

***DISCLAIMER:** The goal of this list is not to discourage you from starting an online business but to give you a realistic and honest guide of the businesses that are out there. So you can make an informed choice about which business to start and one that fits your characteristics. Saving you time and money.*

Trading

Online trading consists of buying and selling financial instruments (stocks, forex, cryptocurrencies, etc.) to make a profit. It is based on the analysis of markets and price fluctuations.

Inconvenient truths:

1. To earn significant amounts, you need significant capital (not the "little money" often promised).
2. Small capital produces small earnings.
3. You can lose all your capital in a few hours, especially with leveraged products such as CFDs.
4. You are challenging institutions with advanced algorithms and millions of dollars in technology.
5. It's not enough to watch a course or follow "signs"; an in-depth analysis is needed.
6. Every time you are offered to join a broker and you are guaranteed profits it is a scam.
7. Avoid signal rooms. Because the trades will tell you it won't work.
8. Avoid binary options.
9. Losses can be emotionally devastating and lead to impulsive decisions.
10. You must constantly monitor the markets; trading is not a passive source of income.
11. Profits must be declared and taxation is often complex.
12. Even if you make money, some of it is eaten up by transaction costs.
13. Many course sellers do not make money from trading, but from the courses themselves.
14. Only a small percentage of long-term traders manage to be consistently profitable.

Why start this business:

- You are passionate about financial markets

Kindle Publishing

It consists of publishing eBooks on Amazon Kindle Direct Publishing (KDP), earning royalties on sales.

Inconvenient truths:

1. We can group the books we can publish into three main categories: Low content, medium content and high content. Low content books (diaries, diaries, notebooks, sketchbooks, journals) have a low cost which makes it very difficult to stay within the margins if you do paid sponsorships. Medium content (coloring books, puzzles books, longer journals) have higher margins. High content books are the classic books we read. They have a high margin but it costs hundreds of dollars to get them produced or
2. It is possible that a book that sucks will sell in the first few days but in the long run it will no longer sell due to negative reviews.
3. Do not create books with registered trademarks and do not insert copyrighted or trademarked words into Amazon's metadata when publishing the book.
4. It is not enough to publish a book on Amazon to sell. You have to run advertising campaigns to sell the book. The best are Amazon ads.
5. You need to do keyword research to understand if there is demand for that type of content.
6. There are millions of books published, many at very low prices.

7. Better to publish a few well-made books than many. More books means more hassle on Amazon's part in possible disputes.
8. Having chatgpt write an entire book in 30 minutes can lead to an account ban because the quality of the book is low.
9. Using random images taken from the internet without a license and placed inside the book can lead to an account ban.
10. If you use sites like creative fabrica to create medium and low content books it is always best to edit the images to make them unique.
11. You cannot open multiple accounts under your name.

Why start this business:

- It can become a fairly passive income but not completely. Because the books you publish (if of good quality) will continue to sell even 2/3 years after publication.
- Self-publishing gives you the creative freedom to write what you want, without having to follow the conventions imposed by big publishers.
- The cost of starting this business is "relatively" low. Bear in mind that you can also create a low/medium content on your own with a Canva (\$12/month) and Creative Fabrica (\$50/year) subscription and then promote it via free TikTok. If, however, you want to create high content books, the cost varies based on whether you create it yourself or rely on a writing agency.

Bonus (how to create a viral video for tiktok):

1. CAPTURE ATTENTION IN THE FIRST SECOND

The intro of the video is crucial. TikTok decides whether to push your content based on early interactions. Here are some techniques to immediately capture the viewer:

- **Use a visual hook:** Immediately show your book with a close-up shot as you browse, or a curious and eye-catching detail, or launch the book in a way that captures attention. Be creative.
- **Ask questions that stimulate curiosity**

2. THE CONTENT

The content must engage, entertain and, ideally, excite.

- **Show someone using the book** in a fun or relaxing way, perhaps with quick time-lapses or speed-ups (for example, drawing a page).
- **"How to use this book":** A short practical guide that shows how easy and fun it is.
- **"POV" or storytelling:** Tell a short story, for example: POV: "Have you had a stressful day? This book is your lifesaver." "This is how I'm transforming my life with this journal...".
- **Challenge or trend:** Connect to a popular challenge. For example: "Can you finish this page in 5 minutes?" (for coloring books).
- **Show a final result:** If the book is a coloring book, show a spectacular completed drawing or a before/after of a page.

3. MUSIC

TikTok is music and trends, therefore:

- **Use trending songs:** See what songs or sounds are popular right now (you can find them in the "Sounds" section of the app).
- **Choose suitable sounds:** For coloring books, relaxing or "aesthetic" music. For funny books, choose something lively or comical.

4. HASHTAGS

Hashtags help the algorithm rank your content:

- **Use a combination of popular and specific:**

Generic: #BookTok, #TikTokMadeMeBuyIt, #ColoringBooks, #FunnyBooks

Specific: #StressRelief, #FunnyJournals, #CreativeTime

- **Create a unique hashtag for your book:** #ColorWithMe or #JournalingFunny

5. VISUALS AND DESIGN

- **Visual quality matters:**

Use good natural or artificial lighting.

Vibrant colors to attract attention, especially if you are promoting coloring books.

Youtube automation

Create video content to earn money with sponsorships and YouTube monetization.

Inconvenient truths:

1. Creating, editing and uploading videos takes hours or days for each piece of content.
2. To maintain and grow your channel, you need to post regularly.
3. Changes in YouTube's algorithm can dramatically reduce your views or penalize you.
4. Some niches are saturated and difficult to monetize.
5. Monetization depends on CPM (cost per thousand views) which varies by niche and country.
6. While AI tools can help speed up the video creation process, using them completely to create the video makes the video of low quality.

Why start this business:

- The structure of this business is not that complex. (Reference niche analysis – content creation – publication – post production analysis).
- Once you publish a video to YouTube, it continues to earn views and advertising revenue over time, even if you're not actively working on it.
- If you do this business on your own you can start with just a few dozen dollars. This obviously depends on the type of niche and content you want to do.
- There's always room to start a new channel on. There are channels that with 2/3 well-studied videos achieve channel monetization in less than a month. YouTube is a dynamic platform, always growing and with a recommendation system that gives visibility even to small channels. (if they have good content).
- It is very scalable and has a high earning potential.

Affiliate Marketing

Promote products or services of other companies, earning a commission for each sale generated.

Inconvenient truths:

1. Broadly we can distinguish affiliations into two branches: low ticket affiliations and high ticket affiliations. With low ticket affiliations you have a very low margin, sometimes even a few dollars. With high ticket affiliations you have a higher margin but it is more difficult to sell given the higher cost.
2. Affiliate programs may close or be unreliable.
3. Program Dependence: Affiliate programs may change terms or close.
4. Lots of testing: You need to test multiple products to find the most profitable ones.
5. Advertising costs: You often have to invest in campaigns to generate traffic. Most of the traffic comes from payment methods (Facebook ads, TikTok ads, Instagram ads, Google ads) and a small part from SEO.
6. It is possible to sell through SEO but it takes longer and there is a possibility that even if you manage to rank in the top search results, it is possible to lose rankings overnight due to an algorithm update, or more authoritative competitors can target your keywords and outrank you.
7. Many programs pay 30-60 days.
8. Not all products convert: Even with lots of traffic, sales can be poor.
9. If you promote Amazon products, you must clearly state that you are an Amazon Associate, otherwise your account may be terminated.
10. In the United States, the FTC deals with the regulation and legal considerations related to affiliate marketing. It is essential to understand and respect these rules to avoid running into legal problems.

Why start this business:

- You don't need to create a product or manage an inventory.
- It is possible to earn high amounts but you must have good marketing skills. (creation of funnels, promotion etc.)

Amazon FBA

Amazon FBA allows you to sell products on Amazon without managing inventory, while Amazon takes care of logistics, shipping and customer service.

Inconvenient truths:

1. You have to purchase large quantities of inventory upfront.
2. Amazon commissions per sale are high, and there are storage and shipping costs.
3. Competition on Amazon is extremely high, with many sellers offering the same products.
4. Amazon may decide to lower the prices of your products, impacting your margins.
5. If you are a private label seller, using FBA could have implications on your ability to grow your brand, because Amazon will put its brand on the package, not yours.
6. If you want to control and customize every aspect of the shopping experience, you won't be able to do that with FBA.
7. You have no direct contact with your customers and therefore no possibility of cross-selling or up-selling.
8. The risk of overstocking or running out of inventory is constant. Given the fact that Amazon manages the inventory according to its method (co-mingling), making inventory management more difficult.

9. Strict regulations and high standards for each new supply. This includes aspects such as the labeling of individual products.

Why start this business:

- Amazon is one of the largest and most trusted online marketplaces in the world, with over 300 million active customers globally. This gives you a large audience ready to make purchases.
- It is possible to earn a lot but it is not a business suitable for beginners because it has various problems. (cost to start, supplier, customs, refunds etc.)

Matched Betting

It is a mathematical method that takes advantage of bookmaker bonuses, placing opposite bets to guarantee a profit regardless of the result.

Inconvenient truths:

1. Even if you don't risk it, you need to have money to cover your bets.
2. After completing the welcome bonuses, which are the most substantial, the bookmaker bonuses run out after a while.
3. The temptation to spend extra money is high, especially when making casino bonuses.
4. Mistakes in betting or laying can wipe out your earnings or cause you to lose money.
5. It is not completely legal everywhere. Some countries have strict regulations.
6. Each bet must be analyzed and placed, especially in multiple bets where you have to follow all the matches in order to hedge the matches (lay).
7. It is difficult to scale because each gaming account is associated with a person.
8. Bookmakers can limit or ban your account, especially if you manage multiple gaming accounts in different people's names. Or make suspicious bets/withdrawals.
9. In order to earn excellent amounts you must have good profiling (make bets to appear like a regular player), to push bookmakers to offer you recurring bonuses.
10. To get increasingly bigger bonuses you must consequently invest more money in the bookmaker.

Why start this business:

- It is a mathematical and "certain" business. (But not taking into account the human risk).
- You already know in advance how much you will earn from each bet you place.

Social Media Agency

It involves creating an agency that manages social media accounts for companies, developing marketing strategies, content and advertising campaigns.

Inconvenient truths:

1. You must be very competent in digital marketing, content creation and campaign management.
2. It is a job that requires time and dedication. You need to continually interact with customers and monitor performance.
3. Each social network has its own dynamics (Instagram, Facebook, TikTok, LinkedIn) and each algorithm changes frequently.

4. Having clients who don't appreciate or understand the value of your work can be stressful.
5. Agency growth requires hiring, training and complex team management.
6. Business expenses: You need to invest in management tools, advertising software, and content creation resources.
7. Requires great communication: Companies want to see real results quickly, so you need to be skilled in customer relations.
8. Many are entering this industry, so there is a lot of competition.

Why start this business:

- Every business, regardless of industry, needs to be on social media to stay competitive. If you have experience and skills, there will always be a great demand for your services.
- Managing a Social Media Agency offers you great flexibility, especially if you decide to work remotely or make use of freelance collaborators.

Sale of Online Courses

Create and sell online courses on platforms like Udemy, Teachable or kajabi.

Inconvenient truths:

1. Creating a complete course takes a lot of time and work, from designing content to recording videos.
2. You need to invest time and money in promoting the course.
3. Many courses are already present on popular platforms.
4. Although the courses can generate income over time, updates and support for the group are needed.
5. You must be an expert in your field to offer valuable content.
6. You must respect the rules of the platform hosting the course.
7. You have to answer questions and interact with students.

Why start this business:

- You like sharing your experience and helping other people.
- The online course industry is growing rapidly, with millions of people looking to learn new skills, advance their careers, or develop personal passions.

NFT

This business consists of buying and selling NFTs. That is, digital certificates of ownership, linked to content such as art, music or collectibles, which can be purchased via cryptocurrencies.

Inconvenient truths:

1. Prices of NFTs can vary greatly and change without notice.
2. Not all NFTs go up in value. Many fail, leaving investors with worthless items.
3. There are many frauds and scams, where the purchased NFTs don't really exist or are fake.
4. The market could collapse if investors stop buying.
5. You are not investing but betting.
6. The NFT market is still poorly regulated and there are not many legal protections for those buying or selling.

7. Even if an NFT is registered on the blockchain, there is nothing stopping users from taking a screenshot of your NFT or copying it.
8. It is not easy to liquidate an NFT. If you've purchased a piece of art or digital item and now want to sell it, you won't necessarily find a buyer quickly.
9. Transaction fees on Ethereum (known as "gas fees") can be high, especially when the network is congested. When you buy or sell an NFT, in addition to the price of the NFT itself, you also have to pay these fees, which may vary based on demand and network activity.

Why start this business:

- Better to start with something else

Crypto

Investing in cryptocurrencies such as Bitcoin, Ethereum and other altcoins with the aim of earning through buying and selling, or even through staking.

Inconvenient truths:

1. Cryptocurrencies can lose 30-40% of their value in a few days.
2. You can lose all your capital in one fell swoop.
3. Cryptocurrency laws change frequently, posing legal risks in some jurisdictions.
4. There are many scams in the cryptocurrency world, from fake projects to unregulated exchanges.
5. You must continuously monitor the markets and do research to avoid risks.
6. Although it is improving, converting cryptocurrencies into traditional money is often complex.
7. Security threats, such as cyber theft and hacker attacks, are common in the cryptocurrency ecosystem.

Why start this business:

- Better to start with something else

Reselling Sneakers

Buying (copping) limited or exclusive shoes to resell them at higher prices.

Inconvenient truths:

1. Requires startup capital: Signature sneakers can cost hundreds of dollars.
2. Prices can drop rapidly if interest drops.
3. It is very difficult to cop manually because they use almost all bots. Bots are capable of completing the entire purchasing process in fractions of a second. This means that even if you are ready on the site, by clicking the "Buy" button as soon as the shoe is released, bots can complete the checkout and pay much faster.
4. Many sneaker retail sites (like Nike, Adidas, Yeezy Supply and others) implement anti-bot technologies but the bots win. Because they use systems that make them appear human (CAPTCHA bypass, IP rotation, Parallel sessions, Timing optimization, Ghost accounts).
5. In some countries, reselling may be regulated or prohibited.
6. Earnings depend on the availability of new models.
7. You have to manage shipments and returns.
8. Platforms like StockX or GOAT retain a significant portion of earnings.

9. Following releases and purchasing requires dedication. Or you can make this phase less stressful by adding to reselling channels that are available on discord. They help the entire purchasing process, paying a monthly fee that varies according to the group.
10. If you want to buy more sneakers and therefore make this business your main job you have to buy a bot. The price ranges from hundreds to thousands of dollars.

Why start this business:

- You are passionate about the world of sneakers

Etsy

Etsy is a global platform dedicated to the sale of handcrafted, vintage (at least 20 years old), and DIY supplies.

Inconvenient truths:

1. Etsy charges several fees on each sale, including: Transaction fee: 6.5% of the sales price. Listing fees: \$0.20 for each product listed, even if it doesn't sell. Payment processing fees: Vary by country. Optional (Etsy Ads) or mandatory (Offsite Ads, which retain up to 15% of sales generated) advertising rates.
2. Etsy has become an extremely popular platform, which means it is saturated with sellers in many categories.
3. Often, your products compete with thousands of similar or identical items.
4. It becomes difficult to stand out without investing time and money in promotion, sponsored listings or SEO optimization.
5. Frequent changes in the algorithm can drastically affect your store's visibility and sales.
6. You may see a sudden drop in sales without understanding why, as Etsy does not provide transparency into the factors that influence rankings.
7. To compete with other sellers, many drastically lower prices, creating a price war.
8. Etsy offers few options for customizing your shop design. All stores follow the same standardized layout, limiting your ability to stand out visually.
9. Buyers on Etsy belong to the platform, not your brand. You cannot collect customer information (such as email or contact information) independently.
10. Creating an Etsy shop means being entirely dependent on the platform for traffic and sales. If your store is suspended or closed, you lose all the work you've done.

Why start this "business":

- Etsy has millions of monthly shoppers actively interested in handcrafted, vintage, or custom products. This means you don't have to search for customers - they are already on the platform and interested in what you offer.
- Opening a shop on Etsy is simple and accessible to anyone. You don't need to create an independent website or have any particular technical knowledge.

Online surveys

Survey sites pay users to answer questions.

Inconvenient truths:

1. You earn a few dollars per surveys.
2. To earn significant amounts, you have to spend hours a day.
3. Not all profiles can participate in every survey.
4. Many platforms only pay when a high threshold is reached.
5. Some sites don't pay or disappear.
6. You cannot increase earnings; you are limited by the number of surveys available.
7. The questions are often monotonous and boring.
8. Personal data: You have to provide a lot of personal, sometimes sensitive, information.

Why start this "business":

- Easy to get started.
- Does not require technical skills.