



Creating an Online Business 101

(A Guide on How to Set Up
Your Own Online Business)

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Introduction

More and more people today have become dissatisfied with their jobs and their pension provisions. So the interest in starting an online business has begun to increase. Yet many who look at such a project find it difficult to know where to start because of the mountain of information available on the subject.

However, during this book we will help you to wade through the mountain of information available. This will, in turn, help you to decide on what is the right sort of online business for you.

One of the first things that you should bear in mind when setting up an online business of any sort, is that you must treat it as just that - a business. This means that you must be prepared to put in the time and effort in order to reap the rewards, even if you are only starting it as a part time venture at first.

Next, you must be prepared to invest some money into it. You do not need to put in large amounts, in fact, if you want, you could actually set it up on a very low budget. Also, what you should remember where an online business is concerned, the running costs are very low compared to a more traditional business.

However, the best place to begin is by picking what you like from the existing successful online business models already out there. So talk to others who have already made money in the niche that you have chosen, and then study, then implement the steps that they took to make it the success it is.

So now you need to think about just what sort of business it is you like to run. Some of the more

popular types of online businesses to be found are: selling goods at auction sites such as Ebay, creating and then selling digital products (e-books are a good example of this) and setting up a custom storefront for your offline business. Also, you may want to make downloadable audio and video products for your customers, or you may just want to get into affiliate marketing instead. We will look at affiliate marketing a little further on in this book in a little more depth.

However, if you do choose to go with Ebay, one of the main advantages of setting up an online business based around this is as follows:-

1. You will have immediate access to millions of customers.
2. Plus you will have the opportunity to sell anything from cars to collectibles (say old sports cards).
3. Also, setting up an account on Ebay is straightforward, and the costs relating to auctioning items on this site are extremely low.

However, it is important that you familiarize yourself with the site. So take a look at the different categories and auctions that are already taking place. Also check out their "How to Sell" section on the site.

For some, the thought of creating their own products seems very daunting, but if you happen to be an expert in a particular niche, then coming up with ideas should not be that difficult. It is important that you carry out some market research to make sure that people would buy related items.

So spend some time writing down or recording any thoughts that you may have with regard to the subject.

Then go back and edit where you need to by putting things into a logical order. However, if you are someone who doesn't like writing, then take a look at some other sites selling those same products or similar ones and get ideas from them.

Make a note, if you can, of what is selling well and formulate some questions that someone who is interested in this product might ask. If you are able to find a friend who will do an interview with you, getting them to ask you the questions you have produced. You can, if you want, record this interview and the make into an audio product which others can then download.

But if this just all seems too much, then why not get someone else to write some books for you? Think about hiring a ghostwriter. But this may be something to consider when you have a bit more money in the business account. So really, the next best way to make money with an online business is by selling someone else's products as an affiliate. As previously mentioned, we will look more closely at affiliate marketing in another chapter of this book.

The best way of starting an online business is to do it in an area that you are knowledgeable or passionate about. This will help you to focus your attention, as well as help to create a small income more quickly. But over a period of time, you will soon develop new skills, and through persistence and patience, you will soon see some very good results appear.

Chapter 1 –

What Reasons Are There for Starting an Online Business?

There are plenty of reasons as to why many people start an online business, and below we will provide you with just a few of them.

For many people, the main reason that they decide to start an online business is to earn an extra income. Usually, this is in addition to the income that they are already earning. However for others, what starts as a part time venture, soon becomes a full time one.

Another reason that people decide to start up an online business is that they have more control over their working life.

Also, it provides them with a chance to spend more time with their family and friends. Today much too much time is spent working, and many people find that they have little or no time to spend with those that they love.

Furthermore, there are other reasons as to why so many people now choose to set up an online business.

What rush hour?

No longer do they need to get up in the morning to rush off to work and get caught up in all that traffic. Now that time which would normally be wasted sitting in traffic can be used to their advantage. Plus, it is up

to you when you work, so if you don't want to start until late in the morning, you do not need to.

Prosperity

Because of the rapid advance in technology, many online businesses today tend to be prosperous, and so getting involved in this type of business is a good way to make some money.

Costs of Starting Up

This is probably one of the biggest reasons as to why many people choose to start an online business. As many of the transactions are completed online, there is little or no need for lots of paper and documents. What one really needs in order to get an online business going is a computer, a high speed internet connection (ADSL), printer, fax machine and few other essentials that an office may need.

As you can see, these are just a few good reasons for why setting up an online business might be the ideal choice for you.

Chapter 2 –

Things That Need to be Considered Prior to Setting Up an Online Business

During this chapter, we will look at things that you need to consider before you actually set up your online business.

What product or service will you want to provide?

For many people, they will start an online business based on knowledge and experience that they have already, while others may spot a gap in the market. But the most important thing that you can do is carry out research with companies and individuals that you do not know in order to get a more unbiased view.

Also, do as much reading and research on everything you can about particular areas of interest, as well as studying the pros and cons that this will have in relation to your overall goals. Plus, make yourself familiar with your competitors, as this will boost your confidence and enthusiasm for setting up an online business.

Where to work from?

You do not need to work from home, but this is an option that many online business people prefer. But others prefer to have an office away from the home, as

they find it difficult to focus, as well as feeling isolated.

How to market the business?

It is important, if you want your online business to thrive, to ensure that you establish a web presence. The best way of doing this is by direct mail, networking, display advertising etc. But what approach works best for you will depend on the product that you are selling. The best way of finding out what will work, is by trying a different number of methods initially, and then go for it once you know which one is best. However, if you are unsure where to start, then look at how your competition is marketing their goods...if it works for them, it may work for you also.

Develop a Plan.

Without having a blueprint on how to reach your goals, you may find that not just your efforts, but the resources may well be squandered. Having a plan provides you with focus, direction and momentum to keep the business on track. We will look further at setting up a business plan in the next chapter.

Check Laws and Regulations

It is important that you check to see if there are any local laws or regulations in relation to setting up an online business from home. Also, you will need to get laws and regulations in regard to being self employed.

Setting up the Office

More often than not, an online business will be conducted from the person's home. So it is important

that you set up a home office prior to starting up the business. You should arrange to have all the necessary equipment that you will need such as computer, internet connection, printer, fax machine (but not essential) are just a few things that you will need if you want to be successful with your online business.

Chapter 3 –

How to Set Up a Business Plan for an Online Business

By setting up a business plan, you are road mapping your way to success. It will help you to develop your business goals and strategies, as well as providing you with a better understanding of the marketplace. It will also highlight any business strengths or weaknesses that you may have, as well as providing you with an opportunity to take a close look at your competitors. If you want, you can also include financial projections, historical data and growth expectations into your business plan.

With any good business plan, it should show who the target audience is, and just how the product or service that is being provided will meet or exceed their needs and expectations.

When organizing a business plan it is best if you break it down into sections such as:-

1. **Business summary** - The product or service you want to provide.
2. **Market analysis** - Research on the product or service and how the competitors are doing.
3. **Product positioning** - How to make it more prominent compared to your competitors.

4. **Market strategy** - How are you actually going to market it?
5. **Customer analysis** - Look at what the customer wants or needs.
6. **Financial analysis** - What you need to invest in order to set up the business and to keep it going while it is just getting started.
7. **Overall business goals** - What you hope to achieve in, say, a year's time.

But what is more important is that once a business plan has been developed, it should not lay in the back of a drawer somewhere. It should be a working plan that you can refer to when you need to.

The best way to make a business plan is to keep it simple (one or two pages should be all you need).

Certainly one of the best things you can do when starting an online business is to create a plan then stick with it.

Chapter 4 –

What Type of Businesses Can You Have as an Online Business?

In this chapter, we will look at some of the more common types of online businesses that people are running. Keep in mind, the decision is really up to you as to what type of business you want to run online.

Marketing Business

This is one of the most common types of online businesses around. You can either run this business by exclusively marketing your own products, or by marketing those of other big budget companies. But this needs you to produce a visually striking web page that has all the necessary information and purchasing options on it for the products in question. In order for this business to be successful, it needs to be promoted effectively to potential customers via search engines, email or other sources. We will look at marketing in more depth in another chapter of this book.

Turnkey Internet Business

This is a very trendy type of business to have online. This is where you would purchase a website from an already established sector and then run the business on a web platform that is provided to you by the established business. In order to promote such an online business, there are many different methods that

you could use, such as promoting individual products or services to your online customers.

Internet Services

This is a business where specific services are provided to online customers at a reasonable price. Such businesses are often set up according to a person's professional expertise and will provide services to their customers in relation to this. The types of businesses that will come under this umbrella are online consultancies, computer software assistance, and hardware trouble shooting and even such things as how to start an online business.

Medical & Health Care Facility Services

This is where someone will set up a complete online pharmacy and the services related to this type of business will be offered to online customers. Such businesses will provide customers with medical consultancy, selling of medications and other medical charges. If you look further into this line of business, you will find that there are several medical institutes who can franchise a person to run a virtual medical and health care facility for them.

But besides the ones mentioned above, there are many other kinds of online businesses around, such as entertainment websites, online chat and interaction and email servers are just some. But no matter what type of online business it is you decide to get involved in, it is important to plan carefully and have the ability promote the business professionally over the internet.

Chapter 5 –

How to Go About Setting Up an Online Business

The best way of setting up an online business today is as follows:-

1. Choose a niche and then specialize in it. Do not think that you are going to make big bucks by selling everything under the sun (unless you are using Ebay, but even this is getting more competitive today).
2. Choose or create a product. You can either use affiliate products or create your own.
3. Probably one of the most important things to do when setting up an online business is to find a good name. It should be short, easy to remember and reflect what your business actually does. Your domain name is the name by which your online customers will remember you by. A good domain name is one that is memorable, short and easy to spell. There are many websites around offering domain names, and prices can start for less than \$1.
4. Get your own website. Do not go for a free page on some affiliate site, but get your own. It is much easier to do than you think. Get some hosting (there are plenty of companies on the web today offering their services). Then buy a template system if you can not program (again

take a look around the web and you will soon find plenty of companies offering web templates). Now all you have to do is start learning how to use it. However, if you are not technically minded then you will need to hire someone to handle all the technical aspects of your online business. This could include such things as building your website for you, the handling of your website hosting and the setting up of any domain names that you may require.

5. Always look for a secure and reliable host service provider. It is important that you examine the "uptime guarantee" that each service provider offers. Also, analyze the physical infrastructure of where your online business will be stored. But probably most important of all is that you should scrutinize the hosting providers "Back Up" and "Data Security" systems. This includes calculating how much time would be required to reinstall your online business if there was a complete infrastructure failure on the part of the hosting provider. This will help you to calculate the least possible loss to your business if such a situation arises.
6. Build a list. This is important so that you are able to repeatedly talk with visitors to your site. It is important that you keep the visitors updated as to what is happening with your site. This also enables you to contact them numerous times regarding whatever offer(s) you wish to present them.
7. Look at the ways in which you will handle the payments made by your customers. If you are selling an affiliate product, then this will not be a problem as the affiliate program will handle the payments for you. However, if you are selling your own product, then you will have to

set up your own payment processing system. This will be looked at more closely in another chapter of this book.

8. Look at the ways in which you will arrange for goods to be delivered to your customer if selling your own products. You must look at local courier companies, as well as the postal service and find out which will be more cost effective for sending goods to customers. Also, you will then need to decide on the pricing system for the sending of packages to your customer's. But it is important that you choose a shipping company who you know is going to be reliable. Look especially at those companies who offer an online tracking system.

Chapter 6 –

How to Set Up an Online Business on a Budget

You have now decided to set up an online business, but your budget is very small, so how can you get going?

You could start off by looking for free domain names. Because there are so many companies around who are now selling domain names, the market has become quite competitive. But there are a few sites around that will register a domain for you at no charge. However, there is a catch with some of them in that they will set themselves up as the administrator for your domain and then only transfer ownership to you after a set period of time for free or will charge you a small fee.

If you are going to be setting up and launching a website, but do not want to pay the \$20-\$40 a month that you can typically charged for hosting, then don't. There are plenty of places on the web today that will host your site for free. But before you get too excited about this prospect, it is important to remember that there is a drawback to be had from using such places. Most of these free host sites will place a banner at the top of your pages for allowing you to do this. However, there are some web hosts around who do not charge you a fee or force you to have a banner on your site either. While there are others who will remove the banners completely for a small fee each year, which is nothing compared to what you would pay to get someone to host your site for you each month.

What if you are someone who does not have their own product to sell, but still wants to make money online? Then look no further than becoming an affiliate marketer. This we will look at more closely in the next chapter of this book.

Chapter 7 –

Just What is Affiliate Marketing and Why Become an Affiliate Marketer?

Many times you will have seen previously in this book we have mentioned affiliate marketing as a great way of setting up an online business. During this chapter, we will provide a more in depth look at what it is exactly.

Affiliate Marketing is a method of promoting a product in which an affiliate is then rewarded for every visitor, subscriber, customer and/or sale provided through their efforts to the actual company selling the product. The compensation or commission that an affiliate gets may be based on a certain value for each exposure, visit (pay per click), new customer (pay per lead), sale which is usually a percentage of the item sold (pay per sale or revenue share) or it may be a combination of any of these.

Many companies like to use affiliate marketing because they do not incur any marketing expenses unless the desired result is realized.

There are also some e-commerce sites around today which run their own affiliate programs, while others use third party services. These provide intermediaries who will track traffic or sales that are referred to them from their various affiliates. There are many businesses online today who owe much of their growth

and success to the use of affiliate marketing. It has been especially successful for small and midsize businesses on the internet.

We have now looked at what affiliate marketing is, now let us look at some reasons as why it is a good type of online business to set up.

No Production Costs

With an affiliate program, production costs are no longer an issue as the product has been developed and proven to be good. Best of all, it has all come out of the merchant's accounts and not yours.

Do not need a lot of money to set up.

All you will need is a desk, computer, internet connection and word processing software to get started.

Costs Involved

Normally it is free to join an affiliate program, and all the set up costs and shipping costs will be met by the merchant whose products you are selling. Plus, as you do not need any where to store goods, this is another reason for joining an affiliate program. So even if you happen to live in a 1 bedroom apartment, you can still sell the biggest products going as an affiliate because all the goods are held by the merchant you are working as an affiliate for.

Choices

There are thousands of products and services that you can choose from. So finding the right products for either a website you have already or one that you are planning to build is immense.

No need to have a Merchants Account

This can be a time consuming and costly expense for anyone setting up a business for the first time. Certainly, it is even more so where an online business is concerned. However, as an affiliate, the merchant

you are selling the product for will bear all costs, as well as handle the processing of all payments. So you never have to worry about any potential charge backs, fraudulent purchases or losing your merchant account completely as an affiliate. Plus, no longer will you be concerned with collecting and storing names and addresses of customers along with their credit card details, as this is all done by the merchant who you are affiliated to.

Plus, no longer do you have to worry about dealing with awkward or nasty customers and their complaints. This is down to the merchant to deal with.

Probably one of the best things about affiliate marketing is that you can make money while you sleep.

Another benefit to get into affiliate marketing is that if the product you chose isn't making money, then you can just dump it. Remove any links to the product and then start promoting another instead. This is because there are no long term contracts which bind you to selling one particular product, so the risk to you is minimal.

If you work hard at affiliate marketing, then the potential to earn a good income is high. It really depends on just how much you want it and how much effort you are willing to put in to the products you are trying to sell.

For an idea of just what kinds of products and services offer affiliate programs, check out Clickbank.com or ComissionJunction.com. Both of these sites are generally at the very top of most affiliate marketers' lists.

Chapter 8 –

Is Using an Online Payment System a Good Decision for my Online Business?

There are many online payment services today which provide you with an alternative way to traditional payment methods. So unlike banks and credit card companies, services such as PayPal and CheckFree no longer require a business to have a merchant account. In fact, using services like this not only provides a quicker way for money to be paid online, but it is more secure than having someone sending you a check or cash. This is because the funds are electronically transferred to your account with them in order to settle any transaction made.

Such services have become especially popular among those who use online auction sites (such as Ebay), but also many other online businesses are now beginning to see the advantages of these services as well. However, what is important to know is how they work, and how to avoid any potential problems that may arise.

Such services use a relatively simple process in order to transfer money from one person to another. What you need to do is set up an account providing enough information which should include your real name, email address and credit card or bank account details (which are used to verify your identity). Then, in order for someone to pay you, they enter your email address and the amount of the transaction in question. This is

then paid into your account, and can either then be transferred to your bank account, or a check can be sent to you.

However, many of the payment services will charge a small fee in order to transfer funds. For example, PayPal charges you up to 2.5% for each transfer that they make (but this all depends on the amount). But what should be remembered is that these fees are probably less than what you would normally pay for a credit card merchant account. Also, such services can be especially helpful when you need to arrange for small repetitive payments to be made to your account, such as affiliate rewards and commissions.

But there are some drawbacks to be had from using a payment service, and these are as follows:-

1. Many of them impose a daily or weekly limit on the amount of money that you send or receive. So if you want to exceed these limits you may find yourself incurring an additional fee for a "business account" or "premiere account".
2. These services are not banks, and therefore are not subject to strict banking regulations or protected by Federal Deposit Insurance.
3. Often these services provide their customers with less protection against fraud and abuse than many credit card companies offer.
4. Also, they are sometimes quick to freeze a customer's account if they suspect fraudulent or other criminal activities are taking place. They can be so quick sometimes that some customers have found that their account has been frozen for no apparent reason whatsoever.

It is important that before you sign up to any payment service, you read through their terms and conditions thoroughly. Plus, also read through their terms of service agreement carefully. It is important that you fully understand and accept the service's dispute policy, limits on liability, their fee structure and any other rules or regulations that they may have. It is also important that you do not keep too much money in your account, rather hold in it enough to conduct a few days of business and any unused funds should be transferred over to your regular bank account.

Below are just a few more payment services that you may want to look at further when setting up an online business account.

1. **Authorize.net.** This service processes credit card and checking account transactions.
2. **BidPay.** This allows person to person payments, in which they accept a credit card payment from the payer and then send a money order through to the payee.
3. **BillPoint.** This also allows person to person payments, but from a credit card. Originally this system was being targeted specifically at Ebay customers.
4. **E-Gold.** This allows the payment in gold (silver, platinum or palladium) to be made from one customer to another using an account based system.
5. **PayPal.** This is probably the most well known of payment services, and it allows user to user payments. This is where a payer uses a credit card to pay money into another user's account. Or, in fact, they can use money they already

have in that account in order to pay for the goods they have purchased.

6. **World Pay.** This service provides both an internet merchant account, and payment processing service in one package.

Chapter 9 –

How do You Go About Marketing Your Online Business?

In the final chapter of this book, we will look at various ways in which you can market your online business. The reason for marketing an online business is in order to get that all important traffic to visit your site. This traffic consists of visitors, who will then become your customers and start purchasing your product or service from you.

The first thing you need to do is learn how to optimize your website so that it will start getting ranked in the top three search engines (Google, Yahoo and MSN. The sooner you do this the faster it will get ranked and the sooner the traffic will start to appear at it. A great way of doing this is by investing in either a book, E-book or Ecourse on how to optimize your site, or you could try some of the following methods instead. The best way in which you can optimize your website is by ensuring you have back links to your site. This is where you have links to your site placed on other sites through various different methods. Below we provide you with some that are useful in order to get those all important back links to your website.

Link Exchanges

This is where you exchange links with other websites that have complimentary products or services to your own. It will not only give you direct traffic from the link, but will help to increase your pursuit for getting ranked higher in search engines.

Write Articles

It is important that the articles you write are interesting and full of useful information regarding your niche. This is probably one of the best ways around for gaining more traffic to your website. Not only is it free, as there are many article sites around where you can have your articles published for free, but each article you have published will be providing a link back to your site. This means that you are helping to gain even higher rankings where search engines are concerned. When writing an article, you should always include information about you, the author (this will usually be in a resource box at the bottom of your article), and do not forget to include that all important link to your own website. By distributing to numerous article sites, you are not only gaining traffic (as when someone sees it on there, they will click on your link if they like what they saw), but also you get a link that points directly back to your site, which the search engines use to rank sites. However, if you are someone who dislikes writing, then you could always look at using a ghostwriter. There are many sites around today who offer ghostwriting services, but when initially setting up an online business, this may not be an expense that you want to incur.

Online Forums

When using these, do not forget to include your signature line at the end of any comments that you make, as this will then provide a further link back to your site. The best bet is to stick to forums that are on the same topic as what you are trying to sell. Not only will you be learning about your potential customer's desires, but you'll be able to establish yourself as an expert in the field.

Blogs

Blogs are a great way of ensuring you get back links to your site. So why not start a blog on your website? But ensure that you post to your blog several times a week and think of it as news page for your site. Certainly blogging has become the in thing at the moment on the web. You only have to do a quick search to find out just how many there are.

Conclusion

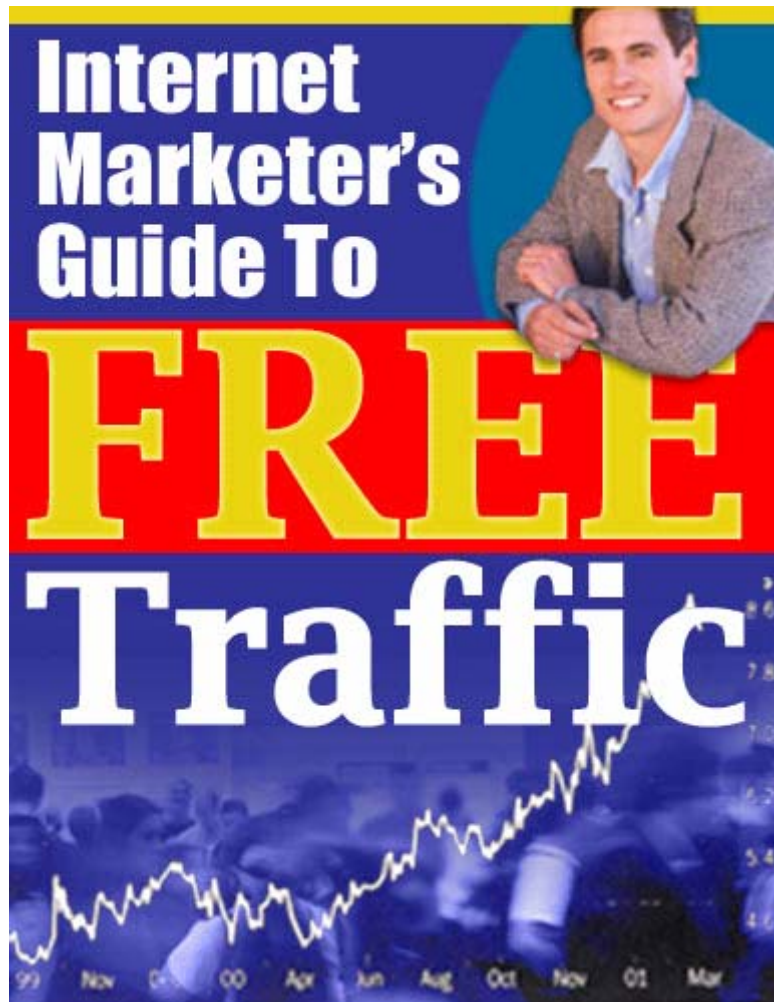
So hopefully the information that has been provided for you in this book will be setting you on your way to starting your first online business.

However, what you should remember is the costs of running an online business are considerably reduced. This is because you do not actually need an office...you can work from home. No need to employ others and all you need to get started is a good computer and good internet connection.

But there are some problems that you do not get with a traditional business, such as hackers, viruses, websites going down and data preservation.

However, the most important aspect of any online business is to generate traffic to your site. There is no point in you having a great product if nobody knows about it. So get a strategy in place which will generate the traffic required to bring in those all important visitors, and then sales to your site.

So the best way of starting any kind of online business is to sit down and write up a plan. Once you have done this, then you can start looking at all the steps that have been shown in the book on how to start an online business!



Internet Marketer's Guide to FREE Traffic

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Introduction

Advertising is one of the key factors in making money in any business and internet businesses are no different.

If you own your own website and are trying to make money with it, there is no way around it...you need a way to drive traffic to your website in order to generate sales and make money.

Now, while there is no way around having to drive traffic to your website in order to earn money. There is a way around having to pay for that traffic. That way is free traffic and advertising.

And that is exactly what this e-book is about.

In this e-book you will find the simple, proven and effective ways to get free advertising and traffic so you don't have to spend money on driving visitors to your website.

Why is this so important?

Because when you think about it, what is the biggest most expensive part of your business that eats away at your profits the most? In most cases it is the advertising that eats away at your profits and takes money straight out of your pocket every single month!

The methods and advice in this book will allow you to simply take away the largest expense of your internet business, and that's worth allot (however much you spend on advertising).

So, when you think about it: how much extra money would be left in your pocket if you did not have to pay for advertising?

Generating Thousands of Free Visitors to Your Site By Way of Writing Articles

Writing articles is one of the easiest and most effective ways of generating free traffic to your website and getting free advertising.

So without further ado, let's get into it and learn all about using articles to generate free traffic...

Now let's get down the root of your article. In this section, this is what we are going to cover

- 1) Determine the purpose of your article
- 2) Creating a compelling article heading
- 3) How to make your article interesting enough so they click on your resource link
- 4) How to write your article quickly and make it a viral marketing machine
- 5) How to spit and polish your article so it looks like you're a professional writer

Ok, so let's determine the purpose of your article. This might sound stupid, but if you don't know what you want your readers to do when they finish reading your article, how will they know what to do?

Before I get too far into writing this, there is one thing you must do before you put pen

to paper so to speak.

FORGET EVERYTHING YOU LEARNT ABOUT WRITING IN SCHOOL!

It doesn't apply to article writing on the Internet. The purpose of writing articles is to get a response and that sometimes means using unconventional methods of writing. If you can't handle that your writing may look like it was written in the dark in some sports (maybe a bit harsh) and you're neurotic about it, forget writing on the Internet altogether.

This is meatball writing. We get straight to the point and give the readers all the information in less than 700 words.

Now back to determining the purpose of your article.

Here are the usual options that the reader has.

1) Visit your website link in the resource box

This is probably the most common response people seem to go to, even if it is the wrong one. People are so fixated with wanting their readers to go to their websites and buy straight away.

Tell me something, how many strangers on the

Internet have you brought something from because they just told you a great story? None right?

You have to preheat (or presell your readers) the oven before you can ask for their credit card details.

Sending your readers to your website will usually result in a lower sales percentage straight off the bat. That is of course if you are selling them anything at all.

If you were selling them something, the best bet would be to send them straight to your newsletter signup link in your resource box, or even better yet, a free 5 day course via email, which I will talk about in a minute.

But if you are sure you want to send them to your website, the best way to do that is to tell your readers (in your article) that if you go to your website (in your resource box), there is a free gift (of value) they can get, just by visiting your site.

Make sure if you do this, it's not a blatant plug for a product and the gift is of real value, or very few publishers will publish your article, and fewer readers will respond to you in the future. No one likes being sold straight off the bat, and by giving them a free gift, or getting them to give you their email address some way is the best way to go.

2) Visit an affiliate link

This one is quite tricky.

For starters, some publishers don't allow you to put affiliate program links in your article at all, and if you do, they have to be completely in context and it must be one brilliant article, but that's not a problem.

You can of course put an affiliate link in your resource box, which would be allowed straight away.

However, if you want your affiliate links in your article here are a few tips.

- 1) Make sure they add value to your article and are not just blatant plugs.
- 2) Make sure your article is informative and to the point
- 3) Give plenty of free information away at your website and or offer a free course
- 4) Write a brilliant article!

3) Subscribe to your mailing list This is one of the better options? Why, because when they sign up for your mailing list, they are giving you permission to contact them via email on a regular basis.

It would be very hard in your article to announce your mailing list in context of the article, as it would come off as a blatant plug, so the best bet would be to include

your subscribe email address in your resource box.

Don't make them go to a website and subscribe, this will cut your lead percentage nearly in half. All your readers should have to do is send a blank email to your autoresponder/mailing list email address and subscribe from there.

4) Subscribe to your free course

This is my favorite way to really maximize your articles. Why?

Here's why!

- 1) They give you their email address just like they are joining your newsletter
- 2) They are in the buying mood straight away
- 3) You get to give them a sales message at the end of your free 5-day course and it won't look like a blatant plug
- 4) You can offer them more free courses for years to come
- 5) Just do it!

With a free 5-day course, you are really getting to know your readers better and you are giving them the chance to read more information from you straight away.

A free course is just really 5 or so articles put together with an autoresponder and sent out over a period of days.

Just like with the mailing list, put your free course link (not a website address) in your resource box.

5) Refer your article to others

If you want your readers to refer your articles to other people, here is what you do.

(This is a good idea if you have affiliate links in your article)

You send them to a website, with a refer a friend script. This website also has your previous articles on there as well in an easy to use site.

You don't need fancy graphics or flash animation, just make it easy to navigate.

As I was saying, send them to a page with a refer a friend script on it, and once they do that, give them a free bonus, like the chance to sign up for a free 5 day course you are offering!

You see how many possibilities there are.

By giving them something in return with value, like a free 5-day course, you get them to refer your article/website to their friends.

6) Contact you personally

If you want people to contact you personally, don't make them dig through a website to find your contact details. At the very least, put your email address in your resource box, if not your business phone number.

7) Do nothing

Don't be disheartened if a lot of people don't visit your website or take an action from your article, they could just be freebie seekers looking for free information and are not willing to take an action no matter how good your information is or would be.

The secret to article writing is volume. The more articles you have out there being passed around, the more traffic you will end up getting.

8) Flame you

There are some idiots, and yes they are idiots, who would rather send nasty emails to you instead of giving constructive criticism.

If you are one of these people, find a better hobby, because it can really hurt a person's feelings. When I was first starting out, and I got some flames, they really hit me hard, but then I realized I was the one making money on the Internet and they were probably spending all day abusing people over the

Internet.

Never get in a verbal fight with these people at all costs.

Creating a compelling article heading

Here is an article by **Terry Dean** on the importance of headings. While it tends to be written more for ad copy, a heading is vitally important to an article:

How To Increase Response Rates 1800% by Tomorrow Afternoon

By: Terry Dean

This section you could call the make-it or break-it section. Of all parts of your advertising, the Headline is absolutely the most important piece to the puzzle.

If you don't write a good headline, you might as well get out of advertising right now. The bad news is that You cannot make money in business without good headlines. The good news is anyone can write KILLER headlines...Yes, I said anyone. That means YOU!

Some copywriters would like you to think that you have to have some kind of special skill or creativity to writing killer headlines. Guess what, there is not. You don't have to have a special gene for creative headline

writing.

What those same copywriters don't tell you is that they wrote 10, 20, 50, 100, or more headlines for that specific piece BEFORE they chose the KILLER headline. It isn't massive creativity that creates winning headlines. It is the right knowledge and hard work.

This section will give you the KNOWLEDGE you need to write killer headlines, but the WORK is up to you. I have NEVER heard of anyone coming up with the BEST headline on the first try. It takes Brainstorming dozens of headline ideas until you are coming up with the WINNER!

It is worth the work of writing KILLER headlines, because One headline has been known to out produce another headline by as much as 1800%. That is with no change in the body of the letter at all! That means that a promotion which made \$1,000 could have made as much as \$18,000 just by changing the headline! Suddenly, a promotion which could have been unsuccessful NOW is a MEGA MONEY Maker!

I don't think that I could emphasize the importance of writing WINNING headlines enough. Without a headline, your sales letter is doomed to failure even before it starts...If you are not willing to put forth the effort of doing an effective one, then you might as well quit your business now and

go work at McDonald's. You will never make more than minimum wage anyhow without good headlines!

If I was going to give you a schedule for writing your sales letter, it would look like this. Spend 10% of your time doing research. Spend 40% of your time on the offer, benefits, bullets, and order form. Spend 50% of your time on the headline. That is how important the headline is to your success in marketing.

Over 5 times as many people will read your headline as will read your sales letter. It has to catch the attention of your targeted prospect and make them read the rest of the letter. If your headline is weak, hardly anyone will ever even SEE your sales letter, much less purchase from it.

If you are going to spend time and money on advertising, you need to make sure that people are at least going to READ your sales letter. The key to this is an effective headline. Without it, you will not get 99% of the people who see your ad to even read it.

Writing headlines is not a magical art for the select few. It is a skill that you will learn as you practice and do your work on each advertising piece you create. Here are a few of the basic rules of writing KILLER headlines:

It has to absolutely stop your target prospect in their tracks and force them to read the ad! It must answer the question "What's In It for Me" by giving your #1 Benefit Right Up Front! It has to set the tone for the whole rest of the ad and your offer!

It is the leader for your entire ad and it will set the tone and direction for your ad. You could easily say that it is 50% of your ad all by itself. Let's talk about each of those aspects in detail:

#1 - It has to Grab Your Targeted Prospect's Attention

Too many ads are written for any old reader. By that, I mean that they aren't trying to focus on anyone specifically. They are trying to sell anyone their product. When writing ads, you have to TARGET your prospects.

You have to decide exactly who your #1 customer will be. That is part of the reason for the Research that you need to do first. You had to find out who and why people were buying your product. Your sales letter needs to be written as though it was for ONE specific person.

The best ads and sales letters are always the ones which seem as though they were written JUST for you. When you read them, you feel as though they wrote it knowing your every

thought and plan. It is your letter!

When a sales letter is written like that, it will sell like wildfire when introduced to it's specific target audience. For example, if you are selling a book about child care, you may start a headline like this:

"Attention All Frustrated and Worn Out Parents..."

Or

"PARENTS..."

You could sell a weight loss product with a headline that starts with:

"If You Want to Lose 30 pounds in 30 days..."

If you are selling computers, you might start with:

"Are You Looking for a Computer At Half the Cost?..."

With those kinds of examples, we call out the audience right there and then. Those who are looking for computers will continue to read on. Those who don't want a computer won't. You have captured your target market's attention.

What I like to do is to put this type of message on the top of the sales letter in

smaller letters with the main headline underneath of it. This has worked best for me in the past. You will notice EVERY ONE of my sale letters is done in this format. This way I can grab my target market's attention upfront and then blast them with the offer in larger letters. I advise you to do the same in your advertising.

#2 - "What's In It For Me"

All of your advertising is based on those 5 little words. The headline is no exception. Your prospect will ask this question of your headline, your letter, your offer, and your order form. You have to give it to them throughout the letter, especially in the headline. If they don't receive it here, they will NEVER read the rest of your letter.

When you made your list of benefits, which one stands out to your prospects the most by your research? This should become a part of your headline along with your USP (Unique Selling Position) if possible. Using this type of headline is the beginning of a KILLER ad copy. You want to overwhelm your prospects with benefits. There is no better place to start than in the headlines.

#3 - It should set the tone of the ad and the offer!

Your headline is a type of introduction of your upcoming killer copy. It needs to both

grab the attention of your prospects and then get them ready to read the ad. You could say that the headline is the "Ad for the Ad."

The headline's main purpose is to SELL the prospect on the idea of reading the entire sales letter. Whenever you write a headline, keep that in mind. People's time is precious and if you want them to take time out of their day to read your sales piece, then you better have something good to say in the very beginning. Otherwise, you have lost them forever!

Terry Dean, a 5 year veteran of Internet marketing, will Take You By The Hand and Show You Exact Results of All the Internet Marketing Techniques he tests and Uses Every Single Month" Click here to Find Out More:

[<http://www.netbreakthroughs.com>](http://www.netbreakthroughs.com)

How to make your article interesting enough so they click on your resource link

While I have covered some of this already, I will add a few more things here.

The secret to making your article interesting is to give away enough information to solve one part of the problem, but to leave the other part unsolved so they want more information. Let me explain:

If I was just beginning to learn how to

promote affiliate programs, I would be after information on how to create a website that sells and of course how to advertise that website.

Now if I was writing an article and I had a product to sell on affiliate programs, I would write an article on how to create a site that sells, but leave out the part about advertising your site.

Of course people will need this information if they want to succeed, so more then likely, if your resource box is compelling, they will click on your link to your website.

How to write your article quickly and make it a viral marketing machine

To write your article, you have to know where you want the article to go. For instance, are you planning on making this a series of articles that link together?

You must determine the outcome for your article before you can write it.

Now, writing your article isn't that hard at all.

You should try and make your article at least 500 words, and no more then 1000. To do this, outlining the topics you are going to cover and writing 100 or 200 words on each topic, makes the article flow well, and easier to

write.

For example.

If I was writing an article on getting more traffic to your website on a budget, I would write an outline something like this.

1. Introduction to budget advertising
2. How to write articles that get publishing every time
3. Joint venturing for huge profits
4. Getting all the free links you can
5. Search engine ranking tactics that work
6. Using mp3's to distribute your message
7. Making the most of your budget traffic

Then I would write 100 - 200 words on each topic and there is your rough copy article, ready to go, it's that simple.

When writing your article, you must keep in mind that people don't like reading big words they probably don't understand. Imagine you are trying to write to an 8th grade level, as it has been proven that people like to read at this level.

Here is a great article on this very subject:

Here's a simple method for tapping into an outstanding source of FREE publicity for your business.

By Kevin Nunley

*Everyone likes to buy from an expert.
Shopping for a computer? A sales person who
knows computers inside and out makes us feel
confident about her recommendations.*

*Planning to buy stocks? You likely look for a
broker who has Wall Street down pat.*

*Here is an effective way to make yourself one
of the leading experts in your industry.
Write your own how-to articles.*

*Prospects and clients will read your
articles, appreciate the good information you
have to share, and look to you as an expert
who can help them.*

*You don't have to be the next great novelist.
Simply write a page of instructions that
tells someone else how to do something. It
can be information you learned on the job or
advice you picked up in books and
conversations. Customers buy because they
have a problem they need solved. When you
appear as a helpful expert with lots of
answers, you're half-way to a sale.*

*Newspapers, magazines, e-zines, and industry
newsletters all need a steady stream of good
informative articles. It is easier to get
your articles into smaller publications that
closely target your best customers. Often
these smaller e-zines and newsletters draw*

better response than some of the big glossy national magazines.

START WITH THIS FORMULA

Articles are easy to write when you use this simple pattern. I have given this formula to classes of college freshmen. Everyone in the class is able to use it to write professional quality articles.

1. Start by pointing out a problem your reader has. I could have started this article: "Spending lots of money on advertising and still not getting the results you want?"

2. Then make your reader's problem seem worse. Point out the ways this problem can impact their business, life, and happiness. "Your ads bring in only temporary response. Without an effective and affordable way to get the word out on your business, you may be closing your doors before the year is over."

3. Next suggest one to five ways the reader can solve the problem or make the situation better. "One simple way to get lots of new prospects and customers is to write articles for trade publications in your industry." I could go on to explain how to write an article (as I'm doing now).

4. End your article with a paragraph or two that reviews your most important points. Wrap

up with a positive spin that paints a bright picture for your reader.

"Many entrepreneurs and professionals use their articles to launch successful national careers earning healthy six figure incomes. By following these easy steps, you can become a widely-respected expert in your field and give your business a big boost."

5. Finally, include your contact info in a final paragraph at the end. Now that readers are impressed by your good ideas, they will want to contact you to pay for more information, services, or products. Many publications will allow you to include four to six lines that provide your contact information and even a plug your latest product or service. Check the end of this article for my "resource box."

Most e-zines like articles a page or two long (200 to 400 words). Magazines increasingly want articles that fill just one of their pages (900 words).

Keep your sentences and paragraphs short. Avoid sentences that require lots of commas. The idea is to write in a style that is clear and easy-to-understand for a reader that is in a hurry. I think writing simply is also easier. How-to articles don't have to be fancy.

"BUT I DON'T LIKE TO WRITE"

A friend often reminds me that I like to write, but most people, including herself, hate to write. "Everything you type looks wrong and an hour later you haven't gotten anywhere," she says.

Many of us don't have time to write or don't feel it is one of our strengths. No problem. You can get a writer to do the work for you or hire an editor to polish the words you have written.

A fellow writer who ghostwrites books for other people confided many well-known business writers don't do their own writing. Bill Gates has several good books, but all were written for him by professional writers. He probably doesn't have time to sit down to write 200 pages.

Check with your local library for a list of writing clubs in your area. A quick look around my town turned up groups of non-fiction writers, technical writers, even a group of successful romance novelists. These are fertile sources of expert writers and editors, many who work for low prices.

Also approach English teachers, journalists, do a search for writers on the Internet, and ask people who write articles you like. Give the writer the general idea for your article and some information to draw from. Then let them use their creativity and taste to write

the article.

SUBMIT YOUR ARTICLE TO EDITORS.

E-zines are in constant need of fresh articles. Submission procedures are informal. Many welcome unsolicited articles. Simply e-mail the editor an article with a short personal note. You may find it best to first write the editor for permission to send your article.

Gary Christensen has compiled a big list of editors looking for articles at:
<http://www.site-city.com/members/e-zine-master> Kate Schultz's EzineArticles.com will distribute your article to a big list of editors.

Most magazines have specific submission rules they want you to follow. Some want you to pitch your article idea in advance via a query letter. Others invite writers to submit articles on certain topics that will be included in future issues. Check magazine web sites for submission guidelines.

Once an editor discovers you can supply them with good articles month after month, you can parlay your articles into a regular column.

Now here comes the enthusiastic wrap-up:

In a complicated world where every problem seems to require an expert, lots of new

customers will respond to the useful information you provide. Write your own articles to make yourself an expert in your field. Don't miss your chance to tap into this powerful no-cost form of marketing.

Kevin Nunley provides marketing advice and copy writing for businesses and organizations. Read all his money-saving marketing tips at <http://DrNunley.com>.

There are however a few things Dr Nunley didn't touch on enough in that article. Those were:

1) Creating a compelling resource box

The resource box is your little reward for writing your article. This is where you get to tell your readers what exactly you are offering.

In your resource box, you should put the following:

- * Your full name
- * A bit about yourself
- * Your website url
- * Your subscribe link to your autoresponder
- * And a little bit about why they should take action by either visiting your site, or subscribing to your autoresponder

Remember, you usually only have 3, 4 or 5 lines to do all this, so make it brief.

2) Taking your article viral

This is really a simple step and all it involves is 2 things

- A) A little tweak in your resource box
- B) A little help from the people who publish your article

If you want people to give away your article to others, all you have to do is ask. If you want your readers to refer your article to others, tell them so in your resource box.

If you want publishers to do the same, why not ask them to give your article to their publishing friends.

You can do this by telling them that they will get your article first over anyone else, ensuring you get your article published all the time, and ensuring the publisher gets fresh never seen before content.

You could also give them access to your product (if you are selling one) for the rights to a list of their publisher friends.

How to spit and polish your article so it looks like you're a professional writer

The number 1 reason why most articles don't get published (behind not following posting guidelines, which I talk about next chapter)

is the article is full of spelling errors .

Just because I said you don't have to worry so much about correct grammar in your article, it doesn't mean you can slack off and not proof read and spell check your work.

Even if you don't have a spell checker program on your computer, there are plenty of free web based ones.

[<http://www.spellcheck.net/>](http://www.spellcheck.net/)
[<http://www.jspell.com/jspell.html>](http://www.jspell.com/jspell.html)

If you are having trouble with one or two words, why not try
[<http://www.dictionary.com>](http://www.dictionary.com).

You will also want to make sure your article flows properly and makes perfect sense. I know sometimes I write one word but mean another. Like put instead of but, etc....

You might want to print it out and read it aloud a few times, or even get a few other people to do the same.

This is also a good time to see if you've covered everything you've wanted to cover and your not leaving anything out the reader might need to know. There is nothing worse than an article that either doesn't make sense, or leaves so much information out due to the fear of giving too much away, that it's practically blank and full of fluff no

one is interested in.

How to Get Your Articles "Out There"

Before you send out any articles to anyone, you must read their guidelines fully! Failure to follow the set guidelines for posting/submitting your article usually ends with straight out rejection.

Most people will want the following.

1) Article 500 to 700 words in length -

Put the exact amount of words there are in the email to the ezine publisher/article announcement list.

2) No spelling errors

This is as simple as doing a spell check

3) Complete contact details of yourself and a short synopsis of your article

What this means is that when you send an email to say an ezine editor, you include a brief introduction about yourself, your contact information if needed and a short run down of your article. Anyone else but the ezine publisher or article announcement owner doesn't see this.

4) Word wrap

You will want to wrap your article to 65

characters for each line. What this means is that every line of your article has 65 characters or less in it. This is important for margins in email.

There is a free tool that will do this for you, that I love.

It will also help you with your article writing as well. You can get it from <http://www.ezineassistant.com>

5) Article in the body of your email

Never send your article as an attachment in an email. Most people don't open attachments for the fear of viruses, so send all articles only in the body of the email. This is a big stumbling block for newbie writers.

But the best advice I can give you is to follow any guidelines set to the "T". If you are unsure, ask someone.

So what should my email look like to any publisher?

Here are a few examples.

"Please consider this article for your website or ezine.

Permission to reproduce if byline stays intact. Courtesy copy appreciated; not required.

TITLE: Kenna, David and Julie are Moving!
AUTHOR: Susan Dunn, The EQ Coach
WORD COUNT: 727
WRAP: 65
URL: <http://www.susandunn.cc>
Mailto:sdunn@susandunn.cc "

"Article Title: Make Your Web Site User-Friendly
Author Name: Dejan Bizinger
Contact Email Address: debizi@yahoo.com
Word Count: 1216
Category: Web Site Design
Copyright Date: 2002

Special Requirements For Reprint: You have permission to publish this article electronically or in print, free of charge, as long as the complete resource box is included. A courtesy copy of your publication would be appreciated. Please send it to:

Send Your Articles Out To Thousands

Here are the best resources anywhere on the Internet to post your articles. If it's not here, don't bother with it!

Here are a list of ezine directories. You will find hundreds even thousands of ezines that are looking publish articles on all topics.

[<http://www.published.com>](http://www.published.com)

[<http://www.ezine-dir.com>](http://www.ezine-dir.com)

[<http://www.writerswrite.com/epublishing/mldirectory.htm>](http://www.writerswrite.com/epublishing/mldirectory.htm)

[<http://www.zinos.com>](http://www.zinos.com)

[<http://www.topezineads.com>](http://www.topezineads.com)

[<http://www.directoryofezines.com>](http://www.directoryofezines.com) - The best, but it's not free

[<http://www.ezinesplus.com>](http://www.ezinesplus.com)

[<http://paml.net>](http://paml.net)

[<http://www.ezinesearch.com>](http://www.ezinesearch.com)

[<http://www.marketing-seek.com>](http://www.marketing-seek.com)

[<http://www.ezinelinks.com>](http://www.ezinelinks.com)

[<http://ezine-universe.com>](http://ezine-universe.com)

[<http://www.ezinesseek.com>](http://www.ezinesseek.com)

[<http://www.freezineweb.com>](http://www.freezineweb.com)

[<http://www.newsletter-directory.com>](http://www.newsletter-directory.com)

[<http://www.ezinedirectory.com>](http://www.ezinedirectory.com)

[<http://www.list-city.com>](http://www.list-city.com)

Now not everyone of the mailing lists you find will accept articles, and not every ezine directory will tell you who does and

who doesn't accept articles, so it will be a bit of a process in finding out which ones do and don't.

Make sure you write down all the details of who you submit your articles to and make a directory, so you know where to send them next time.

Here is a list of article announcement sites

[<http://www.websource.net/articlesub.htm>](http://www.websource.net/articlesub.htm) -

The best of the best

[<http://www.marketing-seek.com>](http://www.marketing-seek.com)

[<http://www.ideamarketers.com>](http://www.ideamarketers.com)

[<http://www.authorconnection.com>](http://www.authorconnection.com)

[<http://www.ezinearticles.com>](http://www.ezinearticles.com)

[<http://www.makingprofit.com>](http://www.makingprofit.com)

[<http://www.clickz.com>](http://www.clickz.com)

[<http://www.bpub.com>](http://www.bpub.com)

Getting Thousands Of Sites To Link To Your Website

Quality information is the beehive of any good website. If you have quality information, it really is simple to get quality traffic.

To do this we are going to target websites that are on the same topic as your website and search engine ranking. The two really go hand in hand.

What we want to do, is to get as many people

linking to our site as possible, as this will increase your search engine ranking ten fold.

To do this, we need to find hundreds of possible link partners for you to ask a link from. This is called reciprocal linking.

So how can you start getting hundreds of sites linking to you?

On your website, we are going to create a section with all your articles you've created and every time you create a new article, you will put it up there aswell.

If you're not sure what I mean, have a look at an example.

<http://www.bizpromo.com/free>

This site is run by one of the best-known marketers on the Internet, Terry Dean.

He has nearly 100 articles on his site, that he allows people to steal and put on their website, or even link to his site.

He also has over 500 people linking to his website! That's not counting the amount of people who use his article on their websites and in their ezines.

You can see exactly where his traffic is coming from, by visiting his Alexa rating page at

[<http://www.alexa.com/data/details?url=www.bizpromo.com>](http://www.alexa.com/data/details?url=www.bizpromo.com)

(If you want to check any other site, just put in a new url at the end of that address)

With this site, I can see roughly how much traffic he is getting, how many people are linking to him, who is linking to him, and other sites his visitors were interested in.

Do you think this is helpful?

You better believe it.

If you happen to have a site on Internet Marketing, you can now use his information to find possible link partners yourself.

Of course you can do this for any topic. Just find a website in your field that's very popular and you can see exactly where some of their traffic is coming from.

All you have to do now, is contact these people, telling them you have a new website and you would like to swap links with them.

You can also tell them that the free articles on the site can be used by them as long as they keep your resource box at the end of the article, and if you happen to have an affiliate program, let them put their affiliate link for your product in the byline

for extra incentive.

To find the most link partners, do the above for hundreds of sites, and write down all possible sites that you might like a link from.

Turn Your Articles into a Viral Marketing E-book

This is one the best things you can do for your business. It requires no work on your part, or little work and it will bring in results for years to come. What you are going to do is create a viral marketing ebook with articles you've already written and you are going to sell it for \$19 with reprint rights. That means everyone who buys your book can sell it him or herself or give it away.

First though, you are going to need an ebook compiler that allows your customers to brand the book with their information. While this sounds crazy, the purpose of this is for them to give away your book, therefore creating more customers for you, with out doing any of the work. You will allow these people to put their affiliate links in the book and even their contact details, so it actually makes it look like these people are recommending your and your products for sale. Every time someone reads your book, they will either buy what ever you are selling through your affiliate program, which allows people to promote your product for a percentage of the sale, or join up for your free course sent via auto responder.

This free course also promotes your products and the sign up for it is placed through out the book. Doing this not only allows you to make sales and get your name out there, but

also build a huge mailing list in the process. The type of ebook software you will need you can find at <http://www.ebookpaper.com>. This software allows you to create books in exe format and allows your readers to brand parts of it with their information.

Examples of these types of books would be <http://www.autorespondermagic.com> and <http://www.milliondollaremails.com> both written by Yanik Silver.

He created 2 viral marketing ebooks that were passed around the Internet like wildfire. He gave the readers/buyers a chance to also sell the book for \$19 to their own customer base. He also gave them promotional material like a sales letter, ad copy and articles to use.

Promoting this type of book is very easy. Since your not really concerned with making money from the sales of this book, you can go and contact all the website and ezine owners you can find and tell them that you will give them resale rights to this book, if they promote it to their customers and mailing lists.

Don't make them buy the book from you, since the sheer amount of people promoting your book after this will be more then enough reward.

Setting Up an Affiliate Program

In this chapter I'm going to talk about setting up your own affiliate program to promote your product or service.

Most of you are already familiar with affiliate programs, but for those who are not, here's a brief description from the affiliates point of view.

In essence affiliate programs or associate programs are revenue sharing arrangements where companies (merchants, which would be you) pay webmasters commission for sending them customers.

You are paid a commission if the person buys a product or service, (Pay Per Sale - Most Popular Option), clicks on an affiliate link (Pay Per Click - Less popular due to fraud) or simply fills out a form (Pay Per Lead - Also Very Popular).

Basically affiliate programs are programs that enable you to sell other peoples products for a percentage of the sale. They are also a very hot topic at the moment. To see a comprehensive list of affiliate programs you can join, visit <http://www.AssociatePrograms.com>. You can virtually sell anything online now thanks to affiliate programs.

So let's say you sell a book on how to improve your golfing game on the Internet and you've exhausted your pool of advertising sources and you need fresh leads. The best way to go about this would be to start your own affiliate program and pay people a percentage of the sale.

For example, if your book is selling for \$47, don't be afraid to give people 50 to 60% of the profits of each sale. Why? Because it's costing you nothing in advertising and you get to keep the customer for life. So imagine if you then had another product for sale for \$97, you could then advertise this product to your existing customer base and it would cost you nothing.

Affiliate programs are great for the merchant (product owner) because it's risk free. You only pay your affiliates when they get their leads to perform an action (IE, buy something from you) so it costs you nothing. Of course if you have physically create and ship your product, those would be your only costs, and even now that can be avoided by going solely online.

So by using the example of the golfing book, you can do this. Instead of having a "real book" so to speak, you could turn it into an ebook and your customers can download it online and it costs you nothing to ship or create! Pure profits all round.

So how do you go about setting up your own affiliate program? Well that all depends on the type of products you sell and the commission structure you want to work with.

Let me explain.

A lot of affiliate programs now days let the affiliate earn commissions in 2 ways, sometimes more (multi level marketing).

It's called a tier structure. 1-tier and 2-tier affiliate programs.

1-tier affiliate programs pay commission once, thats when a product is sold. 2-tier pay affiliates when they sign up other affiliates under them, and they then make a sale.

Let's see if I can't explain that in a simpler manner. Here is a good example.

Let's say you setup your affiliate program to be a 2-tier affiliate program. When one of your affiliates makes a sale, let's say you give him 40% of the sale. But here's the trick with 2-tier affiliate programs.

Let's say that your first affiliate recruits another affiliate under him, and that affiliate makes a sale, and also get's 40% of the sale. The only difference here is that the first affiliate (the one who referred the

second affiliate) gets a portion of the sale, let's say 10%.

So in actuality, you are paying out 50% of the total sale price to 2 affiliates. You are rewarding your first affiliate for recruiting a second affiliate when they make a sale.

The majority of the sale should always go to the affiliate who made the sale, IE the first affiliate.

So what affiliate software should you use? This is a part that seems to trick a lot of people or confuse them, so I will make it as simple as possible.

The 2 options available to you are,

- A) Do it yourself affiliate software
- B) Third party software

The 2 have their advantages, and it will depend on what you are selling which one you choose. Let's start with selling an ebook or digital product that can be downloaded online.

My favorite is <http://www.clickbank.com>. They are used by thousands of small businesses online, and if you are just starting out, this is what you should be using.

Not only will <http://www.clickbank.com>

allow you to setup up an affiliate program, they also send the checks out to your affiliates and are also used as your credit card company.

That's right, [<http://www.clickbank.com>](http://www.clickbank.com) will take your orders, give you an affiliate program to sell your products thru, and will take care of the checks so you don't have to do anything.

So what do they want in return? They take a fairly hefty fee per sale. \$1 and 7% per sale and they have a one time setup fee of \$49 which is nothing really. You won't find a better company to setup your affiliate program with if you are selling digital products online. [Clickbank.com](http://www.clickbank.com) [<http://www.clickbank.com>](http://www.clickbank.com) cannot be used to sell physical products, IE tangible goods.

So this brings me to my next section. What affiliate program software should you use for shipping physical products?

You could do it yourself and use a DIY affiliate program script. Here are a few options,

Ultimate Affiliate: Available at [<http://www.groundbreak.com>](http://www.groundbreak.com) for \$200.

Little Salesmen: 3 CGI Programs for \$197 at [<http://www.cgitoolbox.com>](http://www.cgitoolbox.com)

These have to be setup on your own webhosting

company and you are responsible for sending out affiliate checks and making sure everything is running smoothly. If you are not that good at cgi scripting, it might be a good idea to get someone to help you with setting this up, and mind you, it isn't cheap.

You will of course need your own merchant account to accept credit cards on top of this as well.

If you don't want the hassle of having to handle the setup of your affiliate program and still want to ship physical products, here are your best options.

[<http://www.netofficetoolbox.com>](http://www.netofficetoolbox.com) - A very good option

[<http://www.CJ.com>](http://www.CJ.com) - Expensive, but also a good option

Now, last but not least, if you have a membership site (one that is billed weekly, monthly, bi monthly, yearly, etc) and you want to start an affiliate program (and you should) here are a few tips that will get that started for you.

There really is only one option currently for recurring billing and an affiliate program thats handled by a third party, and that is [<http://www.ibill.com>](http://www.ibill.com). They charge 15% of every sale and they do have a small setup cost, which I believe is getting more

expensive soon.

So Ibill will accept your credit card orders and online checks, they will also give you the option of setting up an affiliate program, and they will again send out checks to your affiliates so you don't have to worry about it.

<http://www.clickbank.com>

[<http://www.Clickbank.com>](http://www.Clickbank.com) is rumoured to be starting a service for rebilling soon, which I would use hands down over Ibill.

Building Your Affiliate Resource Section

Now this is an important part to your affiliate success. In the next chapter I talk about finding super affiliates that will rocket your sales through the roof, but you need to help these affiliates first by setting up resources they can use to promote your affiliate program

Even though your affiliate would be better off creating their own marketing materials in the long run, you still need to create your own, so they can at least use it as a template.

One idea for keeping your marketing material fresh so thousands of affiliates are not using the same material over and over is to keep your material fresh and updated constantly.

Ok, so what should you be creating for your affiliates to use?

1. Articles
2. Endorsements
3. Solo Ads
4. Free Course
5. Classified ads
6. Banners
7. Graphics

Articles

Are a great way to get your affiliates promoting your products. All you have to do is let them change the byline of your article (the little advertisement at the end of your article) where your web site link is, to their own affiliate link for your product.

This way, they get a few good articles to promote to their ezine list and they get paid for any sale, and so do you. So this really is free advertising, because nothing is coming out of your pocket.

You should aim on creating four or five articles straight off that they can use, or even turn into a free course if you don't feel like writing one.

Endorsements

Endorsements are probably the best affiliate

resource you can give them. Nothing sells better than an endorsement coming straight from the affiliate themselves, so it should be written in the affiliates perspective.

These endorsements will most likely be used in ezines and email mail outs, so keep that in mind when your writing them. Four to five paragraphs long should be all it needs to be.

Of course, web site endorsements can be longer. These ironically enough will be pasted on web sites. They work really well for search engine ranking. A good idea is to design up graphics for these web site endorsements, like book covers and maybe even a spiffy html template. You can check examples of this by visiting a really good affiliate resource section run by Marlon sanders at <http://www.hitsncash.com>

Solo Ads

When ever I advertise with ezines it's usually solely with Solo Ads. These are ads that are sent out by themselves, unlike classified and other ads that go out in the ezine itself.

This ad will go out by itself, so it needs to be a fairly good length. While some people say shorter ads work better for the simple fact the reader has less to read, in reality, a very well written longer solo ad will pull much much better.

There are usually word and length limits to these ads so when you are creating them for your affiliates, it might be good to check around at what the normal length of a solo ad is in your industry. You might even check out the posting guidelines for other ezines so you can know exactly how long they like their solo ads.

The best bet to make a compelling solo ad is to work really hard on the headline. If you can write a very compelling headline for your ad, the rest of the ad should follow.

If you need some information on copywriting, try <http://www.Bizpromo.com/free>

Free Course

Not enough affiliate programs do this. Imagine as an affiliate, being able to give away a free 5 day autoresponder course via email to all your web site visitors promoting your favorite affiliate program.

Do you think that would boost sales? It sure would.

Creating your own free course for your affiliates isn't that hard. You can use the method of just sitting down and writing Five articles (you may already have 5 articles written) and putting them together in the form of a free course via autoresponder.

You can see an example of this at

[<http://www.masterinternetmarketing.com/earnmoney.html>](http://www.masterinternetmarketing.com/earnmoney.html)

The owner of this product allows the affiliate download a 6 part free autoresponder course and use it in your marketing efforts. It's all written for you, all you have to do is put in your affiliate url.

There's a saying that very few visitors buy on the first visit to a web site, so by capturing their email address with this free course, you can contact them over and over again for free.

Classified ads

These are small ads, usually four or five lines long that go out in the ezine itself. They don't work anywhere as well as solo ads, but they are cheap as chips. The secret here again is to write a very compelling headline.

You should also think about telling your affiliates to put their autoresponder link in the classified ad rather than trying to make a sale from such a small ad. They would be better served (and so will you) if they captured the email address of their prospects and sent them the free course.

Banners

While I don't recommend that you place too much time on banners, some affiliates with highly trafficked web sites like them and will produce for you, but in reality, banners very rarely make any good money for merchant or affiliate.

To get your banners created, there are plenty of tools online that you can use to create them on your own. Just put the term "banner maker" into [<http://www.google.com>](http://www.google.com).

What I do recommend is that you hire someone to do this for you, and I suggest you talk to Brian Terry at [<http://www.ebookwow.com>](http://www.ebookwow.com).

Graphics

You will also have to create a few different sized ebook covers for your affiliates to use on their web sites. I suggest you talk again to Max Rylski at www.maxcovers.com about this.

So where should your affiliate resource section be and what support should you give your exsisting affiliates?

Your affiliate resource section should be somewhere on your website. You could possibly set up a seperate website just for your affiliates. A good example of that would be Marlon Sanders [<http://www.hitsncash.com>](http://www.hitsncash.com).

Marlon Sanders is a bit of a marketing genius and he has over 10 products selling through one affiliate program.

I strongly urged you to have a look at what he offers his affiliates and how he does it, because he has one of the best affiliate programs on the Internet.

Another example I want to show you is Ken Evoy's affiliate help. He offers his affiliates just about any sort of help you can imagine and this builds a lot of loyalty. Just imagine this for a moment. If you see two affiliate programs offering pretty much the same product and the same commission rate, but one offers unlimited support and help to it's affiliates and the other just has a standard resource section, which one would you join?

Not a hard question is it.

What Ken Evoy does at <http://articles.sitesell.com/preselling/> is give his affiliates not only an affiliate ezine that is published every month or so with useful tips for promoting his affiliate program, but he also gives them an extremely detailed sales training document. It's hundreds of pages long and it's a really good beginners guide to affiliate programs.

His affiliate resource section is amazing too. You get free courses which you can brand

with your own affiliate links, and it's not even run from your own autoresponder, Ken takes care of that for you.

Ken is also easily available to his customers so that also helps his affiliates make more sales.

Joint Venturing For Profits

This is one of the biggest secrets on the Internet, that people literally pay thousands to learn, and most of the time they are learning from people who are using out dated methods.

In this chapter, I'm going to show you exactly how to get hundreds of large web sites and ezines to sell your products for nothing using your already built affiliate program.

Yes, I'm talking about joint venture marketing, but with a twist.

What you don't need in my method is a lot of money, and any supposed "joint venture finder" software that never really works. You do need to know however, how to write an email and do some Internet research.

So let's begin.

Finding Possible Joint Venture Partners For Your Products

What we are looking for is highly trafficked web sites in your target area. These people already have the customers you want, and if contacted correctly, they will give you access to them for free.

You of course are going to have to pay then a percentage per sale. The usual percentage offer to these people if you are selling a product that can be downloaded online and needs no shipping and production costs is 50 or 60% at least.

If you are selling physical products, which need production costs, shipping and even drop shipping fee's, the range is anywhere from 25 to 50%.

Hopefully, you already have a hot product to offer these people, otherwise you might as well quit now. If you are not product of your own product, how can you expect to sell it to other people?

So how can you find people who are willing to sell your products to their loyal customer base?

Good question and this is the fun part, research.

There is only one way now that I use to search for joint venture partners, and it never fails. Sure there are other methods, but why mess with whats working?

Ok let's start.

We are going to pretend that you have a site on bed and breakfasts, and you have a product (an ebook) about the best places in America

to take your little lady (or little man:) for a romantic weekend.

(Just a side note: Just because I'm using this as an example, doesn't mean you can't use the methods I'm going to show you on any topic or market. You could sell a product on "how to get rid of bird poo on your wind shield" and still use these methods!)

So where do you start to find web site and ezine owners on bed and breakfasts? Easy!

First we go to google.com. You probably all know google.com as the major (and dominant) search engine now days. That's right, it's no longer Yahoo.com.

We are going to put in the search term "bed and breakfasts" into google.com without the brackets. You can see the screen grab below of the results.

Now let's visit some of these sites and see what they are like and if they could possibly be joint venture partners. (Mind you, you won't be able to tell until we do one more thing in a minute.)

Here are the sites I visited.

[<http://www.BedandBreakfast.com>](http://www.BedandBreakfast.com)

[<http://www.Bbonline.com>](http://www.Bbonline.com)

[<http://www.Lanierbb.com>](http://www.Lanierbb.com)

[<http://www.Ibbp.com>](http://www.Ibbp.com)

Ok, these sites look good, and they have a high ranking in google.com so they probably get a lot of traffic, but we need to know for sure before we make them an offer.

Before I go any further. Always remember to have a good look around your joint venture partners site before you contact them so it doesn't sound like spam. You want to be fairly familiar with the site so you can comment on some of the aspects and what you liked about it. This will be explained in the next section about writing your joint venture letter.

Let's now go to <http://www.alexa.com>.

[Alexa.com http://www.Alexa.com](http://www.Alexa.com) ranks all the sites on the Internet with a number, from one to millions. One obviously would be the highest trafficked site on the Internet.

We are looking for partners who's rank is below 200,000.

Alexa.com is great. Not only do they show you how much traffic is coming to someone's site, they also show you web sites that their visitors went to after theirs and which sites link to their web sites.

Do you think this is invaluable information? Too right it is. With this, you can now see

who has linked to your joint venture partners site and other sites of interest (don't forget he's also your competitor, but play nice) and you can then contact those people, so your research is practically done for you.

Ok, back to <http://www.alexa.com> and we are going to see all the information about [BedandBreakfast.com](http://www.BedandBreakfast.com) possible.

Here are the results, which you can also see at

<http://www.alexa.com/data/details?url=bedandbreakfast.com>

These people look like great joint venture partners! You can do the same for the rest of the sites I mentioned above and see if you can find a partner joint venture partner, but these people look professional, they have a mailing list and they have lots of quality information, and most importantly, they have traffic, and loads of it!

How do you contact these people?

Do you know the best way to contact people these days? Especially for important issues like this?

PICK UP THE TELEPHONE AND HAVE A CONVERSATION.

That's right, the telephone is the quickest and easiest way to contact joint venture partners. Imagine getting a phone call from someone saying they just visited your site, or they've been fans for years and they just released a new product no one has seen, and they want to give you first dibs at promoting it?

Do you think you would be interested? Of course. Not only that, they offer to send you a review copy (no charge) to have a look at the product and see if you like it enough to promote to your loyal readers.

If you can't get the courage to do this, email can work OK.

Here is a sample email, and something you should strive to copy in your own way. This came from Jim Daniels Site at <http://www.bizweb2000.com>

>Hi Jim

>I have found your Bizweb gazette a great help over the >last ... well, I don't know how long it is actually!

>So I thought I'd add you into the banner ad rotation on our Web site. I publish a newsletter in the UK, and please feel free to take a look - if we can promote each other then all the better for both of us. >

> The address is <http://www.freepint.co.uk/> >

>By the way, if you have a look at the Advertisers page, >you'll see a link to the administration page for the >banner ads. Your password is "xxxxxx" and so you can >even review how many times your ad has been >displayed and how many times its been clicked >on - neat eh? >

>Please remember, you've only just gone into the >rotation so your viewings and click-thrus won't be very >high for a while. >

>All the best with your venture, and if you would like to >do some cross-promotion then please get in touch (for >instance, we sell advertising space in our email >newsletter also). If you want to subscribe free to our >newsletter then that would be great. >

>Kind regards,
>William Hann
>Editor, Free Pint
>w.hann@freepint.co.uk

You will of course, during your joint venture process, always get more no's than yes's to your joint venture deals, but you can beat the odds by using a mix of the following.

Firstly, send an email, with your joint venture request and see what interest you get.

Secondly, send a real letter to your possible joint venture partner. If that doesn't work, try....

Ringling them!

Reciprocal Linking

Reciprocal linking is one of the best ways to get traffic to any web site. While it tends to take a lot of work, for what at first seems little result, (a link back to your site) you will soon realise that, that little link not only brings in massive traffic from the site linking too you, but also shoots you up the search engine ranking path.

So you can see how one little (but strategic) link can make a big difference. Now imagine if you had 100 little links or 1000 little links on highly trafficked web sites all over the Internet? Imagine the traffic you would get from that, and the best part is, it's free!

Ok, so whats the process of reciprocal linking?

Basically, you want other people to link to your site, and in return, you have to link to them. Pretty simple. People have been using this method for years before Internet Marketers got a hold of it. It use to be only amateur web sites that use to ask each other for links, IE Britney Spears fan sites.

But, Internet Marketers saw the potential this has, and the way it effects search engine ranking and they took it by the scruff

of the neck and made it into a professional marketing tool. Some might say they complicated the whole process, and they would probably be right.

That might sound confusing to some people, so let me explain the whole process from the top. Here is the best explanation of reciprocal linking I can give you.

Imagine you have a web site on stock trading, and you were selling books on stock trading from your web site, but all your web site is, is a sales letter. No real information about stock trading, just information on your product or products.

You, however, being the smart person you are, don't want to pay for traffic, or setup an affiliate program (which you should do in the long run). You want people to link to your web site for free.

So what you do is the following.

A) You setup your web site with useful information about stock trading. Information that will help people. So it has to be quality, and it has to be free.

B) You contact other people in your industry and try and get them to link to you because you have the best free content on the subject, and you being the kind soul you are, will allow them to link to you and your

quality information from their web site, and in exchange, you will also link back to them.

Once this is done, you will have hundreds of highly trafficked web sites linking to yours, AND as an added bonus, search engines like google will start to see that lots of other sites link to yours, so it must have good information, and it will come and check out your site, and give it a higher ranking in the search engines.

So, basically, your swapping links with other web sites, but it's more advanced then that. YOU being the greedy traffic hoarder want good links on prominent sections of their web sites, not somewhere at the back of the site that no one will see.

So how do you go about doing this?

Read on!

How to setup your web site for reciprocal linking

I think the best way to explain to you how to setup your web site is to show you an example.

<http://www.bizpromo.com/free>

Look at how Terry Dean (the owner of the website) has placed all his free articles into a easy to use directory.

Do you think he has sites linking to him? You betcha.

Wanna see exactly how many sites link to Bizpromo.com? Easy. Here's the link, and once again, we owe all this to alexa.com!

<http://www.alexa.com/data/details?url=www.bizpromo.com>

721 links back to that site.

That's the direct link straight to the bizpromo.com site, or you can go to alexa.com and use the search function they have there.

Terry Dean has a stack of articles there that people can use themselves (yes thats right, he lets them put his articles on their sites, just as long as he get's his byline in promoting his products) or link straight to his web site.

So, how do you go about getting your site ready for links?

Firstly, you need to create some content. Why kind of content? Here's a run down.

You could create

Articles....

Free Courses Via Autoresponder.... (Highly Recommended)

Videos....

Free Ebooks....

Newsletter Archives.... (Example Site:
<http://www.associateprograms.com/search/newsletter.shtml>)

All these things will get people to link to your site. Offering quality information is the best way to succeed online. You will have to try 100 times harder to even give away useless information then to sell or give away good information.

There are two more things you have to make sure you do before you go contact potential link partners.

1) Make sure you have your content page linked off your main homepage

And....

2) Create A How To Link/Link Directory Page

The "How To Link" page will show people how to link to your web site, and more then not, you won't need to link back to these people's web sites.

Just one more thing. I know there is a lot of software claiming to be brilliant in the art of getting you more links, but the material is shoddy and the links you get from it are practically useless.

Why? Because the links you end up getting are usually in places no one even looks on the web site.

How to find reciprocal linking partners and contact them

Secrets of Reciprocal Linking Strategies

Whether you're new to the Internet or a seasoned online marketer, developing a plan to increase the number of reciprocal links back to your web site can help you bring more highly targeted traffic to your web site as well as improve your ranking in the search engines.

Link popularity is becoming an increasing important criteria for better search engine ranking. So the better your popularity, the better your ranking. You may be thinking that you'll lose traffic to your web site if you link to other web sites. Sure, that can and will happen, but you should gain as many or more NEW visitors that you not have otherwise visited your site.

Keep in mind that in addition to more visitors via linking that another big benefit here is a potential increase in your websites' Search Engine positioning. As an online business owner you realize that there are a variety of advertising and web promotion techniques you have available to you. Linking to other web sites is a well

know but little used tool that can produce significant traffic for your web site as long as it is done properly.

Understanding how to link to other sites is as important as any advertising you do. The time and energy you put into developing links to your business can pay off for weeks, months, even years to come!

****First Rule of Linking****

"Know Thy Self" or at least know what you want to accomplish on line, whether it's selling products or services of your own or as an affiliate, distributing or disseminating information on the Internet or even just having your own personal webpages.

Unfortunately what I see all of the time are people who end up jumping around from one program, or provider or affiliate program after the other without any focus on what exactly they want to accomplish, other than make money online, etc.

Now, not later, is the time to look into exactly what you want your web site focus to be. Decide what primary category(s) your web site will fit into and what secondary or peripheral sites will compliment it. Once you've decided your focus you'll be well on your way to using reciprocal linking strategies successfully.

****Second Rule of Linking****

"Know What Kind of Web sites Will Compliment Yours". There's been a lot written about how to choose web sites to link to. But I think the one thing that can often be overlooked is the fact that people all around the world have diverse interests and although they may be looking for specific information, etc on one day doesn't eliminate them from clicking on a link to a website that is totally different from what they wanted to look at yesterday. They may not be targeted to your web site but their interest brought them to you.

You would be surprised to find the information you may be searching for on a web site that compliments yours but does not directly compete with you. It happens all of the time. This is where your list of primary and secondary categories for your web site will help you decide who you want to contact to set a reciprocal link with.

****Third Rule of Linking****

"Know who is Linking to Your Web site". You can do this very easily by going online to www.linkpopularity.com
<<http://www.linkpopularity.com>> It's FREE. There's no strings attached and it's quick and easy.

Usually it doesn't take more than 2-3 minutes

to check your web site links. You may find that you have several links back to you that you didn't know about, some you like and maybe one or two you don't. The next thing you might want to do to help you narrow your focus is to view a comparison of your site's link popularity to your competitors and other popular web sites at

<http://64.232.113.195/publinkpop/>

****Enough With The Rules Already****

Before you go contacting webmasters, now would be a good time to set up your Main Links page on your web site. On this page you are going to describe how a webmaster can add their link to your Links Pages. You can call this Favorite Links, Personal Links or something similar.

Basically anything that lets visitors know you have a Quality links page available. Your Main Links Page should have several categories for visitors to choose from. Each category should link to a separate page on your site where the category links can be viewed. Remember to set each link so that it opens in a new window when a visitor clicks on it because you don't want them leaving your site altogether and forget where they started out from.

On this page you'll invite your visitors to apply for the privelege of linking to you. Why should they have to apply? Because you

want to screen their web site to be sure it doesn't directly compete with yours and that it also compliments yours in some way. You can see my links page at

http://www.cashway.com/main_links.htm .

You also want to indicate to your visitors that a reciprocal link back from their web site is a requirement for obtaining a link on this page. Those who are serious about reciprocal linking will understand and place a link on their page.

Why not just use a FFA web site and link to 1,000's or millions of webpages? FFA pages play a small role in your advertising but they shouldn't be included in a reciprocal linking strategy because people rarely see the FFA sites or their messages and the Search Engines don't recognize them in their criteria for determining link popularity. It's best to stay away from them as a way to develop reciprocal links for your web site.

****Contacting Webmasters ****

Again the best webmasters to contact are the ones whose web sites compliment yours in some way. How do you find the sites and contact the webmasters?

The simplest way is to go to one of the major search engines, enter in the terms that describes websites you want to link to and let the search engine bring up the lists for

you. You can get several hundred email address just by visiting these sites and contacting the webmaster.

It is always best to send a short email to the webmaster introducing yourself and stating the reason you're contacting them. You may want to give the information for them to add your link to their Link Page or simply start a dialog to see if there is a mutual interest in linking.

For best results I like to find web sites that compliment mine, then add them to an appropriate link page and then send the web site owner a personal email telling them I liked their site, have added it to my Quality Links page and ask if they would link back to my web site. I also like to explain to them of some of the benefits of Reciprocal Linking and even go as far as helping them set up their own page if they don't have a good quality links page. Some will link back to you and some won't. If they don't simply delete the link and move on to the next site.

Implementing a reciprocal linking strategy does take time and effort, but it is easily manageable. Combined with an overall web promotion strategy it can be a powerful way for you to develop relevant, targeted traffic to your web pages as well as help to increase your web sites overall position in the search engines.

For more information on promoting your web site and increasing your traffic visit this writers web site www.cashway.com
http://www.cashway.com/main_links.htm for
Free Resources, links and web promotion
techniques.

Building Your Opt-in List

There are so many ways to build your opt-in list, I've employed the help of an expert to explain some of the fundamentals. Read this article first, then I will explain a few more things in detail.

"How To Build your own Highly Targeted Opt-in List"

Follow-up and building good relationship with your targeted prospects is a key to success for every online business. Focusing on providing useful information that could really help your subscribers who are looking for answers to their problems, useful information which could help them in their business or even a "Step By Step Guide" and the "How To" solution on their targeted field. You can write a weekly or monthly ezine based on your targeted area that will provide useful and interesting weekly articles to share with your list of subscribers who are eagerly looking forward to hear from you every week.

Follow-up Autoresponder

What tools do I need that could help me to buildup a good follow-up system? Good

Question! Well, I personally use Autoresponse plus software to run my listbuildersuccess newsletter. The features include unlimited autoresponder messages, unlimited follow-up messages. You can track your links for using their link-tracking feature, which allow you to manage your link impression and clickthrough. Add any number and types of attachment to your follow- up messages. Personalize each message to your subscribers, which will include their first, last or full name and many more..

Click on the link below to find out more about this great follow-up and mailing list software:

[<http://www.autoresponseplus.com>](http://www.autoresponseplus.com)

If you find this software too costly for you, not to worry, you can get some free follow-up autoresponder available free on the net, which work very well too:

[<http://www.limitlessfollowup.com>](http://www.limitlessfollowup.com)

Now, first of all, you will need to know how to write good articles. I have some useful tips to help you write good articles. It is actually very easy to write a good article simply by reading other publisher's articles and learn from them.

You can review the great articles written by some great authors simply by subscribing to

our newsletter at:

[<http://www.listbuildersuccess.com >](http://www.listbuildersuccess.com)

Ezine Advertising

When you read most of the articles, most of them are telling you how to they use ezine advertising to promote their business. What's so good about ezine advertising? Well, you get great exposure of your article for free! When you submit your ezine articles to other ezine owners and when they review your article and find it good and relevant to their ezine or newsletter, they will just use it to publish on their next weekly issue.

Write Good Content Articles

When you prepare to write a good article, ask yourself, how do you want your article to help you promote your business? Simple, write a good content articles which you can use it on your web site to improve on your keyword density for search engine placement. Include your author's signature below for every of your written articles which include a short introduction of your web site and your subscribing information or the URL link to subscribe to your ezine or newsletter.

You can also offer free ebooks or softwares as a token of appreciation for subscribing to your list.

Exchange ads with other Newsletter

Another great and effective way of increasing your subscriber's base is to exchange ads with other newsletter when you have at least several hundreds of subscribers in your list. Both of you will benefit from getting good number of new subscribers.

Submit to Ezine Directories

There are thousands of free and paid Ezine Directories available on the net. Simply go to: [<http://www.google.com>](http://www.google.com)

Do a search for "Ezine Directories" and you will get a list of ezine directories where you can submit your article.

You can review the top 20 Ezine Directories at:

[<http://ezines.nettop20.com>](http://ezines.nettop20.com)

Those are the few ways of helping you to get started to build up your fresh new opt-in list from scratch. With the highly targeted opt-in list you have built up, follow-up with your list, build a good relationship with your subscribers and that will create a unlimited income from your list for life.

***Best of Success,
Jun Han***

"Discover the Highly Effective & Proven

Strategies"

***on building your own 100% highly targeted,
responsive***

***Opt-in List. To Discover the TOP Listmasters
Highly***

Effective & Proven Strategies!

Simply subscribe to our Newsletter at:

[<http://www.listbuildersuccess.com>](http://www.listbuildersuccess.com)

There are a few aspects Jun didn't touch on.

What happens if you want subscribers in a hurry, and I'm talking days not months and you are willing to pay for them?

If this is the situation you are in, read on.

Co registration is nothing new, but the amount of publicity it is still getting is immense. It seems most big time marketers are now setting up dozens of lists solely with brought subscribers.

So how does Co registration work exactly?

"Co-registration" is a new method of generating targeted leads for your ezine and involves placing a short ad for your ezine on other sites that reach the same target market you wish to reach. This short ad involves a checkbox that allows prospective readers to automatically subscribe to your newsletter.

Co-registration leads normally work in two

ways: you can barter for subscribers, or you can buy them. We are going to talk about buying subscribers.

The 2 main sources for co registration are, <http://www.worldwidelists.com> and <http://www.profitinfo.com/leadfactory/> Both run extremely good services, but I prefer <http://www.worldwidelists.com> overall. With these services, you can go from 0 subscribers to 30,000 in a matter of a few months, and the cost to you? Around \$5000! That's pretty good in my books.

The secret to making a success with this type of advertising is to have an intensive email marketing system setup. You want to give these people the best information you possibly can, and then sell to them once you've gained their trust.

As good and as cheap as this advertising is, it's not the most targeted out there and you really need to build a trust with your subscribers.

The following chapter is written by special guest author **Jeff Smith**:

Backend Marketing

If you already have your own product, and it's selling well, and you have thousands of leads and hundreds of customers, it's time to throw in some backend marketing.

This is where the real money is made online.

Why?

Because it's free advertising. You've already got the names and email addresses of your customers in your autoresponder, so all you have to do is send out an email.

Your customers should be treated like gold, because they've shown you that they trust you and are willing to buy from you.

You should also work your leads list. These are the people who may have signed up for some free information you were offering but didn't buy anything from you.

While some of these people will probably never buy anything from you, you should not discount your leads list.

So how can you optimize your opt-in lists?

Offer your lists everything they need to succeed online!

For example, if your product is about affiliate programs, your customers and leads are going to need webhosting, domain names, more information, seminars, video's, and the list goes on.

The way it should go is you start them off with a lower priced product and you work them all the way up to the big products.

For example, you already have 500 customers who brought a \$49 product from you (that already is \$24,500 in profits), so you then offer them a \$97 product and 300 previous customers buy that particular product. (That's another \$29,100 profit)

You then offer them a product for \$497 (it could be a video set, seminar ticket) and 100 of your previous customers buy that from you. (Add another \$49,700)

You then hit them hard again, (by the way, you are contacting these people by email) and you offer them a product for \$4997 and only 10 of your previous customers buy, but that doesn't matter, because 10 customers at \$4997 is \$50,000! (Add another \$49,700)

All up, your total sales would be \$153,000. All that money from just 500 customers! That means every customer you have is worth just

over \$300 to you! So you can see why your customer list should be treated like gold, because frankly, it can be worth a lot more.

So how can you do this?

Do It With Affiliate Programs

Imagine if you had to create all those products above! It would take you months if you didn't know what you were doing.

But, thankfully, other people probably have the products your customers want, and they are willing to share the profits with you, if you offer their product to your lists.

While making your own products all the way through is probably the best option in the long run, there is no reason why you can't join affiliate programs to start with.

Just make sure when you are promoting these products that they are of a high standard. Make sure you only recommend products you use and trust.

Do It With Reprint Rights

This is a very popular option, buying reprint rights to other people's hot products. The advantages to this are huge, but it also has some disadvantages.

For example, reprint rights can get

expensive, and if you don't know that your customers want the product, you could waste a lot of money. This has happened to many people.

What you should do before you buy any type of reprint rights to a product is do an online survey to your mailing lists.

It's very simple to do an online survey or poll if you will. You can get the software from <http://www.Oneminutepoll.com>. To see an example poll, have a look at Phil Wileys web site at <http://www.ezinetools.com>.

This way, you can ask exactly what your customers and leads want before you give it to them. There is no way you can lose with this scenario!

The advantages of reprint rights are numerous. I mean, if you already have your own customer and lead list, you are basically sure to win with this method, if you buy the right product.

So where can you find reprint rights to products for your market?

One way would be to contact people with exsisting products that you have purchased and enjoyed. You can work out a deal with the owner of the product to get reprint rights to their product to sell to your list for a very small price. I wouldn't spend over \$500 on

any reprint rights if I could get away with it.

[Ebay <http://www.ebay.com>](http://www.ebay.com) is another good way to find products. If you go to the businesses for sale:web site section, people are selling all sorts of businesses. You can get reprint rights to books, videos, membership sites, physical products, software, just about anything you can think of.

Do It With Your Own Products

Of course this is the best method, but it's also the most time consuming.

I won't get into product development here, for the simple fact, it could fill one hundred books, and there are products out there already which do a very good job at it.

Before I get into this section, if you are interested in creating your own products, here are four must have products to get you started.

1) Terry Deans

<http://www.Netbreakthroughs.com>
[<Netbreakthroughs.com>](http://www.Netbreakthroughs.com)

2) Bill Myers [<http://www.Bmyers.com>](http://www.Bmyers.com)

3) Marlon Sanders

<http://www.yourownproducts.com>
[<http://www.Yourownproducts.com>](http://www.Yourownproducts.com)

4) Marlon Sanders

[<http://www.gimmesecrets.com>](http://www.gimmesecrets.com)

I just joined the Bill Myers membership site, and it's amazing. For \$24.95 for three months, he shows me everything about product creating, and sample product ideas.

I'm now learning how to create dvd's for profit and I'm just about to release my first dvd product on selling on ebay.

What I'm going to do is license the video to people who want to sell it themselves. I'm selling 20 license copies at \$500 a pop, and that's it so I don't saturate the market. That's \$10,000 for a few days work and that's good business in my books.

Ebooks take a very very long time to write, so I recommend you start with audio products or videos. All you have to do is interview someone in your field on a topic your customers and leads will be interested in, create the audio cassettes and send them out.

This type of product will easily sell for \$97 or more!

Physical products have a much higher perceived value than ebooks and the like.

Four Free Advertising Techniques You Might Not Be Using

It's one of the biggest challenges to getting your business started.

Finding products to sell online that you enjoy working at and that attract an ongoing stream of "hungry" buyers is THE most important success factor to doing business - period!

For those of you that want to create their own infoproducts, it's even more important since you will be investing time, energy and your emotions into your products.

Thousands of subscribers to my "Online Marketing Success Secrets Revealed" (<http://www.infoproductcreator.com/ezine1.html>) Newsletter, experts and aspiring infoproduct creators struggle with the same 6 questions...

Do these questions keep you awake at night?

1. What do I like doing enough that I would spend a few weeks developing a product, and years marketing and supporting them?
2. How do I know if ENOUGH people will purchase my product to achieve my goals?
3. Will people pay for my knowledge - even if I'm not an expert?
4. How do I test for demand BEFORE I spend weeks or months developing my products?

5. Do I have to write a 150-page book to make money?

6. What topics sell - it seems like only "Making Money" type products are selling.

Listen - you are NOT the first to wonder about these questions.

In fact, your success depends on getting PAST these doubts - so let's take each one and work through them - OK?

1. DO I HAVE TO REALLY LOVE MY TOPIC?

Two answers to this question - you CAN develop a winning product about a subject that you are not completely passionate about.

Professional writers do it all the time.

Here's the catch.

A great deal of your success marketing infoproducts online will depend on MORE than just selling 1 product. It will depend on...

a) Your ability to market additional products - yours and others.

b) Your ability to create great publicity campaigns, partnerships, follow up sales campaigns, loyalty with your readers

c) Your ability to support and ADD-VALUE to your

prospective and
existing customers

d) Your ability to gain MOMENTUM in your business by tapping into your customer base and continuing to provide them high-value, back-end products Are you seeing it?

Yes, you can develop an article, book, booklet, eBook or whatever infoproduct you favor about a topic you are less than thrilled about - BUT...

You MUST be willing to live with that market for years to come!

For that reason alone, it's worth finding a market and subject that both interests you AND has great potential.

Here's a real-world example.

Just over 1.5 years ago I developed my own eBook aimed at empowering product developers with proven ways to tap into a flood of market demand, test their ideas and quickly generate products that sell like wildfire.

The original ebook - "The Ultimate Information Entrepreneur's Success Package" at:

[<http://www.infoproductcreator.com >](http://www.infoproductcreator.com)

took me 4 weeks to develop - start to finish.

Not bad.

It's because I knew my topic so well that I was able to produce a 110 page eBook and accompanying interviews within weeks.

Since that time I have written well over 60 articles, published a regular ezine, updated my product 3 times, written several special reports, created hard-hitting websites, press releases, ads and added hundreds of pages of content to my websites.

All of that is not including more than 40 interviews, reviews, publicity events and other projects I've been involved in -

ALL ON THE SAME TOPIC.

Add to that hundreds of hours of email and phone conversations with joint venture and affiliate partners who sell my product for me each and every week.

Now - all of this activity has put tens of thousands into my hands, from this one single book, not to mention other products I sell.

POINT IS: Marketing The Product YOU Create Will Mean Living With Your Product Each and Every Day As You BUILD Your Business. You Can

Make A Fortune, But It Takes Some Effort Each and Every Day.

You MUST Be Passionate Enough About Your Topic To Stay Motivated and Focused - That's the Secret To Building Your Own Infoproduct Empire Online.

2. HOW DO YOU ESTIMATE DEMAND FOR YOUR INFOPRODUCT IDEA

Now we're into the details that will skyrocket you into the top 5% of infoproduct developers online - that will set you aside from 95% of others who do NOT consider demand for their topic.

Just for sake of argument - I'm going to use an example of a hobby that some of you may have, model airplanes. You know, those little scale airplanes that get so many hobbyists out of bed at ungodly times of the morning - addicting to the smell of Naptha gas.

Here's a few ways you can can estimate demand for your proposed market...

a) Use online tools to seek out demand. The three best tools (and they are completely free) to use are:

- Overture keyword search tool:

<http://inventory.overture.com/d/searchinventory/suggestion/>

A search for model airplanes brings up some interesting information -

- Over 55,000 searches on this topic in less than 1-month

(Not Bad!)

- Second most searched topic RELATED to model airplanes is Model Airplane News - OK, so people want information.

- Several search categories include searches done on various products, evidence that this market is willing to spend money.

b) Now if you had a tool such as Adword Analyzer --

[<http://www.infoproductcreator.com/part/adanalyze>](http://www.infoproductcreator.com/part/adanalyze)

Then you would see that the supply of websites that come up when searching for model airplanes is quite small - relative to other keyword searches.

In addition, with this incredible tool, you would see that there are very few current Google Adwords or Overture.com campaigns being purchased. What's that mean?

It means that you can use one or both of these tools to generate almost INSTANT high-quality traffic to your site for a fraction

of what most other high-demand keywords would cost.

All good signs that point to a strong market demand for your hobby and area of product interest.

c) A third method you can use is to seek out what is already selling. A great way to do that is to look at <http://www.amazon.com> and <http://www.zdnet.com> top movers/top sellers in various market niches.

This will tell you ALLOT about what people are spending money on right now!

3. WHAT WILL PEOPLE PAY ME FOR?

Now that you have picked a niche market and an area of focus, you need to find out what people want BADLY within that niche.

Here are a few ways to find out...

a) Search google for "model airplane discussion forums". You are looking for active and reasonably good quality forums to TAP INTO ongoing discussions - this will offer you a goldmine of information on what people are looking for.

In a 5-minute search, here's what I found --
<http://www.indiarc.com/cgi-bin/yabb/YaBB.cgi>

<<http://www.rcorlando.com/modules.php?name=Forums>><<http://www.flightlines.com/cgi-bin/Ultimate.cgi?action=intro&BypassCookie=true>>

You will find TONS of active discussions that will lead to product ideas, allowing you to tap into what this market wants.

b) Get involved in Chat's - many of the sites above also run live chat sessions periodically, another great way to find out pockets of demand

c) Check offline - read RC Modeller magazines and books, find out consistent topics, gaps in information or ideas that you could expand into a different medium.

For example, a common topic is flying techniques or flight patterns.

Why not travel to your local model flying club and video tape both flight paths and techniques used by flyers, converting them into digital files and selling them on CD-ROM?

You get the idea.

d) Listen to your fellow model airplane buffs - find out what their frustrations are, what their spending patterns are and what else they are looking for, but can't find.

4. TESTING FOR DEMAND

Here are 3 quick methods of testing for demand - BEFORE you spend days, weeks or months on creating your infoproduct.

a) Surveys - using a free trial from <http://www.surveymonkey.com> you can find out whether your target market seems as passionate about your idea as you are. NOTE: Be sure to ask them IF and HOW MUCH they would be willing to cough up to get answers to their questions.

b) Special Report - Use this often overlooked technique to put together a few pages (from 5-20 pages) that you can either give away or sell for a low price to test the popularity of your idea.

You WILL need to market this report, so it will take some time BUT, it's a great way to setup your marketing channels ahead of time, preparing them for your full product which comes later.

The best resource I've come across on writing Income-Generating Special Reports is "The Special Report Bible" - you will be amazed at what you can put together in a matter of hours or days.

ANOTHER IDEA is to run an interview or teleseminar on your topic with a topic expert. Judge the popularity of the call can

mean you will roll out new products later.

An example of this strategy is Yanik Silver's recent Public Domain Riches teleseminar (<http://www.infoproductcreator.com/part/pdomain>) which turned out to be such a hit that he quickly put together a \$1,000+ personal coaching course on the same topic.

c) Articles - Write articles on your topic directly addressing the same desire you hope to fill with your full product. Submit your article to the various article directories on Yahoo and many others out there.

Request a courtesy notification from publishers who publish your article so that you get a feel for how popular the article proves to be. Of course, you should also have a link to either a website or autoresponder email address at the end of your article.

Clicks on your link following the article will also give you a sense of how popular the topic is.

What should you expect?

You don't need to have HUGE numbers, a few publications and approx a 1% clickthrough on any published articles tells you there is enough response to continue - or at least do additional testing.

5. eBooks AND WHAT ELSE?

If you haven't asked the question - WHAT ELSE and you are considering writing a typical book or eBook then you may be missing out on product opportunities that will both make you more money AND take far less time to create.

Here are just a few formats that many successful infoproduct developers use today...

- Audio files (telseminars, interviews, commentary)
- Special Reports (5-20 page treatments)
- Videos (It's easier than you think)

- Software (Software applications or scripts can be developed by starving professionals on Elance.com or Scriptlance.com for far less than you might imagine.

- Physical booklets or courses/binders
- Bundled products

6. THE INTERNET MARKETING MARKET FALLACY

It has to be the biggest un-truth floating around the internet.

Contrary to what most people say, developing products targeted only at the internet marketing crowd is NOT the only OR the most lucrative market out there.

It IS the most competitive - so that's why

you tend to see products everywhere, leading most people to believe those are the only products selling.

In fact, there are products selling in many niches including...

- health and wellness
- hobbies (models, crafts, collectors, music, sports, etc...)
- relationships
- parenting
- career and business
- business opportunities (ie. home business)
- technology
- pets
- and many, many others

Each week I continue to be AMAZED at the incredible opportunities out there in niche markets - our society is more information hungry than ever.

Don't make the common mistake of ignoring a market you are interested in because you don't THINK products will sell. Instead, test and find out what products will sell to a given market.

With those obstacles out of your way - NOTHING stands in the way of you creating that lifestyle you've always wanted by creating and marketing information products.

About the Author:

Jeff Smith is the author of the top-selling "Ultimate Information Entrepreneur's Success Package" helping thousands package their knowledge into profitable eBooks, special reports, ezines and audios. Visit his site here: <http://www.highertrustmarketing.com>

Using Your Free Traffic to Its Full Potential!

So you have thousands of people coming to your site, but you have no idea what to do with them? That's going to change now.

With these techniques, we will squeeze every cent out of your website it possibly can.

Backend marketing

Backend marketing is crucial to your success, whether or not you are selling a product of your own, or you're an affiliate for someone else.

There is no use going into business and selling a product for \$20 and thinking your going to get rich with out a back end product. That \$20 will probably be what it costs to turn a prospect into a customer, so if you break even from the start, and you have a backend marketing system, where you can offer your existing customers higher priced products, your on the winning track my friend.

So how can you do this?

Simple. If you are selling a product, create

another, or if you're lazy, affiliate with someone else.

You will obviously have your customers email addresses, so why not contact them from time to time offering them other products or services they might need. This works well because you already have their trust.

The idea of backend marketing is to work them from the \$20 product up to the \$5000 product. While a lot more people will buy the lower priced products (this will give you your customer base), you only need 2 or 3, \$5000 sales to make very good money.

Popup window

Collecting leads from your free traffic is a must. Some free traffic isn't as good as paid traffic, so you are going to need to get a lead system in place.

The pop up window is there to give you another chance at a sale and collect their email address so you can contact them at another time via email.

To do this you will need an autoresponder (check the resources chapter) and a pop up window script.

Upsell on order page

The biggest money-maker most people forget to

do is to add an upsell on their order page.

What do I mean by this? **Let me explain.**

When a customer is ready to order online, he clicks on a link to take him to the order page, but with this method, instead of going straight to the order page, he/she is taken to a page where they are offered an upgrade on their current purchase.

Here is an example of what I mean.

Go to <http://www.instantsalesletters.com> and click on the order link. Don't worry, you won't get charged anything.

Once you do that, you will see what I mean by the order upgrade. I guarantee you this works like a treat. If done properly, you can get 50% of your customers to be upgraded customers with virtually no effort, which means more profits for you.

The secret here is to make sure the upsell isn't too big. Nothing over \$20 extra is the norm.

Upsell on download page

This is like the last upsell, but it gives you yet another chance to sell them something else. The phase they are at now is that they just purchased your first product/s and they still have their credit card out, so why not

ask them to buy from you again?

I can't show you an example of this, but I'll do my best to explain it.

The customer has already put in his or her credit card details, and now they are at the "Thank You For Purchasing" page that comes after their credit card is billed.

Here is the perfect time to ask them to buy another complimentary product. For instance, if they just brought golf balls from your store, why not true and sell them a new putter? It works give it a try.

Traffic tracking

If your not tracking the amount of people coming to your website, then you are making one big mistake. How else can you convert leads to sales unless you know exactly how many people are visiting your site each day.

Lets say for example, for every 100 people to your site, you get 3 sales. That's not bad. A 3% conversion rate is very acceptable, especially if you are selling higher priced products and your cost per customer is low.

For example, if you are selling a product for \$47 and you make 3 sales, that's over \$130 for every 100 people to your site. Of course you have to take out advertising costs and others costs like shipping if you have a

tangible product.

But this means little if every visitor to your site costs \$2 to get. You would be losing \$70 per 100 people to your site and that's not good math's.

So the secret is to track your website and you can do that by using a free tracking tool from

[<http://www.xav.com/scripts/axs/index.html >](http://www.xav.com/scripts/axs/index.html)

If you break even on the first sale, most experts will say you've done well, especially if you have a really effective backend marketing system in place.

Endorsements

I don't care what you are selling, a well-written endorsement from a customer, or if you can, a recognized celebrity in your field will dramatically increase your sales rate.

Your sales letter might only be getting a 2% sales conversion, but with a host of endorsements or testimonials if you will, that will sky rocket up to 4% to 5%.

A good example of that would be [<http://www.masterinternetmarketing.com>](http://www.masterinternetmarketing.com). This site has amazing endorsements, and I know for a fact it's conversion rate went up 2% with the endorsements.

So how do you go about getting testimonials for your site?

Network! You really need to get out there and get people to know what you're selling. If you can, give people in your industry a review of you're product with out them asking or paying for it. If they like it, they will write you a nice testimonial, but if they don't like it, don't hassle them for one.

Following up your prospects

This is the key to success and it goes hand in hand with backend marketing. A lot of people who come to your site won't buy anything on their first visit, so it's vitally important you get their email address so you can contact them again at a later time.

These prospects will not all be potential customers. Some will be freebie seekers looking for a free lunch, but others will be interested in your offer, but they need a little nudge in the right direction.

What you should do is create a free 5-day course outlining what the benefits of owning your product are. Give them really great free information and they will flock to your order page.

Once they buy, move them into your customer list and start them into the backend

marketing cycle and try and get them to buy more from you.

This will enable you to turn your customers into true assets that buy from you over and over again.

LAST WORDS

I hope you understand the true importance of FREE advertising and everything that is talked about in this guide.

I understand that writing articles or setting up a free course is not as easy as simply buying a bunch of traffic to send to your website, but it can be a lot more effective and profitable!

And besides, once you start to try and explore all the ways to get free advertising and traffic outlined in this guide...you will quickly get the hang of these great and proven methods for driving Free traffic to your websites.

Now, the last thing I want to say is this:

It will take some work to start pumping your website full of as much traffic as it could possibly handle...but it will all be worth it in the end! And even though it will take some work, it will still be relatively easy!

The methods and techniques outlined in this guide are the same methods used by some of the biggest names in marketing to generate overwhelming floods of traffic to their websites and generate hundreds of thousands of dollars in sales...so rest assured, these methods really work!

So get started! There are millions of people out there that are willing to pay for your products and services, all you have to do is let them know you exist!

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Introduction

Welcome to Adwords Elite

Ever wonder what separates the people who make millions on the Internet from people who just struggle along to make relatively little money or fail entirely?

And did you ever wish you could join the group that makes millions?

Then read Adwords Elite, a special presentation created by The Elite Internet Marketing Group.

We've pooled our money-making knowledge to create this groundbreaking book.

By reading it, you'll learn the combined secrets of people who make thousands, even tens of thousands a day online. And you'll learn how to apply our secrets so you have the best chance of becoming a member of this elite group.

You'll not only be able to build wealth; you'll be able to do it right in the comfort of your own home – or anywhere else in the world where you can access the Internet.

What's our secret? We know how to maximize the money-making power of Adwords – the driving force of Internet search marketing on Google.

Even if you're a beginner, you can succeed with the knowledge we will share with you. There's a sound reason. You'll be able to maximize the monetization of Adwords. Others benefit from only a fraction of their power.

Of course, the level of success you achieve will be related to how much you put into learning Adwords and into online marketing.

We can guarantee that you'll have the knowledge to create online advertising that can make millions. The rest is up to you!

We wrote this book to share with you the expert knowledge we've gained over many years of creating advertising with Adwords and using it to succeed in Internet search marketing.

We're going to share everything we know with you.

We don't think you can find a more effective book on Internet marketing. You've chosen wisely. So let's get started.

Chapter 1

The Concept Of Affiliate Marketing

With Affiliate Marketing, you can make money even if you don't make a product.

How? Affiliate Marketing is a concept based on advertising products online that are made by the thousands of companies you can affiliate with, including many of America's leading corporations. That's right. You can market products made by many of America's finest companies, because they've enrolled in the affiliate programs that you can enroll in.

You'll be able to choose the companies you want to work with and the products or services you want to advertise.

Now, here's the best part: these companies will pay you a commission every time a click from your advertising results in a sale – commissions that range from 10% all the way up to 75%!

Your office is the internet, opportunities are everywhere, and the amount of money you can make is essentially unlimited.

The Merchant And The Affiliate

While you can make your own product and use Adwords to promote it, most Internet search marketing is made up of two entities – the merchant, who provides the product or service that is being marketed, and the affiliate, who promotes the product or service on a pay-per-click basis.

The relationship between them has proved to be so mutually profitable that it has attracted thousands of merchants and tens of thousands of affiliates.

You can become an affiliate as easy as applying to one of the numerous affiliate programs. There are no contracts. The relationship is based on your ability to generate clicks through the advertising you create and their agreement to pay for every sale that results from those clicks.

Imagine! If you had a staff job, you'd be working for only one company and having only one source of income. As an affiliate, you can work for many different companies at the same time and have income streams from all of those you succeed for. Needless to say, when you're successful at affiliate marketing, you're more secure, because no one company or boss can ever fire you.

Since affiliates greatly multiply a company's ability to advertise on the Internet, the merchants are delighted to have you working for them – and to pay you for the success you bring them.

The truth is, many companies you can choose simply do not have the skills to be successful Internet search marketers, and so they rely on their affiliates to generate a lot of their business.

Affiliate marketing proves its money-making potential every day – and you can be part of it.

Understanding Pay-Per-Click Advertising Or PPC

When you enter a search term in Google and arrive at the results pages, you've probably noticed the little ads along the right side, top, and bottom of the pages. These are known as Sponsored Search Results.

Advertisers place them there to make products or services stand out from the long list of similar products or services that show up as page after page of free search results, which are often called natural or organic results.

How do the ads get there? Google places them for advertisers who have signed up to pay Google on a cost-per-click basis. Each time the ad shows up, Google counts it as an impression, which is free to the advertiser. But each time someone clicks on an ad, the advertiser pays Google a cost per click. The more those clicks result in sales, the more the advertiser makes.

How much does Google charge every time a person doing a search clicks on an ad? It varies according to the price per click Google has assessed for the search term or "keyword" that has placed the ad in front of the person who clicks on it.

How are the prices of keywords determined? Google has devised formulas to arrive at the charge for various keywords. The cost varies according to what Google calls the quality score of the word, as well as the overall quality score of the advertiser, which is based on the advertiser's history. The higher the quality score, the lower the price.

What determines quality? In a word, relevance. Yet it is relevance understood in a very precise way. One of the invaluable things you will learn in Adwords Elite is how to improve the quality of your keywords, so you can lower the cost per click and make a higher profit on the sales you generate.

How do you participate? First, you register with Google Adwords. Then you'll create advertisements that appear in Google and other search engine results.

If you want, and we recommend you do in time, you'll also sign on with Yahoo Search Marketing, which works in a very similar way and gives you a second income stream.

At some point you may also include MSN Search, which is making an effort to get up to speed.

Reach People When They're Ready To Buy

Google and Yahoo Search allow you to create ads that reach people when they're actually looking for information about the product or service you're advertising. So they're predisposed to make a purchase.

The Google Network reaches over 80% of people who use the Internet.

Chapter 2

Sign Up For Your Adwords Account

The first thing you must do to become an elite Adwords marketer is sign up for a Google Adwords account. Go there now and follow the prompts.

When Google asks you to "Target customers by location," select "Countries and territories." When you're asked to "Target customers by country or territory," select "All countries and territories."

Now, you'll be prompted to create your first Google advertisement.

It's easy to create a Google ad. We'll show you how.

What should you advertise? The time will come for you to select the companies you want to affiliate with, and we'll tell you where to find them.

For now, you'll create a prototype ad. You'll learn a lot, and you can delete it when you've finished the sign-up process.

Just enter whatever product and other information you happen to think of.

Next, Google will ask you to enter some keywords. At this point, enter whatever you like, even the title of this book, *Adwords Elite*.

Basic Guideline For Choosing Keywords

Think of what search terms people will enter to arrive at a page where your ad might appear.

Enter a number of words that best represent the product or service you've decided to put in your prototype. The more keywords you choose, the more Google can show your ad. But they must be "quality" keywords to help you control the cost per click and maximize your profits.

You can also enter as many keyword phrases as you want to.

When you're asked to choose a currency, you should, of course, choose the one with which you wish to pay Google for your advertising. Just select the currency that you use most often.

When asked "What is the maximum you would like to spend, on average, per day?" simply enter \$1.00 or the equivalent in your chosen currency.

When Google asks "What is the maximum you are willing to pay each time someone clicks on your ad," enter \$0.01 or the minimum bid that Google lets you enter.

Once you create your ad, Google will ask if you want to review it. You'll also be asked whether you want to receive information from Google and to indicate where you heard about Google Adwords. Now, click "continue."

Next, choose a login. If you already have an account with Google, you can use it to start your Adwords account. If you don't, sign up for one by choosing "Create a new Google Account."

Enter your email address and password. Then click "continue." Now, you'll be directed to a page where you'll confirm your email and address. You'll also find the information you need to sign into your account.

Congratulations! You've taken the first step to being a successful search marketer.

Chapter 3

It's Time To Affiliate

Now, you're ready to join an Affiliate Program. The basic principle behind all of the programs is identical. When you join one, you'll be able to drive traffic to the merchant and be paid a commission on each sale your ads produce.

There are a number of programs. Two of the bigger ones are Commission Junction.com and

Clickbank.com. Since product offerings and commission structures vary, you'll do well to compare different ones.

Some of the programs have a thousand or more merchants. So you certainly don't have to surf the Internet to find products and services you can advertise.

All the programs are designed to facilitate online marketing efforts by merchants and affiliates, including commission payments to affiliates.

Affiliate Networks: The Approval Process

How do you become a member of an affiliate program? Actually, most of them will approve your application automatically. If you have a Website on which you hope to place your ads, some affiliate programs will review it before approving your application. If you were already affiliated with another program or your site doesn't meet their traffic requirements in terms of volume, you may not be approved.

If you don't have a Website and don't want to start one, you can still join certain affiliate programs. One is Clickbank.com. It's also the largest program.

The Three Major Affiliate Networks

Currently, the three major affiliate networks are Commission Junction, Clickbank, and Link Share.

Look them over, pick one, and sign up. Then you'll be able to apply to any of the hundreds and even thousands of companies that do affiliate, click-based advertising through the program.

The Affiliate Programs Will Handle Your Commissions

One of the convenient things about the affiliate networks is that all financial transactions occur through them, instead of through the many companies you may be promoting. So the network keeps track of the clicks and sales you generate and the commissions you earn. Then, usually on a monthly basis, your earnings are wired to your bank account or a check is mailed to you.

Avoid Pay-Per-Lead Programs, At Least For Now

There is one kind of affiliate program you should avoid, especially when you're beginning. These are pay-per-lead programs. They only pay a few dollars per lead, so it's hard to make money with them if you're driving traffic using Adwords. On the other hand, if you have a Website or sites with a lot of traffic, you might find pay-per-lead programs profitable, since your cost per lead is essentially zero.

How To Pick Products To Advertise

There are basically two types of products in terms of advertising

Some products pay a lot per sale but most affiliates who advertise them won't make a large volume of sales. An easy-to-understand example is a mortgage company. Of course, when you do make a sale, you can pocket a large commission. This kind of product represents one end of the scale.

The other extreme is a product that sells in volume but pays a small commission; for instance, a ticket service, where customers can purchase tickets to concerts and sports events.

Your goal is to pick products that are in or close to the golden mean between the two extremes. Among them are many products that pay a hundred to two hundred dollars for each conversion and that convert with inviting frequency.

Here are some categories you'll find them in:

Diet Programs & Nutritionals
Dental And Medical Plans
Gambling
Insurance
Jewelry
Loans
Software, Especially For E-Commerce
Tech Products
Voice Over IP
TV Satellite Companies
Web Hosting Services

Chapter 4

How To Select Elite Keywords

Let's be direct and define elite keywords as ones that make a lot of money.

Google and Yahoo have keyword tools that can help you find the most relevant ones, select them, and work with them.

Both of these search networks will suggest keywords that are relevant to the product or service you're trying to advertise. In fact, the tools suggest so many keywords an early task is to select the most profitable ones.

While there are also independently authored keyword software programs that can be helpful, you won't need them. Just learn what we'll show you.

Once you've found all the keywords and phrases that could be relevant, how do you isolate the ones that will convert to the most sales?

Initial Elite Keyword Tactics

First, ask yourself the obvious: what search terms are online shoppers most likely to enter when they're interested in the product or service you're advertising? Second, include a call to action that tells shoppers what you want them to do. Some examples are "purchase," "buy," and "enroll." Why do this? Imagine people who want to buy insurance. They might enter "buy insurance." Since your ad includes that keyword literally, it will be more likely to show up in the search results.

You also have the pleasure of knowing that, if they enter "buy," they're really ready to purchase. You don't have to convince them. You just have to get the right ad in front of them. Another smart but simple tactic is to include the word "compare." Why? A lot of consumers want to compare, so they may enter "compare insurance policies." Or they may be attracted to your ad because it offers the opportunity to compare.

So it's smart to include these words among the keywords of every ad campaign. Put one or more right in your ad and combine it with other keywords you've selected.

It's also an obvious but often overlooked tactic to include the name of the product in your keywords. If the brand is well known, enter it, since many people will search for it. If the company that makes it is well known, include the company name, knowing some people will enter it in their search.

Another overlooked tactic is to think if there are obvious spelling errors people might make. For

instance, take the word insurance. Some people might type in “insurence.” Since few marketers have ever selected such a keyword, it will usually have a cost per click price that is low, and when people enter the misspelling, there won’t be a lot of other ads out there that are as exact a match as yours.

You’ll also want to manipulate the order of your keyword combinations; for example, you can reverse the order of them. Take “life insurance.” You should also use “insurance life.” Many people enter the category name before they enter the specific product they’re looking for in the category.

Let’s say you’re selling insurance. Here is a basic list of keywords you might choose.

Home insurance
Car insurance
Life insurance
Medical insurance
Dental insurance
Insurance home
Insurance car
Insurance life
Insurance medical
Insurance dental
Buy insurance
Purchase insurance
Compare insurance
Insurance plans
Insurance policy
Insurance policies
Plans insurance
Policy insurance
Policies insurance
Aetna Insurance
Chubb Insurance
Hom insurance
Lif insurance
Etna insurance
Chub insurance

Use The Keyword In The Title And Copy Of Your Ad

When Google crawls the Internet, looking for matches, their programs and robots are exact. There’s no subjectivity. To appear in the maximum number of searches, you want to be very exact in your advertising. One way to make sure your ads are Internet savvy is to use the keyword you think is the most likely search term right in your headline and/or copy, preferably in both.

For example, let’s take an ad for life insurance.

The title or first line of the ad might be: Buy life insurance. The copy line might read: Compare life insurance rates.

Notice how exactly we’ve attempted to hit the “bot” on the head. Of course, you’ll also want to include both the singular and plural forms of your most important keywords, simply because some people will search for one or the other.

Yes, if you’re using a keyword without special markers to delineate exactly how it is to function (more about these markers later), Google and Yahoo may show you ad when somebody enters a plural

keyword, such as “insurance policies,” even though you’ve only included the keyword “insurance policy.” But your ad is much more likely to show up if you’ve included the plural keyword.

Google and Yahoo determine if they will show your ad if you only enter the singular or plural keyword by taking into account the history of your account in terms of performance, particularly CTR or the Click Through Ratio. But it’s in your best interest to do everything you can to control the choice.

Where to Get Free Help With Keywords

You can get free help with choosing and maximizing keywords from a variety of sources. Some of the most widely used keyword tools are:

Google Keywords
Google Sandbox
Overture Keyword Tool
Word Tracker

You will also find live tutorials on Google, and we suggest you make the most of them. They’re a treasure of knowledge, presented by the creators of Adwords.

For instance, here’s just the advice that occurs when it’s time for you to improve the quality of a keyword or raise your bid:

Improve your keyword's quality

Increase your keyword's maximum CPC

This process is called *optimization*, and there are several ways to accomplish it:

- [Edit your keywords](#) by using the Keyword Tool to find keyword variations or change your match type.
- [Edit your ad text](#) to mention your keyword or include a call-to-action phrase (like register, find or join).
- [Learn more about optimization](#)

Improving the quality of your keywords is the best way to maintain a relevant, cost-effective campaign. It may take longer for your keywords to be tested and re-activated, but you'll receive the greatest return on your investment in the long term.

If you want to re-activate a keyword for search immediately, increase its maximum bid.

Chapter 5

What exactly is a Google Campaign

A Google campaign may consist of ads for a single product or for a variety of products. Most importantly, each ad will be built around tightly related keywords and ad copy that highlight various selling points. Shotgun approaches in terms of keywords have a low quality score and so the cost per click is high. Each ad should be as focused as a silver bullet.

How to Create A New Campaign

Let’s assume that by now you’ve set up your Google Adwords account and joined an Affiliate Network (or that you have another way to get a product or service to promote). Now you’re ready to create your first Adwords campaign.

If you haven’t done so already, delete your prototype campaign. You want to get a fresh start.

While it is actually quite easy to create an Adwords campaign, it takes real know-how to create one that will achieve results that make a significant profit. Here are some suggestions.

- *Name your campaign in a way that's easy to recognize*

This will help you keep tabs on it as your campaigns multiply. We suggest you include the name of the product or service. If you have a Website you're promoting, you can include its URL.

2. Uncheck the Content Network

Google offers three places where your ad can show up: Google Search, Google Search Network, and the Content Network. The one you definitely don't want to be on, especially when you're learning and funds may be scarce, is the Content Network. Why? The traffic comes from Google AdSense, which displays ads on many smaller Websites that often produce low-quality, poorly targeted traffic. So your ad will get a lot of clicks, but they won't convert to many sales. There is also far more click fraud on the Content Network.

Google Search offers the highest quality traffic. The Google Network also offers excellent traffic. It's made up of Google's key affiliates, such as AOL and Ask Jeeves.

- *Set Your Daily Budget*

When you set your daily budget, you tell Google how much you're willing to spend on clicks per day. You can set it for \$5, \$10, \$25, or far more. The higher you set it, the more Google or Yahoo can show your ads. Once your budget is clicked away, the search engines will stop displaying your ad in searches.

We recommend starting every campaign with a small budget. Then increase it after you get an idea of how the campaign is converting and have some time to refine it.

Traffic Tip

When you use the Traffic Estimator on Google, which we'll cover later, it will provide a recommended daily budget. You'll get the maximum traffic if you set your budget way above the amount Google recommends, even ten times the amount. Yahoo allows you to spend without putting any limit, if you choose. These choices will mean that your ads will be shown all the time and that they'll achieve the most hits possible. Obviously, this is an especially attractive option if you're dealing with a campaign that you know is profitable.

At a minimum, you should set your budget at the level Google or Yahoo recommends. But the ideal is not always attainable, particularly when you're just beginning to be a search marketer.

For now just set your budget at a level you feel comfortable with. If it's significantly less than the recommended amount, at least, you're getting started. You can keep track of it for a few days to get a feeling for how fast or slow it gets clicked away and what your return on investment looks like.

Create Your Ad Groups

Each campaign is made up of extremely targeted ads that form an ad group.

Each ad in a group will contain only a small number of sharply focused keywords, used in a variety of specific ways. You can use as few as one, two or three keywords per ad or as many as twenty or twenty five.

In fact, limiting an ad to just one keyword is an excellent way to compare the effectiveness of different keywords; later, you can try combining their traffic-building power.

When you create the copy for each ad, your goal is to make it tightly relevant to the keyword or keywords that you've selected for the ad.

This sharp focus is a secret many marketers are unaware of. Instead, they just enter all the keywords they can think of, believing that more of them means more exposure and traffic. The problem is, Google's click charges are based on the quality of the keywords. If you have too many keywords, many of them are bound to be low in quality, because they're less relevant. So your cost per click will be higher, and your ads will show up in less targeted searches. The unfortunate result is you will have a much harder time making money.

Some Internet marketers may pick a lot of keywords right at the start of a campaign to see which ones generate the most traffic. But they quickly rework the winners into tightly focused ads. You can, however, achieve much the same result and spend nothing by using Google's Traffic Estimator for different keywords.

When you make the keywords exceptionally relevant to your ads, that is, when the keywords and the copy of each ad in your ad group form a tight combination, you'll show up in more relevant searches, pay less per click, and have a much higher CTR, higher sales, and a much better ROI.

(Click Through Ratio (CTR) is the relationship between how many times your ad appears in a search and how many times a searcher clicks on it. A 10% CTR indicates that ten out of every hundred times your ad appears in a search it is clicked on.)

The Common Keyword Technique

A quality ad is one that is highly focused around the product and the keywords that apply to it. The creation of quality ads is the cornerstone of Elite Internet marketing.

The basic technique for creating ads and Ad Groups with high quality ratings is to select your keywords for each ad using what is known as the Common Keyword Technique, which basically means that all the keywords or keyword combinations and phrases in each ad should have at least one common word or word combination in them and that keyword or keyword combination is the one you will highlight in the copy of the ad.

The Common Keyword Technique significantly increases the quality score, because it makes the ad extremely relevant to what the online shopper is looking for.

What will people search for to find your ad? When people search Google for these words, your ad will show up. Pick several words or phrases that relate to the product you're advertising. The more keywords you have, the more often we can show your product.

To illustrate the Common Keyword Technique, let's imagine we're creating an ad for something called "The Hollywood Diet." The common keyword combination is "Hollywood Diet." Each keyword phrase we create would contain these two keywords.

If we did so, the ad group would very likely achieve a high CTR. So it would have a high quality score, with a lower cost per click.

Ads with a high quality score also appear in higher positions in the search results. In fact, if your ad achieves a quality score that is high enough, it could appear in the first position in the sponsored search results, even though you could be paying less per click than other ads in the same search results.

That's good news, because you'll get more traffic for less – and quality traffic, because you've honed your ad to appear in searches where people are interested in the product or service you're advertising. So your profits will be higher.

How Many Keywords Should You Have Per AdGroup?

We recommend limiting the total number of keywords in an Ad Group to under 25. But remember you'll be working with them in a variety of ways, so the actual number in the group will increase.

Here are the basic steps to creating an ad, using the Common Keyword Technique.

Let's use our Hollywood Diet.

We can select our 25 or so keywords, or we may choose to select far fewer. Then we will begin to arrange them so we can create individual, highly focused ads with just a few keywords from the group for each ad.

Here are the keywords around which one of the ads might be built, using the common keyword technique.

Hollywood Diet

New Hollywood Diet

Hollywood Diet works

Lose weight with Hollywood Diet

Hollywood Diet Of The Stars

Obviously, the common keyword phrase is "Hollywood Diet." Now, it's time to use it in the ad that goes with these keywords. We will use the common keyword in both the title and the copy:

Title: New Hollywood Diet

Stars Lose Weight With Hollywood Diet.

If a user has heard about the Hollywood Diet and enters the search term "Hollywood Diet," you can see how relevant the ad is to the search. It will very likely be displayed, because the common word the ad is built around is exactly what the person is searching for. And, when the keyword or words that resulted in the ad being displayed in the search are in the copy of the ad, Google puts them in bold type. The bold type helps attract attention and results in a higher CTR.

When you know how to create ads with a high quality score, you're well on your way to becoming an elite Internet marketer.

Chapter 6

Writing Elite Ad Copy

There's a huge difference between just writing ad copy and writing ad copy that that sells. Here are the techniques that will help you write copy that achieves results.

Writing The Title

The title or first line is the most important part of the ad. State the name of the product or service that you're selling. This will flag your audience. Include the keyword the ad is built around.

Writing The Support Line Or Lines

The first line of the copy should state the principal benefit of the product or service you're selling. What does the key product attribute, or feature, mean to the purchaser? Your goal is to state the most compelling reason to buy the product or service, in the most compelling way – and then make sure it shows up in the most compelling places. Remember, an ad isn't about the "steak," which is the meal; it's about the "sizzle," which is the taste. Don't just state an attribute. Transform it into a compelling consumer benefit.

Strive to make an ad say the best thing about the product or service, in the best way, in the best places.

By following these simple rules, you'll be able to create ads that sell. Here are some additional techniques.

Psychological Moment

Think about the psychology of the people who are looking at your ad. What are they thinking at that moment? Make sure your ad is addressed to shoppers in a way that connects with the psychological moment you think they're at in regard to the product or service. Why did they do the search? What are they looking for? Is it the kind of product or service that requires some assurance about quality or reliability?

Always Include A Call to Action

How often have you seen an ad that says "Buy it now!" "Purchase it today – and save!" "Sign up now!" "Learn Microsoft Excel!" These are all calls to action. No piece of direct-response, or DR, advertising should be created without a call to action. And DR advertising is what you're creating. They tell the reader exactly what you want him or her to do. Notice that every one of the calls to action begins with a verb and most end with a word that states the need for an immediate response, which is the time-fuse.

[This phrase lets the visitor know that when they visit your site they will be required to sign up. These kinds of phrases prepare your visitors for what is offered on your website. In this example, the visitor will be aware that an action ("Sign Up") is required to "Get Started Today."]

Make Your Ad Dramatic

You want your ad to stand out and achieve an effect. If it doesn't capture attention, what does it matter what you're selling? So you must make it dramatic. That doesn't mean you have to be a dramatist. It means you have to highlight and concentrate the news that presents exactly what the person is looking for in terms of the principal benefit.

By making your ad dramatic, you'll make it stand out as the most logical choice on the page.

Here is an example of a dramatic ad.

Who needs medical insurance?

You do. Find affordable medical insurance today!

A dramatic ad will drive more traffic and lead to more sales.

If you're driving traffic to your own Website, you should make sure there's an immediate connection with the ad on the home page. The most exact connection is to repeat the major benefit and follow it with the call to action that's in the ad.

For instance, if the ad says "Find affordable medical insurance today!" the same message should ideally be repeated on the home page, so shoppers just have to click on it to continue with the search that brought them to the site.

Address The Obstacles To Success

Consider what shoppers might think of that would prevent them from buying and address them. Do they need quality reassurance? A price comparison?

Select Your Audience

Content often selects your audience. But you don't want people who are just searching for information to click on the ad. You want people who are ready to buy.

One way to select the buyers from the non-buyers is to include the price in the ad. The higher the price, the more important it is to include it, because the price will select the people who are willing to pay it and exclude those who aren't. Of course, if you're offering a great price break, you'll want to include it. The important thing is, when price plays an important role, you should give searchers an idea of

what they'll have to spend before they click.

Let's take our insurance ad as an example.

Who needs medical insurance?

You do. Find medical insurance: only \$199 per month!

You don't have to use all these techniques in all of your ads. You'll want to include different ones in different ads. Then monitor them for results and go with the ad or ads that produce the highest CTR and the most sales.

Chapter 7

More About Quality Score

To a great extent, your success as an elite Internet marketer depends on the Quality score your ads are able to achieve. So we'll go into more detail.

As you know from our earlier discussion, the quality score is the way Google ranks every ad. The score determines the position of the ad in the search results and the minimum bid price of the keywords you want to use, which, of course, determines your CPC or cost per click.

Yahoo Search lets you look right at what other people are bidding for different keywords and positions, so you can see how much you have to bid to achieve a certain position. Of course, you'd prefer to be first, but that can get expensive in terms of cost per click and you'll attract a lot of curiosity seekers who have no intention of buying. It's usually good enough to place your bid so that you'll show up in the top three or five ads or at least among the ten that are on the first page of the search results.

The Google Quality score system is different. By knowing how to work with it, as well as the Google Traffic Estimator, you can achieve better positions for less, so you can make more money while spending less – and that means a higher return on investment. By offering quality score, Google has become the highest quality paid search network. How does Google determine quality score? There are five variables: CTR, Ad Content, Ad Grouping, Ad History, and the content of the Landing Page (more about landing pages later.)

1. CTR or Click Through Ratio

CTR is, as we stated earlier, the percentage of clicks that your ad elicits in relation to the number of search impressions it receives. So the CTR is an accurate measurement of how persuasive your ad is to its target audience.

How can you increase the CTR?

When you experience a CTR of 1 % or less, it's pretty easy to increase it to 5% or more just by utilizing the Common Keyword Technique. Also, experiment with the other techniques we've already covered.

2. Ad Content And Quality Score

Your ad content can influence its quality score. The most reliable way is just to make sure the keywords for the ad are repeated in the ad copy. We demonstrated how to achieve that before. Here's another example.

If you're doing the Hollywood Diet, your keywords will certainly include "Hollywood Diet," "lose weight," "lose weight fast," and "lose weight like Hollywood stars." So when you create an ad, you could do one that says:

Title: New Hollywood Diet
Lose Weight Like Hollywood Stars
Sign up to lose weight fast

3. Ad Grouping

By creating ad groups, you can build each ad in the group very tightly around selected keywords. It's a good idea to limit the Ad Group to about twenty or twenty-five keywords. We've seen Google itself create Ad Groups with as few as five or ten keywords. Google also offers four different forms in which each keyword can appear. We'll explain those later.

The important thing to remember is, the more relevant the keywords you choose are to your product or service, the higher your quality score for the keywords and your ads will be. When your keywords are too numerous, many of them are bound to be too general, so they will reduce the quality score and increase the CPC.

4. Ad History

Once your ad or ads start to run, they develop a history. Google monitors this evolving history. If your ads perform well, Google will forecast that they will continue to do well and that will help the Quality score. If they do poorly, Google will assume they or any other new ad or ad groups you create, along with any new keywords you select, will continue to perform poorly and that will decrease the quality score.

You can take advantage of a successful history or work to remedy an unsuccessful one.

If you see an ad that is performing well, look carefully at the copy and the keywords. See if you can manipulate them to create targeted ads that will show up in other searches. You can either drop or revise ads that perform poorly.

Of course, the best way to get a good ad history is to set up ads that will get a high quality score from the start. Then Google will provide you with improved positions and CPC's.

5. Landing Page Content

Quality score is partially influenced by the relevance of the landing page of a Website to the content of the ad that sent the Web shopper to the site.

Google's robots crawl Web pages constantly to determine the content. So you want the "bots" to find content that's extremely relevant to the content of your ad groups.

If it's not, the content will obviously lower the quality score. The robots will also be able to determine if you're attempting to hide the landing page content with various techniques, such as redirects and cloaking.

It's much easier – and much more potentially profitable – to make sure the landing page content correlates with the content of your Ad Groups.

Chapter 8

Effective Bidding: Effects on Ad Placement

Now that you are familiar with quality score, it's important to implement the correct techniques so that you can achieve the best return on investment while keeping the relevance and overall quality of your campaign high.

There is a fine balance between bidding, ad placement, quality score, traffic, and overall cost.

Ad Positions and Bids

What position do you want your ad to be in to generate the most traffic? Ideally, the top position or, at the very least, on the first page of the search results. The top position can get, as we said earlier, a lot of clicks from people who are just curious and not real buyers. The second, third, fourth or fifth positions are also excellent, and you'll attract fewer people who are just looking.

If you examine search pages, you'll see sponsored search results occur on the side, as well as at the top and bottom. As many as 10 paid-search ads can appear on one page. Since most Web surfers don't go beyond the first page, it's important to be one of the first ten ads.

You can determine what position your ad will have by using Google's Traffic Estimator. Since the results you will see are based on data from the past, it's not entirely accurate, but it can be an excellent guide to decide how to start your bidding.

How To Use The Google Traffic Estimator

Once you select the keywords for an Ad Group, Google will take you to a page that asks you to enter your maximum cost per click, or CPC. You will also see a link that says "View Traffic Estimator." Click on the link. It will take you a page that will show you three important things: the cost of each keyword, estimated average CPC, and probable position.

Look the results over. Then experiment with different bids while updating the page by clicking on "Get New Estimates."

Enter your maximum CPC

Higher CPC's lead to higher ad positions, which usually get more clicks.

You'll also want to estimate what keywords are likely to generate the most clicks. At the top of the page you'll see a link that says "Clicks Per Day." Click on it to arrange the keywords so that the ones that are likely to get the most clicks will go to the top of the list. They will appear in descending order, based on traffic estimates. So you can see which keywords you'll most likely be spending your money to sponsor.

Since you want your ad to be in position 1 to 10, you may have to increase your maximum bid.

When done, click the "Continue" button and save the ad.

What do you do if you can't afford the bid price to be in a high position? Get started and work toward improvement. Just know that at a lower maximum bid, it will take your ad more time to generate traffic and prove or disprove its effectiveness.

Traffic Volume Vs. Cost Per Click

It's great to get traffic and, as you your ads start to generate impressions and clicks, you'll be able to see which key words are getting the clicks and either costing you money or making you money. But the most important question is, how much traffic is each keyword converting into sales?

Obviously, the keywords that attract the traffic that is most likely to buy your product or service will perform the best. So the more relevant the keywords are to the searcher, the more profitable they will be.

If you're getting traffic but not converting it to sales, you're not spending your money wisely. Here's a handy rule.

Figure out how much you'll earn each time you generate a sale, that is, the amount of a single commission. If you spend that much on clicks without getting a single sale, you're losing money.

So put the campaign on pause and examine what you're doing – the overall amount you've spent on the

campaign, average cost per click, average position, and the traffic each keyword is generating.

Since you know you're getting clicks but not making sales, look at the keyword or words that are generating the useless click volume. Then lower your bid, which may or may not make them inactive, or delete them entirely. At this point, you may also want to try some new keywords. Remember: the most relevant ones will convert the most traffic, because they will attract the most likely purchasers.

Precision promotes profit.

High Cost-Per-Click Bidding

As you progress, you'll see that the cost of advertising with various keywords and in various industries varies widely. Sometimes the price per click can be very high. We consider pricey bidding to be anything where the cost per click on a keyword is \$1 or more for your ad to appear on the first page of relevant search results. Obviously, the only time it makes sense to pay \$1 per click or more is when the commission you expect to earn is high enough to still allow you to make a profit.

For example, let's take a keyword that costs \$1 per click for a product that pays \$100 for a single commission. You're just at the break even point if you convert one out of every 100 clicks. To make a profit you need to convert two or more sales per hundred clicks. We like to convert 3 to 4.

It's easy to calculate your break even point.

One Commission = \$100

Average Cost Per Click = \$1

Break Even Point = 1 Sale Per 100 Clicks

The ratio you will have to convert to break even is 1:100. As the number of clicks goes down per conversion, your profit goes up. If you can halve the number of clicks per conversion, the ratio would be 1:50. At that number of clicks per sale, you'll be making a 100% return on your investment.

In high cost-per-click bidding, it's especially important to get the most clicks for the least amount of investment. So when estimating traffic for a new campaign, you'll still begin with the minimum bid price (\$0.01 USD). Of course, you'll find that many of your keywords are inactive. So you'll have to experiment until they become active at the lowest CPC you can manage. Raise the price until you're comfortable with the estimated traffic and the cost per click, while you keep in mind that your goal is to have the ad show up in one of the first ten positions.

These Techniques Will Help You Become An Elite Internet Marketer.

Why? Simply put, they will help your quality score go up. And, as we said before, as it does, the CPC goes down while the ad position rises.

There's a very sound reason.

Always remember: Google is in the search business and rewards people whose ads are highly relevant to searches and perform better.

Google places your ads in search results according to their quality score and maximum bid. So you can increase your profits.

Ad Scheduling Or Dayparting

Recently, Google gave advertisers what many of them have been requesting for some time – daypart advertising.

Google describes the option in this way:

This lets you tell Google exactly when you want your ads to run, and more importantly – when you do

not want them to run. In addition, more advanced users can automatically modify their bids based on time-of-day and day-of-week cycles in campaign performance.

Ad scheduling can also help you improve your ROI by ensuring that your ads run when it makes the most business sense. For instance, a local business may only want to run their ads during business hours, or an online retailer may want to boost their bids during their busier-than-normal lunchtime shopping period.

If you wish to try this new feature, you can enable it via the Edit Campaign Settings page.

Chapter 9

What About Inactive Keywords?

When you see that Google has made a keyword in your ad group inactive, Google will display the reason. Your max bid is not set high enough to activate the keyword. You'll see a notice from Google beside the keyword or words that says "Inactive for search. Increase quality or bid \$X.XX to activate." (Of course, \$X.XX will be an actual amount.)

A word or ad may be made inactive because of poor performance. Don't just automatically raise your bids. See if you can apply the techniques you've learned to increase the quality, so you can make your keywords and ads active while you still control your cost per click.

Of course, if the keyword or ad was making money, the quickest way to get back in business is just to calculate if it will still make money if you increase your bid to the level recommended. If you're satisfied with what the resultant ROI will be, go ahead and increase the bid. Then go to work to see if you can create another ad or make other changes that will result in a higher quality score.

All Google Accounts Are Not Treated Equally

You should also know that every Google account is not treated the same. Why? Minimum bids and ad placement are partly determined by the overall quality score and history of the account. When an account has keywords and ads and Web pages that are consistently relevant, along with high CTR's, the quality score is high. So Google feels you are serving its search customers well and rewards you by making the minimum bids to activate keywords and ads lower – another reason to follow the techniques in this book to raise your quality score!

Since we have high Google quality scores, we can often activate keywords with the minimum \$0.01. At the same time, we know that other marketers must bid 20 or 30 cents to activate the same keywords.

Arriving At The Right Daily Budget

How much should you spend to advertise each day? The answer isn't just related to money; it's related to how much you must spend to achieve your goal. As usual, that relates to your quality score.

One of the benefits of this is that, even if you have a smaller budget, you can compete with other marketers who have bigger budgets, as long as you keep your quality score high.

Of course, you must set your budget at a level you can afford. You're not in the Internet marketing business just for a day but for the long-term. It's important for you to preserve your capital while you learn how to earn.

Helpful Budgeting Techniques

First, you may want to set your budget on Google higher than the one you're actually willing to spend. Let's say you're willing to invest five or ten dollars a day. The problem with setting your daily budget at, say, \$5, is that it may be too little to activate your ad for many of the searches made with your keywords. So you may wind up spending even less than \$5. On the other hand, if you set it much higher, say, at \$25, your ads will appear in far more searches. *But, of course, when you use this technique, you have to monitor the spending.* If you actually exceed your budget, just pause the campaign for the rest of the day.

You'll find a daily budget calculator in Adwords that will recommend what your daily budget should be for the keywords you selected. If you set your budget at five to ten times this amount, you can be sure your ad will be served in all the appropriate search results. Google actually displays the time your ad is being served, and ideally it will tell you 100% of the time.

While it's not likely that you will actually spend five or ten times your daily budget, particularly if it's based on Google's recommended daily budget for your keywords, it could happen – a possibility that makes it especially important to monitor your account. And, to be successful as an online marketer, you need to be involved; that means taking the time to log onto your account on a regular basis every day.

Be warned, however, that this “higher than the actual budget” technique is only recommended when you have Content Search turned off. Don't use it if, for some reason, you have it turned on – or you could easily spend as much money as you tell Google you're willing to. And you might not make a single sale, because the audience you're reaching won't be nearly as relevant for the product or service you're promoting.

Google calculates the daily budget over a 30-day period. You'll notice that on some days you do spend more than your budget but on other days you spend less. Google manages the spending so that, on average, you will spend at or very close to your budget level over the 30 days.

How to Monitor Keywords To Maximize ROI

When you create an Ad Group, you must always use the Google Traffic Estimator to determine which keywords will likely result in the most traffic. These are the keywords you must monitor the most, because you don't want to spend on a lot of clicks that don't result in sales. When you see a keyword that is getting a lot of clicks but not producing a consonant number of sales, you have to remove it from the mix. So lower the bid to deactivate it or just delete it. It might work for another product or service, but right now it's just gobbling up your precious investment funds.

How To Split Test Your Ads

What is split testing and how can it benefit you?

Split testing is when you create multiple ads for the same keyword group. Then you monitor the results. Thankfully, Google provides data on how each ad is doing, including impressions, clicks, and CTR.

As a result, you can compare different titles, claims, and support points. So you can optimize your advertising to achieve the highest sales and profits.

For instance, you might create two ads that have the same title but different support points. Or you might create two that have different titles but the same support points. Then you can watch which performs best. What you learn can dramatically increase your ROI. When doing a split test, certain techniques can make it more effective.

Optimized Ad Copy Test

When you set up a campaign, there's an option that asks Google to optimize the way it serves your ads. The default setting tells Google to optimize it. What does optimization do? When the option is turned on, Google knows to display the ad that is converting better more often. So you're actually making more money even while you're conducting the split test. Yet you're compromising the accuracy of the split test. If you really want to conduct the split test accurately, turn this option off. Then, when you have enough data to know which ad is working better, go with that ad, and drop the other one.

Non-Optimized Ad Copy Test

A non-optimized split test is the most accurate way to determine the results of two different ads. It basically means both ads will be shown an equal number of times. You'll also be able to monitor which ad costs less per click, so you'll know which one has a higher quality score. How often do you need to see the two ads clicked on before you can determine with certainty which one is performing better. We suggest anywhere from 200 to 250.

Dynamic Keyword Insertion

Dynamic Keyword Insertion is a tool many advertisers don't utilize, but it can be quite effective.

The keyword is dynamically placed in the title or body copy of an ad, and it appears in bold type.

Let's say you have a large number of keywords that are relevant to your product and audience but don't wish to write multiple ads to optimize them. With dynamic insertion, you can make a place for various keywords to appear in bold, while you leave the rest of the text in place.

When a Web searcher enters a keyword that is in your ad, the ad shows up with the keyword in bold type.

Dynamic Keyword Insertion lets you carefully control the variables in the ad while it targets different keyword searches. When you use the technique, you'll create ads that will likely get a high CTR. The drawback is, Google does not add points toward the quality score for the ads, and, as you know, higher quality means lower costs.

As an alternative, you can create the same series of ads without Dynamic Insertion. Since they will have a higher quality score, they will appear higher in search results – and at a lower cost per click.

How to Use Dynamic Keyword Insertion

Here is the typical structure used for Dynamic Keyword Insertion. Notice it appears in brackets. This identifies the ad as one that uses the technique.

{Keyword: Default Text}

The first part of the ad consists of the term "KeyWord." Notice that both the "K" and the "W" are capitalized. This is actually an instruction that inserts your keyword, while capitalizing the first letter of every word. The next part of the ad is a colon, which is followed by the default text.

When a searcher enters a search term that is too long to fit in the ad, the default text appears.

If you use "Keyword," with a capital "K" but a small "w," Google will only capitalize the initial letter of the first keyword, so the text will appear in what is known as sentence style. If you use a lower-case "keyword," the keywords will appear in lower case but will still be bold.

Dynamic Keyword Insertion is an efficient way to determine which keywords are performing best, because you control all of the variables except the keyword. But once you determine which keywords are your best, it's better to create individual ads built on the keywords. That way you'll get the benefit of the keyword at the same time you can increase your quality score. When you do create such ads, don't forget to delete the keywords you use from the Dynamic Keyword insertion Ad Group.

We use Dynamic Keyword insertion from time to time, but we switch to creating individual ads for the keywords as soon as we know which keywords are doing best.

Chapter 10

The Four Keyword Match Types

There are four ways a keyword can be presented by Google. Most Internet marketers don't know the choice is available, let alone what each one can do for you.

You will find the description of match types if you click on Tools in Adwords. You'll also find many other helpful tools. We recommend that you learn to use them well.

When you do know the differences among the match types and how to use the four appropriately, you can use them to increase your CTR and your overall quality score.

Google defines the four match types as follows:

Broad Match – This is the default option. If you include a general keyword or keyword phrases – such as *tennis shoes* – in your keyword list, your ads will appear when users search for *tennis* and *shoes*, in any order, and possibly along with other terms. Your ads will also automatically show for expanded matches, including plurals and relevant variations. Broad matches are often less targeted than exact or phrase matches

Phrase Match – If you enter your keyword in quotation marks, as in *"tennis shoes"*, your ad will appear when a user searches on the phrase *tennis shoes*, in this order, and possibly with other terms in the query. In this case, the search can also contain other terms as long as it includes the exact phrase you've specified. For instance, your ad will appear for the query *red tennis shoes* but not for *shoes for tennis*.

Exact Match – If you surround your keywords in brackets – such as *[tennis shoes]* – your ads will appear when users search for the specific phrase *tennis shoes*, in this order, and without any other terms in the query. For example, your ad won't show for the query *red tennis shoes*. (*Needless to say, this is a very precise way to target an important keyword.*)

Negative Keyword – If your keyword is *tennis shoes* and you add the negative keyword *-red*, your ad will not appear when a user searches on *red tennis shoes*. (*You'd use this negative keyword if you weren't marketing red tennis shoes.*)

When you use broad, phrase, and exact matching options for each keyword or phrase within your Ad Group, you will greatly increase the CTR and quality score.

Let's take the example Google uses and work with it more.

Keyword: Tennis Shoes

Most marketers would just use the broad match. But, if you use the broad, exact and phrase match types for this keyword phrase, you'll achieve a higher CTR. Why? The impressions Google calculates will be divided among the 3 match types, so you'll essentially have three possible keywords dividing the same number of impressions that would usually be applied to only one keyword.

Tennis Shoes, "Tennis Shoes", [Tennis Shoes]

Phrase Match

When you put the keyword in parenthesis and an online shopper enters the search term "Buy Tennis Shoes," then your phrase match "Tennis Shoes" is likely to be triggered. Google will only register an impression for this phrase-match version of the keyword. If the user searches for the term "Tennis

Shoes,” your exact match [tennis shoes] will be triggered. And only the exact match type will have an impression recorded for it. If the surfer searches for “Shoes basketball tennis soccer,” your broad match term might be triggered. Then the impression would be calculated for that match type.

We strongly recommend that you use all three match types for each keyword in your Ad Group.

If you use up to 25 keywords for each Ad Group and use each one three ways, you’ll have 75 keywords. While that’s a lot of keywords, it’s still acceptable.

However, when Google itself optimizes an ad we’ve seen the specialists there use as few as two keywords per ad, in two or three match types. This results in highly focused ads with low costs per click. Such highly focused ads may not get as many clicks as you need, even if Google creates them for you. So never hesitate to experiment.

Google also uses a fourth type, known as Negative Keywords.

When you put a minus sign (a hyphen) in front of a keyword, it tells Google to eliminate the word as a match from your search. Let’s say the Hollywood Diet you’re advertising only comes as a book at this time. But you know that many people may be looking for a diet video or a diet center like Weight Watchers. You don’t want your ad to appear for search when someone wants to find a diet video or center, so in your keywords you would include, after the usual ones, these: -video and -center.

If you had Google optimize your ad campaign, the techniques you’ve learned are exactly the ones their ad experts would work with.

By the way, once you’re working with Google, you’ll discover that they may offer to optimize your advertising free of charge. You may, however, find that even their optimization will not perform as well as your own campaigns will, because you’ll be working with many of the same techniques they will, but you’ll also be monitoring how your ads are doing and refining them.

Chapter 11

To Use Or Not to Use The Google Content Network

The Google Content Network has a lot of minuses but it also has some pluses.

When you start out, we recommend that you simply turn it off. You could waste a lot of your investment money. As much as 80% of your traffic can come from the Content Network, and, as we noted before, the traffic will not be as relevant to your ad as you need it to be to provide a profitable CTR.

Yet the cost per click on the Content Network can be significantly lower than it is in regular Google Search or its Search Network. So, once you know which of your keywords and ads have a high CTR, you might find you can make a profit leaving the Content Network active.

What is the Content Network? It’s made up of publishers, actually Website owners, that display Google Ads on their Web pages. Certainly, you’ve clicked to a site and seen the Google ads.

Google calls the service AdSense. To make it work, Google has robots that crawl the pages of the sites on a regular basis to determine the content, even when it changes. Then Google places ads on the pages that are targeted to the audience the content would most likely attract.

In theory, the traffic your ad would attract does sound targeted. Realistically, the traffic is of a much lower quality than your ads will interface with on Google Search. One way you know this is that the CTR is much lower.

Beware: The Content Network is also where the most click fraud occurs, and it's very hard for Google to track it. Since the publisher gets paid on a per click basis, there's a temptation for unscrupulous Website owners to click on the ads from time to time themselves. And what are those kinds of clicks going to do besides cost you money?

Since conversions are low, if you're going to make money on the Content Network, select products that have a high ROI – so you can pay for all the clicks and still make a profit.

Yet, as we said, effective use of this network requires you to know which of your keywords have the highest CTR. If you don't, we recommend that you leave the Content Network off. You'll do best when you spend your money on quality traffic.

Setting Content Bids

While the Content Network can produce a lot of traffic, it offers the lowest quality traffic in Adwords. One way to deal with this dichotomy is to set your CPC lower – with bids from \$0.01 to \$0.05. We've gone as high as \$0.12 but only with products that have a high ROI and with ads we know produce a high CTR.

If you set your bids the same for the Content Network as you do for the Search Networks, your advertising cost will be higher but your CTR will be lower. Thankfully, you can set your bids for the Content Network separately – and Google allows those bids to be lower.

Don't Confuse The Search Network With The Content Network

Google's Search Network is markedly different from its Content Network. It is made up of sites that have the Google Search bar or that function as independent search engines. For instance, AOL is part of this network. Since searchers see your ads the same way they do when they're doing a Google Search, the traffic is usually of a much higher quality. The only major difference is that the Web shopper did not initiate the search in Google itself.

What's Better – Direct Linking Or A Landing Page?

In direct linking, you send pay-per-click traffic through your affiliate link directly to a merchant's site. It's the fastest way to set up and launch a campaign and it can be an effective way to make money. But there are a number of shortcomings. First, Google doesn't permit multiple URL's to use the same search term. Why? It stops one company from being advertised a number of times with the same keyword. The restriction is also intended to increase the quality of the results.

So when you advertise a product or service using direct linking but aren't seeing much traffic, the reason might be that another online advertiser is promoting the same merchant URL with the same keywords – and the other advertiser has set his CPC higher than you've set yours or his quality score is higher than yours, so Google is giving his ads more exposure. Also, direct linking doesn't let you offer shoppers what they often demand, which is comparison shopping. Why? You can't advertise more than one product in the category. Even when you do generate traffic, you're at the mercy of the sales copy at the merchant site. If it's not convincing, you lose the sale even though you send the customer to the site.

As a result of these drawbacks, direct linking results in fewer sales and lower ROI. So it's better to create a landing page. Then you'll have the opportunity to pre-sell the searcher. Here's how it works. The traffic you generate is sent to your landing page first and shoppers see your sales message before being sent to the merchant site. It produces higher conversions because you get to pre-sell the shopper.

Also, when you use direct linking, you will not be able to gather analytical data, unless you can set up a Google conversion tracking code with the merchant. On the other hand, when you have a landing page, or a complete Website, you can collect the data with counters and other tools.

Use Direct Linking For Testing

Direct linking does let you set up a campaign quickly and experience what it's like to sell a product or work in a certain industry – without assuming the overhead involved in creating a landing page or Website. Just be aware that you may have a hard time generating enough clicks to give you a firm feeling about the product or industry, since, as we said, Google will not allow different advertisers to promote the same URL with the same keyword. As expected, you may not experience great conversion rates.

Once you've gotten a feel for the product or industry with direct linking and you decide to go ahead, we recommend that you create a landing page or Website.

Creating Relevant Landing Pages And Web Sites

What is the difference between a landing page and a Website? Simply put, a landing page consists of a single page, while a Website consists of multiple pages. The only links on a landing page are your affiliate links, which will send your traffic to the merchant sales page.

When you create a landing page or a Website, the most important goal is to make sure it presents content that is highly relevant to what the person is searching for. It's your opportunity to interface with the shopper in an inviting and persuasive manner. So be sure to optimize your landing page or Website in terms of relevance and salesmanship.

Of course, you'll also want to make it easy for your shopper to click through to the merchant page, where the sale actually takes place.

Google gives preference to substantial Websites over single landing pages. So we recommend that you prefer to create and drive traffic to real Websites.

Chapter 12

Advertising Techniques That Increase ROI

Target Your Content

When people search on Google, they're looking for the results that are most relevant to their search. No wonder relevance plays such a key role in Internet marketing. The more precise the relevance, the better. For instance, if you're promoting the Hollywood Diet and you utilize the keyword "Hollywood Diet," if your landing page primarily is about generic weight loss, it won't convert as well as if it is focused on the unique attributes and benefits of the Hollywood Diet. Make your keywords, ads, and your landing page as relevant to the searcher as you can. You'll sell more, serve Google better, and be rewarded by Google for your service to their searchers.

Compare Products

The timeless invocation to compare before you purchase can work for you. Shoppers want to be as certain as they can that they're buying the best product at the lowest price. If you can convince them they are, you'll increase your conversions markedly. As we often say, if you can educate them, you own the sale.

How can you help consumers compare?

You can show different products with captions. Even add a table that lets the shopper compare product features and prices at a glance.

Remember to feature your best sellers with the prominence you think will lead to the most sales.

Since most visits to landing pages and Website visits are relatively brief, the product you place first will attract a lot more attention than even the one you put second. The main advantage for potential customers is that they do not have to compare products themselves because you will do it for them, and in many cases, this will help convert a browser into a buyer.

Use Testimonials

Testimonials are persuasive to most people. In fact, if you do focus groups across the nation and ask people who they trust most, a majority of them will tell you they turn to another member of their family, a close friend, or a neighbor. These days, people are far more suspicious of experts, whether they're CEO's, doctors, lawyers, or any other authority. So the more personal you can make the testimonials, the better. You'll relate to the search audience in a more trustworthy and convincing way. Even members of your family can serve as testifiers.

We've seen enormous sales increases when some convincing testimonials were added to a landing page or a Website.

Use Verbal and Visual Persuasion

So far we've talked about verbal techniques.

But people see something before they read about the details. And, as the saying goes, one picture is worth a thousand words.

When you provide visuals – photos or illustrations – that are relevant to the search, you will increase your sales. For example, you can add before and after shots of people who benefited from the Hollywood Diet.

Use Product Reviews

Featuring product reviews on your landing page or Website is a very personal and effective way to sell. The reviews can provide just the reassurance and guidance the searcher is looking for.

Here are some tips on creating effective reviews:

1. Unify Each Review Around Relevant Products

The products you include in the same review should all be in the same category, so you can help shoppers make up their minds about what product in the category they want.

2. Make The Reviews Short

A review invites readers if it's short and focused on relevant information. Don't exceed 100 or so words. If you add the review to the page and it makes the page look crowded, shorten it. Just make a few salient points about each product. Too much detail will only bog readers down and encourage them to give up and click on. Instead of long paragraphs, use bullet points, especially to highlight features. It's also not a good idea just to copy and paste the merchant's sales sheet. Sales sheets are usually very plain and factual. You want your site to look and talk like an engaging salesperson.

3. Create Highly Readable Reviews

Get to know the product or products you're selling, so you can write reviews that are knowledgeable and convincing. Remember, the shopper wants information, and if you provide it, you have a much better chance of closing the sale.

It can help to mention your own experience with the product. So give it a credible rave. If you need information about the product, you can visit the merchant's site or do a Google search on it.

Don't copy Web information exactly, especially from the affiliate sites you may be competing with. Make the content on your site your own.

4. Provide Easy Access To The Merchant's Site

Since you can't complete the sale on your landing page or Website, you should make it transparently easy for the shopper to continue to the merchant's site. Your goal should simply be to do a bit of pre-selling, so the customers want to go to where they can buy the product. The faster you get them to the place of purchase, the more likely you will make the sale.

Don't Just Make A Claim; Support It With "Reasons Why"

When visitors arrive at your site, your job is to present them, not only with a claim about the key benefit and maybe important secondary benefits of the product; it's also your job to support the claim or claims with "reasons why," also known as "reasons to believe."

Besides product-focused selling points, include selling points based on how the product will enhance the purchaser's lifestyle or improve his or her business success. And don't forget the call to action – the specific invocation that they should buy the product today.

How many products should you feature?

Too many products will only overwhelm and confuse your visitors and many of them will just click off. A page of small product shots and a plethora of features will decrease your sales. Even ten products are too many.

Put no more on the page than you'd like to be confronted with when you land on a page yourself. We suggest you restrict the number of products you feature to from one to six. You can really romance one. You can do an excellent job with two or three. Four starts to be a crowd. If you get past six, who would be sure what to focus on?

Proofread Carefully

Grammatical mistakes and spelling errors will diminish the credibility of your site and reduce your conversion rates. Your visitors simply won't feel that they're in reliable hands. Utilize the proofreading capacity of your word-processing software.

Conclusion

Become An Elite Adwords Marketer

You have now learned what you need to become an Adwords Elite marketer.

It's time for you to get started.

When you begin, be patient with yourself. Don't set goals that are unrealistic. You'll only set yourself up for unnecessary disappointments and difficulties.

But set goals – achievable daily goals. Sure, you have an overall goal – to make as much money as you can and hopefully to join the elite group of marketers who have become rich online.

We're talking about daily goals. You have a lot to accomplish. So do some of the work each day – not as plodding work, but as smart work, using what you've learned in this book.

Unless you manufacture your own product or provide your own service, you need to affiliate, if you haven't done so since starting to read this book. Make joining an affiliate program your first goal.

Once you have products and services to market, create some Google ads, using the invaluable techniques you've learned in this book. Use direct linking to give them a test run.

When you find products or services you can make a profit with, set up your own landing page or Website to pre-sell the traffic that clicks on your ads.

Continue to perfect your ads and increase your ROI, while you conduct an ongoing search for other products or services you can market successfully.

In short, becoming an elite Internet marketer is not something you just suddenly step into. It's something you decide to start becoming and then grow into more and more – and most likely increasing your earnings as you do.

No matter how big or small your daily budget is, set your goals for the day and work to achieve them. You now know more than most of the tens of thousands of people who are already making a living online. So success is more than possible. It's very probable. You simply have to decide to work intelligently toward it with the knowledge that we've provided.

If you make mistakes, welcome to the crowd. We all make them. They're part of the process of working toward success. In fact, if you don't make some mistakes, you're probably being too careful. To make as few as possible, dare with prudence. Learn from your mistakes, and, when you do something right, congratulate yourself.

You might earn more than you can imagine. You certainly have the techniques, now.

The knowledge we've imparted in this book is the same knowledge we use to make major money online – and have time to enjoy our lives, too. And you can use it just as effectively.

We have held nothing back. We have told you all we know about Adwords.

As we've stated before, from time to time you should look into Google. There are a lot of helpful tools and tutorials available. They are updated and new ones are added from time to time. Google wants you to succeed, too – and serve their searchers well!

Yahoo Search Marketing And MSN Search

You'll also want to become comfortable working with Yahoo Search or, as the service is also still called, Overture, at www.overture.com. The principles you'll use to work with Yahoo are pretty much the same, and Yahoo Search offers you another way to reach your market. In fact, there are times when Yahoo Search will offer lower CPC's and offer you more relevant keywords. At times like these, you can use both Yahoo Search and Google to make sales. Or you might decide to concentrate on Yahoo for a while. Remember, Yahoo gets more visitors than any other site on the Internet.

We also suggest you keep up with MSN Search as it evolves. It could offer you another excellent opportunity to market products and services profitably on the Internet.

You're ready to become an elite Adwords success. Go for it!

Glossary

Ad Copy - The text in an ad. Creating highly focused and relevant copy can increase CTR and your overall Quality score.

Ad Group – A group of keywords targeted to a specific ad. The Ad Group should be made up of from one, two to twenty or so keywords that are highly relevant to the product, the service, and the search. .

Ad Positioning - the placement of ads Google gives an advertiser in sponsored search results. It's based on the advertiser's CPC and overall quality score

Adsense - Google's name for the service that allows Website publishers to present Google ads on their sites and earn money based on click volume. Since Google relates the ads to the content, visitors see ads that go with what they're interested in.

Adspend -The amount of money spent on advertising; another way to refer to an advertising budget.

Adwords – Google’s cost-per-click (CPC) advertising program, which places ads on the margins of search pages.

Search Network – made up of Google’s marketing partners, including AOL, Ask Jeeves, ABC.com, About.com, EarthLink, CompuServe and Netscape.

Google Premium Services – For advertisers with larger budgets or a long history using Adwords, Google provides valuable strategic and marketing services.

Affiliate - The marketing person or publisher in an Internet marketing relationship with a merchant.

CPC (Cost Per-Click) - the amount it costs for a single click. It ranges from a low of \$0.01 up to multiple dollars.

Call To Action - Ad copy that directs users to take a specific action, such as "Buy now!" or “Download it today!”.

Campaign – The highest level of organization in an Adwords account. A campaign is made up of ad groups, which contain selected keywords. A single campaign can contain from one to as high as 200 or more ad groups. Since they’re part of a campaign, they should all apply to one product, service, or industry.

Click Through Ratio (CTR) – The ratio between the number of impressions an ad receives and the number of clicks it evokes. An impression is added every time the ad is displayed in a search result, while a click is added every time someone actually clicks on the ad. Generally, the more relevant an ad is to the search, the more likely someone will click on it, and the higher the overall CTR. CTR is a cornerstone value in Google’s determination of quality score.

ClickBank -The largest digital-product network online, with over 10,000 merchants and over 100,000 affiliates. The products vary in quality, consumer appeal, and commission structure. ClickBank pays its affiliates on a biweekly basis. There’s no approval process.

Commission Junction (CJ) – One of the largest affiliate networks. Its merchants are spread through many industries and offer many different commission structures. Many Commission Junction merchants require you to apply to become an affiliate of theirs. Commission Junction keeps all of those who approve you in a simple clickable list, from which you can access banner and text ads, along with the code required to reproduce and activate them on your Website.

Conversion – The execution of a desired action in response to an ad's call to action. It may be a sale, registration, download, or a variety of other desired advertising results.

Conversion tracking - Tracking conversion statistics on a per sale, per lead, per sign-up, or per click-through basis. The process usually requires inputting your conversion code from your Adwords account in a page where results can be tallied. The resulting data can help determine what campaigns, ads, and keywords are performing and which ones are not.

Cost Per Conversion - The ratio between the cost of the advertising to the number of conversions (sales, sign ups, etc.) it elicits.

Destination URL - The URL search traffic is sent to when an ad is clicked. It may be a direct link to a merchant site, to a landing page, or to a Website.

Impression - An impression is tallied when an ad is presented in a user’s browser. The number of impressions determines the cost of online ads in formats based on CPM pricing, which stands for cost per thousand. An impression is also known as an exposure.

LinkShare – Like Commission Junction, LinkShare has a large and diverse group of merchants and

they may require you go through an approval process to become an affiliate.

Minimum Bid - The minimum bid that will activate a keyword. It is determined by Google and is based on relevance and Quality score. If your bid does not meet the minimum bid, your ad will be “inactive” in regard to the keyword.

PPC (Pay Per-Click) - Paid advertising in which the advertiser only pays for clicks to the destination URL. The cost per click is based on a specific rate that may change at any time but is agreed on before the ad is exposed for clicks. PPC advertising choices encompass per-click advertising networks, search engines, and affiliate programs.

Return on Investment (ROI) – Financial nomenclature that is used to denote profit, which is based on margin, that is, the difference between what it costs you to advertise and what you earn. If you invest \$1,000 in advertising and you make \$2,000 in commissions, your margin would be \$1,000 and, since you doubled your investment, your ROI would be 100%.

Sales Copy -The sales text that is presented in a sales piece, whether it’s an ad, a landing page, a Webpage, or any other written document that is intended to sell a product or service.

Search Engine Optimization (SEO) - The process of increasing the number of visitors to a Website by improving its ranking in the unpaid search results of search engines. The higher the site ranks, the more visitors it will attract. The listings are often known as natural or organic because placement is a result of the search engine's free search results.

Updating – keeping your Adwords campaigns up to date on a daily basis, including daily budget, ad content, active ads and networks, account information, and all other aspects of the campaign.

Web Page - A single page of a Website. It contains links to other pages in the site and may also contain links to other Websites. For an affiliate marketer, the outbound links go to merchant sites, where the sales can be completed.

Making Money With E-Books

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Making Money With E-Books

E-Books – Profit-Pulling Powerhouses

E-Books are part of the new frontier of cyberspace. They are an entirely new medium for sharing marketing information, ideas, techniques, and expert knowledge. Each day the number of people accessing the Internet grows, causing the exposure of your E-Book to increase incrementally. It's obvious why electronic self-publishing has become so popular so quickly.

The publishing industry, I hope, does not intend to forever banish the printed word to the dustbin of history. Books in print have their own special qualities and merits, and the world would be diminished by their disappearance.

Having said that, let's look at what makes E-Books so important and so unique.

- **E-Books have certain abilities and qualities that other mediums do not possess.** For example, E-Books are fairly easy to produce, and their production cost is inexpensive. Just think about it: you don't need a publisher, an agent, a printing press, offset film, ink, paper, or even a distributor. You just need a great concept, the ability to write it or to hire a writer, and the right software.
- Additionally, **E-Books are easily and rapidly distributed online.** They are also easily updated; they do not require a second print run. All you need is to go into your original creation and modify the text or graphics. Because of this flexibility, E-Books can change and grow as fast as you can type.
- **E-Books are also immediately obtainable.** You don't have to go to a bookstore or search through endless titles at an online bookstore. All you have to do is download it from a website, and presto! It's on your computer, ready to be read.
- **E-Books are interactive.** This is one of the most unique and specific qualities that E-Books offer. You can add surveys that need to be filled out, order forms for customers to purchase your products or goods, sound and video that draw your reader into the virtual world of your E-Book, even direct links to relevant sites that will expand your E-Book outward. The potential is virtually limitless.

- **E-Books have a particular kind of permanence that other mediums do not possess.** Television shows and radio shows air once, and then may rerun a few times. E-Books remain on your computer for as long as you choose, and they can be read and reread whenever you choose to. They can even be printed out and stored on the shelves of your traditional home library.
- Another wonderful quality is that **E-Books have no barriers in terms of publishing.** You don't need to go through the endless process of submitting your manuscript over and over again, and then once you land an agent, having the agent submit your manuscript over and over again. Nor do you have to shell out thousands of dollars for printing a self-published book. All E-Books require is a writer and appropriate software.

Figure out your market, write your book, post it on your website, and with the right business savvy, your audience will come to you.

Finally, you have creative control over your E-Book. You don't have to compromise with an editor or the publishing trends of the time. You don't have to haggle with a designer or wait for copyedited galleys to arrive by snail mail. You are in complete control of the design and the text.

How to Use E-books for Marketing and Promotion

There are innumerable ways to use E-Books to promote your business and drive quality traffic to your website. Once posted on your site, you can turn them into a daily course, which brings your customer back to read the next chapter. You can use them as a free gift for making a purchase or for filling out a survey. Put your E-Book on a disc, and you will have an innovative brochure. Blow your competition away by inserting the disc into your sales packages.

The most effective marketing products are those that are unique. Copyright your E-Book, and immediately, you have a powerful tool that you, and you alone, can offer to the public. People will have to visit your site to acquire your E-Book, which increases the flow of quality traffic and the potential of sales and affiliate contacts.

Make sure that you keep your E-Book current. Update it frequently as the market and trends change. Add new advice and techniques to show your prospects how your goods or services can enrich their lives. By constantly keeping abreast of new trends and techniques, you can continue to see profits from your E-Book for years after your original creation.

Another phenomenal advantage of E-Books is that **you can test their marketing potential without** putting out hardly any cash at all. You can even produce an E-Book one copy at a time, each time you receive an order, eliminating the need for storage and inventory. By this method, you can gauge the salability of your E-Book, and make adjustments as necessary until the orders start pouring in. E-Books allow you to learn about your market and customer habits and motivation over a period of time, without risking your precious financial resources. They also provide you with an invaluable way to gather marketing information, which you can use in many different facets of your business.

Use your E-Book to discover what the specific goals and problems are in your specific industry. Then figure out how to solve these problems, and publish an E-Book with this invaluable information. This will increase the value of your business, upgrade your reputation, and get you known as an expert in your field.

You can extend the value of single E-Book by breaking the book down into chapters for a serial course, into special reports available on your website, or into audio or visual tapes. E-Books can be broken down into several different promotional materials by accepting some of the articles and using them to promote your product. You can include a catalog in your E-Book to promote all the products or services you sell. You can include a thank-you note for reading your book and an invitation to download a trial version of your product. Or you can include a form for your audience to contact you for further information or with questions, thereby building your business relationships and your mailing list.

Using E-Books in this manner helps to cut the cost of individually producing separate promotional materials. You can use a single E-Book to entice new prospects and to sell new products to your current customers.

No other medium has this kind of flexibility and ability for expansion. Think of your E-Book like a spider spinning a beautiful and intricate web. Now go and create that web, and see how many customers and prospects you can catch!

Why Sell E-Books?

It's not true that everything that has been said has already been written. Since that unfortunate axiom came into use, the whole universe has changed. Technology has changed, ideas have changed, and the mindsets of entire nations have changed.

The fact is that this is the perfect time to write an E-Book. What the publishing industry needs are people who can tap into the world as it is today – innovative thinkers who can make the leap into the new millennium and figure out how to solve old problems in a new way. E-Books are a new and powerful tool for original thinkers with fresh ideas to disseminate information to the millions of people who are struggling to figure out how to do a plethora of different things.

Let's say you already have a brilliant idea, and the knowledge to back it up that will enable you to write an exceptional E-Book. You may be sitting at your computer staring at a blank screen wondering, "*Why? Why should I go through all the trouble of writing my E-Book when it's so impossible to get anything published these days?*"

Well, let me assure you that publishing an E-Book is entirely different than publishing a book in print. Let's look at the specifics of how the print and cyber publishing industry differ, and the many reasons why you should take the plunge and get your fingers tapping across those keyboards!

Submitting a print book to conventional publishing houses or to agents is similar to wearing a hair shirt **24/7**. No matter how good your book actually is, or how many critique services and mentor writers have told you that "*you've got what it takes*," your submitted manuscript keeps coming back to you as if it is a boomerang instead of a valuable mine of information.

Perhaps, in desperation, you've checked out self-publishing and found out just how expensive a venture it can be. Most "vanity presses" require minimal print runs of at least 500 copies, and even that amount will cost you thousands of dollars. Some presses' minimal run starts at 1,000 to 2,000 copies. And that's just for the printing and binding. Add in distribution, shipping, and promotional costs and - well, you do the math. Even if you wanted to go this route, you may not have that kind of money to risk.

Let's say you already have an Internet business with a quality website and a quality product. An E-Book is one of the most powerful ways to promote your business while educating people with the knowledge you already possess as a business owner of a specific product or service.

For example, let's say that you've spent the last twenty-five years growing and training bonsai trees, and now you're ready to share your knowledge and experience. An E-Book is the perfect way to reach the largest audience of bonsai enthusiasts.

E-Books will not only promote your business - they will help you make a name for yourself and your company, and establish you as an expert in your field. You may even find that you have enough to say to warrant a series of E-Books. Specific businesses are complicated and often require the different aspects to be divided in order for the reader to get the full story.

Perhaps your goals are more finely tuned in terms of the E-Book scene. You may want to build a whole business around writing and publishing E-Books. Essentially, you want to start an e-business. You are thinking of setting up a website to promote and market your E-Books. Maybe you're even thinking of producing an E-zine.

One of the most prevalent reasons people read E-Books is to find information about how to turn their Internet businesses into a profit-making machine. And these people are looking to the writers of E-Books to provide them with new ideas and strategies because writers of E-Books are usually people who understand the new cyberspace world we now live in. E-Book writers are experts in Internet marketing campaigns and the strategies of promoting and distributing E-Books. The cyberspace community needs its E-Books to be successful so that more and more E-Books will be written.

You may want to create affiliate programs that will also market your E-Book. Affiliates can be people or businesses worldwide that will all be working to sell your E-Books. Think about this. Do you see a formula for success here?

Figure out what your subject matter is, and then **narrow it down**. Your goal is to aim for specificity. Research what's out there already, and try to find a void that your E-Book might fill.

What about an E-Book about a wedding cake business? Or an E-Book about caring for elderly pets? How about the fine points of collecting ancient pottery?

You don't have to have three masters degrees to write about your subject. People need advice that is easy to read and easily understood. Parents need advice for dealing with their teenagers. College students need to learn good study skills - quickly. The possibilities are endless.

After you've written your E-book...

Getting your E-Book out is going to be your focus once you've finished writing it, just as it is with print books. People will hesitate to buy any book from an author they've never heard of. Wouldn't you?

The answer is simple: give it away! You will see profits in the form of promoting your own business and getting your name out. You will find affiliates who will ask you to place their links within your E-Book, and these affiliates will in turn go out and make your name known. **Almost every single famous E-Book author has started out this way.**

This doesn't mean you should stop here. Eventually, you will move into where most of the wealth mountains are – **selling them, and then maybe their Resell Rights and Private Label licenses!**

Another powerful tool to attract people to your E-Book is to make it interactive. Invent something for them to do within the book rather than just producing pages that contain static text. Let your readers fill out questionnaires, forms, even crossword puzzles geared to testing their knowledge on a particular subject. Have your readers hit a link that will allow them to recommend your book to their friends and associates. Or include an actual order form so at the end of their reading journey, they can eagerly buy your product.

When people interact with books, they become a part of the world of that book. The fact is just as true for books in print as it is for E-Books.

That's why E-Books are so essential. Not only do they provide a forum for people to learn and make sense of their own thoughts, but they can also serve to promote your business at the same time.

How to Write an E-Book

The hardest part of writing is the first sentence. When you look at the whole project, it seems like an impossible task. That's why you have to break it down into manageable tasks. Think of climbing a mountain. You are standing at the foot of it and looking up at its summit vanishing into the clouds. How can you possibly scale such an immense and dangerous mountain?

There is only one way to climb a mountain: **step by step**.

Now think of writing your E-Book in the same light. You must create it step by step, and one day, you will take that last step and find yourself standing on the summit with your head in the clouds.

The first thing you have to do, as if you actually were a mountain climber, is to get organized. Instead of climbing gear, however, you must organize your thoughts. There are some steps you should take before you begin. Once you've gone through the following list, you will be ready to actually begin writing your E-Book.

Beginning Steps to Writing an E-Book

First, figure out your E-Book's working title. Jot down a few different titles, and eventually, you'll find that one that will grow on you. Titles help you to focus your writing on your topic; they guide you in anticipating and answering your reader's queries. Many non-fiction books also have subtitles. Aim for clarity in your titles, but cleverness always helps to sell books as long as it's not too cute.

Next, write out a thesis statement. Your thesis is a sentence or two stating exactly what problem you are addressing and how your book will solve that problem. All chapters spring forth from your thesis statement. Once you've got your thesis statement fine-tuned, you've built your foundation. From that foundation, your book will grow, chapter by chapter.

Your thesis will keep you focused while you write your E-Book. Remember: all chapters must support your thesis statement. If they don't, they don't belong in your book. For example, your thesis statement could read: We've all experienced insomnia at times in our lives, but there are twenty proven techniques and methods to give you back a good night's sleep.

Once you have your thesis, before you start to write, make sure there is a good reason to write your book. Ask yourself some questions:

- ✓ Does your book present useful information and is that information currently relevant?
- ✓ Will your book positively affect the lives of your readers?
- ✓ Is your book dynamic and will it keep the reader's attention?
- ✓ Does your book answer questions that are meaningful and significant?

If you can answer yes to these questions, you can feel confident about the potential of your E-Book.

Another important step is to figure out who your target audience is. It is this group of people you will be writing to, and this group will dictate many elements of your book, such as style, tone, diction, and even length. Figure out the age range of your readers, their general gender, what they are most interested in, and even the socio-economic group they primarily come from. Are they people who read fashion magazines or book reviews? Do they write letters in longhand or spend hours every day online. The more you can pin down your target audience, the easier it will be to write your book for them.

Next, **make a list of the reasons you are writing your E-Book.** Do you want to promote your business? Do you want to bring quality traffic to your website? Do you want to enhance your reputation?

Then write down your goals in terms of publishing. Do you want to sell it as a product on your website, or do you want to offer it as a free gift for filling out a survey or for ordering a product? Do you want to use the chapters to create an e-course, or use your E-Book to attract affiliates around the world? The more you know upfront, the easier the actual writing will be.

Decide on the format of your chapters. In non-fiction, keep the format from chapter to chapter fairly consistent. Perhaps you plan to use an introduction to your chapter topic, and then divide it into four subhead topics. Or you may plan to divide it into five parts, each one beginning with a relevant anecdote.

How to make your E-Book "user friendly"

You must figure out how to keep your writing engaging. Often anecdotes, testimonials, little stories, photos, graphs, advice, and tips will keep the reader turning the pages. Sidebars are useful for quick, accessible information, and they break up the density of the page.

Write with a casual, conversational tone rather than a formal tone such as textbook diction. Readers respond to the feeling that you are having a conversation with them. Break up the length and structure of your sentences so you don't hypnotize your readers into sleep. Sentences that are all the same length and structure tend to be a good aid for insomnia!

Good writing takes practice. It takes lots and lots of practice. Make a schedule to write at least a page a day. Read books and magazines about the process of writing, and jot down tips that jump out at you. The art of writing is a lifetime process; the more you write (and read), the better your writing will become. The better your writing becomes, the bigger your sales figures.

In an E-Book that is read on the screen, be aware that you must give your reader's eye a break. You can do this by utilizing white space. In art classes, white space is usually referred to as "negative space." Reader's eyes need to rest in the cool white oasis you create on your page. If your page is too dense, your reader will quit out of it as soon as their eyes begin to tear.

Make use of lists, both bulleted and numbered. This makes your information easy to absorb, and gives the reader a mental break from dissecting your paragraphs one after the other.

Finally, decide on an easy-to-read design. Find a font that's easy on the eyes, and stick to that font family. Using dozens of fonts will only tire your readers out before they've gotten past your introduction. Use at least one and a half line spacing, and text large enough to be read easily on the screen, but small enough so that the whole page can be seen on a computer screen. You will have to experiment with this to find the right combination.

Of course, don't forget to run a spell and grammar check. You are judged by something as minor as correct punctuation, so don't mess up a great book by tossing out semicolons randomly, or stringing sentences together with commas. (By the way, that's called a "comma splice.")

Last of all: **create an index and a bibliography**. That's it! You've written a book! Now all you have to do is compile and publish your E-Book online, and wait for download request from your website visitors!

How to Price Your E-Book

You've written and compiled an E-Book. Now you have to decide how much to charge for it. Finding the right price is essential to the success of your product. If you charge too little, people will think it's of little value, and they won't purchase it, or even if they do buy your book, you will have to sell thousands of copies to get to the point where you can begin to see a profit. If you price it too high when compared with your competition, you will find yourself steadily lowering the price, which will cause you all kinds of new problems in the future. For example, if you sell your E-Book at first for \$39.99, and later reduce it to \$24.95, don't you think the people who bought it for \$39.99 are going to be **PISSED**?

Choosing the right price for your E-Book is one of the most critical parts of the marketing process. The first rule of pricing E-Books is to never underprice. Determine the highest price your audience can afford, and then if you find your book isn't selling, you can always reduce the price. Before you take that step, make sure you are promoting your book like crazy on the Internet and on websites. The price should be aimed at bringing in profits, but you should never forget that price is one of the factors that people use in judging the value of your E-Book ? before they buy it. So always start with the highest price, and then launch a mega-marketing campaign.

Pricing an E-Book is particularly difficult because E-Books are a fairly new commodity. Since they are digital, the value of an E-Book is as confusing as the understanding of what digital actually is to the average layperson. This means that we must look at E-Books in a different light in order to determine their actual worth in this brave, new cyber world.

Let's look at the difference between a book in print and an E-Book. A printed book is an object you can hold in your hand, store on your bookshelf, even hand down to the next generation. It is priced on factors such as paper stock, design and production costs, and marketing.

But the fact that unites E-Books and print books is that they are composed of ideas. It is the ideas in these books that have the ability to change, or possibly transform, people's lives.

What do you think an idea is worth when evaluated against the cost of paper and ink?

It is the IDEAS that are valuable! That is how you determine the cost of your E-Book.

What should I charge for my ideas?

There are all different formulas and methods for determining the correct price for your E-Book. Let's begin with honing in on your ultimate goals.

Decide if your goal is to get wide distribution and **maximum** exposure. This goal is aimed at drawing customers to your business or service, or to establishing the credibility of your reputation. If this is your main goal, you should aim to keep your price on the low side. Some authors have even priced their E-Books at a profit loss to draw a high number of new customers. The key is to find a price that maximizes your profits and the number of books you sell.

This is an excellent pricing strategy if you are looking to acquire long-term customers. Long-term customers are extremely likely to buy from you again and again as long as the first E-Book they buy is of exceptional quality and beneficial to the customer.

However, if your book contains valuable and more importantly NEW information, references, or techniques then you should aim to price it on the high end.

After you figure out your goal, you must figure out what your audience's need is for your E-Book. For example, does your book solve a particular problem? If it does, and solves it in a way that hasn't been written about in one hundred other E-Books, you will be able to achieve high sales at a high price. If your book solves a problem or answers questions in a new and unique way, you should price your book as high as you can go. You will achieve larger profits this way, but bring in fewer customers. Just make sure the question or problem that your book solves is one that is important and relevant to the majority of your market audience. If your ideas are not common knowledge, or you are presenting a brand new

technique, you will be able to sell books at a high price. Just be prepared for your competition to undercut you on price as soon as they hear about your book.

Keep in mind that the above pricing strategy is temporary. Eventually, you will cease to sell books at this high price. So figure out in advance how long you plan to offer your E-Book at this high price, and when that time is up, change your pricing strategy.

If you want to see large profits over customer draw, aim for an audience that is looking for easy solutions to their problems at a low price. If your book is aimed at solving one particular problem rather than general advice, then you can charge more. Start at the highest price the market will bear to bring in the largest profits, and plan to discount the book a number of times throughout the year.

Marketing Strategies

The key that unlocks the sales potential of your E-Book is to find a single sentence that becomes your selling handle. This sentence states what question or problem your book answers and the benefits your E-Book can provide. Then be sure to use that sentence in every piece of sales and promotional material, and every time anyone asks you about your E-Book.

Besides promoting your books assiduously online, there are several other strategies that can help you sell more books.

One is to give something away for free with your book, such as a valuable bonus item. Or bundle several E-Books under one price, which lowers the price for each E-Book if they were sold separately.

An effective technique for figuring out a price is to send out a survey to your current customers. If these customers have already bought an E-Book from you, ask for their opinion in terms of price. Do this by creating a sales page for the new book, but don't include a price on that page. Instead, add a number of links to survey questions that ask pointed questions to aid you in assigning a price to your E-Book.

Another strategy is to test out prices by creating a number of duplicate sales pages with different prices on each page. Make sure your sales copy is exactly the same on every page, and includes your selling-handle sentence. Then figure out

for each page the conversion ratio between visitors to your site and sales of your book. This will tell you what your optimum price is.

Ultimately, if you've written a book that solves a problem or presents a new technique, your book will bring in both traffic and profits. So be sure to write that selling-handle sentence that sums up what problem your book solves and what the benefits of your book will be to the customers who purchase it. And then watch your market come to you!

Steps to Publishing Success

Even if your best friend owns a top publishing company, giving you an immediate "in," this does not guarantee publishing success.

First, you have to write a quality book that has a clear target audience. And your book must answer a common problem or need that audience shares. Then you have to develop a marketing plan, and stick to it for at least two years.

Let's begin with the process that should commence before you write your first word. **Begin by reading A LOT.** Read both books you passionately love and books you can't seem to make it past page five. Then figure out what the author did in the book you loved, and what was wrong with in the book you couldn't finish. Write down these points so they are crystal clear to you. Read other people's books for inspiration and to discover what you should avoid as a writer.

The next step is to plan out your book. Narrow down your subject, and then divide it into chapters. Each chapter should address a specific aspect of the problem your book is going to solve. In each chapter, break the specific aspect down into several parts. This will help your readers take in your information a bit at a time instead of overwhelming them with every bit of information clogging up the pages until they feel like they're about to go blind. It's not quite spoon-feeding the information to your readers, but it's close.

The next two steps are obvious. **Write your book and then revise it. And then revise it again.** And perhaps again. Of course, writing is extremely hard, and writing a book can seem like an impossible task. There are many books out there that give you guidelines to help you become familiar - and even love - the process of writing and revision. Find a number of books about writing. Better yet, find a

number of books about writing the specific type of book you aspire to write. These can serve as roadmaps on your writing journey.

Once you've written your E-Book and revised it at least twice, **show it to someone else whose opinion you respect**. If you're lucky enough to know a good editor, see if you have something to barter for him or her to go through your manuscript. Or join a writing group and let the other members critique your work.

Then take all these ideas from other people, and revise your manuscript one last time. And then stop! Put down that pen! Get your hands off the keyboard!

One of the most important steps to actually producing a book is to know when to stop writing and tinkering with it.

You've finally written your E-Book! Pop open the bubbly! Give yourself a night out on the town!

Okay, now that this necessary celebration is out of your system, what do you do next?

How to turn your E-Book into Profits

E-Books are a revolutionary way to publish your book without incurring the costs of print production. All you need is a relevant and targeted subject and some inexpensive software, and you can transform your manuscript into a book.

The problem, in terms of actually seeing any profits from your E-Book, is that the market is overwhelmed with E-Books, and many of them are not worth the time it takes to download them. Just because the ability exists to easily produce an E-Book, doesn't make it good writing.

Make sure your book does not simply rehash old material. You will injure your credibility as an author by claiming to offer valuable new insights and disappointing your audience with material they've read a zillion times before. So spend enough time writing and revising your book to make sure it's of the highest quality and presents the most current information. A good book will eventually sell itself; false claims about your book will make it extremely difficult to sell any future books you may write.

Assuming you have determined that you do indeed have a quality product that answers some question or need of your target audience with NEW information, how do you know how much to charge for it? Rule number 1: Set a price for your book equal to its value. An under-priced book will only give the impression that your book isn't worth very much.

To figure out a fair price, estimate how much time you put into creating it and how difficult it was to transform the necessary information into understandable and engaging writing. Figure out how much your time and effort is worth, and then price it accordingly. The goal is for you to be adequately compensated for your talent, your time, and your effort.

Once you've figured out a price that is high enough to convey the value of the book, but not so high as to be out of the reach of your target audience's mean budget, then it's time to offer it for sale on your website. To attract sales, you will need to develop a promotional campaign, particularly if you are an unknown author.

There are multitudes of books about self-promotion that will guide you in your efforts. Choose a plan that is both creative and professional. Learn how to write a catchy yet informative press release, and send copies of your E-Book to sites that specialize in E-Book reviews.

Learn how to write powerful sales copy, or hire someone to write it for you. This is an essential. You absolutely need excellent sales copy to sell your book. Make sure the copy includes all the reasons your target audience needs your book, and the benefits they will derive from buying it.

Use graphics in your promotional materials. Beautiful graphics have the power to instantly convey the quality and value of your E-Book. Graphics can also convey the amount of valuable information the book contains, and your careful attention to detail. Professional graphics sell professional books. They reassure the customer that the product is what it claims to be.

Consider excerpting chapters for articles. You can offer these tidbits for free on your website as a sort of demo of your book. Include an order form for your E-Book at the end of the excerpted articles.

Finally, when you set-up your download link, make sure to simplify the process. It's a good idea to offer a few bonuses that make your book even more enticing to

purchase, but make sure the bonuses are valuable and high quality. Too many bonuses that are basically a load of useless stuff will compromise the impression your audience has of your E-Book. The goal is to convey to your audience that they are getting a quality product for a good deal. That means applying restraint, especially when it comes to adding bonus items. Too much free stuff offered diminishes your credibility.

Make sure your book is a quality product. Make sure it is relevant and current. Develop an effective marketing plan that includes excellent sales copy and excerpted articles. **Then offer your book for sale, and wait for your audience to discover you!**

The Little Affiliate Marketing Handbook

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The Little Affiliate Marketing Handbook

Affiliate Marketing Introduced

Being in the affiliate marketing business is **not that hard** now with the Internet at your disposal. It is **much easier** now compared to the days when people have to make use of the telephones and other mediums of information just to get the latest updates on the way their program is coming along.

So with technology at hand, and assuming that the affiliate is working from home, a day in his or her life would sound something like this...

Upon waking up and after having breakfast, the computer is turned on to check out new developments in the network. As far as the marketer is concerned there might be new things to update and statistics to keep track on.

The site design has to be revised. The marketer knows that a well-designed site can increase sign ups from visitors. It can also help in the affiliate's conversion rates.

That done, it is time to submit the affiliate program to directories that lists affiliate programs. These directories are means to attract people in joining your affiliate program. **A sure way of promoting the affiliate program!**

Time to track down the sales you are getting from your affiliates fairly and accurately. There are phone orders and mails to track down. See if they are new clients checking the products out. Noting down the contact information that might be a viable source in the future.

There are lots of resources to sort out. Ads, banners, button ads and sample recommendations to give out because the marketer knows that this is one way of ensuring more sales. Best to stay visible and accessible too.

The affiliate marketer remembered that there are questions to answer from the visitors. This has to be done quickly. Nothing can turn off a customer than an unanswered email.

To prove that the affiliate is working effectively and efficiently, inquiries would have to be paid more attention on. Nobody wants to be ignored and customers are not always the most patient of all people. Quick answer that should appear professional yet friendly too.

In the process of doing all the necessities, the marketer is logged on to a chat room where he or she interacts with other affiliates and those under that same program. This is where they can discuss things on how to best promote their products.

There are things to be learned and it is a continuous process. Sharing tips and advices is a good way of showing support. There may be others out there wanting to join and may be enticed by the discussion that is going on. There is no harm in assuming what opportunities ahead.

The newsletters and E-zines were updated days ago, so it is time for the affiliate marketer to see if there are some new things happening in the market. This will be written about in the marketer's publication to be distributed to the old and new customers.

These same publications are also an important tool in keeping up to date with the newly introduced products. The marketer has put up a sale and promotion that customers may want to know about. Besides, they have to keep up with the deadline of these sales written in the publications.

It is that time to show some appreciation to those who have helped the marketer in the promotions and sale increase. Nothing like mentioning the persons, their sites and the process they have done that made everything worked.

Of course, this will be published in the newsletters. Among the more important information that have been written already.

The marketer still has time to write out recommendations to those who want credible sources for the products being promoted. There is also time to post some comments on how to be a successful affiliate marketer on a site where there are lots of wannabes.

Two objectives done at the same time. The marketer gets to promote the product as well as the program they are in. Who knows, someone may be inclined to join.

Time flies. Missed lunch but is quite contented with the tasks done. Bed time....

Ok, so this may not be all done in a day. But then, this gives you an idea of how an affiliate marketer, a dedicated one that is, spends the marketing day.

Is that success looming in the distance or what?

The 3 Things All Affiliate Marketers Need To Survive Online

Now every affiliate marketer is always looking for the successful market that gives the biggest paycheck. Sometimes they think it is a magic formula that is readily available for them. Actually, it is more complicated than that. It is just good marketing practices that have been proven over years of hard work and dedication.

There are tactics that have worked before with online marketing and is continuing to work in the online affiliate marketing world of today. With these top three marketing tips, you will be able to increase your sales and survive in the affiliate marketing online.

What are these three tactics?

1. Using unique web pages to promote each separate product you are marketing.

Do not lump all of it together just to save some money on web hosting. It is best to have a site focusing on each and every product and nothing more.

Always include product reviews on the website so visitors will have an initial understanding on what the product can do to those who buys them. Also include testimonials from users who have already tried the product. Be sure that these customers are more than willing to allow you to use their names and photos on the site of the specific product you are marketing.

You can also write articles highlighting the uses of the product and include them on the website as an additional page. Make the pages attractive compelling and include calls to act on the information. Each headline should attract the readers to try and read more, even contact you. Highlight your special points. This will help your readers to learn what the page is about and will want to find out more.

2. Offer free reports to your readers.

If possible position them at the very top side of your page so it they simply cannot be missed. Try to create autoresponder messages that will be mailed to those who input their personal information into your sign up box. According to research, a sale is closed usually on the seventh contact with a prospect.

Only two things can possibly happen with the web page alone: closed sale or the prospect leaving the page and never return again. By placing useful information into their inboxes at certain specified period, you will remind them of the product they thought they want later and will find out that the sale is closed. Be sure that the content is directed toward specific reasons to buy the product. Do not make it sound like a sales pitch.

Focus on important points like how your product can make life and things easier and more enjoyable. Include compelling subject lines in the email. As much as possible, avoid using the word “free” because there are still older spam filters that dumps those kind of contents into the junk before even anyone reading them first. Convince those who signed up for your free reports that they will be missing something big if they do not avail of your products and services.

3. Get the kind of traffic that is targeted to your product.

Just think, if the person who visited your website has no interest whatsoever in what you are offering, they will be among those who move on and never come back. Write articles for publication in e-zines and e-reports. This way you can locate publications that is focusing on your target customers and what you have put up might just grab their interest.

Try to write a minimum of 2 articles per week, with at least 300-600 words in length. By continuously writing and maintaining these articles you can generate as many as 100 targeted readers to your site in a day.

Always remember that only 1 out of 100 people are likely to buy your product or get your services. If you can generate as much as 1,000 targeted hits for your website in a day, that means you can made 10 sales based on the average statistic.

The tactics given above does not really sound very difficult to do, if you think about it. It just requires a little time and an action plan on your part.

Try to use these tips for several affiliate marketing programs. You can end maintaining a good source of income and surviving in this business that not all marketers can do.

Besides, think of the huge paychecks you will be receiving!

How To Become A Super Affiliate In Niche Markets

Over the past years, web hosting has grown bigger than it used to be. With more companies getting into this business and finding the many benefits it can give them, the demand for web hosting has never been higher. These seem to be the trend of today.

38 million people have put up their very first websites online this year 2005 alone. It is estimated that by 2008, the Internet sales industry will top the dollar bank. And to think, majority of those sites will be offering different affiliate programs for people to choose and participate into.

This only means one thing. It is easier now to find the right web host for your application. The possibility of quality web hosting companies separating themselves from the rest of the industry is anticipated. If this is done, the unprofessional and incompetent ones will suffer.

Support will be the number one consideration for people when choosing a web host. It will be obvious that traditional advertising will become less and less effective. Most people would rather opt for the web host based on things that they see and hear. Also based on the recommendations by those who have tried them and have proved to be a successful.

This is a great opportunity for web hosting affiliates and resellers alike. There would hundreds of web hosting and programs to choose from that the difficulty in finding the right one for them is not a problem anymore.

How does one become a successful affiliate in the niche markets using web hosting?

If you think about it, everyone who needs a website needs a web hosting company to host it for them. As of now, there is really no leading hosting industry so most people choose hosts based from recommendations. Usually, they get it from the ones that have already availed of a web hosting services.

With the many hosts offering affiliate programs, there is the tendency to find the one which you think will work best for you. Think of the product you will be promoting. Pattern them to the site and see if they are catering to the same things as you are.

When you have been with one host for quite some time and seem not to be making much despite all your effort, leave that one and look for another. There is no use in trying to stick to one when you would be before off in another one. Things will only have to get better from there because you already have been in worst situations.

Try this out. If you are quite happy and satisfied with your web host, try to see if they are offering an affiliate program you can participate on. Instead of you paying them, why not make it the other way around; them paying you. The process can be as easy as putting a small “powered by” or “hosted by” link at the bottom of your page and you are already in an affiliate business.

Why choose paying for your for your web hosting when you do not have to? Try to get paid by letting people know you like your web host.

Always remember that when choosing a web host, choose the one that is known for its fantastic customer support. There are also many hosting affiliate programs. Residual affiliate program is also being hosted. This is the program wherein you get paid a percentage every month for a client that you refer. This can allow you to have a steady source of income. With perseverance, you can even be quite successful in this field.

There are a lot of niche markets out there just waiting for the right affiliate to penetrate to them and make that dollars dream come true. Knowing which one to get into is being confident enough of your potentials and the good results you will be getting.

Web hosting is just one affiliate market you could try out and make some good and continuous income. Just remember that to be successful on your endeavor also means that time, effort and patience is needed.

Nobody has invented the perfect affiliate market yet. But some people do know how to make it big in this kind of market. It is just knowing your kind of market and making the earnings there.

So Many Affiliate Programs! Which One Do I Choose?

Ask questions first before you join an affiliate program. Do a little research about the choices of program that you intend to join into. Get some answers because they will be the deciding point of what you will be achieving later on.

Will it cost you anything to join? Most affiliate programs being offered today are absolutely free of charge. So why settle for those that charge you some dollars before joining.

When do they issue the commission checks? Every program is different. Some issue their checks once a month, every quarter, etc. Select the one that is suited to your payment time choice. Many affiliate programs are setting a minimum earned commission amount that an affiliate must meet or exceed in order for their checks to be issued.

What is the hit per sale ratio? This is the average number of hits to a banner or text link it takes to generate a sale based on all affiliate statistics. This factor is extremely important because this will tell you how much traffic you must generate before you can earn a commission from the sale.

How are referrals from an affiliate's site tracked and for how long do they remain in the system? You need to be confident on the program enough to track those people you refer from your site. This is the only way that you can credit for a sale. The period of time that those people stay in the system is also important. This is because some visitors do not buy initially but may want to return later to make the purchase. Know if you will still get credit for the sale if it is done some months from a certain day.

What are the kinds of affiliate stats available? Your choice of affiliate program should be capable of offering detailed stats. They should be available online anytime you decide to check them out. Constantly checking your

individual stats is important to know how many impressions, hits and sales are already generated from your site. Impressions are the number of times the banner or text link was viewed by a visitor of your site. A hit is the one clicking on the banner or text links.

Does the affiliate program also pay for the hits and impressions besides the commissions on sales? It is important that impressions and hits are also paid, as this will add to the earnings you get from the sales commission. This is especially important if the program you are in offers low sales to be able to hit ratio.

Who is the online retailer? Find out whom you are doing business with to know if it is really a solid company. Know the products they are selling and the average amount they are achieving. The more you know about the retailer offering you the affiliate program, the easier it will be for you to know if that program is really for you and your site.

Is the affiliate a one tier or two tier program? A single tier program pays you only for the business you yourself have generated. A two tier program pays you for the business, plus it also pays you a commission on the on the sales generated by any affiliate you sponsor in your program. Some two-tier programs are even paying small fees on each new affiliate you sponsor. More like a recruitment fee.

Lastly, what is the amount of commission paid? 20% - 80% (and some cases, **100%**!) is the commission paid by most programs. .01% - .05% is the amount paid for each hit. If you find a program that also pays for impressions, the amount paid is not much at all. As you can see from the figures, you will now understand why the average sales amount and hit to sale ratio is important.

These are just some of the questions that needed answering first before you enter into an affiliate program. You should be familiar with the many important aspects that your chosen program should have before incorporating them into your website. Try to ask your affiliate program choices these questions. These can help you select the right program for you site from among the many available.

Which Affiliate Networks To Look Out For When Promoting

There are many horror stories about affiliate programs and networks. People have heard them over and over again, that some are even wary of joining one. The stories they may have heard are those related to illegal programs or pyramid schemes. Basically, this kind of market does not have real, worthy product.

You do not want to be associated with these schemes. It is obvious you want to be with a program that offers high quality product that you will readily endorse. The growing number of those who have joined already and are succeeding immensely is proof enough that there are reliable and quality affiliate programs out there.

Why participate in an affiliate program?

It allows you to work part-time. It gives you the opportunity to build a generous residual income. And it makes you an owner of a small business. Affiliate programs have already created lots of millionaires. They are the living testimony of how hard work; continuous prospecting, motivating and training others pay off.

If ever you are deciding to join one, you must take note that you are getting into something that is patterned to what you are capable of. This will be an assurance that you are capable of doing anything to come out successful.

How do you choose a good affiliate program to promote? Here are some tips you may want to look over before choosing one:

1. A program that you like and have interest in.

One of the best ways of knowing if that is the kind of program you wish to promote is if you are interested in purchasing the product yourself. If that is the case, chances are, there are many others who are also interested in the same program and products.

2. Look for a program that is of high quality.

For instance, look for one that is associated with many experts in that particular industry. This way, you are assured that of the standard of the program you will be joining into.

3. Join in the ones that offer real and viable products.

How do you know this? Do some initial research. If possible, track down some of the members and customers to give you testimonial on the credibility of the program.

4. The program that is catering to a growing target market.

This will ensure you that there will be more and continuous demands for your referrals. Make inquiries. There are forums and discussions you can participate in to get good and reliable feedbacks.

5. A program with a compensation plan that pays out a residual income and a payout of 40% or more would be a great choice.

There are some programs offering this kind of compensation. Look closely for one. Do not waste your time with programs that do not reward substantially for your efforts.

6. Be aware of the minimum quotas that you must fulfill or sales target that is too hard to achieve.

Some affiliate programs imposes pre-requisites before you get your commissions. Just be sure that you are capable of attaining their requirements.

7. Select one that has plenty of tools and resources that can help you grow the business in the shortest possible time.

Not all affiliate programs have these capacities. Make use you decide on one with lots of helpful tools you can use.

8. Check out if the program has a proven system that can allow you to check your networks and compensation.

Also check if they have it available online for you to check anytime and anywhere.

9. The program that is offering strong incentives for members to renew their membership each time.

The affiliate program that provides continuous help and upgrades for its products have the tendency to retain its members. These things can assure the growth of your networks.

10. Be aware of the things that members are not happy about in a program.

Like with the ones mentioned above, you can do your checking at discussion forums. If you know someone in that same program, there is no harm asking if there are many downsides involved.

Have a thorough and intensive knowledge about the affiliate program and network you will be promoting on.

Knowing the kind of program you are getting yourself into will make you anticipate and prevent any future problems you may encounter.

Easy Profits Using PPC In Your Affiliate Marketing Business

PPC or Pay-Per-Click in full is one of the four basic types of Search Engines. PPC is also one of the most cost-effective ways of targeted Internet advertising. According to Forbes magazine, PPC or Pay Per Click, **accounts to 2 billion dollars a year** and is expected to increase to around 8 billion dollars by the year 2008.

Let us take a quick look at how PPC Search Engines work.

These engines create listings and rate them based on a bid amount the website owner is willing to pay for each click from that search engine. Advertisers bid against each other to receive higher ranking for a specific keyword or phrase.

The highest bidder for a certain keyword or phrase will then have the site ranked as number 1 in the PPC Search Engines followed by the second and third highest bidder, up to the last number that have placed a bid on the same keyword or phrase. Your ads then will appear prominently on the results pages based on the dollar amount bid you will agree to pay per click.

How do you make money by using PPC into your affiliate marketing business?

Most affiliate programs only pay when a sale is made or a lead delivered after a visitor has clickthrough your site. Your earnings will not always be the same as they will be dependent on the web site content and the traffic market.

The reason why you should incorporate PPC into your affiliate marketing program is that earnings are easier to make than in any other kind of affiliate program not using PPC. This way, you will be making profit based from the clickthroughs that your visitor will make on the advertiser's site. Unlike some programs, you are not paid per sale or action.

PPC can be very resourceful of your website. With PPC Search Engines incorporated into your affiliate program, you will be able to profit from the visitor's who are not interested in your products or services. The same ones who leave your site and never comes back.

You will not only get commissions not only from those who are just searching the web and finding the products and services that they wanted but you will be able to build your site's recognition as a valuable resource. The visitors who have found what they needed from you site are likely to come back and review what you are offering more closely. Then they will eventually come back to search the web for other products.

This kind of affiliate program is also an easy way for you to generate some more additional revenues. For example, when a visitor on your site does a search in the PPC Search Engine and clicks on the advertiser bided listings, the advertisers' account will then be deducted because of that click. With this, you will be compensated 30% to 80% of the advertisers' bid amount.

PPC is not only a source of generating easy profits; it can also help you promote your own site. Most of the programs allow the commissions received to be spent for advertising with them instantly and with no minimum earning requirement. This is one of the more effective ways to exchange your raw visitors for targeted surfers who has more tendencies to purchase your products and services.

What will happen if you when you integrate PPC into your affiliate program?

PPC usually have ready-to-use affiliate tools that can be easily integrated into your website. The most common tools are search boxes, banners, text links and some 404-error pages. Most search engines utilize custom solutions and can

provide you with a white-label affiliate program. This enables you, using only a few lines of code, to integrate remotely-hosted co-branded search engine into your website.

The key benefits? Not only more money generated but also some extra money on the side. Plus a lifetime commissions once you have referred some webmaster friends to the engine.

Think about it. Where can you get all these benefits while already generating some income for your site? Knowing some of the more useful tools you can use for your affiliate program is not a waste of time. They are rather a means of earning within an earning.

Best know more about how you can use PPC search engines into your affiliate program than miss out on a great opportunity to earn more profits.

Using Product Recommendations To Increase Your Bottom Line

In affiliate marketing, there are many ways in which you can increase your earnings and maintain the account that you have worked so hard for already. Most of the techniques and tactics can be learned easily. No need to go anywhere and any further. They are available online, 24 hours a day and 7 days a week.

One of the more important ways of increasing affiliate marketing bottom line and sale is through the use of product recommendations. Many marketers know that this is one of the most effective ways in promoting a certain product.

If the customers or visitors trust you enough, then they will definitely trust your recommendations. Be very careful in using this approach, though. If you start promoting everything by recommendation, your credibility will actually wear thin. This is seen especially when recommendations are seemingly exaggerated and without much merit.

Do not be afraid to mention things that you do not like about a given product or service. Rather than lose any points for you, this will make your recommendation more realistic and will tend to increase your credibility.

Furthermore, if your visitors are really interested in what you are offering, they will be more than delighted to learn what is good about the product, what is not so good, and how the product will benefit them.

When you are recommending a certain product, there are some things to remember on how to make it work effectively and for your advantage. Sound like the true and leading expert in your field.

Remember this simple equation: Price resistance diminishes in direct proportion to trust. If your visitors feel and believe that you are an expert in your niche, they are more inclined to making that purchase. On the other hand, if you are not exuding any confidence and self-assurance in endorsing your products, they will probably feel that same way and will go in search of another product or service which is more believable.

How do you establish this aura of expertise? By offering unique and new solutions they would not get anywhere else. Show proof that what you are promoting works as promised. Display prominent testimonials and endorsements from respected and known personalities, in related fields of course.

Avoid hype at all costs. It is better to sound low key and confident, than to scream and seek attention. Besides, you would not want to sound unprofessional and have that thinking stick to your potential customers and clients, now would you? Best to appear cool and self-assured at the same time.

And remember; prospects are not stupid. They are actually turning to experts and may already know the things that you know. If you back up your claims with hard facts and data, they would gladly put down hundreds, or even thousands worth of money to your promotions. But if you don't, they are smart enough to try and look at your competitors and what they are offering.

While recommending a product, it is also important that you give out promotional freebies. People are already familiar with the concept of offering freebies to promoting your won products. But very few people do this to promote affiliate products. Try to offer freebies that can promote or even have some information about your products or services.

Before you add recommendations to you product, it is given that you should try and test the product and support. Do not run the risk of promoting junk products

and services. Just think how long it took you to build credibility and trust among your visitors. All that will take to destroy it is one big mistake on your part.

If possible, have recommendations of products that you have 100% confidence in. Test the product support before you begin to ensure that the people you are referring it to would not be left high and dry when a problem suddenly arouse.

Have a look at your affiliate market and look at the strategies you are using. You may not be focusing on the recommendations that your products need to have. Your plan of action is sometimes not the only thing that is making your program works.

Try product recommendation and be among those few who have proven its worth.

Using Camtasia to Increase Your Affiliate Checks

Since there are already lots of people getting into affiliate marketing, it is no wonder that the competition is getting stiff. The challenge is to try and outdo other affiliates and think of ways to be able to attain this.

There are also many tips and techniques being taught to these affiliate in order to best plan their strategy for their program to work effectively so that more earnings will be achieved.

What better way to wow your prospects and customers than to record and publish top notch, full motion and streaming screen-captured videos. Nothing like feeling your hard work getting paid by having your customers jumping up excitedly in great anticipation to buy your product right there and then.

This is Camtasia in action. It is a proven fact; giving your customers something they can actually see can explode your online sales instantly.

You do not need to have trainings and education to be able to know how this system can work for your affiliate program. Anyone can create stunning videos, from multimedia tutorials and step-by-step presentations available online. The process is like having your customers seated next to you and looking at your

desktop, as you show them the things they need to see and hear. All this done step by step.

For those who does not know it yet, how does Camtasia works?

1. **It can record your desktop activity in a single click.** No need to have to save and compile all your files because it is recorded right there and then.
2. **Can easily convert your videos into web pages.** Once converted you can have your customers visiting that certain page. Videos are easier to understand and take in unlike reading texts which oftentimes is a trying thing to do.
3. **Upload your pages.** Publish them through blogs, RSS feed and podcasts. You may want your Camtasis videos to get around and reach out to other people that may be potential customers in the future. Nothing like being visible in many sites and pages to advertise yourself and get your message through.

There are other things you can do with your affiliate program using Camtasia. You can...

Create stunning multimedia presentations that are proven to increase sales because all the senses are engaged. This also has the tendency to reduce skepticism among hard-to-please customers.

Reduce refunds and other customer issues by demonstrating visually how to use your product and how to do it properly. Complaints will also be minimized because all the facts and the presentation are there for the customers to just see and hear about.

Promote affiliate products and services using visual presentations. This is an effective way of redirecting your viewers straight to your affiliate website after they are finished with the video. Make the most of the presentation by putting your site location in the end and make them go there directly if they want more information.

Multiple your online auction bids exponentially when you give your readers a feel of what you have to offer. Based from reports, auctions that includes pictures

increases bidding percentage by 400%. Imagine how much higher it will be if it were videos.

Publish valuable infoproducts that you can sell for a much higher price. It will be all worth the price because of the full colored graphics menu and templates that you will be using.

Minimize miscommunication with your customers. Instantly showing them what you want they wanted in the first place is making them understand clearly the essence of your affiliate program. The good thing about multimedia is, nothing much can go wrong. It is there already.

These are just some of the things you can do with Camtasia that can be very helpful in your chosen affiliate program.

Note that the main purpose of using Camtasia is to boost the income that is generated from your affiliate program. Although it can be used for entertainment and enjoyment purposes, which is not really a valid reason why you choose to get all through that trouble.

Try to focus on the goal that you have set upon yourself to and achieve that with the use of the things that may be quite a lot of help in increasing your earnings.

Top 3 Ways To Boost Your Affiliate Commissions Overnight

The ideal world of affiliate marketing does not require having your own website, dealing with customers, refunds, product development and maintenance. This is one of the easiest ways of launching into an online business and earning more profits.

Assuming you are already into an affiliate program, what would be the next thing you would want to do? Double, or even triple, your commissions, right? How do you do that?

Here are some powerful tips on how to boost your affiliate program commissions overnight.

1. Know the best program and products to promote.

Obviously, you would want to promote a program that will enable you to achieve the greatest profits in the shortest possible time.

There are several factors to consider in selecting such a program. Choose the ones that have a generous commission structure. Have products that fit in with your target audience. And that has a solid track record of paying their affiliate easily and on time. If you cannot seem to increase your investments, dump that program and keep looking for better ones.

There are thousands of affiliate programs online which gives you the reason to be picky. You may want to select the best to avoid losing your advertising dollars.

Write free reports or short E-Books to distribute from your site. There is a great possibility that you are competing with other affiliates that are promoting the same program. If you start writing short report related to the product you are promoting, you will be able to distinguish yourself from the other affiliates.

In the reports, provide some valuable information for free. If possible, add some recommendations about the products. With E-Books, you get credibility. Customers will see that in you and they will be enticed to try out what you are offering.

2. Collect and save the email addresses of those who download your free E-Books.

It is a known fact that people do not make a purchase on the first solicitation. You may want to send out your message more than six times to make a sale.

This is the simple reason why you should collect the contact information of those who downloaded your reports and E-Books. You can make follow-ups on these contacts to remind them to make a purchase from you.

Get the contact information of a prospect before sending them to the vendor's website. Keep in mind that you are providing free advertisement for the product owners. You get paid only when you make a sale. If you send prospects directly to the vendors, chances are they would be lost to you forever.

But when you get their names, you can always send other marketing messages to them to be able to earn an ongoing commission instead of a one-time sale only.

Publish an online newsletter or E-zine. It is always best to recommend a product to someone you know than to sell to a stranger. This is the purpose behind publishing your own newsletter. This also allows you to develop a relationship based on trust with your subscribers.

This strategy is a delicate balance between providing useful information with a sales pitch. If you continue to write informative editorials you will be able to build a sense of reciprocity in your readers that may lead them to support you by buying your products.

3. Ask for higher than normal commission from merchants.

If you are already successful with a particular promotion, you should try and approach the merchant and negotiate a percentage commission for your sales.

If the merchant is smart, he or she will likely grant your request rather than lose a valuable asset in you. Keep in mind that you are a zero-risk investment to your merchant; so do not be shy about requesting for addition in your commissions. Just try to be reasonable about it.

Write strong pay Per Click ads. PPC search engine is the most effective means of advertising online. As an affiliate, you can make a small income just by managing PPC campaigns such as Google AdWords and Overture. Then you should try and monitor them to see which ads are more effective and which ones to dispose of.

Try out these strategies and see the difference it can make to your commission checks in the shortest of time.

How To Avoid The 3 Most Common Affiliate Mistakes

As the handbook draws to a near end and closing publication, here are some hazard signs and dangerous waters you shouldn't be treading on in the affiliate marketing scene!

So listen up...

Affiliate marketing is one of the most effective and powerful ways of earning some money online. This program gives everybody a chance to make a profit through the Internet. Since these affiliate marketing programs are easy to join, implement and pays a commission on a regular basis, more and more people are now willing in this business.

However, like all businesses, there are lots of pitfalls in the affiliate marketing business. Committing some of the most common mistakes will cost the marketers a large portion taken from the profit they are making everyday. That is why it is better to avoid them than be regretful in the end.

Mistake number 1: Choosing the wrong affiliate.

Many people want to earn from affiliate marketing as fast as possible. In their rush to be part of one, they tend to choose a bandwagon product. This is the kind of products that the program thinks is “hot”. They choose the product that is in demand without actually considering if the product appeals to them. This is not a very wise move obviously.

Instead of jumping on the bandwagon, try to choose a product in which you are truly interested in. For any endeavor to succeed, you should take some time to plan and figure out your actions.

Pick a product that appeals to you. Then do some research about that product to see if they are in demand. Promoting a product you are more passionate about is easier than promoting one for the sake of the earnings only.

Mistake number 2: Joining too many affiliate programs.

Since affiliate programs are very easy to join, you might be tempted to join multiples of affiliate programs to try and maximize the earnings you will be getting. Besides you may think that there is nothing wrong and nothing to lose by being part of many affiliate programs.

True, that is a great way to have multiple sources of income. However, joining multiple programs and attempting to promote them all at the same time will prevent you from concentrating on each one of them.

The result? The maximum potential of your affiliate program is not realized and the income generated will not exactly be as huge as you were thinking initially it would. The best way to get excellent result is by joining just one program that pays a 40% commission at least. Then give it your best effort by promoting your products enthusiastically. As soon as you see that it is already making a reasonable profit, then maybe you can now join another affiliate program.

The technique is to do it slowly but surely. There is really no need to rush into things, especially with affiliate marketing. With the way things are going, the future is looking real bright and it seems affiliate marketing will be staying for a long time too.

Mistake number 3: Not buying the product or using the service.

As an affiliate, your main purpose is to effectively and convincingly promote a product or service and to find customers. For you to achieve this purpose, you must be able to relay to the customers that certain product and service. It is therefore difficult for you to do this when you yourself have not tried these things out. Thus, you will fail to promote and recommend them convincingly. You will also fail to create a desire in your customers to avail any of what you are offering.

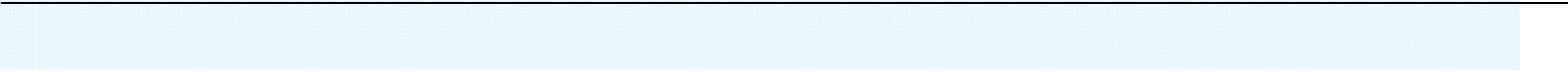
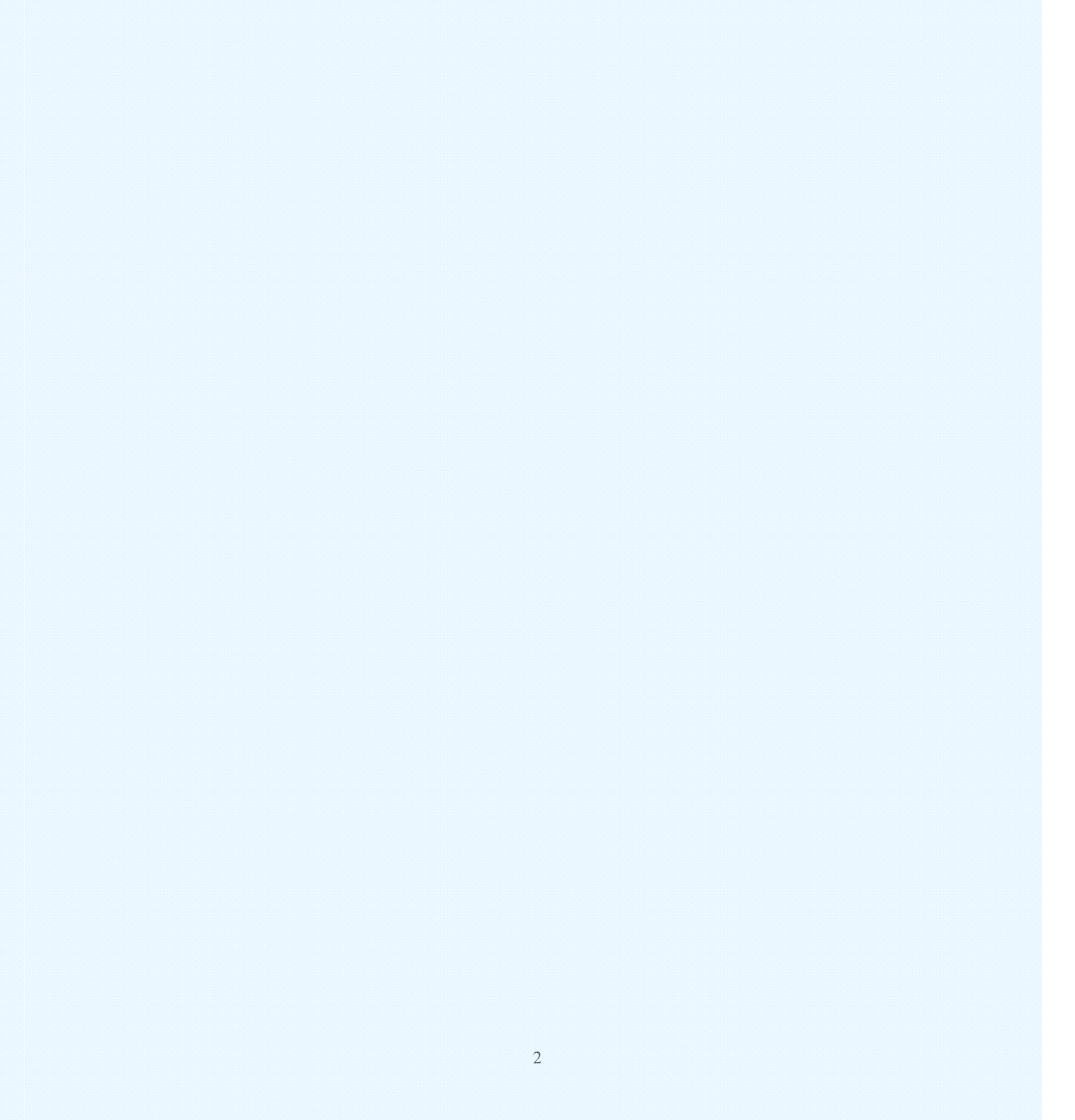
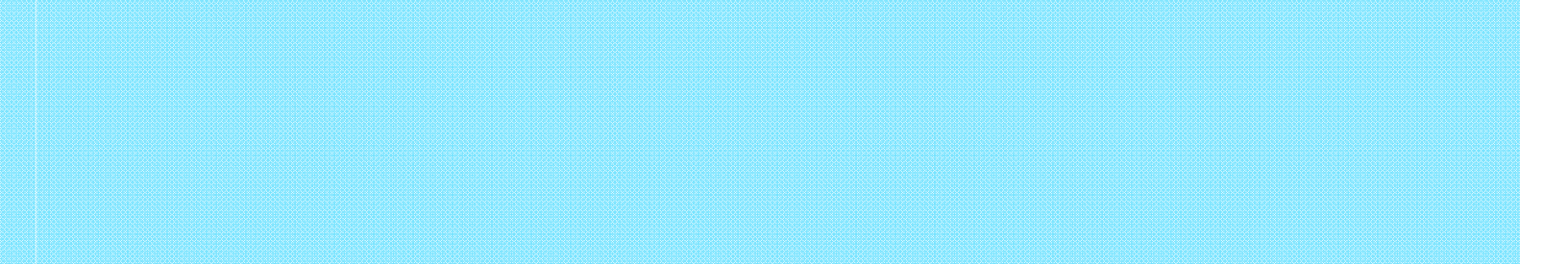
Try the product or service personally first before you sign up as an affiliate to see if it is really delivering what it promises. If you have done so, then you are one of the credible and living testaments aware of its advantages and disadvantages. Your customers will then feel the sincerity and truthfulness in you and this will trigger them to try them out for themselves.

Many affiliate marketers make these mistakes and are paying dearly for their actions. To not fall into the same situation they have been in, try to do everything to avoid making the same mistakes.

Time is the key. Take the time to analyze your marketing strategy and check if you are in the right track. If done properly, you will be able to maximize your affiliate marketing program and earn higher profits.

Resource Guide

*Michael Vincent's
Online Wealth Course
Volume I*



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Insert photo

Hi, my name is Michael Vincent and a few years ago, I discovered the secret to making a fortune on the Internet. Now I'm going to share that secret with you.

When I first started working on the Web, I never dreamed I could make the kind of money I'm making today. To be honest, I didn't even intend to. At first, I just wanted a bit of extra cash to supplement my real job and maybe put a little money aside for the future. But what I discovered amazed me! Within just a few short months, my little online business was raking in thousands of dollars every day! I was making more every two months with my Internet marketing programs than I was earning each year sitting in my office making profits for my boss.

As you can imagine, it wasn't long before I decided to ditch the suit and start working for myself full-time. Now, I have a completely automated marketing system set up on the Web. Each week, I spend just a few hours checking that the system is working properly, and the rest of the time I'm cashing the checks and spending the money.

It really is that easy!

But while the money is great, the best thing about working on the Web is the freedom. I'm not just making more money than I ever thought I would earn—*unlike my other high-income friends I've actually got the time to enjoy it.*

That's a feeling money just can't buy!

Now, I didn't achieve any of this by doing a Ph.D. in programming or by following Bill Gates around for twenty years. When I built my first website all I knew about my computer was how turn it on. Today, I know how to turn it off too. I still know nothing about programming and even less about technology. I've got no idea what speed my computer runs at, and I wouldn't even know how to check it.

The fact is, to make money on the Web all you need is a few simple tools and the will to get up and do it.

It's not about intelligence or education or who you know. It's purely about how much you're prepared to put in the time at the beginning to build the system and keep it running.

With this book and your determination, you have everything you need to kick your day job and earn a real income by yourself, at home, on the Web.

Forget everything you've heard before!

Introduction

In this book, I'm not going to give you some airy-fairy theory about what should work if everything clicks the way I think it should. That's the kind of rubbish you can read in any one of a thousand marketing books sitting on the shelves of Barnes and Noble. The fact is, I doubt if a single one of those authors has sold anything online except copies of their book on Amazon.

Here's my first piece of advice: don't listen to advice from someone who hasn't been there and done it themselves!

This is absolutely crucial. If you look around the Web or in your local bookstore you're going to find a ton of hype about how you can become a millionaire with nothing more than a keyboard and a mouse. There are people out there who will tell you can get rich with no effort, no work and no investment. There are even some who will try to sell you pyramid schemes, get-rich-quick plans and every other kind of scam you can imagine. And people actually buy them. At the first sign of a chance to pick up instant cash, people whip out their wallets and give away their life savings. I'm sure you're smarter than that.

But it's not just the straightforward frauds you have to watch out for. The Internet changes almost every day. Unless someone is actually earning their living on the Web day in, day out, by the time they've finished explaining how to make money on the Internet, chances are, their advice is out of date.

Like I said, I didn't set out to make a fortune on the Web. I just figured it might give me an extra hundred bucks or so a week to make my life a little better. But like any successful businessman, I ditched what didn't work and did more of what did. If I saw something that I thought would bring in extra cash, I put up a website and gave it a try.

The fact that it's so easy to create a Web business was what really did it for me. If I wanted to take advantage of an opportunity, it cost me next to nothing to try and I lost little if it failed.

It wasn't long before I knew exactly how to find the right products and bring them to the right customers.

That's what I'm going to show you in this book. I'm not going to give you any strange theories or fancy ideas. I'm just going to tell you *exactly* what I did—and *what I'm still doing!*—so that you can do the exact same thing.

Of course, I can't guarantee that you'll have the exact same results as me. Heck,

I bet if I were starting from scratch today I'd have different results too. I might even have better results. All I can do is tell you what I did and explain precisely how I did it. My system works for me; I can't think of a single reason why it shouldn't work for you too.

Do You Have What It Takes To Be An E-Entrepreneur?

Before you even turn on your computer though, the first question you have to ask yourself is whether you're cut out for this kind of work.

The fact is, building a home-based business isn't for everyone. Some people like the commute. They enjoy having a boss who tells them what to do, and they like the routine of working nine-to-five for a bog-standard salary than can barely pay the mortgage. Personally, I think they're nuts.

More reasonably, there are people who are concerned about the risk of starting up their own business. They're not sure it's worth the investment of time and money, and they're scared of the responsibility that comes with running their own company. They wonder if there isn't another way to escape the rat race.

I'm sure there is. You could win the lottery or wait for your Aunt Betty to keel over and leave you her condo. Maybe you could sit down with a pen and paper and draw the blueprint for The Next Big Thing. Anything can happen.

For me, what happened was creating a successful, self-running Internet marketing system. It didn't happen without effort. It didn't happen without at least some initial investment of both time and money. And it doesn't happen now without me having to make sure that the taxes are filed and the paperwork done. But it happened. I'm my own boss. I work from home according to my own schedule and I get to pocket *all* the cash my business makes. If you're prepared to give an e-business the time, the work and the money it needs to get started and get growing, it should happen for you too.

The Internet—Your Business Tool

In effect, my system is built on three foundations: the Internet, marketing and the product.

In this book, we are going to look closely at each one of those. In particular, we'll spend a lot of time talking about the marketing because this really is what the Internet does best.

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Let's just begin by taking a quick glance at why the Internet is the greatest business opportunity since the railroad.

The Internet actually started in 1969 as the ARPANET, a Defense Department system designed to let survivors share files after a nuclear attack. From a handful of top secret computers, it's grown to fill more than 10 million hosts and millions of domain names.

And it's still growing. According to a recent survey, the volume of Internet traffic is expected to double annually over the next five years. Consumers are expected to account for 60 percent of all Internet traffic over that period with the rest of the market made up of business users.

What does that mean for you?

It means customers—millions of them.

*No other business tool can put the products you sell to so many people so easily.
Nothing even comes close.*

We're talking about a potential market of 340 million people around the world who can buy your products 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. If you opened a store on your high street, how many people would walk past your window each month? If you live in Manhattan, maybe a few thousand. If you live in Los Olivos, Ca. maybe a few hundred. On the Internet, there's no limit to the number of people you can bring through your store front wherever you live.

That's the power of the Internet. That's why my online business is bringing in between \$1,500 and \$2,000 *every day*. I bring in a lot of customers and I shift a lot of goods.

The Right Product Sells Itself

In fact, for many of my online businesses, my customers *are* my goods. When you join an affiliate program, you buy traffic from other sites and pass them onto your partners for a profit. In this book you'll learn all about affiliate programs.

It'll show you how to build them, how to select your partners and how to turn your traffic into cash.

But traffic is just one kind of product on the Web. Information products are amongst some of the greatest money-spinners currently churning up dollars on the Net. And anyone can create an information product.

Imagine you know how to build a bookcase from scratch. That already makes you a lot more knowledgeable than me—the only thing I know about wood is that it looks great in my fireplace! Maybe one person in a thousand will want to know how to build the kind of bookcase you know how to build. If you're not a well-known carpenter, no publishing company is going to touch you. It's just not worth the marketing. On the Web, one person in a thousand gives you a potential market of 340,000 customers. If you write a book and sell it on the Web for just \$10 per copy you could make as much as \$3,400,000. All you have to do is tell people what you know—and tell them it's out there. And that costs next to nothing.

Make a list of what kinds of product you would like to sell. Be specific.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

The Eternal, Changing Business Plan

Of course, it's communication that's the key. The more people you can bring to your websites the more money you're going to make.

You can have the greatest products in the world sold on the most beautifully designed site on the Web, but if no-one knows where it is, you're just going to be wasting the twenty bucks or so you're spending each year on the host.

There are a dozen different ways to bring people to your businesses. This book

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will discuss about the ones that are most effective. I'm sure there are other ways too. I'm sure you'll find people who will tell you that this site is great or that method gave them results. Maybe they're right, and you're welcome to try them. What I can tell you is that I've tried a lot of different methods and these are the ones that worked for me.

That doesn't necessarily mean that they *will* work for you. If there's one piece of advice regarding online marketing that you learn from this book it's that *marketing has to be flexible*. Like I said, I tried a dozen different methods. If I hadn't kept a constant watch on how those methods were working, if I hadn't dropped those that weren't worth the effort and repeated my success with those that brought in cash, I'd still be sitting at my desk, wearing a tie and taking orders from my boss.

I'll tell you about the methods that I found consistently effective. If they don't work for your product, give it a little time then switch the methods around.

In the first chapter of this book, I'm going to explain exactly what you have to do to build a website—from selecting a host to mapping the design. Once you've got your site up, you have to bring traffic, and that's what I look at next. I'll reveal the secrets of successful search engine optimization, how to buy advertising that pays, and how to make the most of the millions of affiliate programs that will pay real dollars for users you've never met and never will.

I'll also examine the various kinds of products you can create and sell online, and finally, I'll show you how to put everything together to create a truly integrated business system that brings in real cash, hour after hour, day after day!

Making a fortune on the Web is easy. Simply read this book and employ the methods I teach. I know it works because I've done it. Whether you choose to do it too, is entirely up to you.

The Benefits Of Internet Marketing – Why Is Internet Marketing Effective?

Internet is the one medium, which can be used to reach every city and every country over the globe. It means businesses do not just have to concentrate on local markets - nothing is impossible. If a business has a web site, this in itself means it is accessible by the global market and domestic market alike, and it is vital that businesses take advantage of this.

Besides, Internet is a very cost effective medium for not only new businesses but also existing ones. It offers excellent convenience to the prospective customer. An added advantage of having a website is that a company can rope in customers

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24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

The only effective way for small and medium sized businesses to market globally as well as domestically is via the Internet, and it is important that they do this effectively. Normal media advertising and promotion (such as through the press, radio and local promotions) cannot reach so many remote visitors as marketing on the Internet can. If done correctly, the sky can be the limit.

Not surprisingly, marketing has in recent times taken on a completely new media avenue, which has more power and effect than any of the traditional marketing avenues. This new avenue, which cannot be ignored in the 21st century, is the Internet. Internet marketing has become the way of the future, with successful businesses using it to advertise, promote, sell, place commercials and undertake public relations.

According to a research study conducted during December 2002 by Aberdeen, consumers purchased more than \$4.5 billion in goods and services online — \$1 billion more than the same period in 2001.

Interestingly, many studies conducted indicate that corporate America continues to disregard problems plaguing its collective Web presence. Brand switching is easier than ever before, and companies that ignore signs suggesting that the online channel is quickly becoming the channel of choice, especially among younger consumers who will constitute the markets of tomorrow are placing their brand equity at risk.

Internet Marketing is a progression of steps for qualifying a prospect by capitalizing on the power of the web. To create an Internet presence that will become a company's most effective sales tool with consulting services, making sensible investments in Internet marketing such as Search Engine Optimization and Marketing, Webcasts, Email Campaigns, ROI tracking and measurement and other forms of promotion is essential.

Why businesses need to know how to market your products or services leveraging the power of the Internet?

The number of new Internet businesses starting each year globally and specifically in the U.S. create a sizeable market. Often, an entrepreneur starts such a business with a solid idea for selling through the web, but little experience in creating the formal web promotion strategies or marketing deliverables necessary to turn their idea into a successful business. With recent IPOs giving

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back much of their initial valuation, companies are now being forced to demonstrate profitable business models in order to maintain strong valuations. Venture capitalists need to focus on making their existing companies successful instead of simply prospecting for the next great idea. To accomplish this, founders need to effectively define and communicate their value propositions. Since this is not a core competency for many entrepreneurs, there is an opportunity to provide this skill set through outsourcing arrangements. Additionally, founders need experience in Internet marketing to exploit market opportunities and create early revenue wins.

The benefits that the Internet offers to the world of business and commerce are numerous both in terms of the reach it offers to take your message beyond the confines of your geography as well as the efficiencies that it brings to transactions through speed and reduced costs. In order to use this potential to advantage, you have to attract visitors to your site and tell them about your offering and you have to spur them to action. You have to engage their attention and convert these leads to prospects. A whole new science has emerged defining the rules and practices of promoting your online presence, generating leads and converting them to prospects.

There are just too many vying for the visitors' attention and the market is flooded with tips and techniques of bringing visitors to your site. Several large players can afford to appoint marketing specialists in the Internet media and can lay down budgets running into several hundred thousand dollars each. It is the small and the medium sized enterprise that is looking for cost effective solutions. Individual efforts are just too costly and the landscape is ever changing. You could use the services of professionals who have the experience and the insight about what strategies fit what business needs. Or you could do it yourself. If you do not have money to burn and you are willing to learn various techniques, you could do a great job of promoting your site. After all, selecting the right professional, laying down the scope of work, setting metrics to determine if the services have led to commensurate results and setting an optimum price for the services are complex matters. They do not come easy, and more often than not, you rush into things and regret your move later on.

Let us see how a professional marketing consultant in the area of Internet marketing presents their services. This gives you an insight into the professional way of marketing online.

If a small enterprise wants to promote its online business or message, it can spend weeks trying to understand the techniques and then experiment with them. Do you just submit to specific search engines or go for pay per click advertising. Do you go for e-mail campaigns using opt-in lists or do you go for affiliate marketing? Where do you get relevant and genuine opt-in subscribers? Should

you stuff your site with keywords? Even if you do manage to bring visitors, how do you ensure it impacts bottom line? How do you convert visitors to profits? Does anyone in the enterprise have the time to read and analyze options and follow them up logically to bring measurable results?

ABC has invested extensive resources in developing a well-honed marketing and promotion methodology. This methodology is intended to systematize the mechanics of assessing the customer's business objectives and current web presence and evolving and implementing strategies to elevate their effectiveness over the web to a new level. The entire process has been laid out in a series of analytical and action steps that are well documented. The Company has many trained specialists in this methodology. When they have to devise a road map for the customer, they – with the process template in hand – lay out the current practices adopted by the customer. They establish key performance indicators (KPIs) and gain agreement on baseline levels. Then the specialists perform a thorough evaluation to redesign the strategy. New and improved KPIs are developed and a first-cut business case is prepared. The customer is handed a comprehensive and detailed proposal.

ABC can thus help move the customer's organization from comparative advantage to competitive advantage.

This is your role model, when you are out there trying to achieve it by yourself.

Internet has become a major medium for businesses. Recent studies indicate that worldwide e-commerce will generate \$2.6 trillion in revenue by 2004 -- a rise from \$280 billion in 2000. IDC predicts that by that time, \$1.2 trillion of B2B revenue will come from e-marketplaces.

Gartner Inc. forecasts that the worldwide Internet commerce market should total \$919 billion in 2001 \$1.9 trillion in 2002 and \$8.5 trillion in 2005. Gartner also reports that in 2000, the value of global B2B sales transactions was over \$433 billion, a 189% increase over 1999 figures.

Considering such staggering figures, it is absolutely vital for smaller and midsize companies to not only have a presence on the Internet but also to attract customers to their websites by employing proven strategies. The need for Internet marketing services is rising enormously.

The effectiveness of online advertising and marketing is being recognized by more and more businesses. The total online advertising market in the US has been projected to be between \$ 6.4 and \$ 8.7 billion in 2002, according to research figures put out by eMarketer and Gartner Dataquest respectively.

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1. Getting Started

The first step towards creating an online business is building a website. Now, that isn't as complicated as it sounds. When I built my first website, I thought Java was a type of coffee and HTML the name of a robot in Star Wars. That's why I didn't do it. I paid someone else to do it for me. It cost me just a few hundred bucks, but I earned it back in the first few days. This chapter discusses how to begin the process of creating your first site, and where you can find someone to build your site if you don't want to do it yourself.

1.1 Making Your Website Attractive, Interesting, Engaging And Interactive

To succeed at your online business (whether you are selling your own product/service or are selling for other merchants as an affiliate), you need a Web site created just for that - a simple, focused site. One that is easy to build, maintenance-free, low cost, credible, and a powerful traffic-builder and customer-converter.

Having the right tool and the right product alone doesn't insure the success of your website. There are many factors to be considered while designing a site. Unfortunately, most of these are easily ignored by Internet business owners.

Build It for Speed - It's a fact of modern life - people are in a hurry. This means that you have between 10 and 30 seconds to capture your potential customer's attention. To minimize your load time, keep graphics small. Compress them where possible. Use flashy technology (JavaScript, Flash, Streaming Audio/Video, animation) sparingly and only if it is important to your presentation.

Target your Market - Know who your market is and make certain that your site caters to their needs. It is critical that your site reflect the values of your potential customers. Is your market mostly business professionals? If so, the site must be clean and professional. Is your product aimed mostly a teenagers and young adults? Then your site could be more informal and relaxed. The key here is to know your market and build the site to their preferences.

Focus the Site - Make certain your web site is focused on the goal, selling your product or



service. A site offering many unrelated products is not necessarily unfocused, but this is often the case. If your business does offer many products, dedicate a unique page for each instead of trying to sell them all from one page.

Credibility Is Crucial - The most professionally designed site won't sell if your customers don't believe in you. A clear privacy statement is one way to build your credibility. Provide a prominent link to your privacy statement from every page on the site as well as from any location that you are asking your visitors for personal information. Provide legitimate contact information on line.

Navigation should be simple - Make site navigation easy and intuitive. Simple and smooth navigation adds to the convenience of the visitors. Add powerful search and catalog features. Many times a lot of visitors do not have the patience to navigate through the whole website to find what they are looking for.

Consistency is the key - Make sure the site is consistent in look, feel and design. Nothing is more jarring and disturbing to a customer than feeling as if they have just gone to another site. Keep colors and themes constant throughout the site.

Make your site interactive and personalized – Make your website interactive. Add feedback forms as well as email forms that allow your prospective customers to ask you any questions they might have pertaining to a product. Personalization of your website is another key element that can lead to customer delight and can increase your sales. Personalization technology provides you the analytic tools to facilitate cross-selling and up-selling when the customer is buying online. It would give you an idea of what products to cross-sell and up-sell. For example, when a person buys a CD player, a disc cleaner can also be offered.

Content is King - Good content sells a product. Ask yourself the following questions. Does your copy convey the message you wish to get across to your visitors? Is it compelling? Does it lead your visitor through the sales process? Have others review, critique and edit your copy to insure it is delivering the intended message. Always double check your spelling and grammar.

1.2 Navigation

The aim of a web site's navigation is simply to allow users to get to the content they require. For sites that have a large number of sections and web pages (and information sites can be one of these) the navigation plan has to be properly researched and designed. You have to consider different types of visitors and simulate the most common steps they would take to find what they want on your site and the navigation plan has to optimize this movement. For example the steps required from searching a catalog of items, selecting from the catalog,

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adding them to a shopping cart, proceeding to check out, to entering the payment particulars is a specific sequence that should be facilitated by the navigation system. If the sequence is haphazard, it could lead to frustration or the user may miss an important step and you would have an aborted sale.

To find their way about, users need to know two things:

- ✦ Where they are now
- ✦ How to go elsewhere

Navigation does not exist in isolation; good site organization is a prerequisite for a coherent navigation system.

Objectives Of A Navigation System

Navigation can be broken into two primary types, Location Indicators and Navigation Controls

Location Indicators

Location indicators let users know where they are in the site at the moment. It needs to be borne in mind that users coming from outside your site can enter at any page, not necessarily on a 'main' page. They need to be able to orientate themselves.

Equally it is important that users navigating around your site have a clear idea of where they are both in absolute terms and in relation to other content.

Location information should appear on every page of the site, in the same place and in the same style. Location indicators should tell the user precisely where they are and this should be clear even to a user who has entered the site at an internal page. The location indicator should be identifiable for what it is and make sense in the context of other navigation.

In simple sites a page banner - text or graphic - naming the page will be sufficient. For this to work the page name should also appear in the main navigation so that it is relevant within the overall structure of the site.

Color can be used. For example a different color background, contrast color or sidebar in each part of the site. To be really effective the color change should be reflected in the navigation.

Using 'breadcrumbs' on every page is a good idea. Breadcrumbs show you a



series of hierarchical links that you have used to go from page to page within a section. Using breadcrumbs is like leaving a trail of the path you have followed. The breadcrumbs appear at the top of the content section, just below the main navigation template. Each element in the breadcrumb is a link to that section or subsection. This helps in avoiding a series of back buttons allowing the user to directly go back to the main section page or another sub section. More importantly, it always shows the context of the page that is being viewed and how it belongs to a section or sub-section.

Navigation Controls

Navigation controls are the main navigation links; they allow users to move around the site. Whether they comprise images or text they should be predictably located in the same place, and with the same appearance, on each page.

These have several purposes

- ✦ To allow users to move about within the site
- ✦ To tell users what information is available at the link
- ✦ To work with location indicators to orientate users

A good navigation control:

- ✦ Is clear: it looks like navigation
- ✦ Leads to obvious content - users have a good idea what they will find if they click
- ✦ Is consistent with other navigation controls
- ✦ Is predictable in its style and location on the page

There is no mystery to usability. It simply involves creating a site, which is accessible to the majority of people, is easy to use and get around and delivers on its promises. You can have a site that meets the most important standards of usability by planning it well and always keeping the end user in mind. Remember that web sites should not be designed for their owners - they should be designed for their users.

Problems with usability could be said to stem from just two sources: the site itself and the user. In fact the site is always at fault; if a user, however experienced or inexperienced, has problems navigating, getting information or understanding the site.

While websites have become far more complex, web users have become less rather than more experienced as more and more people go online. It is a mistake

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to think that the majority of users will be web or even computer savvy and will understand subtle clues about content. Most will not.

1.3 Defining A Usable Site

A usable site will:

- ✦ Help users achieve a goal, usually to find something, such as information, or obtain something, such as a book.
- ✦ Make it easy for them to achieve that goal
- ✦ Make it possible to achieve the goal quickly
- ✦ Make achieving that goal a pleasant experience

A site will be generally usable if:

- ✦ The content is good and relevant
- ✦ The content is easy to find
- ✦ The content can be found quickly
- ✦ The page is pleasant to look at and cleanly designed

1.3.1 Good Content

A site with good content, regardless of its subject, is one that provides products or information that is useful or beneficial to users. A good usable site will make it clear what information or content is available and at what price AND what is not available. A good usable site should define clearly all subscription packages offered.

1.3.2 Ease Of Access To Information

Good navigation, precise location indicators, secondary navigation, clear linked text and a well organized structure all contribute to making information easy to find for a wide range of different users. This is discussed earlier.

Bearing in mind that many users are inexperienced, it may be necessary to include explanations of things you consider self-explanatory. For example, an inexperienced user may need an explanation of how to use a drop down menu.

1.3.3 Quick Access To Information

This is the aim of the majority of web users. It can be broken into two important aspects:

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Speed of page loading

This requires, in particular, attention to images to ensure they are properly optimized and do not excessively delay load time. It may also mean breaking up long articles and ensuring that important content is at the top of the page where it will load first.

Speed of Access to content

This is where the much-vaunted **3-click rule** comes in - no important content should be more than 3 clicks from the home page. Some standards even say that it should be no more than two clicks.

One helpful way to speed access to content is to consider each type of user, select the content that they are most likely to be interested in and create links from the home page to one piece of content for each group. This will get them quickly to the appropriate part of the site.

1.3.4 Cleanly Designed Pages

Cleanly designed pages are pleasant to look at and easy to read. It is almost impossible to make a site with an image shown as a tiled background usable - the whole thing is too distracting and confusing. It takes no great design skills to create clean pages; it just requires thought and adherence to the principle that when it comes to design, less usually is more.

1.3.5 Download Status

Most paid membership websites are limited to online access and information download rather than selling products. There should be clear download instructions. In case of information download, it is crucial that you show a download bar and the download status. Many websites offer huge files for download but while the user is downloading he/she has no idea of the status of the download or the speed of the download. This is very frustrating especially in the case of larger files and often you'd see users canceling the download midway and leaving the website. Your website should also state the size of the file in kilobytes and the estimated time of download for a user having a 56K modem, DSL, Cable and so on.

1.3.6 Usability Problems

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While for large commercial sites investment in full-scale usability studies may be not just useful but essential, few small sites can afford such luxuries.

However, identifying problems with usability for your site need be no more complicated than asking a few (honest) friends to act as guinea pigs on your site and, if possible, watching them silently as they do this. Watching users try to find information at your site can be both instructive and quite surprising.

Remember that if at any stage you feel the urge to intervene and explain, then you have identified a usability problem.

List of the most common usability problems

- ✦ The site does not state its purpose clearly
- ✦ Java applets, huge images, banner ads or flashy elements slow down loading; 10 seconds is about as long as the average user will wait for a page.
- ✦ The site requires specific software to be used. Have you ever actually changed browsers or downloaded a piece of software just to see a site?
- ✦ Poor navigation, too little navigation, too much navigation and, not uncommonly, no navigation at all
- ✦ Bad design leading to poor readability
- ✦ Discomfort due to ugly design or inconsistent design. Almost always because a designer overestimated their skills.
- ✦ Irrelevance of content - for example the business site that includes biographies and photos of each of the board members. Happy egos on the board; bored users!
- ✦ Complexity or excessive originality of design, which requires users to learn how it works in order to use it.
- ✦ Inaccessibility because the site cannot be used by browsers used by people with disabilities

1.4 Building Interactivity And Personalization

Make your website interactive. Add feedback forms as well as email forms that allow your prospective customers to ask you any questions they might have pertaining to a product. Personalization of your website is another key element that can lead to customer delight and can increase your sales. Personalization technology provides you the analytic tools to facilitate cross selling and up selling when the customer is buying online.



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People read a Web page differently than they do a brochure or a newspaper. They scan, scroll, click, hit the back button, and hit the forward button. “Reading” is about moving around and being in control. You have one chance to make a first impression – to quickly convey the benefit of staying on your Web site. I can’t overstate the importance of first impressions, which in Web-time are measured in milliseconds. The layout, functionality, message and overall look and feel of your web page determine who stays – and who clicks away.

Your story should be clear and to the point. The goal of any web page should be to get the visitor to DO something: to move on to the next step in a purchase sequence or to click for more information about a product or service. Without readable, compelling copy and clearly organized hypertext links, visitors are much less likely to complete a transaction – and return to your site again.

Writing for your Web page should always start from your visitor’s perspective. What is your Web site visitor looking for? Why is he/she here? How can you make his/her visit as quick and efficient and positive as possible? You should take the time to clarify the goal of each page before starting to write. If the page is part of a transaction sequence, identify what may be hindering the buying process. Be sure instructions are clear and easy to read.

If you are selling a service on your website, your Unique Selling Proposition (USP) is your service’s most powerful benefit, in combination with a strong, unique feature of your business. It answers that most difficult question:

Why should potential customers hire your service company?

Tell your customers what service you are selling and explain what your service provides. What is the key benefit(s) to your customers? What pain does it cure, what solution does it provide? Compare your service with that of your competitors and highlight what makes you stand out from the competition? Keep working on this until you can clearly separate yourself from the field. As stated earlier there must be a convincing reason for doing business with you, instead of your competitor.

Summarize the above into one tight, powerful, motivating phrase that will persuade your customer to do business with you and to trade their money for the benefits delivered by your service.

As you start to work through the above four steps, you may find this to be a lot harder than it looks. Don’t blow it off and give up! You must have a USP. If it was easy, everyone would have a great USP! Come up with a tight, sharp USP that sells your service to your customer.

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Write tight, get right to the point, be keenly aware of the audience for the page, and don't use a three-syllable word when a one or two-syllable word will do. Use call-to-action language and be interesting. The page should be so clearly organized that, in seconds, visitors can understand and get convinced to buy your product and be able to anticipate where a hypertext link – or a “Continue” button – will take them. Studies show that “ease of use” is the winning factor on an e-commerce site.

If you're going to promote your service and expand your customer base using your website, potential clients have to be able to trust you. Their confidence in you and your products has to be boosted. Endorsements on your website from a valued friend or colleague, or a referral from a strategic partner are the types of “leads” that boost your credibility. You and your service must be perceived as being trust-worthy before your visitor will be confident enough to contact you or even buy your product.

Show prospects that you have their best interests at heart and that you can adapt or customize your service to meet their individual needs. Foster an ongoing relationship that steadily increases their trust levels and cements a view that you are an “authority” in your field.

Another important aspect of convincing prospective customers is to keep abreast of recent developments in your field. Check on what your competitors are writing about, and watch for new trends. This will keep your website current, razor-sharp and unique. By keeping your eyes open, you will be able to grab an angle or niche that hasn't been well covered yet by your competitors. Portray this angle or niche on your website.

Finally, be wary of broadening the theme of your site too much. Try not to dilute your product or service's targeted niche simply to expand your base of merchant partners. Remember; focus on your selling your service. That's where the “meat and potatoes” of your business will come from.

What you do feel you need to change to build an internet affiliate that will work?

1.7 Choosing a Domain Name

In the physical world, you can distinguish a business because of its structure,

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window displays, or signs. You can tell that a bank is a bank, or a clothing store is indeed a clothing store.

In the Internet, however, it is an entirely different story altogether. Your domain name is the only clue to your online business. You do not have visual clues: no location, no look, and no store design. Instead, users have to type in a word or a set of words to reach your site. Your prospective visitor has no way of knowing what your site is all about until he/she finds it and reads its contents. Who can ever tell that Amazon.com sells books? Or that Excite is a search engine?

Your domain name can spell your success on the Internet. A good domain name is the best asset you can ever have. It can make your business stand out in the crowd, or just float aimlessly in space.

The need to provide immediate clues to an online business led to the prevalence of generic domain names. Generic names instantly provide the user with an idea of what a business is all about, what to expect and look for in a site. For instance, Etoys.com is a toy store.

The temptation of the generic name has been so powerful; that some companies even paid ridiculously high prices to get the name they want. The domains Loans.com and Wines.com were both bought for \$3 million each. Telephone.com was acquired for \$1.75 million, while Bingo.com sold for \$1.1 million.

However, generic names do not necessarily create the “buzz” that you’d like surrounding your website. Branding has always been about proper names: McDonald's did not name their store Hamburger. Hertz is not called Car Rental. FedEx is not Mail Carrier. Kodak is not Photographs. Microsoft is not Computer Software.

For better branding results, your domain name should be memorable and easy to remember. Remember the following tips when creating a domain name.

- ★ The domain name should be short
- ★ The domain name should be simple
- ★ It should be suggestive of your business category
- ★ It should be unique
- ★ It should be easy to interpret and pronounce
- ★ It should be personalized
- ★ It should not be difficult to spell
- ★ It should not be difficult to remember

Domain names can be registered through many different companies (known as

"registrars") - a listing of these companies is available at ICANN: <http://www.icann.org>. You can register for 1 to 10 years - prices can vary anywhere from \$10 to \$20 per year. Most web hosting companies, as explained later, will handle the registration process for you, but make sure that you are properly listed as the owner of the domain when it is registered. If you have registered a domain name for a specific period, make sure you renew it in time. You can be surprised at the number of cases, where site owners have let a domain name slip by if they have not renewed in time.

Write down domain names:

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1.7.1 Using Expired Domains To Skyrocket Your Traffic

At some point while you're building your website, you're going to have to buy a domain name. This is the address that users type into their browsers to reach your site. That takes about five seconds, and depending on the name you want and whether anyone else owns it, it won't cost you more than a few bucks.

But domain names are also a golden opportunity to make some easy money.

I'm not talking about Internet real estate, where you buy up good names and sell them on for a profit—if you haven't got into that now, forget it. The bottom's fallen out of the market and the best domains are long gone.

I'm talking about expiring domains.

Thousands of webmasters invest time, effort and money to promote their site and build up traffic. Many of them then lose interest and move on, leaving their site active. That means that although they still own the domain, they're not actively promoting it. But they don't need to. All the automatic marketing systems they've put in place are still bringing in traffic. The site runs itself.

Now, at some point the ownership of those domains is going to expire. If you snap up those domains once they come back onto the market, you've got a pre-built stream of customers. You can either rebuild the site, or redirect the traffic

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to your domain. You could set up an affiliate program get paid for users someone else paid for.

It's that easy.

There are tons of options, and lots of easy ways to make lots of money with very little effort. Opportunities like these are everywhere.

Websites such as www.expiredtraffic.com or www.deleteddomains.com actually do all the legwork and let you reap all the rewards. Expired Traffic even has an affiliate program and www.snapnames.com allows you to back-order a specific domain name.

Do be careful when using other sites though. There are some swindlers out there that will sell you subscriptions, provide you with outdated lists, take your money and keep the good domains for themselves. It happens, and there's little point in taking a risk when www.deleteddomains.com does such a great job.

1.8 The Host

Let's start where the Internet starts: with a host. A host is a server which provides a home for your website on the World Wide Web. Just as your computer contains all your files, so a host contains all the files needed to run your website. Why can't you just keep all those files on your own computer? Because that would mean users would have to connect directly to your computer to see your website. Not a good idea—it wouldn't be secure and it would make your machine run like a tired snail. With a host, you can simply upload everything you need to the server and your users can then connect there to see your site. It lets the site run faster and allows it to have all the security and extras it needs.

Selecting a host is the first important step towards building your Internet business.

Hosting services and companies vary from totally free, shared servers to large-scale dedicated machines. You'll have to decide which is right for you and your business.

Your choice of server will depend on how much money you have available at the beginning and how much you plan to



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This stage of testing removes any errors in your content, and ensures that your site has a professional appearance. In this phase, you should reread each page on your site, and check for spelling and grammatical errors.

System And Browser Compatibility Testing

This test phase is completed in order to ensure that your website renders correctly on a user's screen. To begin with, you should test several pages from your site on different browsers such as Internet Explorer 4, 5, 6, Netscape 4 and 6, and Opera. This can be extremely important - if your site does not work properly with the Netscape browser, Netscape users will end up annoyed, and they'll go elsewhere.

1.9.1 Monitoring And Tracking

Understanding what your visitors do on your site is crucial information, not to mention interesting. If your visitors proceed to purchase a product but then a large majority leave the site when they get to a specific page in the order process then you need to know about it. It could be that this page is confusing or hard to use. Fixing it could increase your sales by 200%. This is just an example; there are many reasons why you want a detailed analysis of your site visitors.

Most website hosting services offer a stats package that you can study. If you're not sure where this is, call up your hosting service and ask them. Statistics are a vital part of tracking your marketing progress. If you don't have access to website statistics get a package that can help you in this area. Do not get a counter that just shows how many visitors you've had. You'll be missing out on vital information that can help strengthen weaknesses in your site.

A good website hosting service would offer traffic logs that provide an invaluable insight into the traffic being referred to a web site from various sources such as search engines, directories and other links.

Unfortunately traffic tracking provided by web hosting services is often in the form of raw traffic log files or other difficult to understand cryptic formats. These log files are basically text files that describe actions on the site. It is literally impossible to use the raw log files to understand what your visitors are doing. If you do not have the patience to go through these huge traffic logs, opting for a traffic-logging package would be a good idea.

Basically two options are available to you and these are: using a log analysis package or subscribing to a remotely hosted traffic logging service. A remotely

hosted traffic logging service may be easy to use and is generally the cheaper option of the two. WebTrends Live and HitsLink are two good, remotely hosted, traffic-monitoring services worth considering. However, WebTrends Live is a more complicated system and is suitable for larger ecommerce websites. “SuperStats” is another recommended traffic logging service.

These services do not use your log files. Typically a small section of code is placed on any page you want to track. When the page is viewed, information is stored on the remote server and available in real time to view in charts and tables form.

Log analysis packages are typically expensive to buy and complex to set up. Apart from commercial packages there are also some free log analysis packages available, such as Analog.

A good traffic logging service would provide statistics pertaining to the following:

- How many people visit your site?
- Where are they from?
- How are visitors finding your site?
- What traffic is coming from search engines, links from other sites, and other sources?
- What keyword search phrases are they using to find your site?
- What pages are frequented the most - what information are visitors most interested in?
- How do visitors navigate within your web site?

Knowing the answers to these and other fundamental questions is essential for making informed decisions that maximize the return on investment (ROI) of your web site investment.

The most important aspect of tracking visitors to your website is analyzing all the statistics you get from your tracking software. The three main statistics that will show your overall progress are hits, visitors and page views. Hits are tracked when any picture or page loads from your server on to a visitor's browser. Hits, however, can be very misleading. It is quite an irrelevant statistic for your website.

The statistic that is probably the most important for a website is Page Views/Visitors. This gives you a good indication of two things. First, how many people are coming to your site, and secondly how long are they staying on your site. If you have 250 visitors and 300 page views you can figure that most visitors view one page on your site and then leave. Generally, if you're not getting 2 page

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views per visitor then you should consider upgrading your site's content so your visitors will stay around longer.

If you see the number of visitors you have increasing as well as the number of page views per visitor increasing then keep up the good work! Always look for this stat as an overall barometer of how your site design is going and if your marketing campaigns are taking hold.

Also, a good stat to look for is unique visitors. Once a person visits your site they will not be added to the unique visitors' category if they visit again. This is a good way to track new visitors to your website.

Page views are a good indication of how "sticky" your website is. A good statistic to keep is Page Views divided by the number of Visitors you have. This statistic will give you a good idea if your content is interesting and if your visitors are staying on your site for a long time and surfing.

Some people are intimidated by web traffic statistics (mostly because of the sheer volume of data available), but they shouldn't be. While there are many highly specialized statistics that can be used for more in-depth web traffic analysis, the above areas alone can provide invaluable information on your visitors and your website performance. Remember- this data is available for a reason. It's up to you to use it.

1.9.2 Tracking Your Sales

Like any business, it is absolutely vital to track and maintain your sales records. You should know every month your income and expenditure. This would give you a good idea of which products are in demand and which ones are not.

There are many ways to keep track of your sales. Using orthodox methods such as keeping a paper journal is time consuming. Simple spreadsheet programs as well as basic accounting software are available at no or minimum costs. However, it is advisable to install advanced accounting software such as QuickBooks, Quicken, or Microsoft Money.

Such advanced programs save you time by sorting your register transactions by date, transaction amount, document number (e.g. check number), order entered, or cleared status. The tracking feature included in such software tracks, by user, changes made to each transaction. Daily, weekly, monthly as well as yearly sales reports can be generated with a few clicks. These reports help you analyze the sales of each and every product. Logs and reports can be generated to keep track of all your customers.

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What is it going to take to ultimately get you what you want from your site?

What is it that you want from your site?

1.10 Building Credibility And Maintaining It

Finally, make sure that you build trust and credibility for your business. We discussed earlier the importance of credibility. Credibility is a key ingredient for any successful business venture. Building and enhancing the credibility of the products and services you offer is an ongoing and full-time effort.

Why not make sure the web site you use works as hard as you do to establish credibility? Let's look at elements that can be built into a well-designed web site to enhance credibility in the eyes of your potential customers.

Offer a Guarantee

Nothing beats a solid, believable guarantee for building credibility online. It may be hard to believe but buying via the Internet is still unfamiliar, and uncomfortable, territory for the majority of people. It is up to you, the business owner, to put their minds at ease. One way to do this would be to offer an unconditional, 100% money back guarantee. By assuming all of the risk, you will earn instant credibility points with most potential customers.

Provide Contact Information

Even the best guarantee won't help establish credibility if the potential customer cannot contact you. Post accurate contact information on your web site and make it easy to find. Provide as many methods of contact as possible; do not simply

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post a link to an email address. For maximum credibility, post the complete mailing address, phone number (preferably a toll free number), and email addresses for customers to use if they feel the need to contact you.

How are you going to build credibility?

Provide a Brief Bio

Familiarity is one of the most effective tools for building credibility on the Internet. How do you establish familiarity in a faceless, impersonal medium like the Internet? Simple, tell people about yourself. Post a page that provides a thumbnail sketch that describes who you are. Be sure to include personal data as well as professional credentials. Place your photo on the page so people can put a face with your name. Creating familiarity will impart another level of credibility for you and, by extension, for the product you represent.

In this chapter, we looked at how you can build your website and explained what it should contain. We also discussed some of the ways you can generate traffic and even told you about a fantastic way to make buckets of cash for a nickel investment. And we're only getting started! In the next chapter, we're going to look more closely at some of the popular and successful Internet business ideas.

What do you want to attract with your site?

2. Internet Business Ideas

2.1 Leverage The Advantages Of The Net

The Internet is a vehicle that has been used to escalate higher communications levels between people, companies and countries throughout the world. It means

your online selling business does not just have to concentrate on local markets - nothing is impossible! If your business has a web site, this in itself means it is accessible by the global market, and it is vital that your business take advantage of this.

Internet selling is on the rise. There are many research studies and statistics that support this statement. A study conducted by Ipsos-Ried in February 2003 concludes that in the year 1999 only 28% of worldwide Internet users purchased a product or service online, whereas this figure rose to 62% in the year 2002 and is projected to be about 70% in the year 2005. Nielsen/NetRatings supports this finding with its own research.

The Web is a huge marketplace that has attracted businesses with its potential for big-time revenues. Dizzying success stories of ventures started in a basement that grew to become stock market's darlings are constantly parlayed in the media. Small businesses came to the Internet, tentative at first, and then in droves - eager to sell everything from fake estate jewelry to handcrafted tapestries.

You can sell just about anything from soup to nuts — as long as you have a product that has a market and an ability to get it (legally) to your customer.

2.2 What Businesses Are Succeeding On The Net?

After the settling down of the dot-com bubble, sanity checks have brought realistic expectations to the fore. Initially, a backlash was seen, forecasting the doom of the Internet. Finally, merits have made the Internet gain its rightful place. In breakthroughs that show the promise of e-commerce wasn't all smoke and mirrors, four dot-coms recently reported their first quarterly profits. The list of the Internet's publicly held moneymakers includes eBay Inc., Amazon.com Inc., Yahoo! Inc., Overture Services Inc., Expedia Inc., FindWhat.com Inc. and E-Trade Group Inc. Several privately owned dot-coms, including search engines Google and DealTime, say they have been making money, too.

In 2001, the last full year where numbers are available, the Department of Commerce broke out e-commerce sales versus total U.S retail sales which revealed the \$3.16 trillion retail industry saw a total of \$37.7 billion in sales take place online -- comprising 1.2 percent of the total. This year e-commerce is tracking about the same. Through the third quarter, the last full quarter where numbers are available, total retail sales were \$856 billion versus \$11 billion in e-commerce, about a 1.3 percent share.

There were big gains made in Home and Garden, a 78 percent increase;

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Furniture and Appliances, a 75 percent increase; and Toy shopping online with a 61 percent increase in the year 2002. There is no doubt that online shopping is growing.

Nielsen//NetRatings found that more than 35.5 million U.S. Internet users made shopping trips to virtual department store sites during the week ending November 3, 2002 - that's a 20 percent increase from the week ending October 20 and roughly 14 million more than almost the same time period in 2001.

There is a growing tendency amongst Internet users to pay for valuable content online. There are many reasons for this. First, only a few websites operated by big companies can afford to provide valuable content without being compensated. The rest of us can't be so generous. And trying to recapture our expenses by selling advertising on our websites has failed to pay the bills. Online advertising and click-through rates are on the decline.

Second, many people are now more than willing to pay to receive quality services and products even if they were offered for free earlier. Several paid content websites have already proven this unmistakable trend. The discerning buyer values his/her time as also the quality of information or service and is willing to pay for it.

However, not all products can be sold on the Internet. Some products may be better suited for online sales than others; others simply will not work on this new commercial medium. According to an Ernst and Young study, the most popular online purchases are computer related products (40%), books (20%), travel (16%), clothing (10%), recorded music (6%), subscriptions (6%), gifts (5%) and investments (4%).

Businesses offering paid services have also prospered enormously. The top three categories (Business Content/Investment, Entertainment/Lifestyles and Personals/Dating) accounted for 62% of all paid content revenues in the first three quarters of 2002. The total market for paid online content in the U.S. grew to \$361.4 million for the quarter, a 14 percent gain over the previous quarter and a 105.3 percent gain over Q3 2001. An interesting statistic put forward by this report is that 85% of money spent by U.S. Consumers for online content goes to the top 50 sites in most of the categories.

The graph below (Top 3 Content Categories) is indicative of this change.

In terms of "stickiness" of different categories, Business sites - especially finance and investment rank the highest. In other words, users are more likely to spend longer time surfing through a business website compared to other

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categories. This study was conducted by Nielsen//NetRatings. The table below shows the most addictive web categories for 2002.

Category	Time Per Person	Audience
Business	0:2:33	51,586
General News	0:15:47	64,822
Entertainment	0:14:32	45,922

Source: Nielsen//NetRatings

According to the above figures a person spends about 22 minutes on a finance website on an average.

2.3 Should You Be Selling A Product Or A Service?

The Internet is primarily used to communicate, entertain, educate and research. It is thus no wonder that nonperishable, information-intensive products - including computers and software, books, travel, consumer electronics, magazine subscriptions - are the most popular online products at present. Content-rich sites, subscription-based sites to advertiser-supported sites focusing on a wide range of topics, have been sprouting all over the Internet.

Services such as hotel reservation, air travel and investments have successfully translated themselves to the Internet.

Unique services such as Online driving schools have been prospering. Some states in the US have set up online payment sites for Government services. Residents of a state can log on to a common site to pay all bills and other expenses, such as parking tickets to the local/County courts.

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However, all kinds of services cannot be run entirely on the Internet. The Internet is less effective when face-to-face selling is needed to close a deal. The Internet can give lots of preliminary information that's useful in setting the scene for the closing. But the actual closing takes place offline - i.e., not on the Internet.

Products can also be marketed and sold successfully on the Internet. The kinds of products and services that sell best on the Internet are those that take advantage of the convenience of the Net. Remember that convenience is the primary reason why consumers flock to the Internet in the first place. People can shop any hour of the day at any site. They can avoid crowded stores, irritating sales clerks, and even avoid pickpockets.

Offbeat or unusual products and services often attract online attention and sell strongly. You would generally not try to sell items people can get at the corner store. Thus, few toothbrushes are sold on the Net; the same thing with daily food and beverage purchases. But special cheeses, rare cigars, Turkish plates, long-aged wines, even diamonds, can and do sell on the Net.

Most products sold by catalog and mail order also sell well on the Net. However, people tend to buy only those products that could be shipped at a reasonable price. Higher shipping costs diminish the price competitiveness of online products and turns-off a lot of potential buyers. In fact, high shipping costs is the primary factor that discourages people from buying online more than any other single reason. An Ernst and Young report shows that 53 percent of online shoppers are concerned with shipping costs that are too high, compared to only 19 percent who are concerned with credit cards being stolen.

As an online merchant, you have to work out the advantages as well as disadvantages of selling either products or services. However, in the recent past, online services have known to flourish. Nevertheless, if you chose to sell products you need to rethink your product offering if the total costs of the product and the shipping are higher than what is offered elsewhere.

2.4 Importance of Back-end Selling

Considerable effort is required to get customers for your products. You design killer web pages, work hard for high search engine rankings (or pay for them), submit classified ads, etc. but still do not manage to sell enough. This is where the concept of back-end sales is useful.

Most marketers are successful because they apply back-end selling



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into their marketing efforts. Back-end selling is when you sell other products or services to your existing customers after they have purchased an initial product.

It is always easier to sell products or services to your existing customers because you have developed a relationship with them when you sold your first product or service to them. You will find it less expensive to sell to old customers as compared to selling to new customers.

Your conversion ratio will be dramatically higher with existing customers. Every time you continue selling back-end products or services to existing customers, you will be building a life-long relationship. You should continually bring out new back-end products or services to sell to existing customers.

Many businesses sell their front-end products (initial products) at almost zero profit in order to generate back-end profits. These businesses do not care even if they lose money on the front-end products or services; they want the back-end profits.

How do you make backend sales? There are several ways. When you order a product from a mail-order company, they'll send you a catalog along with your order, or put you on a mailing list and send you new catalogs from time to time. They might also send you a sales letter for another product. This may be related to the first product in some way. Many companies implement such a strategy.

To implement this technique on the web, you can put the sales pitch for your backend item in the email to the customer to confirm their order. If you have an online catalog, you could include a link to it, or even include a coupon or special offer "for all valued customers".

For a faster response, you should put the backend offer on the "Thank You" page that is generated by a credit-card sale. The customer just bought something from you and has a credit card in his or her hot little hand! Why not ask for another purchase while they are in the mood to buy. In case you do not sell more than one product or service, affiliate programs might come in handy. This way you can back sell products promoted by your affiliate programs as well.

Back-end selling can also be integrated with "Up-Selling" wherein you introduce more expensive products or services to your existing customers in similar ways as those mentioned above. This will almost instantly raise your sales and profits.

2.5 Cross Selling

Another successful strategy similar to the ones discussed above is Cross Selling. One of the best examples of cross selling via the web is on Amazon.com. If you search for a book on the Amazon site, a message will appear on the same page,

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saying 'Customers who bought this book also bought...' and will list half a dozen other books for your consideration. This is an excellent way to cross sell additional services or content to your members.

You can also direct visitors to other parts of the site, to consider products and services that they hadn't previously considered. Successful cross selling is the result of recognizing a customer need and meeting that need with a useful product or service. Customers benefit from needs-based cross selling efforts because they receive the services they need and want.

Cross selling can help your business realize its objectives: providing useful services, retaining customers, attracting new customers, and staying competitive with other websites.

In conclusion, you can offer a range of products and services on the Internet. The key is proper research and a great marketing plan. We'll be talking about marketing strategies for your product or service in the consequent chapters. In the next chapter we discuss one of the most important Internet Marketing strategies – Search Engine Optimization.

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It doesn't matter how great your website, if no one sees it, you're not going to make a penny. You can spend days producing the perfect design, weeks tweaking the copy, and months writing the code and uploading the pages, but if no one knows where you are, how are they going to know they should buy from you?

When I first started selling on the Web, the first major problem I ran into was bringing customers to my door. I put banner ads on other sites, organized reciprocal links and joined Web rings. Those methods all worked to some extent, but what really did it for me, what turned my business from a small earner into a major money-grabber, was figuring out how to use search engines.

Sure, I'd submitted my sites to the major search engines as soon as I'd finished building them, but I didn't really pay them much attention. After all, I figured search engines are just for people who are looking for information; they're not really good for commercial sites.

Boy, was I wrong!

One day, I sat down and checked out which sites were popping up first in the

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categories that suited my businesses. I found that all the top-ranked sites were my biggest competitors. And when I say biggest, I mean these guys were in a whole other league. They had incomes that were ten or twenty times the size of mine—no wonder they had top billing at Yahoo! and Google! And then it clicked. Search engines don't list sites by size, they list them by relevance. These sites weren't listed first because they were big; they were big because they were listed first!

That was when I began to ‘optimize’ my pages and think about meta-tags and keywords. As my sites rose through the listings, my traffic went through the roof. And not just any old traffic! The people that came to my sites from search engines hadn’t just clicked on a banner by accident or followed a link from curiosity, they’d actually been looking for a site like mine. My sales ratio went up like a rocket. I’d created my own big break.

In this chapter, we are going to discuss all proven strategies of Search Engine Optimization. We would discuss how to optimize your site, submit your pages and pick up the targeted traffic you need to make cash. This chapter is probably the most important chapter in the whole book. It's crucial that you read it carefully.

Let's start with search engines.

3.1 How Search Engines Work

Internet search engines are special sites on the Web that are designed to help people find information stored on other sites. There are differences in the ways various search engines work, but they all perform three basic tasks:

- ✦ They search the Internet -- or select pieces of the Internet -- based on important words.
- ✦ They keep an index of the words they find, and where they find them. They allow users to look for words or combinations of words found in that index.

Early search engines held an index of a few hundred thousand pages and documents, and received maybe one or two thousand inquiries each day. Today, a top search engine will index hundreds of millions of pages, and respond to tens of millions of queries per day.

Spidering

Before a search engine can tell you where a file or document is, it must be found.

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To find information on the hundreds of millions of Web pages that exist, a search engine employs special software robots, called spiders, to build lists of the words found on Web sites.

When a spider is building its lists, the process is called Web crawling.

In order to build and maintain a useful list of words, a search engine's spiders have to look at a lot of pages. How does any spider start its travels over the Web? The usual starting points are lists of heavily used servers and very popular pages. The spider will begin with a popular site, indexing the words on its pages and following every link found within the site. In this way, the spidering system quickly begins to travel, spreading out across the most widely used portions of the Web.

Indexing

Once the spiders have completed the task of finding information on Web pages, the search engine must store the information in a way that makes it useful. There are two key components involved in making the gathered data accessible to users:

- ✦ The information stored with the data
- ✦ The method by which the information is indexed

In the simplest case, a search engine could just store the word and the URL where it was found. In reality, this would make for an engine of limited use, since there would be no way of telling whether the word was used in an important or a trivial way on the page, whether the word was used once or many times or whether the page contained links to other pages containing the word. In other words, there would be no way of building the ranking list that tries to present the most useful pages at the top of the list of search results.

To make for more useful results, most search engines store more than just the word and URL. An engine might store the number of times that the word appears on a page. The engine might assign a weight to each entry, with increasing values assigned to words as they appear near the top of the document, in sub-headings, in links, in the meta tags or in the title of the page. Each commercial search engine has a different formula for assigning weight to the words in its index. This is one of the reasons that a search for the same word on different search engines will produce different lists, with the pages presented in different orders.

An index has a single purpose: It allows information to be found as quickly as possible. There are quite a few ways for an index to be built, but one of the most

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effective ways is to build a hash table. In hashing, a formula is applied to attach a numerical value to each word. The formula is designed to evenly distribute the entries across a predetermined number of divisions. This numerical distribution is different from the distribution of words across the alphabet, and that is the key to a hash table's effectiveness.

The Search Engine Program

The search engine software or program is the final part. When a person requests a search on a keyword or phrase, the search engine software searches the index for relevant information. The software then provides a report back to the searcher with the most relevant web pages listed first.

3.2 Top Search Engines

We studied how search engines work. An integral part of any Internet Marketing or Search Engine Optimization campaign is to know exactly which search engines to target. This section discusses some of the top search engines today.

Google

Google has increased in popularity tenfold the past several years. They have gone from beta testing, to becoming the Internet's largest index of web pages in a very short time. Their spider, affectionately named "Googlebot", crawls the web and provides updates to Google's index about once a month.

Google.com began as an academic search engine. Google, by far, has a very good algorithm of ranking pages returned from a result, probably one of the main reasons it has become so popular over the years. Google has several methods which determine page rank in returned searches.

Yahoo

Yahoo! is one of the oldest web directories and portals on the Internet today, and the site went live in August of 1994. Yahoo! is a 100% human edited directory, and provides secondary search results using Google.

Yahoo! is also one of the largest traffic generators around, as far as web directories and search engines go. Unfortunately, however, it is also one of the most difficult to get listed in, unless of course you pay to submit your site. Even if you pay it doesn't guarantee you will get listed.

Either way, if you suggest a URL, it is "reviewed" by a Yahoo! editor, and if approved will appear in the next index update.

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AltaVista

Many who have access to web logs may have seen a spider named 'scooter' accessing their pages. Scooter used to be AltaVista's robot. However, since the Feb 2001 site update, a newer form of Scooter is now crawling the web. Whichever spider AltaVista uses, it is one of the largest search engines on the net today, next to Google.

It will usually take several months for AltaVista to index your entire site, although the past few months scooter hasn't been deep crawling too well. Unlike Google, AltaVista will only crawl and index 1 link deep, so it takes a good amount of time to index your site depending on how large your site is.

AltaVista gets most of its results from its own index, however they do pull the top 5 results of each search from Overture (formerly Goto).

Inktomi

Inktomi's popularity grew several years ago as they powered the secondary search database that had driven Yahoo. Since then, Yahoo as switched to using Google as their secondary search and backend database, however Inktomi is just as popular now, as they were several years ago, if not more so. Their spiders are named "Slurp", and different versions of Slurp crawls the web many different times throughout the month, as Inktomi powers many sites search results. There isn't much more to Inktomi then that. Slurp puts heavy weight on Title and description tags, and will rarely deep crawl a site. Slurp usually only spider's pages that are submitted to its index.

Inktomi provides results to a number of sites. Some of these are America Online, MSN, Hotbot, Looksmart, About, Goto, CNet, Geocities, NBCi, ICQ and many more.

Lycos

Lycos is one of the oldest search engines on the Internet today, next to Altavista and Yahoo. Their spider, named "T-Rex", crawls the web and provides updates to the Lycos index from time to time. The FAST crawler provides results for Lycos in addition to its own database.

The Lycos crawler does not weigh META tags to heavily, instead it relies on its own ranking algorithm to rank pages returned in results. The URL, META title, text headings, and word frequency are just a few of the methods Lycos uses to rank pages. Lycos does support pages with Frame content. However, any page that isn't at least 75 words in content is not indexed.

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Excite

Excite has been around the web for many years now. Much more of a portal than just simply a search engine, Excite used to be a fairly popular search engine, until companies such as Google seemed to have dominated the search engine market. As of recently, Excite no longer accepts submissions of URL's, and appears to no longer spider. To get into the Excite search results, you need to be either listed with Overture or Inktomi.

Looksmart

Getting a listed with Looksmart could mean getting a good amount of traffic to your site. Looksmart's results appear in many search engines, including AltaVista, MSN, CNN, and many others.

Looksmart has two options to submit your site. If your site is generally non-business related, you can submit your site to Zeal (Looksmart's sister site), or if you are a business, you can pay a fee to have your site listed. Either method will get you listed in Looksmart and its partner sites if you are approved.

Once you have submitted your site, and it is approved for listing it will take up to about 7 days for your site to be listed on Looksmart and its partner sites.

AOL Search

America Online signed a multiyear pact with Google for Web search results and accompanying ad-sponsored links, ending relationships with pay-for-performance service Overture Services and Inktomi, its algorithmic search provider of nearly three years

3.3 Search Engine Page ranking algorithms

A search engine's main job is to provide results which most satisfy a user's query. If they present a result that the user visits and doesn't agree that the document is about their query, there is a very good chance that the user may not use that search engine again. Most search engines pay no attention at all to the Meta description tags. Meta description and keyword tags are hidden attributes that you can add to the front of your document which are supposed to annotate and describe the document. Since the users will never see this information, they will be disappointed if you stick in invalid keywords or fail to keep the description in line with the document's contents which usually is the case. Most Search Engine page ranking algorithms rank pages based on the following aspects:

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- ✦ Content of the website
- ✦ Representation of content, keywords, and links on websites
- ✦ Location and number of inward and outward links on websites
- ✦ Relevancy of search terms as compared to the websites

Given below is a brief description of the page ranking algorithms of some of the most popular search engines.

Google

You can submit your site to Google using <http://www.google.com/addurl.html>. Submitting your site will only make Google aware that your page exists; it is quite possible that your pages may get crawled even if you have not submitted. It is advisable to submit the home page and some inside pages. Inside pages are added to the submission, just in case the home page is found too slow to load or crawl. The pages that are submitted should link to the rest of the pages. Google indexes the full text that is visible on any page that it crawls. It generally does not index the metatags – keywords or descriptions.

When Google lists your page in the search results, the description that is displayed is the extract of text that is around the first line where the search word appears on the page. It may thus be a good idea to write a good description of the page and build it around the most likely search term(s) and place that near the top of your page. You should remember that one sure way of getting your site listed and indexed is if there are several links that point to your site and such links appear on web pages that in turn have several other links pointing to them. The term ‘link popularity’ is used for this. It analyzes links of the pages that it has visited and this ‘link analysis’ helps to determine the ranking of the page.

Google uses a proprietary PageRank algorithm for determining relevance and ranking of pages in the search results. Location and frequency of the search term on your web page are no doubt factors in ranking; however off the page factors such as link analysis are more important. Generally, Google provides search results based on relevancy, meaning that it returns a list of pages ranked by the number of other Web pages linking to each page, as well as other mathematical algorithms

Yahoo

Yahoo offers a human powered directory and visitors are offered the results from this directory. The directory is supplemented by web page index created by crawling. Yahoo currently uses Google for its crawler indexing. The directory is an important channel in the area of search engine marketing. It is popular and is used extensively by people to locate sources of information. Moreover the

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directory is a valuable boost to your site for crawling and ranking in other search engines, as the directory provides a high quality link to your web site.

When a visitor is looking for information or relevant sites, he/she could either browse through the hierarchy of directories and sub directories or search for an appropriate directory through a search interface. As your site can be listed in just one category, generally, the choice of category is an important step. Choose the top category that your target visitor who is making a search may select out of the different categories offered to him/her.

Select your target keywords and find out which categories relate to those keywords. For submission of non-commercial sites also the Yahoo Express submission is recommended rather than the Standard submission option.

Listing of your site on the results page in your chosen category is in two possible sections (for most categories). One section is called Most Popular Sites and this is on top, while the remaining listing is Alphabetical in the second section on the page.

Yahoo does not reveal how it includes certain sites in the Most Popular Sites list. However link analysis, clickthroughs are likely to be factors. You cannot pay to be included in this section. Certain sites with sunglasses shown next to their name or @symbol shown at the end of the name reflect that Yahoo considers those sites as excellent.

Inktomi (MSN Search, AOL Search, Hotbot)

Inktomi is a search engine that does not offer its search services through its own site, but through Partner sites – prominent ones being MSN Search, AOL Search, HotBot and others.

Inktomi through its crawler creates three different indexes. Best of the Web index has around 110 million pages that it indexes on the web and considers high in link analysis. The next set of around 390 million pages is indexed as Rest of the Web, considered as lower in link analysis. The third index is of paid inclusion. It also offers specialized regional indexes as well as targeted news, multimedia and directory indexes. It avoids duplication of the same page in more than one index. Link crawling and paid inclusion are the two most effective ways to get covered by crawling. For bulk submissions to its paid program, it offers IndexConnect (for 1000 or more pages). Again there is a cost per click basis, with a monthly minimum.

Ranking at Inktomi is determined by a combination of factors including HTML links, keywords and description tags near the top of the page or in the Title tag.

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3.4 Keywords—Optimizing Your Site To Get Top Billing at Search Engines

When a user enters a search term, also known as a ‘keyword,’ into a search engine, the engine runs through the billions of pages in the database and awards each one a ‘relevancy score.’ The higher your score, the higher your listing. If your site doesn’t contain the keyword used by the searcher, the only score it’s going to get is a big, fat zero. Your first task then is to make sure you know which keywords are most relevant for each of your sites.

There are three ways to figure out your keywords

Ask Your Competitors

This is the cheapest way to find many of the most important keywords. Simply log on to a search engine (AltaVista is good, Google is better) and carry out a search for sites like yours. Open the top site, and once the home page has downloaded, click on ‘View’ in your browser, and then ‘Source.’ That will reveal all the HTML used to build the Web page, including all the keywords that have been specially inserted.

For example, let’s say one of your websites sold nutritional supplements. You could carry out a search for ‘vitamins’ in Google. The top site there is called DrugEmporium.com, and the keywords they list are "The Katz group, Snyders, Drug Emporium, Drug, Drug Store, pharmacy, stores."

Some of those keywords will be relevant to your site. Others, of course, won’t be relevant and there will be lots of other keywords that aren’t obviously listed—like ‘vitamins’ for example. But you can repeat the process on other sites, using different keywords, and build up a pretty long list.

Ask The Pay-Per-Clicks

Pay-per-click sites actually let you see how popular a keyword is. They’re not being kind; they’re trying to make money. The more webmasters bid on those

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keywords, the higher the bids are going to rise—and the more money the pay-per-clicks are going to make. FindWhat, for example, has a Keyword Center, and Overture a Keyword Suggestion Tool. Both are very handy, but they also require you to open an account. That can cost a few bucks, but when you have a lot of sites covering a lot of different areas, it's usually worth the expense.

Use A Specialized Tool

Not too surprisingly, a number of companies have popped up to supply specific keyword services for a fee. The best of these is WordTracker.com. They're not bargain basement, but you get what you pay for. They'll give you all the keywords you need and in my experience, they're a sound investment.

Googleflight.com is another useful tool to see whether one keyword is more popular than another. The site compares two keywords and tells you which is more popular. It's free and has a limited use, but it's fun to play with.

As you make up your list of keywords, bear in mind that it's also worth looking at key phrases. It's quite possible that a user looking to buy flowers online might search for 'red roses' or 'cheap bouquets' as well as just 'flowers.' Key phrases are often overlooked by competitors, so you've got a pretty good chance of getting a high placement with the right combination.

Don't worry too much about the competition though. Some people will tell you that you're better off trying to find keywords that no one else has thought of—as if there were any!—and others will tell you to throw in keywords that are only slightly relevant to your businesses.

In my experience, that's a waste of time. If your competitors are using certain keywords, it's because they know they work. And if you pick up any users using irrelevant keywords, you're not going to sell them anything. Don't try to reinvent the wheel here: just try to figure out the most popular keywords and the best key phrases to put on your site.

Whichever of these methods you use—and I tend to use more than one—you should end up with a pretty comprehensive list of keywords that you can stick into your website. The next question then, is how do you use them? When a search engine assigns relevancy to a site, it looks for the keywords in a number of specific areas.

Title Tag

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The title tag is written in the <HEAD> section of the Web page and after the <TITLE> tags. It's usually the line listed in the search results as well. For example, the New York Times' title tag is "The New York Times on the Web: Daily international, national and local news coverage from the newspaper, breaking news updates, technology news, sports, reviews, crosswords, classified ad listings."

That looks long, but the title tag is usually between 50 and 80 characters including spaces. Different search engines have different limits so you want to make sure that your most important words are near the beginning of the title. When you look at the New York Times' site, you only see "The New York Times on the Web".

The rest of the title is made up of keywords and phrases but in fact, you don't want to put in too many keywords here. Just place one keyword as the second or third word in the title. Too many, and your site could be seen as spamming.

You can also list more keywords in the <META Keywords> and <META description> sections of the <HEAD> area, but because these areas have been so abused in the past, a number of search engines today will skip right past the title tag and go straight to the Web copy.

Make a list of key words

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

3.5 Web Copy For SEO

The search engines will scan the text on a Web page to see if your site is relevant to the search term. That means that in effect, your Web copy is going to have to

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do two things: to persuade a customer to buy, and persuade a search engine it's relevant.

When you write your copy aim for about 500 words a page, but throw in between four and eight keywords. You'll have to try to balance a smooth text flow with getting in all the keywords you need to be listed.

You can also consider adding text-only pages such as how-to articles, tips or tutorials to your site. Throw in some keywords and they can turn up in search engines and create opportunities for link exchanges.

So there's a few ways you can try to improve the position of your site in a search engine. More important than where you put the keywords is choosing the right keywords. That's not really a huge challenge as your competitors are likely to have done the job for you.

Of course, even if you do get everything right, it doesn't mean you're going to shoot straight to the top of Google. One of the criteria for relevancy is how long you've been online, so success on the search engines won't come overnight. The sooner you start submitting though, the sooner you can start to rise.

3.6 Submitting To Search Engines

Submitting sites to search engines is much easier than submitting them to directories or pay-per-clicks. In fact, you only have to submit the home page. The search engine's 'spider'—a neat little software program—will then follow all the links from the home page and include your other pages. Spidering actually increases your relevancy score more than hand-submitting your internal pages yourself.

The disadvantage of spidering is that it can be slow. Google has the best spider but even they can take up to a month to index all your pages. For other search engines you can wait three times as long.

Submit your site to all major search engines for just \$49.95 at www.get-visitors-now.com

3.7 Search Directories – The Benefits of Browsing

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Search directories differ from search engines by providing a range of categories for users to browse. Rather than enter a keyword into a search box, users click through categories and sub-categories narrowing down their options.

You could say that search engines are like going straight up to the sales assistant and asking what they have in eveningwear; search directories are like browsing through the store and seeing what catches the eye.

How you make your site catch the eye in a directory though is actually pretty similar to standing out in a search engine: it's all about relevancy—a mixture of keywords and links.

3.7.1 Submitting To Search Directories

Submitting your site to a search directory is a little tougher than submitting to a search engine. Directories don't have spiders—they rely on humans. When you submit your site, whether it's to Yahoo! or any of the other myriad directories, you'll have to complete a form that will include your URL, Page Title, Keywords and a Page Description.

Your keywords and title will play some role in your ranking, but for the description, it's much better to put a hard sell that will attract users. There's no point having a link at the top of a category if no one wants to click on it.

Bear in mind that because each submission to a directory is checked by a human editor, it can take quite a while for your site to be approved and listed. Some sites do have express services but these are pretty pricey (Yahoo! wants \$299 and \$600 for adult sites!), and if they decide your site isn't suitable for a category, you don't get your money back. It's usually worth the wait.

3.8 Pay-Per-Click—Buying Status

Pay-per-click programs (PPC's) allow you to buy a prime position in a search engine by selecting the price you wish to pay for each visitor you receive. This can place you exactly where you want to be in the listing, or let you decide how much you want to spend on advertising.

The big advantage of PPC's is that you don't have to worry about messing with keywords or links or any of that. You can just figure out how much you want to pay for a keyword and buy your position. In addition, you only pay for people who actually click on your link (for banner ads, you often have to pay when

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someone sees it.) And you can also get cheap visitors. Bids usually start at around five cents per click. The top three bids though are often promoted across a network of sites (Overture place theirs at the top of Yahoo!) so there can be big bonuses for bidding high.

This is how most pay-per-click programs work:

- You create your page title, description and link as you want it to appear in the search results.
- You enter the keywords and phrases that will prompt your listing to appear.
- You enter your keyword bid (the amount you are willing to pay for each click to your site).
- Your keyword bid is compared to that of other bidders for the same keyword. The results are returned to the user with the highest bid appearing first.

3.8.1 Show Me The Money!



With PPC's, the name of the game is profit. You need to be careful not to get carried away with the ranking so that your promotion doesn't cut into your revenues.

This is essential! There's no point in being top if you're out of business in a month. You have to figure out what you can afford and keep to it. Base your decision on your visitor to sales ratio (the number of visitors on average that it takes to generate a sale) and your net profit per sale.

So for example, if you were get a sale from every tenth visitor, and you net a profit of \$20 from each sale, then you can't pay more than \$2 for each click without operating at a loss. In practice, you might make one sale for every 500 or so clicks and pay perhaps 15 or 20 cents for each visitor, depending on your market.

It's absolutely crucial for you to know your visitor to sales ratio.

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It's also important to keep that ratio as high as possible, and that means only bidding on relevant keywords. If you pay for visitors who are looking for something completely different to the services you're offering, you're just throwing your money away. They aren't going to buy, and even at five cents a shot, those wasted nickels soon add up. On the other hand, because you can pay so little, it is worth bidding on as many relevant keywords as possible.

The key is to balance high payments for top keywords with low payments that bring in less traffic.

You should also consider the quality of visitors the site will send you. The more targeted a directory, the more your visitor to sale ratio may improve—and that might make it worth improving your bid price.

3.8.2 Submitting to pay-per-clicks

Submitting your site to a PPC is certainly a lot faster than submitting to a search engine or a directory. You must, however, make sure you consider the following:

The maximum amount you can bid (can't stress that enough!)
The keywords you wish to bid on.
The titles and descriptions of the site.

That last point is very important for making the most of PPC's. Just because you don't have to worry about putting keywords in your title and descriptions to please a program doesn't mean relevance isn't important. On the contrary, relevance still matters. You need to let the *user* know that your site is exactly what they're looking for. That means putting the keyword in the title and having a catchy, informative description. Remember, the more good clicks you get, the more money you'll make.

3.8.3 AdWords and Premium Advertising

If you do a search at Google, you'll notice that not only do you get a list of all the sites that return your keyword, you also get a list of other relevant ads on the right of the page and at the top of the listing. These are part of Google's Adwords and Premium Advertising programs. Advertising like this can certainly

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be an important part of your marketing plan. Well developed ads with clever wording can prompt an immediate response from the reader to visit your site. Google and Overture are currently making a lot of money with this kind of advertising—and if they're making money, you can be sure their advertisers are too.

Buying an AdWord on Google is a little complicated but it can be very cost-effective. In effect, Google have combined the Pay-per-Click system with their own relevancy calculations. You'll need to select a keyword—or an 'AdWord' in Googlespeak—and write a short description. But you'll also have to choose how much you wish to pay, and the price won't guarantee you a position.

Advertisers enter a maximum bid per click and this is multiplied by the click-through rate (the percentage of users who click on the ad). That's the score Google use to allocate position.

So for example, if you were prepared to pay a dollar per click, and one user in a hundred who saw your advert clicked on it, you would get a rank number of $(\$1 \times 1\% = 0.01)$.

Let's say that gives you top position. You might then get even more users and a higher click-through rate of 2%. That higher rate would reduce your price to 50 cents (0.01 divided by 2%).

All very nice, and it's always fun to pay less than you've said you can afford, but how it works is less important than the fact that it does. All you have to do is figure out how much you're prepared to pay for each click, how much you can afford to pay each month, and write a great description.

And once again, it's the description that's key.

Like the PPC's, your description has to persuade users that you're relevant; it doesn't have to play to the search engine's software. By all means repeat the keyword, but also make sure you have good, call-to-action copy like "Grab a great deal on DVD's today!" or "Buy now, while stocks last!" Remember, the more clicks you get, the more sales you'll make—and the less you'll pay.

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Always place the AdWord in the most appropriate category and track the responses you receive from it. Be proactive in redefining your strategy if you receive minimal response. You'll probably have to play with the wording and the keyword selection to get the results you want.

Make a list of adwords

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

Premium Advertising

This is the Platinum Card of Google advertising. For at least \$5,000 you can be one of two advertisers to top a category. Very effective, very prestigious—and very expensive. \$5,000 is the *minimum* bid. Something to think about—if you think you can make the money back.

3.9 Link Popularity And Link Analysis

Majority of the major search engines use link popularity as an important factor in ranking relevancy. As search engines have become more sophisticated, so too has link popularity. Link popularity simply is the number of links from other websites that point to your website. This strategy has gained immense success due to the crawling nature of most search engines. Spiders crawl from link to link and store pages into their database. Link popularity is generally gained through reciprocal linking. Other websites would usually point to your website only if you have a link to their website from yours.

A few years ago, the number of websites linking to your site gauged link popularity; little emphasis was placed on the "content relevancy" of the linking site. In an effort to gain more link popularity, "link farms" began sprouting up across the web. For a nominal fee, a website owner could join link farms and enjoy increased link popularity overnight.

Search engines caught onto this tactic and created better tools for detecting

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legitimate links. Websites that have links from websites with "similar" or "relevant" content score higher, thus earn better placement in search engines.

However, Avoid joining "link farms"; some search engines consider them a form of Spam. Many engines will actually penalize sites for maintaining an abundance of links from non-related websites. It is more important than ever to develop a solid "link-popularity" strategy. One excellent, although time consuming, method is to simply write complimentary website requesting a link exchange.

Link analysis is somewhat different than measuring link popularity. While link popularity is generally used to measure the number of pages that link to a particular site, link analysis will go beyond this and analyze the popularity of the pages that link to your pages. In a way link analysis is a chain analysis system that accords weighting to every page that links to the target site, with weights determined by the popularity of those pages. Search engines use link analysis in their page-ranking algorithm. Search engines also try to determine the context of those links, in other words, how closely those links relate to the search string. For example if the search string was "toys", and if there were links from other sites that either had the word toys within the link or in close proximity of the link, the ranking algorithm determines that this a higher priority link and ranks the page, that this is linked to, higher.

3.9.1 Reciprocal Links And Partner Sites

Keywords and AdWords aren't the only way that search engines score relevancy; links to other similar sites are another important factor. Keywords have been so abused by some webmasters that links are winning much more relevancy points. Google is said to love them.

It might sound strange to suggest that your users should check out your competitors, but they probably know about them anyway. If your competitors have a higher ranking than you, linking to them can make the higher relevancy score—and the increase in traffic—worth your while.

Alternatively, you can link to your own site by creating a sub-directory. This is like building another Web page, but the URL will include your keyword. So if you were selling stuffed toys, the new URL would be www.yourdomain.com/stuffed_toys/stuffed_toys.html. You could then write a short paragraph on the home page, describing the new page and including a link. Big relevancy points!

Reciprocal Links

Reciprocal linking means forming partnerships with other sites who place a link from their Web pages to yours. You give them a similar link in return.

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When you look for people to swap links with, make sure that you don't reduce the quality or content of your own site. You don't want users to click straight through without reading your content; you want them to buy first. One way to stop them from running away too quickly is to create a "Webmasters Resource Page" and link to that page from your homepage. This doesn't take away from the content on your homepage and the links are just one click away rather than being buried deep within the site, giving value to your partners.

In any case, you want to be sure that your site is more than just a page full of links. If your site contains more links than content, it will not be attractive to webmasters, search engines or users.

3.9.2 Picking Your Partner

Your link partners should be sites your target market will visit. Think about your product and its subject area and brainstorm to determine where people interested in your product might be looking online. For example, if you're trying to shift your book about blackjack strategy, it makes sense that the people visiting online casinos would make great customers. Online casinos then could be good partners. Identify top-ranked, high quality casino sites and find the email address of their webmasters.

You can also identify your competitors and see where they trade links.

Tips for talking to webmasters

- Before you contact webmasters, place a link to their site on your resource page to assure them that you will actually provide a quality link.
- Create a subject line that will encourage them to read your message rather than deleting it—you don't want them to think you're spam. (Something about *their* site or product is sure to capture their attention; they will open it, thinking you're a potential customer.)
- Begin your message by talking about your visit to their site and what you found interesting about it. Detail your product or service in one line and ask them to exchange links with you.
- Tell them in detail where you have placed their link and emphasize that it is only one click away from your homepage.

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Tell them that if you don't hear back from them in a couple of days, you will consider that to a negative response and that you will remove their link from your site.

3.9.3 Inward Link Analysis

Like reciprocal linking, inward links to your website can be an effective strategy to increase your website's visibility. Inward links are links pointing to your websites from other websites without providing a reciprocal link from your website.

There are many techniques to improve inward linking. Many of these have enjoyed success. The most proven technique for inward linking is through Ebooks. You can offer interesting and educative Ebooks for free to other websites and they could install the icons or the Ebooks on their sites. The icon or the Ebook you create would have a link to your website. This will allow a spider to crawl through that link and visit you website. For example, a footer on every alternate page can have a link to your website that would increase the probability of your website being listed with a crawler based Search Engine.

Other techniques include posting newsletters, white papers, news stories and press releases at other websites, particularly industry specific and general portals. The newsletters and press releases would contain a link pointing to your website, thus, promoting your website.

3.10 Optimizing Your Website

To get listed correctly in the search engines each page of your site that you want listed needs to be optimized to the best of your ability. Since the keywords that you decide to target will be used throughout the optimization process choosing the right keywords is essential. If you choose the wrong keywords you will not be found in the search engines. If you are not found in the search engines how will anyone find your site? Since the keywords you choose to optimize your

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pages with are so important we have put together some tips to help you make sure that you make the right choices. You should utilize these tips when selecting keywords for each page that you plan to submit to the search engines.

Think "specific keyword phrases" not "keywords". Due to the extreme amount of competition for general terms in the search engines, if your keyword phrases are too general it is very unlikely you will rank well in the search engines. You stand a far better chance to rank well for specific phrases where there is less competition. The resulting traffic, since it is more highly targeted, should also be much higher quality too.

You should try to come up with as many keyword phrases as you can think of that relate to the page you are optimizing. Try asking a few friends and family what they would search for when searching for a site like yours. Check out your competition for ideas. Do a search using keywords that you already know you want to target and click through on the top sites that come up. Once on the site view the source HTML code and view the keywords they have in their Meta tags - this should give you many more ideas.

Make sure to only use keywords that relate to YOUR site or page. To view the HTML code, simply click the 'View' at the top of your web browser then select 'Source', or 'Page Source'. You should develop a list of keyword phrases, following the tips on this page, for each page that you optimize for the search engines.

Apart from these, there are certain aspects that should be avoided. These are:

Dead Links - As search engines index your entire site by crawling through hypertext links, you must make sure you check for dead links before submitting.

Graphics and Image Maps - Search engines cannot read images, be sure to include Alternative Text tags.

Frames - Many Search engines aren't frames compatible. Meta tags and the <no frames> tags are important in this instance.

Spamming - Avoid resubmitting your pages repeatedly to search engines if your site does not get listed in the first few weeks. Allow at least 6 weeks before resubmission. Continual resubmission (such as those caused by automatic submission software) can cause your site to be penalized.

3.11 Monitoring Your Progress

Okay, so you've decided on your keywords, inserted your links and submitted

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your sites. Now all you have to do is open your offshore account and wait for the cash to pour in, right?

Well, not quite. You might get lucky with your first shot, but it never happened to me. Once you've submitted all your links, you need to keep a close eye on them, and see which need improving and which can be dropped.

The crucial factor here is to keep track of your Search Engine Statistics. These will tell you how many people have come from the various search engines and how many of those became customers.

But it's not enough to know how much traffic you're receiving, you also want to know how you're doing in the rankings. There are two ways to do that:

Manual Searches

Dead easy, simply log on and look. First enter your URL to make sure your site has been approved and listed. That can take a little while. Once you can see that you're online though, you want to see how you're ranked in each keyword. To do that, you can simply enter each keyword into the search engine and browse the pages until you find your listing. Works, but takes a while.

Computerized Searches

I'll be honest with you: it's been a long time since I did a manual search. If you've got just ten sites and you want to check ten keywords for each once a week, you're going to lose at least a day's work a month. That's too much for me. I use WebPosition Gold. I tell it which keywords to check where and it gives me an automated report. Simple.

When you look at your statistics, pay particularly attention to which keywords are bringing in the most traffic. In general, the higher you are, the more traffic you receive and the more sales you make. But that isn't always true. It might pay more to be fifteenth on a keyword that gets a million searches a month than first on a keyword that gets just a thousand. And if you're fifteenth, you've still got room for improvement.

And it's the improvement that's the key. If you see that your link is stuck at the bottom of a list somewhere, try adding more links, putting that keyword in more pages or adding keyword-rich content. If you can see where you stand, you can figure to where to go.

3.12 Finally, A Word About Spam

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Buying Advertising and Keeping Customers

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Don't.

You can spam search engines by stuffing your site with keywords, submitting them numerous times or filling your pages with links. And they'll just get you blacklisted.

Don't do it. It's just not worth it.

It used be accepted practice to create doorway pages—duplicates of a home page filled with different keywords—but search engines won't accept even these any more.

They will accept smart pages though. If you want to use more keywords than you can fit on your site, create a second page that is totally different from your homepage but which is still based upon your product or service. Here, you can expand upon a topic you merely touched on in your homepage. A great example of a smart page is to write articles on the benefits of your services using a different set of keywords to those on your home page. You can do that.

To sum up, this chapter gave a detailed view of many of the proven and effective Search Engine optimization techniques. SEO is probably the most important and the most successful traffic generating mechanism, and when done carefully it can do wonders for your website and your products.

In the next chapter, we discuss Internet marketing through ads and banners.

4. Buying Advertising And Keeping Customers!

In my experience, search engines and directories are the easiest and probably the most effective methods to bring users to a site. But it's never a good idea to use one tactic exclusively. In this chapter we're going to look at three other methods: banners, text links and classified ads.

4.1 Banners

When the Web first started, banners were all the rage. Today, they're pretty much passé. They're no longer a novelty and unless they're super-clever, users pretty much ignore them. Conversion rates have dropped through the floor and many advertisers have found other ways to push their products.

And yet, every website still contains a whopping great banner ad splashed along

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4.1.1 Banner Glossary

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an image. Not a great way to measure interest. One page can have lots of images and get lots of hits, even if it's only seen once. Often, people will say "hits" when they really mean "page views" or "impressions."

- **Page Impressions or Page Views** — The number of times a Web page has been requested by the server. Much more accurate than hits: each view is a potential customer looking at a page of your site. But not necessarily a different customer...
- **Unique Users** — The people who download a Web page, counted by IP address. You want to bring lots of users to your site so that you can create a broad customer base. The same user clicking on a banner a dozen times could cost you money without increasing your sales. Most reputable sites will check the IP address of the person clicking on a link and only count it once in a 24-hour period. If a site doesn't do this, don't advertise with them.

4.1.2 Banner Economics

Business online, like business offline, always boils down to math: the difference between cost and revenue. If your banner campaign is costing more than it's earning, you won't be in business for very long. To figure out how your campaign is doing, you're going to need to know your Cost Per Mille, your Click Through Rate and your Conversion Rate. These are your basic tools. If you don't know them, find out!

Let's say your CPM is \$20, your CTR is 1%, and your Conversion Rate is 4%. (So you're paying \$20 every 1,000 times your banner is shown, it brings you 10 new users, and you make one sale for every 25 users the ad brings). The question you need to ask yourself is how much are you wasting on the 24 users who *don't* buy.

- **Cost per visitor** = $\$20 / 10 = \2 So each visitor costs you \$2, but you need 25 visitors to make one sale, so...
- **Cost per sale** = $\$2 * 25 = \50 If your product is worth less than \$50, you're making a loss.

That's pretty simple, and as you can see, there's not a lot of room to maneuver here. Margins are tight on banner advertising and that applies to both the site selling the advertising space and the webmaster buying it.

Of course, hard cash isn't the only way to measure the success of a banner ad, and one reason they're still popular is that they're a pretty effective branding tool. After all, advertisers spend millions on billboards without expecting

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motorists to drive straight through them and make a purchase! On the Web, those advertisers can even be reasonably sure that the people who see their ads will be interested in them. But branding costs money—lots of it—with no guarantee of results. It's usually best left to the big boys.

The banner ads on my sites usually send users to my affiliate partners, and the banner ads I place on other people's sites usually come *from* my affiliate programs. They don't cost me anything and as long I'm making the sales to pay my affiliate partners, everybody's happy.

If you do decide to purchase banner advertisements though, and if you have a *very specific* market in mind, make sure they are strategically placed—on sites where the traffic will most definitely be interested in your product or service. Find a site that suits exactly your specific product and you’re going to be appealing directly to your target market.

4.2 Text Links

Text links are much simpler than banner ads. They're also less eye-catching and less sexy. There's no funky animation, no neat Flash, just a few well chosen words often stuck at the side of a Web page. But that doesn't mean they're not effective.

In fact, to some extent, text links are the unsung heroes of online marketing. They don't get half the attention they deserve, but they can do a pretty neat job of bringing users to a site. And you can't ask for more than that.

The first point to bear in mind about text links is that they're tough to write. You might have all of 50 characters to make your sales pitch. That's about the length of that sentence, so you're going to have to be pretty creative in what you say. That's the downer. On the plus side though, text links are amongst the most popular form of promotion amongst users. They don't get in the way like pop-ups, and they're often mistaken for content—so unlike banners, they're actually read. And because they're written into the site's HTML, you know that each page view means a real exposure.

They're also cheap. You might have to pay a flat-fee or a cost-per-click, but there's much less risk there than with banner ads. If you know how much traffic the site's getting, you can figure out in advance if it's worth your while.

Best of all though, you can sometimes arrange for free links with partners in return for a similar placement on your own site. That doesn't just give you free

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advertising—it also helps your search engine placements.

I use a lot of text links to promote my sites, but I wouldn't just use them. They aren't prominent enough to really keep traffic moving in droves, but in terms of effectiveness and cost, they're way up there.

4.3 Classified Ads

Offline, classified ads are cheap little adverts that appear at the back of newspapers or magazines. They work well if you're trying to sell your old Ford Escort or you're looking for a new home for your tatty sofa, but they're not too profitable for businesses aiming to keep repeat sales coming in.

That's offline. Online, things are a little different. But not hugely different.

I post adverts on classified columns, but I don't expect to make a lot of money from them. What I do expect though is an opportunity to test my headlines and ad copy before I start spending hard cash on AdWords, text links and sales letters.

That's why I don't bother with the dollar ads. If I'm going to spend marketing money, I'd rather give it to a search engine than a classified ads column. The return on sales just doesn't justify it.

But there are places where you can place free ads, and you can actually do this on some of the really big sites like AOL and Yahoo. Even if I don't make many sales, the fact that I'm getting my product in front of so many people certainly won't do me any harm.

Occasionally, I'll post an ad on one of these and monitor how many replies I get.

4.4 Cultivating New Customers

Text links, banners and search engines are all ways to attract clients and build a customer base. It's our buyers that's we're really talking about here. But the Web isn't the only place to look for customers even for Web-based businesses. Some of the old traditional methods like word-of-mouth referrals still work just as well, and still bring me a fair bit of cash each month. Here are some tips to help you grab as many customers as you can while you're setting up your business and getting your online marketing programs in place.



Whatever your line of business, you've got to know your market. You have to know who your clients are, what they want and what makes them buy. Do the market research, check out your competitors, create a formal marketing plan—but take the effort to put yourself in the shoes of your buyers. Otherwise you won't get any!

You might think you know what your product's sales points are—you might even be dead proud of them—but the fact is, your buyers don't give a toss about all the wonderful gizmos you've packed into your product. They just want you to answer one question: *what's it going to do for me?*

Make Your Site Sing

It can take a fair bit of effort and not a small amount of time to create a website that works. But you can't stop there. You're going to have to keep updating it, checking it and making sure all the links and addresses work. It's the first place to look when you notice your sales starting to drop, and it's crucial to keep them coming in.

You must always be alert for opportunities to make new business contacts and not allow yourself to be caught off guard when opportunities arise. It doesn't matter if you're out shopping or at a Chamber of Commerce meeting, make sure that you have professional business cards, brochures, etc. on hand—and don't be afraid to use them.

Tell everyone about your business and your product. You might even consider sending out a mass mailing to everyone you know, telling them what you're doing. Chances are, someone knows someone who wants what you've got, and friendly referrals usually bring the best business!

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Buying Advertising and Keeping Customers

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When it comes to building customers, there are clients who buy once—and clients who buy lots of times. It's the latter that you want to pack into your customer list; they're worth their weight in gold. Big companies are good places to prospect for repeat business (they have big demands and budgets) but *always* treat your repeat customers well. That might mean the odd discount or the occasional freebie, but the extra business should make up for it.

4.5 Creating Effective Ads

Online advertising on the Internet leaves a lot to be desired. We have ads that emulate Windows-warning boxes. We have pop-ups and pop-unders. All of these are developed with the intent to make people notice them. However, most of them only end up irritating them. Advertisers, especially those with small budgets, can't afford to waste money on ineffective buys. In order to optimize your advertising buys, you need to concentrate on improving your creative.

Here are some tips that might help:

Step 1: Define clear goals of your advertising campaign

The most important aspect of any advertising campaign is to have a clear objective in mind. You may be targeting a specific group of people, your initial aim may be to target at least 1000 internet surfers and so on and so forth. Have a well defined, clear purpose.

Step 2: Identify The Most Effective Sites For Achieving Your Goals

Sites that are most relevant to your product or service will, more than likely, be your best bet; but also consider larger sites or networks that can target the audience you're trying to reach. They can be very cost-effective. If you have multiple products or services that appeal to various target markets, you'll have to consider sites that reach all those various segments.

Step 3: Craft Your Message To Fit The Needs Of The Audience You're Targeting

This comes down to understanding the audience of the sites you're advertising on. The message you use on a technology site to appeal to technologically savvy customers won't have the same appeal for visitors on a small-business site. Focus your campaign.

Step 4: Content Of Your Ad

Buying Advertising and Keeping Customers

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any advertising campaign is knowing which ads bring you the most visitors. After all, you may have banner ads, newsgroups ads, ads in newsletters and articles, ads in autoresponders, or a simple classified ad on a website.

Every marketer can only benefit by knowing:

- ★ which of the ads received the best response
- ★ whether free classified sites are worth the effort
- ★ which newsletters are the most profitable
- ★ how a sponsored newsletter ad compares to the standard one
- ★ whether animated banners are better than static ones
- ★ how effective are your email ads
- ★ does the ad at the start of an newsletter or article outperform the one at the end

Ad Tracking programs would answer all of these questions. They can help you analyze the effectiveness of every single ad and hence they should be an integral part of every marketing campaign. At the basic level an ad tracking program records when your URL has been clicked. It can detect where your visitor came from (the referring URL), the browser and operating system and the exact time. It can record total hits and unique hits (i.e. where one visitor may click several times). This data is kept in the system so you can then pull off reports on any ad campaign over any period e.g. by month, day or even by hour.

Types Of Ad Tracking Tools

There are two types of Ad Tracking programs. However, the operation of both these types is the same.

CGI Script

You purchase these programs outright and it is installed on your site. If you have some technical knowledge you should be able to install it yourself otherwise the supplier will charge an installation fee. There are certain minimum software requirements for programs which run on your site, including access to the cgi-bin. Hence, most free sites would not be able to install CGI scripts. However, with CGI scripts your tracking URLs carry your own domain name.

Online Services

These programs operate completely independently from your site - no software installation or use of your system resources (such as disk space) is required. However, such programs run at the supplier site. You pay a rental (monthly or yearly) for the program. Thus, you are dependent on the supplier's website for

Buying Advertising and Keeping Customers

your ad tracking. Besides, your tracking URLs carry the supplier domain name.

The main difference between these types of ad tracking tools is the installation. For some businesses, running CGI scripts may be more advantageous, whereas for some online services would be more useful.

There are many Ad Tracking tools available at reasonable rates. Some of the most popular tools are discussed here.

Adminder (<http://www.adminder.com>)

This is an online service tool. AdMinder provides an ad tracking service that can be used with multiple websites. It provides the capability to track clicks, actions and sales. AdMinder provides reporting as well as the ability to export your data in CSV format, which you can use in MS Excel for additional analysis.

Some of its key features are:

- ✦ Browser based service, so no installation required
- ✦ Works with all major web browsers
- ✦ Provides key financial stats
- ✦ Allow for Grouped Reports
- ✦ Unlimited Campaigns

ProAnalyzer (<http://www.proanalyzer.com>)

ProAnalyzer Ad Tracking System is a CGI program that installs on your website's cgi-bin directory and tracks your ad click-throughs and sales without paying a monthly fee. When a visitor enters your website from an ad URL, a cookie is placed on his web browser and a click-through is recorded. If the visitor purchases a product, that cookie is read on the Thank You page with the purchase total, and the sale is recorded for the ad that generated it.

You can track sales or results either by the campaign name, the revenue generated by a sale, or the action accomplished (lead generated, etc.). The Administration Area allows you to monitor each of your campaigns showing hits, sales, and the conversion rate for each. You can configure how the program calculates the conversion rate (by raw hits or unique hits) and how results are sorted.

There are lots of different ways to bring customers to your site. So far we've talked about search engines, banners, text links and even reminded you of some of the old-fashioned, offline methods you can use.

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“I don’t know the key to success, but the key to failure is
to please everybody”

~Bill Cosby

List below what you have gained the most from volume
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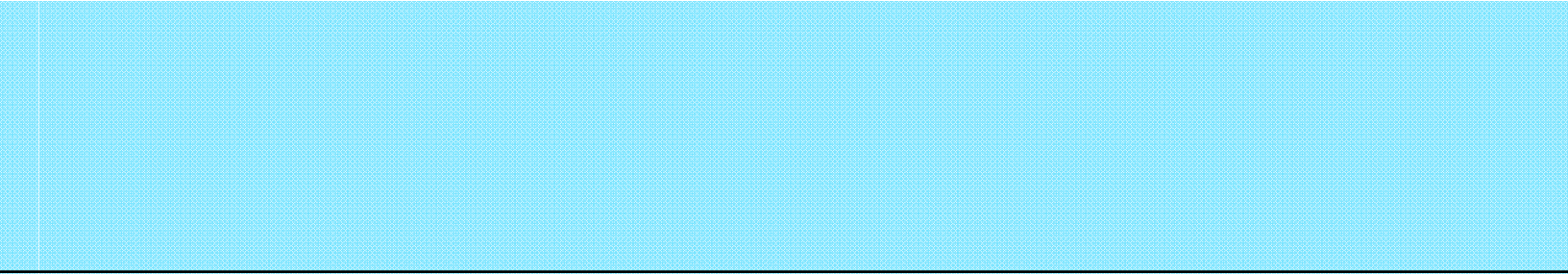
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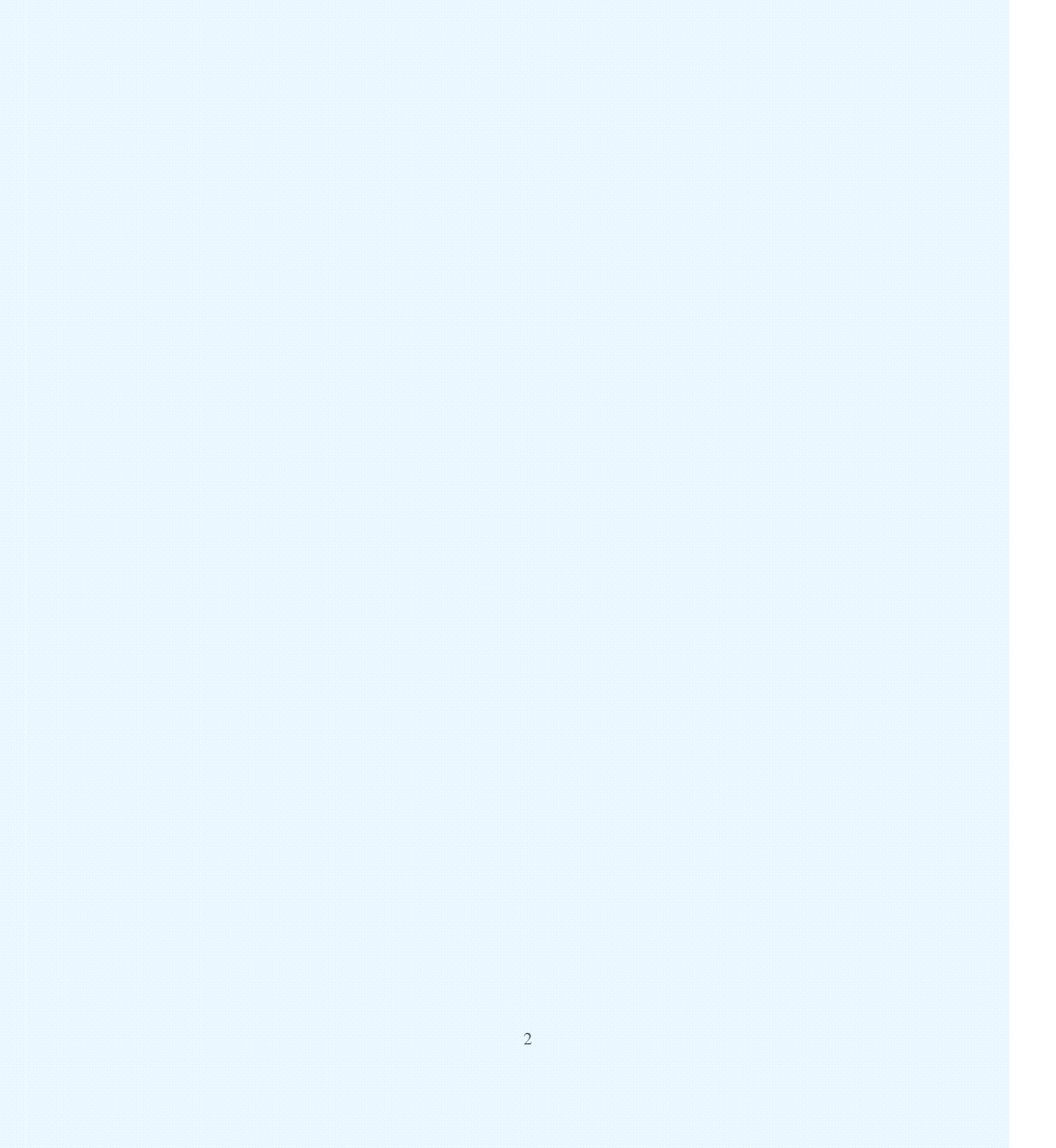
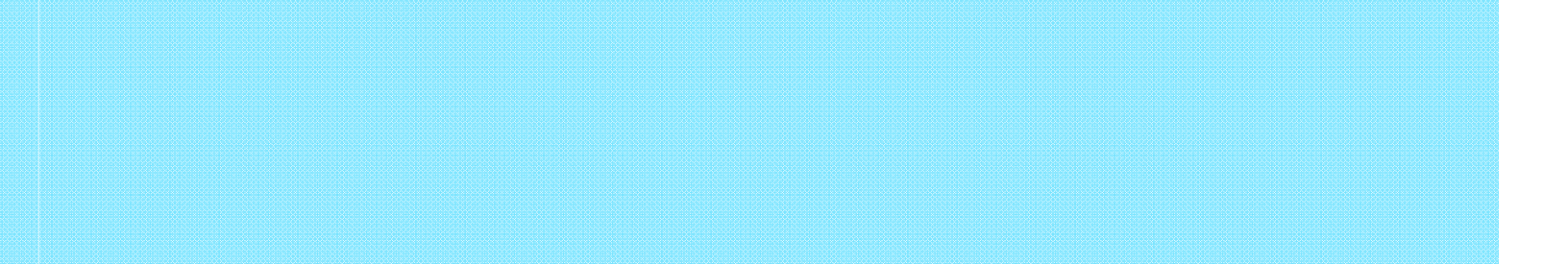
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*Michael Vincent's
Online Wealth Course
Volume II*



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5. Getting Rich from Affiliate Programs

Affiliate programs (also called Referral Programs or Partnership Programs) are essentially commission-based sales schemes. You recommend a site to your users and pick up a percentage of any sales those users generate. You benefit from the commission and the site benefits from sales it wouldn't otherwise have made. If you've ever gone to a website and seen links to Amazon, those were affiliate links.



You can run an affiliate program from a site you've already set up, or create a site specially to promote a product or service. As long as it brings in more cash than you spend on building it and buying traffic, you're laughing.

Affiliate ads work two ways: you can join them to make money, or you can run one to attract users.

5.1 Joining An Affiliate Program

As with any marketing venture, you need to be careful in the selection of an affiliate program. The benefit of an affiliate program is that it gives you another way to make money from your users. Instead of selling them a product yourself, you send them to a partner and take a cut.

On the downside though, your affiliate ads will take the place of a different ad that you could have put in that same spot. You have to make sure that each advertising position on your site is bringing in the maximum revenue possible. If you're not getting the most from your site, you're tossing money away.

The key to success is to choose the right program, right from the beginning.

Now, a lot of commercial sites run affiliate programs. That's because they know that they only have to pay a commission if a sale is actually made; it's a proven way to generate revenue without risk. What that means for you is that when it comes to choosing an affiliate program, you're going to have a huge range to choose from. What it all boils down to though is product and price.

While it might be tempting to go for the program that pays the highest commissions, the program won't pay you a penny if your users won't go there or won't buy once they get there. You have to be certain that the service you're promoting is of genuine interest to the kind of users you buy, whether you're buying them from search engines or anywhere else.

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Sure, you can work backwards: You find a high-paying affiliate program and create a small site to send users to it, but do you know where to buy users for a program like that? You're going to have to research the field, check out the most popular sites, and negotiate banner campaigns and link exchanges.

For example, suppose you had set up a dating site. You might make bit of money selling subscriptions, but you might make even more by joining Match.com's affiliate program and selling them your users. Unless you're planning to be the Internet's biggest dating site, you're not going to be able to compete directly and beat them, but you can join them—and earn money.

Here are some tips to selecting an affiliate program that is lucrative and right for you:

Look for comprehensive statistics pages that list the number of click-throughs, sales and earnings so you can see how you're doing. The information should be broken down by month.

Find out how often you will be paid and make sure that the payment schedule meets your expectations. Some programs pay monthly, others quarterly; which is best for you?

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get the best results.

Make sure that top level support is given If they can't answer your questions promptly and intelligently, you don't want to work with them.

5.2 Setting Up Your Own Affiliate Program

Joining an affiliate program is a neat way to make money from your users. But just as you can join someone else's affiliate program, so you can set up your own program and invite webmasters to sign up.

What would that bring you? The same as you're bringing your affiliate partners: deals. Every time someone sends you a user who gives you money, you give a portion of that money to your affiliate. It's an easy way to generate traffic and earn cash.

And you don't need to be a programming genius to set up an affiliate program. There are a whole bunch of companies out there that offer entire affiliate kits right off the shelf.

Ultimate Affiliate

lets you run a fully featured affiliate program from your website. It integrates with virtually every payment method, awards down-line commissions, and can handle high-traffic websites. You can edit the sign-up form to match the "look and feel" of your site as well as delete some of the optional fields. The administration area allows you to edit affiliates and commissions, create printable reports of money due, export the data to a text file, view the traffic through your affiliate program, and much more. Your affiliates can log in at any time and see their traffic and commission statistics as well as change their information and get links and banner code.

Once the program is set up you'll only need to log in once a month to print out a list of the affiliates, their addresses, and the money owed. You can do this quarterly if you wish. You can export the payments owed to a text file in PayPal's "mass pay" format and then just upload it to your PayPal account to pay everyone automatically. Or, you can simply write your own checks. If you have to pay a lot of commissions, there is a check printing service called qchex.com. Upload the file and they'll print and mail your checks for a fee of about 80 cents each.

Alternatively, **Locked Area Pro** is an advanced member's area management system offering very good security that's easy to maintain. The system provides

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a huge list of useful features including automated sign-up, user account validation, optional random password generation and an administration approve/decline account feature. It also comes with an extremely powerful control panel with an online administration of users, backup, and full customization facilities from the browser. A statistics system is also built in. What more could you want?

5.3 Cooking Off The Spam

Any time you run a program where your affiliates rely on other signups to generate profits, you will eventually have a problem with spam. One of your affiliates will inevitably get it into their head to blitz the Web with unwanted garbage.

When this happens you need to be ready to take action—otherwise it will cost you! Your Internet company can boot you off your server and you can find yourself blacklisted. Not good for business. If you get an email from someone claiming they received spam with your URL, then take it as an early warning. I am not advising you to immediately terminate the affiliate's account, but be sure to contact them to follow up on the complaint. Let your affiliate know you received a complaint and advise them to remove this person from their list.

If you only get one or two complaints, it's probably not spam—the complainants might simply have signed up for an email list and forgotten all about it. You will know when one of your affiliates is spamming, because you will get anywhere from 10 to 100 complaints in the same day all regarding the same URL. The best thing to do in this case is to immediately terminate or disable the account of the affiliate URL that was spammed.

5.4 Managing And Tracking Your Affiliate Programs

The key to any business is to promote your products and services to people who need them. Your affiliate business is no different. In order to earn commissions you must put your products in front of the people who need them. The beauty of marketing affiliate programs is that it is anybody's ball game. This is the one place you can burrow deep into your own niche and stick it to the so-called 'big wigs'.

You may create your own affiliate program or you may promote other popular affiliate programs that are related to your product or service. The best way to manage and track affiliate programs is by creating your own affiliate program website. This is where you can list all your affiliate programs.

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Staying Organized



There are many affiliate networks that provide multiple affiliate programs and merchants. Keeping a track of all affiliate programs in a single network is easy. You would generally be given one username and password as well as a single interface that controls all the programs. However, if you have many of your own affiliate programs or you promote several stand-alone affiliate programs from your website, the task of staying organized becomes a bit more complex.

There are many software programs available on the Internet that organize and keep track of all data associated with affiliate programs. Some of these are My Affiliate Program 2000 and Affiliate Assistant 1.0. These programs maintain databases pertaining to information about all your affiliate programs. A typical database would consist of the following fields:

- ★ Program Name
- ★ Date joined or created
- ★ Contact Name
- ★ URL
- ★ Email Address
- ★ ID
- ★ Password
- ★ 1st Tier Percent
- ★ 1st Tier Sale
- ★ 2nd Tier Percent
- ★ 2nd Tier Sale
- ★ Total Income
- ★ Additional comments

Once the program information has been entered, you can add information about individual sales made and checks received. The program then keeps track of sales to date, amount collected and receivables. Besides, some of the advanced software programs also provide analysis and comparison tools for all affiliate programs. If you take the time to input collected data about clicks, sales, and page views, impressions, emails sent etc. from your various campaigns and enter all of it into the program, it will show you:

- ★ Click to Sale Ratios
- ★ Impression to Sale Ratios
- ★ Amount Earned Per Impression
- ★ Amount Earned Per Click

Apart from these are a few other tips that might help you manage your affiliate

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programs.

Always ensure that your website is up and running. On a Daily basis type your URL into your browser's address bar, refresh the page and find out. The danger in not knowing that your site is down comes when you are running a pay per click advertising campaign. The click costs add up whether your site is functional or not. If your site is down, you are paying for advertising, but no one is buying.

Check your statistics daily, maybe even twice a day. This will give you a better idea of your income trends and also highlight affiliate programs that bring your business. Visit the statistics interface for each network and individual affiliate partner and input your total revenues into any accounting software. Using such software frequently will also keep you informed as to whether certain checks have become overdue.

Be prompt in answering any queries from affiliate partners or customers, especially when these are about your products or services. This probably means that the customer trusts your site and is thinking of buying your product.

One of the main aspects of any affiliate program is residual income. You've got to make the most of each and every customer you receive. The best way to do this is by promoting affiliate programs that offer residual commission.

This allows you to repeatedly get paid for work you do once. For example, if a visitor arrives at your site and purchases auto responder services, newsletter subscriptions, ISP/hosting services, you will collect a portion of the monthly fees for as long as they remain a paying customer. Membership sites are a good way to collect residual commissions and are steadily growing in popularity. There are many affiliate programs that offer residual commission.

A well placed recommendation placed at the end of an outgoing email can bring in extra sales. Target your audience, what are their specific needs? If you can offer them a product they need/want, often times the end result will be a sale.

Finally, track all your affiliate links. The best way to accomplish this is by setting up tracking software for your affiliate links. There are a number of scripts that will do the job. Most tracking programs typically allow you to setup tracking links for any product you promote, telling you how many hits each

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product has received, and where the hits are coming from. A more detailed view of tracking and analysis is given in the section below.

It is not enough to have a few banners and classified ads. You must provide as much help as possible for your associates if you want them to be successful. You should have tested and proven endorsements, testimonials, sig files, ezine ads, and other unique tools and techniques. You must also make yourself available, either through email or the phone, to help your affiliates implement these tools and to answer any questions they may have.

Whether you run your own or participate in an affiliate program, you must be able to determine what methods work best in a particular medium. For instance, which ezine ads work best and in what ezine; which banner ads produce the greatest clickthroughs and from which sites or banner exchanges; and where on your website is the most effective spot to include a testimonial.

Some affiliate programs, have implemented unique payment procedures to get affiliates their commission checks on a timely basis. Some of these procedures include: online electronic payment services, direct bank deposits and checks by fax. If you can solidify your payment procedures from the start, you will save yourself an administrative headache and more importantly, keep your affiliates happy and working to promote your program.

5.5 Evaluating Your Website's Performance

Website statistics and affiliate sales figures are essential for evaluating the effectiveness of your affiliate programs. Before you start recording and analyzing data, it's worthwhile to know what statistics you're trying to calculate - and why. Following are some of the key questions that need to be answered periodically to ensure the success of affiliate programs.

- ★ What percentage of the website visitors become customers through affiliate programs?
- ★ What percentages of sales are new or renewals?
- ★ What is the average revenue per visitor?
- ★ What is the average revenue per sale?

The most important figure you need to keep track of is the visitor to customer conversion. It tells you exactly how well you convince your visitors to buy your affiliate products. Average conversion ratios for affiliate programs range

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between .5 and 1.5 percent. Anything above 1.5% is really good. This figure, however, indicates the total conversion for all the affiliate programs. If you promote more than one affiliate program you need to also calculate the conversion rate for each of the programs.

Knowing how conversion rates compare between programs is useful when deciding how to direct your promotional efforts. For example, if you discover that Program 'A' converts at 1% and Program 'B' converts at 2%, it might be time to spend more time and effort to promote Program 'A'. Most tracking software would give you detailed information about each of the affiliate programs promoted on your website.

All affiliate programs that have a low conversion rate should be dropped. While this may seem like a lot of work to go through to track your site's performance, it really is a worthwhile endeavor. Once your tracking mechanism is set, and you've done the inputs a few times, you'll be surprised at how simple it becomes. In fact, you may find that eventually you look forward to 'adding things up' at the end of the month to get a clear picture of where your affiliate business stands.



5.6 How To Attract Affiliates

One of the biggest fears new Affiliate managers have is in finding new affiliates. This fear is a stumbling block that stops many site owners from getting started with affiliate marketing. Interestingly, with a proper marketing strategy, getting affiliates may not be very difficult. Given below are some tips that may help in attracting new affiliates.

✦ Find complimentary sites - "Complementary" sites are a sites that sell products or services that compliment your offerings. If you sell "gardening tools", a site that sells books on "gardening tips" would be a perfect affiliate. If you sell software, try looking for sites that sell computers or computer parts. Finding sites that already attract your target market, and can benefit from recommending your product or service to their visitors, is the goal.

✦ Find content sites – There are many sites that do not sell any kind of product or service but are mainly content-oriented sites. Such sites promote an idea, concept, study or belief. Content sites that are used as a resource for your target market are ideal affiliates.

Finally, there are several sites on the Internet dedicated to listing affiliate Programs. Get your program listed in these directories.

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5.6.1 Classifying Affiliates For Better Management

The hardest part of administrating an Affiliate Program is deciding what your affiliates need to help make the sale. But, by carefully categorizing your affiliates, you can easily determine what their needs are and how to accurately meet them. The plan given below helps in categorizing affiliates in order to manage your affiliate program better.

The First Step is to pick at least three types of affiliates. Take a look at your affiliates and try to determine one outstanding characteristic that can easily be compared across the board and choose at least three types of the characteristic. Here are some examples:

- ✦ Level of Sales - You may find that your affiliates are so completely different that it's hard to find something to classify them by. Try classifying them by the level of sales they've reached with you. You'll most likely find that you have a few forerunners that lead the pack with a number of sales, quite a few affiliates that have sporadically made a sale or two and some that have yet to make a sale. This will help you classify them based on sales.
- ✦ Products - If you sell a wide variety of products for specific interests/needs you may be able to classify your affiliates by product. For instance, a financial site could classify types like Personal Finance, Small Business Finance, and Corporate Finance.

Industry - If you market commodities like office supplies, health and beauty products, house-wares and so on, you may find that your affiliates come from a wide variety of industries. You can most likely classify your affiliates according to their industry.

The **Second Step** is to determine the needs of each type. Each of your affiliate types will have different needs; some of their needs will overlap, but you should find a distinct difference in many of their needs. If you find that all of them have the same needs, go back to step one and re-think your types.

Here are some basic things to look for:

- ✦ Linking Methods - Different types of affiliates will need different linking methods. Let's use the example above where we had different groups based on sales. Your low sales group may be satisfied with a banner or two to place on their site. Your medium sales type may be interested in an article or two for added content on their site. Your high sales group will probably pass up banners for articles, guestbooks, email ads and signature files.
- ✦ Capturing visitors is what you want. In order to do so -- you have to know what they want. Visit your affiliates' sites to see what visitors are looking at and

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looking for. Ask yourself, "How does my product relate to what I am seeing?" Different types of affiliates may expect different commissions. You'll have some Affiliates that have joined your program "on the side" and others that plan on earning a substantial income from the program. Determine what effort they are putting into advertising, how much other programs in your industry are paying, and the amount of time they devote to your program.

The **Third Step** involves the process of creating and compiling linking methods for each group of affiliates. Based on the needs you identified in Step two, create and compile linking methods for each type. Here are a few linking methods to think about.

- ✦ Banners - Though they aren't as effective as other linking methods, banners are still widely used and expected. Make banners in a variety of sizes to fit tops of pages, bottoms, toolbars, sidebars and other miscellaneous areas.
- ✦ Articles - These are great for affiliates that need content for their websites and newsletters. Be sure that your articles are articles and not ads.
- ✦ Email Ads - Your active affiliates may be interested in placing ads in e-zines or their own newsletters. Try writing a few ads in different lengths.
- ✦ Signature Files - Dedicated affiliates may even add your tag to their signature line. Give them a few witty lines to choose from.
- ✦ Guestbooks: - Let your affiliates help you build your Opt-In email lists with guestbooks. Offer them a commission for each email address they send you, or each resulting sale from the subscribers they send you.
- ✦ Product Images - Give your affiliates images that show and link directly to specific products. They'll be able to choose an image specific to their site, or choose several images to display.
- ✦ Review each affiliate Type and match them up with your new linking methods. You may have some linking methods that overlap Types -- this is okay. Just be sure you are concentrating on the affiliates' needs.

The **Fourth Step** is to decide commission levels. Your first decision will be to determine whether you want to pay a flat rate or percentage of each sale. Based on the needs you identified above for each of the affiliate types, decide on a commission amount for each Type. If you have a two-tier program, consider the possibility of different second tier rates as well.

Similarly, there are also programs that surf the Net, recording every email address they find. These will let you quickly build up a huge list of e-mail addresses—none of whose owners will thank you when you stuff their inboxes with marketing material. Forget about them; they're not worth the effort. It's much safer, and much more effective, to take the time to build your own list.

Many affiliate marketers make a huge mistake of posting their ads on forums. Forums can be used to promote your affiliate programs and your website but in a proper manner. Posting banners is very similar to spamming and may easily upset forum administrators.

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programs to such websites.

- Avoid using caps on your web page or email ad. Using caps is symbolic to shouting, which never goes well with potential customers. A few words may be written in capital text to give them additional emphasis. However, such practice should be limited.
- Always respond to all queries sent by visitors as soon as possible. A slight delay in your response could easily result in loss of a potential client.
- Do not use pop-up ads along with your webpage. Most surfers are likely to close their browser if they come across pop-ups.
- Do not host your website on a free server or use free email accounts. This gives a negative impression to visitors. Using free hosts and email accounts looks cheesy and loses sales.
- Many websites do not have an opt-in list. Create an opt-in and opt-out list for your visitors. Without these, there is no way of tracking potential customers. Visitors should be allowed to opt-in at any time as well as opt-out at any time.
- Most sites have a poor tracking mechanism. It is essential that you track all business activities. Accurate record keeping is crucial. There are many software tools, discussed earlier in this chapter, that can automate your record keeping process with minimal error.
- A 'mall' site is best used as a central hub to send visitors to your other domains. As a main or only site, unfocused mall sites don't get traffic from the engines, and they don't convert well to sales. Highly focused theme sites attract traffic and sales.
- Offline advertising may not be effective. A lot of money and effort should not be wasted on offline advertising. Most people rarely check websites that are advertised in local magazines or newspapers.

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- Avoid focus on animated banner ads. These simply use up bandwidth, thus making web pages load slower.
- While advertising do not degrade other competitors. It is recommended that you highlight your products' uniqueness and superiority but never mortify other products.
- Banners or text links that expire are guaranteed to eventually send your visitor to a broken link or show a broken graphic on your page. Time sensitive advertising is best used only in email advertising campaigns.
- Never put affiliate links on your homepage. This is similar to asking your visitors to leave immediately. Give them a chance to browse, sign up for your newsletter and decide that they'd like to come back to your place before introducing them to your affiliates.
- Technology changes with amazing speed. To keep up with this rapidly evolving industry, you must invest time and money in research. The investment is a tax write-off, and will pay you back many times over in additional revenue.
- Finally, persist with your plan. It might take you time to get established even if you have a solid marketing plan. Persistence is the single most important factor in determining success online or off.

5.7 LinkShare – Affiliate Program That Can Bring You Great Results

LinkShare hosts a password-protected website that offers affiliates a choice of hundreds of merchant programs. On the site, affiliates can join new programs, get links to put on their sites, and then see reports about how their links are performing and how much they have earned.

When a visitor from an affiliate's site clicks on a link and goes to a merchant's site, LinkShare keeps track of all of the transactions that the visitor makes. If that visitor buys something on the merchant's site, you get a commission. In some cases, affiliates are compensated even if the visitor doesn't buy anything, just for having driven traffic to the merchant's site.

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LinkShare also provides affiliates with customer service, notifies affiliates about new programs and new opportunities, and offers resources for affiliates to learn about how to get the most out of their programs.

5.8 Affiliate Management In-Built With Your Payment Gateway – ClickBank

ClickBank (<http://www.clickbank.com>) has a built-in affiliate program. It offers all features of a good affiliate program. There is no need to install any expensive scripts on your website. You can start signing up affiliates right away as soon as you open your account.

The beauty of ClickBank is that it integrates the affiliate management program with an in-built payment gateway. ClickBank is one of the most popular and easiest services to use for payment processing online. Sign-up is quick and you get approved and running in one day.

The ClickBank Control Panel is easy to use. You can get familiar with the whole system in no time. It costs \$49 to open a ClickBank account. This is pretty cheap when compared with other payment processing systems. Once you open an account, all your transaction money gets deposited into your account. You are paid the full balance every two weeks.

I'm a member of probably about dozen different affiliate programs, and have literally hundreds of webmasters signed up in the programs I run myself. If you're serious about earning serious money on the Web, then you're going to be spending a lot of time checking out affiliate programs and tracking your responses. It's one of the easiest and most reliable ways to make cash with a website.

So far, we've talked about the kind of marketing plans that work through your website: banners, links, affiliate programs etc. But the website isn't the only way to get the traffic you need. In the next chapter, we're going to begin talking about how you can use e-mail to drum up business.

6. Exploding Your Profits Through Email Marketing

Off the Web, mail marketing is hated by customers. It's unwanted, uninvited and stuffs mail boxes. But it's pretty clear that it's also incredibly popular with advertisers. Why? Because while most potential customers toss away their junk letters with barely a glance, enough take action to make it all worthwhile. They

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do buy—and in high enough numbers to more than cover the cost of those who don't.

Email marketing is pretty similar, but with one important difference: on the Web, you can only send marketing emails to people who have already chosen to receive them. A bit tricky. On the other hand, because those people have already chosen to receive your emails, you can be confident that they're going to buy.

In this chapter, we will read how to produce marketing material that gets results!

6.1 Collecting Opt-In Email Addresses



Email is still the most popular and most used application on the Internet. It's also an efficient means of distributing your message to large numbers of people who have *requested* that information. As a form of marketing, it generates high response rates—and gives you measurable results with instant feedback.

But because email marketing been so abused, it's just not accepted any more to send emails to people who haven't chosen to receive them. Bust that rule, and there's a good chance you'll be out of business. That gives you the problem of building up a list of willing subscribers.

When you're first starting out, there's often a temptation to simply purchase an opt-in email list. Lots of people sell them and you can easily pick up a million or so addresses for just a few bucks. But while that may appear to be a fast, easy

What kind of results are you looking for from each step?

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6.2 Double Opt-in

Marketing by e-mail can attract new customers, keep existing ones, upsell, cross-sell, and cut costs. E-merchant Wine.com, for example, found e-mail campaigns drove twice as many "best prospects" to their site compared to banner ads or other Internet marketing programs.

If executed improperly though, e-mail campaigns can backfire with disastrous business consequences. How to minimize the risk and maximize the return? Part of the answer is a common sense approach called "permission" or "opt-in" marketing, in which customers or prospects volunteer to receive e-mail.

The odds of users joining a list can be improved by providing three opt-in opportunities, all with low entry barriers. First, there should be minimal sign-up work. Many sites require only an e-mail address; all other personal information is optional. Second, there should be several sign-up opportunities on a site including on the inquiry, order, and feedback forms. These forms may use a checkbox asking prospects if they would like to receive occasional special offers/newsletters by e-mail. If so, it must be placed conspicuously on the form. Third, a privacy policy that addresses what will be done with user information should be posted in an obvious place.

Continuing on the lines of "opt-in" marketing, one of the most successful methods is the double opt-in technique. In double opt-in a user elects to receive e-mail newsletters or standalone commercial messages. A confirmation e-mail is sent to that user, who is not required to take further action to be included on the list. The confirmation e-mail includes an opportunity to unsubscribe or opt out. Although, the double opt-in techniques runs the risk of losing subscribers during the confirmation process, it gives the subscribers more control and thus, has proven to be more successful. That said, here are some measures e-mailers who practice, or are considering, double opt-in can take to reduce confirmation drop-offs.

When a user enters his address, mention an e-mail will be sent to him and , include its estimated arrival time. Indicate the user is required to respond to that message to receive subsequent mailings. With transactional customers, consider placing this information on the page with order confirmation.

Ideally, a confirmation message is sent immediately. It should be sent while the subscription is fresh in subscribers' minds and they're still engaged in an online session. If you notify them it will be within a day or two, make sure you follow

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through on that promise. If your systems are slower, then requirements related to message content are even more relevant.

If you need a confirmation, that's the only thing you should ask for. Explain to users they will not be added to the list until they take the necessary action. Most desirable is a one-click confirmation link embedded in the message. Giving users a reply option with subject line intact is another good approach. Requiring them to write something in the subject line or body of the message or asking them to forward the e-mail on to another address is not as effective. Ensure the brand is clear, the list subscription is identified, and contact information is included. It's also a good idea to link to your privacy or e-mail policy.

6.3 Intelligent Targeting Through Tailor Made Research

As with any other marketing campaign, careful planning and proven techniques are the best way to deploy the most effective campaigns and to realize the highest response rates. The key: putting the right offer in front of the right person at the right time. Targeting your emails is crucial for any Email marketing campaign. No product or service can be all things to all people. Acknowledging this reality, targeting is simply focusing your marketing onto a specific niche. The two factors that you alter to target your email campaigns are targeting the message, and targeting the list.

Targeting your message means tailoring your message to the expected audience. For example, you may have two pitches for your product: one that concentrates on the radical new features of the product, and another that details the tremendous cost savings from using it. You can also target the creative used for the email campaign. You might have two versions, one that uses a clean list of bullet points, and another that features highly stylized text that flies across the screen.

You also need to target (i.e. subdivide) your email lists. Targeted messages will be more effective when sent to an appropriate group of recipients. Continuing the example above, you would send the product feature pitch and technical information to technical people, and send the cost savings information to finance people.

The primary rule of effective targeting is deceptively simple: figure out what your target groups wants, and then offer it to them. How do you go about doing that? Try asking some of your existing customers. Another way to know what actually works is to send a test campaign to a sample of your targeted group.

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Once you have the attention of the recipient, for an all too brief moment, the biggest factor in obtaining a positive response is usually how valuable the offer is perceived to be. Providing something of actual value that really speaks to the target is a requirement.

Tell a story to each targeted group over a series of messages. This will help lead to increasing the permission level with each recipient. As you learn more about each other you will be able to utilize more sophisticated targeting. Once you begin to establish a dialog with your target, eventually a true one to one marketing relationship can develop. Unless you have an unlimited budget for your marketing efforts, you need to make sure that every dollar invested counts. You need to target your email campaigns, or else at best much of your efforts are being wasted. Be careful to target accurately, or your campaign might miss the target or even work against you. Deliver the correct message to the correct group of recipients, and the results from your campaigns will "hit the bull's-eye" and deliver a great boost to your profits.

6.4 Renting Or Buying Lists

Many marketers peg acquisition-based e-mail response rates at historically low levels, primarily due to the high volume of messages in everyone's inboxes these days. Some believe that allocating any percentage of a marketing budget to acquisition-based e-mail is waste. However, this is not true. Although the true response rates for acquisition are typically lower than those for retention-based e-mail, renting lists to win over prospects and grow a customer base can work wonders, if you do your homework.

Here are some guidelines that can help in buying or renting lists for achieving high ROI.

With email, just like direct mail, how precisely the list is targeted to the marketer's offer is critical to the success of the email campaign. The marketer will need to test a variety of email lists in order to find the most responsive names for their offer. Recency, Frequency, and Monetary Value are important within email lists. Thus, where applicable, focus on lists of recent online buyers or registered users.

More importantly, when researching email lists, focus on the origin of the list to ensure compatibility with your offer. Make sure you obtain names from branded, well-recognized sites or sources. Since an outbound email announces to the recipient, in the form of a header, exactly where they gave permission, a well recognized source would lend more credibility to the message.

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A frequency cap can ensure lists aren't over mailed. If a list manager can't provide the details on mailing frequency, look elsewhere. That organization probably lacks the control, technical expertise, and reporting basics. Also ask about recency selects. Newer names offer access to new subscribers.

Frequent uploads of new names and instant suppression of unsubscribes are a must. Your brand will be associated with spam by those who unsubscribed but still receive mailings before their request is processed. Lists that are housed and resold by multiple managers are probably mailed more frequently. This negatively impacts performance, brand equity, and deliverability.

As filtering becomes increasingly dominant, you must make sure list managers are up to speed on delivery techniques and processes. ISP relations and white listing are critical. Check all available blacklists for the list manager's IP addresses. List managers should be able to monitor delivery of their campaigns and ensure messages are delivered to the inbox, not a bulk mail folder.

Finally, the best-performing lists provide the most ability to slice and dice the file to find the right people for your offer. Leveraging selects based on demographics, psychographics, and even specific stages of the buying cycle will almost always outperform untargeted mailings.

6.5 Creating Pop Ups

Pop ups are mini windows that open when a user takes a particular action. That action could be anything from reaching the site, clicking onto a particular page, or even leaving the site.

Many businesses use pop ups in collaboration with joint venture partners as a way of sharing traffic, but they're also great ways to trap users' email addresses so that you can keep them informed and send them marketing material. It's very effective.

So how do you add pop ups to your site?

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One of the best things about pop ups is that they're dead easy to produce. It takes just a few lines of script inserted into the <HEAD> part of your website. You don't need to hire a programmer to do it for you. I'll give you the script right here. All you have to do is paste it into place and customize it to meet your needs:

```
<SCRIPT TYPE="text/javascript">
<!--
function popup(mylink, windowname)
{
if (! window.focus)return true;
var href;
if (typeof(mylink) == 'string')
    href=mylink;
else
    href=mylink.href;
window.open(href, windowname,
'width=400,height=200,scrollbars=yes');
return false;
}
//-->
</SCRIPT>
```



Don't worry about how the code actually works; the important thing is that it does. Simply swap the parts in bold for the name of your link and the name of the pop up.

Of course, you'll still need the trigger that gets the pop up popping:

```
<A HREF="popupbasic.html" onClick="return popup(this, 'notes')">The link</A>
```

Use that as the link, with the right URL and the word 'notes' replaced by the name of your page, and you're in business.

Finally, when you build the pop up page itself, make sure you include the following line of code:

```
<SCRIPT TYPE="text/javascript">
<!--
window.focus();
//-->
</SCRIPT>
```

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This just makes sure that your pop up stays in front of the main window instead of disappearing behind the browser and getting lost. Very important, otherwise your users won't see it to sign up.

So pop ups are dead easy to make. Anyone can do it. But there's no point in having a working pop up if the pop up itself doesn't have persuasive enough text to close the deal. There are a number of sales tactics that you can use on your pop up to make sure the user actually fills in the form and sends you his details:

1. Give them a reason to play

If you really want to make sure your users hand over their email addresses, offer them something in return. Free reports are good, e-books are fine too. In fact, anything that's free and relevant is likely to get results. You don't have to go overboard here; if you can find a goody that won't cost you anything, fantastic. If you're going to pay, make sure it pays overall.

2. Make the Title tell

The title tag of your pop up isn't going to push it up the search engine listings, but it's still important. If you leave it out, or worse, write something daft, like "mypopup", no one's going to take you seriously. Be professional and you'll achieve professional results. Use a real title.

3. Use a hard-hitting headline

I talk about headlines in more detail later in this chapter. I can't stress how important these are. You've got about two seconds to grab a reader's attention and make them read. That's the job of your headline. It's got to focus on the benefits the user can expect by signing up:

"Increase Your Sales By 127%!"
"Learn How To Speak Swahili In Three Weeks Or Less!"
"FREE Marketing Newsletter! Sign up here!"

Use a duff headline and you'll get a duff bottom line.

4. Keep it slim

If your users have to wait more than a few seconds for the pop up to download, the chances are they'll close the window before it's finished. Use minimal graphics and make sure everything's optimized before you put it on the server.

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5. Make it sexy!

Slim doesn't mean the same as dull. You can still use cool colors and attractive fonts, but make sure the pop up looks professional. The copy has to be easy to read, and the whole page has to be good on the eye. Balance and simplicity are key when it comes to pop up design.

6. Offer a close button

You might think it's a good idea to keep the pop up open until the user signs up. But if they're not going to register to get the benefits you're offering, are they likely to opt in just to get rid of the pop up box? And if they do, are they likely to buy from you? Keep your users happy; let them close the box easily if they want it out of the way. Maybe they'll go ahead and buy something instead.

6.6 Email Marketing Tactics

All right, so you've got the addresses. Now what are you going to do with them? Obviously, what you're going to do is send your users marketing material in the mail so that they'll know all about the great stuff you've got on offer.

There are two ways you can do that: you can send them a newsletter every couple of weeks or so; or you can send them a sales letter. Newsletters are hugely important. In the next chapter I talk about newsletters in detail.

In the rest of this chapter, I'm going to explain how to write simple sales material that gets results. I'm going to do that by concentrating on the two most important parts of any sales material: the headline and the call to action. Get those two right, and any piece of marketing material you produce—online or off—will get the results you want

6.6.1 Writing Headlines That Grab Your Customers And Sell Your Goods!

Headlines are absolutely vital for all your marketing efforts. Whether you plan to use them on your website, your emails, your newsletters or anywhere else, they're the hook that grabs your readers, reels them in and turns them into customers. There are dozens of different kinds of headlines that you can use and some of them are better than others. These are the ones that I use, and that I've found the most effective.

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The No Nonsense Headline

The first type of headline you can use is the simplest. No frills, no tricks, no hooks, just a straightforward description of the contents of your message. You could produce something like:

**Tips To Save Money On Your Weekly Shopping
The Best Way To Choose Your Next Car
Real Estate Agents That Shift Property Fast!**

Notice that you can still use explanations and hard-hitting adjectives to get your point across, but these headlines do little more than tell the reader what to expect.

The advantages of these headlines is that they're easy to write and easy to read. You don't have to try to come up with some hard-hitting sales message and customers aren't put off by a document that looks a piece of promotional material. On the other hand, they're a bit weak and that makes them hard to turn into cash.

When to use it

You can use No Nonsense Headlines when you don't need to work hard to make the sale. If you're sending information that you know your customer will read, either because it's free or because it makes no obligation on them, these are the kind of headlines to use.

The Question Headline

Question headlines work by asking customers a question that plays on their worries and promises a solution further on. These are great devices when you really want to grab a customer and ram your message home.

Want To Save Thousands On Your Home Insurance Bills? Learn How To Cut Your Costs In Half!

Where Do You Look For Love? Discover The Best Places To Meet Your

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Match!

Suffering From Termites? Drive Them Out With The Extermite-Ator!

To write these headlines, think first of what problem your product is actually going to solve. (If it's not going to solve a problem, then you're going to have a problem selling it!) In the first half of the headline, you ask your customers if they're suffering from the problem. Just by asking, you're suggesting that they do. In the second half of the headline, you tell them that you have the solution. Dead easy and dead effective.

This is a really simple formula to follow: all you have to do is state the question and promise the answer. And it sells too; you've put the problem in the reader's mind, now you're offering the solution.

Of course, these kinds of headlines depend on the reader empathizing with the problem. If they don't, or if they decide that the headlines looks too long to read, they're not likely to buy.

When to use it

Question Headlines are most effective when your product is going to clearly solve someone's problem—and when you know your customers are going to empathize with that problem. If they don't say yes to the question, they're going to say no to the sale.

The How Headline

This is pretty similar to the Question Headline—but only offers the solution. It makes for a shorter read than question headlines so you get your point across faster, but you lose the empathy.

How To Fix Up Your Home Without Breaking The Bank!
How I Made \$3,000,000 With One Phone Call!
How I Lost 33 Pounds On A High Fiber Diet And A Revolutionary
Light Exercise Plan!

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These kinds of headlines cut straight to the problem-solving aspect of your product. They're short and to the point and can be easily absorbed with just a glance.

When to use it

How Headlines are great when the rest of the document is going to reveal information. That information might just be details about your product, but the focus should always be on telling customers how they can solve a problem. These work best when you're selling information products like books or newsletters.

The Numbered Headline

There's a good reason that magazines like Cosmopolitan use headlines like "6 Ways To Drive Your Man Wild!" They work. Most people are put off by the sight of a giant slab of text. They want their information in bite-sized chunks. When you put a number in your headline, you let your reader know that the information you're offering them is going to be easy to read:

7 Ways To Make Your Computer Run Faster
15 Top Tips To Turn Your Website Into A Money spinner
23 Sales Tools That Guarantee A Sealed Deal

The advantage of these headlines is that they promise easy reading, increasing the chances that your text will actually be read. It's also easy to slip a call-to-action sales message into these kind of documents: one of the tools, deals, or ways etc. will be "buy my product"!

On the other hand, easy reading isn't the same as interesting reading. The headline still has to grab your readers to make them *want* to read it.

When to use it

Numbered Headlines are most effective when you're confident your readers will find your message interesting and you don't have to fight to make them read on. They're best used when you're competing against other articles or sales letters. I use them a lot in newsletters, especially when I know it's going to be published in a joint venture partner's newsletter.

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The Testimonial Headline

These are some of the toughest headlines to write. You take a chunk of text from a letter written by a satisfied customer and use that as the headline for a sales letter:

“Last Year, I Was Working 12 Hours A Day And Making Just \$36,000. Last Month, I Made \$32,000 And Worked Three Days A Work—And It’s All Down To Your Amazing Methods!”

“I’d Tried Every Weight Loss Program Ever. I’d Tried Dieting, Exercise, High-Fiber, Low Fat, High-Carbs... You Name It, I’d Done It And Nothing Worked. Then I Tried The Lose Fat Fast Program. I Lost 33 Pounds In The First Two Months And I’ve Never Felt Better!”

“Within A Week Of Sending Out My Resume, I’d Got Three Interviews And A Fantastic Job Offer. I Couldn’t Have Done It Without You!”

These headlines puts your reliability right at the top, increasing the customers’ confidence to buy. They explain in detail precisely what you’re offering and what you can do for the reader. They also create massively long headlines that are difficult to absorb at a glance and can put a reader off.

When to use it

Testimonial headlines are best used in industries where reliability is a bit of a problem. If you’re selling weight loss products for example, or any other life-changing service, then a headline like this goes some way towards proving to the buyer that you’re on the level.

Those are just five kinds of headlines that I use in my businesses every day. There are dozens more, but these are the ones that I’ve found the most effective. There’s certainly enough here for you to get started. Play around with them, figure out which ones would work best for your business and try them out.

But even the best headline will only grab a reader’s eye and get him reading. They won’t close the sale. After the headline you’ll have to describe all the wonderful benefits of your product—you’ve got to get the reader to actually take the action that will seal the deal. That’s the call to action.

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Make a list of good headlines that will sell your product. Be specific.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

6.6.2 Growing your Email lists

A key concern of most marketers is how to build their Email lists without compromising on the subscribers that already exist. After all, Email marketing is about building relationships with your best customers without neglecting others. The process of growing email lists can very easily turn into spam. This is something all marketers need to steer clear of. Most companies are always looking for ways to get their email marketing address lists together. Large companies are trying to get email addresses for their existing customers and prospects, while small or startup companies are just trying to create any list at all.

With careful and meticulous planning, you can build strong relationships with new subscribers. Here's how:

Collect only relevant information

While requesting a visitor to sign up, collect information that is relevant to your business. A recent study lamented that most of the corporate probing was unnecessary, given that most companies never act on the information they extract from their customers. It is crucial that you know exactly what you intend to do with the information you're going to collect. Moreover, you should also be able to prove to your visitors that information you would be collecting from them is actually vital for your business.

Do not make your customers repeat information

Most customers don't mind telling their banks the ages of their children if they think the bank will use the information to help them sort through the myriad college savings plans or make them aware of estate planning issues. But nothing irritates customers more than having to repeat the same information to each

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channel as if it's the first time they've ever heard the information. This is especially true in the case of Email lists on web sites.

Focus your list

We have discussed the importance of focusing or targeting customers earlier as well. Current customers are the most important e-mail addresses to collect, much more so than prospects. They'll be more receptive to your communications and likely to respond, since they're familiar with your company and its products. Do not run campaigns that attract a high number of visitors that have no interest in your products or services.

Scrutinize and leverage all available data

Scrutinizing all data that is collected is vital. This is particularly true for bigger companies. Let the rest of the company know what you're doing—they may know of a quick way they can help you. There have been many cases when employees come and go, unknown projects sprout up and wither before anyone discovers them and multiple, redundant databases flourish.

Special Offers and Discounts

Special offers like coupons and discounts are classic direct marketing techniques that translate extremely well to email. In order for an offer to be effective, it must provide something of real value to the recipient. Minimal discounts are not enough to get the readers' attention; you have to offer something of substance. Don't discount lower than your profit on the transaction, however. Having a time limit on these types of offers is extremely important, in order for the call to action to work.

Apart from using the Internet as a medium, there are also some ways you can use your marketing efforts in the real-world to help build your Email lists.

Networking Meetings

From your local chamber of commerce, to specialized industry groups, the meetings of many organizations are great opportunities to make contact with new people. You are exchanging business cards with interested prospects or possible referral sources, so make sure that you send appropriate email communications to these people. Start with a personal email recapping your conversation with them, and letting them know that you will be adding them to your monthly email list. Don't just start sending a barrage of email to every person that you come in contact with, however. Make sure that the person indicated some interest in what you have to offer first, or your contact will become quickly unwanted.

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Trade Shows

Whether you have a booth, are one of the presenters, or are simply attending a trade show, you have an excellent potential opportunity similar to networking events, but at a much greater scale. Organizing the follow-ups to people you actually spoke to yourself, and then adding the person to your personal list is a given.

The general information requests gathered by associates at your booth can be handled in a similar way. Lastly, you may have organized a giveaway or contest to gather more leads at the show. These people are frequently less interested in what you have to say, and more interested in whatever they might be getting or winning. As a result, it may require secondary contact to obtain the permission to add them to your regular communications. In general, hitting contest winners with a "hard sell" is not usually effective.

Seminars

Organizing informational seminars is a great way to build a healthy relationship with prospects and potential referrers. One effective technique is to have advance registration, and to ask permission to send regular emails at that time. This way, even if the person is not able to attend the seminar, you still have an opportunity to stay in touch with them. After all, they were interested enough to register for the seminar.

Events

Concerts, parties, art openings, or any other occasion that gathers people together can provides an opportunity to build your email address lists. Having a registration or check in location, or associates with clipboards working the room are just two ways to make contact. In the case of events, it is a good idea to offer some kind of incentive to boost signups. However, make sure that the person can only receive the incentive via email. This way, you will improve the quality and accuracy of the lists you are collecting.

Post Cards/Direct Mail

When a company has an existing database of postal addresses, direct mail may be the best way to get the email addresses for your existing customers and prospects. Again, offering an incentive always helps stimulate a greater response, and is particularly effective when there is a pre-existing relationship. This helps increase the typical response rate of converting postal address recipients to email recipients. Publish a specific, but simple, web site address on your mailing to direct people to a landing page with the list signup on your site..

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6.6.3 Email Content – Text vs. HTML

This is probably every Email marketer's dilemma. More so, due to the fact that there is no clear majority of people preferring one format over the other. Some people will always prefer text to graphics, and some email readers only support basic text. A prominent Internet Marketing website recently carried out a survey asking not only which format was preferred but why one format was preferred over another. Over 600 people—mostly marketers and small business operators—responded.

55% favored HTML and 45% preferred Text. Given that well over 90% of email readers can view HTML, it is surprising that almost half the people would prefer to receive Text. To investigate this point further, the survey gave those who chose Text a list of possible reasons to explain why. On average, people listed about two and a half reasons each. They said:

- Can't read HTML 6%
- Just want the meat without the distractions 32%
- Like to read offline 15%
- Ads are more intrusive in HTML 22%
- Slow to download 14%
- Other 11%

The most popular reason for choosing Text over HTML was an interesting one. People were clearly expressing a desire for email layouts that focused on the message, and they often saw HTML emails as containing elements that distract from the content—the content being the reason they signed up for the email in the first place.

11% of the people who selected “Other” as their reason gave their own reasons as:

- Text takes up less storage space 28%
- Security—fear of viruses 22%
- Easier/faster to read/scan 13%
- Text is easier to read on a PDA 9%
- Text is more reliable, formatting/forwarding etc. 7%
- Easier to save/file/copy text 6%
- Like to read email in preview pane 4%
- Text is more personal 4%
- Fear of tracking/being spied on with HTML 4%
- Text is more easily searched off line 1%

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The fact still remains that readers are almost equally divided on their preference. The best way to get around this is to give your subscribers an option of receiving messages in Text or HTML.

6.7 Managing Email campaigns

6.7.1 Personalization in Email Marketing



People respond more favorably to marketing when they feel special and unique. People respond differently to things when they perceive themselves as part of a group. These are only some of the psychological factors that come into play when using individual message personalization as a part of your email marketing campaigns. When done correctly, personalization can be a powerful way to reinforce the bond between your brand and your customer. However, poorly personalized messages can just as quickly sever that connection that you have worked so hard to establish.

The Initial Greeting

The initial greeting has a tremendous impact on whether a recipient will read the rest of a communication. The tone must match the type of communication, and the type of relationship that exists between the sender and recipient. For example, "Hi, John" is good for an email from a business to consumer, but too casual for a message to a business recipient. A "Dear Mr. Smith" or "Dear John Smith" is more appropriate for a business to business communication in email just as in a business letter.

Providing References

A very strong technique is including a reference to a specific product or service that the recipient has either already purchased, or that they have requested information about. Don't forget to link directly to the page on the site that corresponds to the product or service you are trying to up-sell.

Affiliation

When recipients are members of a known group or organization, you can create a positive tie-in. When using this kind of personalization, you must make sure that the relevancy will be obvious for the recipient. This works particularly well for sending partner offers, but again only as long as the offer tightly matches the needs of the target group, and will be perceived as relevant.

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The more reliance your email marketing campaign has on your database, the more important that it is to have the correct data. Errors in your data can lead to your mailing showing how poorly you know the recipient, not how well.

Always have default information to substitute in case you are missing data. You can write your copy so that substituting this default text maintains the flow of the narrative. For example, let's say you plan on merging the "Company Name" from your database into your email, Using default text of "your company" works well as in "We know that XYZ Corp. can benefit from our services" or "We know that your company can benefit from our services".

Lastly, always respect the privacy of the recipient and avoid all sensitive information. Anything that might make the recipient uncomfortable such as financial status or health status, are best left off limits when it comes to email personalization.

In conclusion, Leverage the full power of your database to personalize email content to individual names, histories, likes and dislikes. In the world of direct Email marketing, one size does not fit all, so use available tools to make your email as personal and as relevant to each person as possible.

6.7.2 Creative Segmentation

If you look at the overall behavior of all of your web visitors, you'll be inundated with a ton of information. Trying to distinguish and identify patterns among such a large group is extremely difficult, if not impossible.

If you segment or divide your users into logical groups and then compare and contrast how they behave and what they do, you'll have more accurate, actionable information that actually means something.

Segmenting your site visitors allows you to develop a clearer overall picture of your site's performance. If the metric you're trying to measure is how many people buy a particular product, it makes sense to measure that within the context of how many people interacted with the site in a meaningful way.

Since prospects and customers are always more likely to respond to messages that match their interest sets, it makes sense to chop the database into smaller, segmented slices based on preferences and past behaviors, making Email messages as relevant as possible to each group. You may use historical data to apply what you know about the likes and dislikes of your target market segments, and develop your messages and offers to fit.

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6.7.3 How often and when to mail?

Email marketing is a powerful yet inexpensive way to make contact with customers and prospects. Depending on whom you are trying to touch, there may be certain times of day, or days of the week, when the recipient may be more responsive to your message. In addition to specific timing for your email marketing campaigns, the frequency and the number of times to send can all play a big role in helping improve your results.

When to Email?

For a mailing to business recipients, sending midday from 11 AM through 3 PM is probably the best time. Sending a message earlier in the day can result in a higher risk of the message getting lost in the rush to prepare for morning meetings. Sending it too late in the day and it may end up quickly deleted before the recipient leaves for their commute home.

On the other hand, when mailing to consumers after work is probably the best time. People tend to check their personal email when they get home from work or after dinner. Most consumers are too busy getting ready for work in the morning to read their email.

Like the time of the day, different days of the week can affect your results as well. The best days to contact businesses are weekdays barring Monday and Friday. Monday has proven to have too many meeting to reach decision makers, and on Friday most people would prefer to leave early before the rush hour than receive your email, no matter how cool the email and offer may be.

Consumers are more likely to spend more time on the Internet on weekends, and hence have more time to consider your offer. One observation is that since many people tend to check their personal email at various points throughout the day, selecting a specific time to hit your target group while they are online is much more difficult.

Avoid mailing during Holidays

During the holidays, people tend to be away from their computers and not check their email regularly. This means they may get your message when they return together with a ton of other mail that has piled up during the holidays. Chances are all but the most important messages will be deleted in a rush without a second look.

Frequency of the Email

Sending email too often can be annoying, resulting in recipients asking to be

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removed. Not sending often enough and you may have been forgotten when the recipient is finally ready to buy. As for most communication, once a month is best. A few exceptions are a daily newspaper, or a time-dependant offer like a seminar invitation.

Sending three variations of the same offer to the same recipient is a good way to improve response rates. You should never send the exact same offer more than once. Otherwise you risk the recipient thinking that it's just another copy of the same email and deleting it. If a recipient has not responded by the third attempt, they are not going to, either because it's the right offer/wrong person, or the wrong offer/right person.

Following Up

It is important to follow up at least once after an initial offer. Many times it has been seen that a number of recipients who click-through on the first mailing after receiving a second mailing. You cannot wait too long to send a follow-up message or they may have forgotten about the original offer. Follow-up contact is recommended one to two weeks after the original offer is sent.

6.7.4 Refrain from Spamming

The proliferation of abusive email marketing has dramatically changed the landscape for anyone with an email address. Legitimate marketers now not only have to work harder to obtain a positive response for a campaign, but they also have to avoid a negative response and all this while trying to avoid getting filtered right out of the in box before recipients even see your message.

Make sure you have permission to communicate with every person on your lists. Many spam emails are now claiming "you signed up for the XYZ list" when in reality there is no existing relationship. If someone has indeed opted-in to your list, make sure they understand when and where this took place. If their relationship is with a third-party that you are partnered with, make sure to spell that out instead. You may well be better off with a partner sending on your behalf, so as to avoid any confusion about exactly why the recipient is being emailed.

Once you've crossed the line with a recipient by spamming, there is usually no going back. The same ability of email marketing to directly reach recipients, can inadvertently offend them. Like the difference between using a chainsaw to cut up a fallen tree versus accidentally severing your own limb, email marketing requires both care and knowledge to use correctly. Make sure you stay on the correct side of the line, and you can put that power to work to improve your bottom line results.

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6.8 Analysis of Email Campaigns

6.8.1 Tracking Performance - Measuring useful metrics

Tracking and analyzing the actions of your customers and prospects is critical to your success. After deploying several campaigns you will have generated a mountain of response information - invaluable data enabling you to create new and more effective approaches and offers. There are many software tools easily available that track, record and analyze all data pertaining to your Email marketing campaign. Many sophisticated analysis tools predict future actions based on past behavior. Such tools are crucial for your campaign as Response data is meaningless unless it can be analyzed and turned into valuable customer knowledge.

Once you have the capability to track the vital statistics of your email marketing campaigns, the inevitable question becomes: how well are my mailings doing? Here are some guidelines on what information to gather and how to measure the performance of your campaign from the gathered information.

There are a number of different pieces of information that can be gathered when using any reasonably good email broadcasting service. The five primary measurements are: the totals each of messages sent, message opens, click-throughs, bounces, and opt-out requests.

Total number of items sent must be accurately counted, based on reaching each individual email address only once. Opens measure the number of people who actually view the message using their email program.

We prefer to use “unique” opens, so that if a recipient views a message in their preview window, then opens it into a full size window, that this only counts as a single open instead of two opens. Click-throughs are recipients that respond to your offer by clicking on a link in the email. Bounces are messages that are undeliverable to the recipient. They could be “soft bounces” due to temporary issues such as a full mailbox, or “hard bounces” from an invalid email account, but for our purposes here it means “people on your list who did not receive your message”. And last, opt-out requests are recipients who request to no longer receive email.

There are a wide range of results that can be measured for Email campaigns, such as:

- ✦ How accurate is the list (how many bounces out of total sent)
- ✦ How active is the list (how many opens out of total sent)

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- ✦ How positive was the reaction to the offer itself (number of click-thrus out of total opens)
- ✦ How negative was the reaction to the offer itself (number of opt-outs out of total opens)

The actual number of responses on any particular campaign can vary quite a bit. A newsletter whose primary job is to inform, will not achieve the same click-through rate as a promotion, which is intended to get a specific response. The differing levels of permission within your list of recipients will also affect results. Until a list has been "cleaned" of bad addresses and those who are not interested, you may see far different data. Pruning these from your lists will help you improve your results considerably.

In order to account for these wide variations in factors, we suggest some general "baseline" ratios that should be achieved on any particular mailing. There should be more opens than bounces, or else the list is probably out of date. Also, there should be more click-throughs than opt-outs, otherwise the offer is poorly targeted or the list is of questionable origin.

In order to get the optimum response you will need to send two or three multiples of your email marketing campaign, each time using a variation of the original offer. If they haven't responded by 3 attempts, it's time to change your approach.

The typical response pattern is that mailings 1 and 2 will have a similar response, with number 2 often slightly fewer click-throughs than number 1. Number 3 picks up the stragglers and undecided recipients, so the response will be much lower, but usually significant enough to justify the mailing. Please note that you shouldn't necessarily just blast out three mailings one after another. For example, you might piggyback your first offer onto a monthly newsletter, send the second offer separately as a special promotional mailing two weeks later, then finish the series with the final offer in the next month's newsletter.

It is useful to understand how the size of your lists is changing over time. By viewing how many people sign up for your lists each day, you can attempt to correlate list growth with other marketing activities that you may be conducting. It is also important to consider how many people are signing up for your lists versus how many are opting off of them. If your lists have been cleaned, and the overall list size is still shrinking, you need to reevaluate both your list acquisition strategy and the content relevancy of your mailings.

Testing is critical to optimizing your email marketing campaigns. But in order to test, you have to measure first. Make sure you have a way to collect detailed information about your mailings, preferably in an automatic way. Careful analysis of the actual metrics will help give you the information you need to take

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your email campaigns to the next level.

6.8.2 Enhancing Email Response

The process of Email marketing may not always bear the kind of results that you expect. In fact, even after doing all the basics right the response rates may fall way short of expectations. The good news is that Email responses can be enhanced with a little bit of analysis and research.

We discussed, earlier, the importance of gathering statistical data during Email campaigns. With this ton of information available and a few creative segmentation strategies, email response can be enhanced by a great deal. Your Emails may reach three sets of readers:

- ✦ Those who deleted the Email without even opening it
- ✦ Those who opened the Email but did not read it or click on the offer made
- ✦ Those who read the Email, clicked on the link provided but did not accept your offer

The set which represents readers who never opened your Email is probably the biggest. It is very much possible that at least 50% of readers discarded your Email as junk. To boost response rates of such readers, you should segment these as a group and change the subject line of the Email, and the sender's name and address. Chances are good that you'll find some of the changes work better than others, and that some of the non-openers to the first message have opened up the new message based on a single and possibly simple change.

Perhaps this change lies in a new appeal in the subject line, or perhaps it's due to the message coming from a living person instead of an impersonal company. Record and save those variables and continue to test and fine-tune them with each subsequent campaign.

The next segment comprises of readers who read the Email but were not interested enough to click on the offer and land on your website. This segment may be pretty huge as well. It is very likely that most of these readers may have read a couple of lines at the beginning of the mail and deleted it. The best possible remedy in such cases is to analyze the section of your promotion—does it say enough to make people want to read further? If not, reformatting and/or reworking the introductory copy and headline may be all it takes to increase your clicks.



Finally, we have the last segment comprising of readers who actually read the Email and were interested enough to click through and reach your website. However, once they got there their interest disappeared

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and they chose not to go through with the transaction. Such a segment would be much smaller when compared with the above two segments.

In such cases it may be best to take a hard, objective look at the landing page. Something is clearly missing or is not being communicated properly. Does the offer remain clear? Is the form too cumbersome or too long? Can you revise the form, and perhaps also revise some of the required form fields within it, for purposes of having these potential customers complete their first transaction?

Some times it may pay to instill a tad of humor in your Email. There have been many instances when potential clients were so taken by a humorous gesture in mails that immediately decided to do some business with the marketer. Make some assumptions and apply them to your next campaign. It's all about getting potential customers over that hurdle and making that first commitment.

Considerable time and effort may be required to enhance Email responses. That said, the fruits such a process may bear over a period of time can be well worth it.

6.8.3 Should The Message Trick The Reader Or Be Honest?

Often, companies try to trick people into opening an Email to start a relationship with a prospective customer. From the customer's point of view, this is certainly not the most brilliant idea. Almost all potential customers would not prefer to do business with someone who deceives them, not matter how good a product or service they offer.

As a marketer you must approach your direct mail and email marketing messages with the attitude that this may be the one and only opportunity to start a relationship with a new customer. For that matter:

- Messages should be honest and reflect the company's credibility - Take the high road with your creative. Tell people who you really are and what you really do.
- Be clear and concise with the offer - Don't make it difficult for the reader of your message to figure out what you are promoting.
- Test your message - Try your message out and ask for feedback. This will be the best way to assure you are not misleading.
- Know your audience - The shotgun approach to marketing does not work with direct mail or email. Sending your message to the wrong audience is wasteful spending of your advertising dollars.

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Remember your message is a reflection of your brand, product or service and employees. Make sure your message is something you can stand behind with pride no matter how it is delivered.

6.9 Autoresponders

Automation of your Email marketing process is crucial for the success of your business. An automated system enables you to reply immediately solicited information, send follow ups to your prospects, and save lots of time. Automation can be achieved with tools known as Autoresponders.

The auto-responder is a program that automatically sends a reply with a pre-designed response to any email address that sends email to it. It is also often called infobot, autobot, auto-mailer, or responder. Auto-responders are great for confirmation messages as well.

Advantages Of Using An Autoresponder

The auto-responder allows you to capture the email addresses of your visitors, so you can build your own opt-in targeted mailing list. This is a great tool to use for an Email or Newsletter. You can offer via auto-responder a free article that pertains to the subject of the newsletter to all of your new subscribers.

The auto-responder will automatically extract the prospects name and use this information in your follow-up messages. With this marketing tool you can send personalized follow-up messages. If you personalize an email message, your prospect is twice as likely to buy from you.

You can sell your products 24 hours a day, 7 days a week with the help of an auto-responder. Auto-responder is a handy tool that automatically follows-up with a series of email messages at preset time intervals and works for you 24 hours a day. You will be able to develop your follow up messages and set reliable time intervals.

Following up with your prospects could mean a 50% increase in your sales. Your potential customers may simply forget about your initial message or they simply may have a bad day; for that reason, it is so important follow up with your prospects at preset time intervals at least five times after sending your initial message.

Autoresponders are great for sales letters. Suppose you posted to a couple of forums and newsgroups you can offer a free report about your industry and

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included in that you could have a sales letter. You then post the email address of your autoresponder and within seconds the user could be reading the free report and your sales letter. You don't have to do anything. Apart from these, autoresponders also allow you set up predefined answers to the most likely questions. This can cut up to 70% of your customer service requirements.

Given below are some of the other key benefits of Autoresponders:

- ✦ They introduce your business to the prospective customer
- ✦ List out special offers for members
- ✦ List out benefits of joining your website
- ✦ Compare your product or service with your competitors
- ✦ Give testimonials of existing customers
- ✦ Welcome letters for new members
- ✦ Thank you messages for new orders
- ✦ Order confirmation
- ✦ Acknowledgement of a query or a receipt of payment from your customer
- ✦ A reminder when their subscription or free access period is about to expire.

It is a good idea to have a copy of the original email sent to the autoresponder forwarded to you. Some people don't understand exactly what to expect from the autoresponder and they put a message inside the body of the email. If you don't at least take a peek at these emails, you may accidentally ignore a question from a prospective customer.

Autoresponders can handle many more emails than you could ever process manually. Also, you can send a ten-page email just as fast and easily as sending a two paragraph email.

Choosing And Setting Up Autoresponders

It can be simple to set up and use an autoresponder, but choosing which one from the dozens of autoresponders that are available can be difficult. Most web hosts offer a simple autoresponder that gives one email message in response to an email to a specific email address. The problem with this type of responder is that one message is often not enough to keep the continued contact or deliver the content that you want to offer your visitor.

There are two main types of autoresponders. They each have their pros and cons.

Autoresponder services

Autoresponder services are web based services that allow you to send a series of

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emails to a visitor who has either requested the email through a web-based form on your site (the service provides the html code for your site to use) or who has sent an email to a specific address the service has provided you to use.

The primary advantage of such services is that they are very easy to set up, and are very reliable. In addition, they are host independent. This means that your web host doesn't have to allow you to run any particular services on your site to have access to all that an e-mail autoresponder can provide.

Email autoresponder services have two main drawbacks -- they can be costly, especially if you need to use an autoresponder on more than one web site, and they lack a certain amount of flexibility -- whatever the service provides is what you get. There is a limited amount of customization that you can do with such a service. GetResponse is recommended for most people. It has good customization, and the price is quite reasonable.

Autoresponder programs (or scripts)

The other choice for an autoresponder is to purchase (or lease) a program or a script (usually written in perl, requiring CGI access on your server.) Several of these are available. They offer the potential for lower cost, especially if you have multiple web sites to support. (But be careful to check the license agreement. Some license agreements require an additional fee if you are going to use the program or script on more than one site at the same time.

These types of autoresponders also allow, potentially at least, for increased flexibility. Some are quite powerful in their own right, while perl scripts can generally be modified to suit your needs for a fee. A good example of a script based Autoresponder that you can install on your site and never have to pay monthly fees to use is Autoresponse Plus.

Autoresponse Plus offers the advantages of a system you can own along with all of the flexibility. It is available at a very reasonable price, and a multi-domain license is also available for only modestly more. Finally, most of the complexity often associated with such programs can be almost completely eliminated because professional installation is available for a small incremental increase in cost.

6.10 Call to Action—Closing the Deal

At the end of the day, everything you do on the Web is geared towards one thing: driving your users to take an action that will result in you getting money. That might be buying something from you, subscribing to a newsletter, clicking

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an affiliate link, or any other move that brings you cash.

When you begin preparing your email copy, you have to know exactly what you want the user to do as soon as he finishes reading. You can have the most amazing headline and the greatest product described in the finest email ever written, but if the reader doesn't know what to do at the end of the email, you've wasted your time.

You've got to get them to take action.

There are a number of points to bear in mind when you're trying to turn your reader into a customer.

- **Stand out**

You want to be sure that your reader doesn't miss your call to action. It's got to absolutely stand out from the rest of the page. You can do that by playing with font color, font size, underline, bold etc., but make sure it's seen and acted upon!

- **Be clear**

Orders rarely come in the form of long sentences. In general, marketing material should take the form of short paragraphs, punchy phrases, and bulleted points that spell out the benefits as clearly and quickly as possible. Potential customers tend to scan rather than read. The easier you make it for them, the more chance they'll buy.

- **Compel**

The words you use to persuade someone to take action are crucial. You want your call to action to include real action-packed verbs that are simple to obey. Use phrases like “Click here!”, for example, or “Press Submit”. The more precise the verb, the easier it will be for the reader to take real action.

- **Play it straight**

Once you've got them doing what you want, you don't want to waste time. If you've told them to click on a link so that they can fill in an order form, make sure that the link leads right to the form. Don't give them a chance to change their mind. Even the best call to action copy only works for a short time.

- **Create a sense of urgency**

Many people like to put off making a decision as long as possible—especially if that decision means spending money. The fact is though, if they don't take action as soon as they finish reading the email, they probably won't take action at all.

You have to create a real sense of urgency, an idea



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that if they don't buy, click, order, whatever... *right now*, they're going to lose the opportunity of a lifetime. This isn't too difficult to do. Here are some options:

- Offer a time limited prize: "Order now and receive a FREE copy of 'Build Your Own Bicycle!'"
- Offer a quantity limited prize: "The first 50 people to register will be entered into our FREE prize draw!"
- Create a penalty for not acting immediately: "Every day that you don't use the amazing ideas in this book, you're throwing away thousands of dollars! Download your copy and start earning now!"

Bear in mind that the kind of action you want people to take will depend on the kind of product you're selling—and the kind of person you're pitching to. If you're trying to sell cars online for example, "Place your order here" isn't likely to get many results. People don't usually like to buy cars so quickly. You might want to say something like: "Click here for a picture of the interior" or something that's less committal than inviting them to part with lots of cash. Similarly, if your marketing material doesn't contain all the information necessary for someone to buy, your call to action will only be to invite them to find out more.

On the next page, I've put all that advice together in a sample marketing email. I've also added my notes to explain how I built it up. Feel free to use this email as template for your own.

6.11 Sample Marketing Email

Subject: Discover How To Make Your Users Pay You!

(The subject line is unique to emails. It's like a mini-headline, but it's got to stay short.)

**Want Your Users To Give You More Money?
Give Them More Value!**

(There's the headline. I've used a Question Headline here. I've stated the problem and followed with the solution.)

Dear Friend,

As the webmaster of a dating site, you know how important it is to keep your users coming back day after day, week after week. You know that the more your users see your site, the more likely they are to buy a subscription – and the more they'll keep sending you cash!

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(The first paragraph explains what the email is all about: making money.)

And you also know that the only way to keep those users logging in is to renew your content on a regular basis.

GoDating.com is now making its dating magazine available to the webmasters of dating sites. GoDatingMagazine will give your users:

(And here I explain how to do it: by adding value. Note the link so that they can see what I'm offering.)

- **Amazing, insightful articles** on subjects ranging from matchmakers and soul mates to swingers and foreign brides.
- **Real, practical dating advice** for both online dating and face-to-face relationships.
- **Exclusive interviews** with dating experts, authors and celebrities.
- **Fun, interactive Love Quizzes** to help your users discover their real selves!
- **Heartwarming relationship news** from around the world.
- **Exciting, fresh content, week in, week out!**

(Bullets and bold make the benefits stand out.)

GotoDatingMagazine is updated every week with new articles, news stories and an interactive advice column.

That's 20 original relationship articles every single month! You can provide your users with all this fantastic dating content for just \$99.95 a month.

If you were to hire writers to produce this content yourself it would cost you hundreds—if not thousands—of dollars. For the price of just a tiny number of monthly subscriptions, you can give all your users this incredible extra value.

(More details. As soon as I tell them it's going to cost money, I explain why it's great value.)

To learn more about what we can do for your users—and your income—write to me today at bizdev@godating.com.

(And there's a simple call to action.)

We look forward to working with you!

Yours Sincerely,

Creating Newsletters That Sell As Well As Inform

Andrew Hudson,
Editor,
GoDating.com

In **conclusion**, from the advent of the Sears catalog in the late 19th century to tons of catalogs arriving in every mailbox today, Email marketing has proved to be a superior way to quickly and cost-effectively create a personal connection with customers, and garner immediate sales results. It also lends itself to greater measurability and testing in order to optimize results. Email marketing can be easily coupled with other marketing techniques to further improve end results. One such technique, which is an integral part of Email marketing, is marketing through newsletters. Newsletters are discussed in detail in the next chapter.

7. Creating Newsletters That Sell As Well As Inform

Running your own free Newsletter or Ezine can bring huge benefits to your website and profits. Newsletters are one of the most important components for you to drive traffic to your website and build your online business.

The popularity of these newsletters is based on the need for information. The main reason people are online is because they want and need information and that is exactly what newsletters provide. Newsletters are mostly delivered via email, some however are delivered as HTML pages. Newsletters which are delivered as HTML pages still utilize email, as the webmaster will email subscribers notifying them that a new issue is ready.

There are many advantages of starting your own newsletter, however newsletters do require a bit of work to get started and maintain so they may not be for everyone.

The two main advantages are:

- ✦ Being able to maintain regular contact
- ✦ Being able to build a relationship with your subscribers

Newsletters allow you to maintain regular contact with your website visitors, this is vital to success, because rarely do people buy on their first visit, in fact people usually have to be exposed to an offer several times before they actually buy. A Newsletter allows you to keep the connection with your site visitors reminding them of how your product is suited for them.

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Creating Newsletters That Sell As Well As Inform

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Newsletters give you the "excuse" to send potential customers emails packed with articles and off course your sales message. Newsletters are great for building trust and relationships online, if your newsletter provides regular quality content which your subscribers can really use, they will begin to trust your opinion and also they will begin to feel that they know you. This is important as developing relationships is vital for any business.

The other, often overlooked, advantage of having a newsletter, is the income it can generate, not from selling your products and services but from selling advertising space in it. You do need a medium to large subscriber base before other businesses will be interested in advertising but this is not that hard to achieve, especially if it is regularly full of quality content. You can earn a few hundred every month just from ads if you play your cards rights.

Your online customers will eventually become your offline customers if they trust the information you regularly send them. Put simply, a newsletter is your way of helping people. If you help people online, eventually they will buy from you.

However, running your own newsletter involves considerable amount of work. It is vital that you regularly write a lot of quality content before your next send-out. Besides, ideally a newsletter should be sent out every week or at least every fortnight. This is not always easy. In fact it's never easy; the next thing that adds to your work load when it comes to newsletters is maintaining your email addresses. Many of the email addresses may be wrong. Maintaining a list of working email addresses is crucial.

7.1 Advantages Of Newsletters As A Marketing Tool

Just as in the olden days, trust builds relationships, and relationships build sales. Used properly, newsletters can help build business relationships based on trust. And the key word is **trust**--trustworthiness in content, subject lines, mailing lists, regularity, and ability to quickly subscribe and unsubscribe. Given below are some of the key advantages of newsletters:

Newsletters demonstrate value

Newsletters deliver valuable information that solves the day-to-day problems of readers, helps them stay on top of industry trends, and saves time by distilling practical information such as real-world best practices and industry advances from many sources.

They help in building trust

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As stated earlier, the most crucial benefit arising out of newsletters is building of trust. Newsletters can very easily become customers' trusted information source on business problems. Trust helps you to position your company as a credible source, which in turn retains your customer base.

Online business owners can portray themselves as a stable source of information

Newsletters deliver accurate and timely information that is vital to the success of your customers and visitors business at regular intervals over time.

Newsletters serve as an attention puller

Valuable and relevant information can always prove to be a great attention puller. Most people dread junk emails. However, once you build a sense of trust amongst your potential customers, you can reinforce your value to your visitors with each newsletter issue.

Newsletters offer better prospects for closing a sale

Not only do newsletters make it easy for potential customers to contact you, they also let you harvest the relationship built around them and simplify sales for your sales team. The sales team dreams of knowing about their prospects' hot buttons prior to making that first call.

7.2 Creating An Effective Newsletter

Creating a successful newsletter can be extremely rewarding. Subscribers and customers respond with glowing feedback, online sales jump and your customer relationships and brand loyalty deepens. Here are some useful tips that might help in creating a successful newsletter.

Define Success:

Ask yourself “What is the purpose of your newsletter?” A newsletter is a substantial investment of company resources in terms of time and energy, and you need to define in as tangible terms as possible the purpose of your

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Newsletter.

Voice and Personality:

Establish a voice or editorial personality – whether newsy, serious, gossipy or funny – that is synergistic with the image you want to portray and connects with your audience. Remember that email newsletters aren't email promotions designed to stimulate immediate action. Sales and promotional copy don't suit e-newsletters. Nor does the traditional tone of broadcast corporate communications.

Think of your newsletter as a one-on-one conversation. Just imagine sitting in a coffee shop talking informally with a customer. That's the starting point for your approach--a more personable and appropriate "human" voice will come naturally. Drop the jargon, drop the sales pitch, be as honest as you can, and talk like a human being.

You can have as much or as little personality as is appropriate. Consider adding a brief editorial, a comment or two, an editor's note, a couple of lines of commentary, a touch of opinion; adding a little human element here and there. Sign editorials, give authors a byline, or list some names down in the administrative section of each issue to which your readers can relate to.

From Line:

Whether a person's name, name of the newsletter or company name – determine what will resonate best with your readers and stay with it.

Subject Line:

“Vol. 1, Issue #8” or “Company News” are not enticing subject lines. They are certainly consistent and simple, but they don't tell your readers anything that will motivate them to open your email. Your subject line is your calling card - entice your readers with the most interesting or intriguing information in your Newsletter.

Style/Format:

Establish a format and layout of your Newsletter that is clean and simple, with elements of the Newsletter (table of contents; “Tips”, subscription information, etc. located in the same spot each issue).

Content:



Figure out what your readers want and give it to them. Seek continuous improvement by obtaining reader feedback and monitoring click-through rates to determine what types of articles are most popular.

Another dilemma that we all confront is too much information and too little time. The newsletter's job is to keep readers on top of trends and the latest developments in the industry. Aim for articles and feature stories to meet one of the following criteria by including either: major industry occurrences, forward thinking industry ideas, education on issues or new techniques, or business opportunities.

Whether your customers work out of a corporate or home office, employees need answers to questions and tips for improving business activities. E-newsletters provide you with an opportunity to point out work inefficiencies, and share relevant best practice. When you create a newsletter, try changing your focus from selling products and services to solving your customers' problems. Think about what they need and give options they don't know exist

Frequency:

Determine how frequently your readers want to hear from you/receive your Newsletter – and what you can commit to. As a thumb rule, a weekly newsletter is ideal. However, don't launch a weekly newsletter if you are not absolutely certain that you can distribute a quality Newsletter every week. A fortnightly newsletter is a good option too.

Timing:

Test and pick a day and time that works best ...and stick to it. Readers should almost be able to set their watches by the receipt time of your Newsletter.

Make it Viral:

Provide information readers can act on or that stimulates reaction – forwarding it to friends and peers, stimulating purchases or requests for additional information. Make it easy for readers to forward articles and information to peers and friends. Provide a “Forward to a Friend” link that enables readers to forward the Newsletter with a personalized note.

Search:

Make it easy to find articles of interest and back issues. Provide a table of contents and links to articles within the newsletter and to resources and past articles on your site.

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Printing:

Consider providing “printer-friendly formats” on your Web site.

Personalize:

At minimum address the reader by name. The most successful newsletters have a human being associated with them...and a personality. If possible, your Newsletter should be “written by a person” at your company...not the company.

Write in layman terms with simple vocabulary:

Not everyone has the vocabulary that you and editors do. Use words that are easy-to-understand, and if you do use technical terms, provide a definition that people can relate to. There is nothing more frustrating than a definition that makes less sense than the word itself.

Test :

Test the Newsletter on few email addresses to check for errors and other issues – before sending to the entire distribution list.

If you lack experience in print media, seek out assistance if you know someone in the field. If not, don't worry – the above mentioned basic principles apply. Plan to research your material thoroughly and avoid factual or editing errors, as they will make you seem less credible.

Add hyperlinks and include updates on old material should new information surface. The typical form of newsletter is a one-way communication where you provide information to customers, such as product updates and announcements. You have the option of formatting your e-mail by including colorized text and a variety of fonts, but not all e-mail software supports HTML mail. Consider writing your newsletter in plain text or offer two mailing lists- one for plain text mailings and the other for HTML e-mail.

Make sure you Include:

- ✦ Table of Contents
- ✦ Hyperlinks for customers who want more information for a featured topic
- ✦ Exciting secrets or tips related to your product or service
- ✦ Contact information

E-newsletters can take up a good amount of time if not managed correctly. The use of a list server (a piece of software that runs on your Internet provider's

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questions, and subscribe and unsubscribe your recipients automatically. (You will always lose a few. Don't take it personally. Make it easy for people to off your list).

Step 8: Never SPAM. Spamming is the practice of sending information to people who didn't actually ask for it. It has been an accepted practice in the offline direct marketing world but for some reason has become a really sensitive issue online. Don't even try it. You could find yourself switched off by your ISP. They will not hesitate for fear of being listed world wide as a SPAM server.

7.4 Getting Subscribers And Generating Leads For Your Newsletter

There are many different ways of getting subscribers to your Newsletter. Obviously, the first place you should start is on your website, doing this can get you an immediate flow of subscribers. You should advertise your Newsletter and place a sign-up box on every page of your site. Always use the sign-up box instead of a simple email link when you can because the results are far better. The top of the page is a better place for your sign-up box as it gets more exposure but the bottom is still good. Always include a privacy statement telling people exactly how you are going to use their email address and how you will keep it private, with all the talk about spam nowadays this is bound to reassure them, which in turn will increase the number of new subscribers.

Offer an incentive to your visitors. You should whenever possible offer them a free gift if they subscribe, such as a free report or Ebook. There are hundreds of free Ebooks which you can give away. You are bound to increase your sign-ups by doing this provided you offer them something related to your site's theme.

Next you should submit your Newsletter to all the Newsletter directories you can find, there are plenty of them on the net, and some of them get really big traffic every month. If your articles are good quality and informative then newsletter and website publishers will be interested and your work could end up being published in endless newsletter editions and hundreds of websites. Not only will this increase your credibility, it could result in 1000's more visitors, this is because at the end of all your articles which you allow others to publish will be a link back to your site. Don't forget also if lots of your articles are published on websites then your link popularity will improve drastically. This will result in higher search engine rankings in Google and the other engines which use link popularity as a ranking factor, which of course means lots more visitors and profit for you.

Include details of your newsletter in your signature file. This is the little bit of text that you attach to messages you post on the Internet and the emails you send

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to people. You then can promote your Newsletter through you signature when you post in email discussion groups. Email discussion lists are great ways of communicating with people who have similar interests as the topic of your Newsletter. Contribute to the discussion by posting solutions to problems. You can also mention "We have put together more in-depth advice on xxx. Feel free to visit our website. You'll find loads of free information and resources."

This technique alone will drive much more traffic into your site. It also begins to establish you, the author, as an authority in your field. Once your online customers come to trust your information, they will also trust you enough to buy from.

Similar mediums to email discussion lists are newsgroups and online discussion forums. Remember that you cannot advertise your newsletter directly in any of these mediums, but having a little mention in your signature is perfectly OK (in most cases). The amount of subscribers you get through your signature file will depend on the quality of your post, if you post an interesting and useful article people will think that your Newsletter will also be useful.

Apart from these, Ad swaps are a very effective way of getting subscribers. You should find other publishers with newsletters similar to yours and trade ads with them. You run their ad and they will run yours. This helps both sides, which is another plus. You should swap ads with publishers no matter how many subscribers they have. Another method of 'swapping' would be to have the other webmaster recommend your newsletter in the confirmation email he or she sends to people who have just subscribed and you in turn could do the same for him.

7.5 Advertising In Newsletters

We discussed earlier the advantages of having advertising space in your newsletters. Similarly, advertising in other companies' newsletters is equally beneficial. By advertising in other newsletters, you can reach an audience which is highly targeted and cost effective. Moreover, you can never be accused of spamming as all the recipients have subscribed to the newsletter. There are so many newsletters out there covering so many different topics that it's easy to find highly targeted ones to advertise in. So if you've matched the newsletter to the product you're selling, you've reached your target audience to a tee.

Almost all newsletters are archived, thousands of people read these archives, and your ad will be seen by these people at no extra cost. This can bring in exposure and extra sales on a long term basis. Besides, newsletter publishers may have already developed a trust between themselves and their readers. Just by placing your ad in the newsletter, it's more likely to be read because it appears in a publication they like and trust.

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Newsletter advertising is not only effective, it's cheap as well. A 5 line ad in a newsletter that goes to 3000 people will cost you between \$5 and \$25 per issue. With so little risk involved, this is definitely worth it.

Buying Ads In Other Newsletters

Just as you can sell advertising, you can also buy advertising in newsletters. You can use those ads to promote your business or to invite people who read newsletters to read your own.

Again, you have to pick your partners carefully. There's no point just picking a newsletter with the cheapest rates; you want to make sure you choose an outlet that appeals to the same buyers as you. You also need to think about where your ad is going to be placed. In general, the higher the position the better.

And the more the merrier too. Don't expect a huge response from a single ad. It's always best to think of advertising in terms of a campaign. You'll get a better deal—and better results—if you reserve an advertising slot for four or five issues than if you buy them one at a time.

7.6 Promoting Affiliate Programs Through Newsletters

As many webmasters are now discovering, making money with affiliate programs can be hard work. It is not as simple as uploading some banners then sitting back and collecting commission checks. A more effective way to distribute this content is through newsletters.

As a more creative approach, web savvy marketers are finding that creating a "niche specific" email newsletter is one of the most effective ways to boost profits with affiliate programs. For example, a website about Pets could offer a free newsletter about caring for a pet. The newsletter could include informative articles such as "How to exercise with your dog" and "10 tips on keeping your fishbowl clean", etc. Pet products such as a dog leash, bowl, and toy should then be included with an affiliate link to encourage a purchase.

One of the main reasons why newsletters are a great way to promote affiliate programs is because of the clickthrough rates. Clickthrough rates for a targeted newsletter can reach anywhere from 10 to 15%. This can be significantly higher than banners and buttons. Obviously if you receive more clickthroughs, you will have a better chance of success.

Moreover, promoting affiliate programs through email allows for the removal of

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some of those slow loading banners from a web site. Instead, web sites can be filled with much stickier content such as interactive bulletin boards, exclusive articles, chat rooms, and voting booths.

Common sense dictates that featured affiliate products should be related to a newsletter's target market. If a newsletter is geared towards senior citizens, this market is probably not interested in the latest skateboard gear. Instead, a better fit would be to feature an online greeting card service that pays a commission for each free registration.

Besides, a newsletter should always be opt-in/opt-out. A potential subscriber must request to be on the list and be given instructions on how to unsubscribe. Benefits of an opt-in newsletter include: higher response rates, fewer undeliverable emails, and time saved on list management.

7.7 Blogs

Blog (also known as Weblog) is traditionally a webpage where pre-surfer or a blogger “logs” all pages he/she finds interesting. In other words, it is a Web page that contains brief, chronologically arranged items of information. Typically updated daily, blogs often reflect the personality of the author.

Weblogs provide a series of annotated links to items such as news stories, and often include personal rants. They are maintained by one person, most commonly someone who is involved in Web design or some other tech-related field.

A blog is often a mixture of what is happening on a particular website and what is happening on the Web, a kind of hybrid diary/guide site, although there are as many unique types of blogs as there are people. Blogs can be used to introduce products to potential customers.

People maintained blogs long before the term was coined, but the trend gained momentum with the introduction of automated published systems, most notably Blogger at blogger.com. Thousands of people use services such as Blogger to simplify and accelerate the publishing process.

Blog As A Marketing Tool

Blogs offer huge marketing potential. They are highly strategic tools that can strengthen relationships, share knowledge, increase collaboration, and improve branding. Besides, blogs can represent the real voice of the website.



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A weblog can take the form of a diary, a news service (or summaries of and links to current news items on a topic), a collection of links to other Web sites, a series of book reviews or products, reports of activity on a project, the journal of an expedition, and much more. Businesses can use this tool to effectively advertise their products or services.

One of the most interesting ways to use a weblog is by allowing it to function as a discussion forum for customers of your products or services. In this case, the webmaster can give posting rights to other people – visitors and customers, and their posts may or may not be reviewed before they are published to the Web page. Customers, in such a way can post favorable comments about the websites offerings. Some weblogs are set up in such a way that only the owner or the owner and certain other people have posting rights, but anyone else can add comments to the posts.

Weblogs when used with newsletters present immense marketing opportunities:

- ✦ Articles within newsletters can be linked to a blog, extending life and creating a massive conversation.
 - ✦ You can offer a bidirectional forum to customers to get true, personal opinions on your products and services.
 - ✦ Company experts can start a blog and become industry experts, helping your company edge out competition and, through this interactive forum, draw customers into another exchange of information and thoughts.
- The beauty of this interplay is you can layer your blog with editorial controls.

How To Create A Weblog?

The majority of weblogs are now created using software or services designed specifically for this purpose. Some of the software is free - and some of the organizations that provide weblog software will also provide free server space to house a weblog so that it is publicly accessible on the Internet. There are also commercial versions of some of the free software; these commercial versions often provide more features. Some weblog software is available only as commercial software. Alternatively, bloggers can create and maintain their weblog using free software or a free weblog service, but use FTP (File Transfer Protocol) to load the resulting weblog to their own Website.

There are many blogging softwares available easily on the Internet. One of the most popular weblogger is “Blogger” which can be downloaded for free at <http://www.blogger.com>. Most webloggers simplify the process of Website creation. However, they do require basic knowledge of FTP, Website structures and a few technical terms. Besides, creating an advanced weblog requires knowledge of HTML.

Adapting Blog Concepts To Your Newsletters

Blogs as discussed earlier fit very well with newsletter strategies. A blog is not intended to replace your newsletter. Its purpose is to extend and complement a newsletter strategy, serving customers and prospects in a way that extends your expertise and leadership in the marketplace.

A blog communication is four or five sentences of direct, informative content about a specific issue or bit of news. Think of b-blog content as marketing to inform and educate. Besides, blogs are ongoing. The flow of communication builds a knowledge-sharing platform among a community of like-minded people. Soon, an extensive base of information will develop that becomes important not only to your company but also to the faithful readers who contribute to it.

Another advantage of blogs is that they can serve the purpose of FAQs through newsletters. Blogs can be automatically archived by age in days, weeks, or months. And they're searchable, allowing readers to easily retrieve the information they need, when they need it.

However, creating an effective blog requires careful planning. Blogs should present as much information as possible while representing the voice of your website. Here are a few guidelines on how to plan and create a blog to go along with your newsletter.

Like all good communication vehicles, you want to establish goals and objectives. Define your audience, what its needs are, and how best to meet those needs.

Find someone who can step into the role of pundit, who's willing to be the host. Keep in mind that over time, your blog will develop a personality. Look for a thought leader who's just waiting to be unleashed and empowered.

Search thoroughly for the right kind of tool to develop the Blog. There are tools developed everyday. Look for ones that serve your purpose.

Before you officially launch your blog, plan topics that will start the initial discussion. Your readers and customers may be shy about being first to share, so ensure that you or your publisher posts information as needed to get an exchange going. You'll want to include an easy way for readers to respond to the content on your blog.

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Use your newsletter to announce and promote the blog. Offer to email it to subscribers or provide the option, through an icon or link, to visit the blog directly.

Blog functionality should have the same analytical capabilities as a newsletter. So as with your newsletter, make sure you know who reads what, when, and where.

You'll want to periodically check in on discussions and see if they flow the way you anticipated and if they meet your goals. If not, as with any newsletter strategy, you may need to refine your approach, depending on the feedback and analysis you receive.

7.8 Planning Your Newsletter

Here are some other basic ideas that you can use to plan your newsletter:

Interviews

These are great opportunities for joint ventures. You don't have to interview a competitor, but you can probably find people who work in related fields or clients who have used your product in a unique way. Just drop them an e-mail, ask if they want to participate (and seeing as they're getting free publicity for their business, why shouldn't they?) and then you can actually do the interview by e-mail. Dead easy and lots of fun too.

News

You probably already read the newspapers and magazines that relate to your businesses. They're going to be full of great content that you can use in your newsletter. Obviously you can't just paste them into your newsletter and send them out, but you can report what other people are reporting, provided you give due credit. Heck, you probably notice that they do it all the time. How many times have you seen phrases like, "according to AP" or "Reuters reports that" in the mainstream media? If it's good enough for CNN, it's good enough for you.

Talk To Your Customers

One of the best ways to guarantee that your newsletter will be read by your subscribers is to invite them to write in with their questions. You could devote a section of the newsletter to a Q&A column. You'll have to be careful with privacy, and feel free to edit what they write so that it flows better, but don't be afraid to let your subscribers speak straight to you. It's the best way to come across as an expert and provide advice that you know they'll find valuable.

7.9 Ezine Joint Ventures

You should also be creative in your advertising. Instead of asking for cash in return for advertising space, you can ask for a reciprocal promotion on a partner's newsletter. As long as you're not competing, setting up joint ventures with complementary businesses is a great way to increase your customer base—and boost your sales.

For example, you could trade articles or interview other ‘experts.’ Or offer special deals on your partner’s goods.

I look at joint ventures in more detail in the next chapter, but as you read that chapter, bear in mind that almost any joint ventures you create for your business, you can create for your newsletter.

7.10 Managing Your List: Paid List Servers vs. Free List Servers

As you build up your subscriber list, you're going to find yourself with a problem. Whichever mail program you're using, whether it's Outlook or Eudora or something else, it's just not going to be set up to deal with the kind of mass mailing involved with newsletters.

If you have more than 50 people on your list—and that will probably take you less than a week—you'll need to use a listserv. Don't even *try* to do this by yourself!

My hosting company organize this for me. They have a mail server that handles all the mail. I just send them the newsletter and they send it out. Alternatively, you can use a professional listserv such as Microsoft's List Builder or Sparklist.

There are free list servers available too. While you can use these if you're on a really tight budget, I don't recommend it. First, they stuff their own adverts onto your newsletter. That doesn't just reduce the effectiveness of your brand, it draws attention away from your own ads—provided you can persuade people to advertise on a newsletter like this. But their privacy policies have also come

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under a lot of criticism lately and even some of the biggest companies have been found to have used their clients' lists to market their own goods.

If you're going to do a newsletter—and you should—it's worth investing in a professional service. That is, after all, what you're offering.

Newsletters then are one of the most effective ways to keep customers, and keep your revenue flowing in. They remind people you're still out there, provide news about deals and bargains, and give customers the confidence to buy. You can put them together in a snap, or even pay someone a pretty small fee to do it for you. If you sell advertising space on your newsletter, you'll even find each issue will pay for itself.

It was mentioned earlier that one of the ways to maximize the revenue from your newsletter was to enter into joint ventures with other businesses. That's what we're going to look at in more detail in the next chapter.

8. Joint Ventures—Partnering For Success

We've already mentioned joint ventures briefly, but in this chapter we're going to look at these kinds of partnerships in much more detail. I can't stress enough how important joint ventures are in creating a profitable online business. It doesn't matter what products or services you're selling, there are always people that you can partner up with in a way that will bring benefits to both of you, without costing you a penny. It's those savings that boost your profits and reduce your costs.

In this chapter, I'm going to explain how to find partners, reveal a number of different ideas you can put into practice, and show you how to keep track of your deals.

8.1 Choose Your Partners

Selecting the right partners is crucial for the success of a joint venture. As always, the best bets are businesses whose services complement your own. If you're selling CD's for example, you could do a deal with company that sells audio equipment, or a music magazine; if you're offering home-made furniture, you could partner up with other home furnishing companies.

Essentially, you want to be sure that you're both appealing to the same kind of market but not directly competing.

One way to find partners is to figure out where they advertise. As you surf around sites related to your business, you'll probably notice that you keep seeing

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promotions from the same sites. Those are the kind of people you want to team up with.

In fact, you don't even have to look further than your inbox. You probably already get a whole bunch of newsletters from companies in related industries, and are already pretty familiar with their business. Your first choices for joint ventures then will probably be easy to think of—and they'll probably be the best ones too.

If you want to expand the scope of your partners beyond the immediately familiar though, it's worth downloading Alexa. This is a neat little software tool that plugs in to your browser and ranks websites based on the amount of traffic they receive. That makes it pretty useful when you want to be sure a potential partner has a decent amount of users to send you. It's also free.

You can then do a keyword search, pick the top ten sites, and use Alexa to get an idea of how big those sites really are. Alexa will even tell you the name of the webmaster and give you a contact number.



Of course, it's one thing to get in touch with a potential partner, it's quite another to get them to agree. In my experience though, this isn't really a problem. About 80 percent of the people I contact already know me and understand exactly what I have in mind. Once your business is up and running, you'll probably find that's true too. The whole negotiation takes nothing more than a couple of emails and maybe a five minute phone call.

Even a cold call gets pretty decent results. In general, I start with an email introducing my site and suggesting a partnership. It's pretty rare not to get a reply at all, and about half of my proposals result in a deal.

So what sort of partnership do I suggest? In practice, that depends on who I'm writing to. Clearly, you want to make sure that you create a joint venture that uses your partner's strengths to strengthen your own services—and your profits.

Here are three different joint ventures that I use regularly and profit from:

8.2 Joint Subscriptions

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This is a newsletter joint venture. A user comes to your site and signs up for your newsletter. They then get a thank you message inviting them to sign up for other newsletters that they might find interesting. Those other newsletters are your joint venture partners. In return for an advertisement on your site, you get the same on theirs. You want to be careful not to pester the user so the invitation needs to be kept simple and well targeted.

8.3 Exit Pop-ups

Exit pop-ups have become an increasingly popular way for Internet-based companies to work together. The fact is only a tiny percentage of the people who visit your site will actually give you money. The rest will just click straight through. The problem is that you're paying for all of those users. Whether you're buying them on a search engine, an advertisement or some other deal, you're paying. The more ways you can find to turn those users into money, the better.

Exit pop-ups present another website to a user as soon as s/he leaves your site. The advantage is that your users aren't bothered until they actually leave (in which case they're no longer your users), and you can choose which pages generate the pop-up. So if a user comes to your home page and then clicks away, they get offered your joint venture; if they purchase, they don't.

On the downside, most exit pop-ups are with competitors which means you're getting good users but giving them extra business. Users also find them annoying.

You can approach another site directly to arrange an exit pop-up joint venture, or you can use any one of a number of different companies to join a wide ring of sites offering the same service. WebTrafficSwap.com for example, gives you two users for every three that leave your site. They also make sure the users you receive are well-targeted and unique. They're a pretty useful site if this is the way you want to go.

8.4 Plug Your Pals

There's no need to be too subtle with joint ventures. There's nothing wrong with using your email list to simply send a marketing letter to your subscribers to plug your partner's products. You'll have to negotiate a good deal for this in return—one that includes a mail-out of at least a similar scale.

Ultimately, a successful joint venture depends on providing services that are truly complementary. Offline for example, a computer technician could make a deal with a computer store offering customers free installations and advice in the

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first three months after their purchase. He'd get access to a pool of potential customers; the store gets an extra service to offer its users. Online you can use similar special offers to truly boost the power of your partnerships.

8.5 Strengthening Your Joint Ventures

The best way to make your joint ventures truly successful is to use exclusivity. Offer your users something they can't get anywhere else, even if it's someone else's services, and you make your users feel that they're getting a real value by knowing about your site. Of course, if you want your partner to give something truly valuable to your users, you'll have to do the same for them. That's not really a problem though. You don't have to give them all gold watches, but you can offer them a discount or a special offer.

For example, I get a newsletter every week from a marketing guru. Just about every edition he sends me contains at least one offer of a book or some other product at a bargain rate. Those products come from his joint venture partners, and I assume that he's doing the exact same thing with his products on their newsletters. I get a lot of newsletters, but his is one I always read. I never know what sort of offer I'm going to be made next, and I know that I'm getting a real value in return for my free subscription. If you've got a good relationship with a joint venture partner, these are easy to arrange.

8.6 Track Your Joint Ventures

Whenever you enter a deal, whether it's listing a keyword on a search engine, buying a banner ad, or entering into a joint venture, it's crucial to track your progress.

The only kind of joint venture you should enter into is an equal one. There's no point in sending thousands of users to a site that only sends them back in the hundreds. You're going to wonder what you're getting out of the deal and if you can't get more somewhere else. You probably can.

How you track the responses will depend on the particular joint venture. If you're swapping users, any traffic monitoring script should keep you in touch. Otherwise, you'll have to monitor sales—ultimately, the best way to monitor your progress.

Joint ventures are one of the most enjoyable ways of promoting your business. Working from home can be pretty lonely. When you start to set up joint ventures not only do you get access to the customer bases of other entrepreneurs, you also

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build up a network of other people working in the same industry. There are benefits every way you look.

8.7 Keeping Your Customers

The whole point of joint ventures is to generate customers. But even more important that getting them is keeping them. It costs much less and bring in much more money. Before we go on to talk about products, I just want to stress the importance of marketing to your *existing* customers.

At the end of every month I sit down with my stats and sales figures, and try to figure out answers to the following questions:

1. What percentage of my sales came from repeat customers?
2. Do my customers believe that they are important to the success of my business?
3. Did I go out of my way to learn all about my customers and keep them interested in my products?
4. Did I check out my competitors to see if they're offering customers something that I'm not?
5. If a customer complained, how quickly and adequately did I respond?
6. Were orders filled correctly and did I offer bonuses to particularly loyal customers?
7. If I heard about a customer who went elsewhere, did I try to win him back?

It doesn't take long to answer these questions, although it does take a bit longer to put new procedures in place if an answer comes up 'no'. But it's definitely worth the effort. I'll confess, I went into this for the money, but I love getting letters from satisfied customers praising me for my service. The fact that it pays to do that too, is a real bonus.

Essentially, there are two golden rules for providing great customer service: punctuality and politeness. Always answer your customers as soon they write to you and send out their goods as quickly as you can. And always maintain a professional, business-like manner with them. It doesn't matter how much they complain or moan, or how unreasonable they are, remember that you're a professional and keeping your cool is part of your job. It's all about customer satisfaction.

So now you know of a whole range of different ways to promote your website. You know how to use search engines, buy advertising and build affiliate programs. You understand the benefits of newsletters and how to set up joint ventures with other people selling on the Web. In the next two chapters we're

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hire a new writer, you're taking a risk. You'll have no idea how talented they are, how much they know about your industry or how well they can write in the style you need. A writer you already work with though, does know about your industry—and you know how well they can write.

If you don't have anyone on call though, Elance is a good place to search. Again, check the portfolios carefully and pay attention to people's feedback. Elance encourages its clients to review the work of the people they hire. These are great pointers to the reliability and skill of a writer you're thinking of hiring.

One little tip for hiring writers on Elance is not to pay too much attention to the amount of work the writer has done in the recent past (another little piece of info Elance gives you). You don't want to hire someone who's too stressed to give your book the attention it needs, and just because someone's new to Elance, or doesn't use it very much, doesn't mean they don't have a lot of experience. They might have a lot of clients outside Elance.

In short, you want to find someone who can show you an e-book they've already written and ideally on the subject and in the style you want.

Now, once you've made the hire, it's important to remember that you're paying someone to do the writing not the thinking. It will be up to you to supply the writer with all the information he needs to get the job done. The more you help the writer with the ideas you want the book to contain, the greater the chance you'll get the product you want.

And finally, don't be surprised if the writer demands that you stump up some cash in advance. On Elance, a deposit of as much as 50% isn't uncommon. This a result of all the unscrupulous buyers who have bought services and not bothered to pay the bill. Too many writers have been stung in the past and most of the more established ones will want to see at least some cash to know you're on the level. There's often room to negotiate the deposit though, and you can sometimes use milestones to lessen the risk on both sides.

9.2 What Can You Write About?

In essence, there are four categories of books. Of course there are a plethora of subcategories in each of these main categories, but the main ones are:

9.2.1 *Pleasure Books*

Usually fiction: novels, short stories, poems, romances, sci-fi, historical, adventure or humor are the most popular, but they're all hard to sell online. Most people prefer to buy fiction in stores.

9.2.2 Inspirational Books

Spiritual books, devotional writings, uplifting life-experiences, Biblical or other religious writings, stories from the heart, or life-changing principles. A select market that you need to know well to make pay.

9.2.3 Study Books

There is a constant need for reference material both for business and academic use. This could cover everything from supplementary reading for school kids to advanced math tutoring for university students. Know something others don't?

9.2.4 How-To Books

“Do-it-yourself” and self-improvement books. Straightforward approaches, pictures and analogies that teach everything from archery to amateur zoology.

Although *all* these types of books sell, the how-to-books and guides are by far the best sellers on the Web. You don't have to be massively original here. The most profitable books are those that offer a slightly new take on a topic with proven popularity. There's no point in picking a subject that only interests you and your best pals.

I've found that these are the ten most popular—and most profitable—topics for “how-to” e-books.

- Making money.
- Saving money.
- Saving time.
- Saving effort.
- Building a more comfortable life.
- Achieving greater success.
- Solving a problem.
- Increasing knowledge.
- Attaining better health.
- Gaining information.

Those are pretty general, and clearly you're going to have to generate ideas that focus on a particular topic. A book entitled “Making Money” isn't going to sell many copies; a book entitled “Making Millions in Your Pajamas” will.

When you're looking for a topic, first make sure it's a subject that you do

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actually have some knowledge about—or alternatively, make sure you hire a writer who does.

If you've found a subject that no one else has touched, or even come close to touching, it's unlikely that anyone will want to read it. The reason that there are millions of romances on bookshelves—and almost all of them the same—is that publishers know they sell. And like you, they're interested in making money not breaking new ground.

So how do you assess the popularity of your chosen topic? Here's a simple three-step process:

Identify keywords for your book idea.

- Conduct a search of your keywords to determine how many people are searching for the information you're putting out.
- Run your keywords through the search engines and look for the following information:
 - The number of e-books already available on the subject.
 - The number of paid sponsor ads for the search. This indicates that there is interest on the subject—otherwise big companies wouldn't be wasting their marketing budgets to sponsor the searches.

And what does all this information tell you? First, it tells you whether there is a market at all; and secondly it tells you whether the market is saturated.

9.2.5 Choosing The Right Topic

We discussed earlier the importance of choosing the right topic or your Ebook. The Internet is primarily used to communicate, entertain, educate and research. It is thus no wonder that nonperishable, information-intensive products - including books, travel guides, magazine subscriptions - are the most popular online products at present. Content-rich sites, subscription-based sites to advertiser-supported sites focusing on a wide range of topics, have been sprouting all over the Internet.

Ebooks and guides on various subjects have been prospering in the recent past. Anything you can put in a physical book, you can put in an Ebook. You can sell just about any content — as long as you have an offering that has a market and an ability to get it (legally) to your customer. Yes, there are exceptions. In some cases you might be competing with big companies with a chunk of the market share.

Here are some categories that you may pursue:

Personal advice, motivation and self help sites

There are several sites aimed at the individual - mainly motivational and self-betterment sites. Such sites offer tips, articles, advice and counseling on how to build self-esteem and self-confidence and reduce stress for a happier life. You may also provide great inspirational quotations, inspirational stories, motivational poems, and other resources to motivate and inspire your visitors. It could include psychology tests, IQ tests, emotional intelligence tests and personality tests for self-help improvement.

The market for personal advice and counseling, especially for students is pretty big. You can provide educational counseling through such sites. Professional advisory information and training is covered in a subsequent category.

Fitness and health, diets, weight loss sites

These sites provide complete guides, articles, tips and counseling on proper eating and exercising habits, benefits of diet and exercise, fitness techniques, diet articles and diet tips, weight loss, as well as some of the popular diet plans. It includes tips from fitness experts, reviews of fitness and diet programs, message boards, forums and discussions on health and fitness.

Information of various nutritional and diet supplements, healthy and non-healthy foods can be included. Some of the popular fitness and health sites are eDiets.com and WeightWatchers.com.

Not all the sites are comprehensive in nature; most in fact focus on some specific program(s) and try to promote those programs to their members. Members are provided not only great details about some proprietary programs, but also personalized guidance to suit their individual cases. Members are also able to share their experiences. Generally, such sites will also offer privileges and discounts to their members to avail of fitness equipments or nutritional supplements or membership of fitness clubs.

Credit Help websites

This category includes sites offering access to consumer credit history records and related content, for example ConsumerInfo.com and CreditExpert.com. Such websites also offer credit counseling and tips as well as credit consolidation services. Articles, guides, and tips for credit improvement are provided.

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Medical research websites

These sites focus on medical issues and/or health insurance. Medical research websites provide an extensive listing of research resources on various diseases and promotion of health through public education. It includes clinical information as well as information about doctors and hospitals in all states. Information on medical ethics and fraud is also provided.

Medical Journals, publications, and articles are often presented. Such websites are a good resource for lists of National Institutes of Health, medical encyclopedias and dictionaries, and extensive information on prescription and nonprescription drugs. Apart from these, all information related to Medicare and health insurance can be found on these sites.

Consultants, paralegal and legal researchers and consumers are amongst those who have interest in such sites.

You may also like to consider a site that provides information on health and medicine for the general public or for a specific target group, say women, nursing mothers. While there are quite a few sites that offer this type of information free, there is room for those that can provide uniquely targeted information. Alternate and complementary medicine and therapy is another area evoking considerable interest and audience.

Personal Finance and Investment

These sites offer advice and tips on managing personal finance and investments. These include articles and guides from financial experts and assist in retirement planning. Such sites provide comprehensive information on various investment plans such as investing stocks, mutual funds, bonds, real estate and so on. They also offer advice on taxes.

Finally, once you have selected your subject, it's just a question of putting it all together and making the sales. Show it to your friends and colleagues to get their feedback, add some pictures to break up the text if you can, and upload it onto your server.

Your basic sales method is likely to be through a website, but e-books also make great bonuses, joint venture opportunities and ways to add extra value to your sales.

Information products have two great advantages. First, they're dead easy to put together. If you've always thought of yourself as a bit of a writer and want to do it yourself, you can have fun and hit the keyboard. If you'd rather pay a pro, you

can probably make the money back once you've shifted about thirty or forty copies—follow my marketing methods and that will take you less than two weeks.

Best of all though, information products give you an unending stream of revenue. Once you've uploaded the book onto your server and set up the website and payment system, they money pretty much rolls in by itself. There's no shipping, no inventory, no fiddling about with order sheets. You just keep an eye on the marketing, make sure the users keep coming and count the number of times people download. Put a series of books like this out, combined with my marketing methods and you're looking at a very nice way to make a living.

You can also sell a range of other products. One of these is software, which is discussed later on in this book. For now, lets examine some other marketing techniques such as Press Releases.

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“Avoiding the phrase “I don’t have time...”, will soon help you to realize that you do have the time needed for just about anything you choose to accomplish in life”
~Bo Bennett

List below what you have gained the most from volume II:

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2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

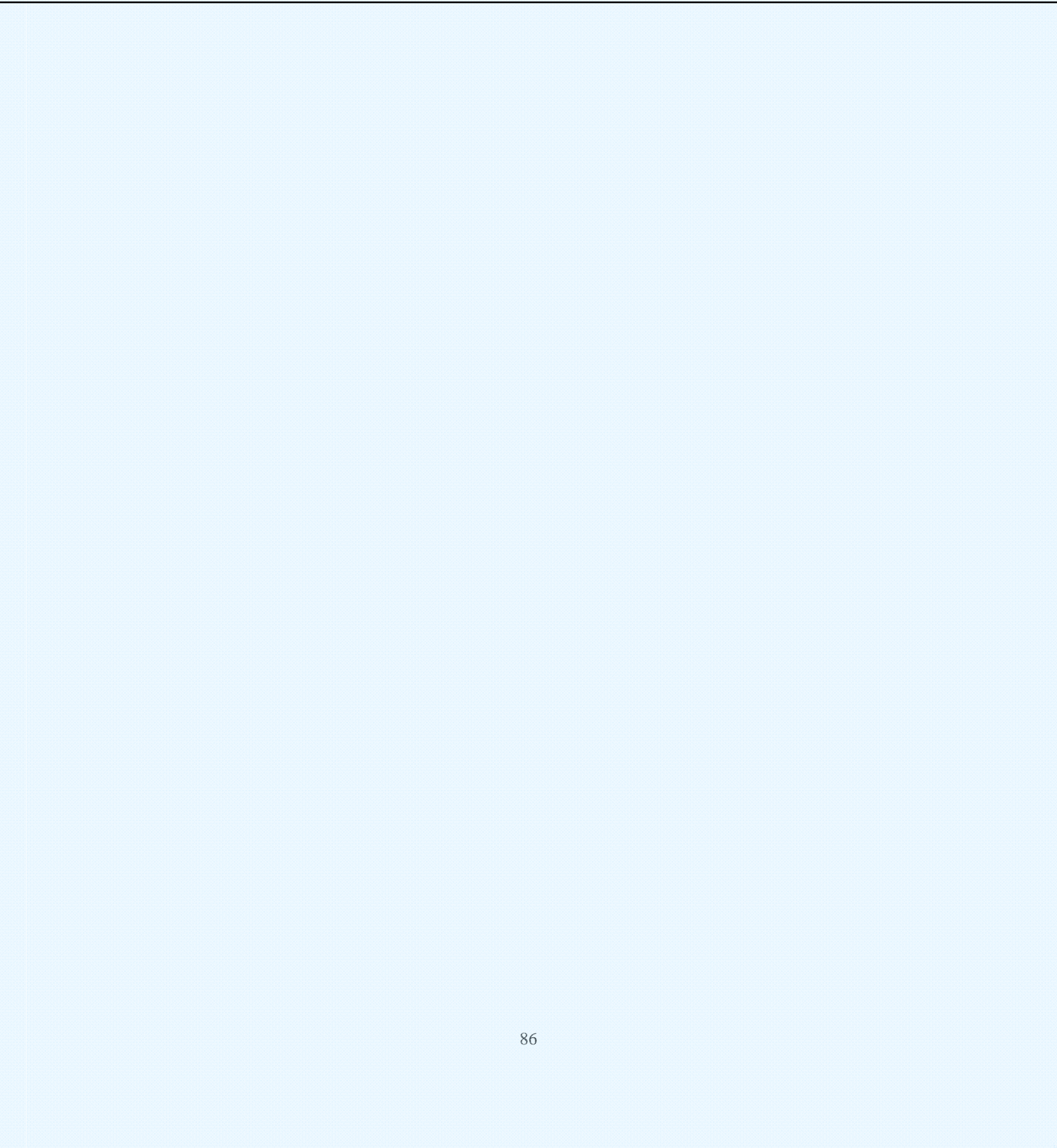
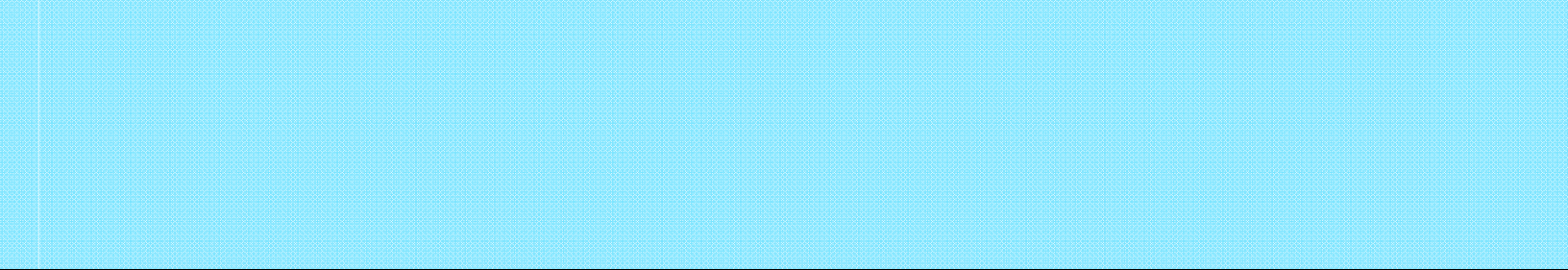
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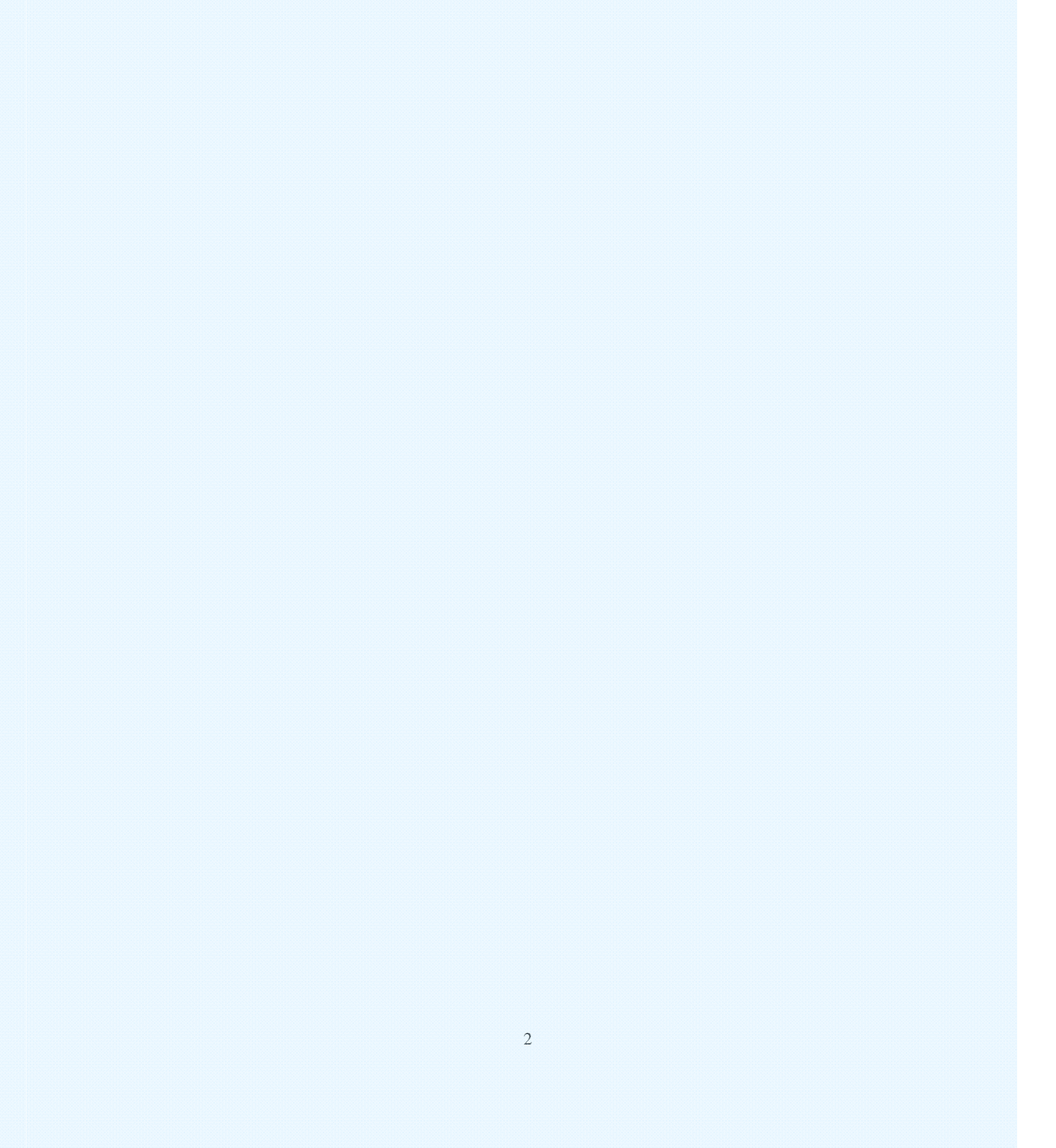
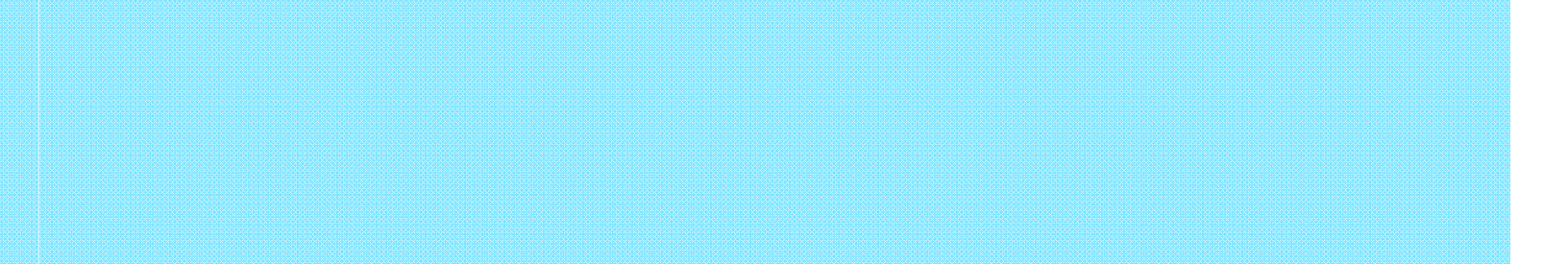
8. _____

9. _____

10. _____



*Michael Vincent's
Online Wealth Course
Volume III*



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10. Press Releases

Press releases, also known as news releases, are brief documents that are used to communicate news (not advertising) to the media. Although a one-page news release is the most basic of publicity tools, it is also one of the most powerful documents that your company can possess - IF it is used correctly. Just one news release has the potential to receive publicity that reaches thousands of potential customers.

Your press releases will provide publicity that will:

- ★ Increase your sales
- ★ Increase traffic to your Web site
- ★ Give you and your company recognition and credibility
- ★ Increase your profits for a relatively low cost
- ★ Save money

Press release distribution is an extremely cost-effective Internet marketing tool. It can build more credibility than any other Internet marketing technique because most readers are more likely to trust independent authorities such as reviewers, columnists, reporters or broadcasters than an over hyped advertising message. A well-written press release can dramatically expose your company to the masses, and greatly enhance the image of your business.

**10.1 Writing An Effective Press Release Or News Article**

Although common practice in the corporate world, press releases are an example of an all too often overlooked potential for business growth, exposure, and traffic generation.

Press releases, done correctly, can garner the online business significant, low cost marketing via interest generated in writers and editors across the globe. These interests can develop into stories, features, or even a mere mention that can send traffic counters reeling, and sales through the roof.

Developing an effective press release is an art form all its own. The content must be creative, eye catching, and somehow moving to the reader. Though this sounds much like the creation of a successful marketing campaign, the idea here is to assemble a final release that communicates ideas and features in a manner that makes the copy of interest to the news-hungry.

One of the most important lessons that you need to learn is that writing media

releases is all about developing a persuasive communication within the framework of a traditional news story format.

Editors will quickly trash media releases that make outlandish promotional promises -- "the best ever," "everyone wins," "one-of-a-kind," "changing humankind forever." Instead, you must think like a reporter. Media releases must follow journalistic style in order to be given any kind of consideration. How do you accomplish this task? Here are some tips:

Collate and organize your facts

Contrary to what most people think, a journalist actually spends the bulk of his time in collating information and facts. When everything is ready, it is not uncommon for journalists to finish writing the story in just half an hour.

How should we go about collating all the information and facts surrounding a particular event? A simple rule of thumb is to find answers to questions pertaining to the who, what, when, where, why or 5 Ws of the event. And we do not stop at just the absolute facts and figures. These must be presented in the right perspective relative to some industry norms, trends and statistics. You may have to undertake some researches by going through past industry and newspaper's reports.

Identify your story's angle

Now that you have collated all the relevant facts and figures, the next step is to identify the "angle" or headline of your story. A good story angle must have the following three attributes:

- ✦ It must be the most important fact in your story.
- ✦ It must be timely.
- ✦ It must be unique, newsworthy or contrary to industry norms and trends.

This story angle must be presented in the first paragraph as well as the headline of your press release. Most newspapers employ an "inverted pyramid" format that presents the most important information in the opening paragraph, follows by other information that support or develop the key points raised in the first paragraph.

Create a catchy headline

By all means, keep your headline short and simple using less than ten words. It should convey the key point raised in your opening paragraph in a light-hearted manner that catches people's attention and imagination.

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Write in third-person voice

Unlike an emailed newsletter that is written in a personal voice, a press release must be presented objectively from a third person point of view.

The reason is obvious. Every journalist has a duty to provide his readers with impartial facts and figures. He must not be seen as endorsing a company's products or services.

Some of the guidelines are listed below:

- ✦ Refrain from using any sales pitch in your press release.
- ✦ Remove "you", "I", "we" and "us" and replace them with "he" and "they".
- ✦ Provide references to any statistics, facts and figures raised in the press release.
- ✦ Refrain from expressing personal opinions, unless they are done in quotes.
- ✦ Draw conclusion from facts and statistics only - not general opinion.

Provide "quotes" from the newsmakers

As a newsmaker, put your most important message down into a quote. Reporters always use quotes from the newsmakers to add an authority voice to their reports. If your press release contains quotes that are important and relevant to the story, chances are high that they will be replicated in full in the published article.

Provide additional background information

You should end your press release with an appendix that provides brief background information on your company, newsmakers as well as who to contact for further information.

Identify your readers

Do you understand your consumers well? As marketers, it is important for you to recognize the profile and buying behavior of your consumers. Information such as their age groups, interests and preferred media would come in handy when you want to reach out to them effectively.

The key to an effective communication, whether verbal or written, lies in presenting your messages to interested audience or readers. Whenever possible, you should only send your press releases to those media whose readers' profile matches that of your target consumers.

You must send your press release to the right persons in order to increase the chance of having your story published. Look through the chosen newspapers and identify those reporters who cover events or activities that share the same theme as your products or services. You can identify the reporters by the articles' byline.

Prioritize your messages

Before you start writing a press release, you should list down all the relevant facts and details on a piece of paper. This is a good writing practice. It helps you organize your story better. I encourage every writer to make it a habit to do so.

How should we go about collating all the information and facts surrounding a particular event? A simple rule of thumb is to find answers to questions pertaining to who, what, when, where, why or 5 Ws of the event. And we do not stop at just the absolute facts and figures. These must be presented in the right perspective relative to some industry norms, trends and statistics. You may have to undertake some research by going through past industry and newspaper's reports.

The next step is to evaluate and prioritize the facts according to their relative importance in conveying your intended message to the media. The most important fact will form the basis for your story's angle.

Relate message to readers

What you want to say about your product or service may not be the same as what your readers want to know. What this means is that you and your readers may look at the same event from totally different perspectives.

To kindle your readers' interest, you must present your intended message from their perspective. If you have done a good job in understanding your readers, you should have no problem in empathizing with their view and interest.

Remember that practice makes perfect and the best way to learn how to write an effective press release is to observe how business news are reported in the business section of your newspapers.

10.2 Press Release Distribution

Press Releases should be distributed to various publications. Smaller companies should start local and small. Here are some distribution tips:

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★ Local and/or small media are most likely to be interested in your story and it's the perfect way to hone your release writing skills. Try local newspapers, trade journals, industry specific magazines, websites, radio shows, and television shows. Don't send your release to just anyone, or you could be accused of spamming.

★ Always remember to get specific contact information for your press release. A release address to a particular person will receive a lot more attention than a general release sent to the media outlet.

★ Familiarize yourself with the editor or reporter's work. Find out the method she prefers to receive press releases. Don't automatically send them by email...some will prefer mail or fax. Find out their deadlines.

★ If you are sending your release by email, never send an attachment. Copy and paste your release into the body of the email. Never send a bulk email. Address emails individually

★ For your local media, check the publication or their website for information on how to submit a release. Do a search on popular search engines for websites in your industry that might just be interested in running your story. MediaPost (www.mediapost.com), which is an extensive directory for US media, may be a good place to submit press releases.

★ Submit your site to a few online newswires and news websites. There are a number of sites that require payment. However, there are a few good free websites as well. Some of these are www.prweb.com, www.free-press-release.com, www.usanews.net and so on.

★ If your budget permits, you may contact a good Press Release Agency. Such agencies distribute your press release to various industry specific websites and publications for a fee. However, care should be taken while selecting a PR agency. Some of these may just spam instead of targeting various sources.



10.3 When Should You Distribute Press Releases?

Press Releases should be distributed every time something newsworthy happens with your website or products. The key here is newsworthy. A press release may easily be considered spam if the reader feels that the content of the press release

is not interesting.

Given below is a list of events when a Press Release can be distributed:

- ✦ The launch of your website
- ✦ When you add new services & products:
- ✦ When you arrange events like public speaking engagements, open houses, seminars, fairs and so on.
- ✦ If your company creates new partnerships
- ✦ When you run contests on your website
- ✦ If you are arranging fundraisers & donations
- ✦ If your company or product gets a major award or accomplishment.

Press Releases can be an effective tool for marketing your products. As discussed, you can hire professionals to create a valuable press release for your company. However, this would add to your costs but nevertheless, it definitely is worth it.

In the next chapter, we will discuss a very interesting form of marketing known as Viral Marketing. Viral Marketing is probably one of the cheapest forms of marketing, yet extremely effective.

How are you going to make your story relatable to your reader?

11. Viral Marketing

Viral Marketing is defined as “Any advertising that propagates itself the way viruses do”; E.g. When Hotmail users send e-mails, they “infect” the recipients with the tagline at the bottom of their messages. Viral marketing denotes any strategy that encourages individuals to pass on a marketing message to others,

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creating the potential for exponential growth in the message's exposure and influence. Thus, the name "Viral"! Viral Marketing is also called V-Marketing, organic marketing, word-of-mouth marketing or word-of-mouse marketing.

Viral Marketing works best when it induces Web sites or users to pass on a marketing message to other sites or users, creating a potentially exponential growth in the message's visibility and effect. In simple words, you pass your message on to 10 other people – each of these 10 people pass on that same message to 10 other people and so on. Such collaborative communications, by nature, needs others in the chain. Everyone simply tells everyone else. ICQ, a service that prompts you when selected friends or colleagues are also online, is an example of a service that is viral by its nature. Its users want to tell their friends about it so that it will be more useful to them.

Viral communication is clearly an enormous opportunity for creating brand growth. Get it right and the rewards are enormous. Your consumers will spread your message for you, at astonishing speeds to a phenomenal number of people. Get it wrong and your carefully crafted proposition will get little further than the marketing director's in-box.

11.1 Viral Marketing Is Not A Pyramid Scheme

MLM (Multi-level Marketing) has its own detractors as well as champions. It is important to point out here the main differences between MLM as is generally practiced and the viral marketing concept that is being discussed here. Just as MLM differs from the infamous pyramid money making schemes (that were grand con efforts), viral marketing is significantly different from MLM.

The major criticisms against MLM are two:

MLM thrives on an unending infinite multiplication through down line proliferation. At the same time, what is being marketed is a physical entity. The participants in MLM are oblivious of the fact that there is a limited supply of the products and there seems to be no one controlling the chain and ensuring that supply can be matched with demand. If the market were to get over saturated, and there is no supply to meet it, the people at the lower rung of the chain are going to get burnt. Those who joined early have nothing to worry as they have made their bucks from their down lines. The criticism thus is that the persons who started this and the early perpetrators in the chain have not pointed out to their down line that there is a limit to how far the chain can actually see fulfillment. Moreover, the participant has first to pay a deposit to join the chain. As long as he/she can see their returns from the deposits coming from their down line, everything is fine. When this stops (due to supply constraint or failure of the primary seller), there would be large number of participants at the lower

rungs who paid deposits expecting to recover it from their promoted down lines, but cannot do so.

The second criticism arises from the fact that what the participant is earning from is from the participants' down line and not from the actual sale of goods or any tangible value. Thus what is being marketed is a dream and the economic theory tells us that this cannot go on.

Well, viral marketing, as we are discussing does not suffer from any of the two lacunae. What you are selling is primarily information, and the transactional cost of either supplying the information or of spreading the message is very low. Thus the risk factor is practically negligible. There is no supply constraint. You can sell as many copies of the e books as there would be persons that you can find in the chain. Moreover, there is no deposit being asked; the upfront investment, if any, is minor. You will not be faced with a situation where you have signed up down lines, but have nothing to offer. Also remember that content that can be offered can be as varied as you get persons to join the chain.

Secondly, the earnings being made are from tangibles. They are from real people visiting sites and subscribing to the information that is provided or through buying of other goods and services that were advertised. This is not a get-rich-quick scheme. It is one of those wonders that are offered by the internet medium and technology.

11.2 Viral Marketing Through E-books

Viral Marketing can be performed in several ways. Many of these different forms of viral marketing have enjoyed enormous success over the years. Viral marketing has been applied to emails and the World Wide Web alike. Another proven technique is the use of E-books as a powerful tool for Viral Marketing.

Ebooks or Electronic books are self-contained "executable" files of HTML. This HTML may be a web site you've created or HTML you've specifically prepared to be compiled into a downloadable .exe file for distribution. When downloaded, this file will self install on your client's desktop.

Ebooks are very similar to normal physical books in the sense that they are rich in content. They are a huge resource for information. Anything you can put in a physical book, you can put in an Ebook. If your site is about tropical birds, why not write a tropical bird guide. If your site is about web design, you could write a beginner's web tutorial.



An Ebook basically is a packaged offline web site that allows

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authors a great deal of flexibility in presentation of content. Ebooks can be downloaded from your website and stored and read offline at any time. Ebooks come with user friendly navigation tools that lets the reader skip to any page or search for any keyword in the Ebook.

Ebooks can be completely interactive with the Internet and can contain live links, graphics, forms, JavaScript, embedded video, audio, animation and more. Hyperlinks and internal search engines enhance navigation, allowing the reader to find items of interest quickly and easily. Ebooks combine the functionality and purpose of physical books along with complex software.

Ebooks will play a very important role in Viral Marketing over the next few years, no matter what the product or service offered by a company is. How can your business benefit from the Ebook direction especially in terms of Viral Marketing? Read on to find out.

Why Are E-books An Effective Viral Marketing Tool

Here's how viral marketing with Ebooks works. First of all, it is essential that your Ebook contains interesting information. It is very difficult to market something if it is of no use. Readers of your Ebook should get to learn something from the Ebook. In this sense it is very similar to a physical book. A reader would throw away a book after reading a page or two if he/she finds it to be boring and dull. The same is the case for Ebooks. No one would want to download your Ebook if it is not rich in content. In other words, your Ebook should have some useful information that the reader wants.

To use Ebooks effectively as a viral marketing tool they should be offered to visitors of your website for free. The production and distribution costs of an Ebook are generally very small. This is what makes it an effective tool for viral marketing.

The Ebook would have the layout and feel of your business service or product, which would familiarize readers with your brand. The Ebook you create would have a message promoting your website and a link to it. This will bring back the reader to your website and create an opportunity for more business. Thus, Ebooks can contain advertisements or links to your website that would persuade the reader to come back to your website. For example, a footer on every alternate page can have some message about your business and a link to your website that would interest the reader and encourage him to visit your website by clicking on that link.

How does Viral Marketing come into the picture here? How do you ensure that Ebooks can be given to more and more readers and in turn generate traffic for

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Adobe Acrobat (.PDF format) or as a solid .exe file. An .exe file is recommended. . The main advantage of using PDF is that it works with almost all operating systems whereas executable files generally cater to only Microsoft Windows users. A more detailed explanation of all popular formats for creating Ebooks is given in the section 2.1.4 – Comparing different formats for Ebooks.

- Make sure your source code is protected. This should be done for security reasons. Your source code may allow unauthorized users to hack into your website which is the last thing you would want from a marketing campaign.]
- Allow icon customization (allow using custom icons for your EBooks).
- Allow resizing of the compiled Ebook to the preferred size. Resizing and icon customization basically allow your customer to change your Ebook according to his/her preference. You should allow your customers to reformat and edit content from your Ebook. However, care should be taken that they are not allowed to delete advertisements and links to your website. Making links and advertisement un-editable can be done while creating the Ebook.
- Allow co-branding of your Ebook. This is a very successful strategy and gives your customers a huge incentive to download your Ebook and pass it on to their customers.
- Create an Ebook search function. This provides easy navigation. Readers should be able to skip to any page in the Ebook directly. They should also be offered keyword search functionality that enables them to search for a particular keyword in the Ebook.
- Support Flash Files, Shockwave, JavaScript, DHTML, Audio, Windows Media, Midi Files and other formats.
- Insert a tracking feature in your Ebook that not only tracks users downloading your Ebooks but also provides different statistics.

There are many Ebook generators available on the Internet that provide the functionality described above. You can also start your Ebook campaign by buying Ebooks from other users and then reselling these Ebooks.

EBook Generator Software

There are several software packages available online to assist you in compiling your Ebook. These generators assist you in each of the functions mentioned in

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<http://www.e-ditorial.com/>

<http://www.ebookedit.com/>

<http://www.ebookcompiler.com/>

<http://www.webcompiler.com/>

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11.3 Viral Marketing through Emails

Email is one of the best ways of spreading your message - it's fast, cheap and, most important of all, it can be viral. Have you ever sent a message to your friends, maybe a joke or a story, only to have it sent back to you days later with several other email addresses in the CC field that you don't recognize? That's because your friends have sent it to their friends, and these friends in turn have sent it to their friends and so on. The Email chain is endless.

It's fair to say that email is an ideal mechanism for viral marketing, because a message can be spread to multiple recipients almost instantly.

Email allows us to touch people at any time and in any place. Email enhances a whole dimension of branding by allowing our brands to be directly connected to the times and places in which we deliver them. Because we can touch people more precisely, we can brand ourselves more precisely as well.

Email that you send to your customers and friends, if interesting, would be again forwarded by your customers and friends to their own customers and friends.

A good illustration of viral marketing through Emails is through Ezines and newsletters. The term Ezines is coined for publications sent through Email. These publications could be anything – articles related to your website or business, press releases for a new service offered by you or any other write up inviting people to visit your website.

Email Newsletters Or Ezines

We had a whole chapter on Newsletters. However, what we didn't discuss then is that newsletters can be a great viral marketing tool. If your newsletter contains information of value, such as tips, hints, news or tutorials, you'll find that subscribers will forward it on to others.

The use of newsletters can also help build content for your web site which increases search engine visibility. Another great benefit is that your newsletters, or ezines or ebooks will proliferate links on many sites that point to your site. Several leading search engines, primarily Google use Page-ranking algorithms that measure how many links point to your site and rank your page in search findings accordingly. The way to do it would be to promote uploading of your material on your customers' sites.

Most importantly, a newsletter should contain valuable information, not just sales copy - otherwise interest will quickly drop off and you'll be getting a number of unsubscribe requests. Worse still, your ezine will be deleted as soon as it arrives; leaving you with a valueless list that only sucks up your time, resources and bandwidth.

Ezine Advertising is one of the most powerful ways to market and promote your

Viral Marketing

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Mail marketing campaign that blasts millions of mail messages to unsuspecting readers.

- At the end of your article, attach a 5 or 6-line 'Resource Box' that includes your website URL and/or your email address.
- When you have finished your article, do NOT send it off straight away. Let it lie fallow for 2 or 3 days and then come back and read it again. You'll be amazed at the improvements you can make. Those final improvements are what make the difference between an article that gets published and one that doesn't.

11.4 Viral Marketing With Affiliate Programs

Affiliate Programs create powerful alliances between an online merchant's web site and various "affiliate" web sites. Affiliate programs as discussed earlier, are a great marketing tool, especially due to the fact that they are viral in nature.

However, affiliate programs are attractive only if they offer useful and valuable incentives to the customers. The best form of incentive would be cash in the form of commission from product or service sales. This is a great incentive for your customers to join your affiliate program and spread your message in turn.

Tips For Making Your Affiliate Program Attractive

Here are some tips to help you in attracting customers for your affiliate programs on your website. Doing some research would help you immensely in increasing traffic to your website and making the affiliate programs as viral as possible.

- The most important aspect of any affiliate program is the incentive. You should offer better incentives than your competitor sites. Money is the biggest and best form of incentive you could offer your customers. Offering a percentage of your sales revenue resulting out of each successful hit can be a great incentive.
- Apart from the normal incentives offer something unique such as cash awards and bonuses for three customers who are responsible for bringing in the highest traffic or highest business to your website. This would provide greater motivation for prospective customers to not only join your affiliate program but also refer your website to more people.
- Most standard affiliate schemes reward only the subscriber directly responsible for bringing more traffic. Develop a second and third tier

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The trick is to make the incentives for each party different, and make the incentive for the carrier greater than the one for their friends. This has the effect of motivating each friend to then become a carrier.

Which tip works best for the clientele on your website?

Viral Marketing

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Let us discuss of all the ways that an e-book could fit into an affiliate marketing business.

If you've been delving into affiliate marketing at all, you're no doubt aware of the viral potential for e-books, first of all *as* affiliate products. It's the affiliates who make them viral, after all, passing the word about the product to their website visitors, e-zine subscribers, and clients, in hopes of earning a commission from a sale.

Then, reseller licensing of the e-book product, or allowing those who buy the books to give them away, adds another viral layer to the promotion. In either case, there's now even more incentive for the book to be pushed along.

The possibility of re-branding the e-book (that is, customizing certain portions of it, or changing the affiliate link coding so that the current host of the download can gain from the affiliate commissions) also adds pass-along momentum. Re-branding might be offered for a low cost or even for a free Ebook.

Let me explain the concept of re-branding further. If you've created a useful Ebook which also promotes your products or services and where affiliates can change the links in your book to point to their affiliate links, you can let your affiliates give this book away to their visitors and subscribers, so that they are giving their visitors something useful and they have the chance of selling your products to them as well.

A merchant's affiliates, or an affiliate's sub-affiliates, could use their own links instead of the author's. If there's another goal that overrides the affiliate commission, or perhaps if only some of the affiliate links will be re-brandable, or the downloader who re-brands a link will have to purchase the product first in order to use or evaluate it, then the loss of immediate affiliate commissions can be amply made up for by the viral spread of the book.

Free as well as “for sale” ebooks might be used by affiliate merchants to promote their offerings. An e-book can be a report, a catalog, a sales presentation, a detailed list of features, and so much more – the possibilities are endless. It could be whatever that is helpful to your visitor and your customer. It can contain graphics, hyperlinks and, with some compilers, even animated graphics and multimedia stuff.

You might create e-books around a subject that pertains to your affiliate program/s. Your affiliates can then create "adjunct" e-books around your program offerings. For instance, a businessperson whose core is consulting of some kind might produce a book that elucidates the importance of his service in achieving clients' greater success. Another could write a book on how to use her

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11.5 Viral Marketing On The Web

As discussed earlier, the simplest and most obvious way of getting people to link to your site is to make it an incredibly useful site packed with informative material. This takes advantage of the main reason people use the Internet - to find information. If you narrow down the focus of your site, you have a much better chance of being found on the search engines, and by those who are looking for the specific information you provide, and hence your chances of being linked to increase greatly.

Another strategy that would immensely help is increasing the link popularity of your website. You want to be found wherever possible and appropriate, throughout the Internet. If your competition is there, you should be, too. Inbound links from other websites to your website provide two benefits: increased traffic to your web site and increased rankings in search engines that calculate inbound links in their algorithm, like Google.

Like you, other site owners are trying to increase their link popularity and require reciprocation or give preferential placement of your link on their site if you provide a link in return. This means you need a page or directory on your site to provide reciprocal links. Creating a links page or directory within your site makes your site more content rich and certainly more viral in nature.

Also, you can encourage your visitors to link your website to theirs. This is only possible if your website is useful to them and rich in content. Sometimes, providing incentives to visitors for link reciprocation would do you a world of good. You can encourage visitors and other complementing sites to reciprocate your website's link in return of commission and "giveaways" for each person visiting your site through their link. This strategy may pay rich dividends.

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11.6 Word-of-mouth Viral Marketing

Word-of-mouth is considered the very best marketing, because it is unsolicited. Here are some ways to encourage friends to share with friends, and use their network to promote your site.

- Install software for website referral. Such software allows visitors to recommend your website to their friends and customers. It is imperative that your website is informative and useful. Try and provide something unique on your website. This could be a new product or a new service that would interest your visitors and encourage them to spread the word for you.
- Make it easy to e-mail or fax your web page to a friend. Encourage readers to e-mail your web page to a friend. This is similar to recommend your site, but allows your visitor to send specific content as well. This is easier to accomplish without a database-driven site.
- Create Email newsletters and send these newsletters to your friends and customers. Always encourage readers to forward your e-mail newsletter to their friends. Do this at the end of a newsletter, and you may jog some readers to do it immediately. It's easy to do.

Create attractive Press Releases with a link to your website and send these to customers and friends. Press Releases are very viral in nature. By providing a link at the bottom of the press release, you ensure that the reader would click on the link and visit your website. It is a good idea to submit your press release to publications that have the same type of target audience as you.

11.7 Measuring Viral Effect and Performance

As with any marketing campaign, tracking the results and optimizing performance over time is absolutely necessary. Understanding how viral and effective your marketing campaign is crucial information, not to mention interesting. You may be reaching a huge audience with your viral campaigns but the key is to analyze how many of these actually visit your site. You may have the right viral marketing strategy but somehow your message may not be efficient enough to bring back visitors to your website. Fixing it could increase your sales by 200%. This is just an example; there are many reasons why you want a detailed analysis of the viral effect and performance of your campaigns.

Creating a Hot Software Product with No Programming Experience

Thankfully, sophisticated viral marketers can track insightful and actionable data that can be used to evaluate performance. Important metrics to analyze are pass-along, click-through, and conversion rates. Marketers should separate the click-through and conversion rates by original customers from referrals and evaluate their respective performances. These metrics will alert a marketer about the offers and customers that drive the highest ROI.

12. Creating A Hot Software Product With No Programming Experience

Producing an information product is easy. If you can read this book, you can write an e-book. There are really no special skills required beyond the ability to write and some basic knowledge about the subject. Producing a software product on the other hand *does* require some special training. It needs someone who know how to program, who understands how a computer works, and who knows how to construct software. It's a fair bit more complex than putting words on a page. It's also much more profitable.

With the right software product, the sky's the limits for profits; Bill gates proved that. But Bill Gates didn't become a multi-billionaire by just being a great programmer—most decent programmers will tell you he's barely that. And if you've been using Windows for a few years, you'll know exactly what they mean.

He became rich by combining some basic programming talent with some outstanding marketing skills.

It's that combination that we're going to put together in this chapter. There's no two ways about, you're going to need an idea. You might have one already. Lucky you! But if you don't, it's time to whip out your pen and paper, and start scribbling. There must be some kind of tool that you wished you had on your computer, or a program that you use every day that just drives you crazy. Maybe you wish your Media Player stored favorites better, or there was a graphics program that was as simple to use as Paint but as versatile as Paintshop. Put down your ideas and then check out the competition.

Do a quick search on Google to find out what other products are already on the market that are just like the one you want to create. There's no point in putting a ton of effort into creating a product that's already out there. Check them out,

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figure out what's wrong with them and aim to create a new version that's just the way you like it.

(You'll also need to be sure that competition is selling. If they aren't finding a market, what's the chance your program will?)

12.1 Building an Outline

Programmers always begin with a written outline—at least the good ones do. When you come to hire a programmer, the better your outline, the easier the project is going to be and the more successful the outcome.

12.1.1 Feature List

Just as it sounds, the feature list is a list of all the benefits you hope your product will contain. Put as many down as you can think of. You'll find that the list will come in handy not just to explain to your programmer what you want your program to do, but you'll also use it when you come to put together the marketing material. In effect, you're writing a list of unique sales points.

You might end up with something like:

- Capable of handling gifs, jpegs and bitmap images.
- Easy, one-click picture editing.
- Simple to use, fast to learn...

And so on...

I usually find that this is the most enjoyable part of the whole project. As you come to think of each little feature, you'll find that you actually get quite excited. The project will begin to form in your mind and each feature should lead naturally onto the next.

12.1.2 User Stories

Here we get into more detail. User stories describe the program from the user's perspective. For the programmer these are the best way to understand precisely what your program is expected to do. For example, you might have a user story that ran like this:

“User right-clicks on image and receives a menu offering Edit functions. The user can then effect a change to the whole image by clicking on one of the

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Studying your competition also gives you a fair idea of what should be the pricing of your product. The key is to price your product competitively. You may offer a lower price for your product or offer it at the same price but have

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additional promotions or discounts. Apart from this, your break-even cost also plays a major role in pricing. Moreover, the break even cost may be a good indicator especially if your product is completely new in the market.

The formula for calculating break even cost is

Initial Software Cost + Upgrade Software Cost + Package Cost / Profit per Sale = Sales Needed to Cover Cost

Initial Software Cost is your investment into the core software. Upgrade Software Cost is your investment into additional features or bugs that need fixed. You might determine that you need to add 3 or 4 major features and fine tune other features based on customer response. Package Cost is your investment into packaging your software – this includes hosting costs, marketing material, documentation, web site design, and some other costs.

Ideally you should estimate the profit per sale to be enough so as to reach break even after around 25 to 30 sales. Again, while doing this you need to keep your competitor's price in mind. If you offer a niche product, customers may be willing to pay more.

There is no simple answer to how much should you charge your customers for your product. A client based software could be charged at a higher price compared to a web based software. Besides, you can also have different versions of the same product. The basic version would have the most common functionality and would be priced the lowest. Premium or advanced versions would have much higher functionality and would be priced higher.

12.4 Choosing a Programmer

No one's expecting you to sit down and code this baby by yourself. There are plenty of people who can do a great job in a decent amount of time—and sometimes even for free.

Why would a programmer who usually charges about \$100 an hour work for you for nothing? Well, that's where things get interesting...

A great programmer is a genius at coding. He can put together 1 and 1 and make it equal 10 or 11, or whatever two is in binary. That's his job. But few of them could sell you water if you were dying of thirst in the Sahara. They'll tell you what water's made of and design a program to count the molecules in the bottle but they'll have absolutely no idea how to persuade you to buy it.



Be careful who you choose though. There's nothing worse than picking up a duffer who isn't prepared to put in the time needed to make the deal work. Ideally, try to find someone local; the whole process is going to go much smoother if you can create a decent personal relationship.

If you're going into a partnership with someone, they have to believe in the

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project as much as you do. In some ways, this is an advantage over paying someone to do the job (this and the \$5,000 it would cost). When someone is truly captivated by the idea they have the motivation to do it right.

When you find a programmer who sounds interested in working with you ask the following questions:

- Have you programmed a product like this before? (There's a fair amount of specialization within programming; if your programmer hasn't worked in this field, he might have no idea what's needed.)
- How much experience do you have? (Some newbies will work for free to fill their portfolio; that's fine for you, but it might take a little longer).
- How would you improve the product? (Every product can be improved; be suspicious if the programmer says it's perfect.)
- How long will it take? (Take too long and the market could change—or fill.)

12.5 Developing functionality

It goes without saying, but you want to make sure that there is a level of interest within your target market for the software you plan to develop. Again, studying your competition is essential to ensure that your product is sustainable. After all, you would need to at least provide as much functionality in your product as your competitor.

The best way to assess what kind of specifications and functionality should go into your product is by asking your prospective customers themselves. A good strategy of achieving this is by surveying your existing customers and visitors on your website. You could have the survey on your website itself or Email all your customers with a list of specifications for your software product – Just ask them what functionality they would prefer at a given price. Don't name the software at this time - just list the features and give a short description of what it will do. That should be more than enough to peak your customers' interests and generate a response.

12.6 Creating A Work Agreement

Even if you hire a programmer through an established freelance site like Elance or Scriptlance, it's still a good idea to draw up some kind of legal agreement.

When you're entering into a business relationship like this with a total stranger, it is definitely worth paying a lawyer a couple of hundred dollars to draw you up a basic contract.

A Confidentiality Clause

The information you share stays between you. If the programmer tells someone else and you lose money, you want to be sure you're going to be compensated.

If this is going to be a cash job, you want every penny put down. You don't want to release your product, watch it make millions then get hit with a lawsuit from your old buddy claiming 50% in royalties. If you're paying, the product is yours and so are the profits.

If you're working on a profit-sharing scheme, you'll have to negotiate who gets how much of the profits and for how long. You'll definitely have to make sure that that's all put down clearly in the agreement.

Creating a software product can take a fair bit of time—at least several months and much longer for really complex programs. Before you write the contract, ask the programmer to tell you how much he thinks each section is going to take and include those in the agreement. You could even put in penalties for failing to meet deadlines, just as you would if you were hiring someone to fix your house.

In my opinion though, it's better to be flexible about deadlines. All sorts of unseen problems can crop up while you're putting together a program—maybe you'll have some changes; maybe the programmer will have some suggestions—and these can have an effect on the timeline. As long as you seem to be heading towards your target release date, and as long as your programmer isn't stringing

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you along, I'd advise being flexible about the scheduling. It's better to get a great final product than a quick one.

12.7 Packaging Your Product



You have created a great product and are ready to market it. However, before you start marketing your product you need to package it well. If you sell a product that can be downloaded directly from the Internet you need to also provide proper documentation and licensing information along with the software files. If your product is such that it has

to be shipped to the customer, apart from documentation, licensing information, software files on a CD, you also require to box up all the contents properly.

Documentation consists of all manuals required for a layman to understand and use the product well. Without detailed documentation, your products value would be “zero”, even if it's the best product around. Documentation generally consists of three guides:

- ✦ The Set Up or Installation Guide, which explains how to set up the software on the customers computer
- ✦ The Tutorial, which explains how the software can be in a day-to-day basis. It would also offer guidance and tips on how to perform certain tasks.
- ◆ The Reference Guide, which is much more detailed and describes each of the functionality fully. This manual requires maximum time to develop.

To create a box for your product, it may be best to hire a professional to design and develop the box. However, if you are familiar with tools such as Photoshop and are creative, you may design the box yourself. This will save you money. However, this should be done only if you are confident of developing an attractive box.

Finally, you should always include licensing information with your product. The licensing information would lay out all the terms of the agreement between your company and your customer.

12.8 Customer Service And Support

In order to develop a good relationship with your customers, you must provide them with quality customer service. Let them know that, should they have any

Customer service is one of the most important factors in determining your customer's satisfaction. Even if you have a great product, if your customer support isn't good, your sales will suffer. Good customer service is perhaps the most important way to build your credibility with the customer. When you are doing your business online, building trust and credibility is the most important factor. Prompt customer service can make the difference.

For every dissatisfied customer, you can expect to lose one hundred new customers. Why? When one customer has a bad experience with your company, you can be certain that they'll tell everyone they know about their bad experience. It will travel through the grapevine and ultimately cost you sales.

Follow-up with your customers and ask them how they like your product or if they have any questions. This is a great way to not only provide good customer service, but to also obtain feedback about your product. By listening to your customers, you will know exactly what they want, what they're having problems with and how you can develop a better product.

By following up with your customers and providing great customer service, you are creating a life-long relationship. Satisfied customers are more apt to purchase your new products in the future. Treat them with the utmost respect and go above and beyond the expected.

Your customer and support service should include:

- ✦ A 24 hour toll free number
- ✦ Email support that is quick and efficient
- ✦ Online chat support

Provide An FAQ

Before the clients purchase the software product from you they will probably ask a few questions regarding any concerns they have about your product.

During the first few weeks of business you will experience similar questions constantly resurfacing. You would be fairly well advised to put this regularly asked for information on your website to reduce your administrative workload. Your interested parties will be happy to get the answers to their questions answered immediately; and you didn't even need to lift a finger.

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Have a detailed FAQ page that tries to offer clear explanation of your policies and rules, how the product works and what are the most common problems that customers may face and how they should tackle them. Such measures will really reduce the need for your costly support time.

So now you know all about marketing on the Web. You also know how to create a couple of great products that generate cash constantly. With information products and software products, there's no limit to the amount you can sell. You don't need massive warehouses to stock your goods, and you don't have to deal with postage and shipping or anything like that. You just have to set up a website and keep the traffic flowing. It's a completely automated system that brings me money week in, week out.

But it doesn't happen without some effort, especially at the beginning. In the next chapter, we're going to look at the best way to manage your time so that your business becomes as profitable as possible as quickly as possible—and with the fewest headaches as possible.

13. Managing Your Life When You Work From Home

At the beginning of this book, I pointed out that not only does my Internet business bring me a decent chunk of money each month, it also brings me time. Now that my system is set up, all I have to do is check that my affiliate partners are sending me cash, suggest the odd joint venture to a partner, and stay in touch with my customers. I rarely spend more than three hours in front of my computer each day.

But it wasn't always like that. It took a lot of effort and a lot of work to get into the position I'm in now. When I first started, it was a bit of a struggle to organize myself. My first website took ages to launch and while the other ones went up quickly, my family went days without seeing me.

Let's be frank, if you don't set up your business properly right at the beginning, you're going to make your life much harder—and your income much lower.

The problem is that until now, you've always thought of your home as a place to relax and the office as a place to focus and work. Now you're going to have to focus at home—and that's not an easy shift to make. You need to keep the same rhythm (without stopping to watch your favorite daytime soap!) and the same kind of discipline you had when you had to commute every



Managing Your Life When You Work From Home

morning.

The first thing to do is to give yourself an office. I'm not talking about a laptop on the coffee table or a corner in the library; I mean a proper room with a door you can close and a desk full of goodies: from a computer with broadband to a place to put your safety clips. If you don't have a spare room to start with, then use your bedroom. But if you're serious, think about finding an office once your business gets running.

The next thing you're going to need is a schedule—a realistic one. This is one of the greatest challenges when you begin working for yourself. At the end of each day, I'd make a list of all the tasks I was going to do the next day. If I got half of them done, I was lucky. I spent weeks frustrated and grumpy.

Once you get a feel for how long each task takes you, whether it's approving a new site design, planning a new marketing program or answering customers' emails, set yourself a timetable and keep to it. Turn off the radio, shut the office door and get to work! And at the same time, don't get annoyed if the day ends before your work does.

13.1 Balancing Your Business And Family

Of course, all work and no play makes Michael a dull boy. And it doesn't do much for his wife and kids either.

When you have a family as well as a business, time in the office is time *away* from the family, and it's hard to know when to stop. You can easily find yourself in front of the computer at midnight and all weekend too. Sometimes working from home seems to be a double-edged sword. If you spend too much time with your business and not enough time with your family, the most important relationships in your life can suffer. But if you spend too much time with your family and not enough with your business, the success of your business can be in jeopardy. And, since your business is likely your main source of income, its success can also determine the wellbeing of your family. Tricky.

Fortunately, it doesn't take a superhero to make the work/ family division work. All it takes is some patience, a little savvy scheduling and a lot of willpower. In fact, if you have the time to read the following tips, then you have the time to do them!

13.2 Know How To Say “NO”

Not easy to do, especially when you're just starting. But if something doesn't fit into your schedule and impedes on another activity you've already planned, just

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Managing Your Life When You Work From Home

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say "no." For example, if a client calls at six in the evening and pleads with you to have a teleconference with him at seven, but your son's basketball game starts at the same time, you're allowed to reschedule. Clients actually like to work with people who sound busy.

13.3 Take a day off from work at least once a month

How often have you said: "I wish I had my own business. Then I could take a day off whenever I wanted." Now you can do it! Chances are, you'll be working more days with your own business than you would when you were employed by someone else. If you don't take the weekends off from your business, make sure you take at least one day a week for no work and all play. Then, on top of that, schedule one day per month for a mini vacation.

For one day, do no work whatsoever and spend all day with your family. That means no computer (unless you're helping your kids with homework or playing games), no business phone, no fax, no meetings, and no paperwork for one entire day. Have fun! I do.

13.4 Learn how to compromise

If you learn how to successfully make deals with your family and clients, you'll see how simple it is to balance your time between both. Running a home business and a family can be tricky, and that frustration does no one any good. It'll cost you clients and create a frosty atmosphere in the house.

If a client, for example, gives you a week to complete a project, and contacts you two days before the deadline saying she needs it right away, don't let your frustration show. Offer her what you've got and tell her you'll send the rest later. She should be able to meet you halfway. The same is true of your family.

What are you going to change to integrate 13.1-13.4 into your life?

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- If I have to warn you that there's nothing more important than getting the work/family balance right, then the chances are you're going to learn the hard way. I

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Conclusion

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went into this for the money. But there's no question that the greatest benefit my business has given me is the extra free time I have to spend with my family. I'm sure if I put that time into building more websites or creating more products, I'd make more money.

But there's more to life than money.

Conclusion

All You Need To Skyrocket Your Web Profits

In this e-book, we've looked at a whole range of different ways to make money on the Web. We've talked about search engine optimization, affiliate programs, joint ventures and even e-books and software programming.

It should be clear that at the center of the book—and at the center of all your online marketing efforts—is traffic: hits to your site by potential customers. That's what all the marketing chapters in this book are about, bringing people to the site so that as many of them as possible will buy. As you build your online business, concentrate on marketing opportunities that provide targeted traffic.

You should also concentrate on programs that are multi-level in nature such as affiliate programs. If you are doing all of the work yourself, your income will be limited by your time and resources; when you bring others into your program, your income potential becomes unlimited. Affiliate programs increase the ways you can turn your traffic into cash, and that's what money-making on the Web is all about: buying traffic and earning from it.

It should also be clear that the most lucrative opportunities are those that have a repeat customer component. It costs less to maintain a customer than to find a new one. That means it's always smart to take opportunities that generate repeat business. It's also worth creating a newsletter that keeps your customers informed, in touch and in your revenue stream.

And the more revenue streams you have the better. On the Internet, as in the real world, chances come and chances go—online, they just come and go a lot faster. If you are diversified, you are more likely to survive market dips that would otherwise shut you down—and that will certainly already shut down many of your competitors.

It should be clear now that a lot of what people have said about online business is a load of old bunkum. You can see that it's possible to make money; you can see that you can do it by yourself, right now; and you can see that whether or not

you succeed is entirely up to you.

You can also see that the following myths are simply untrue:

- ♦ **Your site has to have millions of page views to make money.**
It doesn't. Small sites with good conversion ratios can make more cash than large sites with lots of click-through traffic.
- ♦ **Ad revenue and affiliate revenue don't make money.**
They do, if you know how to use them.
- ♦ **It's easy to make money: just put up a website and the money will roll in.**
If only that were true! Making money on the Web takes time, effort and investment.

Contextual Marketing – The newest concept

This is a newly emerging but extremely targeted and effective form of promoting your online business. Consumers download specific software from a contextual marketing network organizer (such as Gator Corporation, Hotbar, Save, or WhenU) at no cost and install it on their desktops. When the consumer is about to make a purchase for a specific product or service or is placing a search query for that item, the software will beam advertising messages from suppliers of that product or service, offering some incentive to the consumer such as discounts or promotion offers. Through this facility, the advertiser (supplier) is getting an opportunity to promote his offering to a targeted consumer and that too at the point of sale or when there is an intention to buy. Thus contextual marketing offers a highly targeted marketing tool that connects the supplier with a genuine lead and spurs transaction.

The effectiveness of contextual marketing can be seen from the fact that response rates and conversion rates are from 5 to 20 times higher than the results from conventional online advertising.

Automating Your Website – E-Business Automation Systems

There are hundreds of websites emerging online everyday. Some survive, some don't. Of these new businesses, many are one-person bands. Some are partnerships as well as a handful of others have formed a company with the view to operating 100% online.

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The part which makes or breaks a business like this is the website management and maintenance. Don't assume that once the site is online, your work is completed. If people are to return to the site, it will need to have fresh content in order to make the site "sticky". Since this is the most important part of your online business it is very important to be able to keep the administrative tasks to a minimum. One of the best ways to achieve these objects is to automate all possible marketing as well as administrative procedures of online selling.

The ultimate in automation is when all automated functions can be pre-programmed to be carried out at regular intervals with an in-built scheduler. You can go on holidays and have everything carried out for you in your absence as if you were sitting at your terminal for the duration. There are many E-Business Automation Systems available that automate the entire web marketing procedure along with many of the redundant administrative tasks. This is like running your business on "Auto Pilot". One of the most popular tools is discussed below:

QuickPayPro.com

QuickPayPro is a remotely-hosted ecommerce automation system that includes a shopping cart system, secure, real-time credit card processing, digital product delivery, affiliate marketing system, ad tracking, mailing list manager and email marketing autoresponders.

This system is available at a reasonable monthly cost and is easy to set up on your website. Some of its other features are:

- ✦ Sell digital or "real" products and services.
- ✦ Single-product order form or full shopping cart version.
- ✦ Secure, real-time credit card processing, with or without a merchant account.
- ✦ Supports payment gateways such as 2CheckOut, PayPal, PaySystems, Revecom, Authorize.net, QuickCommerce, EMS and SkipJack.
- ✦ Digital product delivery with automatic download link expiration.
- ✦ Two-tier affiliate marketing system with real-time statistics for both your affiliates and yourself.
- ✦ Option to export affiliate commission payments to upload and pay via PayPal, or import into Quickbooks or other applications for automated check writing.

- ✦ Ad tracking system and sales calculators for web site and email advertising.
- ✦ Unlimited email mailing lists.
- ✦ Unlimited sequential follow-up autoresponders.
- ✦ Mail merge personalization.
- ✦ Customizable order and thank you pages to fit your site's look and feel.
- ✦ Remotely-hosted - Manage account using any web browser.

Some Warnings

The fact is, just because you can make money on the Web, it doesn't mean that the streets of the Internet are paved with gold. Like any opportunity, there are scams and hazards. As you set up your Web business it's important to stay alert, use common sense, and keep your feet firmly on the ground.

First of all, don't be tempted by get-rich-quick schemes that promise you instant wealth with no investment of time or effort. There are lots of these on the Internet. One of the most popular are those emails that fly around every now and then from someone claiming to be a wealthy political dissident who's having trouble getting a huge sum of money out of their (normally African) country. They'll ask you to open an account put some money in it and they'll add the rest in return for a fat commission.

Lots of people have fallen for this scam. It's real. And real stupid.

As soon as someone tells you they can make you rich—all you have to do is send them some cash—be sure they're trying to scam you. The Web is just like the real world: if something looks too good to be true the chances are, it is.

And just like the real world, It takes money to make money. The Internet has provided a very economical way to do business and there are some inexpensive Internet marketing options; but marketing is imperative to the success of an online business and productive marketing campaigns do require *some* cash down. That might be money for search engine campaigns, payment for a programmer or a Web designer, or even just the fee for your hosting company, but you will need some money to get started; you get nothing for nothing.

I'm not going to promise you that there's no risk involved here. There is. The size of the risk depends on how much you want to invest. You can start small

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with a cheap hosting company, a site you create yourself and so on. You'll still make money like that; it will just take you a little longer. Alternatively, you can splurge right from the beginning by getting a pro to create your site and marketing it hard from the get-go. It's entirely up to you.

Me, I started small and spent more money as it came in. How you do it will depend on how much spare cash you have and how confident you feel.

Checklist For Launching A Successful Internet Business

Keywords and phrases

Have you developed the key words and phrases that will ensure good placement in the search engines?

Remember, you can think up keywords yourself, you can see which key words your competitors are using, or you can simply pay a specialist company to find them for you. Once you've submitted your site to the search engines in all the keyword categories you want, it's crucial to monitor your traffic carefully.

Optimization

Have you identified what you need to do to ensure that your site is fully optimized? Do you have the means or resources to effectively complete the task?

Once you've figured out the keywords, you have to decide where to put them and how. You also have to think about link exchanges to improve your ranking even more. Remember, the more sites link to you, the higher your position in the search engines.

Content

Have you developed content that is not only attractive to your potential clients, but also search engine friendly? Do you have content and tools other than your main text that will assist with search engine ranking and drive visitors to your site?

Content has to contain persuasive sales text with a fine scattering of crucial keywords. You also have to update it as often as necessary—not

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Do you have a plan for promoting your site and driving traffic to it?

There are all sorts of ways you can bring traffic to your site. In this book, I mention just a few of them—the ones that I’ve found the most effective. When you set up your Internet business, you should have your entire promotion campaign planned out in your mind. You should know which methods you want to use, and what to do if they don’t yield the results you want in the time you want.

Have you identified your target market? Do you know how to reach them? Do you know what they want? Do you know how to attract them?

The more finely you target your marketing, the greater your sales rate will be and the higher your profits. Those high profits begin with a clear understanding of who your ideal audience is. Make sure you know your market before you even build your site, and keep it in mind as you prepare your promotions.

Are you prepared to put in the time required to make your site a success?
When the site launches, will you be ready to roll?

The biggest investment of time comes before the site is launched and in the period immediately after it launches. First, you have to do all the research. You have to understand how you're going to break into your market, and know exactly what you want your online business to do. Once your first sites are built and launched, you have to do all the marketing. Only once it's up and running will you be able to relax, move into monitor mode and begin thinking about your next opportunity. How long that takes depends on how much time you invest at the beginning and how successful your marketing efforts are. It usually takes a few months.

Advertisers and Affiliates

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Have you identified advertisers and affiliates who will promote your site, your products and your services?

You can start looking for advertising opportunities and affiliate programs before you even launch your site. The more prepared you are when you launch, the quicker you'll be able to move from inception to income.

Opt-In Email

Have you identified features for your site that will build a marketable opt-in email list? Have you thought about what you're going to put on your pop up and how you're going to manage the list when you get it.

The people on your opt-in email list are like a little pool of potential customers—and repeat customers. The more people you can bombard with your marketing material, the more money you're going to make. Ways to trap email addresses should form a part of your site design.

Monitoring

Have you identified monitoring features for your site that will provide you with information about your target market? Do you have a way of knowing who has visited your site? Do you have a method of collecting data from your visitors to help you improve your site?

The Internet changes constantly. One week, you can have top rankings and a sales rate to die for; the next week, your site be down on page fifteen with traffic made up of spam from Romania. You have to keep track of your traffic, and be prepared to make changes to your marketing plan.

Joint Ventures

Do you have an idea who you could partner with to offer complementary services that bring real benefits to you, your partner and your users?

Joint ventures are your partnerships for success. They allow you to pool resources with other entrepreneurs to bring real benefits for all of you. Start by talking to the people who send the newsletters you like to read each week. Then move out into people who provide complementary services to the ones you offer. As you build up your business, keep your eye open for new opportunities all the time.

Vision

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Do you know what you want to achieve and what you'll do when you get there?

If your goal is only to make money, you can achieve that in your first week on the Web. Most of us have bigger goals than that though. Whether you want to be the Bill Gates of online marketing or simply set up an automated revenue stream that will bring in a constant flow of cash with very little maintenance, you can do all that on the Internet—as long as you know what you want.

Costs Budget And ROI

We have looked at various strategies and options related to Internet Marketing. One of the key factors while devising your strategies is your cost budget and the ROI you get from it. In this guide, we have studied a number of different techniques for marketing your product or service. The importance of each option is closely linked to your own objective, and consequently your budget in terms of management time and expenditure.

Marketers would be interested in knowing the results of any campaign and most often the result is desired in terms of increase in company revenues. Name recognition, brand image creation and other outcomes are important; however the bottom line is sales. ROI should be able to determine your website's conversion rate in terms of the ability to persuade your visitors to take the action that you desire them to take. At the same time, the success in terms of increase in sales depends on several other factors such as the competitiveness and value in your product or service offerings and the quality of your website to induce the visitor to take action.

Focusing your marketing campaign is crucial to ensure maximum ROI. Your marketing strategies should be able to target prospective customers that are most likely to buy your products. You have to introduce the right product to the right person.

Perhaps the whole promotion cost for small or midsize companies may come to a minimum of \$2500 plus the consulting and the services cost and the production



costs. Remember that budgets for marketing will just zoom up as you go along the way. In some cases the final cost could be three times the above number or even more. Whether this budget is right or not, depends on what you perceive as the market potential for your offering. You may choose to pursue only a few of the strategies mentioned in this

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guide and still get reasonable success.

The key is to make use of some of the tracking tools mentioned for each of the strategies. For instance, tools that measure the traffic coming to your website and identify the source of the traffic. In other words, tools that tell you what search engine did the visitor come from, or which ad/affiliate program directed the visitor to your site. Moreover tracking tools can also tell you what the visitor has done online, including page visits, time spent, actions taken (relevant for e-commerce sites or query/contact forms) and so on.

Proper analysis of the data available is required to relate the traffic history to the revenue results.

Being a successful Web entrepreneur doesn't require massive amounts of investment or a genius idea. It simply requires some initial time and effort. It requires an understanding of how business works on the Web, and it requires the drive to succeed.

Are you ready to begin?

“Employ thy time well, if thou meanest to gain leisure”
~Ben Franklin

List below what you have gained the most from volume
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