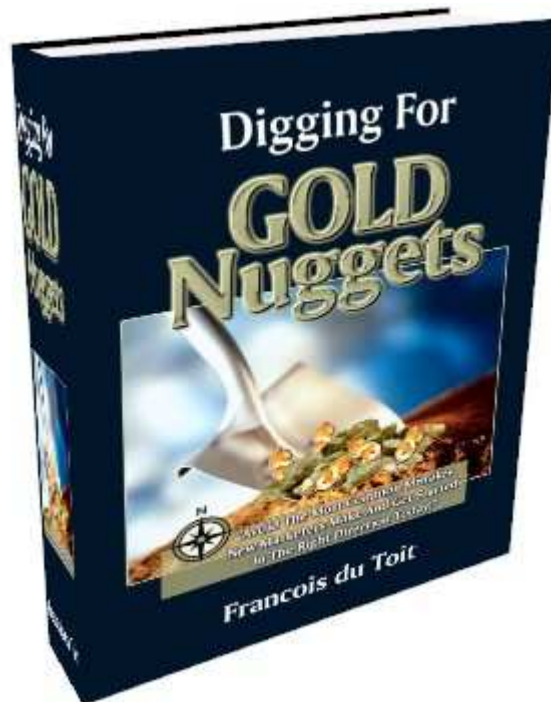


Digging For Gold Nuggets

Lessons Learned In Internet Marketing



By:

Francois du Toit

<http://www.DiggingForGoldNuggets.com>

Copyright © 2008 – Francois du Toit. All rights reserved. No part of this report may be reproduced or transmitted in any form without the written permission of the author, except for the inclusion of brief quotations in a review.

Notice: You have FREE Giveaway Rights To This eBook worth \$47!

You are hereby granted the rights to give it away for free, use it as bait to build your opt-in list or use it as a bonus, on condition that it may be changed, altered or converted in any way.

Disclaimer

This report has been written to provide information regarding the subject matter covered. It is sold with the understanding that the author and publisher are not hereby engaged in rendering professional services. If legal, financial, or any other expert assistance is required, the services of a competent professional should be sought.

Every effort has been made to make this report as complete and accurate as possible. However, there may be mistakes in typography or content. Also, this report contains information on the subject matter only up to the publishing date. Therefore, this report should be used as a guide – not as the ultimate source of information on the subject matter.

The purpose of this report is to educate. The author and publisher do not warrant that the information contained in this report is fully complete and shall not be responsible for any errors or omissions. The author and publisher shall have neither liability nor responsibility to any person or entity with respect to any loss or damage caused or alleged to be caused directly or indirectly by this report.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction.....	4
Chapter 1: Striking Gold!.....	5
Chapter 2: Building a Strong Foundation & Common Mistakes.....	6
Chapter 3: Develop the right mindset!.....	15
Chapter 4: Online vs. Offline.....	26
Chapter 5: Plan!.....	31
Chapter 6: You're the Expert!.....	56
Chapter 7: Invest in your own future.....	60
Chapter 8: The Power of Leverage.....	64
Chapter 9: Marketing & Promotion Fundamentals.....	74
Chapter 10: Without traffic you have no business!.....	94
Chapter 11: Conclusion – Time For Action.....	99
About the Author.....	100
Recommended Resources.....	101

Introduction

Many books have been written about how you can make money online.

There are books about achieving success on eBay, making money with blogs, building a Squidoo lens, doing article marketing, profiting from affiliate marketing, and building niche websites, just to name a few.

However, despite all these resources the vast majority of all new marketers fail to make any money online...

Not only do they fail to make money, they often end up losing a lot of money while trying to make money! Even more importantly, they waste precious time.

They simply do not have a strong enough foundation on which to build an online business. They lack the basic insight and knowledge required to succeed. They try to run before they can walk, or start walking without knowing where they are going.

I have no doubt that it is possible to become a successful internet marketer in a short period of time, but only if you start off with a clear understanding of the basic concepts of internet marketing.

I said farewell to the corporate rat race in 2006 at the age of 36 after spending many years in senior sales and marketing positions.

The transition to full time internet marketer at age 36 was not easy but I knew it was as good a time as any to realize my dream of turning internet marketing from a part-time hobby into a full-time work from home business.

It afforded me the privilege of spending more time with my wife and children than was ever possible while working in the corporate world. For the first time in my adult life I actually felt in control of my own destiny and finally understood the true meaning and value of freedom.

In "Digging For Gold Nuggets" I share many of the important lessons I learned in my first 12 months as a full time internet marketer.

I trust that you will find many gold nuggets in this book and that it will give you a good understanding of what internet marketing is all about and prepare you for the road ahead.

Chapter 1: Striking Gold!

Many people consider internet marketing as one of the best ways to strike gold. And you know what? They are right.

Where else can you set up a business within a couple of hours at virtually no cost and start making money 24 hours a day from customers all over the world?

A valuable lesson from history

The California Gold Rush started in 1848 when James Marshall spotted something shiny in a river. It turned out to be gold, and, despite trying to keep the find a secret, it triggered a massive gold rush.

What a great way to get rich quick! Gold nuggets lying around for the taking. Must have seem like a dream come true for most gold diggers.

The reality was slightly different...

Traveling to California was not easy in those days. There were basically three options, namely by boat via South America (six months of misery), by boat via Panama (if you were not too concerned about malaria and Cholera) or overland (a 2000 mile journey). Once you got there, working conditions were terrible. Lack of supplies meant that prices for basic foodstuffs soared. Many miners died hungry and poor...

What has the 1848 gold rush got to do with internet marketing? As in the case of the gold rush, many new marketers think that internet marketing means easy money. Similar to the gold rush, most new internet marketers do not actually end up making any money.

What can we learn from this?

The better prepared you are the bigger your chances will be to strike gold in internet marketing. The more you know about internet marketing the less likely you will be to make stupid mistakes and fall for “get rich quick” schemes.

Knowledge is power.

I think most gold rush miners would have done things a lot differently if they had a better understanding of what they were getting themselves into. Having a great idea or noticing an opportunity is one thing. Turning the idea or opportunity into a profitable business is a different story.

Chapter 2: Building a Strong Foundation & Common Mistakes

Before you can ever hope to build a successful online business you need to first lay a strong foundation. This means building your proverbial house on solid rock and not on sand.

Why people get scammed

Short answer? Lack of comprehension. New marketers often simply do not understand what they are getting into. Being gullible will always make you an easy target for scammers and the internet has no lack of those...

Imagine going on holiday to China. You don't know or understand the culture and language. You have no idea how much to pay for goods and services. You arrive at the airport and take a taxi to your hotel. The taxi driver charges you \$100. Is this a fair price? Are you supposed to tip the taxi driver? How are you supposed to know?

You see, the problem is you do not have a point of reference...

You cannot compare the cost of a taxi in China to the cost of hailing a cab in New York, Paris, Sao Paulo, London or any other city. Every single city is unique. Unless you live in that city and "know" the taxi tariffs you can be scammed without ever being aware of it. Hey, for all that you know, the taxi driver might have taken an unnecessarily long route or might have driven around in circles for half an hour!

Without a point of reference it is very difficult to know what to believe.
--

Many new marketers are attracted to internet marketing by flashy sites, banners and ads that promise them "easy money" – Ads such as "Make \$100,000 per month". They simply have no way of knowing what to believe.

\$1000 days? Yes, but not on your first day!

The old saying "If it seems too good to be true, it normally is too good to be true" applies here.

Is it possible to make \$100, \$500 or even \$1000 in a single day? Yes, but not on your first day and it is highly unlikely you are going to make it every single day.

It takes time to build a business. The internet is a great marketing tool but there is no magic recipe for instant wealth.

There are simply no real get-rich-quick schemes. It takes a clear head and some careful planning to succeed online. In fact, just like in any other business.

There are many people that have made \$1000 in a single day. However, what is often not mentioned is that it took them several weeks, even several months, to get to the point where they were able to start earning some decent income online.

Think about it logically. Assume you want to make money selling ebooks online. Chances are that if you buy the resell rights to an existing ebook, there are hundreds of other people competing with you.

Many of your competitors will be experienced marketers. Many of your competitors will be selling the ebook for only \$0.99 although the recommended price may be \$ 47.

How do you compete? How are you going to get your sales up to a level of even only \$100 a day?

An alternative is writing your own ebook on a topic that you are passionate about. Even then, you need to research whether there is a demand for such a book.

What are people prepared to pay for the information? It can take quite a while to write an ebook and promoting it may be more difficult than you thought.

Bottom line: you can earn a good living online but it will take some time to get established. I am convinced that most new marketers simply give up too early because they have unrealistic expectations from the very beginning.

I sincerely believe you cannot fail in internet marketing, you can only quit! Not every single project you undertake will be successful. There will be many flops. However, if you are really committed you will succeed.

IM is a wide field...

One of the most important points that new marketers have to understand is that internet marketing is a very wide field!

Try to picture internet marketing as a university. Within this university there are many different faculties or departments. Some dealing with advertising, others with website design, copywriting, market research, etc. A very long list indeed!

A student does not simply decide he wants to become a doctor and then attend classes at random on the spur of the moment as and when it suits him. No. He gets a "general" training that is well structured and that he has to complete before deciding on any area to specialize in.

This is where so many new internet marketers get it wrong... They try to go of in all directions at the same time. They read a little bit here, experiment a little there, and although they gather bits and pieces of information along the way they are actually not building a solid foundation.

Not knowing enough about a topic is sometimes more dangerous than knowing nothing at all! This also applies to the field of Internet marketing.

Not being prepared for what you are about to undertake can cost you a lot of time and money.
--

Internet marketing can be a profitable, full-time business but you need to approach it from the right perspective.

We are all different...

I read an interesting thread recently on my favorite internet marketing forum, Warrior Forum. The guy that started the thread is a very well respected and successful internet marketer with many years of experience. However, he has simply not been able to achieve success with Squidoo.

The way he wrote it was clear that he was fed up and throwing in the towel! It simply did not work for him. Another member, on the other hand, has had great success with Squidoo. It has earned her many thousands of dollars. However, she simply could not convince him it was worthwhile continuing.

I often come across these threads on Warrior Forum and other internet marketing forums. Another one that I remember very clearly was about making money on eBay selling ebooks.

I found it amazing how one member can write a post about how he makes thousands of dollars selling ebooks on eBay and the next post has a comment such as "eBay sucks".

Bottom line? We are all different!

Some of us are great writers while others simply hate writing. There are many people making a good full-time living from eBay and many others that have tried and failed miserably trying to make money on eBay.

There is no exact recipe for Internet marketing success.
--

There are many different recipes! How many recipes are there for roast chicken? Certainly not only one. The same can be said about internet marketing!

There is no “Best” way to make money!

One of the biggest traps new marketers can fall in is falling for hype. Many successful marketers write such good sales copies that a new marketer can easily think he simply HAS to buy the product if he wants to succeed.

You may recognize some of these examples:

“If you are serious about making money you simply have to get this...”
“Order now before your competitors use these techniques against you.”
“You simply cannot afford to miss this limited opportunity...”

Now don’t get me wrong. Many of these products are actually good. The problem is that many new marketers fall for the hype thinking they simply have no choice but to buy the product if they want to make money online.

You always have a choice!

What invariably happens, unless you have a solid foundation and a good understanding of the principles of internet marketing, is that you end up buying several products. Once again, this is not necessarily a bad thing...

However, it is bad when you fail to take action and keep on jumping from the one opportunity to the other, always looking for the proverbial pot of gold at the end of the rainbow.

It reminds me of a television advertisement I saw from a mutual fund company. It starts by showing people running down a street. They are in a big hurry to get somewhere and push one another out of the way to get to their cars first. They have spotted a rainbow and are trying to be the first to get to the proverbial pot of gold at the end of the rainbow. As they get closer to the rainbow, it disappears. However, suddenly they spot another rainbow in the distance and the chase resumes...

Sounds silly, doesn’t it? Well, I see new marketers doing this on a daily basis. You can give them step-by-step instructions that will guarantee them to make money. But often they don’t even bother reading the instructions as they have already found a new ebook they simply must have...

<p>There are many ways to make money online. There simply is no “best” way. If you are going to be chasing after the “best” way all the time (pot of gold...) you are going to be doing a lot of running around, in circles!</p>
--

Be careful of Information Overload!

Information overload means having too much info at your disposal. It becomes a problem when you simply do not know where to start.

I read an interesting forum post (I think it was on Warrior Forum) where a guy started a thread asking if there really is such a thing as information overload.

His point was that his local library is full of books. However, he simply chooses some books he wants to read and is not frazzled by the choice available to him.

Good point.

The problem with internet marketing is that there is a huge amount information available to new marketers and many new marketers are simply overwhelmed by all the resources. They don't know where to start and get totally confused.

I just did a quick search on Google for the phrase "Make Money Online" and got 248,000,000 results for the phrase without inserting inverted commas and 1,970,000 results for the phrase with inverted commas. Whew! That is a lot of data!

Let's look at information overload from this perspective: (Remember our example of the doctor?)

Assume you want to become a doctor and want to start educating yourself. Chances are if you go to a relevant library you will also suffer from information overload. Where do you start? Surely you can't just take out a hundred books at a time that has some medical content? Obviously not.

So how does a student do research? Well, for one, he makes sure he is clear about the exact topic he needs to research. Furthermore, most research papers only deal with a very limited subject matter.

For example, you don't write a paper about "butterflies". It is simply too wide. However, you can do research on the Miami Blue butterfly (One of the rarest insects in North America).

Exactly the same principles apply to internet marketing.

Don't even try to become an expert in internet marketing. There is simply too much information to digest. Rather focus on one small component at a time.
--

Try to become an expert in one internet marketing component at a time and choose a single topic such as article marketing, SEO (Search Engine Optimization), or blogging.

Even article writing becomes a huge field when you really start digging into it...

- How long should an article be?
- What is the best way to write an article?
- What topic(s) should you write about?
- Why should you be writing articles?
- Should you manually submit articles or use software to distribute it?
- What are the best article directories to submit to?

In fact, even researching the best article directories can take quite a while. How do you find the best directories? Why do you consider them to be the best? Alexa traffic rank? Google PageRank? By the way, this is not a silly topic to research...

There are thousands of article directories on the web. You cannot submit to them all and submitting to some will be a complete waste of time.

Take things on step at a time. Break any topic up into manageable smaller pieces. This will avoid indigestion!

From early childhood we are taught that education is a logical step-by-step process. Doesn't matter whether you look at the school system, colleges or universities. The principles remain the same. You have to "pass" a subject before you can continue to the next level. Every year you study becomes slightly more difficult than the previous year and as you continue your education you are constantly given new and more difficult tasks to complete.

One of my late uncles was a teacher. I remember going to school with him when I was about 8 years old to sort out some textbooks for the start of the new academic year. Looking at some of the "advanced" textbooks some senior grades were going to use I became quite worried. It looked so difficult! I really had doubts whether I would ever be able to understand any of it! My uncle simply said that if you are able to pass your current grade and proceed to the next grade you will also be able to pass it as well. Hearing him say that helped a lot!

Unfortunately, it does not work this way in internet marketing.

There is no set curriculum in internet marketing. There are no exams you need to pass before you can proceed to the next level.

There is no beginning or end in internet marketing.

Using the above school textbook example, it is like taking all the textbooks for all the grades and putting them all in one room. Instead of giving learners the textbooks they need based on their current level of education, there are several “teachers” standing at the entrance of the room. Some are saying “Go in and choose any book!” Others are saying “Get as many books as you can”. One says “You have to get Book A” while another says “No, forget about Book A, you simply have to get Book Z”. Confusing? For sure!

By understanding the obstacles a new marketer is bound to face you will be able to prepare yourself, even if only on a subconscious level, to avoid many costly mistakes. You will know what to expect and won't simply fall for hype.

Seeds need darkness to sprout.

Many new marketers make the mistake of exposing their newly planted seeds to sunlight before they are able to withstand sunlight. Seeds need darkness to grow!

As with so many things in life, this story has two sides and you will have to find the right balance. Let me explain...

On the one hand, we all need support when we start a new business venture or decide on a new choice of career. Especially the support of family, friends and peers. Is it really essential? I guess not... However, having the right kind of support certainly makes it a lot easier and not having support can make your life very difficult.

People are often very skeptical of change. As far as your family may be concerned, change may affect their sense of security (will deal with this in the next chapter). Friends may be concerned that you are making a mistake and peers may even ridicule you.

As previously discussed, we are all different. Although you may be really excited about the great possibilities internet marketing has to offer don't expect too many people to share your views. In all honesty, most people know nothing about internet marketing and some may even associate it with get rich quick scams!

One of the internet marketing forums recently had a thread about what you call yourself when people ask what you do for a living. There were some very interesting comments! It seems many marketers prefer not to refer to themselves as internet marketers as many people do not understand what it means or do not consider it a “real” job.

Some like to refer to themselves as entrepreneurs while one experienced marketer said he calls himself a writer. The “writer” said that he indeed does a lot of writing and as most people do not hold unknown authors in high esteem they normally do not ask him too many questions. He also added that most authors struggle to make a living so by telling them he is a writer he at least knows they won’t ask him for money!

It doesn’t really matter what you call yourself. The point is that you should not attract too much attention in the beginning, not until you are ready and at the point where you want to attract as much attention as possible.

You see, many very successful business people failed many times before they became rich and famous. Furthermore, it can take several months before you start making a good income online. I know of several marketers that only started making a good and regular income after two years in the field. There are no guarantees, especially not in the beginning.

By giving away too much information about your activities in the early stages of your online business you risk a lot. For how long will your wife support you if you have not been able to earn money online after three months of spending countless hours behind your computer? Do you really think your husband will have faith in your ability to make money online after yet another “opportunity” ended in failure?

Don’t get me wrong. I am not trying to sound negative here. It is not impossible to make some decent money right from the beginning but most people have to go through a steep learning curve before they taste the rewards of success.

It is during this time that you have to maintain a balance between not giving too much away while receiving the support and understanding you need in order to continue. You don’t want to create very high expectations but on the other hand you will need some support.

What is the best way to handle this situation? There is no single right answer but I do recommend the following:

Always start part-time. Only consider internet marketing full-time if and when you have no doubts that following your internet marketing passion will equal or exceed the income you are earning in your current job.

There are many successful internet marketers that have no plans on quitting their jobs. They simply enjoy having fun online and earning an extra income from it.

Do not be 100% dependant on making money from internet marketing. Certainly not in the beginning anyway.

If you have no or little experience in internet marketing and are desperate for money rather get a job until such time as you are earning a sufficient part-time income from internet marketing before considering going full-time.

Explain to your wife, husband, girlfriend, boyfriend, parents or anyone you need support from that you really believe you can make a success of internet marketing.

Tell them that it is a steep learning curve, will take a lot of your time and that you have no idea how soon you will be able to start making money but that it is something that makes you happy and that you are passionate about. You can even tell them it is your hobby. Why not?

I sincerely believe that by following the above recommendations you will be giving your freshly planted seeds the best opportunity to sprout.

Chapter 3: Develop the right mindset!

Many successful internet marketers are not afraid to admit that they only started achieving real success once they changed their mindset about making money online.

Unless you have actually made some money online you will never really know what potential internet marketing has. It all starts coming together when you make your first dollar.

It can be from Google AdSense (sponsored ads on your site), an affiliate sale (promoting someone else's product) or even selling an item on an auction site such as eBay. Anything really.

The moment you earn your first dollar you know that it is possible to make money online. It is often at this moment that something "clicks" in your mind.

You suddenly really understand that if you can make one dollar you can make 10 dollars and if you can make 10 dollars why not 100 dollars? Your mind starts racing with possibilities.

You wake up at 4am with a new idea and are unable to sleep any longer. Trust me, it happens...

Freedom vs. Security

In Chapter 2 we briefly had a look at security from a family and financial perspective. By starting an internet marketing business without careful consideration your family may feel you are compromising their financial security.

Well, security is directly related to your mindset so it is important to consider it in more detail as not having the right mindset can prevent you from moving forward and achieving the success you are rightfully entitled to.

Like I said, security, and I am specifically referring to financial security, is a mindset. What does this mean? Simply that you perceive security from your own unique perspective. In other words, it is completely subjective. There is no acceptable standard on what financial security means.

Some people view security as having a steady job. Others as having a monthly passive income that exceeds their living expenses, no debt, or having savings equal to one month's or five years salary. It can be anything really and it differs from person to person.

Most of us have been raised with the idea of working hard to get good grades and then finding a stable and reliable job that pays a stable monthly salary. Some of us have been raised to avoid making debt at all cost. Some of us have been raised to save at least 10% of our income every month for a “rainy” day. Once again, it differs from person to person.

Often, anything that involves change and is perceived to threaten financial security creates a big problem for most people.

Consider security for a moment from a totally different perspective. From the mindset of an entrepreneur...

Freedom is at the direct opposite site of the spectrum from security. The more security you have the less freedom you have. Example, can you tell your boss that you will only go to work if you feel like it and keep your job?

The most extreme example of security is a maximum security prison where you have no freedom at all to do as you please.

Most people try to find a balance between freedom and security. Even then, the level of security you think you have depends only on your frame of mind. You may think you have job security but how secure is your job really?

You may consider you have financial security thanks to your clever real estate investments. What if the property market drops and you owe more than the property is worth? What if you cannot get the rental income you were counting on?

Many people have a false sense of security.

Remember that although more freedom, such as working from home, will decrease financial security it does not mean you cannot have a substantial rise in income.

What do you prefer... \$5,000 fixed income every month or an average of \$6,000 per month working from home although some months may be \$4,000 and other months \$8,000...

See where the mindset comes in? Some people would rather earn \$2000 per month from what they would like to believe is a secure job than earn an average salary that can be a lot higher working for themselves.

By the way, have you ever considered that working from home may actually be safer than working for a boss?

Not only will you have more freedom but there won't be a boss that can fire you! In addition, you can really start earning based on your effort. Most companies try to make as much profit as possible while only paying employees as little as possible...

Think about it. I am not saying it is a good idea to quit your job in favor of working from home. I am not saying you will earn more money working from home than working for a boss. What I am saying is that your mindset plays a very big role in what you achieve in life.

Working from home is not the right solution for all people. Imagine the chaos if nobody wanted to do any cleaning jobs and everybody wanted to become a doctor. Yes, it is a ridiculous example. It would also be ridiculous to think that all people can or should work from home.

Being a successful entrepreneur requires a special mindset. Some people are born with it. Others only acquire the mindset much later in life. Some will never acquire it. It does not matter.

There is no right or wrong mindset. However, if your current mindset leans towards 100% financial security then internet marketing will probably never become anything more than a hobby for you.

Scarcity vs. Abundance

Scarcity and abundance are closely related to security and freedom and is also all about mindset.

Those people who value perceived job security over financial freedom also consider good jobs, and money by implication, to be scarce. Something to hold on very tightly for fear of losing it.

My late mother was very religious and one of the parables I heard often as a child was the parable of the talents. I believe it contains some valuable lessons. Lessons that apply to all of us whether we are religious or not. Here goes...

A man was going away on a long trip and gave some "talents" to his servants, wanting them to make the most of what they have been given.

The first servant received five talents, the second servant two talents and the last servant one talent. Both the first two servants made the most of what they have been given and doubled the talents they received.

The third servant was too afraid of losing his one talent. Instead of making the most of it he decided to bury it.

After a long time the master returned and was eager to find out what the servants have accomplished with the talents he gave them. The master was very pleased with both of the first two servants and praised them for what they have achieved.

The third servant was not so lucky... The master was very upset with him for not making good use of his talent. He took the talent away from the third servant and gave it to the first one to add to his ten talents.

“For everyone who has will be given more, and he will have abundance. Whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken from him”
– Matthew 25:29

Maybe it is not so ironic after all that every year the rich seem to be getting richer and the poor poorer...

Make the most of what you have been given. Do not waste YOUR talents!

End of my sermon 😊

Is money the root of all evil?

...or is the absence of money the root of all evil?

Times are changing but not too long many people still held a firm belief that money is the root of all evil. An “evil” that cannot be avoided but should not be given too much attention, and should certainly not be chased after.

Some people still believe this... Is it a coincidence that most of them have a real shortage of money?

How do you feel about money? Chances are that although you may openly say that you like money and would love to get more of it that you may have subconscious “problems” accepting abundance in your life.

You see, a lot of us were raised that you need to find a good job and earn money to support your family but that you should not “love” money. Do you “love” money? What emotion do you have at the thought of “loving” money? Does it feel wrong? If yes, you are probably carrying some baggage with you that originated in your childhood.

Assume you don't feel comfortable with the idea of loving money. How do you feel about loving your dog or cat? Would it feel wrong to say “I love my dog” or “I love my car” or “I love my job”? Probably not. So what is really wrong about loving money? Take your time to think about it.

My wife went to school in a strict Catholic school in Belgium. She has often told me how certain nuns made a point of making the children feel guilty about having so much when there were children starving in other parts of the world, especially Africa. She nearly got the impression that having a lot of money was not something to wish for or something to be proud of. In fact, showing any signs of having material wealth was severely discouraged.

If I have to choose between two equally extreme statements, namely “Money is the root of all evil” or “The absence of money is the root of all evil” I would choose the latter without a second thought.

Why did I choose “The absence of money is the root of all evil”? Well, I have been poor and I have been rich...

Being rich was certainly a lot better than being poor! I remember worrying about money, having arguments with my wife about our financial situation. Was not a pleasant time...

As I said, both statements are extreme. There are also many things money can't buy but just consider for a moment the positive things that money can accomplish.

Things that would not be possible without money, such as helping needy charities. Yes, you can help charities in other ways such as doing volunteer work but you can do so much more to help them if you have money.

You can do so much more with money than without money. Think of all the good things having money can achieve. Maybe now you will be able to say “I love money”?

Money does not buy you happiness?

Maybe, but one thing I know for sure is that the lack of money can make you very unhappy.

You may have no wish to acquire great wealth. In fact, maybe you just want to live a comfortable life where you have everything you need and don't need to worry about money all the time?

There is nothing wrong with only wanting to live comfortably.

Ever heard the story of the Mexican fisherman? It is one of my favorites! I have no idea where it originates from. Here goes:

The story goes that an American investment banker, on holiday in Mexico, was standing at a pier in a small coastal village. A tiny boat with only one fisherman docked at the pier. Inside his boat were several large tuna.

The American congratulated the Mexican on his catch and complimented him on the quality of the tuna. "How long did it take you to catch them?" he asked.

The fisherman replied "Not very long".

This made the American curious and he wanted to know why the fisherman didn't spend more time catching more fish.

The fisherman simply replied that he had caught enough fish for the day to support his family.

The American became even more curious at this reply and asked "What do you do every day?"

The fisherman said, "I like sleeping late, fishing a bit, playing with my kids, take nice siestas with my wife, walk to the village every evening where I drink some wine, and play the guitar with my amigos. I have a good and busy life".

The American bragged "I have a MBA from Harvard and can help you. You need to spent more time fishing and should buy a bigger boat with the extra money you will be earning. Since you will be earning a lot more by having a bigger boat you can reinvest this money in your business by buying additional boats. Soon you will have your own fleet of fishing boats".

The American continued (after catching his breath) "You should stop selling your fish through a middleman. Sell direct to the processor and before long you will have enough money for your own cannery. You will be able to control the product, processing, and distribution. Obviously you would need to leave this small village and move to Mexico City. Eventually you will be able to expand to LA and then New York, from where can run your growing business empire."

The fisherman asked "How long will all of this take?"

To which the American replied "I guess about 15 - 20 years."

"What then?" Asked the fisherman.

The American chuckled and said "That's the exiting part. When the time is right you could launch an IPO and sell your company's stock to the public. You can make a lot of money. In fact, you can make millions of dollars!"

"Millions – What then?"

The American said "Why not retire? Move to a small fishing village where you could sleep late, fish a little, play with your kids, take siestas with your wife, walk to the village every evening where you could drink some wine and play your guitar with your amigos."

Happiness is a mindset. Some people will never be happy, regardless of how much money they have. Other people will be happy even if they only have a little bit of money and live comfortably.

Think for yourself.

The sooner a new marketer starts thinking for himself the better. Internet marketing can be a minefield! Especially if you are not critical and don't ask lots of questions.

In principle, question everything!

After I completed school in 1987 I was accepted into a university to study law. I will never forget my first day... All the first year law students were packed into a very large lecture hall for orientation. We were all nervous but very excited at the same time!

Until the Dean of the Law Department arrived... Professor Malan looked at all of us with a serious expression and shook his head. "I am very sorry but I have some really bad news", he started saying. "We made a serious mistake by accepting far too many new law students..."

You could cut the tension in the air with a pair of scissors!

He continued, "All students that achieved a grade average of less than (can't remember) in their last year of school cannot be accommodated. Please stand up and move to the lecture hall next door where we shall try to make some alternative arrangements for you".

About half the class stood up and started walking towards the door. (Most with some very startled expressions...). Suddenly Professor Malan burst out laughing. "Ladies and gentlemen", he said, "Don't ever believe everything a lecturer tells you. Question everything!" He was only joking!

Having the right mindset for internet marketing means never believing everything you are told, even from very experienced and well-respected marketers. I am not saying you should take care because they may lie to you. No, the point here is that not everything they say may be right for you or applicable to you.

Sadly, as far as many internet marketers are concerned, you should take everything they say with a pinch of salt, especially if they are trying to part you with your money!

It is essential that you think things through in a logical manner. If something seems too easy to be true it often is too easy to be true. Use logic and common sense!

Let's have a look at an example...

You can buy a website on eBay for under \$10. Very often when you read the item description you get comments such as "Earn \$10,000 every month..." or "Easily make \$500 a day by simply selling..." What rubbish! Why would anyone sell a website for \$10 if he can "easily" make \$500 a day from it! Does not make sense. Not logical!

I have even seen some very experienced marketers sell cookie-cutter websites. They normally promise to give you an identical copy of a website they have been using that has been making them lots of money. I am surprised how many people fall for this!

Once again, think about it logically. Search engines such as Google hate duplicate content. Your cookie-cutter website will never rank well in the search engines. I.e. You will not get natural or organic search engine traffic.

You will have to spend a lot of time (and often money as well) promoting and advertising the site.

What may seem like an incredibly generous offer may turn out to be a real dud.

A word of caution: By thinking logically, being skeptical and questioning everything, you need to guard against being too pessimistic or negative. There are many genuine opportunities available on the internet. Keep an open mind. But don't accept everything you are told at face value.

Risk vs. Return.

I have often heard people say that risk equals return. In other words, the higher the risk the higher the potential return. This is often true in the financial markets but remains an oversimplification.

There is no such thing that you have to take huge risks if you want to get huge returns. The key is to manage your risk. How? By knowing what you are doing.

Warren Buffet has build up quite a reputation as an expert investor. He has made billions of dollars on the stock market while many other investors have lost money. What makes him special? He knows what he is doing. While many people don't invest on the stock market, thinking that it is too risky, an investor like Warren Buffet knows how to manage risk.

As far as I am concerned, investing in anything without sufficient knowledge and without managing risk is gambling. Pure and simple.

Talking about gambling... Never act out of desperation! Especially not in internet marketing. In fact, I sometimes think that many desperate people see internet marketing in the same light as I see gambling.

I can't tell you how many times I have come across statements such as "Help. I am desperate for money. Please tell me how to make money quickly". My advice to these people is to get a job or even a second job.

Not having the right mindset about internet marketing will often cost them dearly. The risk of failing when you act out of desperation is simply too high.

It is sad that some unscrupulous marketers will deliberately exploit desperate people by giving them false hope. What is even worse is that many of these unscrupulous marketers that make ridiculous promises often only make money by tricking other people. For example, they sell people a book on how to make \$10,000 per month although they have never made \$10,000 per month themselves...

Risk in business is a given. Running a business is all about managing risk, not avoiding risk.

This also applies to internet marketing. Risk cannot and should not be avoided but must be managed. However, you will find that as you gain more knowledge and experience in internet marketing that you will be able to manage risk better all the time.

Believe in yourself.

The last topic in this chapter about mindset is the need to believe in yourself. As far as internet marketing is concerned, it even goes further than only believing in yourself. You need to believe in what you are doing.

You need to be comfortable that you are doing the right things for the right reasons. You have to be confident and project confidence to other people. It is the only way.

If you are selling or promoting a product or service you need to believe in the product or service. I consider trying to make money from something that you do not believe in to be fraudulent. Not in a legal sense but from a moral and ethical perspective.

I often get up to 30 emails a day from people promoting the one or other product. I don't mind. However, what really irritates me is when I know someone is promoting a product such as an ebook as the next best thing since a slice of bread when he has not even read it himself! How on earth can he believe in the ebook if he has not read it? Why should I believe him? In fact, why should I believe anything he says when he is obviously only trying to make a quick sale?

You see, it is not only a question of believing in yourself but also getting other people to believe in you. By believing in yourself and what you are doing it will be a lot easier to establish credibility with potential customers.

Furthermore, by believing in yourself you will be less inclined to give up. In fact, if you know you are right, never give up. Not every single thing you do online will be profitable. Guaranteed. By believing in yourself and considering quitting not to be an option you will look (and find) ways to succeed.

What about luck? Well, I believe you create your own luck. It always reminds me of golfing legend Gary Player who once said "The more I practice the luckier I get".

Having a positive mindset really helps!

A Philosophy For Life

I have a little framed card on my desk that is very special to me. It was a gift from my late mother and the words have meant a lot to me in life. I believe the original author was Mahatma Gandhi:

Keep your thoughts positive
Because your thoughts become your words
Keep your words positive
Because your words become your actions
Keep your actions positive
Because your actions become your habits
Keep your habits positive
Because your habits become your values
Keep your values positive
Because your values become your destiny

To conclude, having the right mindset is vital in internet marketing. Furthermore, I don't consider it a coincidence that highly successful marketers all share the same trait, namely a positive attitude - Often contagious 😊

I believe that positive thoughts play an important role in the success we achieve in life and that our thoughts are powerful...

Chapter 4: Online vs. Offline

One of the things that will benefit any new marketer is to understand the differences and similarities between online and offline marketing.

Although I spent many years in the corporate world in senior sales and marketing functions, I did have a steep learning curve getting to grips with online marketing!

Myth: It is easier to sell online than offline.

It is all about establishing trust and credibility

Where do you buy your clothes from? Why do you buy from them? Let's see, most people will include one or more of the following answers:

- Convenience – Situated close to your home or office, offer easy parking, etc.
- Price & Quality – They offer good value for money.
- Preference – You like the range of clothing they stock.
- Payment Terms – Many people have store cards.
- Customer Service – You enjoy and appreciate the service you receive.
- Return & Refund Policy – No problem giving refunds or exchanging items.
- Sales Promotions – You simply cannot ignore their great sales promotions.

What many people do not mention is that they trust the merchant and have confidence in the store. Chances are they have been buying there for many years. In fact, most people simply take these reasons for granted because they are so obvious in offline marketing.

What may be obvious in offline marketing is often not that obvious in online marketing.

There are many new website owners that do all the right things - the right things as far as *offline* marketing is concerned... They offer a great product and pay close attention to:

- Convenience – Purchasing is easy. You don't even need to leave your home.
- Price & Quality – They often offer products at a discount to offline merchants.
- Preference – They offer products for which they know a demand exists.
- Payment Terms – They offer easy payment options by credit card.
- Customer Service – They have a toll free telephone no. and offer email support.
- Return & Refund Policy – Offer a no questions asked money back guarantee.
- Sales Promotions – Offer special promotions and discounts on a regular basis.

And yet, they fail to succeed! Why? Because they do not have credibility. People are often nervous to support an online merchant that they don't know.

You always need to put yourself in the position of a potential customer. They don't know you. They don't know if your product is any good.

Many people are reluctant to buy online using their credit cards for fear that their personal information will be stolen. Very often your customer will be hundreds or even thousands of miles away...

You can't hide behind your computer!

Most people hate rejection. In fact, I believe this to be one of the main reasons people hate face to face selling and why very few people still do door to door selling.

Well, with ecommerce getting more popular all the time many closet salesmen are convinced they have found the ideal way to sell products without risking face to face rejection. After all, isn't it better if a potential customer simply does not respond to your promotion instead of slamming a door in your face? Yes and no.

You see, by hiding behind your computer it is really difficult to learn and improve sales techniques. Most offline salespeople are trained to sell. They are trained to spot certain signals from the buyer indicating his readiness to buy.

They are trained to overcome objections. They can often personalize a sales pitch based on the specific customer they are dealing with.

Online selling is more difficult than offline. You don't have to deal with the same type of rejection that you find offline but your online rejection rate will be much higher than offline.
--

Simply because you do not have personal interaction and many people are too polite to tell you in your face to go to hell where online they simply click a button and they are rid of you.

Having a laser sharp focus is the best online alternative to personal interaction. A very specific niche and a very good sales copy. Let me explain. People search for specific information, often to solve a specific problem.

How many people have a problem with "dogs"? I would guess many thousands. However, can you solve thousands of problems in one sales letter? No. In fact, by being too general you are not going to succeed simply because people are not searching for general information.

You need to be very specific. For example, returning to dogs. Your niche should be focused on a very specific problem, such as hair loss in dogs. The more specific the better. This way you will be able to offer a 100% focused solution.

You will be in a much better position to identify with your customers and they will feel that you really understand their problems.

By being very specific you will be able to write a sales letter that really “speaks” to your audience. In fact, they should feel as if it has been specifically written with them in mind.

How often have you read a book or article that describes exactly what you are going through? A book or article that really “speaks” to you... That is what you need to aim for in online marketing. It is the closest you can get to personal interaction without actually talking to someone in person.

Building relationships

You have to subtly convince potential customers that having a commercial relationship with you is in their best interests because you understand their needs and can offer them solutions.

It is difficult to build commercial relationships online.

You cannot compare a close friendship to the relationship between you and your local fruit and vegetable store. However, there is a relationship.

Chances are you support and will continue to support your local fruit and vegetable store if you have any type of relationship with them. Maybe the sales lady is very helpful, friendly and greets you by your first name.

Many online marketers try too hard to sell before building a relationship with their potential customers!

By trying too hard people will invariably question your motives. They may think things like “He is so friendly. I wonder what he wants from me” or “This guy is obviously only after my money”. It is very easy to try too hard and to scare potential customers away.

Online selling and relationship building needs a subtle approach. Most people hate ending up on a website full of ads and flashing banners. In fact, you need to be very gentle not to scare customers away.

Make it clear to them that you understand their problems. Offer them some useful advice and only then inform them that you have the right solution.

Tip: Building a commercial relationship has many similarities with courting!

The customer is always right

There is a popular saying in the sales world “The customer is always right”. Well, I guess this point can be debated... What cannot be debated though is the need to always offer excellent customer service.

Let’s face it. Without customers you simply do not have a business. If you want to build a successful online business you need you build a reputation for providing excellent customer service.

In fact, customer service becomes even more important when you sell online since you do not have any face to face contact with customers. Customers that may already be nervous about doing business online.

Helping a customer in need is the best opportunity you are going to get at building a relationship with that customer.

People simply hate dealing with companies that are all over them when they want their business but ignore them the moment they have a problem or query.

Remember that by providing bad service to a customer you do not only risk losing that customer for life, you risk losing many potential customers. People talk. People complain on public forums and blogs about poor service.

One of my main niches is helping new people to succeed with internet marketing and the number one internet marketing forum is Warrior Forum.

There are posts every day from members asking for comments and advice on a wide range of subjects and companies, such as “What do you think of X?”, “What host do you recommend” and “Is Y any good?”

Many of these posts are read by hundreds of people and potential customers. Whenever I see a comment such as “I tried using X a couple of months ago but found their customer service really sucks...” I cannot help but wonder how many potential customers this company has lost because of one incident...

It does not matter what niche you are in or how you intend making money with internet marketing, people do talk online and poor customer service is a big no-no. Nobody expects a company to be perfect.

A comment such as “Yes, I once had a problem with them but their customer service was excellent and the problem was resolved in no time” can actually help the company to get more business in the future.

Word of mouth is powerful. People love spending time of forums to learn and get advice from other likeminded individuals. This online version of “word of mouth” is very powerful.

Obviously, people also communicate offline with friends, family, discussion groups, and attend seminars and conferences. You simply cannot afford to allow poor customer service in your business, however small your business may be.

One popular marketing technique is “viral marketing”. The word “viral” actually refers to a virus that spreads from person to person. Word of mouth is a very good example of viral marketing.

It is the typical case of 1 person telling something to 5 other people and they in turn tell 5 other people, etc. One action can have a multitude of consequences, good or bad.

What about difficult and annoying customers? People that simply cannot communicate. People that you would rather not have as customers... Well, always be polite. Always try to help. You will never be able to keep all customers happy but the least you can do is try!

I often cringe when I hear comments from marketers such as “I simply do not have the time to reply to all my emails” or “I told the customer that he should not buy from me again because he is always complaining...” Unbelievable when you consider the potential impact that only one customer may have on your business.

Tip: Use customer service as a promotional and/or marketing tool. Use it to your advantage. By turning a potential problem into a positive experience for a customer you will not only keep the customer, build goodwill that can result in future sales to the same customer but also gain a valuable ambassador for your business.

Chapter 5: Plan!

They may be two tired old clichés but “If you fail to plan, you plan to fail” and “Plan your work, work your plan”. However, these remain some of the best advice a new marketer can get!

Can you explain in detail to someone else how you are going to make money online? If you can't you don't have a plan. Without a plan you simply don't know if you are going in the right direction!

Most successful marketers that I have come across achieved success as a direct result of planning and taking action. Without a plan you are only going to be wandering around aimlessly.

Many new marketers simply do not have a plan. What often happens is that they need to earn money and start thinking about possible ways to make money. Online marketing seems like a good option. They think about it and come up with an idea.

Sometimes it is their own idea but often it is an idea that another marketer has planted in their heads. A marketer that is not making any money himself...

“Great”, they think, “I have found an easy way to make some quick money online”. What they don't realize is that they actually only have an idea at this stage and not a plan.

An idea without a plan is like wanting to go to New York but not knowing how to get there.

Imagine someone telling you that New York is a great city that offers many opportunities to make money. The statement may be correct. The problem is that the person making the statement might never have been to New York and might never have made any money in New York. In fact, he may not even have an idea of how to get to New York.

There is nothing wrong with having an idea but you need an exact plan on how to monetize the idea. Sadly, many marketers simply seem unable to get any further than the idea phase.

Having a detailed plan helps us to focus and to take action.

If you know where you are right now and you know where you want to be then the only thing missing is a plan.

The following steps should help you prepare:

Step 1: Set clear Goals

Step 2: Draw up a Business Plan

Step 3: Choose a Strategy

Step 4: Decide on an Action Plan

Since it is easy to be too philosophical or too theoretical, I am going to use “Affiliate Marketing” as a practical example throughout the rest of this chapter. While affiliate marketing may not necessarily be the business concept you have in mind for your internet marketing business, it is a good example.

If you already have some ideas of how you can earn money online then take out a pen and paper and make some notes relating to your specific idea(s) as you read the next section.

1. Goals

Having clear goals can be very motivating. In addition, it is fun setting goals.
--

It gives you an opportunity to dream and visualize a better tomorrow. In fact, I would go as far as saying that if you cannot dream about achieving success you will not be able to achieve it.

Look around you. Everywhere you look you find objects. Objects that someone once dreamed about creating. The legendary Martin Luther King started one of his famous speeches by saying “I have a dream...”

It is important to have a dream (not only an idea) and by setting goals you will be taking the first step towards realizing your dreams.

Let’s take a moment to look at goal setting.

First of all you need to write your goals down. Doesn’t matter if you write them on a piece of paper or type them on your computer. They need to be in writing!

Tip: Formulate a vision of your future, in the present tense, as if you are already there. For example, “I have a BMW...” and not “I want to have a new car” or “I would like a BMW”

By saying “I want...”, “I need...”, “I like...” you are not actually setting goals. You are simply stating your needs and wants, and you will feel more needy and unfulfilled in the process. While it is important to dream one should formulate goals in the present tense, thereby reprogramming your subconscious mind into believing that it is actually possible to realize your goals.

Be specific.

The more specific you are the more genuine your goals will be, to yourself! For example, don't only say "I drive a BMW". You need to be more clear than that. Say "I own a dark blue 2007 BMW 530i with black leather seats, automatic sun roof and CD shuttle, with less than 5000 miles on the clock..."

Think big, BUT be realistic!

You need to set high, but achievable goals. If you are currently earning \$1,000 per month don't limit yourself by only setting a goal of earning \$1,100 per month. You need to aim high.

About 25 years ago one of my school teachers said "Aim for the clouds and maybe you will hit the ceiling" I have never forgotten that advice. However, he was only half right...

You need to aim high but it must be reasonably possible to achieve. Setting a goal of earning \$1 million per month when you are only earning \$1,000 per month does not seem reasonable...

Rather set a goal of earning \$3,000 per month. You can (and should) always aim higher when you achieve it. Setting an unrealistic goal that you will have trouble believing in will only end up discouraging you!

Goals should always be measurable.

Having a goal, such as achieving financial freedom, is nothing more than a wish. What is financial freedom? What does it really mean? Does it mean you are earning more money than you know what to do with? Does it mean you can retire?

You must be able to determine when you have accomplished your goal. There should not be any room for doubt. Either you achieve it or you don't. There is no such thing as "maybe".
--

Timing plays a major role. Without setting a clear timetable you will not be under any pressure to take action. It will simply be too easy to say "I am going to wait until next week..." Before you know it, next week will be next month...

To summarize: Think big, but be realistic, and set very clear and measurable goals that should be achieved by a specific date in the future. Goals that will make your dreams come true.

Tip: Split some of your major goals into sub-goals. Whenever possible, take a long-term goal that should be achieved in say three years and formulate it as well based on yearly, monthly and even daily sub-goals.

Example: Assume you are currently earning \$1,000 per month and your goal is to earn an additional \$2,000 per month within exactly 12 months, working part-time doing affiliate marketing. One year is a long time.

You are not going to be earning \$2,000 extra per month from one day to another. No, it is a process and you need to start today.

Most affiliate marketers start small. They start by earning small little commission checks that gradually increase as they learn, gain experience and really start believing in what they are doing.

\$24,000 per year (\$2,000 per month) gives you an average of \$461.54 per week over 52 weeks or \$65.93 per day during a seven day week. Based on this, a goal of earning an extra \$2,000 per month within 12 months means earning an extra \$65.93 per day, every single day.

Granted you will earn more on some days than others. There will even be days where you earn absolutely nothing. However, by splitting a 12 month goal into monthly and daily sub-goals you create a sense of urgency.

Remember, your goal is to achieve an extra \$2,000 in 12 months time, meaning you do not have to be earning an extra \$65.93 per day immediately. However, you need to work towards this goal.

It always helps to have daily monetary goals
--

Even if you do not earn any money on a specific day you should be able to honestly answer that you have put in an effort on that day that is directly related and beneficial to your long-term goal.

The question you need to ask yourself every morning is “What do I need to do today to ensure that I achieve my long-term goals” and every evening “What have I done today that will ensure me realizing my long-term goals”.

You see, your daily actions are directly related to you achieving your goals.

It may sound logical and obvious, but by listening to other people explaining what they have done on a specific day I often understand why they do not move forward financially.

Without doing this it is easy to procrastinate and to waste time on tasks that are not going to help you achieve your long-term goals.

The actions you take today can lead to a nice long-term income. But, you need to know what and how many seeds you should sow every day to get the harvest you are anticipating.

There is nothing wrong working only five days a week. Hey, there is nothing wrong working only two hours a week. Just remember to adjust your goals accordingly...

Goals are not cast in stone. Circumstances change.

You may get a huge promotion at work and decide to only do internet marketing as a hobby. You may consider earning \$200 extra per month from your “hobby” as great.

On the other hand, you may decide that you enjoy internet marketing so much that you would like to do it full-time. Should this be the case you may need to increase your goals drastically, and the number of hours you spend on building your internet marketing business.

It is ok to be flexible. However, don't change goals like you change underwear or your goals WILL become meaningless.

Make a point of reading your goals every single day, preferable twice a day, in the morning as well as the evening. Being goal orientated will help you to stay focused.

2. Business plan

As soon as you have established your goals the next step is to draw up a business plan. This is going to take a bit of work but is a very essential step.

By following my advice you should be able to have a workable business plan within only a couple of hours.

Many companies spend thousands of dollars on business plans. They employ consultants, do extensive market research, etc. There is no need for you to go to these extremes.

Chances are you are the only one that will ever see your business plan and you remain the best person to prepare your own business plan.

Having a business plan will remove many of the reasons people fail to make money online and limit comments such as “Oops, didn't think about that...” or “Wish I new this beforehand...”

Returning to our example of affiliate marketing...

You have set your goals and have decided you want to make money with affiliate marketing. Where do you start?

I always recommend that new marketers start promoting a product they know or are passionate about. It simply makes it so much easier when you are doing something you enjoy!

Assume you love animals and would like to promote a product that can benefit dog owners.

This is a very wide field and your first step is to narrow down your niche as far as possible while checking that there is indeed a demand for this type of information.

Although you can promote both physical as well as information products I suggest you start with information products.

Most information products are available via instant download (instant gratification!) and you can generally earn very high affiliate commissions on information products as they do not actually cost the seller any money once they have been produced.

For example, if you are selling an ebook from your website, what difference does it make whether 10 people download the product or 100 people? Your cost basically remains the same so you can afford to pay affiliates generous commissions for promoting your ebook.

What are people searching for? Establishing Demand

Having the best product in the world will not feed your family if there is no demand for it. Secondly, search engines rank websites based on RELEVANCY and choosing the right keyword(s) plays a very important role.

For example, when you search for “solutions for dog fleas” you don’t want to see websites that cover dog food, dog training or dog breeds. No. Your dog has fleas and you are looking for information on solving this problem.

You need RELEVANT sites that will give you specific information and advice.

It is crucial to know what keywords or key phrases people use when searching for information as well as the average number of searches per keyword.

The latter is obviously required to establish demand. Do people search for “dog fleas”, “dogs with fleas” or “getting rid of fleas”?

There are many keyword research tools available on the internet, some free and some paid. I consider keyword research a vital part of internet marketing. Not a “nice to have” but a “must have” and suggest you get the best keyword research tool you can afford.

I highly recommend Wordtracker. It is, in my opinion, the best keyword research tool available on the market. Wordtracker offers a free trial option and also has a free keyword suggestion tool. To access their free keyword suggestion tool, visit: <http://freekeywords.wordtracker.com/>

Typing in DOG FLEAS into Wordtracker's keyword research tool I notice that the top keyword DOG FLEAS get an estimated 250 searches per day while a phrase such as FLEAS ON A DOG only get an estimated 7 searches a day. That is a huge difference!

But hey, don't ignore "unpopular" keywords! Low volume keywords often mean fewer competitors! I would rather be on the 1st page of Google for a keyword that only get 10 searches a day than one the 100th page of Google for keyword that gets 300 searches a day...

Tip: Do not make any assumptions. A low volume keyword does not necessarily have fewer competitors than a high volume keyword! Even if it has fewer competitors this does not mean it is a "better" keyword. You need to take both the daily search volume AND the number of competing sites into consideration.

Once you have established demand it is time to have a look at how many sites are competing for the same keyword(s). Once again, Wordtracker offers an excellent tool that is quick and easy to use.

Wordtracker has a very useful measurement tool called "KEI" that rates keywords based on search volume and the number of competing sites.

You can also do a manual search on Google by typing in your keyword or key phrase in inverted commas ("keyword") and note the number of competing sites.

Tip: Do not be dismayed at a large number of competitors. Even if you have 25,000 competing sites you should still be able to rank very well in Google for your keyword(s). However, if you have 100 million web pages competing for the same keyword you should rather focus on using another keyword!

By the way, by referring to websites and search engines such as Google I am not saying you have to build a website or blog that has to rank well in the search engines for your keyword(s) if you want to succeed with affiliate marketing. No. In fact, you don't even need to have a website or blog for affiliate marketing!

However, having a website that ranks well in the search engines can bring you a lot of free organic traffic. Traffic that is normally very targeted to your niche.

Even if you have no interest in ranking well in the search engines it is still very advisable to have a blog or website where you can send people to for more information, collect their details, etc.

Anyway, I am getting ahead of myself. The point is that you have to establish that there is a demand for your niche and, depending on the number of competitors you have, consider narrowing your niche as far as possible while making sure that demand remains reasonable.

Solving problems

It really helps to offer people solutions to problems. People that are searching for solutions to specific problems make better potential customers than people simply browsing the internet because they are bored.

Do some research into your niche to find out exactly what questions and problems people have that they need solutions for. There are many ways to do this type of research. I recommend you visit blogs and forums where you can find your target market.

Make a note of some typical questions, the number of views a question gets as well as the number of replies and what replies are given. It can be worthwhile to do some research into a topic that many people are enquiring about and build up some content of your own.

The better you understand a problem the better the solution you can offer!

Finding affiliate programs to promote

You have found a niche, established that there is a demand for it (people looking to find solutions to a specific problem) and have determined that the niche is not flooded with competitors. In other words, you know that you can reasonably expect to get your share of the pie.

The next step in your business plan is to find a suitable affiliate program to promote that you can present to your niche as the solution to a problem.

I highly recommend searching Clickbank's database for suitable affiliate products.

It is probably the easiest way for a new marketer to find and promote an affiliate product.

For more information, visit <http://www.clickbank.com>

For some additional help & advice concerning Clickbank, I recommend visiting the following two sites:

<http://www.clickbanksuccessforum.com>

<http://www.clickbankguide.com>

SWOT

A SWOT Analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) is nothing new. However, it remains a valuable tool and I am often surprised how few marketers actually make use of it. As far as I am concerned, every business plan should include a SWOT analysis.

Let's briefly consider the four elements:

Strengths (Internal factor – Refers directly to you)

What are your strengths? What are you bringing to the table? This is typically the answers you would give someone when they ask why YOU think the business will succeed.

Here are some examples of possible strengths:

- I have working experience...
- I love working on a computer...
- I have done enough research to know my idea is financially viable.
- I have studied this topic and clearly understand the concept.
- I have lots of practical experience doing this.

Be honest with yourself. You are not setting goals here! Don't mention anything as a strength unless you really believe it to be the true.

Weaknesses (Internal factor – Refers directly to you)

This is often the hard part for most people. It is not nice to make a list of our weaknesses. However, we all have strengths AND weaknesses. By being honest with yourself and identifying your weaknesses you are actually only listing possible problems.

Some examples include:

- I hate writing...
- I often lack self-discipline...
- I have a habit of procrastinating.
- I have a great product but don't know how to promote it.

Focus on playing to your strengths and overcoming your weaknesses. For example, if you hate writing you can always outsource it to someone that loves writing. If you are not sure how to promote a product you can buy some books that will give you step-by-step advice.

There is also a lot of free information available on the internet!

Tip: Visit some internet marketing forums such as Warrior Forum.

Your weaknesses are not to be used as excuses. The reason for listing your weaknesses is to find solutions!

There will always be some negative people, even in your own family circle, that will say things like “But you hate writing. How are you going to...” By acknowledging your weaknesses and finding solutions you don’t need to get defensive when it sounds as if someone is criticizing you.

In fact, having done your homework you will gain their respect and support by illustrating that you acknowledge your weaknesses and have spent some time finding solutions. Weaknesses should not be hidden away or ignored. You can only ignore a weakness at your own peril!

Opportunities (External factor – Refers to outside factors)

In many ways, identifying an opportunity may be best reason to take action. Very often, opportunities do not last long. You need to get in early. An opportunity is simply not going to wait until you finally decide to do something about it.

Have you identified an opportunity? Yes? Seize it with both hands!

Some examples include:

- Offering a unique solution to a problem.
- Taking advantage of a new trend before everyone else.
- Improving an existing product.

An opportunity is normally something that gives you an advantage, if you act on it. For example, what opportunity is there in becoming a plumber if there are already 20 other plumbers operating in your area, all good and hungry for business?

On the other hand, there may be no plumbers in your area. This could be an opportunity!

Remember that there are opportunities all around us. But, you need to be open minded and look for opportunities. Waiting for an opportunity to come and stand right in front of you and pull you by the ear to follow it is simply not going to happen.

Tip: Learn to be creative.

I once attended a lecture on creativity. The lecturer asked each one of us to make a list of possible uses for a pen and gave us only 60 seconds. I would have been happy only getting 5 seconds! Apart from the obvious one of using a pen to write my mind was blank. I was simply not open to exploring new possibilities...

How many uses can you come up with for a pen in 60 seconds?

Here are a few, just of the top of my head...

Writing, coloring in something, chewing it in your mouth (helps you think, solution to boredom), rolling it between your fingers (keeping your hands busy), drawing or sketching, breaking it (giving relief to frustration), using it as a paperweight (to prevent papers from blowing away), lending it to someone (doing someone a favor), selling it (it may be a collector's item), using it as a toy (throwing it, imagining it is a missile), using it as a lever, using it to type on your cell phone (if your fingers are too big), etc.

In fact, there are probably hundreds of possible uses you can list. Just shows you what can be done if you are willing use your creative mind!

Imagine the possibilities (and opportunities) in creative problem solving!

Threats (External factor – Refers to outside factors)

Threats often come in the guise of competitors. However, a possible change in legislation, consumer behavior, and cheaper substitutes can all be major threats.

Some threats may already be existing threats while other threats may or may not actually become real threats in the future. You need to take both types into consideration.

Let's look at an example of something which is rife in internet marketing: information theft. You write a killer new ebook on the best ways of getting rid of fleas on your dog. Someone steals most of your ideas, writes his own ebook and starts selling it on eBay for 99c.

What can you do? Very little. Ideas can not be patented. Yes, he is not allowed to infringe your copyright, i.e. he may not copy parts of your ebook without your permission but nothing stops him from using your ideas and writing his own "unique" take on events.

As in the case of "weaknesses" you need to be realistic about threats.

Do not let the threats you have identified prevent you from taking action. No, if most people reacted like this most businesses would not exist today and many people would be too afraid to get out of bed in the morning!

Threats are risks and every business has them. The point is that you need to be aware of them. You need to manage risk. This will allow you to plan better and increase your chances of success.

Just a word or two about competitors, one of your main threats. Any successful business will have competitors. In fact, competition (now or in the future) is a given. Learn from your competitors. What are they doing that is obviously working? What are their strengths and weaknesses?

As the old saying goes “Keep your friends close and your enemies closer” I am not saying you should think of your competitors as the enemy. However, you should keep a close eye on them.

Tip: View threats as potential opportunities or opportunities in disguise.

Most successful internet marketers have learned that the trick is not to try and destroy competitors but rather to work together in promoting one another’s products. In fact, although many internet marketers have exactly the same target market doing a JV (joint venture) can prove highly beneficial for both parties.

Remember that what you may perceive as a threat may turn out to be a great opportunity!

Financial Considerations

It has been reported that the main reason new businesses fail is due to cash flow problems. They are getting sales and making money but they are simply not generating enough cash to cover all expenses.

It is so easy to get carried away when starting a new business. Many people have a need to “project” success to the outside world as if this will give them credibility.

They want people to think they are successful by driving new cars, buying flashy clothes and jewelry, and by spending money on expensive office furniture and equipment. Big mistake.

We all love to be respected. But, respect is something that must be earned and cannot be bought!

You need to have the right mindset as a new internet marketer. Buy what you need to buy. Items that are necessary for your business, not in six months time but today. Avoid giving in to the temptation of instant gratification.

As the saying goes “Take care of the cents and the dollars will take care of themselves”.

One of the main advantages of starting an internet marketing business is that you can start a business with a minimal cash outlay. In fact, having a computer and access to the internet is already a great start.

You do not need expensive office furniture. There is nothing wrong in working from your kitchen table. Try to keep your expenses as low as possible. Most new internet marketers misjudge how long it will take them to start earning money...

It can be several weeks or even several months before you actually receive any money, even if you earn that money today. For example, Google will only send you a check for AdSense once you reach a \$100 balance.

If you are new in internet marketing this process can take several months. The same can be said for Clickbank. Making an affiliate sale today does not mean money in your bank account tomorrow.

Don't worry if you do not understand how Google AdSense or Clickbank works. My point is simply that it can take quite a while before you see any cash. Unnecessary spending or spending money unwisely can create a serious cash flow problem for any new marketer.

Your business plan should include a proposed budget (forecast) detailing anticipated income and expenses, even if you have a lot of start-up capital available but especially if you are working on a shoestring budget.

How are you going to be paid? Paypal? Check? Bank transfer? How long will it take? Don't make the mistake of getting so carried away in your excitement that you forget to consider the details.

3. Strategy

You have established your goals and drawn up a basic business plan. Next?

You need a strategy. The term "strategy" was originally referred to in a military context. The basic question a strategy has to answer is "How to...?"

Let's consider planning for a moment from a military perspective, just for the fun of it. You have a goal – Conquer the enemy. You have a business plan – What do I need to do?

For example, the enemy has 10,000 soldiers, how many soldiers do I need? How well equipped is the enemy? How much food and water do my soldiers need? For how long can I sustain a battle?

The next obvious element is strategy. How am I going to secure victory? Am I going to strike first or wait for the enemy to strike? Am I going to employ techniques to bluff the enemy? etc.

Your business strategy must answer the "How to..." question.

How are you going to succeed and why do you think it will work?

Many long books have been written about strategic management and business strategy. I am not even going to try to write comprehensively on developing strategies.

However, I am going to share some practical advice that will allow most new internet marketers to make a great start.

First of all, being the market leader is not always a great strategy. It takes an enormous amount of effort to always remain ahead of the competition.

There is nothing wrong with being in the No. 2 or even No. 3 position. If your market is big enough you will get your fair share of the pie.

It is advisable to keep a low profile when you enter a new market. Don't create the impression with your competitors that you are out to get them. Try to simply blend in. Keep your mouth shut and your eyes and ears wide open.

Learn as much as possible. Join the ezines or mailing lists of your competitors. It is a great way to learn more about them!

Take your time. Once you feel comfortably enough you can become more bold in your marketing efforts. I am not saying you should stay on the side lines for a long period of time. Just take a week or so to acclimatize.

There is no need to enter a new niche with your guns blazing.

The first step is to decide if you want to be a leader or a follower. There are many highly successful internet marketers that deliberately fly under the radar.

They do not attract a lot of attention to themselves and just quietly get on with making huge amounts of money. Personally, I like this strategy.

Drawing too much attention is not always a good thing. Why? More and more people will try to copy what you are doing, thinking that by copying you they will become as successful as you are.

I know several highly respected marketers in the IM to IM niche that make most of their money in niches that have nothing to do with the "how to make money online" niche. They promote online dating, hair loss products, etc. Just about anything.

Many of them are so secretive about their niches that they never discuss it with any other marketers that know them. In fact, they often don't even use their real names to promote these niches.

A couple of comments about branding

Branding is one of the best ways to obtain name recognition and credibility.

How do you brand yourself and keep a low profile? You can (and should) brand your own name in a certain niche and brand a company or website domain name in other niches.

Don't try to brand your own name in every niche...

It can create a lot of confusion (and damage your credibility) when people run a search on Google and find out that you have a website specializing in common breast feeding problems, a website selling sexy lingerie and a website promoting handmade wooden toys for children.

Rather focus on branding your website domain names. Everybody knows eBay but how many people actually know who owns eBay? Not many people and nobody actually cares.

The internet is becoming a pretty crowded place and it is getting more and more difficult to stand out in the crowd. You don't need to be a big blue chip company to develop an effective branding strategy and the sooner you start the better!

What is your USP?

What is your USP (unique selling proposition) going to be? Why will people buy YOUR products? What competitive advantages do you have over your competitors? Your strategy must include answers to these questions.

Here are some ideas:

- Sell your product below the price offered for similar or identical products by your competitors. Convey the message that you care about your customers and want to help them by offering the best possible price.
- Sell your product at a higher price than those of your competitors. Convey the message that you are offering a superior product that deserves a higher asking price. Many people will actually rather pay \$47 for an ebook than \$4.70 thinking a higher priced item offers more value.

Please don't get me wrong. By saying "convey the message" I am not saying lie to your customers or mislead your customers. You should NEVER do that. I am simply pointing out that a pricing strategy can work very well if done correctly.

- Promote your product, or someone else's product for that matter, as a new or even ground breaking solution to a specific problem. In other words, you will make your customers aware that the product you are promoting is the latest and best product on the market.

Note: Only use this strategy if it is actually true!

- Offer your customers a lifetime refund guarantee. Don't worry, most people are never actually going to request a refund but it shows your confidence in your product. The refund guarantee you offer will obviously depend on the type of product you are promoting and the payment processor you are using.

- Offer some great free bonus items when people buy your product or request more information from you. These bonus items should be related to your product or at least be complimentary to your product.

Tip: Don't offer a bonus that is totally irrelevant to your target market.

Bottom line, you need to give people a good reason to buy YOUR product instead of those offered by your competitors.

The last but certainly not the least point you should consider in your business strategy is how you are going to promote your product.

Nobody is going to buy from you if they don't know you exist!

4. Action plan

The last step in the planning process is establishing an action plan.

Based on your business plan and strategy, you have to decide what you need to do. Not only "what" but also "how" and "when".

By the way, you will often come across comments such as "The main reason new internet marketers fail is because they do not take action".

This is often true. However, many new internet marketers also fail because they take action without planning...

Your action plan should include a list of things you have to do that will enable you to realize your goals, business plan and strategy.

Let's look at a typical example of an action plan.

Assume you want to set up your own website to promote your own product.

Your action plan may look something like this:

Step 1. Write a sales letter (often referred to as “sales copy”) for the website.

Will have a look at some important sales copy components in Chapter 9.

Step 2. Graphics – Get a header for the website and an ebook cover designed.

This is not an absolute necessity but it can create a positive impression. You can normally have a good header and ebook cover done for under \$70.

Tip: Start a thread on Warrior Forum (www.warriorforum.com/forum) and ask if any “Warriors” can design a header and ebook cover or even a complete mini site for you.

Step 3. Get an HTML Editor.

You do not need any programming knowledge or even HTML knowledge to add content to a website. It is easy to use a WYSIWYG editor (What You See Is What You Get) such as NVU. You can download it for free at www.nvu.com

I highly recommend getting XSitePro. It was specifically designed for internet marketers by internet marketers and is an amazingly versatile tool for building quality websites without the hassles associated with other (and more expensive) programs. By the way, DiggingForGoldNuggets.com was built using XSitePro.

For more details, visit <http://www.XSiteProPlus.com>

Step 4. Buy a domain name.

Note: Refer to my article “Ten Tips For Successful Domain Name Registration” at the end of this chapter – **Insert A**

Step 5. Find a good web host.

You need a reliable company to host your website. I really advise against using free web hosting services. Most of them are unreliable, place sponsored ads on your site, and are very slow. They can severely damage your credibility!

Note: Refer to my article “Free Web Hosting – Facts and Myths” at the end of this chapter – **Insert B**

Step 6. Promote your website.

Will discuss this topic in Chapter 9.

Important! An action plan is not only about listing certain required actions! You should always set clear targets for every action. Set deadlines. If I only get \$1 from every marketer who knows what actions to take but fails to take those actions I would be a very wealthy man!

Prioritize your actions. It really helps to put them in a step-by-step format.

Take things one step at a time. Rather focus on completing one task 100% than completing 10 tasks only 10% each. Having to go back and work on different uncompleted tasks all the time is a waste of time and unproductive. It will often lead to a loss of focus.

Lastly, test and review your plan on a regular basis. No plan is cast in stone. If it is not working well enough don't hesitate to make small changes all the time until you find the "sweet spot".

Closing Comments

Planning is important. Very important. However, don't spend too much time planning and not enough time taking action.

It always reminds me of students... Maybe because I was the same! They take hours getting ready to study for an exam.

They clear their desk, get themselves some water, look for a note pad, sharpen pencils, and waste a lot of time on "nice to have" things. However, taking time to actually study... That is a different story...

It is always advisable to have multiple streams of income in internet marketing. Putting all your eggs in one basket can be dangerous! Many marketers have made the mistake of being too dependant on a single source of income.

Rather have 10 little money makers that pay you \$100 each per month than only one big money maker that pays to \$1000 per month. This way, even if you lose one or two money makers at least you won't lose 100% of your income.

Insert A – Ten Tips For Successful Domain Name Registration

1. Include relevant keywords in the domain name.

“Search engines REALLY like URLs that are saturated with keywords!

- SEO & Internet Marketing Expert, Derek Gehl of IMC (Internet Marketing Center)

Although search engines are becoming more sophisticated all the time they are not human...yet. They look for keywords that will tell them what your site is all about and assist them in correctly indexing your site.

There are many factors that search engines take into consideration when indexing a website and one of them is the domain name of the site. This makes domain name registration an important topic to consider.

This may be a very small component in the greater scheme of things, but every little bit helps, as most successful webmasters can attest to.

For example, If your site concept is all about a topic such as butterflies it will certainly be a good idea to include it in your domain name. It adds to the relevance of the site as far as the search engines are concerned.

2. The domain name should be memorable.

The second point to remember for a successful domain name registration is that the domain name should be easy to remember.

It should be easy to pronounce, short and relevant to your site concept.

Make it easy for people to remember your domain name. I have often in the past come across a very interesting website but when I want to visit it again a couple of days later I simply can no longer remember the domain name.

3. Choose a short domain name, if possible.

Not only is a short domain name easier to remember, it also looks better and more professional.

A common mistake some people make as far as domain name registration is concerned, is to take an existing name that is already registered and adding a word or a couple of words to it.

For example, you want to build a site about starting a home business. You go to whois.net and find out "home business dot com" is not available.

Next you try "home based business"...not available. Next "best home based business"...not available. Eventually you end up registering a site called: "Best start at home based business today".

What is the problem?

- It is difficult to remember (even if it is your own site!)
- It looks unprofessional
- It is easy to make a spelling mistake when typing it

Furthermore, "beststartathomebasedbusinesstoday", when you register it as one word, really starts to look like a dog's breakfast! Not ideal for domain name registration...

4. A dot Com is still the best!

The next point to consider for a successful domain name registration is the TLD (Top Level Domain) extension, e.g. .com .net .org. .biz, etc.

There are so many TLD's to choose from. However, I strongly advise you to always go for a dot com domain name registration. If you really feel strongly about a certain domain name and the dot com has already been taken then go for the dot net (second only to dot com) TLD.

What should you do if the dot net is also unavailable for domain name registration? Choose another domain name.

Remember that even if you manage to register the dot net domain name of your choice you will still lose a lot of visitors that type in the dot com TLD.

Most people are so used to dot com domain names that they automatically type dot com after the domain name.

I have on many occasions made the mistake of typing dot com after a domain name and ending up on a totally irrelevant site, thinking I have typed in the wrong domain name, just to find out later that I typed in the wrong TLD. Remember this when considering domain name registration...

You may get away with a dot net TLD if the dot com TLD belongs to an unrelated site. However, if the dot com TLD belongs to your number one competitor you are in trouble!

As far as the other TLD's are concerned, I would ignore them as possible options worth considering. They are not ideal for domain name registration.

There is one exception though and that is country specific TLD's.

In South Africa, the country TLD is dot co dot za (.co.za). Unlike the USA where dot com is the dominant TLD, even compared to the USA's country TLD (.us), most South Africans will automatically type .co.za instead of .com when searching for a site.

Country domains such as .co.uk (for United Kingdom) is certainly as important, if not even more important in the UK, than a .com domain name registration.

Depending on your specific country, you may find that your country TLD is more than sufficient for domain name registration, especially if you are not interested in international visitors or customers.

However, if you have an international focus you should certainly focus on a dot com domain name registration.

5. Some words can be spelled differently...

English is English. Right? Wrong. In many English speaking countries it is normal for the same words to be spelled differently. Examples include:

- Center (US) and Centre (UK)
- Program (US) and Programme (UK)
- Neighbor (US) and Neighbour (UK)

In fact, there is a very long list of such words...

My advice? Register both and simply redirect the one domain name to point to your main domain name. (It is very easy to do and your domain name registrar can certainly help you if you are not sure how to do it)

6. To register with or without hyphens?

Many webmasters feel very strongly that only domain names without hyphens should be considered for domain name registration. I do not agree. It is easier for search engines to read long domain names with hyphens than without hyphens.

Putting search engines aside for one moment, what is really important as far as domain name registration is concerned is legibility. Names that read easier and look more professional should be given preference as they are more readily remembered by your site visitors.

A word of advice: Whether you prefer your domain name with hyphens or without hyphens, register both versions. You will feel pretty sick if you work hard building a great website and then notice that a competitor is using a version of your own website domain name to compete with you!

By the way, always avoid registering a domain name that includes a trademark. If you do you can end up in some very hot water!

7. What to do when in doubt.

Domain name registration is not always easy. It may be difficult to find the right domain name or you may even end up with a couple of good domain names and find it difficult to choose one.

If you simply cannot decide between two or three domain names I suggest you register them all. Domain name registration is not nearly as expensive as what it used to be. For under \$10 pa. you cannot really go wrong.

If you do not have an extra \$10 to spend on a domain name registration you obviously do not have a choice. However, see it like this: Spending \$10 will give you a full year to decide whether you should use the domain name.

8. What if your domain name is not available?

For a successful domain name registration you obviously first need to find the right domain. But what if your domain name has already been taken? Once again, the easiest solution is simply to look for another domain name.

If you feel strongly about it you can try the following:

Type in the domain url in your browser and see if the domain name you are looking for has already been turned into a website. If it has you can email the webmaster and ask him or her if he or she is prepared to sell you the domain name. Give a price indication.

It is always possible that the webmaster is not interested in continuing with the website in the future. If there is no contact form or email address on the website, try a whois search - Simply go to whois.net

Your chances are much better if there is no website yet. Many people buy a domain name thinking they will use it to build a website but never get around to actually building it. In this case you have a better chance.

Here are some additional techniques that may help:

Go to whois.net and find out when the domain name is due to expire. If the current domain name owner has not done anything with the domain name it is possible he or she will not renew it.

If the name is due to expire within a short period of time you can contact pool.com or snapnames.com to "catch" the name when it "drops".

Note: When a domain name expires the current owner can still renew it for a certain period after the expiry date before it becomes available. I will not go into the details here as it is not relevant to this section.

Both pool.com and snapnames.com are excellent companies to use. They are the best in my opinion. Although they will charge you a fee of about \$60 if they catch the domain name, they will not charge you anything if they are unsuccessful with the domain name registration.

It is also possible that the current owner is already trying to sell the domain name. Do a search on auction sites such as eBay. The two most popular domain name auction sites are afternic.com and sedo.com

9. When to consider domain name auctions?

If you lack imagination coming up with an original domain name or simply want to see what is available on the open market, domain name auction sites such as afternic.com and sedo.com are excellent resource sites.

Sedo alone has more than six million domain names listed. Yes, MILLION!

Buying a domain name on an auction site can be quite expensive. One exception is eBay where you can buy a domain name for under \$1. However, eBay has a limited number of domain names on offer and it must be a really bad domain name if it cannot even fetch \$10 on eBay...

10. Only buy a name once you are sure about your site concept.

One of the biggest mistakes I made when I just started out was buying many different domain names because I thought I could use them in the future. Not very clever.

I highly recommend using either Godaddy (www.godaddy.com) or Namecheap (www.namecheap.com) as they are both very good domain name registrars.

Insert B – Free Web Hosting – Facts and Myths

Free web hosting, as with so many things in life that looks good from far but is actually far from good, is not something any serious marketer can bank on.

Most free web hosting companies will give you exactly what you paid for using their services - Nothing!

The Eight Main Problems with Free Web Hosting are:

1. Sponsored Advertising

In return for free web hosting some service providers will place banner ads on your site. Would you feel like buying from a site that has a huge banner saying "This site is hosted for free thanks to..."? No, didn't think so.

2. Lack of Credibility

Establishing credibility on the internet is one of the most important but also most difficult things you need to achieve.

Many people can spot a free hosted website a mile away.

In addition, companies such as Clickbank will not even allow you to use their services if you are making use of free web hosting services.

3. Inadequate Features

Most hosting service providers will provide you with a comparison chart indicating the features of each package.

You will notice that a free web hosting account normally only has a very small number of features compared with paid hosting plans.

4. Long & Unsightly Domain Name

Some companies do not even give you the opportunity of using your own domain name. Instead you get an address such as freebyhost/sucker.com where "freebyhost" is the name of the host and "sucker" is your domain!

5. Slow Speed

It has been proven that most people expect a web page to open in under seven seconds. Any longer than that and they click else ware...

Free web hosting services do not exactly have an excellent reputation for using fast and efficient servers.

6. Poor Support

Have a problem with your account? No problem, just go and stand in the back of the line while the paid members get looked after first. Don't expect world-class service when you are not prepared to pay a dime for it.

7. Server Problems

Getting traffic to your site is not always easy. Imagine spending a lot of time (and often money as well) getting traffic and when they get to your site the server is down for maintenance or something more serious.

8. Unfavorable Terms & Conditions

Some of the better free web hosting companies such as Doteasy.com offers a reasonable hosting option but you have to buy a domain name through them or transfer an existing name or account to them.

Often the domain name will cost you a lot more than what you would pay for it at another registrar. Transferring an existing domain name or hosting account to them is not cheap either...

Are there any advantages to using free web hosting services?

Not as far as I am concerned. I have never come across an internet marketer, or anyone for that matter, that recommended a free hosting provider as being equally good or better than paid hosting providers.

To be frank, hosting has become so cheap in recent years that you can find excellent hosting packages for only a couple of dollars per month. Many companies will even host several domains on one package at no extra cost.

So far, Hostgator, has given me the best value for money. For as little as \$9.95 / month they will host an unlimited number of websites for you on one account. Their support is great and they offer excellent tools for webmasters. Have been using them for several years and have never had a complaint.

For more information, click this link <http://www.HostgatorGold.com>

Chapter 6: You're the Expert!

You need to become an expert in your own right. An expert in your field. Many new marketers try to find a “guru” or mentor to show them the ropes. This is a good way of learning.

However, until those marketers reach a point where they are ready to see themselves as the expert they will subconsciously limit their own success.

The problem is that many new marketers try to follow several “gurus” at the same time. Even if they are not deliberately following a number of gurus, they do so in their actions. They take advice from various mentors and try to do too many things at the same time, thinking that the more they learn the better they will do.

Well, it does not work like that. Although it is important to learn it is even more important that you reach a stage where you realize that you will actually never stop learning and that unless you take action you will never make any money, despite the fact that you have a wealth of knowledge.

Become an expert!

Being a “jack of all trades, but master of none” is a common mistake.

You find marketers that will write hundreds of articles to article directories but won't be able to answer the following basic questions:

1. Does submitting to a high Google PageRank article directory give your articles more exposure?
2. Does the PageRank of an article directory's home/index page have any benefits to you?
3. Should you submit the same article to many different article directories?
4. What role does “duplicate content” play in article marketing?
5. What are the three main reasons to submit articles?
6. What are “long-tail keywords? How do you find them and when should you use them?

The point is that many people submit articles because they have been told that it is a great way to get traffic but they do not know enough about article marketing to know whether they are doing it right.

The same people may also write sales letters for their own websites. However, being a good copy writer is not easy. It is a skill that I believe anyone can learn but a skill that takes time to master.

Many marketers act as a “jack of all trades, but master of none”. They write some articles to get free traffic to their website. They write a sales copy for their website. However, they do not really understand how to write traffic generating articles or how to write a good sales copy.

They often have no idea when to use a “long copy” or when a “short copy” is appropriate. They simply do not know...

Result? They get very little traffic from the articles they submit and are not able to even convert even 1% of the traffic into sales. This is a typical lose-lose situation.

Most new marketers may not be experts in both article marketing and copywriting. However, it is much better to be an expert in either one than none at all.

Even if you do not have a great sales copy but your article marketing skills are superb you will generate more traffic to your website and will get more sales.

By the same token, if your articles suck but your copywriting is very good you may not get a lot of traffic but your traffic will convert much better, i.e. you will get more sales.

If you want to write articles to get free traffic to your sales website you have to work hard on becoming an expert in article marketing as well as in copywriting. It is not difficult!

The problem is simply that instead of mastering some skills such as article marketing and copywriting, many marketers try to do everything.

They try to build a website and optimize it for the search engines, write articles, build a Squidoo lens, build a Wordpress blog, write a press release, make a video for YouTube, advertise on online classified ad sites, etc. without really knowing what they are doing.

Can you become an “expert” in everything? Not as far as I am concerned. However, you should aim to become an expert in components that are essential to your business and outsource non-essential components.

I consider the following components essential: (This may not necessarily apply to everyone)

Research – Determining demand and supply. As far as I am concerned, this is something you have to master yourself. I would never outsource this component.

First of all, not everyone is good at doing research and, secondly, you run a huge risk...

By paying someone to do research for you into viable and profitable online niche markets you run the risk that the person you are paying will use the information to his or her own benefit.

As stated earlier, most successful internet marketers try very hard to protect their niche markets. The last thing they want is to attract attention to them.

Copywriting – I consider this an essential skill that should be learned sooner or later. Why? Without a good sales copy you are not going to sell a lot of products. In addition, hiring a copywriter can be very expensive and it makes sense to invest some time and money to learn this essential skill.

Ultimately, YOU are your own best copywriter.

Promotion / Advertising – Most successful internet marketers spend the bulk of their time promoting and advertising their products. Without this you are not going to make it.

Many people work too hard on creating a “perfect” product. They want it to be just right before launching it. Well, guess what? The biggest crap out there will outsell your “perfect” product by at least 100 to 1 if you do not now how to promote and advertise your product.

Don't get me wrong, I am not encouraging you to sell crap products. However, I am encouraging you to become an expert in promotion and advertising. The internet evolves very quickly. What worked well last year may not work well today.

It is essential to keep up to date with new and innovative marketing techniques.
--

Let's take Pay-per-Click advertising as an example. I guess everyone has seen Google's sponsored ads, called Adwords. It is probably the quickest way of getting traffic to your website. It only takes a couple of minutes to set up and you can expect to receive traffic within 15 minutes of launching your campaign.

The beauty of PPC advertising is that results are nearly immediate. However, you should test new ad variations all the time.

By making a simple change such as changing one word in your headline you may find a drastic improvement in the number of people that click on your ad. It is worthwhile to manage your own PPC campaigns.

Getting someone else to do it for you makes no sense. It is not difficult to use PPC advertising and you don't want to contact someone else every time you want to experiment with a new ad format. It is simply easier, quicker and more convenient to do it yourself.

Note: It is very easy to waste money on unprofitable PPC campaigns. You really need to invest a bit of time and money to learn the "tricks". Not making a small investment in your PPC education can cost you dearly!

There are hundreds of ways you can promote or advertise your business. Most of them are not that difficult to learn.

Don't only rely on one or two techniques or methods. You don't need to master all techniques but the more weapons you have in your arsenal the better. However, try new methods one at a time and master a method before moving on to the next method.

The following is not really an essential skill but a recommended skill to acquire:

Basic HTML knowledge – These days most new marketers do not require knowledge of HTML before building a website. There are many good software programs on the market that makes building a website nearly as easy as typing a word document.

However, it will save you a lot of time and money if you can at least make some minor adjustments to your website such as changing a headline, inserting a paragraph, and copy & pasting some HTML code. It is really easy. Much easier than a lot of people think.

Non-essential components can be bought or outsourced. For example, website graphics, ebook covers, etc. You do not need to be an expert in everything.

Once you have a basic understanding of an essential internet marketing component, dig deeper until you feel comfortable that you have at least a working knowledge of it.

Chapter 7: Invest in your own future

One of the main incentives that attract new marketers to internet marketing is the low start-up cost required compared to other businesses such as buying a franchise.

What I have noticed is that you always find people that are interested in buying a product but cannot really afford it. Doesn't matter if it is a house, boat or a car. People often want to get more than what they can afford.

If you sell land for \$50,000 you will always get interested people that want to buy but can only afford \$20,000 max. If you want to sell your house for \$500,000 you will always get people that would love to buy but can only afford \$200,000. It has always baffled me.

There is nothing wrong getting a bargain or negotiating a better price but you will always find people that are just being totally unrealistic in their expectations.

Internet marketing is no different. Since the start-up costs are very low you find a lot of bottom dwellers. People that expect to get everything for free. They are simply not prepared to invest any of their own money in their business and, by implication, in themselves.

They want to get a free website, free website hosting, free domain name, free advertising, free software, free (and step-by-step) information on how to make money, etc.

There is a lot of free information, products and tools on the internet and there is no reason to buy something that is available for free. However, the important thing is that you acquire the right tools for your business.

If you can get the tool for free, great! However, if you cannot get the right tool for free you should be willing to pay for it. Don't expect to get everything for free!

A common argument is why should you pay for information that you can obtain for free, somewhere on the internet. Good point. Do you know where to find the information? How long is it going to take you?

I would much rather spend \$10 buying information that someone else took hours, days or even weeks to compile. It simply makes no sense to me to waste several hours searching for information just to save a couple of dollars.

Ok, if you do not have a couple of dollars to start of with I understand. Some people simply have a lot more time than money...

Being a scrooge makes no sense unless you put no value on your time.

The other side of the coin...

The other side of the coin is just as bad. Many new marketers simply buy just about every single new product they can get their hands on.

There are many internet marketers with such a lot of stuff on their hard drives that it will take them weeks to read through everything! They buy products but don't use them. What a waste!

I recently heard one marketer say that she keeps an accurate list of all buyers and that there has been several instances where a buyer bought exactly the same product without even knowing it!

Remember the story about chasing the pot of gold at the end of the rainbow? There is no point buying the one product after the other...

Ask yourself the following questions before buying:

1. Do I need it? Is it an essential tool?
2. Do I need it right now or at least in the very near future?
3. Can I find the time to make full use of it?

Unless you answer "Yes" to all three questions, think twice about buying.

Essential Tools

There are some essential tools that I recommend every single internet marketer should have. These tools are, in my opinion, "must have" tools and not simply "nice to have" tools. They are the tools of the trade.

1. Reliable computer & fast internet connection.

Let's face it, without a computer and access to the internet you simply don't have an internet business.

Working from Internet Cafes is not an answer. It is expensive, time consuming and not safe. Many of these computers are full of viruses, trojan horse programs, and key logger spyware.

Whenever possible, try to get a fast DSL connection.

Remember, time is money and having to wait a minute every time you log onto a new website is a total waste of time. The wasted minutes quickly add up to several hours!

2. Website.

Is it possible to make money online without having your own website? Yes. However, I highly recommend that you get your own website or blog. I do not know of a single successful internet marketer that does not have at least one website or blog. Most have many different websites.

XsitePro is a very popular software program with internet marketers. It is quick and easy to use, even if you have never built a website in your life!

For more information, click on this link <http://www.XSiteProPlus.com>

3. Website Hosting

Having a good website host is not a luxury but an essential component of internet marketing. I have used many different hosts in the past, some good and some disastrous, and the only one that I can highly recommend is Hostgator.

For more information, click on this link <http://www.HostgatorGold.com>

4. Keyword Research

Keyword research is one of the most important tasks you need to perform. Get it wrong and most of what you do afterwards may be in vain. Imagine the waste of time and money using an unreliable tool that does not give you correct information...

You can spend hours or days developing your own product, finding affiliate programs, and working on your sales copy, thinking there is a demand for your product just to discover you got it all wrong! I have made this mistake once and it cost me dearly!

Wordtracker is an excellent keyword research tool.

Visit <http://freekeywords.wordtracker.com/> to use their free keyword research tool or sign up for a free trial of the paid and more comprehensive version.

4. Domain Name

There are many different domain name registrars on the net. I recommend both Godaddy and Namecheap. Personally I have a slight preference for Godaddy as I believe they offer more value for money than Namecheap but many internet marketers swear by Namecheap.

Godaddy – <http://www.Godaddy.com>

Namecheap – <http://www.Namecheap.com>

5. Autoresponder

The autoresponder has been described as the best thing that ever happened to internet marketing. I have to agree.

The ability to build up a large database of customers and to send them personalized messages whenever you want to is priceless. It is true that “the money is in the list”.

No internet marketer can afford to be without a good autoresponder!

I personally use and highly recommend Aweber.

For more information, click on this link <http://products.aweber.com>

Chapter 8: The Power of Leverage

Leverage basically means getting more for less.

Most of us use some form of leverage on a daily basis without even realizing it.

One of the best examples of leverage is buying a house – For example, buying a \$100,000 house with a 20% down payment.

Many people use leverage with great effect to make large sums of money.

Assume you sell the house in the above example for \$110,000 you will make \$10,000 gross profit. That is a 50% return on your \$20,000 investment although the underlying asset only increased by 10%.

Leverage is powerful!

The two most common ways of using leverage is, using...

1. Other people's time, and / or
2. Other people's money.

In the case of the above mentioned example you would be using the bank's money to achieve a 50% return on your investment.

Using your own money would only have given you a 10% return - \$10,000 gross profit on an investment of \$100,000 versus \$10,000 gross profit on an investment of \$20,000. Quite a difference leverage can make!

Why is leverage so important in internet marketing? Well, most people start very small, often part-time working at the kitchen table running a one-man or one-woman business.

There is nothing wrong with this. However, the obvious problem is that you are the business. If you become ill or cannot work the business will suffer.

Furthermore, you are only one person with two hands and there are only 24 hours in a day...

One of the main factors that attracted me to internet marketing is the fact that there are so many ways to use leverage in internet marketing. So many ways to get more for less.

Let's look at an example of a typical one-man or one-woman business – Assume you love woodworking and have the ability to make great wooden toys. Selling it offline in your own shop gives you very little leverage.

First of all, most sales will only be to people living in your area. Secondly, if your shop is closed (because you are sick, sleeping or on holiday) you will not sell anything. Thirdly, you can only deal with one customer at a time. You simply have no leverage.

Now compare that to internet marketing. You do not need a physical store with high overhead costs such as rent, keeping stock, etc. You can set up a website that will showcase and promote your toys nationwide and even worldwide.

Your business is open 24 hours a day and fully functional even if you are fast asleep. You can handle multiple sales at the same time by using a simple shopping cart and payment processor.

What a pleasure!

Furthermore, by building a database (list building) of people that are interested in your products and by using a good autoresponder program you can promote your business to hundreds or thousands of people by simply typing one email message and sending it to your list.

That is leverage!

Let's look at a good example of leverage in internet marketing that involves using other people's time and often, money as well.

Starting an affiliate program

There are many thousands of people that earn a living selling other people's stuff in return for a commission. Talk about building a huge sales team! And you know what, you only pay them when they actually facilitate a sale!

You have no monthly salaries to pay. No problems with unions, no problems with employees stealing from you, no problems with employees not showing up for work. This list is nearly endless.

Setting up an affiliate program gives you a 'virtual sales network' with all the advantages of having your own sales team but none of the disadvantages.

By the way, setting up an affiliate program is not difficult. There is no need to reinvent the wheel or start from scratch. There are many companies that specialize in helping people set up an affiliate program.

Suggest you have a look at companies such as Clickbank (for selling digital products such as ebooks and software that can be instantly downloaded) and Commission Junction for physical products.

By the way, Clickbank alone has more than 100,000 affiliates promoting products that are listed on Clickbank!

Special Notes:

Affiliate Marketing – Have included a short article I wrote about affiliate marketing at the end of this chapter – **Insert C.**

Have also included a free bonus for everybody that has elected to join my mailing list, namely “The Affiliate Masters Course”, by Ken Evoy of Sitesell. It is an excellent guide into affiliate marketing.

Many new marketers have achieved great success by implementing Sitesell’s marketing & website building strategies. If you are looking for an all in one solution, Sitesell may be the answer!

- For more information, click on this link <http://www.SitesellPlus.com>

P.S. If you have not received this bonus, please sign-up for my mailing list at <http://www.DiggingForGoldNuggets.com> and you will receive the download link by email after you have confirmed your request.

Network Marketing – Many new marketers get excited by the “leverage” offered by network marketing companies. Some achieve great success whilst others burn their fingers and damage relationships with family and friends...

Have included a short article I wrote about network marketing at the end of this chapter – **Insert D.**

Insert C – Notes On Affiliate Marketing

Starting an affiliate business from home is one of the best ways to start making money on the internet and can be rewarding if you go about it in the right way.

An affiliate program offers you the opportunity of entering into an agreement with a merchant in which you, the affiliate, earn a commission for referring sales and/or leads to the merchant.

A good affiliate agreement must always offer a win-win solution for both the affiliate and the merchant.

Note: It can only work if both parties contribute towards the success of the business and both parties benefit from the proceeds of the business.

What's in it for the affiliate?

Ten Advantages of building a home based affiliate business:

1. No need to develop your own product or service

It can take a long time and lots of money to develop a good product or service. In fact, many companies spend millions of dollars on product development every year. A good affiliate program offers you the opportunity to make money with someone else's product or service.

2. Start immediately

Most companies that offer affiliate programs, especially on the internet, will allow and even encourage you to start your business immediately after you have signed up as an affiliate.

Some companies may take a day or two to approve your application. Either way, you can be in business within a very short period of time after making the decision to join a specific affiliate program.

3. No investment required to get started

There is normally no cost involved in joining an affiliate program. Most companies won't even expect you to buy their product or service before starting to promote it.

It can obviously be to your advantage to buy the product or service. After all, it is easier to promote a product or service that you are using yourself and it gives you a lot more credibility as well.

4. Very low risk

Starting a new business can be very risky and most new companies do not make it through their first year in business. By becoming an affiliate of an established company you significantly reduce your risk.

In addition, your home based affiliate business can and should handle more than one affiliate program. Don't put all your eggs in one basket.

5. No or very limited selling

The trick is to pre-sell a product or service. This is accomplished by gently referring potential customers to the company you are affiliated with. Let the merchant do the actual selling and pay you a commission for the referral.

Not only do most people not like the idea of selling something but by leaving the selling up to your principle you don't have to deal with payments, deliveries, complaints, etc. This is one of the great advantages of having a home based affiliate business.

6. Your own business

Being an affiliate does not mean you lose your freedom to do as you please. You remain in charge of your own home business and can do whatever you want to promote your business as long as you abide by the rules of your principle.

7. Write your own check

As with any home business, what you put in is what you get out. The harder you work and the more committed you are the more money you can earn in commissions.

Remember, by treating your home based affiliate business as a hobby that it will only pay you as a hobby.

8. High commission rates

What would you think is a reasonable commission rate? 5% ? 10% ? Well, an affiliate can earn a good living from commissions.

It is actually possible to make more money from a sale than the company who developed the product or service!

For products that can be digitally downloaded, such as ebooks and software, the commission rate is often anything from 20% to 75%.

9. Join multiple affiliate programs

Having a home based affiliate business does not mean that you can or should only be an affiliate for one company. You can have multiple income streams by joining various affiliate programs.

It is obviously to your advantage if these programs are complimentary as it will save you time marketing them. However, be careful not to spread yourself too thin. Only select a couple of really good programs.

10. Receive training and support

Perhaps the most important advantage of joining a good affiliate program is the training and support you will receive. Starting a business on the internet can be a daunting task, especially for someone that has no or very limited knowledge or experience.

It can cost you thousands of dollars trying to find your way. Any good affiliate program will offer you free training and as much support as you need. Why? Because they want you to succeed and make lots of money.

What's in it for the merchant?

Employing someone can be very expensive. By offering an affiliate program a company can have thousands of people promoting their products or services at no cost to the company since they are only paid commissions when the company makes a sale. (Some companies will pay you for leads)

Note: For more detailed information on affiliate marketing I highly recommend Rosalind Gardner's ebook "The Super Affiliate Handbook – How I Made \$436,797 In One Year Selling Other People's Stuff Online".

Rosalind Gardner is a great example of someone "walking her talk"! Originally published in 2003, the latest 2007 edition of "The Super Affiliate Handbook" includes all of her latest techniques and at over 230 pages it is probably the most detailed guide available on affiliate marketing. Well worth it!

For more information, click on this link <http://www.SuperAffiliateHandbook.info>

Lastly, but certainly not least, I highly recommend Ewen Chia's acclaimed membership site Super Affiliates. It contains great affiliate learning resources, case studies and marketing materials.

For more information, click on this link <http://www.WealthyAffiliateTips.com>

Insert D – Network Marketing Basics

It is regrettable that many people won't even consider a network marketing home based business due to negative connotations with MLM (Multi-Level-Marketing) and pyramid schemes.

Fact of the matter is that, as with any other business, it is impossible to generalize. As an example, you find good doctors and bad doctors. One bad doctor does not mean all doctors are incompetent.

Some network marketing business opportunities are better than others and some are really bad. However, you do find excellent companies that can help you build a great and profitable network marketing home based business.

How to distinguish between a genuine Network Marketing opportunity and an illegal pyramid scheme.

I just ran a search on Google for the term "Network Marketing" and got 1,540,000 search results. By the way, without the inverted commas I get a staggering 251,000,000 search results! I cannot help but wonder how many of these web pages actually offer members a genuine opportunity to make money...

A legitimate network marketing business always has two income streams, namely:

1. Commission from actual sales to new customers.
2. Commission for finding new recruits.

A company that mainly rewards members for finding new recruits and not for actual sales is more often than not an illegal pyramid scheme.

There should always be a legitimate product or service that new recruits can sell or at least promote. This applies to any network marketing business.

What many MLM companies have done to satisfy the requirement that they should offer a product or service is to simply offer products of a dubious value at inflated prices.

The question you should always ask yourself is:

Would I buy this product or service from this company if they did not offer me an underlying opportunity to make money?

If your answer is "no", walk away. You do not want this type network marketing home based business.

There are many horror stories of people losing large amounts of money in pyramid schemes. People have become more careful in recent years but it may be worth while to briefly touch on this subject.

What many pyramid companies did in the past (probably the present as well) was to require members to buy a huge inventory at inflated prices or pay a high entrance fee to join the company.

Sooner or later this type of scheme has to collapse as it cannot remain viable for an extended period of time. The result is that members get stuck with worthless inventory or are out of pocket thanks to the high entrance fee they paid.

Bottom line, do not invest in buying merchandise or inventory from a company. If you strongly feel you have to then at least make sure you are not buying at inflated prices.

You should always be able to sell the merchandise for at least what you paid for it should the company you bought it from collapse.

As far as paying an entrance fee is concerned... It is normal for any company, offering you the opportunity of having your own network marketing home based business, to expect you to buy their product or service yourself. Remember the rule of never paying an inflated price.

Paying an entrance fee, monthly membership fee or subscription fee without getting a useful product or service in return should be avoided at all costs.

Network Marketing in general or a network marketing home based business in particular is a logical concept and easy to understand.

The concept of a network marketing home based business is actually very simple and logical. Let's assume you want to start your own home based business making and selling soap.

Most people will hopefully agree with you that there is a constant demand for soap. Your soap is special. Not only does it clean well but it also comes in many different fragrances.

Your cost is \$0.20 and you determine you can sell it wholesale to stores at a price of \$0.40 or directly to customers at a retail price of \$ 1.

Selling to stores is difficult. You have a lot of competition and often long waiting periods before you receive payment. Selling directly to customers is ideal but you are only one person. You do not have the time to do direct selling.

What is the logical solution? You get people to sell the soap for you!

You start selling some soap yourself in the limited time available to you, starting with your friend next door. She has no problem paying you \$1, loves your product and agrees to support you every month.

She would like to help you sell soap as she really believes you have a good product but is reluctant...She will have to sell a whole lot of soap to make it worth her while financially! If only she can get other people to help her...

Establishing a network marketing home based business is the answer. You agree to pay her and anybody she recruits \$0.10 commission per soap they sell, five levels deep. E.g. She sells to five people, they sell to five other people, etc. It will look like this:

Level 1 - 1 person selling to 5 others = 5
Level 2 - 5 people selling to 5 others = 25
Level 3 - 25 people selling to 5 others = 125
Level 4 - 125 people selling to 5 others = 625
Level 5 - 625 people selling to 5 others = 3125

Total people in her downline: 3905 !

How much money will she make with her network marketing home based business? \$390 per month (at \$0.10 per soap).

In the above example, she can make \$390 profit per month through the power of network marketing by only getting five other people to buy 1 piece of soap from her every month and sell another piece of soap to five other people, etc.

She can obviously decide to sell to more than five people and they are under no obligation to make any sales themselves.

By remembering the rules she can do very well:

- ⇒ She is selling a high quality and useful item that she is using herself.
- ⇒ She does not sell it for an inflated price.
- ⇒ People will buy the product even without an underlying opportunity.
- ⇒ She does not require an "entrance fee".
- ⇒ She does not require anybody to carry a large inventory.

How much money can you make? Remember, you developed the soap.

Very simple. Even after paying your downline five levels deep you will still make a profit of \$ 0.30 per soap. Calculation: Your cost is \$ 0.20, your product sells for \$ 1.00 and you spend \$ 0.50 on marketing costs (\$ 0.10 x Five Levels). Much better than selling it for \$ 0.40 to a store!

Direct Selling = Free Advertising

The biggest advantage? FREE Advertising!

What better way to promote a product than through the power of direct selling or word of mouth selling. People are a lot more likely to buy a product if someone that is using it recommends it to them.

We did not cover issues such as support, invoicing and payment in the above example for the simple reason that any good network marketing company will automatically offer you great support (even free training) and will take care of invoicing and the collection of payments.

In fact, most good companies will not actually expect you to sell anything in your network marketing home based business but only to promote their product and refer people to them. They will do the selling and you will earn commission on every successful sale.

In the above example I referred to a network marketing home based business with a down line of five levels. This is only an example. There are many different commission payment structures and I won't even attempt to try to cover them all.

Bottom line, the right network marketing home based business can offer you a lucrative income opportunity.

Chapter 9: Marketing & Promotion Fundamentals

What do all successful internet marketers have in common?

A great product? A huge list? No. They know how and where to market and promote their products. I have seen great marketers make thousands of dollars promoting a pretty much mediocre product.

Some affiliate marketers make a fortune promoting ebooks they have not even read and software they have never used. Is this ethical? Well, it is up for debate.

Understand this, internet marketing is not fair. The good guy with the great product does not always succeed. In fact, he often goes hungry. Internet marketing success depends on... yes, marketing and promotion.

It is true that most successful internet marketers also have huge lists. However, they are not successful because they have huge lists. They are successful because they know and understand the importance of marketing and promotion.

Don't waste too much time focusing on a product

I see it happening all the time... People spending days, weeks and months on an ebook trying to get it just right or "perfect". They add content, delete content, rewrite content and after all of this they are still not happy enough with the end result to release the product.

It is laudable to strive towards perfecting a product. BUT, not profitable. Internet marketing is ultimately about making money online. It is not about writing a literary masterpiece. It is about finding problems and offering solutions. Quick, simple and easy.

Perfect the system!

Successful internet marketers focus on obtaining a winning system. A system they can use over and over again and always profit from time after time.

For example – Identify a problem many people have > Find & offer a solution to the problem. Rinse & Repeat. Ok, this is a simplification of the process but you get the point.

What do all successful Multi Level Marketing (MLM) companies have in common? Yes, they have a great system in place. The primary emphasis is on having a great system and the secondary emphasis is the product. Without having a great system in place no MLM organization can succeed for very long.

It goes beyond the scope of this book to evaluate successful systems but having a system in place should be part of your marketing strategy. Here is one easy system that works very well:

Write a free “What to do” report or article. Write a “How to do it” ebook and promote it in your free “What to do” report or article. Obviously the “How to do it” ebook will not be free... (More details later in this chapter under “Sales Funnel”)

Tip: Study some successful marketers. Most of them follow a specific system. If they are successful and using the same system on a regular basis you can assume it is working well enough for them. Learn from them but only copy a system if you are really comfortable with it.

Want vs. Need

One of the secrets of successful internet marketing is to understand the reasons why people buy products or services. Many marketers make the mistake of trying to sell people things they “need”.

I have had many joint venture requests from marketers saying things like “This is a great product and there is a huge need for it in the market” or “People really need this product”. BS.

It is important to establish that there is a demand for a product but people are not going to buy the product only because they “need” it. People buy because they “want” to buy.

It is crucial to understand the difference between “need” and “want”. Why? Because it will totally change the way you approach your target market. If you approach your target market with the attitude that they will buy because they “need” what you have to offer you will be disappointed.

I often hear marketers complain “... I don’t understand why my product is not selling. It is a great product and my target market really needs it”.

Well, think about it...

Do you buy a new car because you “need” it or you “want” it? With most people, buying psychology works as follows:

Step 1 - I “need” a new car.

Step 2 - I “want” a BMW 530i.

There is an important link between Step 1 and Step 2 that we will get to shortly.

Marketers that only focus on what people “need” often don’t see any further than Step 1. They have done their research. They have established there is a demand for their product. They know people “need” it. But, they don’t understand that people do not buy something because they “need” it.

Think of yourself. Assume you “need” a new car. Do you just go and buy any car that will take you from A to B? No, you ultimately buy the car you “want”. You don’t just draw straws and pick any car. By the way, by “want” I mean something that is within your power to acquire. I am not talking about the new Ferrari that you probably also “want”...

In fact, think about any example. Do you buy a new house because you “need” it or because you “want” it? Yes, you may “need” a bigger house but the one you finally buy will be bought because you wanted it and not because you needed it.

I can carry on and on. Coffee? Do you simply buy any type of coffee? No. Why do you for example buy Douwe Egberts coffee? You buy it because you “want” it. Not because you “need” it.

Remember, the secret to getting what you want is to give other people what they want!

The missing link...

Missing the important link between Step 1 (need) and Step 2 (want) is one of the main reasons marketers fail to convert potential customers into actual customers.

Even if people “need” a product you still need to sell it to them. You need to give them a reason to “want” it. Preferably, several reasons. Don’t ever assume they will buy because they need it.

What am I talking about? I am talking about SALES COPY. Writing a good sales letter is essential to convert potential customers that “need” your product into actual customers that “want” your product.

How often have you seen a sales page saying something like “I am not going to try to convince you to buy this product. I know you are very busy and don’t have the time to read through a long sales letter...”

Wrong! Big mistake! Nothing is obvious to a potential customer. Don’t make assumptions.

You need to sell the product. In fact, you need to “sell” yourself as well. Why should the customer buy from you? What makes you so special? Why should the customer trust you?

Who are you?

Many years ago I approached a publishing company with a new book I wrote. In fact, the first book I ever wrote. They made one thing very clear to me, namely the job of a publishing company is as much to promote the author of a book as it is to promote the book.

A publishing company does not simply read through a manuscript and say “Great, we love it and will publish it”. If you are a brilliant writer of fiction you may have a slight chance...

If you are a non fictional writer you have no chance of getting published unless you can prove your credentials and give the publishing company enough ammunition to promote you.

Don't even think about getting a book published on psychology unless you are at least qualified as a psychologist. In fact, simply being a psychologist may not nearly be enough. You would need to come up with some great new stuff to be considered.

Needless to say, my book was rejected. It was a great book but I simply did not have enough credibility in the field I was writing about. Anyway, it taught me a valuable lesson!

Publishing companies have been around much longer than the internet has. They understand that people want to buy non fictional books from “experts” that now their stuff and not from wannabe authors dreaming about making quick bucks or getting their egos stroked.

Yes, the internet has changed many things. These days just about anyone can slap a quick product and website together. However, one thing has not changed... Buyers still need to know who they are buying from. They still need to feel they are dealing with an expert.

Don't get too absorbed in the marketing and promotion of a product that you forget about the marketing and promotion of YOU. Your sales letter should “sell” you as much as it should sell your product.

You don't sell a product by focusing on the product!

“What!” I can hear you say. Hold on... Let me explain.

People buy products because they want solutions and they are after the benefits the product will offer them. You don't buy washing powder simply because it is washing powder. You buy it because you want to have clean clothes.

You don't buy bread because it seems like a popular custom. You buy because it offers a "solution" to stop you from being hungry. Furthermore, many people like the benefits of buying whole-wheat bread such as "healthy", "tasty", etc.

It is a common mistake to focus on features instead of benefits. Don't get me wrong, features are important BUT benefits are substantially more important. Benefits sell a product!

Think of a typical skincare product. Cosmetics companies love listing ingredients (features) such as the product contains A, B and C. Now most of us have no idea what A, B or C means.

It may sound impressive but is not enough to make us purchase the product.

We buy cosmetics because of benefits such as "Healthy Skin", "Looking Good", "Looking Younger", "Feeling More Attractive", etc.

Many years ago BMW introduced the slogan "Shear driving pleasure". I have seen many BMW ads during the years. Know what? I cannot remember any features they advertised. However, I do remember the benefit "Shear driving pleasure"!

People often lack imagination

Don't assume people will know the benefits of your product or figure it out for themselves. No, they want you to tell them.

They want you to spell it out and the more benefits the better!

Tell your customers how your product will benefit them. Stir their imagination.

A good example is estate agents or realtors. They don't simply say "This house has 3 bedrooms". They sell the benefits such as "Walking distance to shops and schools", and "Low maintenance garden"

Realtors seem to have a knack for turning negatives into opportunities!

"Yes, it needs a little bit of work but that is why you can get it at such a bargain price", or

"The asking price would have been a lot higher if the kitchen had new cupboards... You have a great opportunity of having new cupboards installed that you really like instead of paying for someone else's cupboards that are not to your taste".

Here are two examples I often see used by writers of ebooks:

“This is not some flimsy 15 page report. This is a comprehensive guide of 250 pages!”

or,

“This is a no fluff report that explains everything you need to know in 15 power packed pages”

Interesting huh? Both approaches anticipate that some customers may have a problem with the number of pages (possible negative) and turn it into benefit.

People buy on emotion

Emotional buying decisions are often overlooked in marketing & promotion strategies.

Some people spend more money when they are happy and feeling good about themselves. Others spend money when they are feeling depressed. Some even gamble when they can least afford it because they are desperate. These buying decisions are all based on emotion.

For example, some women buy chocolates or ice cream when they are feeling low as a way to pick them up and make them feel good.

By understanding the emotional state of your target customers you will be in a much better position to promote a product and generate sales. I am not talking about exploiting people or taking advantage of people. I am simply talking about connecting to your customers and giving them what they want.

Let's look at a couple of examples...

You are selling an ebook on getting more website traffic.

What emotions are going through your typical customer's head? He is often frustrated – Built a website thinking it will automatically attract thousands of visitors. Alas, he hardly gets any. He may be disillusioned, ready to throw in the towel, etc.

You may also assume that he is not a highly successful marketer unless he is just really curious to find out if you know something he does not know.

By adding an emotional aspect to your marketing & promotion you can drastically increase results.

E.g. “Frustrated at not getting enough traffic?”, “Feeling disillusioned...?”

It always helps to establish an emotional connection!

You do not always need to spell it out like I did above, especially not if it is a sensitive issue. Many people do not want to be confronted by an explicit message that is directly related to their emotional state of being.

For example, some people feel guilty that they are not doing enough to help their children. However, they don't want to see a message that will only reinforce this guilt such as "You are not doing enough..." It may be true but it is simply too direct. You need to be more subtle.

A message such as "Help your children with / in / to..." may be more appropriate. You are still addressing the underlying emotion of guilt but in an indirect and tactful manner.

Note: Be very careful when making assumptions and avoid too much generalizing.

One Time Offers

Ever seen a OTO (One Time Offer)? Sure you have. A typical example is when you buy a product for say \$7. As soon as you have made the payment you are redirected to an OTO page and get a message such as "WAIT! Before you go. You will only see this special offer once..."

It is a great example of clever marketers using the principles of emotional buying to their advantage. They understand that if a customer is "in the mood" to spend \$10 he will probably not mind spending an additional couple of dollars.

They also understand the importance of "convincing" the customer to buy straight away. Chances are, if they only present an offer to the customer a couple of hours later that the customer will no longer be interested in any special offers.

Actually, OTO's are nothing special and have been around for ever in offline sales and marketing. A good example is all the "extras" you get offered when buying a new car, such as "Would you like leather seats? We can throw it in for only \$500 extra"

The customer has already agreed to spending \$20,000 on a car so in his current (emotional) frame of mind an extra \$500 won't break the bank.

Chances are very good that the same customer would not be interested in spending any additional money a couple of days later, even "only" \$500 for leather seats. OTO's and emotional buying is a great example of the saying "Strike the iron while it is hot"!

Dealing with refund requests

I know some marketers get really upset with refund requests, especially if someone buys a product at 09h05 and request a refund at 09h07 when they have obviously not even looked at the product!

You find 3 types of refund requests:

1. Scammers and thieves – They deliberately try to get something for nothing.
2. Unhappy customers – Customers that expected something else.
3. Customers with buyer's remorse.

As far as the first type, scammers and thieves, are concerned. You will always find people that try to get something for nothing. Such is life. There is little you can do to prevent this if you are for example selling a normal PDF ebook.

There are programs that will blacklist thieves by tracking the IP addresses of buyers and decline purchases from suspect customers.

There are also programs that will deliver ebooks in an EXE format (not compatible with Mac) where you can actually lock the file to prevent them from ever accessing it again if they request a refund.

Dissatisfied customers

Unhappy customers often request refunds and the main reason for this is that the product did not meet with their expectations. Some marketers get so carried away in the selling process that they just about offer the sun and the moon to new customers but end up delivering total crap.

Interestingly enough, most buyers are quite relaxed about buying a new product and few of them will actually request a refund, even if the product is not 100% what they expected.

There is one big exception though... Customers that bought thanks to excessive hype. Offline, this is often referred to as hard-selling. Hype can help to sell more products but will also result in higher refund rates.

Now what many marketers don't seem to realize is that even if a customer does not request a refund they may actually lose that customer forever by over hyping a sales page.

It happens quite a lot in internet marketing... I can't remember how often I bought a new ebook thinking it is the hottest thing since sliced bread (thanks to the sales copy) just to find out that it is all rehashed junk. Makes me furious!

Needless to say I keep a record of all poor quality products I have bought to make sure I never buy another product from the same marketer again...

How can you limit refund requests? Here are a couple of tips:

1. Avoid hype. Don't sell your product as "A groundbreaking new technique to explode your profits" when the technique is actually not that great and has been around for years.
2. Be honest. Never lie to your customers. Never make false or misleading claims.
3. Tell the full story. Don't tell your customers they can make \$500 a day by following your step by step instructions and "forget" to mention that they will have to invest \$400 a day in advertising!
4. Qualify your buyers. For example, "If you think HTML is the abbreviation of How To Market Lemons then this is probably not the right product for you..."
5. Give enough details about your product for buyers to decide if it is worthwhile buying. If you are selling wallets, make it clear that it is made from genuine leather. Don't leave them guessing!
6. Include a FAQ (Frequently Asked Questions) section that covers most questions you can think of. This is especially useful if you don't want to include too many topics on your main sales page that may be irrelevant to most buyers but don't want to get too many questions by email.
7. Always include a contact email address or, preferably, contact form (to limit spam emails) where people can contact you with any questions. Some marketers also include a telephone number (establishes credibility) but then you need to make it clear what your "office" hours are!

Tip: Do not give your main or primary email address out. Create a "special" email or use a free gmail email address. You don't want to be bombarded with spam!

Dealing with regret or buyer's remorse

As already discussed, people buy on emotion. However, emotional buying is often not logical or necessary, and hard to defend retrospectively.

Take the example of a woman eating a whole tub of ice cream because she felt depressed. Very often the same woman will regret her actions afterwards and wish she did not do it.

In marketing, this is commonly referred to as “buyer’s remorse” and often result in refund requests.

Some sales letters are simply too good! A potential buyer gets carried away and as soon as he has paid thinks “What have I done? I cannot really afford this” or “I don’t really need this”.

Result = Refund Request...

Here are some tips that will help to reduce the number of refund requests due to buyer’s remorse:

1. Let them know they have made an excellent decision. For example, most info products will direct buyers to a download page after they complete the payment instructions. Instead of just giving them a download link or saying “thank you” say “Congratulations! You have made a very wise decision...” Alternatively, send them an email with the same message.
2. Offer real value and a great deal. By simply selling a product for \$10 that is worth \$10 you will get a lot more refunds than if you sell a product that is worth (perceived value) \$ 50 for \$10. Even if a customer has his doubts about whether he should have purchased your product it helps if he can justify his decision in his own mind by convincing himself that he got a bargain.

Note (1): Be realistic. Customers are not stupid. Give them a reason why they are getting a discount. Don’t go overboard by selling a \$10,000 product for \$1. That is really suspicious and will do nothing for your credibility.

Note (2): Don’t bluff. Don’t say things like “This offer is only good for the next 30 seconds” or “This offer closes at midnight” when it is not actually the case.

Customers have become clever and know that some marketers offer “specials” that actually never change. Trust me, many will actually come back the next day to see if anything has changed and will request a refund if they feel they have been bamboozled!

3. Offer valuable bonuses that will complement your product. I have known buyers that bought a product mainly because they were interested in getting the bonuses on offer. Once again, by giving buyers a lot more value than they are paying for you can reduce buyer’s remorse.

Tip: Always try to over-deliver! Give people more than what they bargained for. A very clever tactic is to give people an unadvertised bonus after they have purchased and that they did not expect.

Don't only focus on getting new customers. Remember to keep existing customers happy!!!

What do all the top marketers have in common? Yes, a huge list. What is even better than just having a huge list? Yes, a targeted list. What is even better than a targeted list of prospects? Yes, a list of actual buyers.

Your existing customers are your most valuable asset in internet marketing. There are marketers with a list of only 500 people that make more money selling to that list than some marketers with huge lists of several thousand prospects.

Once a customer has bought from you and has had a good experience dealing with you, you have accomplished two of the most important and most difficult things in internet marketing:

1. You have established your credibility, and
2. You have someone that is a proven buyer.

It is better to have a list or customer base of 1,000 people that have actually done business with you in the past than have a list of 100,000 possible prospects.
--

By not building a customer database and by not looking after your existing customers you are simply being stupid. Sorry, I have to say it.

Imagine for a moment the time and money (time is also money) it takes to get a new customer. Let's take a Pay Per Click program such as Google Adwords as an example because PPC is probably the fastest way of getting people to have a look at your product.

Assume you are paying 20c every time someone clicks on your add and your sales page converts at 2% - You can do a lot better than 2% but just bear with me. This means that out of every 100 targeted visitors you will only get two customers.

100 Clicks = \$20 (at 20c per click) and if you get two new customers you actually paid \$10 per customer. Based on this example, it costs you \$10 to get a new customer! Not looking after your customers is the same as flushing hundreds of \$10 bills down the toilet! Crazy? YES.

There are no clear rules on what a long-term customer is worth.

It really depends on the market you are in and the type of products you are selling. However, I have heard (as a rule of thumb) that every customer (not prospect!) on your list is worth \$1 per month.

This means that you can earn \$10,000 per month by only selling to an existing customer base of 10,000 proven buyers.

What is really astonishing is that a very good internet marketer can often achieve this by only sending one single email to his list promoting a specific product that he knows his list will be interested in.

Obviously the above is not cast in stone. You may earn a lot more or a lot less. It depends a lot on how you look after your customers.

Tip: Don't try to sell them something every day or you will quickly end up with a list of ex customers!

Getting new customers is important but never focus on getting new customers at the expense of your existing customers.

Treat your existing customers as little gold nuggets for that is what they are.

You need a Sales Funnel

What is the point of building a large list or database of customers if you have nothing left to sell them? Having a list of customers is a valuable asset BUT only if you can monetize your list.

A great technique used by successful marketers is to create a sales funnel.

Assume you are starting from scratch but have identified a certain niche as something you want to monetize. You have no customers, no list and no credibility.

Many (most in my opinion) customers are very reluctant to spend \$97 on a product or ebook from an unknown marketer. It is a lot of money to give someone who has not proven his / her quality of work. However, the same customer will probably not think too hard about spending \$5 or \$7 for a useful report.

I often see this on forums that allow members to market their products to other members. Sales of \$7 products are brisk while higher end products that sell for above \$47 are often sluggish.

Some people simply do not have \$47 to spend on an ebook but even if they do they are still a lot more reluctant to spend \$47 than \$7.

Yet, some highly successful marketers have no problems selling products above \$500 and even above \$1,000. Why? They have built up a reputation in the market. They did not create and sell their first product for \$497. If they did they probably would not have had any sales.

Here is a typical example of a sales funnel:

Step 1. Write a good but short “how to do it” report with a sales price of \$7.

Step 2. Write a good “what to do” report of between 10 and 20 pages and give it away for free. Your main intention is to build your list and promote the \$7 product you created in Step 1. You can also promote some affiliate programs but don't litter your report with affiliate links!

Step 3. You now have a customer list. Hopefully a very satisfied customer list! Write a more compressive report and market this report to the buyers of your first \$7 report for \$17.

By following the above funnel approach you should be able to build up a list of targeted buyers that love your products and are eager for more. Eventually you should be able to market a \$497 course to your list with great success.

Most of the top internet marketers use a sales funnel approach and several of them have been able to record sales of over \$1 million within 1 week selling a high priced item (typically a course).

I am not going to imply that you can duplicate their results. In addition, it can take several years of hard work before you have your first \$1,000 day. However, it is possible.

No one is an island

There is only so much that one man or one woman can do when it comes to marketing and promotion. Many new marketers tend to see everyone else as potential competitors.

However, doing Joint Ventures with other marketers have proven to be one of the best ways to boost sales results into another dimension.

I don't want to spend too much time on the topic of JV's. It is a specialized field and most new marketers get it totally wrong.

Here are a couple of pointers you need to be aware of:

Successful marketers with huge lists do not need you or your product unless you can bring something very special to the table. Why should they promote your ebook for a 50% commission?

There are thousands of products (ebooks and software) on Clickbank that pay up to 75% commission. They get daily JV requests. In fact, most of these emails are deleted without even being read unless they recognize your name.

Tip: Start networking with your peers. Start today.

You have a better chance to invite your next door neighbor to your party than the Queen of England!

Rather join forces with marketers that are at the same level as you. It will be a lot easier and can be very rewarding as well.

Remember that all highly successful internet marketers started from scratch.

Most of their JV partners are people they have known for many years, have built relationships with, and, established friendships with when they were still “small”.

Networking is very important in Internet marketing.

Try to meet as many internet marketers as possible by, for example, attending conferences. Some of the best deals are struck over a couple of beers. Establish a good reputation for yourself by making great posts on forums that potential JV partners frequent.

A common concern with JV's is the fear that other marketers will “steal” your customers. This is a very narrow minded concern unless you do not really have a relationship with your list in the first place.

Many successful marketers cross-promote each other even if they are targeting the exact same customer base.

Why are they not afraid of other marketers poaching their customers? Because they have a relationship with their list and customers.

If I get an email from Mr. Unknown promoting a product and another email from Mr. Credibility promoting the same product who am I going to support? Mr. Credibility, of course!

Depending on how many lists you are on you may get many different emails from marketers all promoting the same product. These marketers know that if they look after their own lists that their customers will look after them and remain loyal to them.

Yes, you may find that some of your existing customers will buy from other marketers in the future but that normally happens if you do not treat them well enough. In addition, the advantages of JV's far outweigh the disadvantages.

By trying to keep your customers all to yourself and not exposing them to other products and marketers you will miss a great opportunity to boost your income to a new level.

Obviously JV's are not only about internet marketers cross promoting products to their lists.

Look for complimentary products.

For example, if you are selling a great ebook on how to toilet train puppies why not approach a website owner that sells puppy toys and ask him to promote your product as an affiliate?

In return you can also recommend his website on your own site or even in your ebook. It is a win-win solution for both of you.

Using testimonials

Testimonials are a valuable tool in your marketing & promotions toolbox. Most people feel more comfortable buying a product that comes recommended.

I have noticed on several forums that people are reluctant to buy a product until it has received some positive feedback.

People really value testimonials.

Unfortunately many testimonials are fake and people are becoming more skeptical all the time...

I have given out some testimonials where potential buyers contacted me just to make sure that I really gave the testimonial!

The easiest way to spot a fake testimonial is when no details are supplied about the person who gave the testimonial.

Not everybody has a website and hardly anybody wants their email address to be displayed to the public.

In such a case you need to keep the testimonial on file and agree to open your file to anyone that wants to confirm that you have a legitimate testimonial.

You would obviously first need to obtain the permission from the person that gave you the testimonial!

How do you get testimonials? Very simple, you ASK.

Remember that the best testimonials are not about you but about your product and the benefits your customers have experienced using it.

How to write emails

We all have our own unique style of writing. However, writing emails to your list that will result in sales is an acquired skill.

Here are a couple of tips that I have found useful:

1. Write as if you are writing to a friend.

Remember, you are not writing an official letter. Keep your tone friendly. Share a short story. Ask yourself if you could send the email to a friend.

2. Keep your emails short

We all have busy lives. People simply do not have the time to read through page after page of dribble. Nobody likes reading an email that is all waffle, waffle and waffle. Short and powerful emails work the best.

In addition, keep your sentences short and limit paragraphs to no more than four or five lines of text. Do not write across the whole width of the screen!

3. Use basic copywriting techniques

Use AIDA – Attention > Interest > Desire > Action

Attention – Get your reader's attention. It can be a catchy headline or even a humorous opening sentence. Anything to grab his or her attention.

Interest – You should know what your target market is interested in. Get them interested by conveying something you know they like reading about.

Desire – Offer them a solution to a problem they have.

Action – Tell them what to do next.

Here is an example of a message to cat lovers that will be sent using an autoresponder program – Assuming that is your niche and you have a targeted list of cat lovers that you have built a relationship with:

Subject: My husband threatened to leave me... (Get their attention)

Hi {first name}, (Use his / her first name)

I haven't shared this before but it is true. John actually threatened to leave me a couple of months ago. It all happened when he invited one of his colleagues from work home for dinner... (Get their interest)

You see, as Mark (his colleague) was about to sit down on our sofa he noticed it was full of cat hair. You should have seen his face! Obviously not a cat lover! John was so embarrassed... Let's just say it was not a great evening.

John made it clear to me that I have to make a decision. It is either him or the cats. He said that he is getting to the point where he is too embarrassed to invite friends to our house...

Whew! I love my husband and I love my cats! I did not sleep much that night trying to find a win-win solution to a problem that seemed so huge at the time.

It dawned on me that my next door neighbor, Michelle, also love cats and that her sofa never has any cat hair on it. Well, first thing the next morning I visited Michelle and begged her to tell me her secret.

*What she told me totally blew me away! **(Desire)***

*The solution is so simple it has been staring me in the face all this time. Can't believe I never thought of it myself! **(Desire)***

I have to run. Must pick Mathew up from school and I am already late... Anyway, if you have the same problems with cat hair (lol, don't we all!) you simply have to read this article by Karen Brown. It is a real eye opener!

*Simply to go CATS.com. You will be glad you did. It saved my marriage! **(Action)***

Your friend,

Ashley ☺

4. Test & Monitor

By using an autoresponder program such as Aweber you can monitor how many subscribers to your ezine has actually opened your email and clicked on the links in your message. (<http://products.aweber.com>)

By monitoring your results you will learn what "triggers" to use in order to get a better response from your subscribers.

Testing is an ongoing process and is an essential component of ezine marketing.

5. Don't bombard your subscribers with messages

The number & frequency of messages you send to your list will vary from list to list depending on your aims and target market.

In principle, you should stay in contact with your list on a regular basis, preferably at least once every two weeks although once a week is better in most cases.

You see, many people belong to several lists and it is very difficult to build up a relationship with your list if you only send them a message every month or so.

People tend to forget quickly that they joined a list and chances are if they have not heard from you in a while they may not recognize your message as genuine and may even accuse you of spam – unsolicited email.

On the other hand, sending daily emails is just as bad. I am on some lists where I get between one to three messages every day from the same marketer. I really dislike it.

The only reason I don't unsubscribe is purely because I like to keep an eye on what the marketer is doing...

6. Tell your list what to expect & remind them of why they joined

Many people unsubscribe from lists because they simply cannot remember why they joined in the first place or they are being sent messages that are not relevant to them. Information they did not elect to receive.

I really find it annoying when I buy a software product and agree to join the developer's list so that he can send me future updates, and end up receiving emails that have nothing to do with the software product (or any related products) I bought. Although I opted in I consider these emails nothing but spam.

If I agree to join a cat lover's list I don't want to get messages about treating fleas on dogs or training budgies! I think most people will agree with this.

You cannot build a relationship with your list and establish your credibility if you are not honest about your intentions!

Inform people what they can expect when joining your list, for example "Subscribe to my FREE 7 Day Course "How To Get Rid Of Dog Fleas". You will receive one lesson every day for the next 7 days..."

Secondly, remind people why you are sending them a message, for example "This is Lesson 2 of my FREE 7 Day Course "How To Get Rid Of Dog Fleas" that you agreed to receive. Lesson 3 will be delivered to your inbox tomorrow..."

Remind people that they can unsubscribe at any time from your list by clicking on the "unsubscribe me" link if they no longer wish to receive any further messages from you.

If you got people to join your list by, for example, offering a free 7 day course and would like to continue sending them messages after the end of the course, tell them what to expect and give them the option to unsubscribe.

For example, say “This is the last lesson in my 7 Day Course on “How to Get Rid Of Dog Fleas”. I trust you have enjoyed the lessons and that dog fleas will soon only be a distant memory! Since I have had several requests for additional information of treating dog ailments such as worms, etc. I have decided to publish a weekly newsletter full of helpful tips and advice...”

7. Newsletter or Sales letter?!

One of the things I really hate with a passion is when I sign up for a “newsletter” and receive a “sales letter”.

Most people sign up for a “newsletter” expecting news, tips and advice on a certain topic. They do not want to be sold to all the time.

I fully agree that “selling” is an important part of ezine marketing. However, you need to provide content as well and not only send subscribers the one sales pitch after the other. That is not why they joined your list!

You have to find the right balance between delivering content and selling.
--

Here are a couple of tips worth considering:

1. Product reviews – Instead of simply saying “Buy this product...” why not write a good and informative review of it, highlighting both advantages / likes and disadvantages / dislikes. Give people the opportunity of buying through your affiliate link if they found your review useful and want to buy to the product.
2. Alternate between “content” and “selling”. A good idea is to send your list members regular and high quality articles with no sales pitches. After every two or three content articles send them a product recommendation that you feel can really help them.
3. Give your members small “what to do” PDF reports that they can print & read at their leisure. Include a link to a “how to do it” report.
4. Insert a couple of “sponsored ads” in your newsletter or articles. Nothing wrong if the ads are your own ads!
5. Invite subscribers to read your latest article / newsletter on your blog or website. Remember to give them a direct link to click on! If you have some Google AdSense ads you can earn a couple of extra dollars when people click on your AdSense ads.

Tip: Include a sentence at the end of your newsletter inviting subscribers to forward your email to any of their friends that may benefit from the content.

I often include the following message at the end of my newsletters:

Thanks for reading! If you know someone who could benefit from this, feel free to forward it to them!

Not a subscriber yet? Like what you've read? Sign up at [ezine]...

This was a long chapter but a very important one. Understanding the basic fundamentals behind marketing & promotion is an important part of building a solid internet marketing foundation.

Chapter 10: Without traffic you have no business!

Getting traffic is, in my opinion, the most important factor in online marketing.

The worst looking sales page that gets traffic will convert better than the best looking sales page that gets no traffic. A crap product that gets lots of exposure will generate more sales than a far superior product that gets no exposure.

Without traffic you are dead!

As you get more experienced in internet marketing you will find that it is actually very easy to write your own ebook, build a website or a blog, and outsource tasks such as graphics. Your single biggest problem will be getting enough traffic. You can never have enough traffic!

Getting traffic is one of the things that most new marketers underestimate. Many new marketers assume that getting traffic is easy. You build a website, submit it to the search engines and sit back while waiting for the money to start rolling in. Nothing can be further away from the truth.

Most new marketers quit simply due to a lack of traffic. Let's face it, you can buy a complete website on eBay for only a couple of dollars, you can buy a ready made product (Private Label Rights) and put your name on it for next to nothing.

Some companies will even give you a free website and tell you all you need to do is promote it. They make it sound so easy...

Well, if you have any experience at all you will know it is not that easy. Getting traffic is hard work. New websites seldom rank high in the search engines for competitive keywords.

Writing articles to article directories take time and in many cases you will only get a trickle of customers. Posting on forums, hoping that someone will click on your website's link in your "signature" takes time.

Paid advertising such as Pay Per Click programs (e.g. Google Adwords), advertising on websites and ezines, etc. can be very expensive.

Let's face it, even large and well established blue chip companies need to advertise and will often see a decline in revenue as soon as they stop advertising. It is not something that can be avoided.

It is certainly possible to get lots of traffic by combining several free and paid advertising solutions. In fact, it is possible to get thousands of visitors every day but it will take time and hard work.

The aim of this chapter is not to give you a quick fix solution to your traffic problems or a step-by-step guide to increasing traffic.

There are many good reports on the market and if you have signed up for my newsletter at <http://www.DiggingForGoldNuggets.com> you can expect receiving a lot of additional “how to” information in the future.

What I would like to share in this chapter is some of the important fundamentals behind traffic generation.

Get TARGETED traffic!

This may be an obvious statement that many marketers take for granted. Yet, I am often surprised that how so many marketers focus on quantity above quality.

You need to focus on QUALITY TRAFFIC, not QUANTITY...

Unless there is a direct relationship between the number of visitors your website, blog or Squidoo lens receive and sales you are probably getting the wrong traffic.

I.e. If you are getting an average of 1,000 unique visitors per month and generate \$1,000 per month in sales you should be able to generate \$2,000 per month in sales if you are able to double your unique visitors to 2,000 per month.

Makes sense?

What many marketers do is they focus on increasing the number of unique visitors they get every month but they do not measure or monitor the ratio between unique visitors and sales.

Monitoring this ratio is probably the best and easiest way of establishing whether you are getting the right kind of targeted traffic. Traffic that are really interested in the solutions you have on offer. Traffic that is able and willing to spend money.

I guess ‘ego’ plays a big role. Getting 100,000 unique visitors per month does give you bragging rights! However, let’s be honest, even getting 1 million visitors means nothing unless they are targeted. In fact, you will probably achieve much better results with “only” getting 10,000 highly targeted visitors per month.

There are many books on the market with titles such as “Easily get an additional 200 visitors per day...” or “How I increased unique visitors by 10,000 per month”

Sounds good? Sure it does. How often do you see a title such as “How I doubled the number of unique visitors I get every month and doubled my sales...”?

Bottom line, don’t fall for the quantity trap. Focus on quality.

Don't put all your eggs in one basket.

Advertising trends, both paid and free, come and go. What may work very well today may not work tomorrow.

A couple of years ago banner ads were all the rage. It was seen as THE way to advertise and get thousands of visitors. Sadly it reached a point where it simply no longer made sense to spend a fortune on banner advertising.

The bubble burst and countless webmasters and marketers went out of business.

The marketers went out of business because they lost their main source of traffic, and by implication income.

The webmasters went out of business because their income plummeted. Within a short period of time they could only charge a fraction of what they used to for displaying banners on their websites.

By the way, banner advertising is very slowly making a comeback but it has taken many years...

SEO (Search Engine Optimization) experienced the same problems, even today.

Many websites that have ranked on the first page of Google for competitive keywords have been totally destroyed when Google changed its algorithm. This happens often enough!

Imagine the consequences when you are used to getting 1,000 visitors per day being on the first page of Google's organic listings and then watch your traffic fall to nearly zero because Google has re-indexed your website on page 57...

Putting all your eggs in one basket is very dangerous!

What I find astonishing is that most marketers will agree you need to have multiple sources of traffic. However, many of these same marketers only focus on maybe two or three different traffic sources.

You should try to have at least five different sources of traffic. Work on becoming an expert in every single source you apply. Get to know it from A to Z and Z to A. If one source becomes obsolete you won't risk losing all your traffic and income.

Track your campaigns!

“The single biggest mistake I see online, and have seen for many years, regardless of the strategy being used, is one simple thing...POOR TRACKING!”
- John Reese

Assume you employ any combination of the following techniques to get traffic and generate sales – Banners, PPC, pop ups, forums, press releases, email ads, links, and articles.

Next, assume you get 5,000 visitors to your website and generate 200 sales worth \$5,000. You spent \$2,000 on advertising in total.

How on earth do you know where those sales came from? From banner ads? A press release? Email ads? This is essential information!

Imagine the amount of time and money you will save by eliminating unprofitable advertising spending and focusing your resources on what works best.

You should be able to significantly cut costs while maintaining the same number of sales, or leave costs unchanged while increasing your number of sales.

Even if you only have one source of traffic (dangerous!) such as Google Adwords, you still need to know what ads are profitable and what ads are only costing you money. This is not only “nice to know” information...

You should be able to track the origin of every single dollar you make. This means tracking every single advertising campaign you run.

There are many good tools you can use to track campaigns.

The one that I recommend is Google Analytics (and it is 100% free!).

Google Analytics is a free tool. Simply sign up for an account, copy & paste some code in your website and you are done. You can also set up “goals” and monitor the results. For example, how many people click through from your sales page to an order / payment page and then onto your download page.

For more information on Google Analytics, visit <http://www.google.com/analytics/>

Don't buy traffic!

Many new marketers, in a desperate attempt to get some traffic resort to buying traffic from some traffic exchange programs. I am not talking about your normal run of the mill advertising campaigns.

Here is one typical example of such a program – You join a program and “surf” websites of fellow members. For every two websites you look at (you often need to spend at least 20 seconds on a site) you get one credit meaning another member will visit your site for at least 20 seconds.

Since many members rightfully feel that it is more exiting watching grass grow than surfing other websites to get credits, they buy credits. Sounds good in theory until you think it through logically...

These members are not really interested in buying anything from you. You basically have a site full of “merchants” and no “customers”. The results are often dismal and a complete waste of time. In fact, I have experimented with several of these sites in the past and never got good results.

Warning: It can be dangerous to buy traffic if you have Google AdSense on your site. You will invariable get some clicks and these clicks are often frowned upon by Google as they are considered “not normal”.

Remember that these members do not click on your website's link. They are automatically directed to your website. Google knows where every single click originates from and if it is the result of a normal advertising campaign or if people are automatically sent to your site under a traffic exchange program.

You run a severe risk of having your AdSense account permanently deleted.

Talking about AdSense, often new marketers are tempted to ask friends and family to visit their new website and click on their AdSense ads. Big mistake. Anything out of the ordinary sets of alarm bells.

I recently spoke to a new marketer who got banned by Google from ever using AdSense ads again. His story was that his friends and family tried to do him a favor by clicking on his AdSense ads... He pleaded with Google saying he was not aware of this but only got a cold shoulder from them.

Advertisers account for approx. 95% of Google's income. They make a point of trying very hard to protect their advertisers from fraudulent clicks!

Tip: If you accidentally click on an AdSense ad on your own site report it to Google without delay. They will normally not make a fuss.

Chapter 11: Conclusion – Time For Action

Procrastination is the thief of time.

The reasons for not taking action are numerous BUT every single excuse can easily be countered...

Fear of failure?

It is better to try and fail than not try at all.

Don't know enough?

Apply what you already know and learn.

If you only remember one thing from this book I hope it will be the following quote:

<p>I hear and I forget, I see and I remember, I do and I understand - Confucius</p>
--

The best way to learn is by doing. There is no substitute for practical experience.

I sincerely trust you enjoyed reading this book as much as I enjoyed writing it and that it will help you to build your own solid foundation in internet marketing!

Wishing you all the very best!

Francois du Toit

<http://www.DiggingForGoldNuggets.com>

P.S. Please drop me an email at DiggingForGoldNuggets@gmail.com with any comments, questions or queries relating to Digging For Gold Nuggets. Thanks!

About the Author



Francois du Toit has been a full-time internet marketer since 2006 and lives in Johannesburg, South Africa with his wife Astrid and their four children.

Enjoyed this free report? Ready to start making some serious money?

“Discover A Proven Blueprint That Will Show YOU Exactly How To Build A Money Pumping Online Business From The Comfort Of Your Own Home!”



<http://www.NicheMarketingUncovered.com>

Recommended Resources

Affiliate Marketing: <http://SuperAffiliateHandbook.info>

Affiliate Membership Site: <http://www.WealthyAffiliateTips.com>

Autoresponder: <http://products.aweber.com>

Domain Name Registration: <http://www.godaddy.com> or <http://namecheap.com>

Hosting Provider: <http://www.HostgatorGold.com>

Internet Marketing Forum: <http://www.WarriorForum/forum>

Keyword Research: <http://freekeywords.wordtracker.com/>

Link Cloaking & List Building: http://ViralURL.com/special_offer

Payment Processor: <http://www.Paypal.com> or <http://www.2checkout.com>

Selling or Promoting downloadable products: <http://www.Clickbank.com>

Sitesell – All in One eCommerce Solution: <http://www.SitesellPlus.com>

Tracking Software: <http://www.google.com/analytics/>

Website Builder: <http://www.XSiteProPlus.com>

Website Marketing Graphics: <http://www.WebsiteMarketingGraphics.com>