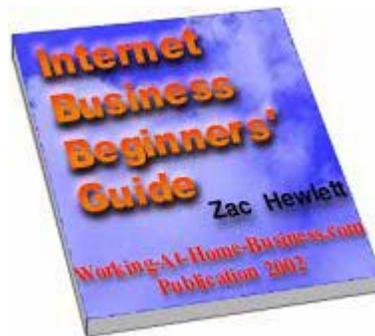**Working-At-Home-Business Publication**

Start Your Own Online Business In A Week
And Most Importantly, Make It Profitable!

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Zac Hewlett

Internet Business Beginners' Guide

Zac Hewlett

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Internet Business Beginners' Guide

Day One

In the very first day, I would like you to understand several things before jumping into the Internet business world:

- Why go online?
- Can you still make money online? (I mean, look at the Dot-Coms...)
- Roadmap to profitable online business

Why Should You Go Online?

Some of you might be seeking for general home-based business opportunities when you first found out my web site Working-At-Home-Business.com

However, I guess you've noticed that I didn't mention traditional home-based business at all at my site. I'm not indicating that traditional home-based businesses are dead. You can still make a comfortable living with most of the old businesses - if you put in enough effort.

(Same for Internet business. You **HAVE TO** put in effort in order to make real money. Forget about those get-rich-quick schemes!)

What I'm trying to say is that, with today's affordable computer technology and Internet accessibility, going online is a better choice if you:

- want to make more money with less effort;
- have no or very limited budget;
- want multiple income streams;
- want to work with the comfort of your home and schedule;
- want the profit coming in by next week;
- want unlimited profit potential;
- ...

Let me explain a bit further.

With online business, you have, at least, these advantages:

* Wider Potential Market

For the first time, you, as an individual, can reach a <mark>worldwide market</mark>.

Billions of people are surfing around everyday. And a rapidly increasing number of people around the world use the Internet to purchase items they can't find locally or just don't care where the product is shipped from, as long as they want it.

(Or even better, if you sell info products that can be downloaded immediately after payment is processed, it doesn't make any difference for your customer where you live or where your web server is.)

If you're fast on your feet, you have the opportunity to make some of them your customers. Think about it. The Internet provides a small business in Peoria, Illinois, or Johor Bahru, Malaysia, the opportunity to be a global player, with little expenditure except time given to learning.

A global opportunity awaits you! Isn't it exciting?

* Lower Costs

If you already have a product to sell, what's the initial cost to put up a web site to sell it? Here's a round down:

--Domain name registration, $8-35 per year
--Web hosting, $0-35 per month
--Advertising, $0-100

And that's it.

Actually you can get everything done for free except domain name registration. So the minimum cost to start selling online is $8!

I mean it, everything. And in a professional way. Web hosting (without ad banner), affiliate program management, credit card processing, mailing list, CGI script...I'll let you know where to get these services in the following lessons.

Even if you would buy all the most professional and expensive services and software right from beginning of your online venture, it shouldn't cost you more than one thousand dollars.

Typically, $100-200 is what you need to start an online business from scratch.

Online business is much cheaper to run as well. You don't have to pay for office rental or equipment. You don't have to employ anyone before you make 1 million dollars.

Once you put everything into autopilot (we'll talk about that later), your running cost will be nearly zero.

* By-pass Middleman

Internet was regarded as advertising medium several years ago. It's not the case any more. A web site is now better understood as place of doing actual business, actual transactions.

Online direct sales enables you to jump any distribution chain that ratchets up prices to the end user. It means ==much higher profit margin== for you, lower price for your customer, or both.

In traditional business world, distribution and retail cost can be up to 90% of the selling price! Now you can pass part of that savings to your customer and keep the rest in your own pocket.

In fact, a really scary development to many manufacturers is the growing temptation to sell directly on the Web and by-pass the complex distribution chain they have built over many years. The manufacturer doesn't want to anger distributors and dealers. But buyers don't care. Neither do you.

* Sales Process Automation

Nearly everything can be put into autopilot for an online business.

From product presentation (the site itself), information inquires, price quotation, to payment processing, order fulfillment, customer service, just to name a few. Even the profit will go into your bank account automatically!

All these can be done while you are sleeping or having fun with your family at beach!

This is rather impossible for off-line business.

It then translates to more leisure time, or better, more time and opportunities to develop your next online project. Therefore, more money ahead.

Above all, automation itself means much higher profit margin. You don't have to spend time or money on routine operations. You don't have to employ anyone to run it. ==It runs by itself==, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week!

* Multiple Income Streams And Unlimited Profit Potential

This is the natural result of advantages discussed above.

Automation frees up your valuable time and makes it possible for you to ==repeat the success time and time again==. Over time, you will be able to build multiple web sites selling different product lines.

Even if one of them couldn't pull in orders after some time due to saturated market, you can rest assured that you have other income generators still making money for you.

A worldwide market enables you to exploit varies product ideas. Your imagination is the only limit.

* Easy Communication With Customers And Visitors

Just imagine, how I can deliver this e-course to you in the off-line world? How can you sign up in the first place? I don't know you, I have no idea where you live, what you like, how old you are...There's no way I can contact you in the off-line world.

On the Internet, you just fill up a form and my course is emailed to you automatically.

(This ebook is compiled from my online 7-day email course which is a free gift for my newsletter subscribers. You will also receive 7 valuable gift ebooks (over $100 value) on Internet business when you subscribe to my free newsletter "*NetBiz Clasroom*": http://www.working-at-home-business.com/newsletter/index.shtml

You will receive free informative issues teaching you all of the insider secrets to Internet business marketing, search engine promotion, copy writing, traffic generation, affiliate program tips, and more every month.)

This communication capability doesn't end here of course. You can easily inform your visitors/customers new content at your site, give them special gift or discount, keep in touch with them via mailing list, answer questions by email...the list goes on and on.

The best part is that, you capture their name and email address simply by setting up a form, just like the one you filled up 5 minutes ago:). **A big time and money saver!**

Better communication means higher chances to:

- build your credibility
- get more traffic
- sell to your visitors
- have better customer service
- build a mailing list which will bring in advertising dollars
- sell more backend products

And all these benefits don't cost you anything!

* Short Summary

I can easily name more advantages of Internet business: test and adjust your marketing methods fast, don't need to talk to strangers, you can start as a hobby first while keeping your full-time job, you can work whenever you want to (if you are as lazy as I am, you should know what I mean)...you have the idea.

What more can you expect?

Just go online!

Can You Still Make Money Online?

You've heard of enough bad news. Economic downturn, dot-com fallout, weak stock market, all the online scams...Some people just don't believe this "e-business" kind of thing any more.

But before you walk away, I want you to think about something for a moment. Did you know that between 1998 and 2000, online shopping within US grew a staggering 580%? It's true. Forrester Research reported growth from $7.8 billion US in 1998 to $45 billion US in 2000. And online sales reach $5.7 billion in December 2001, - up 14% from December 2000, in spite of bad economy.

You can read more detailed and latest report here.

Now think about this. Online consumers couldn't care less about the dot-coms dropping off the Web. More and more people are coming online to shop, and the number of purchases that they're making each year are continuing to increase. Those new to e-shopping are making 9 purchases a year and those with more web experience (5+ years online) are making 20 purchases a year.

So what's going on? Online spending is growing at fantastic speeds. e-Shopping is becoming a routine part of consumer life. Yet all we're hearing about right now is failed dot-coms. One by one, companies like Furniture.com, Pets.com, MotherNature.com, Toysmart.com, Living.com, Mortgage.com, Garden.com, etc... have closed their doors, and each time the pink slips are handed out, the media has a feeding frenzy. Feature stories promising easy wealth and overnight success have now turned into the dot-com obituaries. It's enough to make your head spin.

And that's why these statistics I've just shown you are important. Obviously the whole story is not being told. If online shopping has reached 5.7 billion per month, all of this **money must be lining someone's pockets**.

But whose?

A large portion goes to **individuals just like you**, and small businesses who sell unique products directly at their web sites!

Small is a big advantage. Big businesses dominate the traditional business world. The Wal-Mart's and Microsoft's have steadily forced smaller, family-owned businesses out of the way. Not so on the Internet. Three out of four Internet businesses are very small, often only one person working from home.

You can find many direct sales web sites popping up online everyday. Some will fail. The ones making money all have something in common:

- Focus on a well-defined, easy-reachable niche market
- Sell a unique product or have a unique selling proposition
- Streamlined sales process
- Active and effective web site promotion
- Develop backend products

(I'll guide you through each aspect in this ebook.)

There is still plenty of room for new businesses on the Internet. Now is an excellent time to be starting or promoting your e-business. Take advantage of your competitor's hesitation at this dramatic turning point and scoop up your share of the market!

Roadmap To Profitable Online Business

Although I can't discuss in very detail because of time and volume constraint, I would like to share a step-by-step roadmap for those of you who are either considering starting, or have already started a business on the Web. If you already have a web business, at least scan it for items you may have missed. You really do need every single one of these components if you want your business to grow into a source of financial security.

- Find an easy targetable, reachable niche market. Don't try to be everything to everyone.

- Develop a product you can control. Ideally you should sell something that you own completely. Or at least you have resell rights.

- Make sure your product can solve some problems for your target audience so that they want it.

- A professional web site with your own domain name. Yes, you have to buy your own domain name. And professional doesn't mean complicated.

- Sales copy that is proven to sell. If there is one aspect that kills web site sales it is poor sales copy.

- Accept credit card payment at your site. Offering a fast and secure way for your customers to purchase from your web site with their credit card is a must on the web.

- Customer support that keeps your prospects and clients happy. The best is simply by offering contact forms at your site and answering email every day.

- An affiliate program for your customers. Nearly all successful e-commerce sites offer some form of affiliate program.

- An opt-in email strategy. You must grow a list of prospects. It's the only way you can capture a percentage of the folks who visit your site and do not buy the first time, which is nearly all of them.

- Backend products. Either new products/services, or promoting other's products via their affiliate programs.

- Active marketing strategy including free promotion and paid advertising. More than 80% of your time should be focused on marketing and promotion.

If you're not sure what I'm talking about, don't worry. This ebook is exactly for that purpose. I'll explain every component in the following lessons.

Seems a lot of work? Well, not really. The initial effort to set everything up may cost you just one day - if you know how to do it.

Once you put everything into autopilot, the business will take care of itself, leaving you with more time to enjoy or develop your next online business.

You need to do it in the right direction from day one. The best way to succeed is to copy, or model, the ones who have been successful. Copy their strategies, not their products;-)

You can learn more on starting and marketing an Internet business from Corey Rudl - the most successful online business expert today.

Internet millionaire Corey Rudl has built up his successful business, the Internet Marketing Center, along with all his other businesses on the Internet to the point where he is now...

Earning $6.2 million in revenue and attracting 6 million visitors to his sites every year

...all based on **4 basic principles**!

As the author of the #1 best-selling Internet marketing course online, Corey's business is to help e-business owners like you succeed. And because he has always referred back to these four steps himself to find the rock-solid foundation required to guarantee his success, Corey has realized that this foundation is exactly what so many Internet entrepreneurs are missing!

And so he has decided to reveal his secret formula! Corey has written a new guidebook that tells you exactly how these four steps can be applied to ANY business to lay the foundation for extraordinary success!

It's called "**How to Create a Fortune on the Internet in Just Four Simple Steps**"... and now it's available to those of us whose success relies upon this key formula.

This four-step process does not take a genius to use and profit from. In fact, this process has been used by EVERY successful e-business - whether they knowingly used it or not.

To find out how you can claim your copy in the next five minutes and instantly learn the exact four surefire steps that are ultimately responsible for the success of not only Corey's multi-million dollar business, but also every single profitable business on the Internet today, click here.

Whether you currently have a business on the web or no business idea whatsoever, once you implement Corey's four basic principles, the success and profits will literally fall into your lap!

What you are about to see is a hard-hitting look at how discovering these four simple steps took Corey from near bankruptcy with only $25 in his pocket and a computer on his desk to making $6.2 million dollars online in just a few short years. So do not

hesitate, because if you are willing to put in the little effort it really takes, you can literally duplicate his success if you click here.

That's all for today. In next lesson, you will learn:

- The 2 profitable online business models
- Find the right niche market
- How to develop or find the product your target market will cry to buy

Cheers!

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Internet Business Beginners' Guide

Day Two

Today, you will learn:

- The 2 profitable online business models
- Find the right niche market
- How to develop or find the product your target market will cry to buy

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The 2 Profitable Online Business Models

In this ebook, I focus on **sites created for profit**. There ARE sites not for profit. For instance, personal sites, fans sites, sites backed by non-profit organizations, government sites, etc. I'm not going to touch that topic.

What I'm going to talk about is business sites, sites with main, if not only, purpose of making money.

There are countless sites out there offering various products or services, for free or for a fee. Some sites offer really rare information or products that may seem a bit strange to ordinary people. They are targeting at very niche market. Some are targeting at much broader markets.

No matter what products/services these business sites offer, most of them fall into one of these two categories:

* Traffic Sites

Not long ago, Mirabilis was purchased by AOL for over $287 million dollars. Although this company was just a small business with one major software program, it was worth absolute millions to the major corporation of AOL.

Its software, ICQ, can be downloaded for free.

This software enables anyone on the Internet to engage in chats or to personally contact anyone else who is online at the moment and a user of this software.

The most interesting part of the story is that Mirabilis doesn't sell this software. They give it away for free. It is available to anyone who wants it online.

And because of this, ICQ is one of the most trafficked sites on the Internet. Millions of people are using ICQ to chat online every single day.

If you find a service people need such as autoresponders, forms on their site, search engine listings, traffic tools, etc., you may find that this is the model for you. Sites which provide something extremely valuable for free can often take their traffic counters into the thousands literally overnight...then they can start charging people for placing banners and other types of advertising on their site.

Advantages: You never have to pay to advertise this site. If your free service is extremely valuable and unique, word of mouth and press releases will be all of the marketing you need for it.

Disadvantages: The hard part is coming up with the winning idea. And you have to build up traffic before you see any income. It will cost you at least a couple of months.

These sites don't sell anything, at least on the surface, right at the sites. No shopping cart, no "Order Now" button. All you will find there is free information or services. Normally, lots of information and valuable services.

This type of business could be created in any niche market or area of interest. You could create a theme site or Internet hub in gardening, motorcycles, dolls, puppies, etc. Anything that you have as an interest or hobby could usually be turned into a theme for your web site.

The key to this type of business is to **become the place that everyone wants to go** in your area of interest. In other words, you would want to be a portal or starting point for people searching for information or products on your subject.

Then, start searching for products they are interested in. Pick up magazines and search through the ads for potential products you could sell online. Offer to joint venture with the owners of these products and endorse them to your visitors.

Search for products online they may be interested in. Sign up for the sites' affiliate programs and market the products to your visitors.

You can charge other businesses for advertising at your site as well.

In other words, design a site that is the only one they need to visit online in your subject. Once your traffic soars, so will your profits. The chances to sell your site to big companies, like what ICQ did, are still slim, to be honest. But if you can attract millions of visitors to your site, you will absolutely make a comfortable living on the Internet!

* Direct Sale Sites

Now comes to the easier way: direct sale sites.

A direct sale site is where you sell products right at the site. You have to develop a product by yourself or own the resell right to it.

The most obvious example is online stores.

Another exciting trend in this category is mini sites with several simple pages selling a single product. More and more online info products sellers are using this method to market niche products.

For more information on mini direct sale sites, click here.

Unlike traffic sites where you have to achieve huge traffic in order to make profit, with direct sale sites you can target at really niche market and make money even with a couple of visitors per day.

This ebook will mainly deal with direct sale sites.

The key to the success of direct sale sites is to figure out a niche market and sell the right products to it.

Find The Right Niche Market

You have a killer product which you know everyone wants to buy. You have a proven sales copy. You have built an incredible site and accept every major credit card at your site.

You have only one problem. You just can't get enough traffic to your site. A serious problem!

You may even be thinking the same thing right now. You have an awesome product, but it seems hard to get traffic to your site and to get really qualified prospects.

Over 97% of online marketers have made the exact same mistake and it is killing their businesses: they focused on the product before figuring out the target market.

It is common practice to first find or develop a product and then find people to sell it to, but common practices don't always work.

The quickest and easiest method of achieving success in online business is to **target a niche market and then find out what they want**.

Take the focus in your mind away from the product and place it onto the prospect. Instead of saying, "How can I find someone to buy my product?" Start asking yourself, "What would these people like to buy?"

Don't try to be everything to everyone, or else you will end up a master of none. The key to success online is to focus on a niche market. Don't sell web hosting and flowers on the same site. It simply won't work.

By studying a niche market, not only are you guaranteeing the success of your product or service - people are already actively looking for what you are about to develop - you will also be able to efficiently focus both your time and money on marketing to those people most likely to buy from you!

Many of the niches might even be rather large. For example: business opportunity seekers, movie fans, stamp collectors, dog lovers, cat lovers, work at home mothers... All of these are considered niche groups yet have millions of participants.

The first thing you have to consider is, is this a topic you are interested in? Do you enjoy studying it? Writing about it? Discussing it with others? I know many people, including myself, hate their daytime jobs but have to do it to make living. Then **don't launch a business you don't like!**

Do what you love. Otherwise you will fail. If you love what you do, your enthusiasm will radiate in everything you do. It will reflect in every email you send and every web site you design. Your visitors will feel your passion as well!

Also, you have to make sure you can reach your market easily and cheaply online. Can you describe specifically who they are and where they hang out online? Any specific newsgroups for the subject? Any web site attracting your target audience so that you can advertise there? Newsletters on this topic? If you can't see a clear way to reach this market effectively online, that isn't the market for you.

Don't even think of starting a business until you know exactly where you are going to get your leads from.

Once you pick a targeted market, you need to take time to find out what is it that they are looking for.

The way to do this type of market research for free is to read in forums and newsgroups. You won't even have to be involved in the discussion. Just pay attention to the posts people make on what types of things they want.

Then, when you see that something keeps coming up time and time again, you've got it. That's the product a reachable niche market want. (You should have a solution if you love this subject. Or, at least you enjoy surfing around for the answer.)

Then **give them what they want** by developing or finding it.

Develop A Product Your Target Market Will Cry To Buy

The most important advice here is: get your own product or service! The very best way to make money, either online or off, is to market your own product or service.

It is one of the better-kept secrets among successful entrepreneurs. Why encourage others to create competition? What's more, with all the affiliate programs online, businesses want you selling their stuff and making money for THEM.

Don't get me wrong. Affiliate programs can be a good source of income on the Internet. I have my own affiliate program you can join and make some extra cash:-)

Like most people, you may need to start out online by testing the water. The training which should be provided to you by the affiliate program owners will help you when you

decide to go one step further. You will have learned what type of marketing works and how to motivate people to buy online.

So being a member of an affiliate program is a good business to be involved with. It can earn you a lot of money online. But, there is no substitute for your own product or service.

Once you have your own product, you will never have to rely on anyone else. Marketing your own product or service gives you complete control. You'll never have to worry about supply or pricing. You control every aspect.

Also, you **maximize your profits** by keeping nearly all of the money from every sale. If you are selling other people's products, you earn whatever commission they have assigned to you. If you own your own product, no one can tell you how much you deserve to make from it.

If you own your own product, you can be the person who sets up the affiliate program instead. As a product owner on the Internet, you can leverage the work of thousands of marketers who will gladly and actively promote your products for you.

Stop a moment and take a look at the most profitable businesses on the web. At least 95% of them are offering their own product or service.

The main reason that most people don't develop their own products is that they are scared it will be too difficult.

The number one seller on the Internet has always been, and always will be, information. Creating your own information products is not hard at all!

Everyone knows something about a particular subject. Whether it is golfing or gardening, you can easily create your own information products. Simply take your area of expertise and start writing down everything you know about it.

Ask yourself: what are you interested in? What are you passionate about? What subject or topic do you have a lot of knowledge about? What are people always coming to you for advice about?

This is the type of information others want and need. They will pay good money to save their valuable time and get the knowledge that you already know.

Once you have all your facts organized, you simply mold them into a marketable format such as a manual or eBook.

Information products can also be reports, audio tapes, videos, CD-ROM...

Besides writing about your expertise, you could also find a product that is currently being sold offline, make a deal with the owner and try to become the exclusive dealer of it in the online market.

You could buy the resell right of a quality product and offer it at your site just like what I'm doing at my site.

You could create a service. There are many different service businesses which are opening up online. If you have learned how to develop web sites, offer this. If you enjoy competing on search engines, start a submission service. If you enjoy writing, become a ghostwriter for other people's articles and books.

Once you have your own product, or resell rights of a product, join some affiliate programs relating to your main product as backend. We'll talk more about backend later.

In next lesson you will learn:

- Why do you need your own domain name
- How to choose a good domain name
- What to look for in a web host
- How to write sales copy that is proven to sell

Until then!

Zac Hewlett
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Internet Business Beginners' Guide

Day Three

Today, you will learn:

- Why do you need your own domain name
- How to choose a good domain name
- What to look for in a web host
- How to write sales copy that is proven to sell

Why Do You Need Your Own Domain Name

The domain name is the address of your web site on the Internet for example
http://www.working-at-home-business.com

<mark>**You can't afford not having your own domain name!**</mark>

Never put your business on a free web server with web address like this:
www.freespace.com/freemembers/john/mybusiness/

What can you do if this "freespace" company runs out of cash and closes its door? Or it suddenly decides not to provide free services anymore and start charging a ridiculous fee? Even if it asks you politely to move to somewhere else, how can you update all the inbound links you have built over years to your site? - to their site actually.

You will lose almost everything you have developed if anything happens to that free web server: traffic, business address, search engine ranking, inbound links, bookmarks...

Even a slight change at the free server can destroy your business. What if the free space provider decides to change their URL naming structure from /freemember/user to /member/user ?

All your efforts would be gone!

Let me tell you, it happened to me before. And I had no place to complain since it was a free service!

In addition, did you know that many free web servers are totally blocked out of some major search engines!

<mark>By having a domain name you avoid all these risks</mark>.

You also gain a lot of respect from your visitors and potential customers. <mark>Having your own domain name indicates you are a serious Internet player</mark>. Would you buy anything from someone who can't afford a domain name?

With a real domain, you are also more likely to get listed and rank higher in Yahoo and other search engines and directories. Forget about getting listed in Yahoo with a Geocities address - even though Yahoo owns Geocities.

Once you register a domain name, it's yours forever as long as you pay the annual fee. That name goes with you - wherever you host it.

Unless you expect to do a minimal amount of business on the Internet, you have to get your own domain name!

How To Choose A Domain Name

So now you understand the importance of your own domain name, how can you ensure that you pick a good one? Consider these factors:

* Good Extension

Dot com is still the best. If you are looking for a site only knowing its name but not its extension, would you try xxx.tv first? Few people will do that. So get a .com if at all possible.

If you can get a short, eye-catching, crispy .net, it could be as good as a .com.

You can get .biz, .info, .us, .tv ...if you have a really good reason, say, your site is all about information, then .info is perfectly ok.

* Short

Short names are easier to remember and have less chance to be miss-typed. So keep it short if possible.

One or two words are wonderful - if you can find it. Unless you are to create something similar to Yahoo, your chances of getting a meaningful, commonly used two word name is next to impossible. But it all depends on your business. In your niche market, you may still work it out.

* Descriptive

A good name should describe exactly what the site is about so that surfers can easily make a decision when they see your site name at search engines.

A descriptive name is also easier to market and be remembered as a brand name.

Of course, many companies have succeeded using a non-descriptive name like Yahoo. But how did they make these names successful? Through huge marketing campaigns designed to establish brand awareness. Surely it's better to have an instantly recognizable name than to spend millions to tell people what you do!

* Keywords

A keyword-rich name is much easier to get higher positions at search engines. It's possible for a name to get into top 10 without other optimizations for search engine in a niche market.

Of course, keyword-rich also helps to be descriptive.

You may have noticed that my domain name Working-At-Home-Business.com is a .com, descriptive and keyword-rich. But it's super long. It's really hard to find any meaningful two-word combination of Internet, marketing, online, money, business and so forth. So I decided just to make it keyword-rich and descriptive.

Where to register your domain name has nothing much to do with where you host your site. So shop around for a good price. Just make sure you can easily change DNS (Domain Name Server) record and point to your web host. Most domain name registration providers allow you do it in a control panel.

Currently, you can get a .com domain for about $8-10. Just type in "domain name registration" in any search engine, lots of providers will pop up. Among them, GoDaddy.com might be the cheapest, $7.75. Their customer support is not that good though.

What To Look For In A Web Host?

So, you've registered your own domain name and now it's time to pick a hosting service.

But where do you start? If you check the listings and ads, you'll see services with monthly fees ranging from $3.95 to $395. Some hosting companies even offer to host your site for free, but you'll have to let them slap ads on your page.

Most hosting companies provide a range of services, starting with low-budget packages and moving up to more advanced, expensive features. Obviously, when you pick a hosting plan, you need to make sure it provides enough disk space for your site at a price within your budget. But what else should you watch for? At the very least, consider the following points.

* Usage Limitations

Most hosting plans limit how much data you can transfer to and from the servers in a month. It's also called bandwidth. Once you reach 1GB or 2GB of data transfer, most companies charge you by the megabyte for any additional traffic.

How many bandwidth do you need? That depends. Even fairly busy sites that average more than a hundred visitors a day transfer less than 500MB a month. However, if you provide a three-minute MP3 file or a short video clip for visitors to download, your site will soon break the bandwidth barrier.

If you have some idea of your anticipated traffic, pick a plan accordingly. If not, estimate and watch your usage carefully for the first few months.

For most general information sites, 20MB storage space with 2GB bandwidth should be ok.

* Script And Extra Features

If your web site uses or will soon use SQL databases, CGI scripts, FrontPage extensions, SSI (Server Side Includes), ASP (Active Server Pages)... you'll need a hosting plan that supports these extras. These sorts of higher-end development tools may or may not come standard.

At the very least, make sure you have your own cgi-bin and SSI capabilities. Even if you hate technical stuff, you will need them.

Some hosting companies offer you more extra features such as mailing list management programs, autoresponders, search engine submission, sub domains...which will be handy sometimes. But you may find later that these tools are not up to the standard you need.

For example, autoresponders provided by hosting services will only send a one-time response to subscribers which is far less than what you actually need. You need to send at least 7 sequential emails to visitors.

* File Transfer Options

You'll need to upload your site from your local machine to the server it lives on, look for a host that allows unlimited FTP uploads to get your site online. If you prefer using FrontPage or a web interface for uploading files, make sure your service provider supports it.

You may want people to be able to download files directly from your site. Make sure you are allowed to do that and check what file formats are allowed.

If you intend to broadcast streaming media from your site, say Realplayer videos, make sure that your hosting plan will allow for it. Some hosting companies charge a small extra fee for streaming media while some don't support it at all.

* Mail Options

How much e-mail accounts will you need for your domain? Estimate the number of mailboxes you want. You might pick one for each employee, if you have any. If you are running a one man show like me, you should add some for functions such as sales, info, support, feedback, besides the most important one, webmaster.

Another must-have is catch-all capability so that you won't miss any email sent to your domain. Also, look into forwarding options so that you can relay messages to an established mailbox.

Take into account how you want to receive the emails. For example, if you want to be able to use your favorite email software, such as Microsoft Outlook, you'll want POP3 access. However, look into web based email if you want to be able to check your messages from any computer when you're not in office.

* Site Statistics

Once you get the site off the ground, you need web site statistic tools so that you can evaluate traffic and plan future site development.

If you know which pages are the most popular, you'll know by default what your visitors are looking for. If you know which browsers they use, you'll make sure your pages look good in those browsers. And, most important, you want to know how your visitors got to your site in the first place so that you can concentrate your marketing efforts.

Most hosts provide statistical analysis package for reporting on traffic such as Analog, Getstats, Webalizer.

You also want access to raw server logs so that you can run all sorts of numbers using your own statistical software. If your host doesn't provide access to raw log file, just walk away.

* How's The Tech Support?

Check out the host's service policy at its site, but remember: support packages aren't always as good as they sound.

Unlike many other services you use online where you can operate smoothly without any help, you **WILL** need tech support from your host sooner or later. Even if you are a Ph.D. in computer science, you still can't activate or install certain features from your local machine.

So make sure the support staffs are there, ready to fix your problem, whenever you need them. 24-hour phone-support is preferred. Call or email them before you sign up.

* Is The Service Reliable?

You can't judge a host merely by its feature list. The best insight you'll get into your prospective web host is unedited customer feedback. Check out online forums for comments about a host's performance.

Many gripes may come from customers who are biased or more demanding than you are, so read the reactions to any complaints as closely as the original remarks themselves.

If a host lists any customers with sites that are similar to yours, check them out at key times of day to see how quickly they load or whether they seem sluggish or unresponsive.

* If You Back Out, Will It Cost You?

Before you sign up, find out if you are free to choose another web host if this one doesn't work out. So long as your name is listed as the "Administrative Contact" with InterNIC, you can transfer your site to another host: just go to your registrar and enter new DNS (Domain Name Server) address.

That's why I suggest you register your domain at another domain registrar separately instead of from your host. If your host administers your domain, it has little incentive to play along and may actually charge you for domain-related transactions.

Many hosts offer 15 or 30 days money-back guarantee, if you are not happy with them, you can switch to another one and get your money back.

Look for plans with free setup too so that you can test your site before your payments start rolling in.

* What Should You Expect To Pay?

The best advice is to know the services you really need, and only pay for those. For example, a typical small business web site with less than one hundred pages can find good hosting package with cgi-bin access, free setup, multiple email account and aliases, SSI, raw logs access, for $10-25 per month.

If you need SSL Security, expect to pay $15-35 more per month.

Finding a good host is not always easy. Now at least you know what you should look for while shopping around. Based on my own experience, I highly recommend these two hosts:

Adgrafix: Top-notch hosting service, $19.95-199, the web host I have had the best experiences with and they have excellent tech support.

iPowerWeb: 500MB storage, 30GB bandwidth, reliable, everything you will ever need for $7.95/month. Free domain name. Really a good deal. **Highly recommend.**

If you want to try out free hosting without forced ads, Portland is one of the best. They can host your own domain with 500MB bandwidth for free and offers enough features including cgi-bin and SSI. I use it to test my site and scripts before I complete everything. But expect some down time and poor support.

How To Write Sales Copy That Is Proven To Sell

A stable and well-designed web site is a very important part of online business. However, without effective sales copy your web site is useless. <mark>**Words make sales**</mark>, not fancy web sites.

Your words are the entire foundation of your business. Your product, your web site and your marketing strategies all depend on your words. You must learn how to write persuasive sales copy that is proven to sell.

* Highlight The Most Important Benefit Right Up Front

Start by choosing a single benefit of your product or service that you wish to highlight above everything else. This is your "principle selling position".

Put yourself in the customer's shoes and ask yourself what the customer will really go for. Ask yourself what specific benefit makes your offer different, better, or special.

The first few paragraphs are particularly important. Use them to create a desire for your product or service by briefly touching on the major benefit it will bring the customer.

You don't have to go into too much detail up front as you can expand on these benefits later.

* Use Headlines And Bullet Lists

Reading from the screen puts extra strain on the eyes. Use visual tricks to make reading easy.

<mark>Write attention-grabbing headlines</mark>. Headline is the most important part of your entire sales copy. If it doesn't grab your potential customer's attention, they won't bother to read the rest of your letter.

Your headline will often emphasize your most important benefits and should be displayed in a larger bold font and demand your potential customer's attention to intrigue them to read on.

Use headlines throughout your copy to capture the attention of those who just scan your text. Use subheadings to provide highlights of each section of your sales copy.

And use bulleted lists when describing product features.

* Stress Benefits

<mark>**Stress Benefits!**</mark>

Whatever you do, don't put you mission statement on your homepage. We just don't care.

People want benefits! <mark>What can your product do for me?</mark> Right now!

Can it make me rich?

Can it save me time?
Can it entertain me?
Can it make me feel better about myself?

That's what people want. Your product's greatest benefit should be right in the top header in bold red letters. Your first three or four words should hit them between the eyes.

You have to know the difference between features and benefits. For example, don't just say that your computer is fast (that's a feature), tell your customer that it will give them more free time - a benefit. Better still, paint a picture of them using their free time to go to the beach, read a book, or relax.

Write a list of all the features of your product or service then translate each of these into a benefit for the customer. Look at each feature then ask yourself "So what?"

Imagine you're a customer, why should you care about this feature? Ask yourself, "**What will it do for me?**"

* Establish Trust

On the Internet you don't have the advantage of speaking face to face with your customer. They don't know whom they're going to give their personal information to. They have seen lots of scams. So you have to load as much credibility into your words as possible.

Offer a free trial, a money-back guarantee, testimonials, put your e-mail address, physical address and phone number at the bottom of every page, place a small photograph of yourself etc.

You must completely remove their risk. Provide your potential customers with a solid, no risk, no question asked, money back guarantee. This will put their mind at ease by building their confidence in you and your product.

And stick to that guarantee!

* Testimonials Sell

Good, believable testimonials from real people will help sales, particularly on the web where establishing credibility is a tough job. For even better credibility, ask your testimonial writers if you can include their contact details along with their testimonial.

* Write In A Natural Style

Just write it the way you'd say it. Direct your words towards one specific person. Use words like "you" and "your" rather than "them" or "their". Write as if you are speaking with just one person - one on one.

Don't use overcomplicated, or unnecessarily formal language that can either totally confuse visitors or just put them to sleep. Either way it loses the customer, and loses you the sale.

Don't say "in our considered opinion" or "enclosed please find..." Simplify these into everyday language. Write how you would speak: "we think" and "here is," are much better choices.

* Call For Action

Tell the visitors what to do clearly. For example, "Call now" or "Click here to order now for immediate delivery", or "Sign up for our newsletter now". Don't let your potential customers guess how or where to order.

Ask for the order and provide an easy order process. Needless to say, ordering details must be clearly visible and simple to follow.

* Create Urgency

Throw in something special for the first 100 subscribers or make it "this month only". Offer a "limited time" price. The goal is to make visitors act now. Once they leave, they will forget you and your product. The possibility of a visitor looking for your particular web site on the huge Internet is slim.

Your word selection is important here. Don't say "Subscribe now!". Put a specific time limit to it - "Subscribe in Nov and I'll throw in... ".

Then stick to that limit.

* Put a P.S.

Close your sales copy with a P.S. (PostScript). When your visitor scans your sales message, chances are, they'll read your headlines, subheadings and your P.S. message. Some people read the P.S. first.

Place your most important benefits within your P.S. message. Use it to add a special bonus. Include a time limit to get the good deal. It will get read.

In summary, every word, sentence and headline should have one specific purpose - to lead your potential customer to your order page.

Write your words so that they seamlessly flow together from your beginning headline through to your order page. Pack your copy with all of the benefits your product has to offer and keep it simple.

No time to write? Check out this amazing tool Instant Sales Letters. It will quickly and easily create a sales letter guaranteed to sell your product or services - Without Writing. Just fill in a few blanks and presto, you have a winning sales letter in minutes, instead of weeks.

In next lesson you will learn:

- How to process credit card payment
- Order fulfillment
- Traffic analysis and ads tracking
- Opt-in mailing list
- Build up your sales force

Cheers!

Zac Hewlett
Webmaster
Working At Home Business
http://www.working-at-home-business.com

Internet Business Beginners' Guide

Day Four

You've got a hot product and proven sales copy. That's not enough to sell online yet. You have to streamline the whole sales process to take orders.

Today, you will learn:

- How to process credit card payment
- Order fulfillment
- Traffic analysis and ads tracking
- Opt-in mailing list
- Build up your sales force

How To Process Credit Card Payment

90% of all Internet payments are made by credit card, you should get yourself set up with this payment option as quickly as possible. Online businesses can increase sales by as much as 400% right after they gave their buyers this convenient way to pay.

The entire mentality of the Internet is instant access to information, products, and services. If your potential buyers have to stop surfing and free up their phone lines, call in their orders or, even more time-consuming, hunt around for their checkbooks, envelopes, and stamps... your order process will discourage all but the most hardy shoppers.

Accepting credit cards can build credibility to your business in the minds of potential buyers, which is of the utmost importance if you want to close the sale. That credibility stems from the fact that people believe that you have to be a real and reputable company in order to accept credit cards.

And shoppers feel safer buying this way, as credit card companies only hold consumers liable for the first $50 if fraud occurs.

You have two options to accept credit card payment:

- Acquire your own Merchant Account
- Use a Third Party Credit Card Processor

A **Merchant Account** is an account at a financial institution that allows you to accept credit cards.

Again, you have two ways to acquire your own merchant account.

The first way is to apply from **Direct Processors**, normally banks, who offer direct access to the credit card processing centers. You may find that you can acquire a merchant account directly from your local bank.

However, banks, in general, are cautious about granting credit card merchant status to any business that does not have the large majority of transaction slips personally signed by the cardholders. That's why many banks will charge a hefty deposit of several thousand dollars in addition to a minimum monthly fee, whether you have any sales that month or not.

The second way is to apply through a **Merchant Account Provider**, a company that helps set you up with the proper merchant account, and provides the software and hardware you need to accept credit card payments right at your web site. They may also provide other payment acceptance services, such as debit card and online checks.

A merchant account provider acts as an intermediary between you and the direct processors. I recommend using a merchant account provider to match your needs and situation to the right supplier. There are providers who have 98% approval rate for online businesses, even for applicants who have been bankrupt or reside outside the United States.

The merchant account provider will open an account for you at a financial institution, a bank with whom they're partnered, that can handle Internet transactions, and approves your credit history. Be aware that there are a lot of merchant account providers out there who aren't reputable, so make sure you check them out before you commit to one. Avoid all the hype and terminology, and don't pay more than a $100 processing fee to get the account.

When it comes to deciding which merchant account provider you wish to deal with, the one factor that influences most people is the cost. It can be expensive, so make sure you compare different providers to get the best deal. And read all the fine print too - you may find some "hidden" charges here that are not mentioned elsewhere.

Here's a basic outline of the approximate rates and fees associated with merchant accounts:

- Application/Setup: $0-100 (one time fee)
- Hardware/Software: Purchase: $99+, Lease: $20+ per month
- Discount Rate: 1.49-4% per transaction
- Transaction: $0.10-0.50 per transaction
- Address Verification System (AVS): $0-0.05 per transaction
- Monthly Minimum: $20-25 per month
- Gateway Access: $0-25+ per month
- Monthly Statement: $10-15 per month
- Chargeback: $5-25 per instance
- Reserve: Fees vary, ask specific providers for details

For detailed explanation of these fees, read this article:
http://www.working-at-home-business.com/articles/merchant.shtml

You can go to any search engine and search for "merchant account", hundreds of providers will come out. Or, if you don't bother to check them out one by one, I highly recommend this reputable company - Merchant Express.

NOTE: If you live outside the US, you will encounter quite a few problems obtaining a merchant account, not least of which will be the cost of the account itself. For more information on international merchant account, read this article at my site: http://www.working-at-home-business.com/articles/foreign.shtml

Now let's move on to third party credit card processor.

You can use third party processors if:

- You sell a limited number of products
- Your product/service or credit history is not qualified for a merchant account
- You live outside of US (like me;-)
- You have little cash on hand
- You want to get it done with little effort

Instead of waiting for replies, paying setup fees, transaction fees, statement fees, discount fees and the like, you can simply sign up for a third party credit card processor and pay 10-15% of the sale price of each product.

When you sign up with a third party service provider, the payments your buyers make are actually being processed through the service provider's merchant account. In other words, you do not have to qualify for merchant status on your own.

These services are getting more and more popular with small online businesses, especially those just starting out. The transaction fees are usually higher than owning a merchant account, but there is no minimum monthly charge and no hefty deposit requirement so you are only charged on sales you have made.

Also, third party processors often provide some extras such as check payments option, free affiliate program, etc.

Some webmasters just want to do it in the simplest way: sign up with a third party processor, insert several lines of HTML code, and that's it! The service provider will take care of the rest.

However, with a third party processor, you may end up paying more processing fees in the long run.

Choosing whether to go for a merchant account or a third party processor primarily depends on your monthly sales volume.

As a very general guideline, if your monthly sales are under $1,000, and you don't want to pay for a merchant account, then a third party processor will probably best suit your needs.

Once you've reached $1,000 a month in sales, you may want to acquire a merchant account that offers a lower discount rate.

Below is a list of some of the popular third party credit card processors.

ClickBank

DigiBuy

2CheckOut

PayPal

RegSoft

For a complete comparison, read this article at my site:
http://www.working-at-home-business.com/articles/thirdparty.shtml

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Order Fulfillment

Once the credit card payment is approved, the customer will get a notification that their credit card has been charged. The order information will be sent to you as well so that you can deliver the products.

Product fulfillment on the Internet is a dream if you have a digital product - software, information, e-books, member-only web sites. Delivery takes place by download, and is completely hands free for the merchant.

Basically, there are three ways to deliver digital products:

* Method #1

After credit card payment is approved, the customer will be redirected to a download page automatically. You assign the download URL when you set up your vendor account.

ClickBank merchants use this method.

There's a major disadvantage using this method: the private download URL can be given to someone else, who then may post it anywhere on the Internet. Anyone who knows this URL can download your product for free!

You can't avoid this problem 100%. But you can reduce the possibilities.

First make the URL hard to guess. Never name it as download.html or thankyou.html.

Secondly, change the download page regularly. At least once a month.

* Method #2

After payment is made, the customer will receive an instant notification email with information on how to download the product.

Some credit card processors, DigiBuy for example, will generate a random download link for each buyer. And the link will expire in a number of days. This way, the buyers don't see the real URL pointing to the product.

Or, the buyer will receive a unique username/password in order to download the product or access the members-only site. To do this, you have to be able to customize the notification email sent to buyers to insert the username/password.

This is the preferred way to deliver digital products since it provides more protection.

* Method #3

Do not make the product available instantly. Once you receive payment confirmation email, send the product to customers as email attachment.

The problem with this method is that, your customers won't like it.

You see, the chief difficulty with digitally delivered products is that they are subject to fraud. Whatever you do to protect your hard work, there is a way to steal it if someone really wants to. The eBook file itself or password can always be passed on to others. (Physical books can be passed on as well. So Internet is not to blame.)

Luckily, few people will do that!

If you are to publish eBooks, you should take a serious look at eBook Pro. By far eBook Pro is the best authoring software providing the highest protection to your eBook: eBooks produced by eBook Pro can only be viewed from one computer! The eBook file can be transferred to another machine but it cannot be opened.

If you are to sell tangible goods, you will have more works to do.

You have three options to deliver tangible goods.

* Drop-shipping

Drop-shipping has some very strong advantages and a few disadvantages.

There's no inventory costs. Also, you don't have to pick, pull, pack, and ship the products. The distributor or manufacturer will take all these costs and responsibilities.

Most of drop-shippers can use your own labels so that their package looks like it is from you. Your customer probably won't know that your hands never touched the product.

However, drop-shipping also means lower margins. Expect to see 10% or so off your margins. The difference between making money and losing it may be only a few percent. So choose your drop-shipper carefully.

Crippled customer service is another disadvantage. Drop-shipping may handicap your ability to provide excellent customer service. And without excellent customer service you'll lose your best customers to your competitors.

* <u>Keep inventory</u>

Order an item from the manufacturer or distributor and keep it in stock until you receive an order.

You can ship immediately by keeping your own inventory. The faster you can deliver the order, the more impressed your customer will be, and the better chance you have of getting him back the next time.

You can provide excellent customer service. In case of a problem, you will have all the records at your fingertips to trace the order and make a correction.

Obviously, when you own the inventory, you also own the risk. If a product doesn't sell, you're stuck with disposing of it at pennies on the dollar.

* Use fulfillment house

A fulfillment house will handle some or all of the aspects of getting the product to your customer. They will maintain inventory, order new product, assemble, pick, pull, pack, and ship, all according to your specifications and with your labels.

They can also handle order taking, shopping cart, and provide an ordering and customer service call center if you need. In other words, you can run an entirely virtual business, outsourcing everything to the fulfillment house, if you like.
Of course, they take their pound of flesh.

Which model should you use? It depends on your needs and how much profit you are willing to cut in order to save your time. No one can make that decision for you. But armed with the pros and cons, you'll be able to make a thoughtful choice that will leverage the advantages and minimize the disadvantages.

You will still have a long way to go after the product is delivered: you have to ==provide first class customer service==!

If providing quality customer service is important offline (And it is!), then it is doubly so online!

On the Internet, customers rarely catch a glimpse of whom they are giving their personal information and hard earned cash to, so online relationships are very dependant on trust and good faith. This is why it is absolutely essential that you make customer service one of your top priorities.

If your customers are happy with you, they will come back to you again and again. You will build good reputation through word-of-mouth and get more traffic and sales.

If a few of your customers experience bad product or customer service from you, horrible stories about you and your site will spread really fast on the Internet.

Make sure that your customers feel happy all the time! Reply their emails in a timely and professional manner. Let your customers know that you appreciate their business by thanking them or even giving extra gifts.

And the great thing is, while improving your customer service doesn't have to cost you a penny, it will be what sets you apart from the pack.

Traffic Analysis And Ads Tracking

One of the best ways to improve your marketing effort is to ==analyze the traffic to your site==.

Traffic analysis will tell you:

- Which pages are most popular, which are least seen
- Who is visiting your web site and from where
- What browsers they are using
- Which search engines are most useful to you
- Which banner ads are bringing the most visitors
- Where errors or bad links may be occurring in your web pages
- and more

With these knowledge, you have a more solid ground to fine-tune your web marketing strategy:

- Add in more content your visitors are looking for
- Add in content tailored for your visitors
- Optimize your pages for the most used browser
- Optimize your pages for search engines who bring serious traffic
- Keep spending on ads that is most effective
- Fix your mistakes

The bottom line is, you have to know which promotion techniques are working for you and keep doing it. Don't waste your time on ads that drive one or two clicks per month.

Once your site has been promoted with the right mix of advertising, PR, and search engine marketing, you'll want to measure performance to see how your marketing effort is doing.

A good way to measure returns is to examine the data in your web logs, analyzing your traffic for clues to user behavior. By analyzing behavioral data, you can fine-tune your site to serve customers better and improve your own profitability.

It's important to <mark>know where your visitors go</mark> and to notice what they like or don't like.

Basically, there are two ways to analyze web site traffic:

* <u>Use server side statistical package</u>

Your web host keeps log files that record every single hit on your web site. (If your host doesn't provide access to raw log file or statistical feature, just walk away.)

The log file tells you a great deal about how and from where people are getting to your site, and what they do when they get there.

Your host is quite likely to have installed a freeware version of a popular statistical analysis package. There are several very good ones such as Analog, Getstats, Webalizer.

Normally your host will post the stats in an easy-to-navigate web page where you can view the interesting information.

If you know how to install CGI, you can download and install any server side traffic analysis script you like.

[Analog](#) (free)

[Webalizer](#) (free)

* Purchase web traffic analysis software

These software provide more detailed analysis of web traffic right on your desktop computer. To perform an analysis, you download the raw logs from your host to your own computer. The analysis software will interpret the raw log file line by line, and place the various elements into separate fields in a relational database.

These software will give you more clues about your traffic and visitors such as how long they stay at your site, their path and behavior.

A good example is [WebTrends](#).

You can learn more about tracking visitors' behavior in this article at my site: http://www.working-at-home-business.com/articles/salestracking.shtml

Another thing you must do is to <mark>track your marketing efforts</mark>. Any ad, including free ones, you place without tracking is wasted time and money! Without proper tracking, you won't know how your marketing methods are doing, which ones are making money for you and you should keep doing, how much you can afford on advertising, whether you should improve your sales copy or ad...

Without these information, how can you expect your marketing effort to be successful? Especially when it's a paid ad?

If you have your own affiliate software, tracking all your ads is very easy. Just assign a unique affiliate ID to each ad and you will know the total hits, conversion rate and profit generated from any particular ads.

Alternatively, there are other software or tools available to track advertising:

AdTrackZ: a simple, easy to use cgi script.

RoiBot: a collection of web based tools including ad tracking, autoresponder, that will help you to increase your ROI - Return on Investment.

AdMinder: a very handy web based ads tracking service.

hyperTracker, automated, easy-to-use tracking management tool.

By tracking and testing your ads and expanding into more and more marketing vehicles, you could quickly start reaching thousands of people and earning an income to match.

Opt-in Mailing List

After researching your niche market, you develop a great product. You hire someone to design a professional web site. You follow every tip on how to write a sales copy. You put everything up and start advertising campaign. Search engine, banner ads, classified ads, link exchange, even press release. Now you have hundreds of visitors daily.

One further problem presents itself: you are not making any sales!

95% of people who reach this point give up and declare "people just don't buy online".

This is when most people bury their Internet businesses. Even though they are in different industries and markets, almost every marketer seems to come to this crossroad in their online business.

In order to make money online, you have to keep in mind of this: <mark>real money comes from opt-in list</mark>, not your web site!

About 95% of visitors will not buy on their first visit to your web site. The truth is, most of your customers will have to see your message 7 times before they buy.

Many people believe that their main marketing tool is their web site. In fact, your main marketing tool is your opt-in mailing list. A web site is just a way of building your mailing list - by collecting the email addresses of your visitors.

If you want <mark>to be successful online, you must collect visitors' email addresses to follow up!</mark>

This one aspect of online business is so important that it divides up who has been successful online and who hasn't. The successful marketers are constantly developing new ways of collecting information about their prospects or customers.

Web sites do not make many sales. <mark>Email follow-up makes sales</mark>. Ask any marketer online and you will find that their conversion rate from web site is horribly low. Most web sites get between 0.05-1% sales rate from their visitors.

Once you constantly follow up by email though to the same prospects, you can get those same percentages up to 0.5-10% conversion rate.

A mailing list program will help you do that exactly. It allows you to send out messages to everyone on the list. It should also take care of subscription and un-subscription automatically. Some more sophisticated programs have other useful features such as invalid or bounce-back email address handling, HTML or plain text message option, customization capabilities, etc.

Typically, you set up a subscription form at your site, a visitor fills up the form and presses "send", the mailing list service provider or a mailing list CGI program at your own site will handle the subscription request automatically. You can log into the list management area to send out messages whenever you want to.

"Opt-in" means the subscribers choose, or opt-in, to be included in the list and therefore give you permission to send them messages. And they can opt-out anytime if they don't want to receive your messages any more.

As I said, <mark>the best way to make money on the Internet is to build your own opt-in list</mark>. This way you can build relationship and creditability with thousands of potential customers all over the world.

Once you have built a list, you can make money through it by selling advertising, doing joint venture deals, recommending your backend affiliate programs, and first of all, selling your main front end products. There are dozens of ways to make money from your opt-in list once you know how to do it.

You have two options to manage a mailing list: online services who provide mailing list management or a CGI script running at your own site. Either could be free.

* <u>Online mailing list service provider</u>

The easiest way to manage a mailing list is to use an online service. You don't have to install any script or learn the technical stuff. All you have to do is signing up for an account and inserting several lines of html code into your subscription pages. Everything can be then nicely done via your web browser.

You can log into your account and view subscribers, add subscribers manually, export or download subscribers list, and of course, send messages.

Free online mailing list services:

Topica

Yahoo Groups

Both Yahoo Groups and Topica are advertising supported - every e-mail sent out includes an ad after the message. They both provide excellent services for online businesses to publish ezines and newsletters.

Yahoo Groups is by far the largest free service.

Paid online mailing list services:

BambooBizOnline: Formerly known as Postmaster Online, gives you 50 autoresponders that automatically follow-up and a complete integrated email solution for a very low monthly price.

GetResponse: Provides free, feature-packed, automated, personalizable follow up autoresponder. The paid version includes so call "broadcast" function which is actually mailing list management system.

Aweber: Offers feature-packed sequential autoresponders and mailing list management with reasonable monthly payment plans.

* Mailing list script

If you know how to install and configure CGI script, there are plenty of choices for you. Even if you have never tried to install CGI script yet, I would say it's not difficult at all! Go to this comprehensive online tutorial if you want to learn: http://my.execpc.com/~keithp/bdlogcgi.htm

SubscribeMe: One of the most popular and feature-pack yet user-friendly mailing list script. Its Lite version is free.

Mailloop: Complete email solution from Corey Rudl, the most successful online marketer.

There are many free scripts as well. One of my favorites is Mojo. It's very easy to use and feature-packed. The only thing I don't like is that you can't customize subscribers' name in the message body.

You can go to CGI-Resource for more scripts.

Remember, 95% of visitors will not buy from your web site on their first visit. They won't even do it on their second visit or contact. To sell the maximum number of prospects, you must contact them over and over again.

The only way to do this is to get them to opt-in to an email list.

By building an opt-in list, you are building the future of your business. People have invited you to send them information. Your messages are a constant reminder for people to come back to your web site again and again.

When they come back, you have another opportunity to build rapport with your visitors. You also have another opportunity to sell them your main or backend products!

Building an opt-in list does require a whole lot of work and time. But it is an important step in building a successful online business. It is definitely worth the work! Add an opt-in list to your web site and you will be well on your way to building a very valuable asset - a customer list that you can sell to again and again, year after year!

Build Up Your Sales Force

Marketing and sales is the most important part of any business, online or offline. In offline world, you just can't make money without a good sales team. Now take a look at your online business.

You have great products to sell, you have a proven sales copy, you accept credit card orders at your site. But you are the only sales person for the whole business!

Think about what it would be like to have hundreds, if not thousands, people actively selling your products or services for you with a small share of the profits!

On the Internet, you can easily get this sales force through your own affiliate program. It should be an integrated component of your sales process.

Affiliate programs are also called associate, referral, reseller, partner, bounty, revenue sharing, programs.

Basically, your affiliates send visitors to your web site by placing a banner ad, small graphic or ordinary text at their site or in their ezine, which links to your site. If someone clicks on the link and buys a product or service from you or signs up for something, the affiliates get paid a commission.

You are allowing other people to sell your product at their web site, through their newsletter, to their customer base, or any ethical way they want to market it on the Internet.

Affiliate programs level the playing field between the big corporations and the small operations like you and I. Using affiliate programs makes it ridiculously easy to harness the power of other web sites and all of their traffic. And it is possible to set up your own affiliate program without spending a dime!

With the exception of a few products, almost every product or service online will be much more successful if you offer an affiliate program for it. Every business I have seen introduce an affiliate program has made more sales, and generated more money.

The best thing about affiliate programs is that <mark>you are guaranteed to make money because you only pay for sales generated</mark>.

Think about it. How can you lose money? If you are not paying a dime until a sale is produced, you can do nothing but make money!

You don't have to spend money on advertising. There is no cost in doing this. You only pay affiliates per sale. So if you don't make any sales you don't pay them a dime. But if you make a thousand sales, you pay them a lot of money.

That's why they are motivated to make it work and you are motivated to make it work, as the more you sell, the more money you both make. It is a <mark>win-win situation</mark> for both of you.

The power behind affiliate programs is that, there is nothing to lose for both of you.

The affiliate joins your program for free. They invest 30-60 minutes to post the banner or links to your site from theirs, or emails their customer base or newsletter base about your product, and if it doesn't produce as many sales as they expected, they simply remove the banners or links.

What did they lose? An hour of their time, at the most! That is not much of a risk considering there was a potential to make thousands of dollars over a few hours of work.

With only a few exceptions, the only products or services which may not do well in an affiliate program are those that do not have a high margin to work with. If you are only making 10% profit on an item or service, it is very difficult to give affiliates a large piece of the selling price to motivate them to sell your product or service.

Generally speaking, with a good product or service and a reasonable margin, I cannot think of a web site that should not have an affiliate program!

There are three types of affiliate programs.

The first is **pay-per-click** program. If someone clicks through a link, you pay your affiliate a small fee, usually between $0.05 to $1.00 depending on your product and your margin.

The second is **pay-per-lead** program. You ask visitors to do something, sign up for your newsletter, download a trial version of software, a request for a quote...your affiliates are paid for each lead they send you.

The third method is a **revenue sharing** program. This is by far the most popular type of affiliate program. Basically you are offering your affiliate a portion of the profits on everything that is sold.

And this is the way I recommend you do an affiliate program. As you can imagine, with the other two types of affiliate programs, you are not guaranteed any sales even if you get huge traffic. You could be paying out tons of money, if you don't have a good conversion rate you could end up not making any money in sales. So I would rather consider them as paid ads instead of real affiliate programs.

There are two ways you can set up your affiliate program.

Forget about setting up "mirror" pages and calculating commission manually as some "experts" suggest as one of the methods to use affiliate programs. It's simply not practical if you are serious about making money online.

* Method 1: use third party service

They manage all the details of your revenue sharing operations including affiliate sign-ups, approvals, tracking, reporting, and commission payments.

A huge advantage of using a third party is that it promotes your program for you. Also, they consolidate payouts (payouts from all merchants get lumped together into one large check), making it a favorite for affiliates.

Normally they charge you a percentage of each sale or a set up fee, or both.

Commission Junction: Launched in November 1998. The largest affiliate management service. Depending on volume, transaction fees range from 15-25% of whatever commission you pay.

LinkShare: Another large network. It costs several thousand dollars to set up. LinkShare has attracted some big names, including Dell. You benefit from the publicity it generates.

There are free affiliate management services online such as ClickBank who will also process credit card payment for you.

If you are selling downloadable products, ClickBank can be a good choice to set up a simple affiliate program quickly, easily and very cheaply. It has about 100,000 affiliates.

Another free service is RegSoft: Like ClickBank, RegSoft handles credit card processing and affiliates for you. Their credit card processing fee is even slightly more attractive than ClickBank - 10% of selling price. The reason they are not as well known as ClickBank is their much smaller affiliate base. The affiliate management is a free service for their vendors.

* Method 2: purchase your own affiliate software

You purchase affiliate software and install it in your server. The software will track affiliates and sales. Features you should look for include:

- Sign up affiliates automatically
- Track and display stats for affiliates in real-time
- Work with shopping carts
- Track orders
- Track visitors who come back and buy at a later date and record the affiliate credit for that sale

A big advantage of using your own affiliate software is that you can also use it as ad tracking tools. Just assign a unique affiliate ID to each ad you place, you will be able to find out which ones are working and making money for you.

Another benefit is improved link popularity which is extremely important for search engine ranking today. Since all the affiliate links point directly to your web site if you use your own affiliate software, your link popularity will be much higher.

On the other hand, affiliate links managed by third party will point to that third party's site first then redirected to your site. Search engines normally don't follow the whole path and count it as inbound link to your site.

You will be surprised at how many people telling you one of the benefits of setting up affiliate program is link popularity but failed to mention this: affiliate program managed by third party won't increase your link popularity.

Some good affiliate software:

Ultimate Affiliate: Industry favorite, one of the most fully featured affiliate program scripts on the Internet. Possibly the only affiliate program software which reports affiliate statistics graphically.

My Affiliate Program: Feature packed affiliate program software. And the company is well known for its superb support.

AssocTrac: Good piece from famous Corey Rudl, founder of Internet Marketing Center. You don't just get the software installed. The package also includes a heap of advice on how to recruit affiliates from Corey. That's a huge bonus.

So which method should you choose? It really depends on your needs. Either way has pros and cons.

For example, do you need to use third party credit card processing service? If you do, the best choice is clear: ClickBank or RegSoft since their affiliate service is free.

If you prefer your own merchant account and expect lots of affiliates to sign up for your program, you may want to purchase affiliate software. You will save money in the long run because you can be paying out thousands of dollars in affiliate management fees very quickly if you use Commission Junction.

If you just don't want the trouble of printing and mailing checks for your affiliates every month, obviously you have to go for third party services.

Whichever method you choose, the bottom line is, set up your affiliate program! It's a powerful and really cost effective way to market your products. In fact, I can't think of a better way to market your products or services with such a low risk! It is absolutely fantastic.

In next lesson, I will discuss online marketing - the most important part of Internet business.

See you.

Zac Hewlett
Webmaster
Working At Home Business
http://www.working-at-home-business.com

Internet Business Beginners' Guide

Day Five

You are almost there. You have a hot product in demand, a sales copy that is proven to sell, your web site is up and ready to take credit card orders...

But nobody is coming to your site if you don't promote it!

If you build a well-designed, well thought out site and promote it, they will come. If you just build it, it will just sit there.

Today, in online marketing part 1, you will learn:

- Search engines
- Affiliate program
- Opt-in email list strategy
- Article submission to ezines and web sites
- Link exchange

Search Engines

Although some webmasters don't rely on search engines very much any more, search engines are still an awesome way to build traffic to your site without having to spend your hard earned dollars. If you come up on top, you get thousands of hits. If you come up in the 1,000 position, you get zilch.

Another advantage is that visitors from search engines are highly targeted. A person searching for a particular phrase which your site is related on a search engine is naturally interested in this topic and much more likely to buy.

It makes sense then, to make your site as search-engine-friendly as possible, so your rankings will improve, giving you more visitors which leads to more sales.

The difficulty in achieving top positions is the fact that many of the search engines change their ranking algorithms almost monthly.

However, the principles remain the same. Keep in mind that the ultimate goal of search engines is to provide relevant search results for their, not yours, visitors. So the number one key to getting good positions is having fresh and relevant content about your subject. It's becoming more and more important now.

The first step in successful search engine promotion is to pick the right keywords that people will be searching for. Just as when you identify your niche market, don't try to be everything to everyone. Focus on 5-8 words for each page.

Then search engine will calculate page ranking mainly based on these factors:

* Keyword density

The ratio of keywords to all the words on your page. If you have 100 words on a page and 5 of them are "marketing", then you have a keyword density of 5% for the word "marketing" at this page.

Keyword density is one of the most important factors to determine page rankings. The logic is that, the more you mention something in a page the more likely this page is related to this subject.

Put your keywords in your page so that they are used on 3-10% of the page. You can analyze your keyword density at [Keyword Density](#).

Be careful not to overstuff keywords in your copy so that it sounds strange when you read it.

Besides body text, you can also put keywords in Meta tags, comment tags, ALT tags for images to increase keyword density.

Never try to fool search engines. You WILL be caught sooner or later if you do. Some tricks might work several years ago, like using invisible text (white text on white background). Search engines are getting smarter everyday. Don't you think the programmers and engineers in these giant companies are as smart as we are? :-)

* Keyword position

Search engines tend to place more emphasis on some particular positions in a HTML file:

- The closer to the beginning of visible text, the more importance and relevance will be put
- Domain name
- Page file name
- Page title
- Keyword Meta tag
- Description Meta tag
- Text in heading or bold
- Link text

Make sure you put keywords in those key places. Some search engines may not place more emphasis on all of them. For example, Google doesn't read your Description tags at all. But most of them are still working for most search engines.

It doesn't hurt to include keywords in these places, anyway.

* Link popularity

Search engines, especially Google, place high emphasis on links to your site in assigning a good ranking. Simply put, other things remaining the same, more inbound links means higher ranking.

What is important is not only the number of links to your site, but also the types of sites which are linking to you. A link from a site which is related to yours is more valuable than a link from an unrelated site.

This factor is becoming more and more important and it makes perfect sense. The quality of a site can be largely reflected by the number of webmasters who think the site is great and therefore are linking to it.

The outlines described above are over-simplified. For detailed search engine optimization tips, read this article:
http://www.working-at-home-business.com/articles/searchengine.shtml

Search engines keep changing their ranking algorithms to serve their clients better (and to keep us from catching up with them as well), it becomes almost a full-time job just to figure out which techniques work on which engines today.

Since it's next to impossible for anyone to discover all the current secrets of all the search engines, my suggestion is, focus on good quality content with well-written, keyword-rich copy.

You can also make use of two useful resources for the war:

Search Engine Watch: Lots of free tips, techniques and latest news about search engines.

Web Position Gold: Top-notch software helping you achieve top positions. You can download a free trial version by clicking the link above.

Additionally, there are two directories you need to submit your site to, Yahoo and Open Directory Project.

Unlike the search engines, an actual human editor will evaluate your site.

Getting your site an optimum listing in Yahoo and Open Directory is perhaps the most important step in effective web site promotion.

An optimum listing in Yahoo can bring in more traffic to your site than any other search engines since Yahoo is the most trafficked site on the Internet. AOL Search, Netscape, Lycos and many other smaller or regional search engines and directories pull results from Open Directory.

In addition to this, getting listed in Yahoo and Open Directory will also help you greatly improve the link popularity of your site which helps in improving the ranking of your site in search engines.

However, getting listed in these two directories can be tough, especially <u>Yahoo</u>. Only 10% of submissions are actually included in <u>Yahoo</u>.

For more information on getting listed in <u>Yahoo</u>, read this article:
<u>http://www.working-at-home-business.com/articles/yahoo.shtml</u>

Affiliate Program

Affiliate program is a powerful and really cost effective way to market your products. In fact, I can't think of a better way to market your products or services with such a low risk! It is absolutely fantastic.

So how do you get hundreds or even thousands of affiliates to join your program?

* <u>List your program in affiliate program directories</u>

The first thing to do once you set up your program is to submit it to as much affiliate program directories as possible. Here are some to start:

<u>http://www.affiliateshowcase.com/?15543</u>
<u>http://www.associateprograms.com/</u>
<u>http://www.affiliateworld.com/</u>
<u>http://www.affiliatematch.com/</u>
<u>http://www.sponsordirectory.com/</u>
<u>http://www.whichaffiliate.com/</u>
<u>http://www.affiliate-programs-directory.com/</u>
<u>http://www.affiliate-programs-guide.com/</u>
<u>http://www.internet-affiliate-programs.com/</u>
<u>http://www.becomeanaffiliate.com/</u>
<u>http://www.associatesearch.com/</u>
<u>http://www.affiliateguide.com/</u>

* <u>Ask your customers and visitors to join</u>

Mention your affiliate program in order confirmation email and ask your customers to join if they are happy with your products or services.

In your newsletter, introduce your affiliate program briefly and the benefits to sign up.

Of course, you should create an affiliate section at your site, explain the details, and ask your visitors to join even if they don't want to buy your products.

* <u>Search for affiliates on the Internet</u>

Search for affiliates who have the perfect exposure to your target market.

As a matter of fact, many people surf a couple of hours everyday for news and information in related industry. There are countless web sites to explore if you want to study a subject.

For example, I look for Internet marketing tips and techniques on the web everyday. I want to know new stuff once it comes out. And I do learn many interesting techniques from others' web sites. It's an endless task.

While you surf, whenever you find a site selling products which are complementary (but not competitive) to yours, send them an email and ask if they would like to sell your products at their site.

These are the people who would be your perfect "joint venture" partners, therefore your perfect affiliates.

* Pay good commission

If you are paying out 5% or 10% per item sold, few people will bother to sign up for your program - unless you are selling something in great demands at the price of at least several hundred dollars.

For digital info products like eBooks, you should pay a minimum 30-40% commission to make it attractive to other webmasters. You know the selling cost is zero, that's why you choose these products to sell. Others know that either.

That sounds a big portion of the sales price, you may say. Yes, it is. But these are all free money! You can never reach these customers without the help of your affiliates anyway. You should pay a good commission for their hard work.

And don't set the minimum payout amount too high. $30 or $50 is normal. Otherwise some webmasters will not bother because they have to wait for a year to receive the first check.

* Take good care of your affiliates

Tell them how to sign up exactly, clearly, step by step. Create text and banner links for them to use. Create personalized HTML code for them to copy and paste to their pages.

Almost all the potential affiliates are webmasters themselves and they surely know how to code HTML or design banners. However, people are lazy. It would be much easier to ask them just to "copy and paste" than to write an ad.

(I would never design a banner for any affiliate program I join - why not spend the time on my own banner?!)

Respond to your affiliates' emails instantly. Teach them how to market affiliate programs on the Internet. Let them access real time stats.

And send the commission checks on time!

By the way, if you would like to join my affiliate program, visit here :-)
http://www.working-at-home-business.com/affiliate/index.shtml

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Opt-in Email List Strategy

One thing you should always remember: capture your visitors' name and email address, keep in touch with them on a regular basis. That's the best way to make real money on the Internet.

There are thousands more on the Internet that can take your visitors' credit card order and deliver the product within minutes. If you don't work to stay in the minds of your visitors, others will.

I have discussed the importance of opt-in list and the options available to manage it in the last lesson. A list management program is useless if you don't have subscribers. So how to invite visitors to subscribe and build your list quickly and easily?

* Use a pop-up window

I know a lot of people don't like pop-up windows. I hate it too. But, to be honest, it's still one of the most efficient ways to attract opt-in list subscribers. It will easily triple your subscription rate and should have a place in your online marketing plan.

However, pop-up widow IS annoying to many people. You have to be very careful while using it.

First of all, it's a good idea to make it come up on exit so that visitors are not immediately hit with it when they enter into your site. For me, my first reaction to this kind of right-at-front-door pop-ups is, always, close it before it is loaded.

Let your visitors know a little about your site first, then ask them to subscribe to your list.

Secondly, have it controlled with a cookie so that visitors get it just once within any single day (or three or five days, you can set the number of days), no matter how many times they exit any of your pages.

This is especially important if you are going to add the same pop-up to every pages of your site (yes, you should do that since visitors may land at any pages of your site from search engines). By setting a cookie, visitors will not be bothered by pop-ups when they surf within your site.

You can see it working at my site:
http://www.working-at-home-business.com

Don't see it? That's because you must have been to my site in the last three days. I don't want to keep bothering my visitors. It only pops up to the visitors the first time they visit my site within any three days.

Sounds complicated? Not really. You can set it up in 5 minutes. There's an article explaining the details and the java script itself at my site:
http://www.working-at-home-business.com/articles/popup.shtml

Feel free to use the script.

* Add subscription form at your site

You need to give people the opportunities to subscribe to your list on as many pages as possible. The more people are exposed to your message, the more they will respond. This should go without saying, but many opt-in list owners still aren't doing it.

Don't overdo it. You don't want to put subscription form on every page. For example, on your main sales copy page, you shouldn't distract your visitors by putting anything else other than the sales copy itself.

* Submit to all listings

Continually find places to list your ezine or newsletter. Some of the popular ezine directories where you can list your ezine for free:

http://www.ezine-dir.com
http://ezine-universe.com
http://www.newsletter-directory.com
http://www.freezineweb.com
http://www.list-city.com
http://www.ezinelocater.com
http://www.marketing-seek.com/directory/index.shtml
http://www.ezinelinks.com
http://www.ezinehub.com
http://www.internationalpromoter.com

Not enough? Just go to any search engine and search for "ezine directory" or "ezine announcement" or "newsletter directory", you will get thousands of sites to submit.

Some of the directories have huge traffic and will bring you many subscribers while some others will bring in few. In order to start with the popular ones, you can use Google PageRank to check a site's popularity.

Another way is, pick out the subscribe pages from some of your main competitors and find out all of the sites linking to them. Then, go through and submit your ezine to the same directories.

The key to attracting more subscribers from ezine directories is your ezine's description. Treat it just as classified ad, tell visitors what's in it for them, the benefits to subscribe to your list. If you give away freebies for subscribing, you definitely want to mention that.

* Add a gift eBook for subscribing

My subscription rate doubled after I started to give away gift eBooks for subscribing. In fact, I give subscribers 7 valuable eBooks for signing up for my newsletter!

Click here if you would like to subscribe to my newsletter and receive the gift ebooks.

It has been proven time and time again that your sales will increase if you add a bonus to a product or service you are selling. It's equally true that more people will sign up for a free ezine or newsletter if you also include a free bonus with that as well.

* Include a signature file for your ezine

Signature file is one of the simplest way to market online. You should have your email software set to include a signature file on every email message you send out. You should include a signature file whenever you post messages in newsgroups or forums as well.

You will find it is much easier to use any ads to get people to subscribe to your free ezine than it is to get them to purchase a product. Then, once they are on your list, you build a relationship with them and convince them to buy your products.

So instead of promoting your product directly, you can try to promote your free opt-in list along with your gift ebook in the signature file.

* Trade ads with other lists

Once you have built up a list of at least a few hundred subscribers, you can start trading ads with other publishers. Create a recommended ezine section in your ezine and start trading with ezine publishers in every single issue. You publish their ad in your ezine and they publish yours in their ezine.

If you consistently do this with every issue, your newsletter is going to start growing exponentially. At the ezine directories I listed above, you can find hundreds of ezine owners who are willing to trade ads.

* Ask your subscribers to forward your ezine to friends

In every issue of your ezine, ask your subscribers to forward it to their friends. If your ezine is really helpful, many people will be willing to do that for you since it costs them nothing.

Also include the subscribe page URL in every issue so that anyone who's interested in your newsletter will be able to sign up by themselves.

Article Submission To Ezines And Web Sites

How would you like to reach million of people with your products or services...for FREE?

That is exactly what happens when you start writing articles for ezines and web sites. There are tens of thousands of ezine publishers and web site owners online and almost all of them have one thing in common: they are all looking for good content.

If you have good content (not a sales letter cloaked as an article), then give them exactly what they need. Then, they will give you what you need in exchange: traffic and customers.

Every article comes with a resource box attached at the end of it. While your article should not be a sales letter of your business, your 4 to 6 line resource box should be an outright ad for you and your business. You are free to advertise your web site, your products, your services, or any affiliate program that you are a member of.

The resource box could be something like this:

```
---------------------------------------------
Article by Zac Hewlett at Working-At-Home-Business.com
Visit http://www.working-at-home-business.com for Internet
marketing techniques, home business ideas, free Internet
business e-course, eBooks, articles, and more.
---------------------------------------------
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And there comes the best part. Your articles posted at other web sites (most ezine articles will be posted on the Internet as archive) will be there for a long time, generating leads and high quality inbound links to your site! Since search engines are taking link popularity as the most important factor while determine page ranking, the articles will help you get much higher positions.

You gain these benefits at no cost to you.

You can go one step further. Why not give them permission to pass down your articles to others who can publish it as well? What about the articles, reviews and other original content your create for your web site? Give visitors permission to use them at their sites as long as the resource box is attached.

By the way, feel free to use this e-course in your publication or web site. They are pre-licensed to you. The only requirement is to include the above resource box ;-)

You may say that you are not a writer. Well, that just doesn't matter. The writing style online is not that of English professors. In fact, most Internet marketing experts would suggest you to write in a personalized style.

Since the technology we are using seems so cold and impersonal, your readers are seeking someone who is real, who makes mistakes. You'd better write in a conversational tone just like chatting with a friend!

So write about a topic you know, find a large section of ezine publishers with their name and contact emails. Send your articles to them with a short personalized cover paragraph at the top. It would be good enough if 20% ezine publishers use your articles in their ezines.

Then repeat it again and again!

Linking Strategy

Linking strategies are an essential type of site promotion. The more links pointing to your site, the more traffic you'll receive, and the greater perceived link popularity which will rank your site higher in the search engines.

To get someone to link to your site you need to ask. The simplest way is to find complementary sites, link to them on a links page, and ask them to link back to you. If you develop a strong content oriented site you can persuade thousands of other webmasters to link to you even without linking back to them.

The key is to develop great content people want to link to. No one will link to a nothing site. You have to give them some reason to link to you. What's the benefit for them to link to your site? Is your site helpful for their visitors? Do you have a freebie for their visitors to download?

And then get out there and make the contacts by visiting sites, sending out personalized emails to webmasters.

Find your competitor's sites and other sites in your industry. Then, use search engines to find out everyone who is linking to them. To find out who is linking to a site, type in "link:http://www.website.com" in the search box with "website.com" being the name of the web site which you would like to do research on. Then, the search engine will bring up all the links that are going to this site.

Now, visit each of the pages that come up, examine them, and then send an email to the Webmaster asking for a link. Since they are already linking to similar sites, you have a very good chance to get it as well if you have developed great content.

You have to personalize the email showing them you did visit their site and feel your site is of value for their visitors. Explain the benefit of linking to you for their visitors. No one will link to you because YOU need it. They will do that only if your site provides benefits for their customers and visitors.

In the email, start with a very brief description of your site's content and how it relates to their site. Then provide the exact URL of their page you think the link would be most beneficial. Show them that you've actually visited the site and given some thought to the link. Finally, give the HTML code for the link so the Webmaster can cut and paste it directly into his page code. That gives you some control over the link placement and lets you include your keywords into the link text.

Although it sounds really simple, this is a rather time consuming task. However, it can be one of the most powerful techniques you will ever use in building up your online business. Once you have an established number of links to your site, it will be ranked much higher in search engines, you will have continuous traffic for whatever you want to do.

You can never have too much links to you. So send out email and ask for links whenever you have some spare time. Nothing will happen unless you take the initiative and do something today!

This is the 5th lesson. Have you decided to go online yet?

Good luck!

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http://www.working-at-home-business.com

Internet Business Beginners' Guide

Day Six

Today, in online marketing part 2, you will learn:

- Pay per click search engine
- Classified ads
- Paid ads
- Give away freebies
- Newsgroup, forum, mailing list participant

Pay Per Click Search Engine

Pay per click, also known as PPC, search engines are search engines that allow advertisers to bid on listing positions for chosen keywords. The advertisers pay the amount they bid only when someone clicks the link and visits their sites.

This is great for many of us. Anyone, either a fortune 500 company or a one-man operation, can have the top positions if they choose to.

Pay per click search engines are an incredible way to get **instant, targeted traffic** to any site you need to advertise. Some of them allow you to bid as low as $0.01 and get you up to 10,000 targeted visitors for as little as $100!

Most of the marketing techniques you learn here, or anywhere else, will take time to build up. PPC search engines, on the other hand, can bring in traffic 5 minutes after you sign up.

At traditional search engines, the title and description of a given page seen by visitors in the search result is retrieved from the html file itself. You have no control of it once the page has been indexed. PPC search engines allow you to tweak the title and description for each keyword you bid until it grabs visitors' attention.

(BUT, it doesn't make any sense to bid on "sex" for your Internet marketing information web site! If you did that, you would end up with lots of clicks, a big credit card bill from PPC search engines, and zero sales. What would you do if you click on "Working At Home Business" and discover it's a site all about "video editing"? Click away in no time, I believe.)

Another key advantage is that, listings at PPC search engines often show up in some of the most heavily trafficked traditional search engines and directories such as Yahoo, AOL search, Altavista, MSN, metacrawler, just to name a few.

Obviously, the only drawback is that it's not free. It could easily become unnecessarily expensive if you don't apply the right strategy.

The key to a successful PPC campaign is **knowing exactly how much each visitor is worth to you** so that you will figure out the maximum amount you can bid to ensure you always make a profit.

Let's say 1 visitor out of 100 to your site actually make a purchase, you have a 1% conversion rate which is good enough. If you make $20 per sale and are willing to spend $10 in advertising, then your maximum bid amount is $0.1 - $10 will bring you at least 100 visitors among them one will make a purchase.

If you are more aggressive in getting customers considering the lifetime value of customers, you can bid for as high as $0.2. Anything more than that, you are taking the risk of losing money - if you don't have backend sales.

Many people are doing just that - losing money to get customers - for a good reason. If you have a solid backend sales plan, you can afford losing money to get first-time customers and still make good profit in the long run. I will talk about backend in next lesson.

You may be wondering, what about those advertisers who pay $3 or more for the top positions? At 1% conversion rate, that equals to $300 cost per customer! Well, there are four possible reasons:

- They have an extremely high conversion rate, say 5%
- They have a really high ticket item to sell, $300 plus
- They have very powerful backends
- They don't know what they are doing

In fact, it's not always a good idea to bid for #1 position. How many times did you make a quick decision to buy at the very first site you stopped by? Not many times I guess. Average people typically click around first, read, compare, and then make a decision if at all.

So being listed at #1 position is not necessarily better than at #5. The major advantage of being #1 is having more chances to show up at other search engines and directories. At Overture, for example, the top 3 listings will also show up in AOL search, MSN, Altavista and other places.

The price of top positions is another reason not to be involved in a bidding war. The cost of top listing for competitive keywords could be as high as 3 or 4 dollars!

The best strategy for small business is to get a large quantity of keywords at low price other than bidding $3 for a few words. While top positions for popular keywords get more search and higher click through rate, a large number of less popular, slightly lower positioned keywords will bring you the same, if not more, amount of traffic - at much lower cost!

If you can't find enough keywords, try WordTracker. It helps you come out with hundreds of keywords relating to your topic. Personally I feel the free online trial version is all you need. You can pay a monthly fee for the more complete version if you need.

Some PPC search engines, Overture for instance, also provide handy keyword suggestion tools.

Although you don't have to bid for the top position in most cases, but make sure your site is listed at least in top 20. Otherwise, very few people will find you.

Here are the most popular PPC search engines:

Overture (formerly known as GoTo)

FindWhat

SearchTimes

7Search

Kanoodle

You can learn more detailed PPC search engine techniques here.

Classified Ads

Mail order businesses have a long history of using classified ads to promote unique products. You write a brief ad, test and analyze responses and sales, then rewrite it and repeat the cycle. Eventually you may get a classified ad that draws well, month after month, and you place it as often as you can.

Are you submitting classified ads online? Why not give it a try? Although a lot of the smaller sites just aren't worth the time of visiting and submitting every single day, sites such as Yahoo have classified ad sections that have a large number of real visitors.

You won't get as much traffic submitting classified ads as you will with search engines, but that shouldn't stop you for one minute since there are many free classified ad sites out there. Prepare a good selection of classified ads and keep it in a text file. Then, you can copy and paste your classified ad at Yahoo or at any free classified sites that you run into.

The key to successful classified ads is to continually keep posting ads. Once you figure out which ones work for you, keep using them regularly.

Forget about any notion of selling anything from a classified. Some of the "experts" will tell you that a classified ad can bring cash orders, but this is the exception rather than a general rule. So don't post another sales copy in your classified ads.

Your purpose here is getting as much contacts as possible. Concentrate on offering free information or even gift to attract as many interested prospects as possible for what you have to offer.

Ask them to send a blank email to an autoresponder to receive a gift eBook. Ask them to visit your page and sign up for your free newsletter. Either way, you would have acquired their permission to send them follow-up emails time and time again.

No deception. What you really want are quality names of prospective buyers, not a large quantity of names of those who will never buy from you. It would be easy to promise the moon in your ad, but if you don't deliver in your follow-up emails, you will have alienated your prospect by deception and they will not be receptive to anything you say in the future.

Create a killer headline for your ad so it stands out above the hundreds of other ads. In the body offer something of value for free and tell them the benefits if they take action now.

Not many classified sites will generate significant traffic. Here are some of them that will:

Classifieds2000: Bills itself as the "most highly trafficked classified site on the web" and manages ads on Netscape's and 120 other sites.

AOL Classified: AOL currently has over 44 million members. If only one classified ad could be placed for any web site or product, it would probably be here. AOL is now offering free ads in most categories and you will have exposure to your listing on AOL, CompuServe, Digital City, and Netscape. At AOL, you can have your ad placed in view of people on a service where the ads are actually read.

Yahoo Classified: There are very few free classified ad sites that actually work. Yahoo is one of the shining lights that stands out above the crowd of mediocre free ad sites. Yahoo has more traffic than any other site and it definitely shows when you place your ads here.

On Yahoo, you are allowed to place 10 ads at a time using one Yahoo ID, so do so. An effective tip here is to delete your ads every few days and replace them - even if the message is exactly the same. By doing this, you will be able to keep your ads towards the top of the list and receive more free exposures.

If you want to place more than 10 ads on Yahoo, just sign up more Yahoo email addresses.

You can place thousands of classified ads at other major portal sites and smaller sites. If you can attract a few visitors from each, that would be a huge traffic source if you post at thousands of sites!

Paid Ads

Paid advertising may sound scary to small Internet business owners, but some form of paid ads is important sometimes if you wish to grow your business since paid ads motivate others to spread your marketing message to their own networks of visitors and customers.

There are different types of paid ads. The quickest, lowest cost, and most effective type of paid online ads is placing **sponsorships or solo ads in ezines** or email newsletters.

Nothing else will even come close to the results you can produce through this method. You can purchase sponsorships or solo ads for $100 to $500 and often get results of three to five times it costs if you have an effective ad sales copy for the target audience. There isn't anywhere else that you can get this kind of return for your buck when it comes to spending money on marketing.

Another good idea is **ezine classifieds**. You can advertise in ezines with 10,000 to 300,000 opt-in subscribers for less than $50.00. You can reach thousands of potential customers in your targeted market. Click through rates are likely to be in the range of 1% to 3%.

With thousands of different ezines available, you can expand into hundreds of them once you find a classified ad and follow-up system that works for your product or service. Check out the ezine directories I listed in the last lesson to look for ezines that accept ads.

Don't forget to track all of your ads. Any ad, including free ones, you place without tracking is wasted time and money! Without proper tracking, you won't know how your marketing methods are doing, which ones are making money for you and you should keep doing, how much you can afford on advertising, whether you should improve your sales copy or ad...

Without these information, how can you expect your marketing effort to be successful? Especially when it's a paid ad?

Another form of paid ads is **banner ad**. Banner ads have been around the longest. It was once very popular long time ago, I mean 3 years ago. At that time, everybody was talking about building a web site, attract traffic, and then - sell advertising space! I would say, huge banner ads spending was one of the reasons many dot-coms failed.

Today, banner ads have lost its popularity and effectiveness, for both advertisers and publishers.

Typically these are 468x60 pixel animated and linked graphic ads that appear at the top of a web page. They are usually sold on a CPM (cost per thousand impressions) basis. Targeted sites may get CPM rates of $35-50 or more, but banner ads to reach general audiences are priced $1 to $10 CPM. Banners that pop up on search sites triggered by a keyword can cost $20 to $30 CPM.

Can you justify the cost? Be very careful and always do the math first. If you're paying $10 CPM and the click-through rate is an industry average of 0.5%, then it costs you $10 to get 5 people to your site, or $2 each! If 5% of the visitors to your site make a purchase, which is pretty high conversion rate, then the cost per customer is $40.

Luckily, price is always negotiable nowadays. Realize that there is a lot more banner ad space available right now than is actually being sold, though this may not be true for the niche sites you may be interested in. It is a buyer's market, so it pays to negotiate.

The more impressions you are ready to buy, the stronger your negotiating strength. Contact the Webmaster and ask for a Rate Card. It is just a place to begin the negotiations.

If you ask me, I would suggest that the maximum price of banner ads for small business is $10 CPM.

However, you may want to spend more on banner ads some day for some reason. For example, your business have grown to such a stage that brand name, not the direct sales, is very critical for you. That's why the big guys still put banner ads at popular commercial sites and search engines.

Then there are banner ad networks that can help manage large-scale banner ads campaigns. They also offer very sophisticated tracking tools that give you lots of valuable information about who is visiting your site, and what actions they are taking.

Some of the popular banner ads networks include:

[DoubleClick](#)

[Engage Media](#)

Microsoft bCentral's [LinkExchange Banner Network](#)

Give Away Freebies

In order to make money online, there is one thing you absolutely must do: you must motivate people to read what you have to say. Whether it is your email message or your web pages, if they don't read it, you don't make money.

Among all the methods to make them read, one stands out and shoulders above the rest - **giving something of value away for free**.

Here's a perfect example of this in action: this free e-course itself!

When you saw the invitation to this e-course, at my site, in classified ads, in email signature, from newsgroup... were you curious as to what's in the e-course? Or wanted to get the gift eBooks?

Hey, you've read it this far haven't you? It must have been somewhat effective.

How many times have you tried a free magazine subscription? How about a free month of Internet connection? Ever receive a free shampoo sample in the mail?

You see, these big companies know the power of "free". Do you think they would go around giving their stuff away for free if it didn't pay off in the long run?

Even if you never subscribe to that magazine, sign on with that ISP, or buy that brand of shampoo, these companies have accomplished an objective. You have tried their product and heard their name. Perhaps you even were impressed by the fact that they gave you something for free.

The bottom line is that "free" works in marketing, especially on the Internet.

Whether it is a free subscription to your email newsletter, a free software download, or something else of value, if you give it away for free with no strings, people will get it and remember you.

What can you give away that is valuable to your prospects, but is low or no cost to you? On the Internet, you can always create no cost freebies to give away. You can always find an angle.

Provide free articles to other web sites. Free eBook downloads. Give away free CGI programs. Provide hundreds of links to needed tools. Provide links to downloadable software. Free newsletter of value. Free e-greeting cards. Free clip arts. Free banner design service. Free e-course like this one:).

Don't limit your thinking to just what I have listed. Open your mind and begin thinking outside the box. Go to any search engine and search for "free", millions of pages will come out providing all sorts of freebies. Learn from others what you can give away.

For example, I bought the reprint right of Corey Rudl's new eBook "*How To Create A Fortune On The Internet In Just Four Simple Steps*" and sell it at my site.

It's a fantastic online money-making guide. To make the package more attractive, I bundle five bonus eBooks with it - more than $100 value! I believe there are others promoting this book, but nobody is offering such useful eBooks as bonus for free!

Don't give away rubbish. You want people to come to you looking for valuable information which gives you the opportunity to direct them to your product or service so that they end up buying from you.

Your objective is to get lots of traffic and develop credibility. If people feel your freebie is useless, whether free or not, they won't come back to you for more.

Giving away something for free can make the difference between a winning site and a losing one. So make sure you have something of value for your visitors!

Newsgroup And Forum Participant

One of my favorite online marketing vehicles is to participate in targeted newsgroups and forums on my subject.

Once you have a good web site with high quality content in place, you start visiting the newsgroups and forums regularly and then after you know your way around it, you should start answering questions and becoming an all around helpful individual.

You will be able to build up relationships in these newsgroups and forums, and build up your traffic at the same time without having to spend a penny.

You post answers to people's questions and actively take part in the conversations. By doing this, you can post your signature file with information about your site and product.

Do NOT post direct ads in newsgroups or forums or you will be flamed. You should only use a short signature about some benefit you offer.

Get involved in the conversations, post honest and useful opinions, be consistent, and become a trusted information source, or at least an online friend to other members. Interestingly enough, people are so curious that they want to know who you are as long as you give something helpful.

In addition, you can learn more about your subject. There are many experts in all sorts of industries hanging out there. If you have a question, post it in an appropriate newsgroup, you will get the answer within hours!

Newsgroup and forum are technically different. But you can use them the same way in practice.

A forum is a web site, or a section of a site, where you can go read and post messages via your web browser. It doesn't require any other software. There are thousands of forums out there. A good place where you can find a listing of forums available is Forum Directory.

Newsgroups are slightly more difficult. Normally you need to use newsgroup reading software to participate. Here's one, Free Agent, you can download for free.

Pick out the newsgroups your ISP's newsgroup server supports and that are discussing your subjects and use Free Agent to subscribe to them.

Or you can go to Google Groups to read and post messages via your web browser. You have to register as a Google user first. It's free.

And then participate!

You are almost done!

See you in next lesson.

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Internet Business Beginners' Guide

Day Seven

If you follow exactly the steps I showed you in the previous six lessons, you will be making a good profit within one month.

So now, you have stable web traffic, your site processes orders automatically, a group of affiliates are promoting your product, you also have an opt-in mailing list with thousands of subscribers...

Then what?

In this last lesson, you will learn just one thing - **backend products - which will bring in unlimited income!**

- What is backend anyway?
- What's so good about backend?
- Develop or find backend products
- How to promote backend products

What Is Backend?

Imagine this:

Someone visits your web site and is somewhat interested in what you offer. Like most people, she looks around but is not ready to buy from you yet. Just when she's going to leave your site, a window pops up asking her to sign up for your free newsletter. She fills in the form since it's free anyway.

Over the next several weeks, or months, she receives useful information from you, gets familiar with you, and begins to regard you as an expert in your industry.

Some day she goes to your site again via the links in your newsletter and decides to buy the product you are offering.

She's become your customer!

You send her follow up emails consistently providing more information, and recommending other similar products every now and then. Since she's done business with you before and feels comfortable buying from you, she buys from you time and time again.

Anything she buys from you other than the first sell is a backend sale.

The idea of backend is so neglected by most businesses that many people don't even realize how powerful it can be.

What's So Good About Backend?

In reality, it's rather hard to make huge profit with a $15, $20 or even $30 product on the front end.

Even if you have high profit margin, you may have to spend a large portion of the income in advertising and getting customers in the first place. Pay-per-click search engines, paid ads, freebies, software, referral fee paid to affiliates, opt-in list monthly fee...You may easily find out that your cost per customer is $10, $20 or more.

This is one of the biggest problems businesses have.

Generally, when we think of building bigger profits, we think about getting more customers. That isn't the whole picture. For bigger, quicker profits, marketing to the customers you already have is also a good, if not better, idea.

Once you've developed a little trust, someone's given you their money - and you've given them value for that, they feel good about you and your product. ==Your existing customers trust you and their buying defenses are down and it would be so much easier to sell to them again!==

==**That's where the real profit comes from, the backend!**==

If someone does business with you and she likes the experience, what happens is that she actually develops in her mind that she's done business with you once before and is very comfortable doing business with you time and time again.

The best part is that, it doesn't cost you anything more than the time to send follow up emails.

The bottom line is, you should realize that the biggest asset your business has is your customer base.

Think of hotmail. The main service they provide is web based email and they don't make much from it since it's free. Yet Microsoft bought hotmail for millions! What Microsoft paid for was not the email servers but the huge customer base with millions of subscribers so that they can send personalized and targeted ads and offers to them.

If you're to write a book, you copyright it, protect it and sell it. You would never throw it away. So why do you throw away your customer base by not having a backend product or service?

You have already spent time and money in getting your customers. You have their names, email addresses and maybe more. You can now sell them additional products or services, for free, for as long as you like!

Develop Or Find Backend Products

For many businesses, having a backend product determines whether the business succeeds or not. You should have a backend in mind whenever you are planning your web site, developing or choosing a product.

<mark>On the Internet, it is easy to come up with backend products!</mark>

The best way is, of course, you develop another product by yourself. Over the time, you will have a series of your own products.

A perfect example is Ken Evoy. When I bought his eBook "Make Your Site Sell!" years ago, it was his only product. Now he has developed his own product line:

- Make Your Site SELL! - The BIBLE of site-selling
- Make Your Knowledge SELL! - The BIBLE of selling what you know on the Internet
- Make Your Price SELL! - How to choose the right price that can literally triple your net profits
- Make Your Words SELL! - Filling you with mission-critical writing skills to sell on the Internet
- Site Build It! - One-stop Internet business solution for small business owners

Visit SiteSell for more details.

If you don't own any additional products or services to place on a backend, then you can simply join an affiliate program or two with a high quality product or find an appropriate company who will drop ship for you.

There are thousands of companies out there that have affiliate programs. Just go to Commission Junction, the largest affiliate program network, and search for products you feel suitable.

You can find more affiliate programs at these sites:

ClickBank

LinkShare

Make sure the affiliate programs fit a certain criteria before joining:

* Go for quality

Every time you offer a third party backend, you are not only endorsing it, but also put your reputation in it. So always make sure that either you have personally tried the product or it is of the highest quality at the best price. Don't give your customers a reason to stop buying from you.

Examine the product or service to make sure it is a quality product. Look at the people who are recommending it. Talk to people who have bought it.

Is it really helpful to your visitors? Does it offer valuable information? The better the product or service, the more enthusiastic you will be about recommending it, and you'll have a better chance that people will buy it.

<mark>Don't ever promote anything that's going to harm your reputation!</mark>

* Earn good commission

You will need a lot of traffic to earn a serious income from affiliate programs. And by promoting affiliate programs, you are actually asking people to leave your site. It's only fair that you get something back for doing that.

If someone is paying out 5% or 10% per item sold, this is a pretty low commission. You want to deal with someone who thinks about the lifetime value of a customer and will give you a high commission for your hard work. They can sell their own backend once your visitors become their customers!

Some companies don't realize the value of a customer and don't offer their affiliates a good commission - usually 10%-15%, or even less. You will find that you will be sending tons of people to them and not getting huge commission checks.

* High conversion rate

Even if a program is paying out a high commission, if people don't buy from them you're back in the same boat! So you have to make sure that the affiliate program site is a site which turns visitors into sales. In other words, the site must have a good conversion rate.

You want to deal with a site that has at least a 1% conversion rate. There are not many sites out there which are experts at turning visitors into sales, so make sure you go with a site which has sales copy and web site design that makes yourself want to buy.

After all, you are sending them potential customers, but it is their job to turn those potential customers into buyers.

* Minimum payout amount

Some web sites pay you only after you have accumulated $100 or $200 in commission. If you have a very busy site, that's ok. For a small site without much traffic, it could take a long time.

There's even the odd site which won't pay you at all unless you generate a certain level of business. Read the affiliate agreement before you sign up.

* Focus on your site theme

The backend products you offer through affiliate programs should be somehow related to your site and front end product.

Some web site owners sign up for dozens of affiliate programs and clutter their site with links so much that it's difficult to see the theme of the site. Some webmasters try "banner farms". Don't waste your time. It doesn't work.

You need original content which your visitors feel helpful. And then <mark>blend the affiliate links with your site. Match the product or service to the theme of your site.</mark> Make it something that has to do with your site or your industry.

It doesn't make sense to recommend a web site host to your visitors who come to your site looking for fitness advice. Provide links, services and products, which are related to what your visitors want! If you surf around, you will be surprised by many people who build a site and have products and affiliate program that are in no way related to each other.

* Seek good tracking

Another thing to be concerned with is the tracking software or service the affiliate program is using. You want to go with a company which has good tracking, showing your statistics in real time. You want instant real time stats that are easy to understand.

Having real time stats allows you to compare the difference in results between putting a button up and putting up a whole page recommending the product or service. Look for real time stats so that you can go and check anytime and see how your promotional efforts are working and how effective they are. Then you can increase your sales and commissions by concentrating on the things that work.

* Deal with a responsible company

If you are ever concerned about a company you are thinking about doing business with, ask for references and do some checks on them. You have to make sure they are very professional and responsible.

If you email them, they should respond within a couple of days, maximum, and hopefully within the same day if at all possible. You'd be very surprised at how many companies will not respond to your emails within a couple of days - or not even respond to your emails at all.

If you are asking questions about a company's affiliate program and get no answer, be wary. If they can't even take care of you when you are going to bring them customers, then you probably have a pretty good idea that they won't take care of you when you have a problem. You can also guess that they won't take very good care of your customers either!

So be very careful, the company you deal with should be very professional and willing to help you out when you're in need.

By the way, I have my own affiliate program which meets all the criteria above;-). If you are looking for high quality info products on Internet business, check this out.

The bottom line is, you have to get your backend! The first sell is the hardest and if you don't have a backend, you're setting yourself up for the hardest sell throughout your whole business where the second, third, fourth are the easiest!

How To Promote Backend Products?

The most obvious and effective way is to send follow-up emails. But there are surely other techniques.

* Point of purchase

One of the best points for a backend offer on any sale is right after the initial sale while the customer still has her credit card out. For example, whenever you go buy a pair of shoes, it always seems like once you have the shoes picked out, the salesperson will then ask you if you would like laces, polish, etc.

Any smart retailer will figure out what other products they have that naturally go with the purchases most often being made. Then, they will offer an up-sell immediately at the point of sale.

Apply this to your Internet business. Offer the up-sell right after your customer has made the purchase. In other words, put the backend product on the thank you page right after the purchase is made.

At that point, your customer still has her credit card out and is in a buying mood. By listing one or two similar products on the thank you page, you should be able to increase your overall sales by 10%-30% immediately.

* With product delivery

The second key time to offer a backend is when the product is delivered. Wise marketers send a catalog of other products and services they have with every order.

If you sell info products such as eBooks, you can easily offer one or two similar backend products in the order confirmation email you send to customers. To do this, you should use a credit card processing service that allows you to customize the confirmation letter. Not everyone provide this feature. Observe their service carefully.

Or, if for some reason, you are not using a service that allows you to customize the confirmation email, you can always put your backend at the download page.

Possibly offer a 30-day special discount in the package. If they order something else from you within thirty days they get $10 or 10% off or something similar. Just remember that there has to be some incentive to order now.

* Follow-up

You should send out follow-up emails to all of your current customers. Top marketers report that it is 7 times as easy to sell to an existing customer than it is to develop a new one. Put the odds to work for you and start selling more to your current customers.

The correct time to send out this letter depends on what you sell. If you sell a consumable product such as food, nutritional, body care, etc., then you send out the letter whenever the average customer will run out of the current supply.

If you sell other types of products, then the proper time will often be around every 3 months. It depends on your products and your customers. Learn the correct time by testing.

* Leads that don't buy from you

This is an area that most Internet marketers don't even consider, but it could quickly become a new profit center for your business. What do you do with those leads who contact you but don't end up buying?

In most businesses, they just throw them away. The smart marketer who wants to get maximum profit out of every second of their time and every dollar they spend will put these leads to use also.

They are obviously interested in what you are selling since something you have caused them to originally contact you for more information. They didn't want to buy your product, but what if you offer another similar product to them instead once you have finished your regular follow-up system for your main product?

This is definitely an area that you need to try out. Since the cost of follow-up online is virtually nothing, this type of additional profit is definitely something every business should look into.

Your Next Online Venture

So now, you've got everything up:

- A product you can control and it will solve problems for your customers.

- A well designed web site with sales copy that is proven to sell.

- Real time credit card processing at your site.

- An affiliate program for your visitors to promote your product and earn a commission.

- An opt-in email list.

- Backend products to sell time and time again.

- Active marketing strategy.

Once all components of the system are in order, all you have to do is to spend 1 or 2 hours everyday on customer service and continuous promotion.

Then comes the time to develop your next Internet business. <mark>You can repeat your success time and time again which means unlimited income potential ahead of you!</mark>

Thank you for reading this ebook. I sincerely hope it is of help to your online business.

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All the best wishes to you and your online business!

Zac Hewlett
Webmaster
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PS. Feel excited about this Internet business world? Want to try it out? You have a much greater chance to fire your boss in one year's time if you start online business now.

I've done that!

You will find more detailed Internet business techniques in Corey Rudl's new guide eBook "*How To Create A Fortune On The Internet In Just Four Simple Steps*". Do not hesitate, because if you are willing to put in the little effort it really takes, you can literally duplicate his success if you go to:

http://www.working-at-home-business.com/fortune.shtml

Internet Business Tools and Resources

For latest Internet business tools and resources list, visit:
http://www.wotking-at-home-business.com/tools/index.shtml

Domain Name Registration

GoDaddy: Cheapest domain name registrar online. Domain transfer for $7.75 per year only. Customer service is not as good as its price though.

NameBoy: Great domain name suggestion tools and registration service.

BizMint: Online database which informs people on the domains that are about to expire and become available - the perfect way to pick up a superb .com domain with minimal effort.

Web Site Hosting

Adgrafix: Top notch web hosting service, $19.95-199 per month. The web host I have had the best experiences with and they have excellent tech support.

iPowerWeb: 300MB storage, 30GB bandwidth, reliable servers, everything you will ever need for $7.95/month. Really a good deal. **Highly Recommend**.

Portland: If you want to try out free hosting without forced ads, Portland is one of the best. They can host your own domain with 500MB bandwidth for free and offers enough features including cgi-bin and SSI.

Merchant Account & Credit Card Payment

Merchant Express: Reliable and friendly merchant account provider with reasonable price.

ClickBank: Very popular third party credit card processor. For digital or downloadable products only. Large affiliates network in place.

DigiBuy: Full feature third party credit card processor. Provides digital products storage and download facility for a small price. Compatible with popular affiliate networks.

2CheckOut: Popular third party credit card processor. Support tangible and digital products and membership sites as well. $45 setup fee. Low processing fee, 5.5%+$0.45 per transaction.

PayPal: Popular third party credit card processor. Lowest processing fee. Available in 37 countries currently. Official payment option at eBay.

RegSoft: Easy to use third party credit card processor. 10% transaction fee. Free affiliate program management.

For detailed third party credit card processors comparison, click here.

Traffic Analysis

Analog: Free server side traffic analysis CGI software.

Webalizer: Free server side traffic analysis CGI software. Provides more features than Analog.

WebTrends: Desktop web site traffic analysis software.

Ad Tracking

AdTrackZ: A simple, easy to use CGI ad tracking script.

RoiBot: A collection of web based tools including ad tracking, email autoresponder, that will help you to increase your ROI - Return on Investment.

AdMinder: Very handy yet powerful web based ads tracking service.

hyperTracker: Automated, easy-to-use tracking management tool.

Mailing List Management

Topica: Free web based mailing list management system. Ad supported.

Yahoo Groups: Free web based mailing list management system. Ad supported.

BambooBizOnline: Formerly known as Postmaster Online, gives you 50 autoresponders that automatically follow-up and a complete integrated email solution for a very low monthly price.

GetResponse: Provides free, feature-packed, automated, personalizable follow up autoresponder. The paid version includes so call "broadcast" function which is actually mailing list management system.

Aweber: Offers feature-packed sequential autoresponders and mailing list management with reasonable monthly payment plans.

SubscribeMe: One of the most popular and feature-packed yet user-friendly mailing list script. Its Lite version is free.

Mailloop: Complete email solution from Corey Rudl, the most successful online marketer.

Mojo: Free mailing list management CGI script. It's very easy to use and feature-packed. One of my favorites. The only thing I don't like is that you can't customize subscribers' name in the message body.

Ezine ADventure: A revolutionary new system that allows ezine owner to get Money-Making ads in front of an ever-increasing number of opt-in ezine readers - lightning quick - and for Free.

CGI Script

CGI-Resource: Over 1,000 scripts.

Affiliate Programs

Commission Junction: Launched in November, 1998. The largest affiliate management service. Depending on volume, transaction fees range from 15-25% of whatever commission you pay.

LinkShare: Another large network. It costs several thousand dollars to set up. LinkShare has attracted some big names, including Dell. You benefit from the publicity it generates.

ClickBank: Free affiliate program management service if you use it to process credit card payment.

Ultimate Affiliate: Industry favorite affiliate program script, one of the most fully featured on the Internet. Possibly the only affiliate program software which reports affiliate statistics graphically.

My Affiliate Program: Feature packed affiliate program software. And the company is well known for its superb support.

AssocTrac: Affiliate program software from famous Corey Rudl, founder of Internet Marketing Center. You don't just get the software installed. The package also includes a heap of advice on how to recruit affiliates from Corey. That's a huge bonus.

Search Engine

Keyword Density: Check and compare keyword density of your pages.

Search Engine Watch: Lots of free tips, techniques and latest news about search engines.

Web Position Gold: Top-notch software helping you achieve top positions.

WordTracker: Great keyword suggestion tool.

Overture: Formerly known as GoTo. Largest Pay-Per-Click search engine.

FindWhat: Pay-Per-Click search engine.

SearchTimes: Pay-Per-Click search engine.

7Search: Pay-Per-Click search engine.

Kanoodle: Pay-Per-Click search engine.

eBook Creation

eBook Gold: Software that turns HTML pages into a downloadable executable file - perfect for creating ebooks.

eBook Pro: By far the best authoring software providing the highest protection to your eBook: eBooks produced by eBook Pro can only be viewed from one computer! The eBook file can be transferred to another machine but it cannot be opened.

Activ E-Book Compiler Creates e-books that you can sell. Simple to use. Packed with powerful features. Test run the software for FREE by clicking here

Classified Ads

Classifieds2000: Bills itself as the "most highly trafficked classified site on the web" and manages ads on Netscape's and 120 other sites.

AOL Classified

Yahoo Classifieds

Banner Ad Networks

DoubleClick: Largest banner ad network. Provides sophisticated tracking and matching tools.

Engage Media

LinkExchange: Microsoft bCentral's banner network.

Newsgroup and Forum

Forum Directory: Online forum directory.

Free Agent: Free newsgroup client.

Google Groups: Free web based newsgroup message reading and posting service.

Internet Business Resources

Working At Home Business: Home based Internet business marketing guide, free articles, email course, newsletter, ebooks. Practical and down-to-earth tips and techniques on how to start and market your own Internet business.

The Insider Secrets to Marketing Your Business on the Internet by Corey Rudl, a self-made multi-millionaire and one of the most famous Internet marketers. He specializes in showing anyone how to use the Internet to immediately increase their income using simple, yet highly effective tips, tricks, and techniques.

Wilson Web: The ultimate e-commerce and web marketing knowledge base by Dr. Ralph F. Wilson. One of my favorites. The first place I will go to whenever I have a question on e-commerce.

30 Days To Internet Marketing Success: The author, Joe Kumar, has literally STOLE full-blown 30 days marketing plans from top internet marketers...He has about 60 such strategies where you start with 0$, no product, no website, no relations and build a HUGE PROFIT PIPELINE in 30 days...**Highly Recommend**.

NetBreakthroughs: by Terry Dean, one of only a handful real "gurus" out there. The best benefit of his site is that he tests different advertising systems and then posts the results in his members' area. This lets you know exactly what's working right now so you don't have to waste any money on advertising. **Highly Recommend**.

Instant Sales Letters: Quickly and easily create a sales letter guaranteed to sell your product or services - Without Writing. Just fill in a few blanks and presto, you have a winning sales letter in minutes, instead of weeks. By Yanik Silver, only 29 years old, recognized expert on creating moneymaking web sites.

Push Button Publishing: Unlimited products, turnkey web sites, premium web hosting, list hosting, autoresponder service, pro ad tracking, and much, much more! Not only will it show you how to Make Your Living Online, it'll also pay for the products, services, and resources needed to do it.

Armand Morin's Generator Series: Business tools you need to succeed: eBook Software, Header Software, Sales Letter Software, eCover Software, Link Check Software.

The Amazing Formula That Sells Products Like Crazy!: by Marlon Sanders. Few marketing gurus can boast earning a six-figure salary by working only one hour a day, but Marlon Sanders knows how to make that hour count.

123WebMarketing: Every product to help you start, build and profit from your own Internet business from Jimmy D. Brown, one of the web's most acclaimed Internet marketing consultants.

The Whole Truth How a little known Internet marketer consistently makes over $30,000.00 a month in net profits!

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