

THE *Fast Start* **GUIDE TO** **INFO MILLIONS**



**A Step-by-Step System
for Building A Wildly Profitable
Info-Product Empire**

COPYRIGHT NOTICES

All rights reserved.

No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, mechanical or electronic, including photocopying and recording, or by any information storage and retrieval system, without permission in writing from the publisher.

© Collin Almeida and Success Strategies Inc.

Published by Success Strategies Inc

34950 Hwy 58, Eugene, Oregon 97405

Telephone: Toll Free 1-877-636-9631 or (541) 736-9631

Printed and bound in the United States of America

LEGAL NOTICES

While all attempts have been made to verify information provided in this publication, neither the authors nor the Publisher assumes any responsibility for errors, omissions or contrary interpretation of the subject matter herein.

This publication is not intended for use as a source of legal or accounting advice. The Publisher wants to stress that the information contained herein may be subject to varying federal, state and/or local laws or regulations. All users are advised to retain competent counsel to determine what state and/or local laws or regulations may apply to the user's particular business.

The purchaser or reader of this publication assumes responsibility for the use of these materials and information. Adherence to all applicable laws and regulations, both federal and state and local, governing professional licensing, business practices, advertising and all other aspects of doing business in the United States or any other jurisdiction is the sole responsibility of the purchaser or reader. The authors and Publisher assume no responsibility or liability whatsoever on the behalf of any purchaser or reader of these materials.

Table of Contents

| | |
|---|-----------|
| Fast Action Guide..... | 9 |
| Introduction | 11 |
| Getting the Into the Right Mindset for Success..... | 13 |
| Fear of Failure | 13 |
| Fear of Success | 14 |
| Fear of the Unknown | 16 |
| Your Fast Action Guide Blueprint..... | 18 |
| Overview of Creating and Marketing an Information Product..... | 18 |
| Market Research | 18 |
| Developing the Product..... | 19 |
| Setting up the Website | 20 |
| Driving Traffic to the Site | 21 |
| Other Marketing Issues to Consider | 21 |
| Info Product Development Module | 23 |
| Introduction: The Bare Essentials | 25 |
| Section I: Producing Your Product..... | 27 |
| What Can Your Information Product Be About?..... | 27 |
| Deciding on a Niche | 31 |
| Start Writing..... | 33 |
| Subject Areas That Will Always Produce Info Riches | 35 |
| How To Brainstorm And Narrow Down Your Information Product Ideas To Find The “Quickest To Market” Concept | 36 |
| A Proven ‘Info Riches 10-step Formula’ To Quickly Evaluate Your TOP Product Ideas..... | 40 |
| How To Effectively Create A ‘Profitable Product Outline’ | 41 |
| How To Use Google To Find And Create Content For Your Product Outline | 43 |
| How To Use Amazon To Generate Tons Of High Quality Content Easily..... | 46 |
| <i>Remember that although even at this early stage of its development Search Inside!™ has millions of books covered, it is only a small percentage of the total Amazon book inventory.</i> | <i>50</i> |
| <i>By searching the SIPs in this way you can easily find more books that are covered by Search Inside!™</i> | <i>50</i> |
| Section II: Packaging Your Product..... | 50 |
| 30 Top Ways To Package Your Information Products For Maximum Riches | 50 |
| How To Package Your Ebook For Free | 56 |
| How To Create And Package Audio Products For Free..... | 60 |
| How To Record Interviews With Experts For Free | 65 |

| | |
|--|------------|
| How To Create A Membership Area For Free..... | 67 |
| How To Edit And Package Video Products For Free | 67 |
| WHAT DO TO WITH YOUR VIDEO ONCE IT'S IN MOVIE MAKER..... | 73 |
| How To Package Your Digital Products For Instant Downloads -- For Free | 75 |
| Free Blog Alternatives You Can Use To Promote Your Products | 75 |
| How To Really Write 'List-Building Articles' And Where To Submit Them For Maximum Results..... | 76 |
| How To Create A Viral Product And Make It 'Buzz' | 80 |
| Resale Rights And How To Use Them So They Don't Destroy Your Business | 81 |
| The ONE Marketing Forum You Have To Be An Active Member Of..... | 82 |
| A Completely Free Alternative To ClickBank | 83 |
| How To Publish Your Own (Physical) Book For Less Than \$10 | 83 |
| How To Produce Your CD/DVD For Less Than \$7 | 85 |
| Special Section: PodCast Info Riches..... | 87 |
| How To Create Podcasts Using Your PC..... | 93 |
| Making A Podcast With Blogger And FeedBurner | 95 |
| Podcast Marketing Brainstorm | 103 |
| Forward Thinking: How to Create Products with a Backend Marketing System Already in Place | 104 |
| Marketing | 107 |
| Introduction | 109 |
| Building Your Profit Funnel..... | 110 |
| Overview of the Profit Funnel | 110 |
| Pre-launch Marketing..... | 136 |
| Building Anticipation | 137 |
| A Pre-launch is an Event, Not a Moment | 139 |
| The Keys to a Successful Launch | 141 |
| TAKE ACTION! Worksheets | 143 |
| Checklist #1: the Pre-launch Checklist..... | 144 |
| Other Pre-Launch Issues | 148 |
| 1. More customer service inquiries..... | 148 |
| 2. Expect website glitches. | 149 |
| 3. Your payment processor freezes your account..... | 149 |
| Test everything prior to launch. | 150 |
| Set Up A System That Pays You Repeatedly & In Larger Amounts Over Time..... | 151 |
| TAKE ACTION! Worksheet | 155 |
| For a Bigger Payoff -- Look at the Bigger Picture | 158 |
| Funnel Your Way To Huge Backend Profits | 159 |
| How to Avoid Freebie Seekers..... | 161 |

| | |
|---|------------|
| How to Increase Your Response Rate | 163 |
| When Should You Start “Pitching” in a Free Newsletter? | 163 |
| Getting Interactive to Increase Responsiveness | 165 |
| Summary: The First Sale is the First Step..... | 166 |
| Backend Sales System | 167 |
| Success Starts Here..... | 167 |
| Blunders That Can Stifle Growth & Even Kill A Business... Maybe Even Yours ... | 168 |
| Are You Leaving More Money Behind Than You Rake In?..... | 169 |
| The Secret To Making The Most Of Your Customer List | 171 |
| Are You Bothering Your Customers Right to the Unsubscribe Button? | 171 |
| 5 Surefire Ways To Instantly Boost Your Backend Sales and Multiply Your Profits | 173 |
| Upsell Tactics | 174 |
| Who Else Wants To Start Claiming The 70% - 90% of the Total Profit Others Continue to Leave Behind? | 178 |
| There Are Just 3 Ways To Make Money In Any Business... .. | 178 |
| How to Retain Your Best Customers..... | 179 |
| 1. Honor your policies..... | 179 |
| 2. Answer all customer inquiries promptly | 180 |
| 3. Handle refund requests promptly, too. | 182 |
| 4. Use a help desk..... | 183 |
| 5. Answer calmly and without injecting emotion..... | 183 |
| 6. Only promise what you can deliver. | 184 |
| 7. Focus on solutions. | 185 |
| Your Post-Launch Checklist | 187 |
| Conclusion..... | 189 |
| Copywriting..... | 191 |
| Introduction | 193 |
| How to Build the Framework of Your Killer Sales Letter | 194 |
| How to Write a Good Headline | 195 |
| DOES THIS LOOK COMFORTABLE TO YOUR EYES? | 196 |
| Sub-headline | 197 |
| Addressing Your Prospect..... | 197 |
| Your Opening Paragraph | 200 |
| Announcing Your Solution..... | 203 |
| Benefits vs. Features..... | 204 |
| Endorsements and Testimonials | 206 |
| Giving Bonus Incentives (optional)..... | 209 |
| Guarantee | 211 |
| Persuade to Buy Now..... | 213 |

| | |
|--|------------|
| Post-Scripts | 215 |
| Part II: What is "Million Dollar Copy?" | 217 |
| Copywriting Myths You Must Discard..... | 219 |
| The First Key to Million-Dollar Copy | 223 |
| The Second Key to Million-Dollar Copy..... | 225 |
| "THUD!" | 228 |
| The Third Key to Million-Dollar Copy..... | 238 |
| The Fourth Key to Million-Dollar Copy | 243 |
| The Fifth Key to Million-Dollar Copy | 245 |
| The Sixth Key to Million-Dollar Copy | 247 |
| The Seventh Key to Million-Dollar Copy..... | 249 |
| Ultimate Benefits | 259 |
| THE Ultimate Benefit..... | 266 |
| So, again, how do you use this to sell? | 270 |
| Conclusion..... | 275 |
| Copywriting Worksheets | 276 |
| TAKE ACTION! Worksheet #1: Defining Your Target Market | 276 |
| TAKE ACTION! Worksheet #2: The benefits and features of your product | 281 |
| TAKE ACTION! Worksheet #3: Brainstorming your USP | 283 |
| Traffic Module | 285 |
| All Traffic is not Created Equal | 287 |
| TAKE ACTION! | 288 |
| The Truth About Traffic Diversity..... | 289 |
| Free Ways to Pull in Targeted Traffic | 291 |
| Joint Ventures and Affiliates | 291 |
| After the Joint Venture... .. | 299 |
| TAKE ACTION! | 300 |
| SEO: How to Rank High in the Search Engines..... | 302 |
| What words does your market use to find you? | 302 |
| On-Page Optimization | 303 |
| Off-Page Optimization | 304 |
| Blogs – SEO's Best Friend..... | 308 |
| TAKE ACTION! | 310 |
| Other Sources of Free Traffic..... | 312 |
| Lead Generation Using Free Products..... | 312 |
| Using Free Events | 313 |
| TAKE ACTION! | 314 |
| Sell Resell Rights to Your Products | 315 |
| Forum Marketing | 316 |
| TAKE ACTION! | 318 |

| | |
|--|------------|
| How to Get Free Publicity..... | 321 |
| TAKE ACTION! | 323 |
| TAKE ACTION! | 325 |
| List your action steps here: | 325 |
| Quick and Easy Paid Traffic Generation | 327 |
| How to Use Pay Per Click Search Advertising | 327 |
| ACTION STEP: | 332 |
| Other Ways to Drive Targeted Traffic to Your Site..... | 334 |
| CPA Networks | 335 |
| JV Brokers and Affiliate Managers | 336 |
| Buying Ads Offline..... | 340 |
| TAKE ACTION! | 341 |
| Conclusion: Pulling it All Together..... | 343 |
| TAKE ACTION: Traffic System Checklist (top three methods) | 344 |
| Pay Per Click Search Engines | 346 |
| Outsourcing | 349 |
| 1.0 Introduction to Outsourcing..... | 351 |
| 1.1 Outsourcing – What it is and How it Benefits the Internet Entrepreneur | 351 |
| 1.2 Outsourcing: Now or Later? | 352 |
| 1.3 Full Time Staff versus Outsourcing to Agents – Pros and Cons | 353 |
| 2.0 Tasks You Can Outsource..... | 355 |
| 2.1 Outsourcing Your Advertising and Marketing Needs | 355 |
| 2.2 Why Outsource Your Content Writing? | 356 |
| 2.3 Finding a Competent Graphic Designer for Your Next Project..... | 357 |
| 2.4 Finding a Great Virtual Assistant..... | 358 |
| 2.5 Getting Help with Your Blogging | 359 |
| 2.6 Outsourcing Your Copywriting Projects..... | 360 |
| 2.7 Programming Needs and How to Outsource Them | 361 |
| 2.8 Need a Book Ghostwriter? | 363 |
| 2.9 Farming out Editing Jobs..... | 364 |
| 2.10 Going the Agent Route with Your Sales Initiative..... | 365 |
| 3.0 How to Negotiate Outsourcing Deals | 367 |
| 3.1 Negotiating Your Outsourcing Deal..... | 367 |
| 3.2 Choosing an Outsourcing Company to Handle Your Phone Needs..... | 368 |
| 3.3 Outsourcing Contracts Can Be Confusing | 369 |
| 4.0 Outsourcing – Tips and Tricks..... | 371 |
| 4.1 Outsourcing Tips and Tricks..... | 371 |
| 4.2 Outsourcing: Project Planning and Completion..... | 372 |
| 4.3 Rewarding and Motivating Freelancers..... | 373 |
| Outsourcing Checklist..... | 375 |

Fast Action Guide

Developing a Successful Mindset and
the Blueprint to Success

Introduction

You have big dreams. And you know that making money online can help you fulfill those dreams by helping you finally start living the lifestyle you want.

But if you're just starting out, all of this can be overwhelming. Everywhere you look someone is telling you how to make money online. But here's the problem: everyone is telling you something different.

"The key to making money online," says Joe Guru, "is to set up AdSense sites."

"The REAL key to making money online," says Jack Guru, "is to get started on eBay."

And so it goes. If you try to listen to everyone it will drive you crazy. And if you try to follow everyone's advice, you'll end up broke.

Indeed, if you look around some of the biggest marketing and business forums, you'll see grasshopper marketers who can't seem to focus. They try one thing for a week or two ...until something else catches their eye. Then they move on, always keeping one eye open looking for the next bright and shiny distraction.

End result? They're broke from buying all the programs. And they've wasted months if not years jumping from one thing to the next, never sticking with anything long enough to see results.

It's a common problem, one that's most often it's rooted in the contradictory messages they're receiving about how to make money online.

Now here's the secret: if you stick to one good plan long enough, chances are you'll see some success. But you need to focus.

Even simplifying the process to that degree might still seem overwhelming. What should you focus on? What route should you take?

Let's make it simple: focus on information product marketing.

Why? Because it's one of the easiest ways to get started making money online. You don't need a huge wad of cash to get started. Indeed, you can get started for as little as the cost of a domain name (>\$10) and hosting (>\$10 per month).

Then you can drive traffic to your site for free. If you have money to spend, you'll see your success faster.

Getting started is easy, too. In fact you have in your hands a Fast Action Guide that leads you step-by-step through the entire process: from coming up with a product idea, to writing sales copy, to driving traffic to your site and beyond. In some sections you'll even find worksheets included to help you sail quickly through these steps.

Of course pages of blueprints can also seem overwhelming – at first. But once you start taking the action steps, you'll see that it's not difficult. Even so, we're going to make this entire process even easier by giving you an overview of the entire process. You'll find your blueprint at the end of this section.

But first, we need to talk about one other important piece of the success puzzle: namely, your success mindset....

Getting Into the Right Mindset for Success

Look around, and you'll see extremely knowledgeable marketers who are happy to tell you everything they know about marketing. Indeed, if you meet these folks on business and marketing forums, you can recognize them because they're offering the rock-solid information. Whether it's about copywriting, driving traffic, testing or any other marketing issue, these amazing people are like walking marketing encyclopedias.

Because of their vast knowledge, some of these marketers are making an absolute killing online. And surprisingly, some other members of this group aren't even making enough to cover their hosting bills.

Yes, you read that right. There are indeed people with a vast amount of marketing knowledge ...and yet they haven't turned this knowledge into cash.

How can that be? Is it simply because these people are lazy?

No, it's not that simple. And indeed, many of these people are the hardest-working marketers you'll find.

Their problem – which is extremely common – is that their mindset isn't yet tuned to success. And because this is such a common problem, it's very likely that you'll run into a similar problem yourself.

What it all boils down to, in essence, is fear.

Of course the next logical question is this: what is their to be afraid of? Why would someone actually have any fear about starting their own information marketing business?

Fear of Failure

For some people it's a fear of failure. Think of it this way...

You spend many long hours working on a project. You pour months of your life into this project. And all the while, you're thinking about how successful this project will be. You're thinking about the money you'll make when it's done. You're thinking about the sort of lifestyle you'll lead when you and your project becomes a huge success.

But then something happens: suddenly you start procrastinating shortly before you're about to launch the product. Or in other cases, you develop a case of perfectionism – before you'll release your product or sales letter, you've decided to tweak until they're perfect. Either way, you've essentially guaranteed that your project will never see the light of day.

Why would you do this? Simple: because if you launch and the project is a failure, in an instant your dreams will disintegrate into ashes. All those pleasant day dreams you had about buying a new car, going on vacations, giving nice gifts to your family – gone. All the dreams are crushed if your project fails.

And so it's easier not to release the project at all. If you can procrastinate, or if you become a perfectionist, then you don't have to release your product. That means instead of facing a possible grim reality, you can continue basking in the day dreams that make you feel so good.

It's easier that way. You don't have to risk failing ...and yet you can continue to enjoy those dreams.

Fear of Success

Another common fear is the fear of success. Yes, success! And although you wouldn't think people would be afraid of success, they are ...and they're not alone. This too is quite common.

Some people are afraid of success because they've come to believe they don't deserve it. Since they were very little, they've heard friends and family say things about successful people. Sometimes the things said were rude. And sometimes these things were said in disapproving voices.

Just stop and listen to the people around you, and you'll likely still hear those negative comments and tones. For example, your friend's neighbor gets a new friend. Instead of your friend saying, "wow, nice car!"... you hear your friend say, "My neighbor is such a blowhard and a show off with his expensive cars."

Or listen in general to what people say about wealth. They think rich people are corrupt, dishonest, or selfish. Anyone who's rich becomes an "enemy" of sorts in the minds of those with an "us" and "them" mentality.

Some of it is a scarcity mentality. Some people believe that if someone else is rich, then they are taking an unfair share of the wealth in the world. And that of course means that it's less likely any of the rest of us will get ahead since those "rich people" are hogging all the wealth.

So you can see why we are afraid of success. We are afraid of being thought of as corrupt, dishonest or selfish. We are afraid of what people will say about us behind our backs. We don't want to be show-offs and blowhards. We don't want to feel like we're taking an unfair share of riches in the world.

But none of this is true, of course. Our wealth does not cause someone else to be poor. There is an abundance of wealth in this world, and we can all have as much as we want.

Nor are wealthy people any more corrupt, dishonest or selfish than the rest of us. Indeed, some of the wealthiest people in the world can do the most good in the world. They can build hospitals, schools, and libraries. They can give a tremendous amount of money to charities around the world.

(When you think of it that way, you realize that we all have a duty to become wealthy. Only when we become wealthy can we do the most good in the world.)

So what if you hear these sorts of negative things from people, or – heaven forbid – hear yourself saying them? The answer is simple: you need to ignore those who say such things, and reprogram your thinking so you stop believe them.

That means that you should be consistently saying positive affirmations that help you reprogram these negative thoughts. It won't happen in a night or two – after all, it took a lifetime to ingrain these thoughts. So you need to consistently say these affirmations for as long as it takes – perhaps weeks, months, or even years.

For example, let's suppose you're prone to thinking that wealthy and successful people are selfish. You may have to do affirmations like: "Wealthy people are able to do the most good in the world. I am wealthy. I am a good person who generously shares my wealth."

That's just an example. You should say whatever is comfortable for you. Just be sure to do it consistently – every day for at least a few weeks or few months. Then say your affirmations periodically to reinforce them.

Tip: *You may also want to put inspiring quotes in places where you'll see them everyday, like on your computer desktop or on your bathroom mirror.*

Fear of the Unknown

While some people need to start thinking about wealth differently and realize that they deserve it, others are a bit afraid of what it might take to become a success. Namely: just how far will they have to step out of their comfort zone to see the success they crave?

Think of it this way...

Let's suppose I put you on the edge of a very dense forest, and told you that you walked exactly one mile, you'd find a chest full of one million dollars. All you have to do is walk into the forest to retrieve the chest ...and you're guaranteed one million dollars.

Easy enough, right?

Not quite.

For starters, you can't hardly see into it because the brush is so thick. You know it will take a lot of sweating and work to clear a one-mile path to get to your money.

But there's another problem: you have no idea what's in that forest. Are their wild beasts waiting to attack you? Are their snakes waiting to wrap around and bite you? Are their traps you might fall into? Or perhaps there are tribal people guarding the chest full of money.

On the other hand, maybe the forest is full of song birds, butterflies and kittens. Maybe a choir is standing at the chest, waiting to sing an uplifting song when you collect your money.

The problem is you have no idea what to expect!

And that's why not everyone will walk into the forest to retrieve the money. As long as they stay out of the forest, they know they're safe. They don't risk anything. But as soon as you step into the unknown – even if you know one million dollars awaits you – you're taking a huge risk for that money.

As such, staying in the familiar meadow instead of walking into the unknown forest is, to many people, the right thing to do. It's better to continue leading a mediocre but safe lifestyle, rather than risking anything for the chance at a better lifestyle.

And so it is with making a living online, too. Simply put: you don't know what sort of risks you need to take. You don't know what sort of problems await you. So sometimes it's easier to just sit to the side and watch others enter the “forest” to collect their riches.

But let me ask you something...

What if you had a MAP?

What if you knew exactly where to go in this forest? What if you knew exactly what awaited you? What if you could anticipate the pitfalls, and calculate the fastest, easiest way to get to the million-dollar chest?

Would you go into the forest if you were armed with this map plus all the tools and resources you needed to successfully (and safely) quickly navigate your way to the money?

Of course you would!

And the good news is that right at this very moment you are reading the map. That's right, this Fast Action Guide along with all the materials in the members only area are the tools and resources you need to collect your riches.

Are you ready to get started?

Let's go...

Your Fast Action Guide Blueprint

All you have to do is go through these steps one by one – indeed, you can even use this as a handy checklist. For complete directions on how to complete the steps, refer to your Fast Action Guide, as well as the resources listed in the members-only area of the website.

Important Note: *The membership site includes a full suite of ebooks, software, videos, audios and other resources to put you on the fast track of success – and since it's updated frequently, you'll want to be sure to visit often!*

Overview of Creating and Marketing an Information Product

Market Research

Step 1: Brainstorm and find potential niches.

- ☐ Traditional Brainstorming
- ☐ Using Google and other search engines
- ☐ Using keyword tools

Step 2: Find out if the potential niche is profitable (e.g., is it a hungry market?)

- ☐ Search Google for competition
- ☐ Use keyword tools to assess demand
- ☐ Check out Clickbank.com, Paydotcom.com, etc to see what's being sold
- ☐ Check online and offline publications (pay attention to advertisers – if marketers are consistently spending money advertising, their ads are probably profitable)

Step 3: Find out what this market wants

- ☐ Read forums to find out what people in the niche want
- ☐ Do niche surveys
- ☐ Talk to members of the niche to determine their problems

Step 4: Assess the competition

- ☐ Buy competitors' products: read and use to determine primary selling benefits and weaknesses
- ☐ Read reviews of product to determine benefits and weaknesses
- ☐ Talk to customers and ask for their reviews. What would they like in a product that isn't in the existing products?
- ☐ After figuring out the pros and cons of a product, determine how you can create a better product.

Developing the Product

Step 1: Outline your product

- ☐ Based on research you've collected in previous step, outline what information you will include in your product. Be sure to improve upon existing products.
- ☐ Note: define a USP (unique selling proposition) upfront. That is, how will your product be different and better than the competitors' products? Why should customers buy your product instead of the competitors' products?

Step 2: Decide what format you're going to use.

- ☐ Physical product, downloadable product, or a combination?
- ☐ Text: ebooks, reports, books, articles online, etc
- ☐ Audio: interviews, audio books, teleconferences etc
- ☐ Video: downloads, DVD's, etc

Step3: Create the product

Options:

- ☐ Create it yourself
- ☐ Hire a freelancer to create it
- ☐ Have joint venture partners contribute to it
- ☐ Two or more of the above

Step 4: Convert into proper format

For example:

- ☐ Convert your word processing document into a PDF file
- ☐ Convert your teleconference into a downloadable MP3
- ☐ Convert your digital product into a physical product

Step 5: Consider any relevant bonus products to add value to your offer

Options:

- ☐ Create yourself
- ☐ Outsource to a freelancer
- ☐ Buy the resell rights or private label rights to a product

Step 6: Consider offering one or more products as an upsell or one-time-offer on the sales page, order form, or thank you page.

Options:

- ☐ Create yourself
- ☐ Outsource to a freelancer
- ☐ Buy the resell rights or private label rights to a product

Step 7: Think ahead to your backend marketing – start planning products to sell on the backend.

Setting up the Website

Step 1: Purchase and set up a domain name and hosting

Step 2: Set up a payment processor.

Options:

- ☐ Paypal (with an affiliate script)
- ☐ Clickbank
- ☐ Paydotcom
- ☐ 2CO or similar (with an affiliate script)
- ☐ Your own merchant account (with an affiliate script)

Note: Clickbank.com or Paydotcom are your best choices if you're promoting with affiliates.

Step 3: Set up an autoresponder / mailing list manager (Aweber.com or GetResponse.com)

- ☐ Pre-load autoresponder with a series of marketing messages
- ☐ Place email capture form on your site

Step 4: Create a sales letter for your product

Options:

- ☐ Study copywriting and do it yourself.

- ☐ Do it yourself, but get a critique from a professional
- ☐ Hire a professional copywriter

Step 5: Create a one-time-offer or other upsell and add to your sales process

Step 6: Create a download page

Includes:

- ☐ Thanking them for their order
- ☐ Reminder of how the charge will appear on their credit card
- ☐ Brief reminder of benefits to keep them excited
- ☐ Possible unannounced bonus
- ☐ Possible link to another paid product

Driving Traffic to the Site

Step 1: Decide which online marketing methods you'll use

Options include but are not limited to:

- ☐ Search engine optimization (SEO)
- ☐ Pay per click (PPC) search engines
- ☐ Affiliates
- ☐ Joint Venture Partners
- ☐ Email marketing
- ☐ Buying text and banner ads

Step 2: Decide which offline marketing methods you'll use

Options include but are not limited to:

- ☐ Press releases
- ☐ Classified ads
- ☐ Joint ventures
- ☐ Ads on radio or TV
- ☐ Other print publication ads
- ☐ Speaking engagements
- ☐ Seminars and workshops

Other Marketing Issues to Consider

Step 1: Refine your existing marketing strategies

- ☐ Test and track your sales letter

- ☐ Test and track your ads
- ☐ Test and track other relevant items to find out what's profitable (e.g., test and track PPC campaigns)
- ☐ Tweak as needed to improve conversion rate / profits

Step 2: Expand your backend marketing

Develop more products and more expensive products to sell on the backend. Consider:

- ☐ More ebooks, audios, videos
- ☐ Big multi-media packages of products
- ☐ Workshops and seminars
- ☐ Personal consultations and other training
- ☐ Residual income opportunities such as membership sites (forced continuity model)

Step 3: Log into the membership site to access a full suite of videos, audios, software, ebooks, and tools that enable you to quickly and easily refine your marketing processes and make more money.

Info Product Development Module

Introduction: The Bare Essentials

There are a couple of things that must be mentioned before you begin to create your information product.

You still need to have your own web hosting and domain name that will allow you to host a 'mini site' to showcase and deliver your information product for download.

Now in my opinion, one of the BEST registrars to get your domain name at for a reasonable price is NameCheap. While not exactly the cheapest, they make up for it with their reliability, commitment to customer service and exclusive benefits for customers.

Go to: <http://www.namecheap.com>



The regular price for a standard .com domain name here is \$8.88. There are other domains available such as .net, .org, .info, .us, .tv, .biz, .name etc. ranging from \$2.88 for .info to \$42.95 for a .tv. The most popular TLD you'd want to go for are .com, .net and .info.

Now let's talk about web space...

While it is possible to find free hosts that give you some quality features, they will more than likely put strict limitations on what you can do with your hosting space.

Plus you will have NO CONTROL over the banners that appear on your site either., and you wouldn't want any banner on your sales page at all to avoid looking unprofessional and distracting to the sales process.

Free hosting is definitely out if you're looking at building a serious long-term business and establishing customer trust.

So if you don't already have a web host, then you'd need to get one obviously. My personal recommendation is to get a web host that will allow you to host more than one domain for future products you may create.

Usually this will run pretty expensive, but Ultimate Marketing Center gives you a FANTASTIC deal for what you get. It's also a complete ALL-IN-ONE internet marketing service so it's very affordable.

Go to: <http://ultimatemarketingcenter.com/>

The screenshot shows the homepage of Ultimate Marketing Center. The header features the company name in a large, stylized font with a tagline 'Everything YOU Need To Make a Living Online'. Below the header is a navigation bar with links for 'Home', 'NEW!', 'Member Login', 'Contact Us', 'Partner Program', and 'More'. The main content area is divided into two columns. The left column lists various services offered, such as 'Your All-In-One Solution!', '100 MB Hosting Account with 2GB bandwidth per month!', 'Unlimited Follow-up Autoresponders & List Managers', 'Unlimited Pro Ad Trackers', 'Automated Search Engine Submissions', 'Affiliate Management System - Real!', 'Website Referral System', 'Unlimited URL Rotators', 'Unlimited Banner Managers', 'Multiple Income Streams e-commerce portals', 'Unique CGI scripts', 'Hot Selling eBooks & Software with Super Rights!', 'Marketing Courses, Manuals, Reports and Tutorials.', and a red button that says '& more being added...!'. The right column contains a testimonial from a competitor, a quote about running an internet empire, a product image of a box labeled 'ULTIMATE MARKETING CENTER', and a section titled 'Still looking?' with a list of questions and a concluding statement about being sent over by Internet Gurus.

Ultimately the total cost of getting your own domain name and web hosting space will be peanuts considering the riches you'll be getting out of it with information marketing.

Section I: Producing Your Product

What Can Your Information Product Be About?

Side Bar: Before we get started on how to find and research a niche, we need to make sure you have the right tools.

You can start out with the simple Notepad or WordPad tool that came with your computer. However, to cut through some additional formatting steps, i.e. - copying and pasting, etc. -- it's easier to use a tool with a more functions like Microsoft Word.

You can download a copy of Open Office at <http://www.openoffice.org>.



You may also want to pick up the Open Office Suite. This is helpful to you if you don't have the more expensive Microsoft Office or PDF Maker programs.

This section is a little more lengthy because for most people, this could be the hardest step in the entire information marketing process.

The reason for this is because when you begin anything for the first time it always seems that much more difficult due to it being the very first time.

For some people, writing is an almost impossible task. Let me tell you though that writing an article, special report, or a 340 page ebook isn't any different than learning to roller blade.

However once you get the 'hang' of it, it becomes child's play.

The best advice for this is to write about WHAT YOU KNOW. That makes everything so much easier. And don't think you don't know anything, because everyone knows something that will be of value to someone else.

(Note: You can create anything you want and you'd still be able to get people to purchase them simply by offering your customers a way to make money with your product. This can be resale rights, private label rights, an affiliate program, etc. Simply by inserting a 'money-making' element into your product will get you more sales compared to the other way round.)

Nothing is ever written in stone when it comes to the internet.

A quick example is how many older books on marketing and self-improvement have been storming onto the scene with the trend of Public Domain products.

So if you think that your subject won't have any audience, you couldn't be more wrong.

Chances are good that someone will want to read what you have written, even if they may have never heard of you. It doesn't matter. What does matter is that everyone has a unique way of looking at and solving certain problems. No two people see things the same.

Even if there are hundreds of ebooks, special reports, or articles on the same topic that you're writing on, it won't be filled with the exact same information. That's why you see literally thousands of ebooks covering the same subject matter with the author's own unique spin on it.

Take a look at your own bookshelf (physical or virtual) and you'll see what I mean. For example, if you're a gardener then you probably don't have just one book on gardening on your shelf. You likely have a half a dozen or more. And you probably keep buying them.

Your customers are the same way. They don't buy just one book on a topic that interests them – they buy ALL the books on a topic that interests them. As such, you never have to be worried that a niche is too crowded, because the same people who've bought from your competitors will also buy from you.

Now lets get back to selecting a topic...

No matter which route you take, you should check if there's a market for it first. One of the easiest ways to do this is to use any number of keyword tools that are available on the market. One of the better-known tools is WordTracker.com.

WordTracker is easy to use. All you have to do is enter a keyword or two related to your market, and WordTracker will let you know all the related words your market is using to search for products and information in the search engines.

For example, let's suppose you're interested in dog training. If you entered those two words into WordTracker ("dog training") you'd come out with thousands of words related to the market. For example, you'd have everything from dog housetraining to dog gun training to obedience training on the list.

When you look closely, you'll even find dozens of niches you may never have thought about. For instance, perhaps you'd find that hundreds of people were searching for information on how to train deaf dogs or how to train a particular breed of dogs.

While discovering niches and finding out exactly what words people are using to search for information online is useful, WordTracker gives even more useful information to those who are interested checking out the competition or in optimizing their pages for the search engines.

Specifically, WordTracker gives what they refer to as the KEI, or Keyword Effectiveness Index. The KEI is a ratio of how many times a word is searched relative to how many other websites are competing on this same keyword.

The more a word is searched yet the lower its competition in the search engines, the higher KEI value. In other words, higher KEI values you are better. If you're looking for words that you can successfully optimize for in the search engines, look for those words with high KEI values.

This is not the only way to perform testing on your subject matter of course.

Forums are a fantastic way to ask some questions about your subject and get real answers from real people. It's also a wonderful way to find out how much interest there is from others about your topic.

You can start by visiting the recent forum archives to determine which topics seem to come up again and again. In particular, look for topics for which the existing information products don't provide a full answer. In other words, look for weaknesses in the competing products ...and then make a product that's an improvement over the old products.

If you're a member in good-standing in the forum community, you may also consider posting an open-ended survey to find out what people want. In other words, ask them what sorts of solutions they need. And ask them how you can make your product better than the other products on the market.

To go one step further, you could ask specific questions and incorporate those into your ebook chapters based on the responses you get. (Note, however, that you can't use the exact post without explicit permission from the person who made the forum post.)

You can similarly visit the major search engines and check the supply and competitors. Enter your niche's keywords to see both who controls the organic search engine traffic, as well as who is advertising using pay per click ads. (Those are the sponsored ads that show up alongside the regular advertisements.)

You may also choose to visit places like Clickbank.com and Paydotcom.com to see what sorts of ebooks are currently being sold in your niche.

Note: *If there are too many competitors in your subject topic with a low demand, you may want to rethink your topic.*

Don't be afraid of the competition. Instead, look at it as a good sign that you are entering a niche where the market is willing and able to spend money to solve their problems.

In addition, when you are start marketing your own products then these "competitors" all become potential joint venture partners.

As such, sometimes the saying "the more, the merrier" even applies to marketing!

You'll also want to analyze your competitors' products:

- What are their primary benefits and selling points? You'll want to make sure your product includes the solutions and benefits that your market deems important.
- What are the weaknesses of these products? If you can't tell by reading them, then ask your market.

Also, be sure to read reviews of these products. In some cases you might be able to find reviews on sites like Amazon.com. In other cases you may have to search in Google for the title of the product followed by the word "review" or similar. If you're lucky, you'll find reviews posted on niche forums.

Do note, however, that sometimes reviews are created by affiliates who are looking to sell the product. While this doesn't mean the review is necessarily dishonest, it may mean that the review is biased. And since you're looking for the product flaws, a biased review won't help you.

Once you've figured out the product's weaknesses, think about how you can make your product better. In other words, "build a better mousetrap."

Deciding on a Niche

Before you can start writing, you absolutely must ensure that there is a market for your product. If you followed the advice above regarding how to find a niche, researching it and sizing up the competition, then you can begin writing.

However, many people may feel stuck at this point. They can't research anything because they can't seem to come up with a niche. They look around and have no idea how other marketers seem to be creating a new ebook every week.

So what should you do if you're stuck? There are a few things to help you uncover possible niches and topics for your ebook.

First, you can just keep your eyes and ears open. Watch the news. See what's hot on Yahoo Pulse. Read newspapers and see what everyone is talking about. Listen in on conversations to see what topics are hot. Keep your eye on bestseller lists, like Amazon's list or the New York Times.

Do all of the above, and in time you'll start to see patterns. For example, as the

New Year or summer approaches, you may see that everyone is talking about losing weight. Or it might seem like suddenly everyone is getting “designer dogs” like cockapoos (part cocker spaniel, part poodle). Or maybe you just notice that everyone is talking about a recession... in which case a “how to make money at home” ebook would be a great idea.

Once you have some ideas, be sure to research them as described above to ensure that there is indeed a niche market who’s willing and able to spend money.

Another way to uncover a niche is to return to the keyword tools like WordTracker and start “fishing” for niches. For example, enter the keywords “how to” and see what comes up. You’ll likely find a list of thousands of keywords that boil down to hundreds of niches.

Once you find a few of interest, be sure to research them to determine if they are indeed profitable.

Finally, the third major way to uncover profitable niches and ebook topics is to simply look at your own life and interests...

Make a list of the things that you do or like to do. Whether it's your job, a hobby you enjoy, or caring for children or pets. Remember that things which we often take for granted or overlook because we do them on a constant basis may be something the market wants to know. Once again do your research to determine demand and supply as mentioned above.

Look over the list you just created and choose a subject from it.

Here are a few example topics that might give you some starting ideas:

- Effective Marketing For Small Businesses
- Organic Gardening
- Japanese Bonsai Tree Growing and Care
- Low-Fat Dessert Recipes
- Delicious Italian Recipes
- Working with Leather
- Buying a Car with No Credit or Bad Credit
- Fly Fishing for Beginners
- Pit Bulls as Pets: A Positive Experience

- Choosing A Name For Your Dog
- Home-Made Cat Treat Recipes
- Having an Iguana as a Family Pet
- Being a Better Parent
- Making the Most Out Of Every Day
- Hot Air Ballooning
- Bird Watching For the Family
- Model Airplane Construction
- Coin and Currency Collecting
- Knitting, Crocheting, Sewing
- How to Play Football
- Learning to Play Tennis like A Pro
- Proper Car Tune Up Instructions
- Easy SAT Study Guide For College Students
- Carpet Laying For Dummies
- How to Build Your Own Tranquil Outdoor Garden Sanctuary

The more you narrow down your topic, the more specific the niche category will be and the less competition you'll have.

Pretty much any topic or subject can be turned into a profitable information product if you put the effort into it.

You don't have to have any knowledge about one particular subject, as you could always do research on the topic and create the product as you go along (more on this later).

Start Writing

Once you have your choice topic selected, it's time to begin writing.

You don't have to be afraid, even if you're not a writer. This is easier than you might think. The way to write an information product is to write it as if you are explaining the subject to someone who has no previous knowledge of it or has never heard of what you are talking about.

Go from beginning to end. Leave out nothing, no matter how small the detail. Remember, most of the people that purchase your information product will be new to the whole process of your subject matter.

You will want to create an 'outline' for your product. I'll show you how in the following pages.

Don't be worried about the length of your product. There are more important things to be concerned with than something as trivial as length. Believe me, there are marketers out there selling 5-15 page reports like hotcakes.

This is because they have something unique to share. They also focus on the way in which they provide the information to their customers, making sure it's good and useful information. People pay for useful information -- NOT the length of the product.

Side Bar: *if you don't think that a short report can be useful, let me give you an example...*

Let's suppose I created a one-page ebook and sold it for \$1000. Do you think that's a little pricey? For most topics, you'd likely be right. But if that one page contained tomorrow's winning lottery numbers, then \$1000 is an absolute bargain!

Now of course you can't create an ebook around lottery numbers. However, people who have urgent problems desperately want solutions – and if your ebook gives them that solution, they don't care if the ebook is only 20 pages!

Always remember to be as original as you can be. A good way to do that is to write like you speak. Doing so will also make the task of writing a LOT easier for you.

Note: *Imagine that you are explaining the topic to a friend. Use the same conversational tone in your writing, and you'll have an engaging report when you're finished.*

Indeed, you can even take this literally: get out a voice recorded and explain the topic to a friend. Then get the audio transcribed, edit it to make it flow ...and voila, you have an ebook!

Nothing is perfect. Get your product out there even you're worried you might yet have a couple of typos, or perhaps you're worried that there's a point you forgot to cover. It doesn't matter. What matters is that you provide a topic that works as

advertised and offers a useful solution.

If your product does those two things, then put it on the market. You can always tweak and improve it as you go. But for now, just focus on finishing it and getting it to your customers.

Be inspired: “You don’t have to get it perfect; you just have to get it going!”

Now let’s look at strategies that will almost guarantee your success...

Subject Areas That Will Always Produce Info Riches

How does your business serve others? How do you (or your products/services) contribute to the improvement of lives?

You have to look past the obvious.

For example, cosmetic companies don’t sell lipstick; they sell romance (and sex). They know women want to love and be loved. Lipstick is a device to attain it.

Historically (and most likely forever) people want:

- **Security**
- **Sex**
- **Power**
- **Immortality**
- **Wealth**
- **Happiness**
- **Safety**
- **Health**
- **Recognition**
- **Love**

How do you or your product/service deliver any of those essential needs?

As you begin to brainstorm ideas for your product, keep these customer desires in mind.

How To Brainstorm And Narrow Down Your Information Product Ideas To Find The “Quickest To Market” Concept

Below is an example of the brainstorming spreadsheet you’ll find on the following pages.

STEP 1: Brainstorm as many topic/product ideas as possible.

Write down EVERYTHING that comes to mind. There are no bad ideas at this point. Just do a complete brain dump onto the spreadsheet in the “Idea” column.

You should get at least 20 – 50 ideas during this process. If you get stuck, go back and look through the list of customer desires to get some ideas.

Once you have 20 – 50 ideas (or you feel like you’re finished – if you can come up with 100 ideas go for it!), then move on to step 2.

| # | Idea | How difficult? | Who will do it? | Level of knowledge? |
|---|--------------------------------------|----------------|-----------------|---------------------|
| 4 | small business productivity software | H | O | N |
| 3 | college prep SAT study guide | M | O | L |
| 2 | dog name book | M | M | L |
| 1 | Italian recipe cookbook | E | M | E |

STEP 2: How Difficult?

In the “How difficult?” column place an H (hard), M (medium) or E (easy) in the column for each idea. This indicates how difficult it would be – based on your experience and skills – to turn this idea into a product.

NOTE: DO NOT ask anyone else to answer this for you – especially by making a post in a marketing forum. Only YOU can answer these questions.

H = Hard, M = Medium, E = Easy

Once you’ve placed an H, M or E next to each idea... move onto Step 3.

STEP 3: Who Will Do It?

Next to each idea place an O (for others) or M (for me) in the “Who will do it?” column. This will reference who would be responsible to actually do the work for this idea.

If you have the skills to do the work (and want to do the work) then put an “M” for ME.

If you don’t have the skills or would prefer to pay someone to do the work then put an “O” for OTHERS.

Once you’ve finished this for every idea on your list, move on to the next step.

STEP 4: Level Of Knowledge?

In this step, place an E, L or N next to each idea based on your personal level of knowledge about the subject of the idea.

If your idea is in an area that you are an expert... place an E for expert.

If your idea is in an area where you have some knowledge but you’re not an expert... place an L for limited knowledge.

If you think the idea is a money-maker but you have no personal knowledge of the subject... place an N for “no knowledge.”

After completing that for each idea, let’s move on to the final step.

STEP 5: Prioritize

Ok, now let’s prioritize your ideas.

Don’t get worried... this is going to be SO easy.

You see, most fail at this point because they try to prioritize their ideas based on their own personal “feelings.” Essentially, they pick the ideas they like or want to do.

Our process is going to make this extremely simple for you.

#1 Priorities would be: E (Easy), M (Me), E (Expert)

Why? Because this means it’s an Easy idea, you’ll be doing the work, and you’re an expert in the subject. It can’t get any better than that.

The Last Priority would be: H (Hard), O (Others), N (No Knowledge)

Why? Because the idea is Hard to create, Others would have to be involved (which would mean extra money, additional time and limited control) and you have No knowledge of the subject matter.

The rest of the categories would be ranked somewhere in the middle.

You can even give a Number to each letter so the calculation of your priorities would be simple math.

Easy = 1, Medium = 2, Hard = 3

Me = 1, Others = 2

Expert = 1, Limited = 2, None = 3

Place those numbers next to each letter in the appropriate columns and then just add up the totals.

Your totals would rank everywhere from 3 (lowest) to 8 (highest). Obviously the lower the number, the better this particular project is for you.

You're going to take the top 10 ideas and move on to the next section. Depending on how many ideas you have rank as a 3, 4, etc. you may have all 3's moving on or 3's and some 4's, etc.

If you have more than 1 idea in the 6 category moving on to the next section then you may want to consider brainstorming some additional ideas.

A Proven 'Info Riches 10-step Formula' To Quickly Evaluate Your TOP Product Ideas

Now for an ESSENTIAL part of the evaluation process that is almost always overlooked.

Once you have your top 10 ideas identified (from the previous section), you can use the matrix on the following pages to evaluate each of the ideas to determine the one(s) with the greatest opportunity for success.

You'll basically be looking at the market and how passionate it is, if the market has money, if they spend money, if the market has repeat buyers, if they're reachable, and so on. Here's the complete matrix:

| | Idea 1 | Idea 2 | Idea 3 | Idea 4 | Idea 5 | Idea 6 | Idea 7 | Idea 8 | Idea 9 | Idea 10 |
|----------------------------|----------|-----------|----------|-----------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|---------|
| Passionate | 1 | 1 | | 1 | | | | | | |
| Have Money | | 1 | | 1 | | | | | | |
| Spend Money | | 1 | | 1 | | | | | | |
| Repeat Buyers | | 1 | | 1 | | | | | | |
| Insatiable | | 1 | | 1 | | | | | | |
| Addicts | | 1 | | 1 | | | | | | |
| Reachable | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | | | | | | |
| Already Interested | 1 | 1 | | 1 | | | | | | |
| Already Motivated | | 1 | | 1 | | | | | | |
| Already Predisposed To Buy | | 1 | | 1 | | | | | | |
| TOTAL | 3 | 10 | 1 | 10 | | | | | | |

The example, above, shows how I would have scored the 4 ideas shown in the previous section. Review the last section to see which idea was #1 - #4. Now compare them with the evaluation matrix above.

You'll see that I've identified "Small Business Productivity Software" and "Dog Name Book" as perfect 10's.

Now, based on the previous section ranking the Dog Name Book as Medium, Me and Limited versus Small Business Productivity Software being ranking as Hard, Others and None, I'd chose to move forward with the Dog Name Book. That's because it's the easiest project for me to do (and according to the matrix above, it looks profitable, too).

Use the blank 10-step matrix below to rank your top 10 ideas and then move on to the next section.

| | Idea 1 | Idea 2 | Idea 3 | Idea 4 | Idea 5 | Idea 6 | Idea 7 | Idea 8 | Idea 9 | Idea 10 |
|----------------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|---------|
| Passionate | | | | | | | | | | |
| Have Money | | | | | | | | | | |
| Spend Money | | | | | | | | | | |
| Repeat Buyers | | | | | | | | | | |
| Insatiable | | | | | | | | | | |
| Addicts | | | | | | | | | | |
| Reachable | | | | | | | | | | |
| Already Interested | | | | | | | | | | |
| Already Motivated | | | | | | | | | | |
| Already Predisposed To Buy | | | | | | | | | | |
| TOTAL | | | | | | | | | | |

How To Effectively Create A ‘Profitable Product Outline’

Earlier I mentioned that you should have an outline for your product. This will guide and accelerate your product creation process faster than you thought possible.

Now before you get scared by the thought of creating an outline, let me say this: it’s not as hard as you think. Don’t let thoughts of your high school or college English class give you cold feet.

Below is an example of what an outline might look like for the Dog Name Book.

IDEA: Dog Name Book

| Item | Your Title |
|-----------------------|--|
| Front Cover | Front Cover |
| Legal/Copyright | Legal/Copyright |
| Dedication | Dedication |
| Table Of Contents | Table Of Contents |
| Preface | Preface: Value of a Dog's Name |
| Introduction/Overview | Introduction to Dog Naming |
| Section 1 | History of Dog Names |
| Section 2 | Dog Names by Breed |
| Section 3 | Dog Names by Male/Female |
| Section 4 | Dog Names by Country |
| Section 5 | Most Popular Dog Names |
| Section 6 | 28 Tips for Picking the Best Name for Your Dog |
| Section 7 | |
| Section 8 | |
| Section 9 | |
| Section 10 | |
| Section 11 | |
| Section 12 | |
| Section 13 | |
| Section 14 | |
| Section 15 | |
| Section 16 | |
| Section 17 | |
| Section 18 | |
| Section 19 | |
| Section 20 | |
| Summary/Conclusion | Conclusion |
| Credits | Credits |
| Resources | Dog Resources |
| Back Cover | Back Cover |

Ok, you're probably asking, "Why do I have to create an outline?"

Let's get down to simple basics.

Forget about "products". Forget about books, audios, videos, software, etc.

What makes the product creation process SO extremely simple is that at the core of each product is... Content.

Content. Plain, simple, no-frills content.

It doesn't matter if you're creating the content by writing it yourself, using ghostwriters, articles, interviews, private label products, public domain materials, etc. No matter who's creating it or what sort of content it is, you'll still benefit from having an outline.

(I'd personally recommend writing your own content as it's unique and carries your personality.)

So how do we organize content into a meaningful flow? You got it – by creating an Outline. And from that content outline you can create ANY type of product you wish. But it all starts from a meaningful outline.

Use the blank outline above to develop a meaningful outline for the product idea you've chosen as your #1 idea. Remember, you'll be writing your content in the same manner that you'd talk to a good friend. As such, create your outline in the same manner. (Whenever possible, simply break it down into a "Step 1," "Step 2" type format.)

After you've done that, we'll talk about how and where to find the content for your outline.

How To Use Google To Find And Create Content For Your Product Outline

Most people know about Google.com as the largest search engine in the world... however, few realize how powerful it is as a research tool.

The key is knowing how to tap into Google's research powers. One of the best ways to find content is by using the search string called "allinurl." Let me explain...

You can go to Google.com and type in allinurl:[keyphrase] – and you'll be able to search its database for sites that have that keyphrase in their URL, either in the domain name or in a file name.

For example, I could use something like:

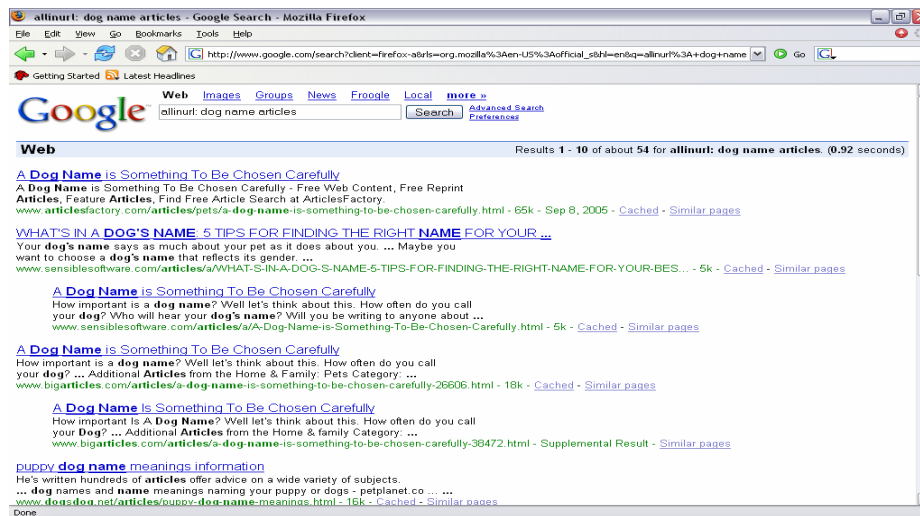
allinurl: dog name articles

allinurl: dog name

allinurl: beagle dog names

You should find some really good content using this method. Let's check out the real world examples and take a look at what we would find.

#1) allinurl: dog name articles



- “A Dog Name is Something To Be Chosen Carefully”
- “5 tips for finding the right name”
- “Puppy dog name meanings”

Looks like great content for the book. Simply decide which section (from your outline) would be the appropriate section for it to go in.

If you really want to use the content but don't currently have a section devoted to it, you want to consider adding one.

Now for the important question... HOW can you organize your search findings? Glad you asked...

Here's an example of a way to organize your content:

IDEA: Dog Name Book
SECTION: Dog Names by Breed

| Name/Title | Link | Expert (Owner) | Type (text, video, audio, etc.) |
|---|-------------------------------|----------------|---------------------------------|
| Top poodle Dog Names | www.site1.com/articelink.html | (Name1) | text |
| Beagle Dog Names | www.site2.com/articelink.html | (Name2) | text |
| How to name your huskie | www.site1.com/articelink.html | (Name1) | text |
| Popular Collie Dog Names | www.site1.com/articelink.html | (Name1) | text |
| Visual tips by breed can pick the name for you | www.site3.com/videlink.mpg | (Name3) | video |
| Go with your first reaction with greyhound pups | www.site4.com/articelink.html | (Name4) | text |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |

Put the name of your idea and the Outline Section at the top.

In the section below put...

Name/Title: The name and/or title of the content you've found

Link: URL to the content

Expert (Owner): Who wrote the content

Type: Is the format of content, such as: text, audio, video, etc.

If you have 6 sections to your outline, you should have 6 of these sheets with content information – one for each section.

This way you can quickly see how much content you've accumulated for each section. Once you decide you have enough content in a certain section, you can stop searching and move on to the other sections in your outline.

After collecting all the content you want for your product, you have two options.

#1) You can contact the content owner and ask permission to include their content in your product. You can do this whether it's text, audio, video, etc.

The benefit of including other expert's content is that when it comes time to market it you've got 'built-in' partners to help promote it.

Note: *Although initially I was 100% committed to writing my own content, I've come to realize the power and the effectiveness of using existing content from the experts. Unless you absolutely have to have the entire product be your words, I'd suggest using expert content along with some of your own content mixed in.*

#2) You can use the collected content as a template and rewrite it.

Note: *Ideally you should find at least four to five separate sources for each topic on your outline. Read these sources, close your browser, and then create something entirely new in your own words. That will ensure you aren't breaking the law by infringing on someone's copyright.*

How To Use Amazon To Generate Tons Of High Quality Content Easily

Amazon started off selling books, branched out into music, and now they sell everything - including kitchen sinks.

But for content, it's the book section that should interest us the most.

Imagine for a moment that you are standing in a huge brick and mortar bookstore in your nearest city. Now imagine that you had all the books on the subject you were researching open at the same time right in front of you.

How would you like to be able to flick through all the books simultaneously and instantly find the pages with the keywords on them, and then be able to read the actual pages?

This is what you can use Amazon for.

They have a brilliant new tool that is just perfect for researching content called "Search Inside!™"

All of the results that you find in each of the books are highly targeted, 100% specific to your niche and your research needs. All of the results are from books by expert authors on their subject, not some spotty 16 year old with a blog.

Big companies have deemed the content good enough to invest the money to publish the book, now you get to read it online in an instant.

This is a content creator's dream; exact laser-targeted answers to all your questions, whole pages of content on your subject that you can read, digest and rewrite. And best of all, this content is delivered to your computer in just seconds.

Here's a real life step-by-step example to show you how it's done. I've used gardening as an example but your search can be as wide or narrow and tightly focused as you want.

STEP 1:

Log into Amazon.com. You'll need an account if you don't have one and a credit card on file for verification. At the top of the page click on the "Amazon.com" tab.

STEP 2:

In the search box just under it, select "Books" and enter your search term in the box beside it. I used "gardening," and from the results I got I selected "New Illustrated Guide to Garden -- by Reader's Digest editors" which was Item 3 on the list. I chose this because it had the Search Inside!™ logo at the top of the image of the book cover.

STEP 3:

When you click on the book title link, there is the product description and price. Then you'll see several more sections underneath it in a yellow-orange font. The 6th section is called "*Inside This Book*"... and this is the one we're interested in. This is what it looks like:

Inside This Book ([learn more](#))

First Sentence:
A lawn is an ideal setting for a home. [Read the first page](#)

Statistically Improbable Phrases (SIPs): ([learn more](#))
[gray velvety mold](#), [spray with dimethoate](#), [front endsheet](#), [deep soil pockets](#), [early summer outdoors](#), [exhibition dahlias](#), [spray with copper](#), [offset rhizomes](#), [soil layering](#), [outdoor planting date](#), [single early tulip](#), [spray with malathion](#), [early fall cut](#), [plus dicamba](#), [encourage further flowering](#), [hardwood cuttings](#), [other narcissi](#), [pointing bud](#), [good hedge plant](#), [areas with short growing seasons](#), [affected shoots](#), [beardless inses](#), [trumpet narcissus](#), [pealike blossoms](#), [treated bulbs](#)

Capitalized Phrases (CAPs): ([learn more](#))
[Hardiness Decorative](#), [North America](#), [West Coast](#), [Height Decorative](#), [Cause Control Leaves](#), [Grow Popular](#), [All-America Selections](#), [Great Plains](#), [Grow Recommended](#), [Leaves With Altered Color](#), [Pacific Northwest](#), [Caterpillars Spray](#), [Thrips Spray](#), [Plum Spray](#), [New Zealand](#), [Bellingham Hybrids](#), [Neutral Division](#), [Cause Control Young](#), [Plants Divide](#), [Deciduous Hardy Light](#), [Deciduous Zones](#), [Chemical Trade](#), [Evergreen Hardy Light](#), [North Central](#), [Evergreen Very](#)

New!
[Books on Related Topics](#) | [Concordance](#) | [Text Stats](#)

Browse Sample Pages:
[Front Cover](#) | [Copyright](#) | [Table of Contents](#) | [Excerpt](#) | [Index](#) | [Back Cover](#)

Search Inside This Book:
 [GO](#)

Search Box

At the bottom of the "Inside This Book" section is a search box where you can search *this book only*. This search returns all the instances the search term is found in the book, along with three lines of text around where the term is found.

I'm going to use this box to search on the term "winter plants" as an example:

274 pages with references to winter plants in this book:

1. [on Page 3:](#)
"... AND GROUND COVERS A lawn is an ideal setting for a home. it also provides a pleasing background for ornamental **plants** and a useful area for leisure-time activities. Lawns not only ... space; they also freshen the air, insulate the ground in **winter**, and reduce temperatures in summer. In extremely hot weather they can be substantially cooler than paving. (Tall grass is somewhat ..."
2. [on Page 6:](#)
"... low nitrogen is applied in late fall. The high ratios of phosphorous and potassium help the grass survive the harsh **winter**. The other has high nitrogen and is applied just before **winter** sets in. The nitrogen is absorbed by the **plant** but does not activate growth until the warm days of spring. The rate at which organic fertilizers release nutrients depends ..."
3. [on Page 8:](#)
"... from leaves and crowns. Patches carbaryl, chlorpyrifos, or of grass are discolored and die. diazinon. Grubs chew roots off grass **plants**; Grubs (larvae Drench the area with diazigrass is yellowed and ... low, dark green, resistant to many diseases, and outstanding in **winter**. Perennial ryegrass (Lolium perenne). Ryegrasses are as attractive as bluegrass , although they do not spread or mow quite so ..."
4. [on Page 9:](#)
"... Even when not in flower, 'Burgundy Glow s' multicolored leaves delight the eye. m LAWNS AND GROUND COVERS Ground Covers **Plants** suitable for ground covers are listed here alphabetically according to ... bugleweed) appear. Foliage may die back to crowns in cold **winters**, but **plants** recover in spring. Grow in or fall. sun or shade. Coronilla (crown vetch) Zone 4 Fast-growing shoots bear ..."
5. [on Page 10:](#)
"... Leaves of the Chinese form of the deciduous kousa dogwood (Cornus kousa chinensis) turn a deep crimson-purple in fall. Few **plants** provide as much personal pleasure, or make such a useful ... and privacy. Deciduous trees give shade in summer, while in **winter** the naked branches have a stark beauty outlined against the sky. Evergreen trees, be they broad-leaved or coniferous , will ..."

Do you recognize this?

It's basically a Google search – only 100 times better.

Every one of the listings is relevant. Indeed, I found 274 relevant listings for my winter plants search, and nearly all of them would be useful if I was building content around “winter plants”.

Each of the pages can be clicked on to view it.

Statistically Improbable Phrases

For your further benefit, the good guys at Amazon have included another feature in the Search Inside!™ section called “*Statistically Improbable Phrases,*” or “*SIPs.*”

These are phrases which occur a large number of times in the book you're searching relative to all the books available for Search Inside!™.

Let's suppose you were searching for information on “gardening.” Your SIPs list might include “soil layering,” “outdoor planting date,” “good hedge plant,” “areas with short growing seasons” ...and so on.

These “SIPs” can then be clicked on to produce a list of *all the books* in Search Inside!™ that contain the phrase. The list contains each page that is found, and the pages can then be clicked on to view them.

STEP 4:

We're now going to look at the SIPs. Remember these are effectively keywords that appear more times in this book than in most others, so they are highly specific for your niche.

You can then drill down further and find where these search terms appear in all the books in Search Inside!™.

Inside This Book ([learn more](#))

First Sentence:
A lawn is an ideal setting for a home. [Read the first page](#)

Statistically Improbable Phrases (SIPs): ([learn more](#))
[gray velvety mold](#), [spray with dimethoate](#), [front endsheet](#), [deep soil pockets](#), [early summer outdoors](#), [exhibition dahlias](#), [spray with copper](#), [offset rhizomes](#), [soil layering](#), [outdoor planting date](#), [single early tulip](#), [spray with malathion](#), [early fall cut](#), [plus dicamba](#), [encourage further flowering](#), [hardwood cuttings](#), [other narcissi](#), [pointing bud](#), [good hedge plant](#), [areas with short growing seasons](#), [affected shoots](#), [beardless iris](#), [trumpet narcissus](#), [pealike blossoms](#), [treated bulbs](#)

Capitalized Phrases (CAPs): ([learn more](#))
[Hardiness Decorative](#), [North America](#), [West Coast](#), [Height Decorative](#), [Cause Control Leaves](#), [Grow Popular](#), [All-America Selections](#), [Great Plains](#), [Grow Recommended](#), [Leaves With Altered Color](#), [Pacific Northwest](#), [Caterpillars Spray](#), [Thrips Spray](#), [Plum Spray](#), [New Zealand](#), [Bellingham Hybrids](#), [Neutral Division](#), [Cause Control Young](#), [Plants Divide](#), [Deciduous Hardy Light](#), [Deciduous Zones](#), [Chemical Trade](#), [Evergreen Hardy Light](#), [North Central](#), [Evergreen Very](#)

New!
[Books on Related Topics](#) | [Concordance](#) | [Text Stats](#)

Browse Sample Pages:
[Front Cover](#) | [Copyright](#) | [Table of Contents](#) | [Excerpt](#) | [Index](#) | [Back Cover](#)

Search Inside This Book:
 [GO](#)

These are the SIPs!

We'll click on one of the SIPs to see what we get -- this time we'll use "good hedge plant" as an example...

Here are the results for "good hedge plant" in SIPs:

"good hedge plant" appears in these books:
Learn more about [Statistically Improbable Phrases \(SIPs\)](#)

- ▶ [5 references](#) in [New Illustrated Guide to Garden](#) by Reader's Digest editors
- ▶ [3 references](#) in [The Pruning of Trees, Shrubs and Conifers](#) by Roy Lancaster (Foreword), et al
- ▶ [1 reference](#) in [Botanica's Roses: Over 1,000 Pages & over 2,000 Plants Listed \(Botanica\)](#) by Williar
- ▶ [1 reference](#) in [Flowering Plants in the Landscape](#) by Mildred E. Mathias (Editor)
- ▶ [1 reference](#) in [Through the Garden Gate](#) by Elizabeth Lawrence, Bill Neal (Editor)
- ▶ [1 reference](#) in [The Illustrated Encyclopedia of Roses](#) by Mary Moody (Editor), Peter Harkness (Edit
- ▶ [1 reference](#) in [European Garden Flora: Volume 3, Casuarinaceae to Aristolochiaceae : A Manual for Europe, Both Out-of-Doors and under Glass \(European Garden Flora\)](#) by The European Garden Flora
- ▶ [1 reference](#) in [Garden Plants of Japan](#) by Ran Levy-Yamamori, Gerard Taafe
- ▶ [1 reference](#) in [Tropical Ornamentals : A Guide](#) by W. Arthur Whistler
- ▶ [1 reference](#) in [Home Landscaping: Northeast Region : Including Southeast Canada \(Home Landscap](#)
- ▶ [1 reference](#) in [Growing Tropical Plants](#) by John Mason

We have found 11 books in Search Inside!TM which use this phrase, all of which can be drilled down and re-searched with other search terms.

Remember that although even at this early stage of its development Search Inside!TM has millions of books covered, it is only a small percentage of the total Amazon book inventory.

By searching the SIPs in this way you can easily find more books that are covered by Search Inside!TM

Just as an aside: if you copy and paste the results from the SIPs search above into Word or Notepad, instead of just giving you the headlines of each book it returns another “Google” type search with three lines of description for each. You can then read sections of each book at the one go without having to open them all individually.

Now you have another 11 books to read up on and find more great content.

Do you think you’d be able to knock out a few niche pages with this great resource?

If you don’t want to do it yourself, you can get a ghostwriter and email him/her this report to find content to rewrite for you. You could even specify the search terms you want searched on.

Section II: Packaging Your Product

30 Top Ways To Package Your Information Products For Maximum Riches

Remember, stop thinking of a “product”... think in terms of “content” and solutions. Think about the outline you built and the content you’ve collected.

That content – and the solutions it presents -- IS your product. The way you package and present it is just the window dressing.

Here are the 30 most effective and profitable information product types which you can use as a guide to package your own products:

1. **E-Books**

Content converted to a PDF file. You'll see a free way to convert content to a PDF later in this action guide.

2. **Books**

Content converted to a PDF file and then sent to a printer.

If you want to self-publish your book, you'll see a great Print-On-Demand (POD) website later in this action guide. You can print just one book or 25,000. It's a great way to get started with a physical book.

3. **Newsletters**

Content 'sections' (articles) that are either used in an offline newsletter or an online ezine. A book of content could give you enough content for a year's worth of newsletters.

4. **Blogs**

Content 'snippets' used in an online blogging program. Snippets would be like taking the title and first paragraph or two from an article.

The debate is still out on this but there are some who say you should use the entire article of content for a blog and others who say you should just use a quick snippet of info to capture the reader's attention.

Whatever you decide, be sure to add your own voice to your blog. Comment on the content. Analyze it. Form an opinion and blog about it.

5. **Audio Books**

Record yourself (or someone else) reading your book content. Yes, just read it and record it. Voila – you've got an audio book.

Later in this action guide I'll show you how to do this with a free software product.

6. **Podcast**

Record yourself talking about your subject matter.

You can read part of your book. Like reading sections or chapters of the content.

You can just talk about it. You've done the research. You're now an expert. Just talk about what you know.

You can use the free software product given later to record your podcast.

7. Audio Program

Multiple audio CDs in one program.

Whenever you gather content for an idea you'll always have more content than you can fit into a book or e-book. A one CD 'audio book' could become a full-blown 'audio program' by breaking it into separate CDs for each chapter and adding additional content.

8. Vlogcast

This is just like a blog or a podcast except it's recording the content as a video instead of text or audio.

Although you will have to invest in a camera (either digital video camera or webcam) the software to edit and package the video is completely free – I'll tell you about it later.

9. Video Program

Just like the Audio Program except the content is recorded as a video. For example, you could read the book into the camera or you could be recorded teaching the material to a group. Break the content up into sections and place each section on a separate DVD.

10. Workbooks

Examine your content and create a book or report specifically designed to 'teach' the material. Present the information in a summarized format and have questions and worksheets for each book chapter/section.

11. Multi-Media Kits

Put your book, audio book and/or DVD or you reading your book together to make a package of products.

12. Coaching Program

Present your content via the phone or email (depending on how you've structured your coaching program).

13. Teleseminars

Present your content via the telephone – normally in an interview type format. However, I have listened to a few teleseminars that were just the expert speaking the entire time.

14. Teleworkshops

Present your content via telephone in a “workbook” type scenario. Make it a smaller group with an interactive layout.

15. Home Study Course

Combine books, audio programs, video programs, workbooks, etc. into one product.

Anyone who can create enough content for an e-book has enough content to convert their content into a Home Study Course... which gives you a high-end product to promote.

16. Membership Site

Include your text, audio and video content in a secure “members only” website where your clients pay you each month for access to the material.

The great opportunity here is it is residual income that continues each month, as long as you retain your members.

17. Radio Show

With the power of the internet anyone can have their own radio show. You can record the content and have it played at various times or you can do a live show. Same content as a podcast.

18. TV Show

Internet TV (IPTV) is coming very quickly. Just like internet radio – within 1-2 years anyone can build their own TV show on the internet.

19. Syndicated Column

As an expert in your field, you may be asked to submit your articles to a newspaper. Or you can post your articles on your own website and others can syndicate the content via RSS feeds.

20. Articles

Crop your book content into smaller sections – and you’ve got a ton of articles you can use online or offline.

21. Mini Books or Reports

You guessed it... if you have a book with 5 chapters, you could make it into 5 “special reports” instead.

22. CD/DVD Training

Use your audio CDs and/or video DVDs to create a monthly training subscription service. As an example, think of “Video Professor.” You’ve already got the content created – get clients to pay you monthly for it.

23. Magazine

A magazine is nothing but a large Newsletter. The great thing about a magazine is that you can get advertisers to pay you money each month to be listed in your magazine.

24. Software

Convert your content into an executable file.

You don’t have to be a software developer. I used HTML and Flash to package text, audio and video into an EXE. Once an EXE I called it software and it could be promoted with a higher perceived value.

25. Keynote Speaking

Summarize your content into PowerPoint slides to speak from when you’re asked to be an expert presenter. Or set up your own speaking engagements.

26. Resell Rights

Provide others with the ability to resell your product(s) and keep 100% of the profits.

Pro: Since you’re offering others a way to make money with your product, it has a higher perceived value. You can also make a bunch of money quickly simply by selling the rights.

Con: You lose control of your product, and it may become devalued on the market when resellers start selling it for a small amount. You’re basically

trading up front profits for long term profits.

If you want extra income up front – this is a great way to do it. If you have a product you don't want to lose control of, then do not do this.

27. Private Label Rights

Provide others the ability to modify your content, brand it with their own name and resell it as their own.

Pro: Higher perceived value as discussed above.

Con: It will no longer be your product after it's rebranded, plus you're losing control of the product.

28. Licensing

Make an arrangement with a company to purchase a large quantity of your product.

For example: A company may license your content for all their employees.

29. Foreign Rights

Convert your content into other languages.

30. Consulting

A culmination of all your research and content presented as required by the person and/or company that hires you.

The key point when it comes to packaging is that you package your product to meet your need.

If you need a viral product – then use a viral package like a podcast, special report, etc.

If you need an entry-level product - then go with an e-book, book or audio book.

If you need a high dollar product – then package products together like books, CDs, Workbooks, DVDs, etc.

NOTE: The most important part of this information is that you notice it ALL comes from the content we put together based on the outline you created.

There is NO difference between the content in an e-book, audio and video... but depending on the way you package it, you could receive a much higher profit because you've provided a much higher value to the client.

Make sense?

If you can create an e-book then you can create ANY of the products/services shown above. They are just various ways to package the exact same content.

How To Package Your Ebook For Free

This is a particularly important step. And the reason is because you want to make your ebook information product available to as many people as humanly possible.

Statistically, most internet users are running on a Windows Operating System format.

That means that statistically, most internet users can benefit from executable formatted products, or those that come in the ever popular .exe file extension.

Now that's fine, but if you decide to only use the .exe format, you're leaving out a good chunk of potential customers that run on non-Microsoft operating systems, such as Macintosh or Red Hat.

The other problem is that many people are wary of opening .exe files, as they've been associated with viruses. So that means even people running on the Windows Operating System may not want to download and open your ebook if it's in the .exe format.

There is a solution to offer your ebook to almost every potential customer no matter which operating system they run on, and no matter what their feelings are about .exe files.

The solution? Use the Portable Document File, or PDF, which is made possible by Adobe.

The genius of this particular file format for information products is that because the .PDF files run on an independent program that can be utilized from any

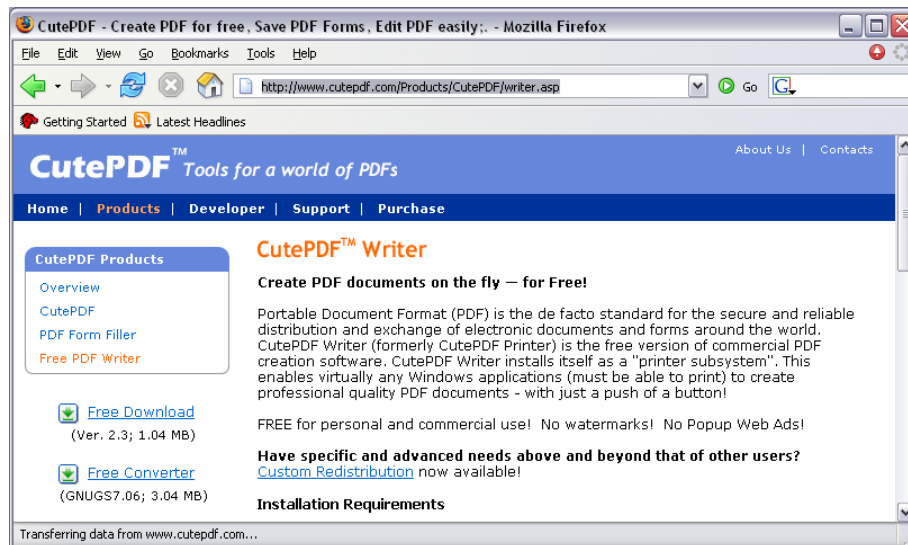
operating system, it then makes the document files platform independent themselves... so long as the customer has the program to open the PDF files.

Adobe Reader itself is also completely free for anyone to download and use. These days most computers come with the Adobe PDF reader pre-installed.

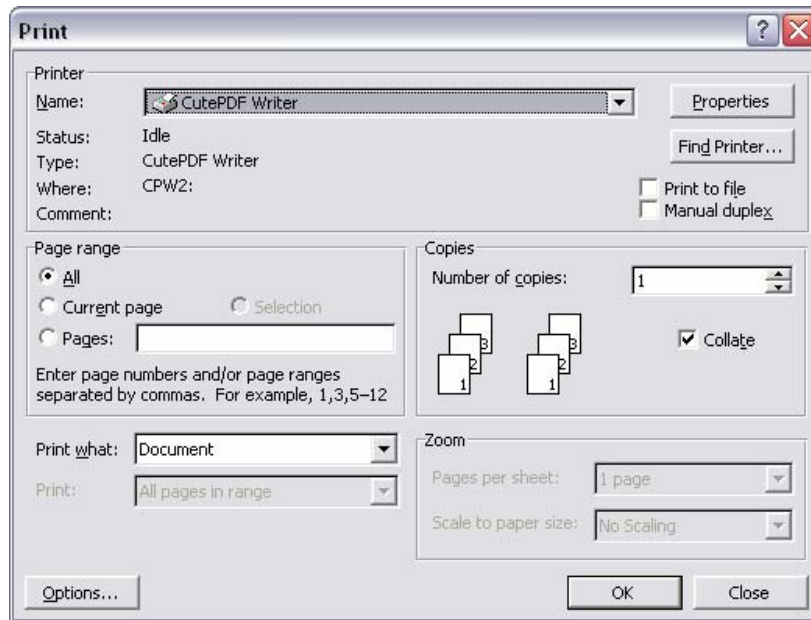
Several years ago Adobe Acrobat was the only product to create such a file format. At a cost of \$300 it wasn't very cost effective for the entry-level marketer to take advantage of it.

Now, however, there are free ways to create a PDF file for your products.

One of them is: <http://www.cutepdf.com/Products/CutePDF/writer.asp>



Download the PDFWriter software and install it on your computer. Then from your word processing program simply choose it as your “print” option.



You'll then be asked where you want to save the file. Pick a location and save the text document as a PDF file.

It's as simple as that to create a high quality text-based infoproduct for you to promote.

And here's another good option as mentioned before: <http://www.openoffice.org>:



To use it as a PDF compiler, all you need to do is open it up by creating a New Document.

Then when you finish writing up and formatting your original product as far as font settings, line spacing, adding images, and things of this nature are concerned, all you need to do is hit the "Export as PDF" button and it'll be

exported in .PDF form.

Normally, the links inside the document won't be clickable when you open up the finished PDF file in Adobe Reader.

There is a way to work around this. Two ways actually. The first, and easiest, is to simply add the entire link within the document so that your readers can copy and paste them themselves to their own browsers.

The second way is to download a PDF editing program.

One free option can be found at: <http://www.pdfedit995.com>.

However, if you are going to use this option, you'll also need to download the PDF995 program at <http://www.pdf995.com>.

This works like an additional printer and creates the PDF files this way. Sounds complicated, but it's not really.

All the information you could ever need about using the PDF995 line of software can be found right at their website.

Another tool you want to use is WinZip at <http://www.winzip.com>

All you really need to do is create a specific name for your zipped file, something like myproduct.zip etc., add the files, and they'll be ready to upload.

Simply open up the WinZip program, choose the "Use Evaluation Version" option, and if you aren't already using the Classic interface, then just hit the *WinZip Classic* button at the lower left corner of the program window that opened up.

Once you're there, a different screen will appear.

Choose the New icon at the top. When you click the new icon, a new window will pop up. In the File name area, put the name of the file you'd like your zipped product to have.

For example, your title might be called: myproduct. Your next step is to then be sure it's inside the folder you want to save this file in, and then hit OK.

Now, find the files you want to add inside your zip file for your product.

If you want to add multiple files at the same time, hold down the Ctrl key when selecting the files. Once you've finished, release the Ctrl key and then hit the Add button. All the selected files should upload inside the zip file together.

If you have a specific folder you would like to add to the zip file, then you will need to hit the Cancel button to close the Add window.

Once closed, you will be taken back to the original window. Now, you will need to open up the My Computer area and navigate to the folder you wish to add.

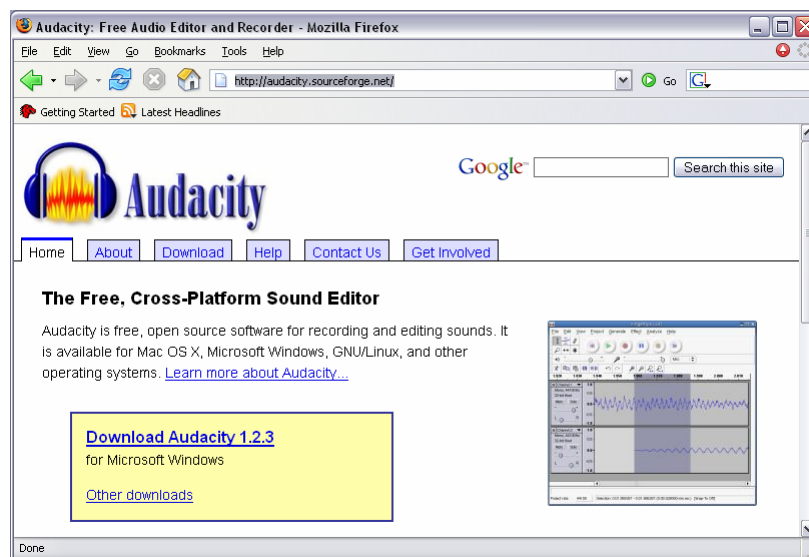
Highlight the folder, then drag it over to the empty white space under the top icon menu on the WinZip window that is open. Then you should see your files appear there. You will not see the folder, but rest assured when you open up your newly zipped file it will be there.

Close the WinZip Program and find your myproduct.zip file inside the folder you placed it in. That's it -- that's all there is to this.

How To Create And Package Audio Products For Free

There is a free audio software that makes it SO extremely easy for anyone to create an audio product.

It's called Audacity. Go to: <http://audacity.sourceforge.net/>



Download the software and install it on your computer.

To create an MP3 go to

<http://audacity.sourceforge.net/help/faq?s=install&item=lame-mp3>

Download the Lame MP3 encoder. Install it on your computer.

You'll use this file to create an MP3 from your audio recording using Audacity.

Depending on whether you already have one of those cheap headsets (headphones/microphone) that some dealers bundle with PCs, you can record an audio without spending a dime.

If you don't have a bundled microphone, the ones at Circuit City or Best Buy cost between \$8 and \$15.

From here onward, I'll assume you have Audacity and Lame installed on your PC.

Before You Record

A few basic setup configurations are required in order to record a podcast. First, connect your microphone to the microphone-in connection on the PC.

Connect headphones to the stereo line out or headphone jack (generally the green audio connection). Don't forget to put those headphones on.

A laundry list of audio optimizations for your PC are recommended to keep your system running smoothly during recording.

After you launch Audacity, make sure Microphone is selected as the recording source in the drop-down menu on the mixer toolbar.



Figure 1. Configure Microphone as your recording source

Open the Audacity Preferences window from the File menu. On the Audio I/O tab, verify that your sound card is selected as the device for both playback and recording.

In the Channels drop-down box under Recording, choose 1 (Mono). Unless you are using two microphones, the Stereo option simply duplicates the track, making the file size bigger without a resulting improvement to audio fidelity.

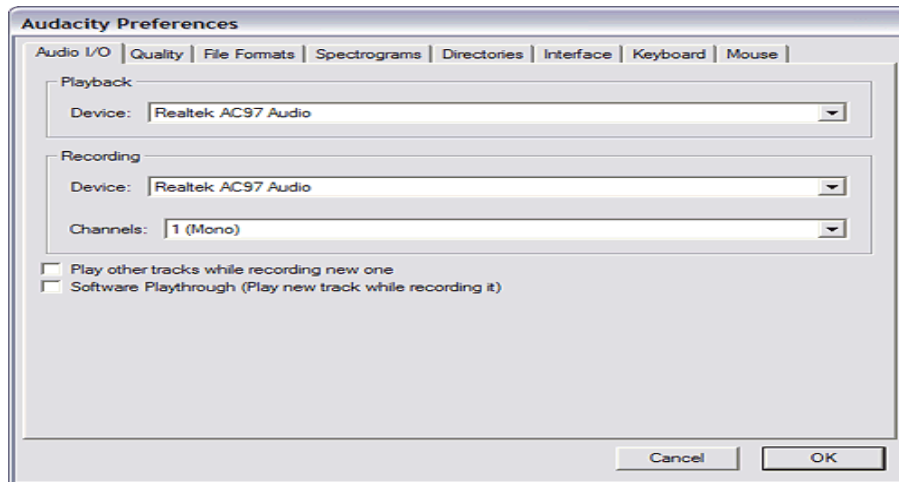


Figure 2. Set the audio recording Channels selection to Mono

Switch to the Quality tab, and choose 44,100 Hz as the Default Sample Rate and 16-bit as the Default Sample Format.

Audiophiles will argue that higher sample rates and formats are better, but for spoken word, 44,100 Hz and 16-bit sampling works admirably, especially considering that the resulting output will be MP3.

Ignore the rest of the settings on the Quality tab.

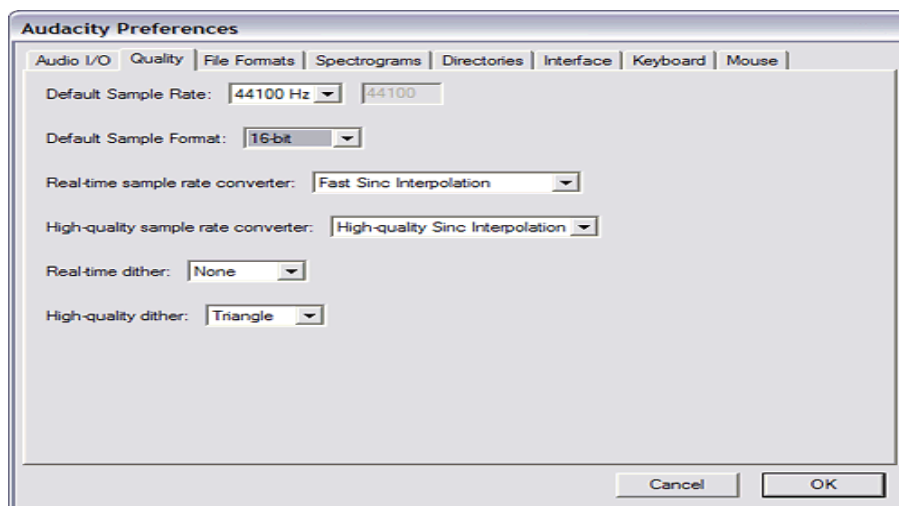


Figure 3. Set the sample rate and bit rate

The File Formats tab configures output options. Choose WAV (Microsoft 16 bit PCM) as the Uncompressed Export Format. Leave the OGG Export Setup untouched.

Then, find the location at which you extracted the Lame codec to add it to Audacity by clicking on the Find Library button and browsing to the file location.

I generally unzip the Lame codec to *C:\LAME* so I can find it easily, but there's no "right" location.

Once you've added Lame support, close the Audacity Preferences window by clicking on OK.

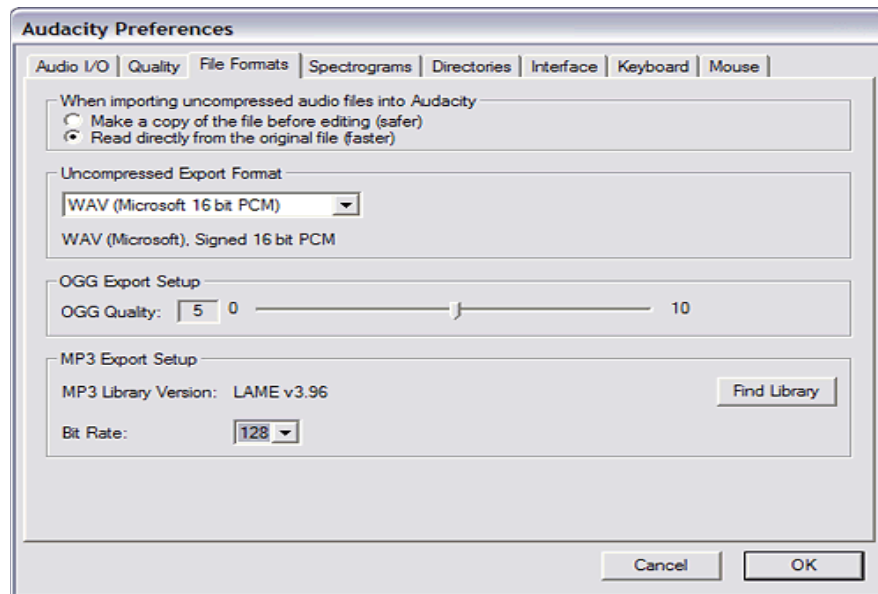


Figure 4. Configure output options

Ready to Record

Click on the microphone icon in Audacity's Meter toolbar to turn on monitoring. You should see a red level indicator moving slightly as it picks up ambient room noise.

Talk into the microphone and make adjustments to the volume until you get a level that rises close to the right edge of the meter without turning the far-right section solid red.

If you get a solid red bar at the far right, the audio is clipping, which means your finished file will sound distorted. Once you've adjusted the level, you're ready to record.

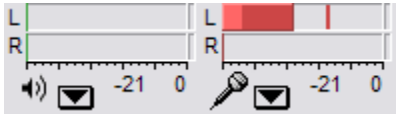


Figure 5. Activate volume-level monitoring

With all the preparations out of the way, it's time to create your first audio. Push the Record button and start talking.

When you finish recording, press the yellow square Stop button and save the file in .wav format. Saving is an important step, in order to make sure you don't accidentally delete the file.



Figure 6. Audacity recording controls

It's time to edit the audio file or save it as an MP3 for distribution as your first audio.

Editing can be as simple as eliminating all the places you said "um" by highlighting them and deleting them, or as complex as adding a music bed and inserting other audio clips into the recorded file.

To keep this simple, we'll assume you're a one-take wonder and you recited a golden monologue for your first audio.

To save the file as an MP3, open the preferences again, choose the MP3 bit rate on the File Formats page. (Generally for voice audio, somewhere between 32 and 64 is good enough without making the file size too big.)

It is THAT simple to create an audio... and completely for free.

How To Record Interviews With Experts For Free

At some point you will probably want to hold teleseminars or just simply record phone interviews with experts in your idea subject area.

Most use a telephone conference “bridge” service that charges them a fee per call – sometimes a flat rate or sometimes based on the number on the line.

Some marketers use a free software product called Skype to make free phone calls. The problem is that Skype doesn’t allow you to record the phone call.

Now... there’s a new free software product called Gizmo that let’s you make free phone calls AND record the call.

Perfect for marketers holding teleseminars or doing interviews.

Go to: <http://www.gizmoproject.com/>

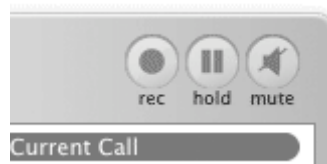


Download the free software, install it on your computer and then purchase the number of minutes you want.



Call Recording

At the bottom of the call control drawer on your Gizmo, you will find three buttons: Record, Hold and Mute.



After a call has connected, you can press the rec button, and Gizmo will begin recording the call. The file is placed by default on your desktop, but you can specify a location in your software options/preferences.

The file is a .wav file and should be playable from any media player like Quicktime or Windows Media Player. When you begin recording the call, the other party will hear an announcement, “Call being recorded.”

You will not hear the announcement. When you finish recording, the announcement will tell the other party, “Call recording stopped.” If you want an MP3 rather than a WAV file, you can import it into Audacity and save it as an MP3.

NOTE: Recording calls is legally restricted in certain countries, states and localities around the world. It is your responsibility to understand and comply with any laws that may apply to you or the person you are calling.

How To Create A Membership Area For Free

If you want to be financially free you should have at least one form of residual income – where the income keeps coming each month.

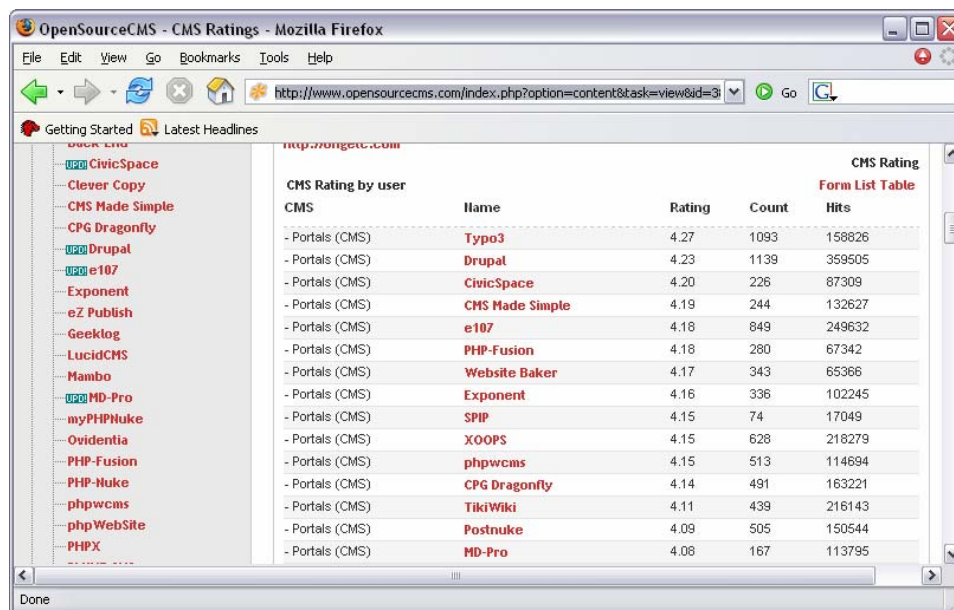
A membership site (or Content Management System (CMS)) is the best way to organize your content and charge a recurring income.

Stop looking at the membership site systems that charge you hundreds of dollars for setup and monthly fees.

There are tons of high quality open source CMS solutions.

Go to:

<http://www.opensourcecms.com/index.php?option=content&task=view&id=388&Itemid=143>



The screenshot shows a web browser window titled "OpenSourceCMS - CMS Ratings - Mozilla Firefox". The address bar shows the URL: <http://www.opensourcecms.com/index.php?option=content&task=view&id=388&Itemid=143>. The page displays a "CMS Rating by user" table with columns for CMS, Name, Rating, Count, and Hits. A sidebar on the left lists various CMS options like CivicSpace, Drupal, e107, etc. The table lists 15 different CMS solutions with their respective ratings and user counts.

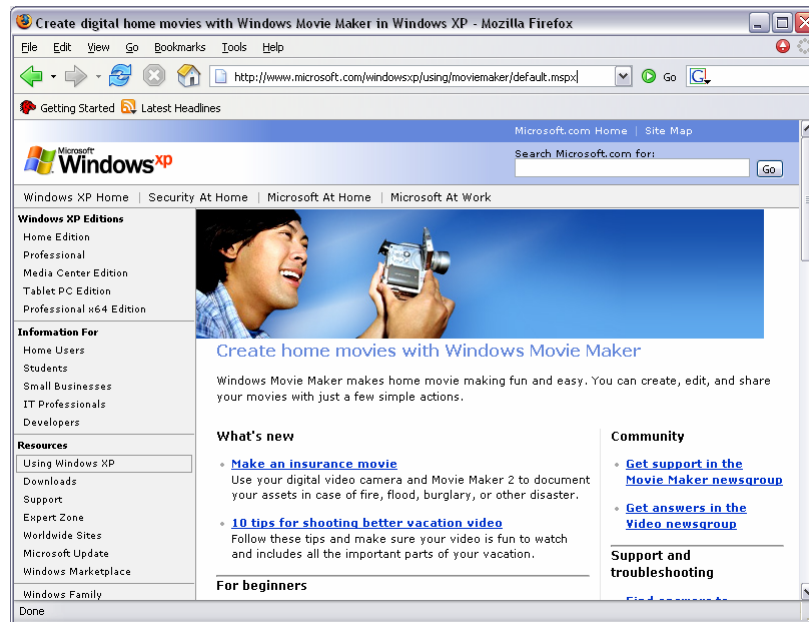
| CMS | Name | Rating | Count | Hits |
|-----------------|-----------------|--------|-------|--------|
| - Portals (CMS) | Typo3 | 4.27 | 1093 | 158826 |
| - Portals (CMS) | Drupal | 4.23 | 1139 | 359505 |
| - Portals (CMS) | CivicSpace | 4.20 | 226 | 87309 |
| - Portals (CMS) | CMS Made Simple | 4.19 | 244 | 132627 |
| - Portals (CMS) | e107 | 4.18 | 849 | 249632 |
| - Portals (CMS) | PHP-Fusion | 4.18 | 280 | 67342 |
| - Portals (CMS) | Website Baker | 4.17 | 343 | 65366 |
| - Portals (CMS) | Exponent | 4.16 | 336 | 102245 |
| - Portals (CMS) | SPIP | 4.15 | 74 | 17049 |
| - Portals (CMS) | XOOPS | 4.15 | 628 | 218279 |
| - Portals (CMS) | phpwcms | 4.15 | 513 | 114694 |
| - Portals (CMS) | CPG Dragonfly | 4.14 | 491 | 163221 |
| - Portals (CMS) | TikiWiki | 4.11 | 439 | 216143 |
| - Portals (CMS) | Postnuke | 4.09 | 505 | 150544 |
| - Portals (CMS) | MD-Pro | 4.08 | 167 | 113795 |

How To Edit And Package Video Products For Free

When it comes to free video editing software (for PCs) there is little doubt that Microsoft's Movie Maker is the most robust and feature-rich product to use.

It ships free with Windows XP or you can download it here:

<http://www.microsoft.com/windowsxp/using/moviemaker/default.mspx>



Other Options

If you are looking for other options for free video editing software try these resources:

http://desktopvideo.about.com/od/softwarereviews//bl_freesw.htm

(About.com has popups)

http://www.mrfreefree.com/free_software/free_video_editing_software.html

Capture Video from a Tape in a DV Camera

Connect your DV camera to your computer, in most cases this requires an IEEE 1394 adapter on your PC and an IEEE 1394 cable to connect your camera. On the camera, set the camera mode to play the recorded video. (This is often labeled VTR or VCR on a DV camera.)

1. Start Movie Maker. To start Movie Maker, click Start, point to All Programs, point to Accessories, and then click Windows Movie Maker.

2. On the File menu, click Capture Video. Alternatively, in the Movie Tasks pane, under Capture Video, click Capture from video device.

3. On the Video Capture Device page, in Available devices, click the DV camera.

4. In the Enter a file name for your captured video box, enter a name for your captured video file. Then, in the *choose a place to save your captured video* box, select the location where you want your video to be saved, or click Browse to select a location.

5. On the Video Setting page, choose the video setting you want to use for capturing video and audio.

6. On the Capture Method page, click *Capture the entire tape automatically*. The tape in the DV camera will rewind. Capture will begin automatically and ends when the video tape ends.

7. Select any of the following commands:

- To separate the video into smaller clips, select the Create clips when wizard finishes check box.
- To stop capturing before the end of the video tape, click Stop Capture, and then click Yes in the resulting dialog box to save the video that has been captured.

8. To close the Video Capture Wizard, click Finish.

The captured content will be imported into a new collection with the same name as the specified video file.

Capture Parts of a Video from a Tape in a DV Camera

If you want to capture parts of a video from a tape on your DV camera, rather than the entire video, perform the first five steps in the procedure above, and then the following steps:

1. On the Capture Method page, click Capture parts of the tape manually.

2. To separate the video into smaller clips, select the Create clips when wizard finishes check box.
3. To prevent audio from playing while capturing video, select the Mute speakers check box.
4. Locate the video and audio you want to capture from your tape by using either the controls on your DV camera or VCR or the DV camera controls in the wizard.
5. To begin capturing video, click Start Capture. The tape will play automatically and capture will begin.
6. When the tape reaches the point at which you want to stop capturing, click Stop Capture. Repeat these steps for each part of the video tape that you want to capture.
7. When you have finished capturing, click Finish to close the Video Capture Wizard.

The captured content will be imported into a new collection with the same name as the specified video file.

Capture Video from Tape in an Analog Camera or VCR

Analog video capture is useful when you have older video content, such as VHS tape, and want to convert it to digital. Or you may have an older camcorder that only provides analog outputs, such as composite or S-Video.

Performing analog capture requires a hardware device that can take video input from a composite or S-Video signal and convert it to digital data.

To capture video in Windows Movie Maker from an analog video camera or VCR:

1. Connect your analog camera or VCR to your computer's capture device, and then set the camera mode to play recorded video (often labeled VTR or VCR on an analog camera).
2. Open Windows Movie Maker
3. On the File menu, click Capture Video.

4. On the Video Capture Device page do the following:

- In Available devices, click the analog device you want to use to capture video. In the Video input source list, click the input line you want to use.
- If you want to adjust and configure the video capture device settings, click Configure.
- In the Audio device list, click the audio capture device you want to use, and then, in Audio input source, click the input line you want to use.
- To adjust the volume of your captured audio, move the Input level slider to the level you want to use.

5. In the Enter a file name for your captured video box, enter a file name for your captured video file. Then, in the Choose a place to save your captured video box, select the location where you want your video to be saved or click Browse to select a location.

6. On the Video Setting page, select the video setting you want to use for capturing video and audio.

7. To separate the video into smaller clips, select the Create clips when wizard finishes check box.

8. To prevent audio from playing over your speakers while capturing video, select the Mute speakers check box.

9. To automatically stop capturing after a time period has elapsed, select the Capture time limit check box, and then type or select the length of time you want to capture. Time is displayed in the form of hours:minutes (h:mm).

10. Using the controls on your analog camera or VCR, locate the video and audio you want to capture from your tape. In Movie Maker, click Start Capture, and then press the Play button on your analog camera or VCR.

11. To begin capturing, click Start Capture, and then press the Play button on your analog camera or VCR.

12. Do one of the following:

- When the tape reaches the point at which you want to stop capturing, click Stop Capture, and then press the Stop button on your analog camera or VCR.

- If you have selected the Capture time limit check box, wait for the specified amount of time for video to be captured, and then press the Stop button on your analog camera or VCR.

13. Repeat steps 10 through 12 for each part of the video tape you want to capture.

14. When you have finished capturing, click Finish to close the Video Capture Wizard.

Capture Live Video

When your camera is connected to your computer, you can use Movie Maker to capture video directly to your hard drive without saving the video to tape first. Start by connecting your camera to your computer as described above.

Set the mode on your camera to capture live video and audio. (This is often labeled Camera mode.) Start Movie Maker on your computer and begin the video capture as described above. Choose your device and configure device settings as explained above.

Enter a file name for your video and choose a place to save your video.

1. On the Video Setting page, select the video setting you want to use for capturing video and audio.

2. To separate the video into smaller clips after the wizard completes and the video is captured, select the Create clips when wizard finishes check box.

3. To prevent audio from playing over your speakers while capturing video, select the Mute speakers check box.

4. To begin capturing, click Start Capture. To stop capturing, click Stop Capture.

5. Repeat these steps to capture another segment of live video.

6. Click Finish to close the Video Capture Wizard.

The captured content will be imported into a new collection.

WHAT DO TO WITH YOUR VIDEO ONCE IT'S IN MOVIE MAKER

Build a Storyboard

Movie Maker automatically divides your video into segments to make it easier to drag and drop the parts you want onto the storyboard where you put your movie together.

To build a storyboard:

1. Import video to your PC. You'll see your clips in the Collections view.
2. Double click on each clip to see how it looks in the preview window.
3. Once you've decided which ones you want to put in your movie, click and drag the clips to the Storyboard in the order in which you'd like them to appear in your final movie
4. To rearrange your clips on the storyboard, just drag and drop them to a different location.

Edit Your Clips

Trim your clips to get exactly the footage you need.

To edit clips:

1. In the Timeline view, click on the clip you'd like to trim.
2. In the Preview window, drag the scroll bar slowly and watch as the video progresses.
3. Stop at the point where you want to trim the clip.
4. On the Clip menu, click Set Start Trim Point.
5. Now continue to drag the progress indicator until you reach the desired end point of your clip.

6. On the Clip menu, click Set End Trim Point.

7. You will now have your trimmed clip.

Add Audio

A soundtrack can really draw your audience in and add fun to your home movies. Just import your favorite clips and then drag them to the timeline.

To add audio:

1. In the Taskpane, click on Import audio or music.
2. Navigate to the music track you'd like to add to your movie .
3. Click on Import.
4. The music track will appear in your Collection view.
5. Click on Show Timeline button in the Storyboard section of your screen.
6. Drag your music track to the Audio/Music level of the Timeline.

CONVERTING THE VIDEO

Once you've crafted your video to be the way you want you'll want to make sure it's either in MPG or FLV format for best video results. Below you will find some free converter software to transform your video into any format you want.

Video File Comparisons:

<http://www.videohelp.com/comparison.htm>

Converting video to Flash Video (FLV):

http://www.download.com/Riva-FLV-Encoder/3000-2140_4-10381392.html?tag=lst-0-1

Converting video to other formats:

http://www.pcworld.com/downloads/file_description/0,fid,23162,00.asp

<http://www.hotscripts.com/Detailed/50351.html>

<http://www.onestopsoft.com/mi-v-conv.html>

How To Package Your Digital Products For Instant Downloads -- For Free

Sometimes you will want to bundle your files together and allow your clients to download them digitally from your website.

Some web hosts will not allow you to download EXE files. If you link directly to a PDF, MP3 or other audio/video file it will try to play rather than download.

So it's great to zip the files into a single file the clients can download easily.

Besides WinZip which was mentioned earlier, here's another great tool...

Go to: <http://www.coffeecup.com/zip-wizard/>



Free Blog Alternatives You Can Use To Promote Your Products

If you are not already blogging then you should consider including it in your marketing promotion.

Confused by all the choices?

Here's the best blog comparison chart I've found so far.

Go to: <http://www.asymptomatic.net/blogbreakdown.htm>

| | b2Evolution | bBlog | BLOG:CMS | Blojsom | Bloxom | Expression Engine | Mov |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|--|---|----------------------|-------------------------------------|---------------------|
| Current Version | 0.9.0.8 Oslo | 0.7.2 | 3.0 final | 2.15 | 2 | 1.0 | |
| Home URL | here | here | here | here | here | here | |
| Trial URL | here | OSCMS | here | | | here | |
| License | GPL | GPL | GPL | BSD | MIT | Personal/Commercial | Non- |
| Cost (US\$) | Free | Free | Free | Free | Free | \$149/\$199 | |
| Minimum Server Requirements | PHP 4.1 MySQL 3.23 | PHP 4.1 MySQL | MySQL 3.23.28 PHP 4.0.6 (or PHP 5.0.0) | Java 1.4 Servlet 2.3/JSP 1.2-compliant app server (e.g. Tomcat) | Perl 4 or 5 | PHP 4.1 PHP XML MySQL 3.23.32 | Pe Berkel SQL |

How To Really Write 'List-Building Articles' And Where To Submit Them For Maximum Results

These are the steps to writing effective and result-based articles that will build your list and sales on autopilot.

1. Choose an attention-grabbing title.

Whether or not someone even reads your article at all is dependent upon your title. This is especially important when you submit it to directories and publishers where there are hundreds of entries.

Here are some templates you can use for your titles:

How to _____ In _____ Steps.

How to _____ In _____ (Time Frame).

The Real Secret to Quickly _____.

Top 2 Ways to _____.

3 Little Known Tips for _____.

The Hidden Costs of _____.

2.) Determine 3-5 points of interest.

Use the chapters or sections of your outline to come up with 3-5 main points for your article.

You'll want your article to be 500-750 words, so write 3-5 sections that are about 100 words each along with an opening and a closing.

With all the content you've collected – this should be simple.

3. Write an interesting opening sentence.

Your title gets them to take a look, and you want to immediately get them into the main body of your article. There are several things you can do in this opening sentence to lure readers in deeper...

- Ask a question.
- Reveal something startling.
- Inject emotion.
- Present a problem.

4. Close with a call to action.

Your mission is to get them to move on to your desired action.

When they finish reading your article, they are going to do something other than just sit there and stare. They've got a ton of options and only one of them is to do what you want them to do.

What you want to do is LEAD the reader to your resource box.

You do this by bridging the gap between your article and your resource box – you create a “transition” between the two.

In your article conclusion, you’ll summarize the 3-5 points you made in the article. Your resource box should reference something related to those 3-5 points. It will draw the reader to click to your site.

Whether you are submitting your articles to directories, posting your articles at your website, inserting your articles into viral e-books to be passed around the web...

...your #1 goal is to get subscribers onto a list. And your 2nd goal is to get them to your sales letter. Here’s how you can do it:

Give away a free report or mini-course in your resource box and place that freebie at the top of a sales letter or redirect them to a sales letter after they’ve joined a list.

Here are the best places to submit your articles for maximum results:

<http://www.internetmarketingFAQ.com>

<http://www.ideamarketers.com/writers.cfm>

<http://www.marketing-seek.com/articles/submit.shtml>

<http://www.boconline.com/sub-art.shtml>

<http://www.digital-women.com/submitarticle.htm>

<http://www.home-based-business-opportunities.com/submit-article.shtml>

<http://www.business-opportunity.biz/addarticle.php>

<http://www.worldwidefreelance.com/guidelines.htm>

http://www.selling-it.com/Add_article.htm

<http://clearviewpublications.com/small-business-newsletter-entrepreneur/clearview/add-url.htm>

<http://store.bellyandbeyond.com/yhst-4403591833340/submitarticle.html>

<http://chinese-school.netfirms.com/submit-business-article.html>

<http://www.ezinearticles.com/submit/>

<http://www.goarticles.com/ulogin.html>

<http://www.webpronews.com/submit.html>

http://www.articlecity.com/article_submission.shtml

<http://www.addme.com/nlsubmit.htm>

<http://www.internetbasedmoms.com/submission-guidelines/>

<http://submityourarticle.com/>

<http://www.businessknowhow.com/newsletter/articleguidelines.htm>

<http://www.powerhomebiz.com/termsofuse/articlesubmission.htm>

<http://www.optimizemag.com/mediakit/contribute.jhtml>

<http://www.freesticky.com/stickyweb/contact.asp>

http://www.workoninternet.com/Submit_Article.html

<http://amazines.com/login.cfm?returnto=http%3A%2F%2Famazines%2Ecom%2Fpubadmin%2Ecfm>

<http://www.ebooksnbytes.com/articles/submit.shtml>

<http://www.theallined.com/submit-articles.htm>

<http://www.businessstoolchest.com/articles/submit.shtml>

<http://www.connectionteam.com/submit.html>

<http://www.echievements.com/>

http://www.mbnet.com/article_add_form.asp

There's such a thing as automated article submission services which are very useful. You may want to look at them:

<http://www.submyyourarticle.com> (only Internet Marketing articles)

<http://www.articlemarketer.com>

Or use a software such as "Article Announcer" which you only pay once and use forever: <http://ewenchia.com/recommends/forevertraffic>

How To Create A Viral Product And Make It 'Buzz'

The most powerfully written instruction manual for making your products and content go viral is Seth Godin's "Idea Virus".

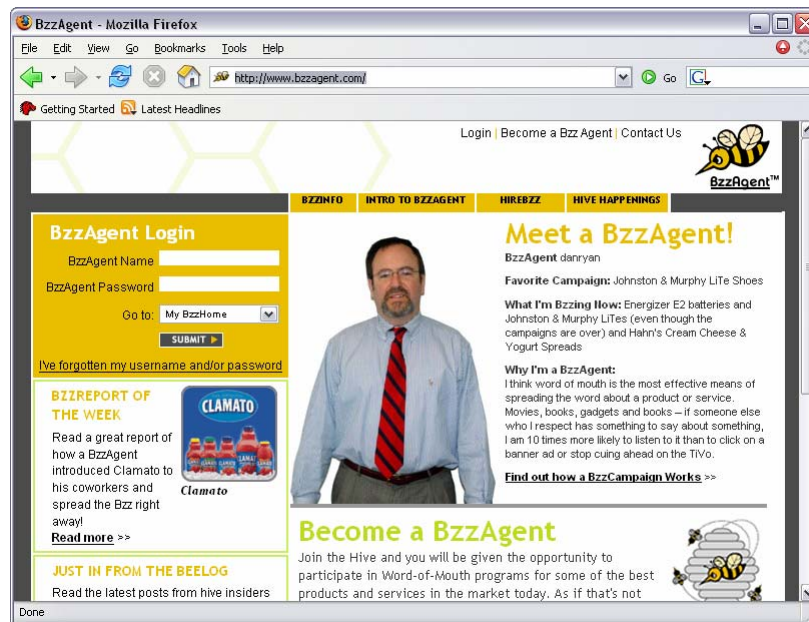
Go to: <http://www.sethgodin.com/ideavirus/01-getit.html>



Click the "Download It!" link and you can download the free PDF file.

Now to further your “Buzz” education of the power of word-of-mouth, you need to become a Bzz Agent.

Go to: <http://www.bzzagent.com/>



Not only can you become a bzz agent and get access to free information and products but you get an insider viewpoint of viral / buzz promotion.

Resale Rights And How To Use Them So They Don't Destroy Your Business

You can sell your information product (such as your ebook) for \$27 or you can sell the resale rights to it for \$67, \$97 or more.

Resale rights are a very profitable opportunity once you become an information product creator. There is one downside though.

Don't get attached to your product. Don't get stuck in the mindset that this product is everything to you.

I made that mistake. When I launched my first product and made over \$30,000 in the first 30 days I thought it would continue forever. What I didn't realize was that because I sold resale rights to many other marketers I would very quickly lose control of my product.

The product itself was a tremendously popular product and very successful. However, after 2-3 months my income had dropped to just a few hundred dollars per month – even though other marketers were still selling thousands of dollars each month.

As a product creator you can overcome this. You can create products from scratch for the sole purpose of selling resale rights instead.

Create a product, sell resale rights to it, bank your profits and move on to your next project. I've made products in as little as 3-4 hours and you can too with this course.

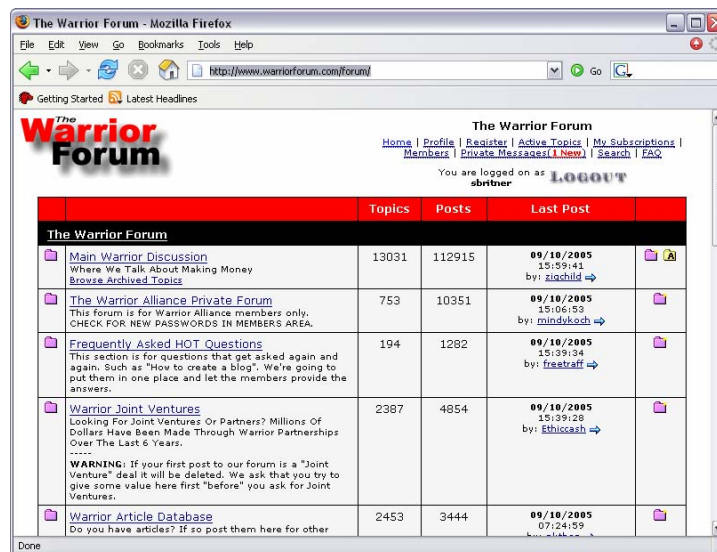
The ONE Marketing Forum You Have To Be An Active Member Of

There are many marketing forums on the internet. Some are good, some are not.

Now here is THE marketing forum of choice and the one you must go to right now and become a member.

You'll find almost every internet marketer there and it's a great place to get help, advice and information.

Go to: <http://www.warriorforum.com/forum/>



If you bring your positive attitude and an open mind you will learn more from these successful marketers than from most of the marketing products floating around the internet.

A Completely Free Alternative To ClickBank

ClickBank has been a powerful friend of online marketers for many years – allowing the sale of digital products for an upfront fee of \$50.

But now all of that has changed because you can have all the power without the upfront fee.

Mike Filsaime has unleashed a powerful alternative that's completely free, even for a merchant account.

Go to: <http://www.paydotcom.com>



Get signed up today for the internet's up and coming leader in the digital marketplace.

How To Publish Your Own (Physical) Book For Less Than \$10

Once you have your content in e-book format, it's just a one step process to get a physical book printed.

Stop thinking that it's a long drawn out process and a complicated process. It's not. Go to: <http://www.lulu.com>



Lulu.com is a full-featured online Print-On-Demand service that will print one book or 10,000 – depending upon your specific need.

Because there are no minimum orders it's perfect for the information product creator who is just getting started and wants to have a physical book to promote.

The book could be sold separately.

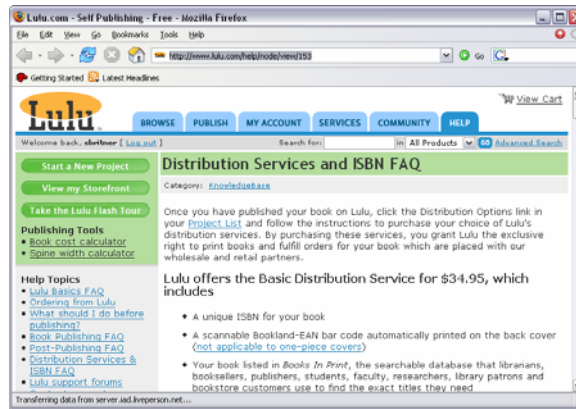
The book could be combined with audios and/or videos as a “kit” or Home Study Course.

The book could be used for a “Best Seller” promotion on Amazon or Barnes and Noble.

If you're going to get your book listed in the major bookstores then you need an ISBN. If you go through the “normal” channels you'll be faced with a \$300+ price tag to get the ISBN.

Using LuLu.com you can get one for as low as \$34.95:

<http://www.lulu.com/help/node/view/153>



How To Produce Your CD/DVD For Less Than \$7

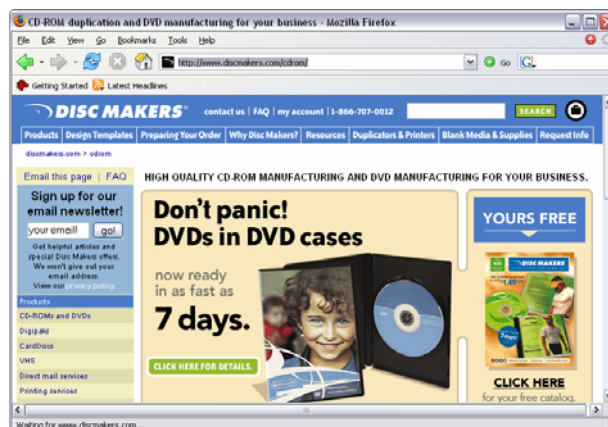
As an information marketer you will definitely need to be able to create CDs and DVDs.

After getting this far I hope it's crystal clear that it's all just "content." It's just as easy to convert it to audio, video or software as it is to convert it only to an e-book.

Once you get your audios and videos created, if you don't have a way to produce them on your own, here's an outstanding resource for you...

Go to:

<http://www.discmakers.com/cdrom/>



This is the business section of DiscMakers.com. You can either have them create 100s or 1,000s of CDs / DVDs at a time or you can use their Self-Service section to create them one or two at a time.

If you're just starting out, you may want to use the Self-Service functionality so you can order just a few at a time.

As business gets better you can migrate that product to their full-service business section and produce larger quantities.

To access their Self-Service section go to:

<http://duplication.discmakers.com/mcm/discmakers/index.jsp>



Special Section: PodCast Info Riches

How To Use Free Tools To Create Unlimited Professional PodCasts...And Turn Them Into Viral Traffic Solutions Or Information Products You Can Promote For Cold Hard Cash!

Before we begin, what exactly is Podcasting?

Podcasting is a method of publishing audio broadcasts via the Internet, allowing users to subscribe to a feed of new files (usually MP3s).

It became popular in late 2004, largely to automate downloading of audio onto portable players or personal computers.

The word "podcasting" is a portmanteau that combines the words "broadcasting" and "iPod."

The term can be misleading since neither podcasting nor listening to podcasts requires an iPod or any portable music player. For that reason, since September 2004 various writers have suggested reinterpreting the letters POD to create "backronyms" such as "Personal On-Demand." However, the word is rarely presented as "PODcasting."

Podcasting is distinct from other types of online media delivery because of its subscription model, which uses the RSS 2.0 XML (or RDF XML) format to deliver an enclosed file.

Podcasting enables independent producers to create self-published, syndicated "radio shows," and gives broadcast radio programs a new distribution method.

Listeners may subscribe to feeds using "podcatching" software (a type of aggregator), which periodically checks for and downloads new content automatically.

Some podcatching software is also able to synchronise (copy) podcasts to portable music players. Any digital audio player or computer with audio-playing software can play podcasts.

The same technique can deliver video files, and by 2005 some aggregators could play video as well as audio.

Initial development

By 2003, web radio had existed for a decade, digital audio players had been on the market for several years, blogs and broadcasters frequently published MP3 audio online, and the RSS file format was widely used for summarizing or syndicating content.

While RSS/RDF already supported media resources implicitly, applications rarely took advantage of this.

In 2001 UserLand founder and RSS evangelist Dave Winer, partly inspired by users like Adam Curry and Tristan Louis, added support for a specific enclosure element to Userland's non-RDF branch of RSS, then to its Radio Userland feed-generator and aggregator.

In June 2003, Dion Mellor demonstrated aggregation and syndication of audio files using RSS in his Ed Radio application. Ed Radio scanned RSS feeds for MP3 files, collected them into a single feed, and made the result available as SMIL or WebJay audio feeds.

In September 2003, Winer created an RSS-with-enclosures feed for his Harvard Berkman Center colleague Christopher Lydon, a former newspaper and television journalist and NPR radio talk show host.

For several months Lydon had been linking full-length MP3 interviews to his Berkman weblog, which focused on blogging and coverage of the 2004 U.S. presidential campaigns. Having Lydon's interviews as RSS enclosures helped inspire Adam Curry's pre-iPodder script, and related experiments leading to a variety of open source iPodder development.

Indeed, blogs would become an important factor in the popularization of podcasting before many professional radio broadcasters and entrepreneurs with business plans adopted the form.

Possibly the first use of the term podcasting was as a synonym for audioblogging or weblog-based amateur radio in an article by Ben Hammersley in The Guardian on February 12, 2004.

In September of that year, Dannie Gregoire used the term to describe the automatic download and synchronization idea that Adam Curry had developed. Gregoire had also registered multiple domain names associated with podcasting. That usage was discovered and reported on by Curry and Dave Slusher of the Evil Genius Chronicles website.

By October 2004, detailed how-to podcast articles had begun to appear online. By July 2005, a Google search for "'how to' +podcast" returned 2,050,000 hits. Independently of the development of Podcasting and its distribution via RSS, an idea that resembles Podcasting was developed at Compaq Research as early as 1999 or 2000.

Called PocketDJ, it would have been launched as a service for the Personal Jukebox or a proposed successor, the first hard-disk based MP3-player, that Compaq's R&D department had started developing in 1998. See appropriate section in the Personal Jukebox article.

Popularization

The word about podcasting rapidly spread through the already-popular weblogs of Winer, Curry and other early podcasters and podcast-listeners. Fellow blogger and technology columnist Doc Searls began keeping track of how many "hits" Google found for the word "podcasts" on September 28, 2004, when the result was 24 hits.

"A year from now," he wrote, "it will pull up hundreds of thousands, or perhaps even millions."

Searls kept track of the search results in his blog through the next month. There were 526 hits for "podcasts" on September 30, then 2,750 three days later. The number doubled every few days, passing 100,000 by October 18.

His prediction of "perhaps millions" in a year proved to be quite conservative. After only nine months, a search for "podcasts" produced more than 10 million hits.

The amateur podcasts themselves were harder to count, but there were enough to capture the attention of The New York Times on October 28, 2004.

"There are podcasters in California, South Carolina and Connecticut," Times reporter Cyrus Farivar wrote, "with others as far afield as western Canada, Australia and Sweden. Though most podcasts tend to reflect their technologically oriented audience, newer shows are being created with topics like veganism and movie reviews.

Even conventional broadcasters are being drawn to the medium, which allows programs to be played at a listener's convenience."

When USA Today took on the subject of these "free amateur chatfests" with a pair of stories the following February, it profiled several podcasters, gave instructions for both sending and receiving podcasts, and included a "Top Ten" list from one of the many podcast directories that had sprung up in just six months.

The newspaper quoted one directory as listing 3,300 podcast programs in February, 2005. At that time, USA Today reported a circulation of 2.6 million, the largest of any paper in the United States. The story of podcasting was getting around.

The Top Ten programs mentioned at that time gave some indication of podcast topics: four were about technology (including Curry's "Daily Source Code," which also included music and personal chat), three were about music, one about movies, one about politics, and -- at the time No. 1 on the list -- "The Dawn and Drew Show," described as "married-couple banter," a program format that USA Today's Marco R. della Cava noted was quite popular on American broadcast radio in the 1940s.

While USA Today was good at recalling the past, its story was less successful about the near future: It predicted that Apple Computer was "in a prime position to make podcasting significantly easier — but probably won't." Della Cava said Apple had "ignored requests from Curry and other technologists to discuss the matter, and declined USA TODAY's interview requests for this story."

In June, 2005, Apple added podcasting to its iTunes music software, staking a claim to the new medium its iPod had helped inspire and name. (See *Coping With Growth*, below.)

Adoption by traditional broadcasters

Traditional broadcasters were extremely quick to pick up on the podcasting format, especially those whose news or talk formats spared them the complications of music licensing.

The American syndicated radio show Web Talk Radio became the first to adopt the format, in September 2004, followed within weeks by Seattle news radio station KOMO and by individual programs from KFI Los Angeles and Boston's WGBH.

The BBC began a trial in October 2004 with BBC Radio Five Live's Fighting Talk. These trials were extended in January 2005 to BBC Radio 4's In Our Time. January 2005 also saw CBC begin a trial with its technology show /Nerd. United States National Public Radio affiliates WNYC and KCRW adopted the format for many of their productions.

In April 2005 the BBC announced it was extending the trial to twenty more programmes, including music radio and in the same month Australia's ABC launched a podcasting trial across several of its national stations.

In May, 2005, the trend began to go the other way, with amateur podcasts becoming a source of content for broadcast radio programs by Adam Curry, Christopher Lydon and others.

Coping with growth

While podcasting's innovators took advantage of the sound-file synchronization feature of Apple Computer's iPod and iTunes software -- and included "pod" in the name -- the technology was always compatible with other players and programs.

Apple was not actively involved until mid-2005, when it joined the market on three fronts: as a source of "podcatcher" software, as publisher of a podcast directory, and as provider of tutorials on how to create podcasts with Apple products GarageBand and Quicktime Pro.

The podcasting selection views of iTunes 4.9

When it added a podcast-subscription feature to its June 28, 2005, release of iTunes 4.9, Apple also launched a directory of podcasts at the iTunes Music Store, starting with 3,000 entries. Apple's software enabled AAC encoded podcasts to use chapters, bookmarks, external links, and synchronized images displayed on iPod screens or in the iTunes artwork viewer.

Two days after release of the program, Apple reported one million podcast subscriptions.

iTunes Podcast directory lists top 100 podcasts based on the number of new subscriptions in a given 24-hour period, which explains the wild fluctuations in top-20 panel rankings, initially suspected to be an active count of total number of podcast subscribers.

Some podcasters found that exposure to iTunes' huge number of downloaders threatened to make great demands on their bandwidth and related expenses. Possible solutions were proposed, including the addition of a content delivery system, such as Akamai; a peer-to-peer solution, BitTorrent; or use of free hosting services, such as those offered by Ourmedia, BlipMedia and the Internet Archive.

Hope this little history shed some light for you. Now let us get going...

How To Create Podcasts Using Your PC

My friend Jake Ludington will walk you through this simple presentation...

Podcasting

This time around, I'm walking through the steps required to record and post your own podcast using tools virtually everyone has or can easily acquire on a tiny budget.

Ultimately, if you decide to podcast on a regular basis, some equipment upgrades such as the podcast recording kit I recently detailed at JakeLudington.com will drastically improve the sound quality. To learn the process, though, you don't need anything fancy.

Depending on whether you already have one of those cheap microphones that the OEM dealers bundle with PCs, you can record a podcast without spending a dime.

If you don't have a bundled microphone, the third-party equivalent costs between \$8 and \$15 at various electronics retailers.

The other piece of hardware you need is a set of headphones.

Headphones are important because although you need to monitor your recorded voice, you don't want the microphone to pick up sound coming from desktop speakers. Ideally, headphones that cover your ears do the best job of isolating your recording sound from other audio distractions. Earbuds make an affordable alternative.

I recommend starting out with Audacity, an open source audio recording application. I like it so much, I bought a T-shirt from the company to show my support. Audacity offers a solid complement of editing features with an interface simple enough for a novice.

It outputs MP3-format audio for distributing your podcast once you download the Lame MP3 encoder. From here onward, I'll assume you have Audacity and Lame installed on your PC.

Note: To use Audacity, refer to the instructions in the section titled: "How To Create And Package Audio Products For Free".

Once you have recorded your audio using the above instructions, you can upload it to a Web server and link to it in your blog post.

One thing for podcasting...

An important step is editing the ID3 tags for the audio file.

You can easily accomplish this by opening the file in Windows Media Player, iTunes, or one of many other popular music players.

In Windows Media Player, right-click on the file in the Now Playing list and choose Advanced Tag Editor. Fill in the Title and Artist fields at the very least, so the proper information about your podcast will display on iPods, Zen Micros, and other portable media players.

You need blogging software with support for enclosures to distribute the file via RSS, like Radio from UserLand, which is available for a \$40 annual subscription.

Movable Type is another alternative; it's free for personal use and has support for enclosures if you install a free plugin. Several other alternatives also exist.

Enclosures are essentially a method to let news aggregation clients like FeedDemon, Newsgator, or Doppler know there's a file attachment associated with an RSS feed entry.

Assuming you are using a blogging tool with support for enclosures, you simply type a blog post as you normally would, and use a standard HREF link to the MP3 you uploaded to your server.

The blogging software determines that the link should be an enclosure in RSS based on the file type, and it makes an appropriate addition to the RSS feed.

If your blogging tool doesn't support enclosures (Blogger, for instance, currently doesn't), you can generate an free RSS feed with a FeedBurner account, which will support enclosures.

FeedBurner offers a straightforward wizard to walk you through the process. Once you have the FeedBurner feed created, you promote the link to the FeedBurner feed and encourage people to subscribe.

In each of these cases, the publication process is fairly similar. Upload the MP3 to wherever you have Web space capable of storing files. Make a blog entry just like you normally would, with a title, link, and description. Link to the MP3 in the blog description and post your entry.

If you want to keep your podcast separate from regular blog postings, or if you don't currently have a blog, the simplest way I've found to publish a podcast is to sign up for the \$5 account at Liberated Syndication and follow its podcast publishing wizard.

The service automatically uploads your MP3 file, and creates the RSS feed and blog post associated with the podcast, all in one easy step. I use Movable Type for all my regular podcasting and blogging, but am amazed at the simplicity of using Liberated Syndication. I created a very basic site at the service to demonstrate the output.

*Jake Ludington is the author of the best-selling guide *Converting VHS to DVD*. He publishes audio and video tips at MediaBlab.com.*

Making A Podcast With Blogger And FeedBurner

Blogger is not our first choice for weblog-based podcasting. **Movable Type** and **Wordpress** are better solutions for many podcasters, because they offer better support for podcasting, more power and greater flexibility.

Nevertheless, many podcasters are finding Blogger to be a good starting place to experiment with podcasting.

Blogger is a free service, and getting started is as easy as filling out some forms on the web.

Here's a quick guide to building a podcast with Blogger. You should be able to set up a podcast using Blogger and FeedBurner in about the time it takes for all the images on this page to finish loading.

This how-to assumes that you already have created your podcast MP3 files, and have them stored on a web server.

Note that some screens may look slightly different as Blogger updates their site.

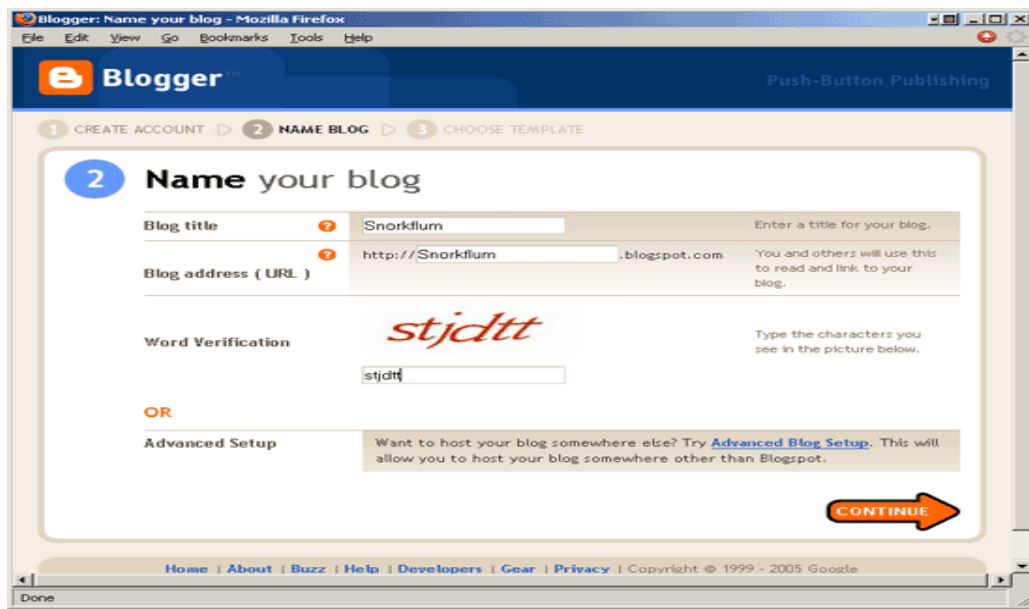
Go to Blogger at (<http://www.blogger.com/>) and select Create Your Blog Now:



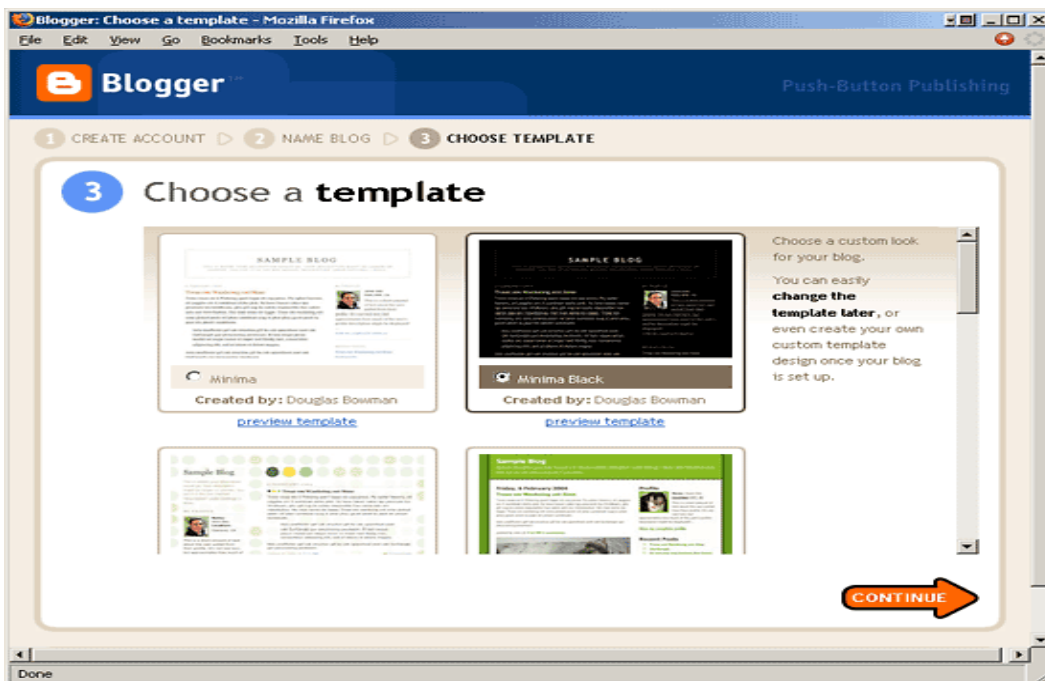
If you haven't signed up for Blogger before, you'll need to do so.

That's the hardest part. If the Terms of Service part wore you out, now is a good time to take a break. Back already? OK - now it's time to name your podcast.

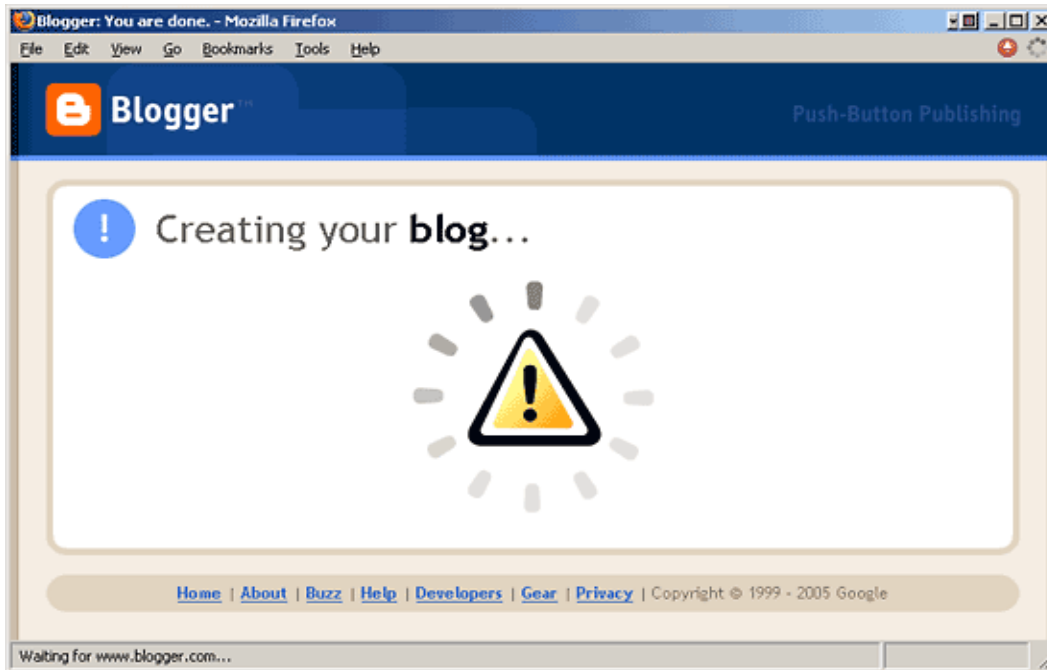
We called ours **Snorkflum** for this example:



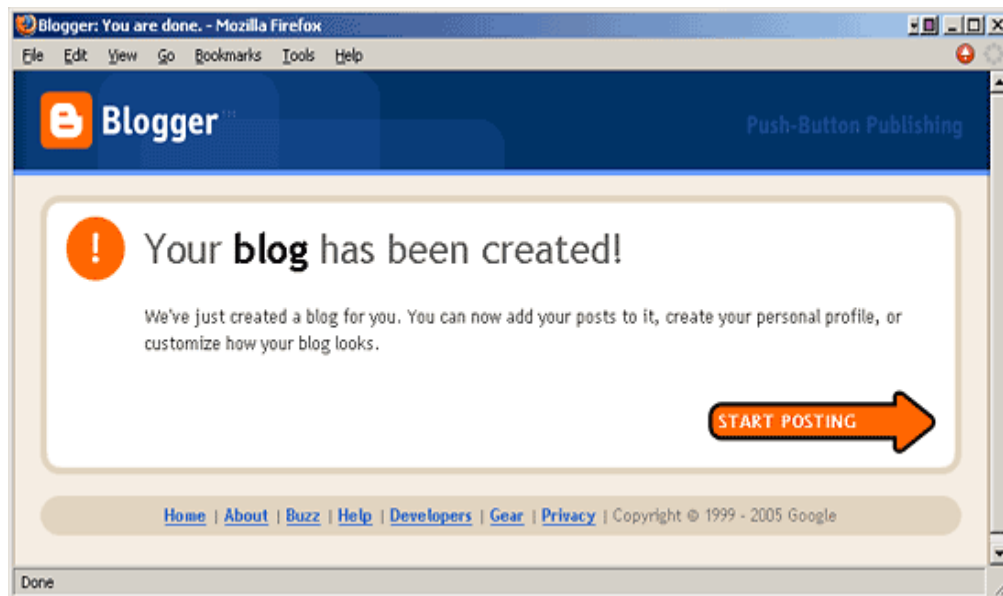
Next, select a template. We selected Minima, because it reminded us a little of The Matrix:



Once you select continue, Blogger automatically creates your blog. First it makes you wait, though:



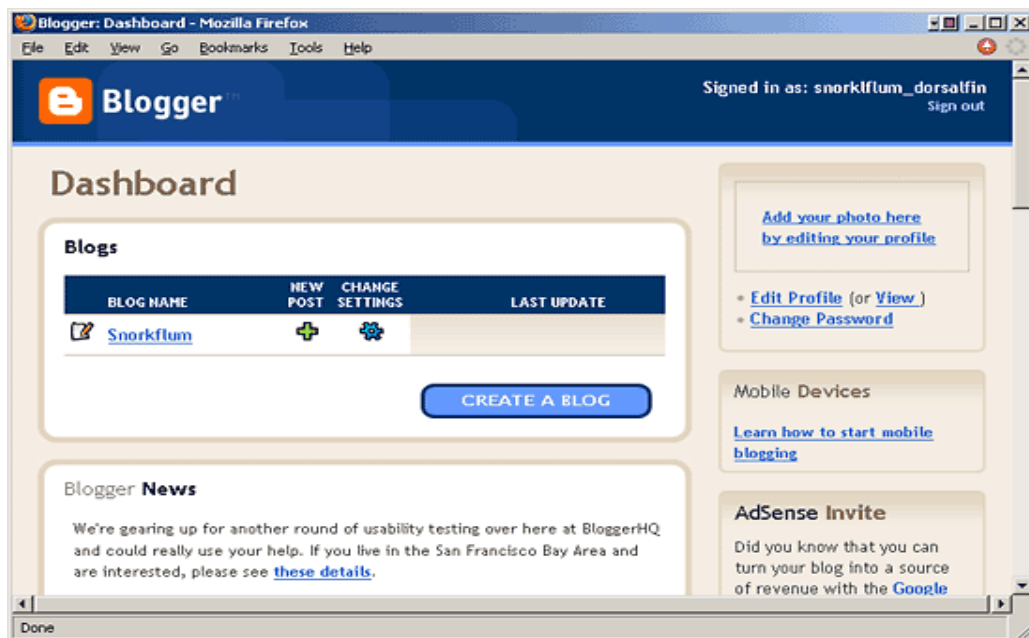
As long as the Blogger servers don't crash, the Internets go down or anything bad like that, you should get a nice confirmation screen:



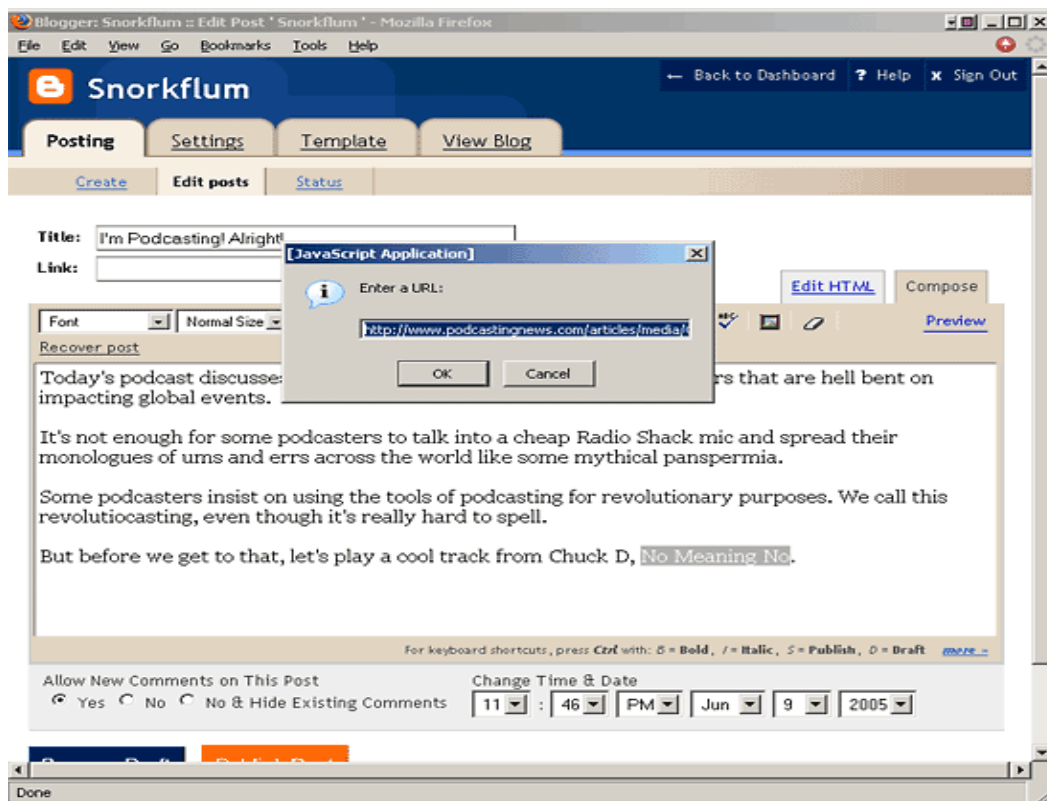
This is another good time for a break. You just created your podcast blog! How awesome is that?

Now you need to Start Posting...

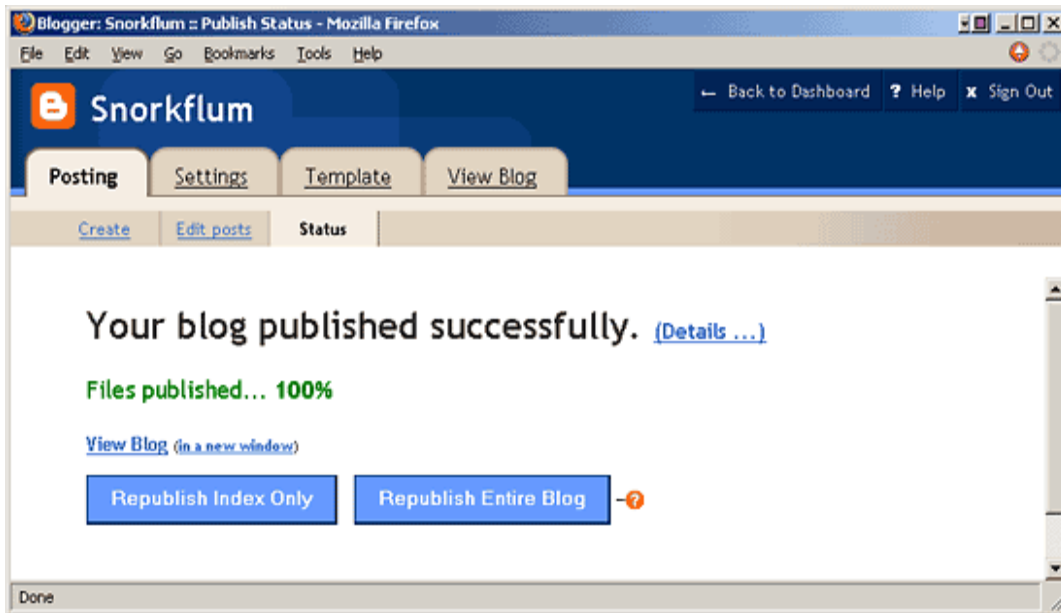
From the Dashboard page, click the **New Post** icon:



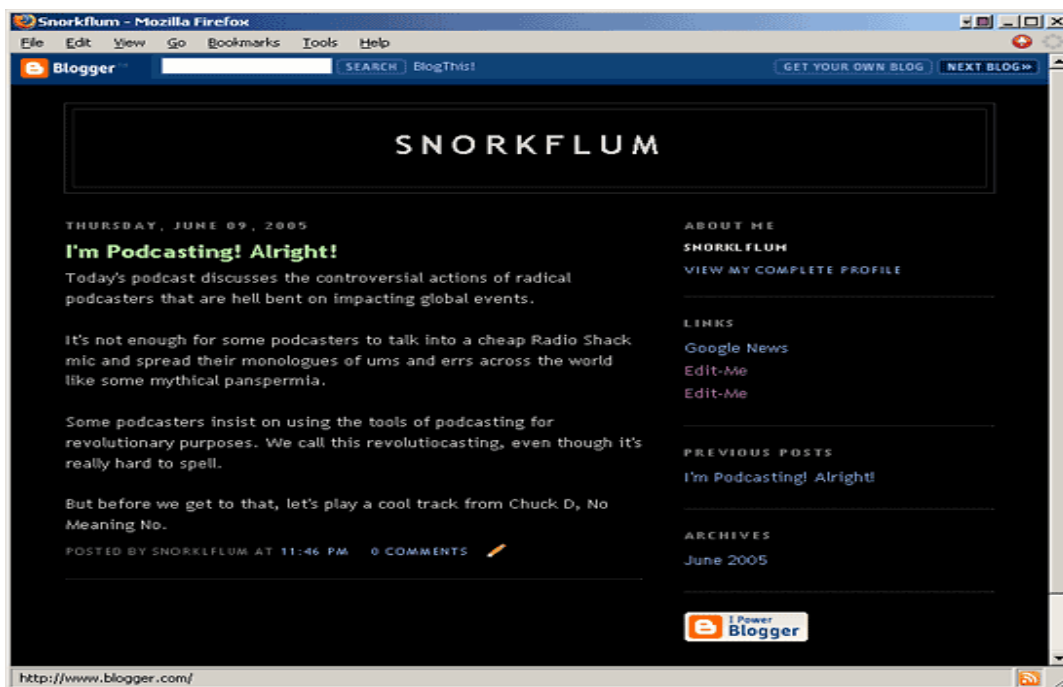
Add an entry. To add your MP3 file, create a text link, select it with the link tool, and enter the URL for your MP3 file:



When you are done, select Publish Post, and you should get a confirmation page:



Now check out the podcast blog that you've created. Snorkflum is available at <http://snorkflum.blogspot.com/>:



Now take a quick detour to **Settings** tab and select **Basic**.

Give your site a description. Forgetting to fill out the description is one of the most common problems with Blogger feeds.

Use the description field to explain what your podcast is, entice people to listen, and provide some keywords to make it easier for people to find.

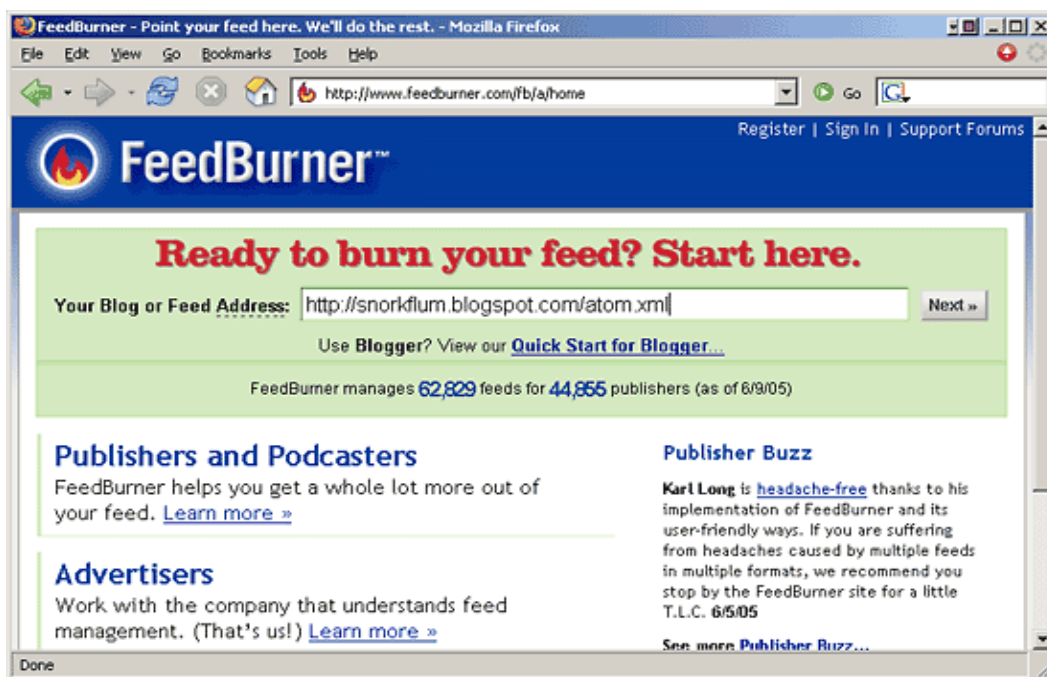
Save this and republish your podcast for the changes to take effect.

Now it's time to create your podcast feed. Blogger only provides a Atom newsfeed, and RSS 2.0 is the standard for podcasting.

Your Atom feed will be at your blog's address, plus "atom.xml", like this:
<http://snorkflum.blogspot.com/atom.xml>.

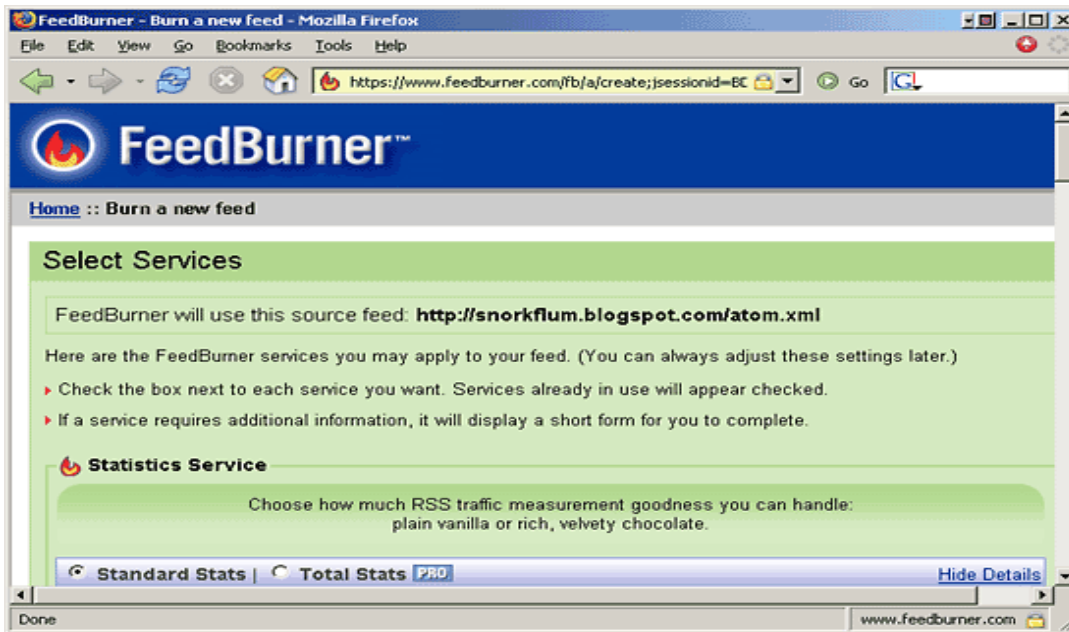
There is a free service, FeedBurner, that can be used to translate the Blogger Atom feed into a RSS 2.0 fee.

Go to <http://www.feedburner.com/>, and enter your Blogger Atom feed URL:

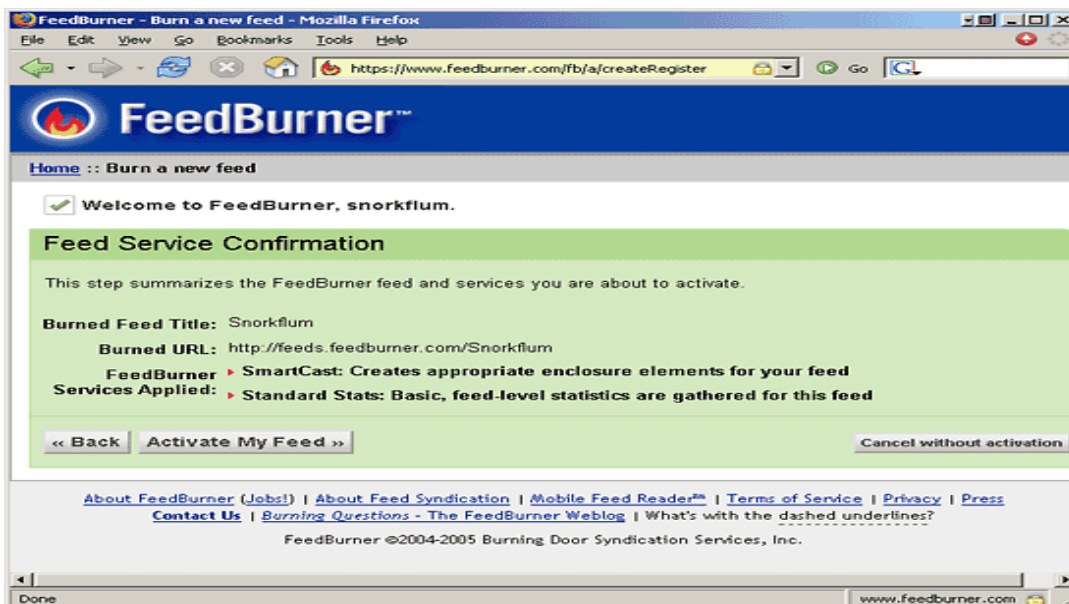


Select Next. FeedBurner will retrieve your Blogger Atom feed and then provide you with an options screen.

Select the SmartCast option, and make sure that the Feed Title and FeedBurner URI (way down at the bottom of the page) are OK with you:



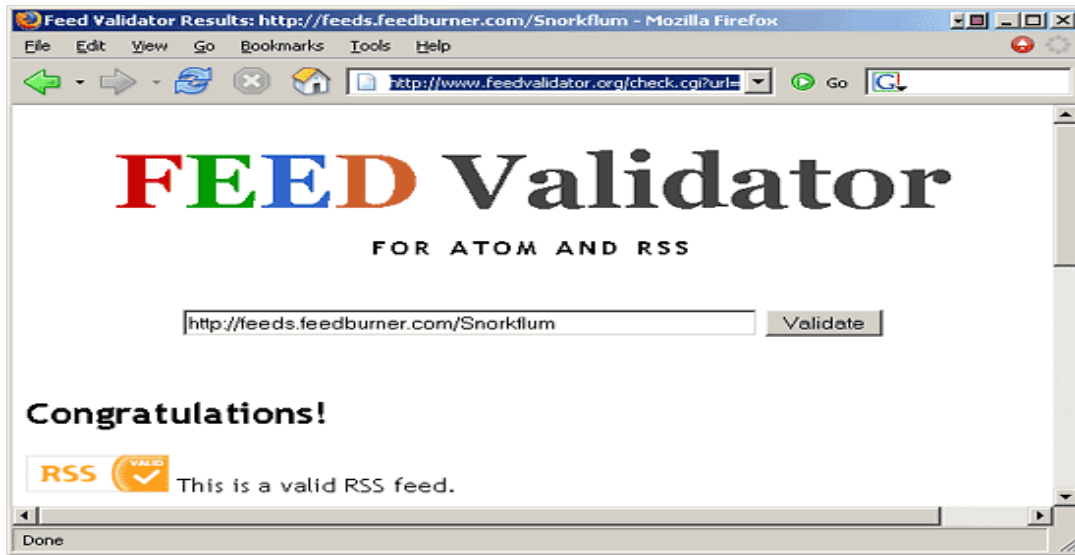
Select Next. You'll be prompted for a user id and password. Next, you should get a confirmation/welcome page:



Note your FeedBurner Burned URL. In this case, it's <http://feeds.feedburner.com/Snorkflum>.

That's it - the podcast is ready to test with a Feed Validator.

Go to www.feedvalidator.org and paste in your FeedBurner URL:



Your podcast should be ready to go.

Test it your podcast feed with a podcasting client such as http://www.podcastingnews.com/topics/Podcast_Software.html and get podcasting!

Podcast Marketing Brainstorm

What business models can you use with your new podcast recording?

- 1.) Audio CD (user pays shipping)
- 2.) Audio CD (sell CD)
- 3.) Audio CD (package with transcripts and/or workbook)
- 4.) Audio CD (bundle with existing product)
- 5.) Podcast (giveaway)
- 6.) Podcast (giveaway part – promote full version)
- 7.) Podcast (create membership site)
- 8.) Podcast (use to enhance blog or website copy)

How can you create a podcast?

- 1.) Just talk about a subject (at least prepare an outline first)
- 2.) Read your articles
- 3.) Read your e-books (audio – by chapters)
- 4.) Read your blog post
- 5.) Read your sales copy

- 6.) Read other people's articles
- 7.) Record/edit interviews with experts

What can you package with your podcast to enhance the perceived value?

- 1.) Create transcripts of your recording
- 2.) Create a 'workbook' to go with your recording
- 3.) Collect articles on the subject of your recording and publish a report

NOTE: Be sure to create a 'resource' page and mention it at the beginning and end of your recording (just like you would with an article, ebook, etc.)

Forward Thinking: How to Create Products with a Backend Marketing System Already in Place

When you think of backend marketing, you likely think of upselling on the sales page as well as pitching additional products through email or even postal mail. But forward-thinking marketers know that they need to build a backend marketing system right into the products themselves.

Consider this...

Joe Schmoe buys your product, asks for a refund, and then puts it on a file-sharing network for anyone to download. Or he sells it on eBay for a buck a pop. Either way, he's selling or giving it away to people who don't realize that its stolen merchandise.

That means your product ends up in the hands of hundreds of potentially honest customers. You didn't get any front-end profits from these folks, but you can sure make money using backend marketing if you're smart.

Sometimes we count on backend marketing systems that don't work. For example, some people buy products using throwaway email addresses. Some people use email addresses that get filled to the brim with spam each day. Either way, these folks aren't reading your emails ...and that means no backend profits for you.

The solution? Get your backend marketing system integrated into your products.

For example, if you sell ebooks, then put links in your ebooks. While some of the links might be affiliate links, ideally you should also have direct links to your own products and your newsletter. Make it clear who created the ebook so readers know where to get more of this good information.

The same goes for your audio and video products. Ensure your links and contact information are prominently displayed or repeated throughout the product.

Another solution is to create a business model with an automatic backend marketing system in place. For example, choose a forced continuity model, where customers are automatically sent a new product each month and their credit cards are billed. You don't have to work so hard on your backend marketing when your customers are automatically buying more product each month.

Rather than sending a product each month, you can create a membership site where you load new products each month. Just as with the above forced continuity example, your customers are automatically rebilled each month until they cancel.

Finally, because email can be so unpredictable, you may want to consider other ways of reaching your customers. A regularly updated private blog or forum can work. But you can also have weekly teleseminars for your customers to attend, which includes a pitch at the end for your newest product.

Bottom line: always be thinking ahead. When you're creating a product, ask yourself how many backend marketing methods can you use to reach the customers of this product. And how can you sell to those who received the product through other means?

Spend ten minutes thinking about your backend marketing today, and watch your profits grow exponentially in the coming years.

Marketing

Introduction

In this module you'll discover some of the marketing issues that go beyond traffic generation (such as joint venture marketing, affiliate marketing, search engine marketing and the like). In this module we'll look at the "whole picture," by focusing in on how the pieces of your marketing puzzle come together to form an overall marketing plan that includes both your pre-launch and post-launch marketing efforts.

However, you needn't think of these components of your marketing plan as separate pieces. In other words, your pre-launch and post-launch marketing plans aren't independent of one another. Instead, you should see them as part of a continuum, each being an important part of your overall sales system.

That means when you're working on a piece of your marketing plan that might be considered part of the "pre launch" process, you should also be thinking about how to integrate this into the backend of your existing products. Likewise, you need to be considering how the product you're developing will fit into your overall system, and what you'll be selling on the backend.

It's a continuous funnel, and understanding how your products fit into this funnel – and how your marketing will attract people into this funnel – will be the basis of your business plan. As such, don't get too caught up thinking about "pre launch" and "post launch" marketing as standalone components. They're not. To succeed in business, you need to create a seamless system to tie them together.

Here's how to do that...

Building Your Profit Funnel

Overview of the Profit Funnel

Imagine your sales system as a big funnel. The wide part at the top is where you cast your marketing net wide and attract likely customers to you. Once your prospects are inside your funnel, you work to build a relationship and earn their trust. This allows you to sell more products and more expensive products to them.

NOTE: see the Squeeze Page Chart on the next page for an overview diagram of what we'll be talking about in the rest of this module.

The reason this funnel idea is so important is because people buy from those they know and trust. You can't expect someone who doesn't know you to buy a \$5000 product from you. A few people will do just that, yes... especially if you get a bit of "borrowed credibility" via an endorsement from someone the customer knows and trusts. However, the vast majority of people will prefer to build that relationship first before they start spending thousands of dollars on your solutions.

So how do you get to that point? How do you start building the trust?

One way to do it is to cast your marketing net wide and see if you can get prospects to identify themselves as prospects. To do this, you offer a valuable and highly relevant freebie, such as a free report, free video, free piece of software, or similar. From there you can work to build trust and build that business relationship.

Other marketers choose to go to the next step directly. Instead of "fishing" for prospects with a freebie, they get qualified prospects to go directly from prospect to customer. No long courting period, no handing out valuable freebies. Indeed, this method does tend to accelerate the process.

How does it work?

Simple: instead of using freebies to build relationships, the marketer offers a very low-cost product. The product is deliberately priced low to make buying it a bit of a "no brainer" – a decision that carries very little risk for the purchaser.

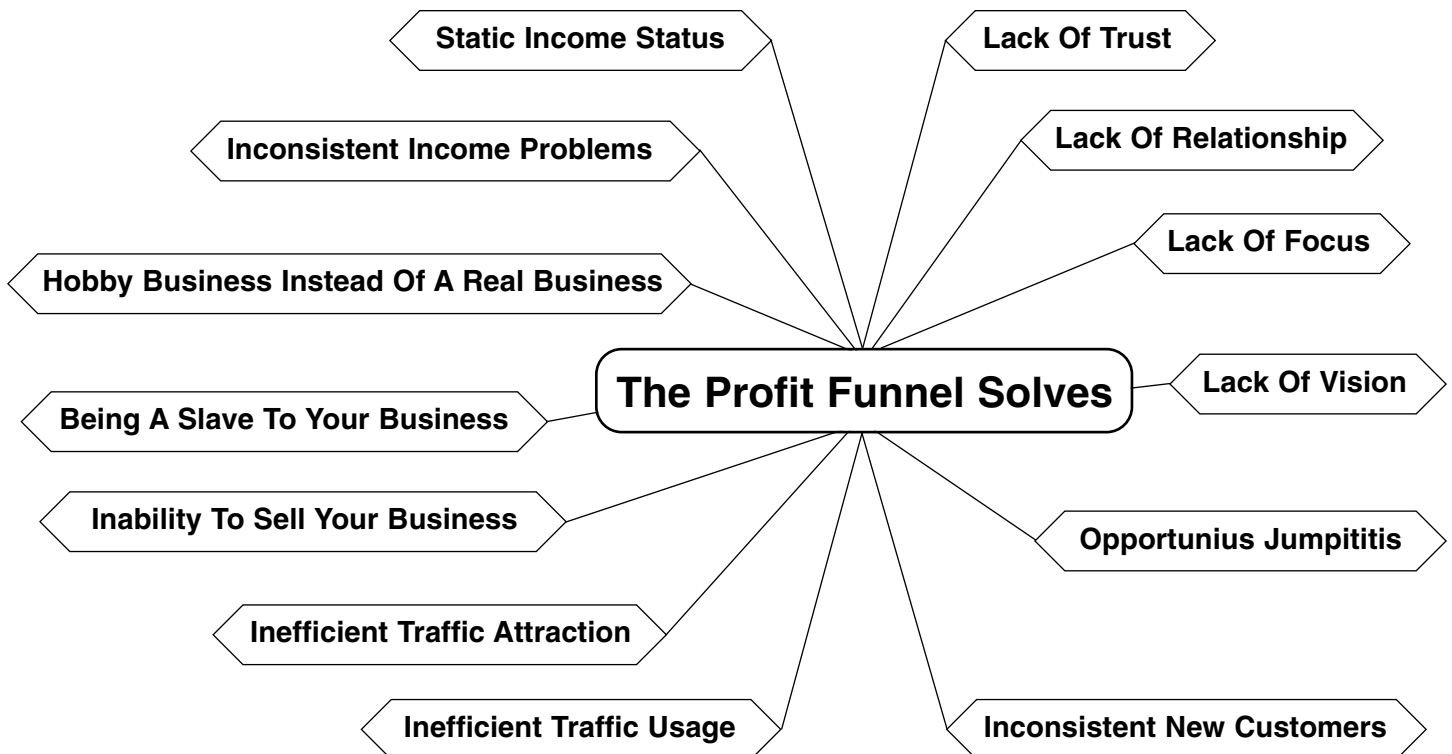
For example, many prospects won't hesitate to buy a \$10 product – at worst they lose \$10, and many prospects consider that an acceptable risk. As such, prospects won't mind buying a \$10 product from someone they've never done business with before.

But here's the key: the product must completely over-deliver and be worth far more than the customer paid for it. In addition, the customer must have a pleasant business experience with you, including fast and friendly customer service, as well as a smooth, safe shopping experience.

Do this, and you build the relationship of trust faster than you could through a free newsletter. From there you can go on to sell more products (and more expensive products) to these customers.

That's an overview of how the profit funnel works to your benefit. But now let's take a closer look at how the profit funnel works, starting with how it can be used to solve your marketing problems.

13 Problems That The Profit Funnel Solves



13 Problems That The Profit Funnel Solves

Static Income Status

First, it solves a static income status. If you're stuck at perhaps, a \$1000 a month and you can't break that barrier, then the profit funnel will definitely help you to increase that income with the same amount of traffic, it's just marketing to it more effectively. It also helps with inconsistent income problems.

Inconsistent Income Problems

If you have higher months and lower months, then the profit funnel can help you to stabilize those months so you are getting a more consistent income.

Hobby Business Instead Of A Real Business

It also helps you to transform a hobby business into a real business, and so if you're being a slave to your business and you have an inability to sell your business, then the profit funnel can help you to transform and totally turn it around because you have a series of systems in place which will help you to create a real business, and which will help you to focus.

Inefficient Traffic Attraction

Also, if you have an inefficient traffic attraction method, or you're using your traffic inefficiently – because you're using the wrong types of traffic – the profit funnel can definitely help you there as well. If you're having trouble with inconsistent new customers, then the profit funnel is excellent there as well. Because, as long as you're getting leads – as long as you're getting a flow of leads into your system – then that's going to result in sales, because customers is a result of conversion rate to the amount of leads that you have. It's just a simple mathematical formula.

Opportunus Jumpitis

It also helps you with “opportunus-jumpitis”, and that is the disease that many Internet marketers have, with the jumping from opportunity to opportunity, from product to product, from market to market, and they're not focusing, and that's exactly what the profit funnel helps you to do. It helps you with a lack of vision, and it also helps you with a lack of focus. If you don't know what step to take next, the profit funnel can help you and show you exactly what step to take next.

It also is especially powerful with solving a lack of relationship, and especially a lack of trust. If you're creating a multiple series of products, then your previous customers will see the quality of your previous product, and they'll say, "Yes, I want this information as well. I'm lacking this information, this information can help me", and it shows you a congruency, it shows you as an authority in the area when you have multiple products. But, it also shows you - based upon your previous products experience, and so that trust relationship is building up there.

Lack Of Trust

Lack Of Relationship

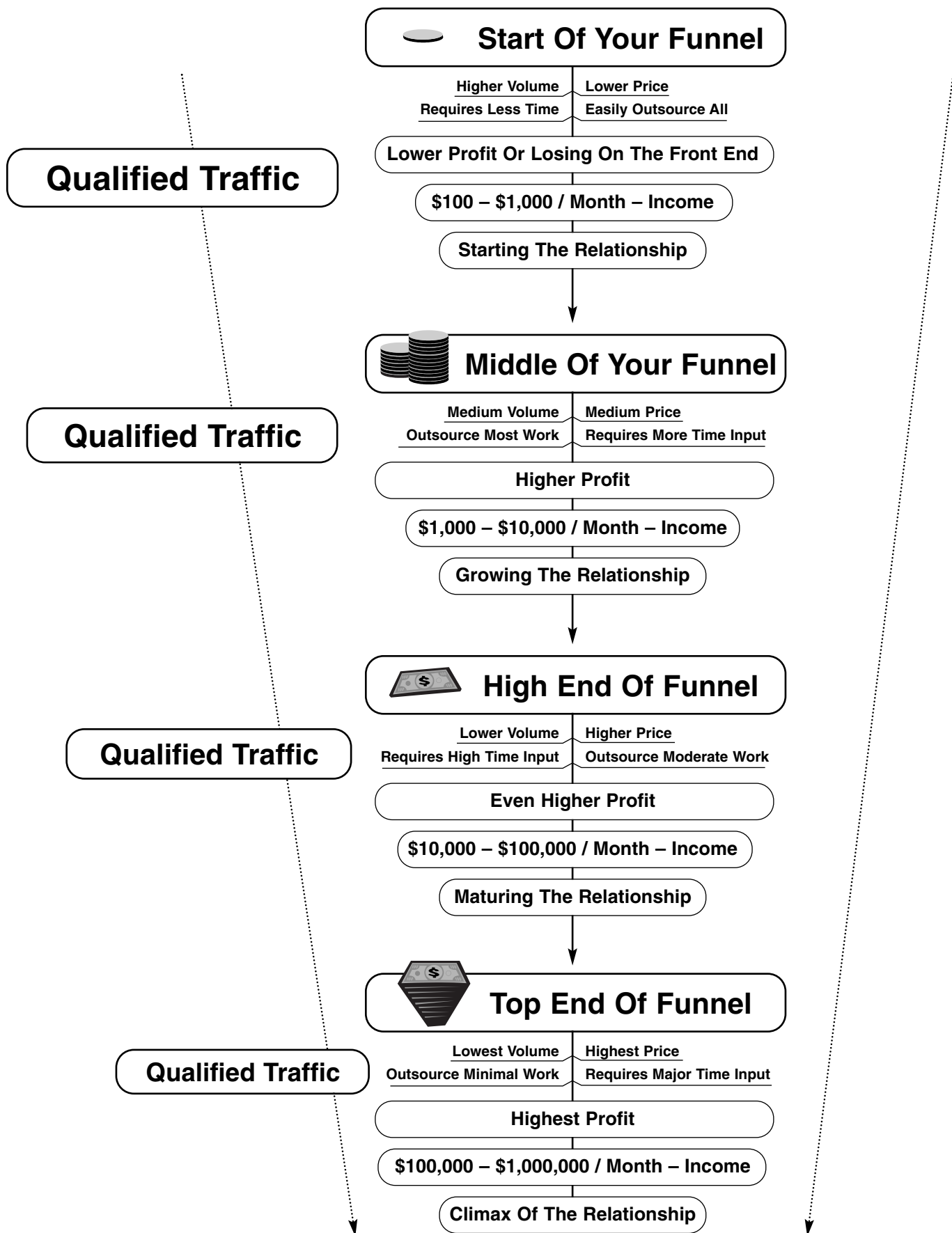
Lack Of Focus

OK, now that we've talked about what the profit funnel actually solves, let's talk about exactly what the profit funnel actually is....

Overview Of The Profit Funnel

OK, what you see before you is a representation of a profit funnel. And, as you can see, there is the start of the funnel, the middle of the funnel, the high-end of the funnel, and the top-end of the funnel. Now I know the top-end seems a bit upside-down, but by top-end I mean the highest income bracket.

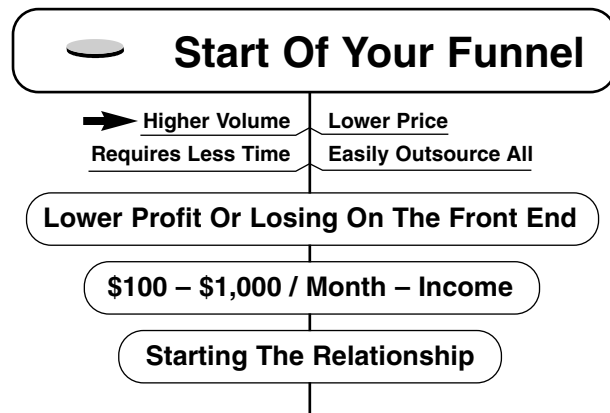
Your Niche Funnel



These lines represent the traffic coming in, and at the start of your funnel you expect a high amount of traffic. It doesn't necessarily have to be very targeted, but because you have a lower priced product, or perhaps a free product to start off your funnel, this is where you qualify your traffic – you qualify your prospects.

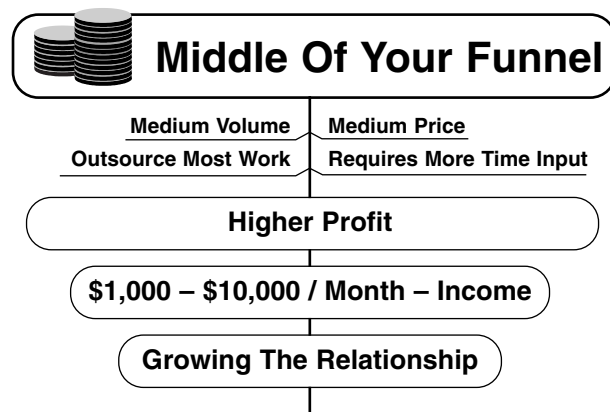
Qualified Traffic

So, this is the start of your funnel and it is basically to be a lead generation part of your funnel. It requires the least amount of time for you, because it's easily outsourced – all of it. We're going to be talking about each of these stages in detail in a minute. But, this is basically a mini-course, or an e-book, a click bank where you are giving the majority of your profits to build a list, and this a list of both prospects and customers. This is the part of your profit funnel where it has the lowest amount of profit, or you're losing on the front-end.



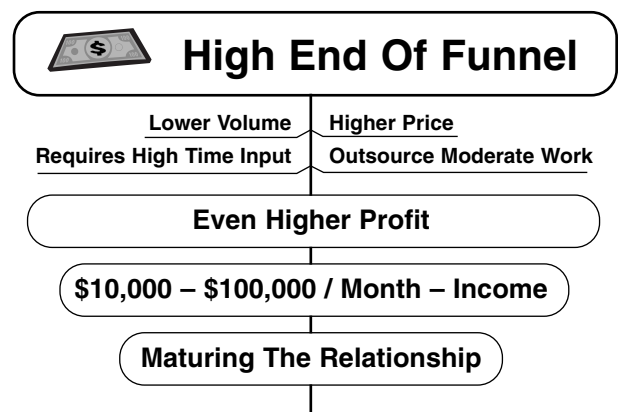
The income bracket is a \$100 to a \$1,000 per month, and it's about starting a relationship. The reason that 90 percent of Internet marketers are failing is because they're stuck in this part of the funnel. They're stuck at the front-end, they're stuck at the lower profit, or the losing side, and they're not taking it to the next level.

Let's have a look at the next part of the funnel – the middle of the funnel. Basically there is a pre-qualification of traffic now coming to this product. It has a medium volume of traffic, and a medium price. You can still outsource most of the work, but it requires more time, more input from you. There is a higher profit associated with this product, and you have a \$1,000 to \$10,000 per month income. It's jumped to that next level, and it's about growing the relationship.



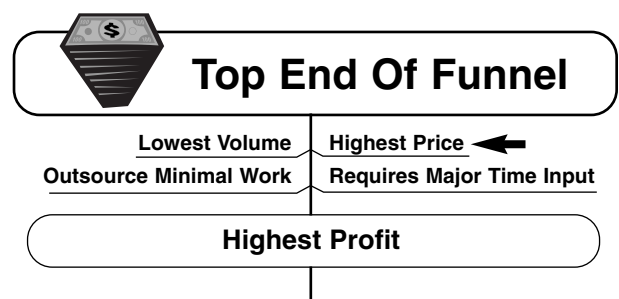
Basically, you're taking these qualified customers and prospects and you're funneling them into this product, and you're going to get a higher conversion from these qualified sources – the prospects and customers – than you are from just using general traffic techniques to drive them straight to this funnel. So, when you funnel previous customers and prospects, you're increasing your conversion rate and your using your traffic efficiently.

Then we take it to the next level, the high-end of the funnel, which has a lower volume again, a higher price, you can charge more for this product. It requires a high time input for you, because you are the primary creator of the product, and you can only outsource a moderate amount of the work, but it has an even higher profit, and this is where you kick up your income bracket to the next level, to \$10,000 to \$100,000 per month in income.



It's about maturing the relationship, and so once again you're taking your prospects, your customers from this level, and to the higher end of the funnel, and so instead of directly selling to an outsource, selling and getting a pathetic conversion rate, you are marketing primarily to this part of your funnel, the people who have purchased in the middle funnel. If they bought your product, and they liked your product up here, and they want more information, then this product is perfect for them and your conversion rates from these customers are going to be huge.

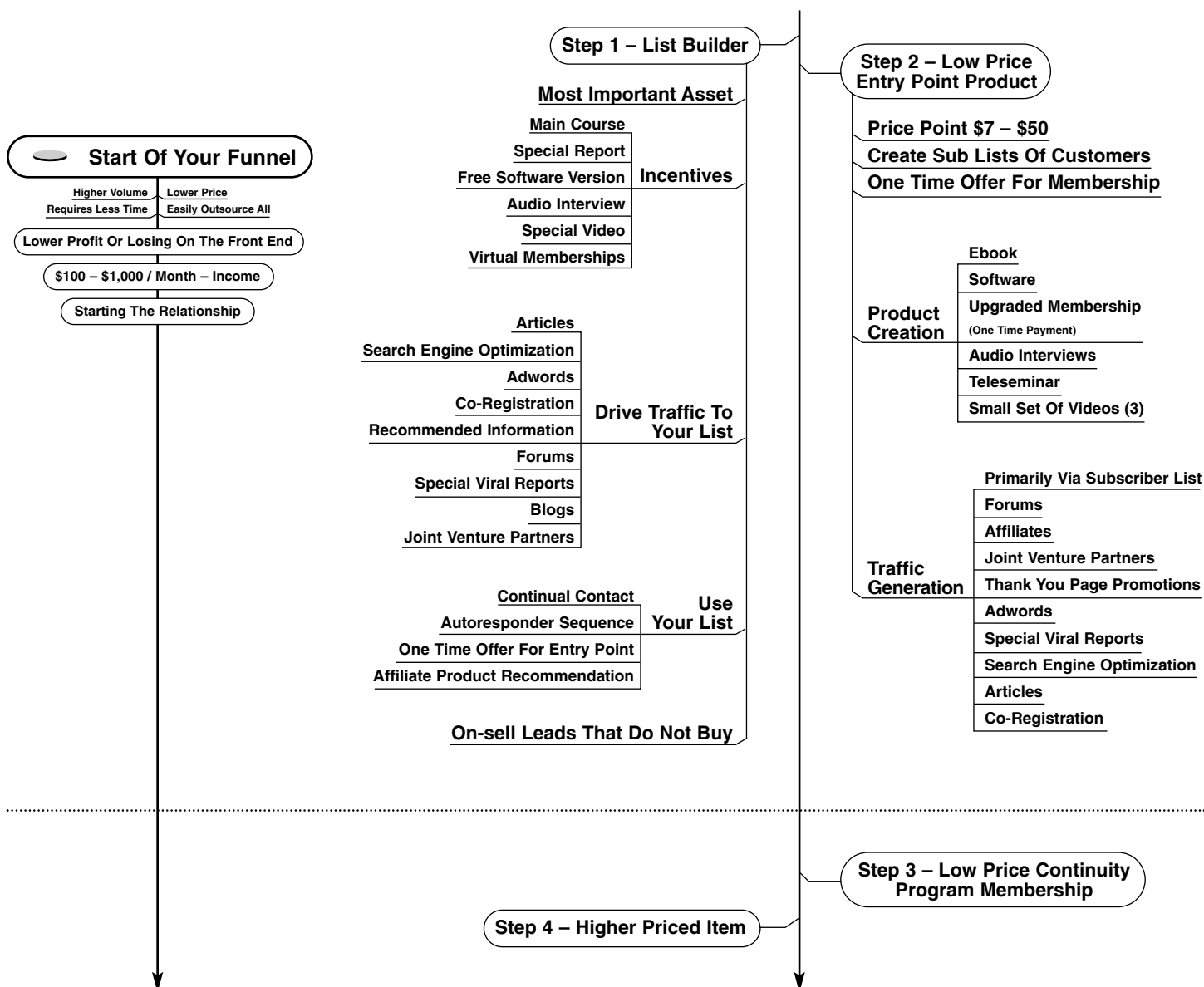
Let's go into the next level then, the top-end of your funnel. This is where you get the lowest amount of volume or traffic, but you have the highest price. The problem is you outsource a minimal of work, and it requires a major time input from you. But, the payoff is you get the highest amount of profit, and you're getting into the \$100,000 to \$1,000,000 a month in income, and it's the climax of the relationship – it's not the end of the relationship.

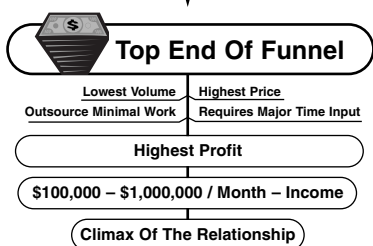
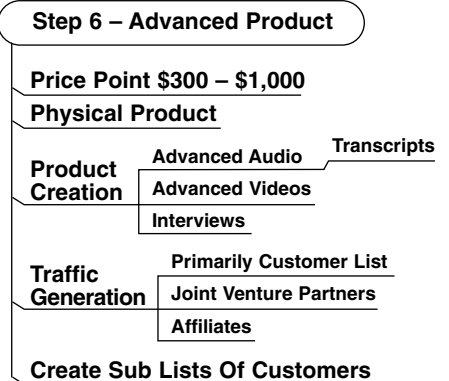
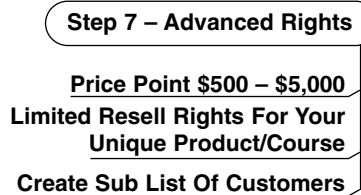
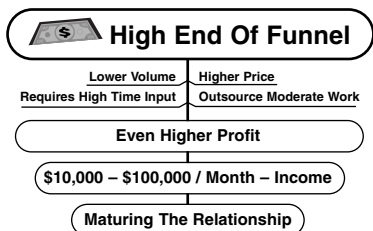
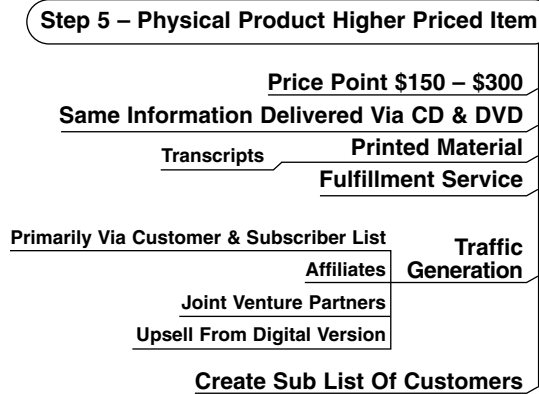
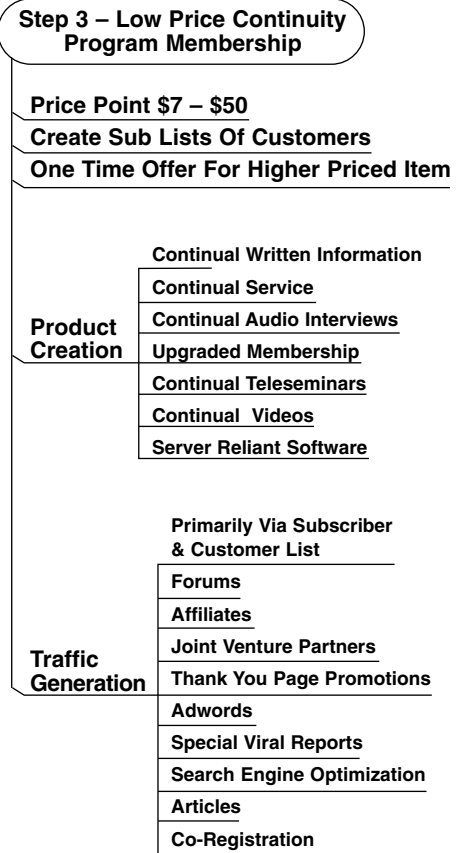
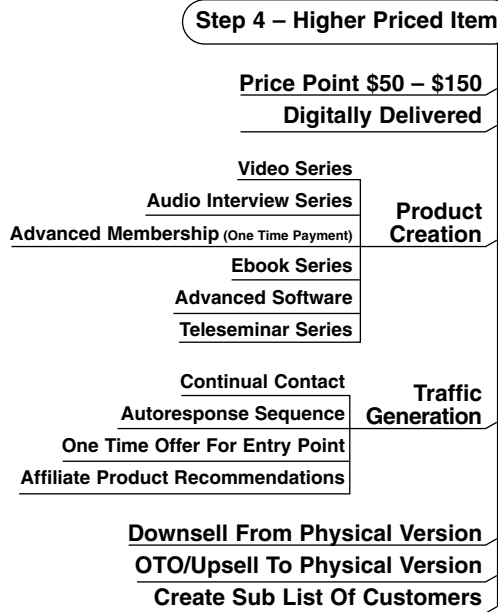
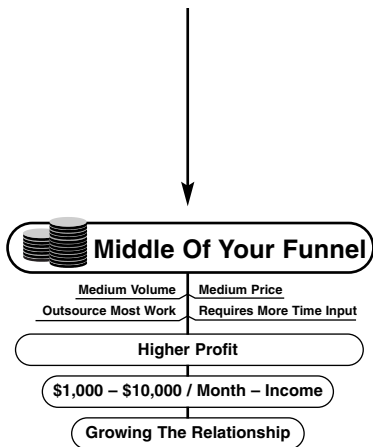


This is the part of the relationship where they trust you the most to pay for a \$5,000 seminar or to pay for a \$5,000 workshop or personal coaching program that you have, because you're taking customers from the high end of your funnel into the top end of your funnel. Once again your traffic is more qualified from here, and you're taking them into the next level and your conversions are going to be big from the high end customer list but not so much from the middle customer list and not so much from the start of your profit funnel customer list and even less from the outside world where your traffic is coming in and that is what your profit funnel is designed to do. To take a customer from up here from being interested, from perhaps purchasing a lower price product, to taking them all the way down here step by step until they purchase a big package and get as much information as they can about your specific market, about the specific problem that you are trying to help them to solve and if you are looking for a more hands free then this is where your profit funnel will end because if you don't want to get

into coaching and mentoring and workshops and different products like that then you stop right here and you focus on these three levels, the more hands free business that you want to focus on these ones bang, bang, bang and that's what the profit funnel is all about. So this is a basic overview of the entire profit funnel. Now lets have a look at each step individually.

Your Niche Funnel



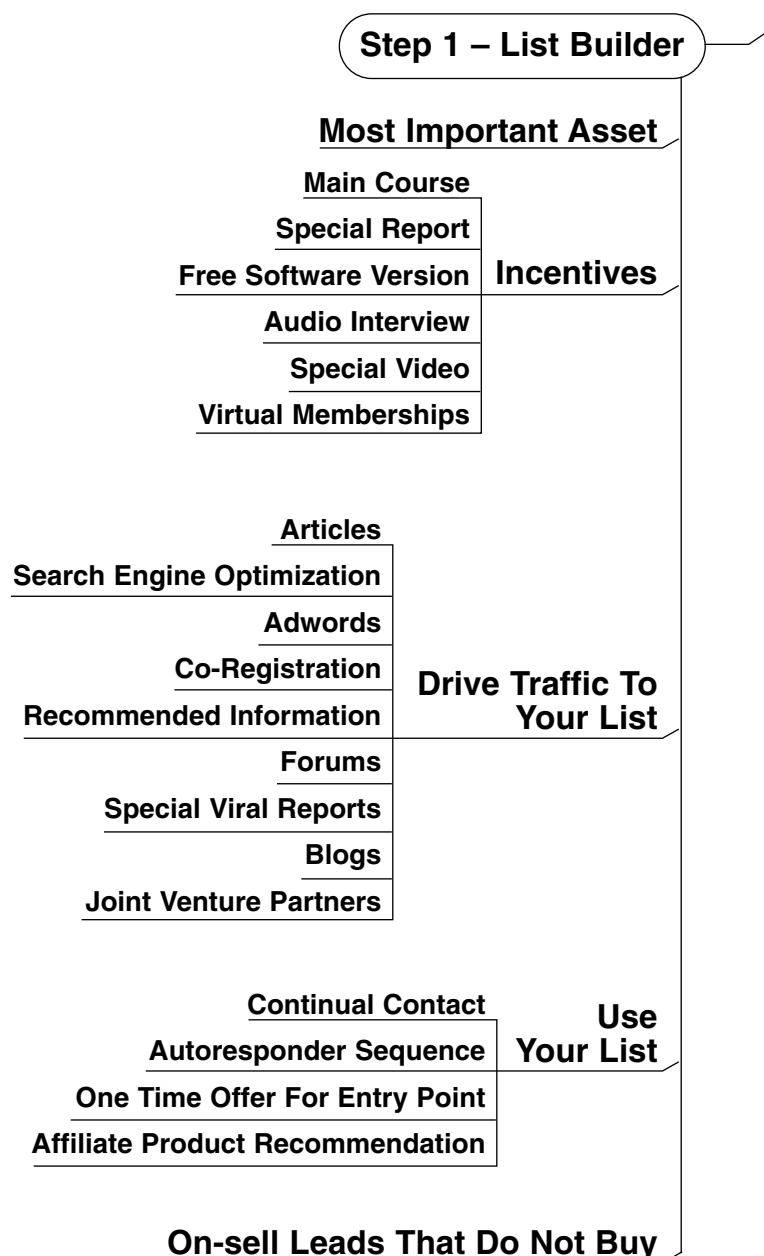
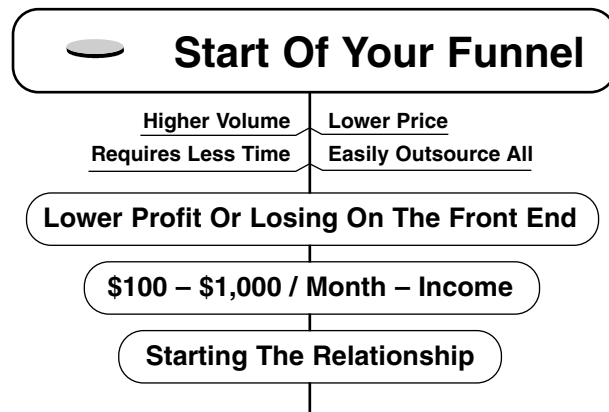


Specific Steps Of The Profit Funnel

OK now we are going to look at the specific steps of the profit funnel. We are going to start at the start of your funnel and then we are going to look at the middle of your funnel, the high end of your funnel, and the top end of your funnel and look at the specific steps and different product types and suggestions for product creation and especially for traffic generation to each one of these steps because they are all different and I want to show you that difference as we look into it.

OK the first step, let me just blow this up...

The first step in your profit funnel is starting off with a prospect list or creating a prospect list because when you have a website and traffic comes in, a person comes in, you can immediately lose them and if they don't take action. If they don't buy a product of yours, but if you capture the lead and with squeeze pages, with a free incentive, you can get conversion rights of over 40%. So you have a much greater chance of capturing that lead and constantly selling to them and constantly building a relationship with them because that's the start of your profit funnel. Starting the relationship, lets have a look at the start of the funnel again. It focuses on higher volume, a lower price, and which means higher conversions but remember we have a lower profit or we're losing on the front end but that's why because we're starting the relationship. This is what it's all about. So it is one of the



most important assets for your business because as I said you are not losing the people when they disappear from your website. You're gaining them and you're building that relationship and you can constantly sell to them and promote your products and you are pre-qualifying them. When they join your list, you know that they are interested in your topic and you know that you have a prospect which is hot for your product, which is wants to learn more, and is interested in solving their specific problem or need.

So let's have a look at some of the incentives that you can use to build your list and the first ones that I want to show you are mostly old school and that is like the mini course, the special report, the free software version. A mini course is a seven or eight part series where you teach a person about a specific problem and let's say you give them seven golf swing tips or something like that just so you can constantly build up that relationship in the first seven days because they have signed up to your

autoresponder, they're interested to know about that topic and so you are constantly building that relationship from the first step. It's very easy to do. It's very easy to hire somebody to create that course for you and so a lot of people use this technique but as I said it's old school and it's becoming less and less effective. It depends on the needs that you're focusing on. The special report is very similar. It's a 10 to 15 page report and it focuses on a specific problem that you can solve and you give 10, 15 pages of good quality content to solve that problem and to give them good quality action steps which they need to take and that is the power of a special report and it's a great incentive. Another thing, if you have a software version then you can create a freeware version and require that they give their name and their email address to capture that lead and to put them into their system and then sell them the full version later on.

Some of the newer methods and much more powerful methods and higher perceived value methods are the audio interview either interviewing an expert or just recording something on audio or creating a special video and these are becoming more and more powerful and the beautiful thing about audio and video is that they are very easy to create. They hardly cost you a thing when you create them

Step 1 – List Builder

| Most Important Asset | |
|-----------------------|------------|
| Main Course | Incentives |
| Special Report | |
| Free Software Version | |
| Audio Interview | |
| Special Video | |
| Virtual Memberships | |

| | |
|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| Articles | Drive Traffic To Your List |
| Search Engine Optimization | |
| Adwords | |
| Co-Registration | |
| Recommended Information | |
| Forums | |
| Special Viral Reports | |
| Blogs | |
| Joint Venture Partners | |

properly and they have a huge high perceived value and that's the power of video and one of the new things, and it's growing in popularity everyday, is viral memberships and viral memberships are perfect because it gives you your list builder product. It gives it legs because every prospect, every customer that you put into the membership, automatically becomes an affiliate to promote it, to get their money back, and to tell others about it and gain benefits and that is fantastic for a list builder and it's perfect and it's not costing you a thing because people who are promoting it and you are just giving them some incentive to that. Now if we're talking about memberships and you have upgraded memberships and they'll be making a percentage on the one time offer or something similar like that and that is the power of these viral memberships. They're not just a free tool, you always need a one-time offer or something to monetize them, but they are very powerful.

Now let's talk about driving traffic to your list. The thing with traffic is that as your price increases, you are going to need more interested targeted traffic for it to convert decently, but with a free list because it converts at such a high rate with targeted traffic, you can use it with untargeted traffic. You can use every option available to drive traffic to your website. The first one I want to talk about is articles. Now articles are so very powerful because 1. They are not hard to write. 2. You can get other people to write them for you. 3. They don't cost anything to submit and you can submit them to multiple places. They are giving you back links to your website. They are getting your name out there. You are becoming an expert about that topic. They are so powerful and they are an excellent way to promote and no matter what you are promoting articles can be relevant and can pick up search engine traffic and also direct traffic from people using your articles and people searching for your articles. This is a very powerful way of getting traffic to especially a list builder. You see with an article you give the good content and then in your signature you have the answer to that content. As Jimmy Brown says, any information you give has to be useful but incomplete to be truly effective. So in the article you create the problem, you create the need, and then you give your specific answer to that problem in your signature. Say if you want to find more or if you want a solution to your problem then go to my link in your signature file and these are so powerful.

OK, going into search engine optimization. Free traffic is one of the best things via search engines, and it's one of the most authoritative forms of traffic that you can get. If you can build your list via free traffic, via your web site, this is something they should definitely do. AdWords is a fantastic way, as well, very targeted and if you can't get into the top rankings of the search engines you can buy your way in. Remember, once again, this is a lead generation tool. Even if you lose in the front end, you're going to make your money via a one-time offer or via the products on the back end. You must keep that in mind. That's why most marketers fail, because they're trying to make money on the front end via AdWords when they could be losing money via AdWords during the lead generation but making it back with interest during the rest of the profit funnel.

Another method for gaining traffic is co-registration. Also you can have recommended information links via the web sites. Forums is an excellent way of getting traffic. Russell Brunson teaches that method very well – for good reason, too. Forums are excellent because there is a targeted audience. They’re looking for your information. If you actively participate in a focused forum and provide good information, and then you have a relevant signature link just like articles, then people are going to go to your site, so it can be a great way of driving direct traffic via forums. Special viral reports, especially the ones that people can brand, are very powerful, as well. Also blogs can be used for search engine optimization. Joint venture partners are a very powerful way of driving traffic. Once again, think of it. If you don’t have a one-time offer set up or some way to monetize that list, then it’s going to be hard for you to get joint venture partners on board with you, and that’s exactly why I didn’t mention affiliates here. It’s hard to use affiliates to drive traffic to your list-builder if you don’t have an incentive on the back end to pay them immediately for the traffic that you do convert.

Using your list is – the great thing about building a list is you have that continual contact. There are some stats, which say that a prospect has to see a web site or see your offer at least seven times before you get the maximum conversion rate and that’s the beauty of using autoresponder sequences and using your list.

| | |
|---|--------------------------|
| <u>Continual Contact</u> | Use Your List |
| <u>Autoresponder Sequence</u> | |
| <u>One Time Offer For Entry Point</u> | |
| <u>Affiliate Product Recommendation</u> | |
| On-sell Leads That Do Not Buy | |

OK, now that we’ve got the lead, and we’re starting to build a relationship with them, the first thing that we should do is try and monetize that lead, try and get back and recoup the investment that we made by giving them a one-time offer for our entry-point product. We’ll be talking about that in a minute. Another way to monetize them is by affiliate product recommendations. This is nothing new but it’s all part of your profit funnel. Finding a niche, building a list in that niche, and building a number of products in that area. This is something that I don’t recommend or use myself, but if you want to get really aggressive and milk your list for as much as it’s worth, then you can on-sell the leads that do not buy. As I said, I don’t recommend it, but if you want to add this to your profit funnel to increase your profits to the max, this is another method that you can do, that you can use.

The second step of the profit funnel is the low-price entry-point product. This is where you turn your prospects into customers. Its price point is between seven and 50 dollars, because you want it to be a low price to introduce them to a product and you want it to be as high-converting as possible. We all know that products with a low price point are going to convert higher than if you're trying to sell a \$200 product or something like that.

You should always create a sublist of customers for every new product that you create, and I'll mention this for all of them, because this customer list is a lot more valuable than your prospect list. In fact, it's about four to five times, maybe ten times more profitable. These people have voted with their wallets, they're interested in your topic, and they trusted you enough to pay for your product and to know more about a specific problem or topic.

Once again, you should always monetize every product that you have in your profit funnel by giving the next step in the profit funnel, and that's a one-time offer for a membership or even your higher-priced product, and we'll be talking about that in a minute. Some ideas for product creation is an e-book. Very old school. Once again, I recommend that people stay away from e-books because they just don't have a high perceived value and there are much more powerful, much quicker ways of creating a product that has a high perceived value such as audio and video and they don't cost you a penny to make. Software, if that is your model, then very easy to create and that should be your low priced entry point.

Another method that you can use is building on from your list builder, your viral membership, and creating a gold membership or an upgraded membership

Step 2 – Low Price Entry Point Product

Price Point \$7 – \$50

Create Sub Lists Of Customers

One Time Offer For Membership

| | |
|---------------------------|--|
| Product Creation | Ebook |
| | Software |
| | Upgraded Membership (One Time Payment) |
| | Audio Interviews |
| | Teleseminar |
| Traffic Generation | Small Set Of Videos (3) |
| | Primarily Via Subscriber List |
| | Forums |
| | Affiliates |
| | Joint Venture Partners |
| | Thank You Page Promotions |
| | Adwords |
| | Special Viral Reports |
| | Search Engine Optimization |
| | Articles |
| | Co-Registration |

| | |
|-------------------------|--|
| Product Creation | Ebook |
| | Software |
| | Upgraded Membership (One Time Payment) |
| | Audio Interviews |
| | Teleseminar |
| | Small Set Of Videos (3) |

for a one-time payment. This can be anything. You can have anything in your membership. You can have an e-book or software or audio interviews or teleseminar or videos. This is just the backbone. You can have anything in it that you want and it's all part of your system of creating a viral system, but especially a profit funnel with legs. Very important.

Another idea for product creation is audio interviews, teleseminars, creating audio interviews with experts, very, very powerful. Also, you can have that one-on-one information, and if you want to get creative you can actually sell a teleseminar before you actually do it and get paid to create a product. Very powerful. Once again, a small set of videos is an excellent low-price entry point because you're overdelivering. Very easy to create, very high perceived value, as well.

Once again, talking about traffic generation is primarily your subscriber list and the other forms of traffic that I mentioned before. Forums, this time I've added in affiliates because you are charging a price so you can give them an incentive, you can give them a commission based on the sale, and it's not just the good will of promoting a free list even if you do have a one-time offer or some way to monetize that list. These products are excellent to be promoted by affiliates.

| | |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Traffic Generation | Primarily Via Subscriber List |
| | Forums |
| | Affiliates |
| | Joint Venture Partners |
| | Thank You Page Promotions |
| | Adwords |
| | Special Viral Reports |
| | Search Engine Optimization |
| | Articles |
| | Co-Registration |

You can also use joint venture partners, thank-you page promotions, you can negotiate with other partners to say, "Can you promote my product through your affiliate link on your thank-you page?" Something that's rarely done but is extremely powerful, because people have their wallets already out because they've just purchased a product and they're in the buy mode. That's an excellent way of picking up some extra traffic and converting some more people. AdWords, once again, viral special reports, search engine optimization, articles, co-registration, call all be used for a low-priced entry product because it's still going to convert at a reasonable rate.

Moving on to step three, moving on to the middle of your funnel, this is where you start making the profit. This is where you start making money on the back end. This is where you start hitting the income range of a thousand to ten thousand dollars per month in income. Remembering that it's a medium volume at a medium price, so we're going to jack up the price. Let's look at some of the specific steps. Step three is a low-price membership. The reason that you want to include a membership in your profit funnel is continual income. That is one of the big problems with Internet marketers. They have high months, they have low months, and they need to constantly be making sales, but when you honor a membership you have a consistent income and it's very strong.

The beautiful thing about a membership is that your price point can still be low, but because it's month after month, these little payments really do add up and you can add a number of members to your membership program and you can be making a significant income each and every month.

Very powerful. Once again, you want to create a sub list of customers and you want to have a one time offer for your high priced items, something we're going to look at next.

Product creation ideas: you can have continual written information. The problem with a membership or a continual program is that you need to, if you're going to charge a monthly fee, then you really need to provide continual information or a continual service which justifies that monthly cost. So, you can do this with writing information about a topic continually, you can provide a service such as hosting or auto-responder service, something in that area where you're providing constant service that they can use, so you're required to put out some output every month. Once again, you can do continual audio interviews, one every month or something like that. You can have an upgraded membership, and this again is part of our viral membership that you can put this in your whole system and can have a gold to platinum type membership that you have.

Step 3 – Low Price Continuity Program Membership

Price Point \$7 – \$50

Create Sub Lists Of Customers

One Time Offer For Higher Priced Item

| | |
|---------------------------|---|
| Product Creation | <u>Continual Written Information</u> |
| | <u>Continual Service</u> |
| | <u>Continual Audio Interviews</u> |
| | <u>Upgraded Membership</u> |
| | <u>Continual Teleseminars</u> |
| | <u>Continual Videos</u> |
| Traffic Generation | <u>Server Reliant Software</u> |
| | Primarily Via Subscriber & Customer List |
| | <u>Forums</u> |
| | <u>Affiliates</u> |
| | <u>Joint Venture Partners</u> |
| | <u>Thank You Page Promotions</u> |
| | <u>Adwords</u> |
| | <u>Special Viral Reports</u> |
| | <u>Search Engine Optimization</u> |
| | <u>Articles</u> |
| | <u>Co-Registration</u> |

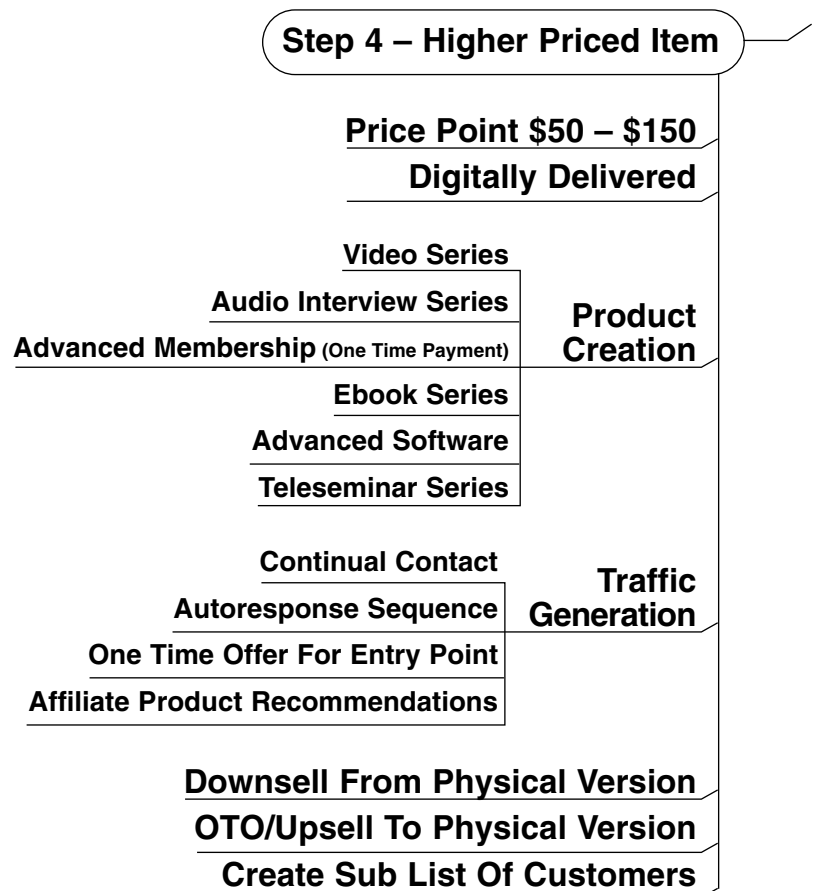
Continual teleseminars are excellent as well, continual videos, and this is an excellent one as well, a server reliant software. When you have a piece of software that is running on your server then you can easily charge somebody a monthly service for the privilege of using that software every month.

Some ideas for traffic generation, once again, since it's a low price, low cost membership program, you can promote it primarily by your subscriber and customer list, forms, affiliates, joint-venture partners, thank you pages, AdWords, special viral port, search engine optimization, and co-registration. These are all effective ways of promoting a low priced membership because the conversion is still high.

OK, moving on to step four; the high priced item. Now this is where you're charging in the vicinity of \$50 to \$150 for that product. It's normally digitally delivered and some ideas for the product creation is it's mostly an advanced series. You're building on the information from step three, or the step two, the low priced program and then you're giving even more information. So it's an advanced video series, an advanced audio interview series, an advanced membership of the one time payment, it's an e-book series, it's an advanced software, it's a teleseminar series.

So whatever you're offering in step two or step three, you want to take it to the next level and you've got your high

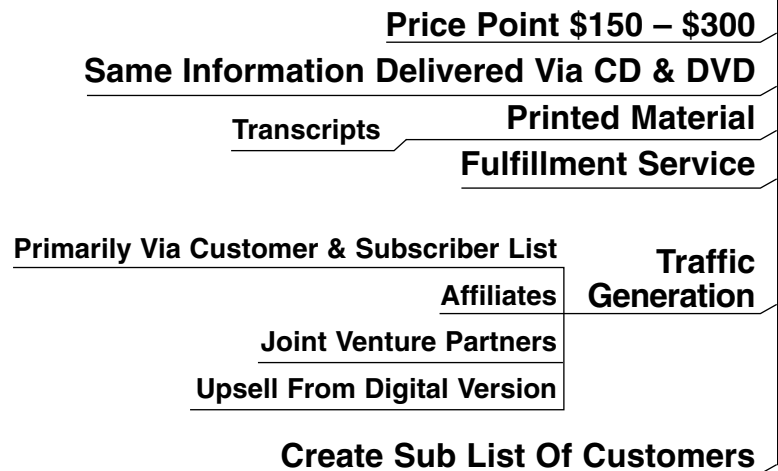
priced item that you can charge a lot more for. Some of the traffic generation methods that you can use are different from the first three steps. It's because you're dealing with a high priced item. Because your traffic from all those other methods other than your customer subscriber lists and your affiliates and your joint venture partners, because they're normally untargeted and unqualified, you're going to get a much lower conversion rate. You want them to be in your low price, you want them to be in your list first. It's much easier to convert people when they're in your list rather than sending them straight to a high priced item. OK, now talking about some other methods. With the high priced you can have a one-time offer upsell to the physical version, but with the physical version you can have a downsell to the digital version and from



the physical version if they skip on the physical version. So there is cross sells and upsells and downsales and one time offers. These are all the things that you can do with a profit funnel. Once again, you must create a sublist of these customers because these customers that have purchased your higher priced item are much more valuable than your members and your lower priced value because once again they voted for you with their wallets and they've shown their interest.

Moving on to a physical, higher-priced product is basically the same information that you have here in step four, but you're putting it into a physical package such as a CD or a DVD with the printed material and transcriptions and your user fulfillment service instead of having a digital product and the beautiful thing about a physical product is it has a much higher perceived value, so you can charge a lot more for it.

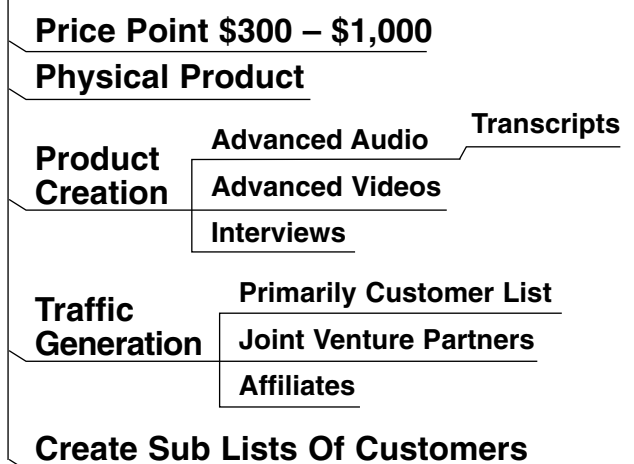
Step 5 – Physical Product Higher Priced Item



Once again, your traffic generation is mostly based on your customer list and your subscribers list, your affiliate joint venture partners and you can have an upsell from the digital version. Also, I highly recommend you need a sublist because once again, these people are much more valuable than those who are bought step four. So this is how your profit funnel works, going from step to step, building more value, charging more for a product. So let's look at now the high end of the funnel. We're talking about low volume and much higher prices. This is where you really start kicking it up to another notch. Your income belt from about \$10,000 to \$100,000 per month. As I said, it's hard to outsource this work and it requires a time input for you to create it.

Looking at step six, we'll have a look at an advanced product. Your price point is increased to \$300 to \$1,000. It's a physical product, your product creation is an advanced audio, advanced videos and interviews with experts all joined together to create one package which is worth this

Step 6 – Advanced Product



price point. You want to generate as much information as possible and as much value as possible and you can do this with all these methods very powerfully. Traffic generation is focused and limited to a qualified traffic of primarily your customer list, your joint venture partners and your affiliates.

Step seven is a bit of a twist than the other two because it's based on the value of selling somebody the resell rights on one of your unique products. It has a price point of \$500 to \$5,000 because you, giving them the ability to resell your unique product or course and it's a limited number so it's an exclusive deal. This is an easy way to

create another step in your profit funnel. You're creating a sublist of customers because these people are even more valuable and you can continually sell to them, offer them products in the same area or a different niche or something. But one question you might be asking me, "Paul, why would you want to sell my rights to one of my unique products? Wouldn't I just be creating an over saturation of the market and be competing with myself?"

Well there's two ways to answer that question, and the first is that yes you would be, but no, you wouldn't be. First; yes you would be in that they have a chance of competing with you. But here you have a giant profit funnel that you start with in lead generation and that you're building to the next step and you're taking them to the next step, and you're taking them to the next step, so you've got a whole profit tree, so you have this advantage over somebody who is just selling one of these steps in your profit funnel.

So, you've created this big profit funnel which is taking people from just the lead to a physical product or, what, taking a person from a lead and leading them all the way through your profit funnel. But a person that you're just selling one part of this funnel doesn't have this power, doesn't have this advantage that you have. And to answer the second part of that question, the noise side, it is very hard to saturate an online market, because it's constantly growing—it's also dependent on your niche – but it's constantly growing and you're limiting the resell rights. And it's hard for one person to sell to every person. And so this is a way of adding another step in your profit funnel and making a significant amount of money with a limited number of resell rights. It's just a suggestion; you don't have to apply it.

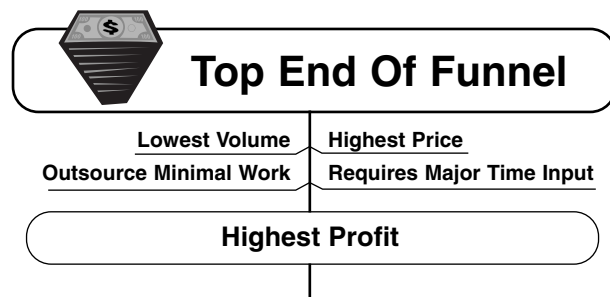
Step 7 – Advanced Rights

Price Point \$500 – \$5,000

**Limited Resell Rights For Your
Unique Product/Course**

Create Sub List Of Customers

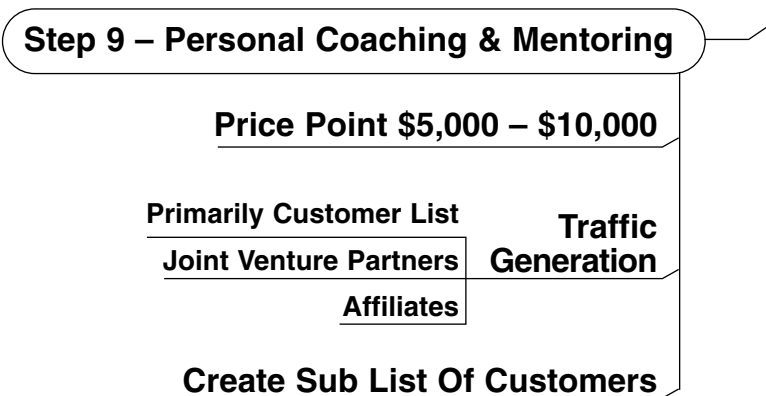
OK, moving on to the top end of your funnel, remember this is the lowest amount of volume, but it has the highest price. And just remember it requires a major time input from you, because you can't outsource the majority of the work. But the benefit of that is you're bumping up your income to a hundred thousand to one million dollars per month



in income. And the ways to do this, the specific steps, is step eight, is seminars, workshops and boot camps and your price point is two thousand to ten thousand dollars. It's based on a live presentation of information with special guest speakers. And the beautiful thing about this type of step, this particular step in your profit funnel, is that you have the ability to record and sell these as live DVDs and create a product. This is what Russell Brunson just did recently when he put on a seminar and he created a product afterwards. So he started with step eight and then he sold step six. And this way he was getting paid via the seminar, he was getting paid to create this product, which you could sell as well. Very powerful, very smart marketing.

Traffic generation, once again, limited primary to your customer list, your joint-venture partners, and your affiliates, because it is very hard to sell a two thousand to ten thousand dollar via an AdWords campaign. You really need endorsements from joint-venture partners and affiliates and you really need the relationship that you're building primarily with your customer list.

Step nine, which is the last one I'm mentioning here, is a personal coaching and mentoring program that you create. The price point is five thousand to ten thousand dollars, and basically you're taking an individual and you are personally coaching them and mentoring them and teaching them about a specific topic. So you are getting paid for the



nine that you spend with that person. The traffic generation, once again, is primary a customer list, joint-venture partners and affiliates, because you need that person endorsement. And once again, you are creating a sublist; you need to create a sublist of customers, because these are the most valuable people on your list. If they're willing to trust you, to pay five thousand to ten thousand dollars for personal service, therefore, for personal mentoring, then you know that you have that trust relationship with them.

OK, now that we've had a look at the specific steps, let's have a look at some action steps.

Action Steps For You To Apply A Profit Funnel To Your Business

ACTION STEP 1 **Choose Your Niche Market**

Must Be A Hungry Market

Must Have Money To Spend

Must Have Potential For Growth

Research Your Niche

ACTION STEP 2 **Create Your Lead Generation & Entry Point Products**

Survey Your Niche

Design Their Wants

Design A Product
Specifically For Them

ACTION STEP 3 **Create Your 1st Backend Product**

Increase The Value

Focus On Your
Previous Customers

Design A Product
Specifically For Them

ACTION STEP 4 **Create Your 2nd Backend Product**

Increase The Value

Focus On Your
Previous Customers

Design A Product
Specifically For Them

ACTION STEP 5 **Continue Until Profitability Decreases**

ACTION STEP X **Start Again In A Different Niche Or Sell The Business And Cash Out**

PLEASE NOTE > Nothing is set in stone. The potential of your Profit Funnel is only linked by your imagination and your ability to track and improve on your existing model.

Action Steps To Apply The Profit Funnel

If you have already chosen your market niche, and you're already building your list and you have a product which is turning your prospects into customers, then you can skip right to action step number three and apply a profit funnel to your business. But if you're starting at the start—and that's where we'll start right now – then your first action step is to choose your market niche.

And always, always, always I recommend

that it must be a hungry market. That is a market that is looking for information, and is searching for that information and has a problem that you can solve with information. And it must have money to spend. You don't want to focus on a pauper type of market, but you want to create a series of products in a market which can afford them. Because when you get up into the high-end and the top-end type products, we're talking about a lot of money, so we want to focus on a market which can afford these type of products. Also, it must have potential for growth. Not only in the online business, and not only on the online market where people are searching for it, but also potential for growth to create more and more high-end products to really increase your bottom line. And last of all, but definitely not least, you must research your niche and look for especially all these three points to apply to action step number one.

Action step number two is all about creating your lead generation, building a list for prospects, and turning those prospects into customers via an entry-point product. When you have that, then it's time – when you have those prospects and you have those customers.

Then it's time to survey your niche, discover their wants and design a product specifically for them to go to action step number three, create your first backend product. And from there, you increase the value of this product, of the entry-point product, you focus on your previous customers, and you design a product specifically for them. That is the power of the profit funnel.

ACTION STEP 1 **Choose Your Niche Market**

Must Be A Hungry Market

Must Have Money To Spend

Must Have Potential For Growth

Research Your Niche

ACTION STEP 2 **Create Your Lead Generation & Entry Point Products**

Survey Your Niche

Design Their Wants

**Design A Product
Specifically For Them**

ACTION STEP 3 **Create Your 1st Backend Product**

Increase The Value

**Focus On Your
Previous Customers**

**Design A Product
Specifically For Them**

From there you go straight to action step number four and you create your second backend product. Once again, you increase the value of action step number three, of step number three, and you focus on your previous customers, you design a product specifically for them.

Then we get to action step number five, and we keep on creating products, keep on creating products, keep on increasing profitability, keep on increasing the price of our products until profitability decreases. Now I don't know when that is, I don't know how many products that is for you. It all depends on your niche, it all depends on your marketing ability. But when you discover that you've spent more time in creating a product than you're getting back – and we're talking about backend products—then something is wrong. And then it's time to analyze your profit funnel, it's time to track and see, mix it up a bit maybe, and really find out what is stopping the profitability.

And if you cannot make it profitable after a certain point, then it's time for action step number X, where you start again in a different niche, or sell the business and cash out, or just keep on running it as it is, making that profit and just keep on bringing those prospects in, so it's constantly bringing you money.

So those are the simple action steps. If you take these action steps, then you can create a successful online business based around a strong profit funnel, which is constantly bringing you money, turning prospects into customers, and to lifetime customers, customers which are constantly bringing you more profit each time you sell them a product.

ACTION STEP 4
Create Your
2nd Backend Product

Increase The Value

Focus On Your
Previous Customers

Design A Product
Specifically For Them

ACTION STEP 5
Continue Until Profitability
Decreases

ACTION STEP X
Start Again In A Different
Niche Or Sell The Business
And Cash Out

PLEASE NOTE > Nothing is set in stone. The potential of your Profit Funnel is only linked by your imagination and your ability to track and improve on your existing model.

Finally I want to point out to you that nothing is set in stone. Everything that I've said, every step, every point can be mixed up and changed around and can be especially targeted to your specific niche. And so, perhaps you have a niche – and perhaps you can turn it around the opposite way, perhaps your niche is heavily focused in seminars, then that's the first step you can create. It all depends on your imagination, that's the only thing you're limited by, and your ability to track and improve on your existing model. Your profit funnel has so much potential,

because you can always improve your profit funnel as well, by the timing that you make offers to your prospects, by the quality of the products that you create, and by the type of products you create for them. Those are the essential factors when creating a profit funnel.

Now you have an idea of what your profit model should look like. Every time you create a new product, you should be thinking ahead about how to insert it into your profit funnel.

But of course you can't just roll products out one after another without giving some consideration as to how you'll market them. The Traffic Generation Module will give you plenty of specific ideas about how to drive targeted traffic to your site. However, in the next few sections we'll look specifically at the psychology and specific tactics you can employ to improve your pre and post launch marketing efforts...

Pre-launch Marketing

As marketers we do tend to get quite excited about our product ideas. We know how much our products will help our customers, so sometimes we're tempted to rush the product to market. For example, we may have the idea on a Thursday afternoon, and then spend the weekend furiously creating it. By Monday morning we're telling our lists about it, setting up pay per click campaigns, getting affiliates to promote it, and so on.

But that's actually the wrong approach.

You see, marketing should be a bit like a snowball rolling down a hill. As it rolls, it gets bigger and gains momentum. By the time it gets to the bottom of the hill, nothing can stop it. Anyone who doesn't get out of the way will definitely get bowled over by this massive snowball.

The next thing you know, word is traveling fast about the big snowball that's rolling through the county. People are lining up along the road just to catch a glimpse of it. Ten miles away at the next town over, people are eagerly anticipating seeing the runaway snowball.

Perhaps this is a bit of a silly analogy, but I wanted to give you an explicit visual that you could imagine as you start piecing your marketing campaign together.

Because here's the problem: the alternative is that you rush your product to market and people barely take notice. Instead of your marketing snowball rolling downhill and getting bigger, it's like throwing a snowball that lands at your prospects' feet. They may or may not notice. And even if they do happen to notice, it's not something worth getting too excited about.

That means no momentum for your product. No prospects and customers telling other prospects about your product. No anxious anticipation. And no large product launch day... because people just aren't paying attention.

You see, building pre-launch anticipation is what gets this momentum going. If you do it right, you'll be able to whip your prospects into a frenzy just before the launch time. They'll be so anxious (and perhaps even curious) about your product, that there's only one thing that can "cure" that eager feeling – and that's buying your product.

Part of what gets people so excited is that they're talking about it with their friends. The forums are abuzz with anticipation. Bloggers are blogging about it. Affiliates are teasing their newsletter readers. Prospects are getting into the launch event so much that they know, inevitably, that they'll buy the product.

The big movie studios know that pre-launch marketing can make or break a product. If everyone is talking about a movie before it's released, they'll have a big launch weekend. The more people who talk about it, the more people go to see it ...which in turn leads to more people talking about it and more people going to see it.

Movie marketers who can't pull off a big opening weekend are often doomed. That's because some other movie comes along and takes the focus for a few weeks.

This is true of your products too. Indeed, the "shelf life" of your online product tends to be even shorter, as people are always looking for something bigger and better and shinier. If you can't work up a lot of anticipation about your product before the launch, it will fizzle like fireworks in a rainstorm. Fast. And you don't want that, because it hurts all your marketing efforts (right through to your backend, because you won't have as many customers).

Bottom line: you need to lay the groundwork several weeks in advance so you can give your product launch the momentum it needs. Here's how to do that...

Building Anticipation

If you want to gain that critical momentum you need to keep your product going strong months after your launch day, then you need a big product launch. And to

do that, you need to build anticipation well ahead of your launch day (AKA pre-launch marketing).

Building anticipation can actually begin during the product-development cycle (provided you are 100% certain that you'll follow through and complete the product). You can do one or more of the following:

- Ask your prospects what they'd like to see included in your next product. If you do this – and keep them involved throughout the process – they'll be eager to purchase the product when it's complete.
- Ask your prospects to contribute to the product. Ask them to share stories about their frustrations with the problem that your product solves. Or ask them to share tips that you sprinkle throughout the product.
- Once the product's first draft is complete, ask likely prospects to review the product and give feedback.

In all cases, you should be looking for prospects who are likely to tell others about your product. Go to the most popular forums in your niche, and you'll see a few people who seem to be the first to talk about a new product. They're always the first to buy it, and sometimes they even get preview copies.

Indeed, the people you're looking for are the types who actually thrive on being the first to deliver new information to their fellow customers. Sometimes these folks even have blogs or forum journals where they track their results from using the product. But the thing to look for is the personality – the person enjoys being “first.” And they enjoy being a member of the “exclusive club” that gets sneak peeks at products.

The reason you're looking for people like this is because they WILL talk about your product with others. They'll build anticipation for you, simply because they won't be able to keep quiet about the fact that they're reviewing a product that the public won't be able to see for weeks. There's a bit of pride associated with being a reviewer and seeing products before they even go on market.

Do note, however, that these true customers are easy to confuse for affiliates. Affiliates will enjoy telling others about the product too, but usually that's because they're looking to build anticipation (just like you) so they can make a sale up the

road. As such, prospects may view their opinions skeptically, as affiliates are seen as biased by some prospects.

In sum: you should bring your affiliates in early so they can start building anticipation too. But don't forget to have "regular" users reviewing your product and sharing their reviews on forums, blogs, and elsewhere. Sometimes a freely offered opinion from a well-respected member of a forum can carry a lot of weight – and thus encourage other forum members to consider buying your product.

A Pre-launch is an Event, Not a Moment

While you're finding people who are likely to tell other prospects about your product, you also need to start planning an event that works for a few weeks to build anticipation. Your affiliates and joint ventures should definitely be part of this event, too.

What should this event look like?

In its most basic form, you can start releasing free content that's highly relevant to your product. However, here's the catch: it needs to be something that will "go viral." At a minimum, it needs to be highly useful. Making it entertaining helps. And making it controversial or even slightly offensive (where applicable) can help push it over the edge.

You see, when you polarize people you get them talking. Those who are shocked or offended start posting on forums (and if you did it right, these probably aren't your customers). Those who agree with you jump right into the conversation to back your views. And meanwhile, everyone is downloading your "shocking" ebook, video, or audio just to see what all the fuss is about.

Remember: *you're not being controversial to alienate your potential customers. You're being controversial to separate your customers from those who wouldn't have bought anyway. If your report alienates your true customers, then you might be taking an unprofitable step. When in doubt don't use controversy. If you can't use it without alienating true prospects, controversy probably isn't the best tactic for you to use in your free content.*

Remember that marketing snowball we talked about before? This is it. You're getting people to line up so they can watch the event unfold. People love drama, so if the remarks on forums end up getting a little dramatic, no problem. It only draws more attention to your freebie.

Of course the point in all of this is that you're collecting the names and email addresses of everyone who's lining up. That is, they can't take a look at your (perhaps controversial) free content unless they first join your mailing list. Once they do that, you can then work to further build the anticipation by honing in on the benefits prospects will receive when they purchase your product.

Strategy Notes: *One of the main points of this “event” is to get people curious enough to join your mailing list. As such, you need to give careful consideration as to how you’re going to use your subsequent mailings to close the prospect. You should keep building anticipation right up until launch day, mainly by making the prospects excited about the benefits of your product, and little curious about the product itself.*

Secondly, you also need to be sure to bring affiliates into the process. They should be the ones distributing your controversial, entertaining, or extremely useful freebies. To encourage them to do so, you’ll need to give them affiliate links that point to your squeeze page. That ensures any visitors they send you will be “cookied” for the upcoming launch.

Finally, you should also be getting your free content into as many hands as possible. Tell your list about it. Blog about it. Link to the content on forums. Get it into the hands of likely prospects who will tell others about it. If it’s offensive or controversial, get it into the hands of the people who are most likely to be offended or shocked... as they’ll likely pass it on!

What will add to the anticipation is a little mystery, something to build curiosity. For starters, many marketers don't reveal the price until launch day. That alone is often enough to build curiosity. However, you should also be adding other curiosity factors, like interviews with “surprise guests” (or perhaps “surprising” guests) and other bonuses.

In essence, you want people to start speculating about your product: it's price, how useful it will be, what sort of surprise bonuses you might include, etc. Just as with the other tactics, this leads to people talking about it on forums (social proof) and building anticipation.

Example: A Contest Event

Here's another key: you must also start working on selling your prospects. Curiosity is a factor, but it won't close the sale by itself. Anticipation must be raised by getting prospects to really believe this product solves their problems ...and this is BEFORE they even read your sales page.

One way to do this is to run a contest where the winners will receive the product for free, and all entrants will receive a limited-time discount on the product. The contest should be something that gets prospects to convince themselves that the product is the answer to their problems.

Indeed, your contest may be that entrants submit a one-page essay on why they think this product is the answer to their problems, or why this product is superior to other products, or how many benefits they can think of around this product.

All entries should be posted publicly. And to make the social proof even more effective, the public should be allowed to vote on who created the best essay. That ensures that as many people as possible read the essays.

Think about the results of this sort of contest, and you'll see why it's so powerful. First, you have dozens, perhaps hundreds, of prospects convincing themselves that your product is amazing. Second, these dozens or hundreds of "social proof" essays will be read by hundreds of other prospects.

This strategy will work wonders to build anticipation – and the discounts offered to entrants will also have a measurable impact on sales.

The Keys to a Successful Launch

Let's summarize how to build anticipation for your product:

1. Get your likely prospects into the product development process early. In particular, get your product into the hands of the people who are most likely to “buzz” about your product on forums, on their blogs, etc.
2. Get your finished product into the hands of your affiliates and your “buzzing” prospects.
3. Meanwhile, create a launch event. This event should include things like giving away relevant content (to get people to join a newsletter), as well as things like contests to help further build anticipation.
4. Put a countdown counter on your site right alongside your squeeze page.
5. Your affiliates by now should be using their affiliate links to steer prospects to your contests and freebies. In addition, they should be sending “teaser” emails to their lists (and you should be too).
6. You should then start getting into the benefits of your product whenever you mail your prospects ...but you should also leave a little mystery. Drop hints. Give prospects something to talk about on forums. They should already be talking about your event, but you want them to eventually start talking about the product itself, too.
7. Coordinate with affiliates to make sure everyone sends the final email at the predetermined time.

TAKE ACTION! Worksheets

Worksheet #1: Brainstorm what sort of freebie you could give away to generate leads during pre-launch.

In particular, is there anything controversial or even a little offensive that would work for your market? What about something humorous? Is there something extremely useful that you could give away ...especially if it's something that most other marketers charge for?

Set aside ten or fifteen minutes right now and brainstorm what sort of freebies you could give away in advance of your product launch.

Worksheet #2: List ways that you can make money on the backend.

Take out a piece of paper and make three columns as shown below:

| <u>Product</u> | <u>Format</u> | <u>When to Promote</u> |
|----------------|---------------|------------------------|
|----------------|---------------|------------------------|

Now brainstorm products you can create (or outsource) to sell on the backend. For example, if you sell a dog training book, then one idea of a backend product is a housetraining book. If you sell a diet book, a backend product would be a recipe book. And so on.

Once you've listed as many backend product ideas as possible, then you can complete the rest of the worksheet. In the "format" column, list what you believe would be the best format for the backend product. Specifically, would it be best delivered by text, audio, or video? Secondly, you should also list whether it's a downloadable product, a physical (shipped) product, or a hybrid (combination) product.

Finally, in the "promote" column you should note all the appropriate places for you to promote these products. These places include:

- On the sales page.
- On a pop-up on the sales page.
- As a “one time offer” (any time before or directly after sale).
- On the order form (directly before sale).
- On the second step of an order form (after credit card info has been submitted).
- Immediately after the sale, but before the download page.
- On the download/thank you page.
- In the shipment (for physical products).
- In the thank you email.
- In other follow-up emails.
- In the product itself (e.g., a link in an ebook).
- In bonus products.
- In unannounced bonus products that come later.

Note: you may promote some of your products in ALL of the above places.

Checklist #1: the Pre-launch Checklist

Website and Graphics:

- ☐ Complete the graphics
- ☐ Complete the web design
- ☐ Create pop-up window to monetize exit traffic

Product:

- ☐ Complete the product
- ☐ Edit as necessary
- ☐ Convert the product into proper format (digital or physical)
- ☐ Get reviews and feedback
- ☐ Revise as needed after feedback
- ☐ Start collecting testimonials for sales page
- ☐ Create bonus products
- ☐ Create backend products (see “planning” section)
- ☐ Where applicable, choose a fulfillment shop (for physical products)

Copywriting:

- ☐ Write the sales copy
- ☐ Write the sales copy for upsells (including OTOs)
- ☐ Write the sales copy for downsells

- ☐ Write the sales copy for cross-sells
- ☐ Write sales copy for squeeze page
- ☐ Write ads for newsletters
- ☐ Write copy for exit pop-up window
- ☐ Create ads for pay per click and elsewhere
- ☐ Write sales copy for affiliates/JV page on your site
- ☐ Write launch partner (JV) proposal emails
- ☐ Create affiliate tools (like solo ads, banner ads, brandable reports, etc)

Mailing List

- ☐ Set up autoresponder for prospects/leads
- ☐ Set up separate autoresponder for customers
- ☐ Create autoresponder series for both
- ☐ Create opt-in form for thank you page
- ☐ Create opt-in form for sales page (or squeeze page)

Payment Processor

- ☐ Choose payment processor
- ☐ Integrated affiliate system, or find separate affiliate script
- ☐ Choices: Paypal, Clickbank, Paydotcom, 2checkout, etc
- ☐ Talk to account representative regarding flood of sales on launch date (so your account isn't frozen during launch due to suspicious activity)

Download Page

- ☐ Create download page
- ☐ Upload product
- ☐ Include backend offers
- ☐ Include opt-in form
- ☐ Include unannounced bonuses
- ☐ Include customer service contact information

Affiliates

- ☐ Create affiliate signup page
- ☐ Create affiliate member's area
- ☐ Load up affiliate tools
- ☐ Create training tools for affiliates

- ☐ Create launch partner blog (to keep launch partners informed)
- ☐ Create mailing list to keep in touch with launch partners
- ☐ Create affiliate contest (including obtaining prizes)
- ☐ Create affiliate leader board (on your launch blog)
- ☐ Find affiliates (search engines, newsletters, blogs, forums, Clickbank, etc)
- ☐ Contact affiliates (launch partners) with joint venture proposal

Testing and Backups

- ☐ Test web link
- ☐ Test joining the mailing list
- ☐ Test entire autoresponder series
- ☐ Test payment link
- ☐ Test download link
- ☐ Put backup plans in place in case of server or payment processor failure
- ☐ Put in place tracking and testing system to test sales letter, ads, etc

Pre-Launch Marketing

- ☐ Create relevant free content (accessible when visitors give their email address)
 - *Note: shoot for viral content. Make it offensive, controversial, perhaps humorous. At a minimum, make it extremely unusual or extraordinarily useful.*
- ☐ Allow affiliates to use affiliate links for their readers to access free content
- ☐ Instructs affiliates to send out coordinated pre-launch emails to build buzz
- ☐ Get your product into the hands of prospects who will “buzz” on forums & blogs
- ☐ Create prelaunch event like a contest
 - *create forum or blog so that event is transparent to public for social proof purposes*

Planning

- ☐ Create backend sales system, including:
 - Creating products to sell on the backend
 - Emails to upsell to customers
 - Links in existing products to upsell
 - OTOs Other special offers
- ☐ Create products for backend offers

As an alternative:

- Pitch affiliate links until you have your own backend product to pitch on the backend.
- *Buy resell rights or PLR products to pitch on backend until you have your own products.*

Other Pre-Launch Issues

Once the virtual doors open on your site, you're likely to get a flood of prospects and customers. That means you need to be prepared for the following:

1. More customer service inquiries.

Whether people are asking questions about the product, or they're asking post-sale questions, you can expect the number of inquiries to raise dramatically as soon as your product launches. You want to handle your customer service inquiries immediately, as this is all part of building that trusting relationship that will result in future sales. As such, you should hire additional people to field these inquiries.

You should also give consideration as to how you'll handle customer support. Adding telephone support is a good idea, especially during the first few days after a launch when you're more likely to get a flood of inquiries.

At the very least, consider offering telephone support to your customers – that way if their download fails or payment doesn't go through, they'll know that you're standing by to help them.

You see, If a customer doesn't know you, it's very easy for them to panic and think you "ripped them off" if the download fails. This feeling only intensifies when they email you, and hours pass without a response. They'll feel "safer" if you're reachable by phone – at least then they know there's a "real person" on the other end of the line.

Naturally you should also offer online support. However, you shouldn't offer email support only. It's simply too easy for emails to get lost. You may not get an email. Or your reply may not get to your customer or prospect. Either way, the customer or prospect may assume that you're purposely not answering.

To solve this problem, install a "help desk" on your site. While inquiries are still handled by email, the entire conversation is also posted online. That way if an email gets lost, the prospect or customer can still visit your helpdesk to see that their question was, indeed, answered.

In short: help desks solve the problem of lost emails since the emails sent back and forth are all posted on the site.

2. Expect website glitches.

The flood of visitors to your site – especially when you get everyone coming at the same time at the moment your product launches – may cause some technical problems.

You'll need to have backup systems in place. If you don't know how to prepare for a possible server crash, you'll need to hire someone who does. Just as you turn over your customer inquiries to trusted staff, you should likewise turn over your technical headaches to professionals.

You'll have plenty of other things to worry about on launch day, such as managing your JV partners, dealing with last minute issues, and so on ...you don't need to be worrying about what will happen if your server crashes. As such, have your tech staff put in backups for the sales page, the download page, the mailing list manager, and the shopping cart system (where applicable).

3. Your payment processor freezes your account.

Even if your payment processor doesn't go down, you might still find yourself in trouble if they decide to freeze your account. This happens if you suddenly have a suspicious amount of money coming into your account.

The way to deal with this is to get in touch with your payment processor well in advance of your launch date. Let them know what you're doing, and how much money you expect to flood into your account. Let them know the dollar amount per sale, too.

Ideally you should also follow up just a few days before your launch to ensure that your account does indeed have notes about your upcoming launch. Be sure to get the names of the people you talk to, in case you have problems. If you have a personal account representative, all the better.

Test everything prior to launch.

Several days before your big launch, you should test the entire process. Better yet, have a few friends test it too. The tests should include:

- Ensuring your link is reachable. If you've recently changed domain nameservers – which happens when you change hosts or servers – you want to make sure these changes have propagated. Ideally you should finish these sorts of tasks well ahead of your launch so you don't have to worry about the issue.
- Make sure the affiliate links work. If you click on an affiliate link, does it bring you to your sales page?
- Ensure your sales page is complete and ready to go.
- Ensure that your payment link works. It should be set for the correct price, and it should forward to the correct download URL.
- Be sure your one-time-offers or any upsells work properly.
- Be sure the download link works. Do the files download without errors? Do you have alternative download sites in place in case your servers crash?
- Does your webhosting account have enough bandwidth to allow for hundreds of downloads of your product?
- Does your squeeze page email form work?
- Is your autoresponder series set up correctly?

And finally: have you considered what you're going to do post launch? That is, do you have your backend sales system in place and ready to go?

In the next several sections of this module we'll discuss these post launch issues. First, let's go back to the topic of email marketing. You see, after your launch event is over, you can't sell your prospects based on anticipation and curiosity alone. Instead, you need to set up a more traditional sales funnel, where you use freebies to attract prospects ...and then you follow up to close the sale.

Here's an in-depth look at the process:

Set Up A System That Pays You Repeatedly & In Larger Amounts Over Time

Create a marketing funnel that pulls prospects inside. Make it magnetic by offering something unique, valuable and of genuine interest to the kind of person you want to attract. It's this "bait piece" you need to have in place before casting your net.

Simply create an information product of some kind (special report, audio, or video recording) and offer it free of charge to anyone who's interested.

There are 2 good reasons for using this technique:

1. It overcomes the biggest obstacle to getting people to "sample" your products -
- because they can do so at absolutely no risk.
2. It gives them a strong enough reason to provide you with their contact information -- A necessary requirement to getting the free gift.

The hidden value of a bait piece is that it allows you to attract prospects with varying degrees of interest and readiness to buy. With their names, addresses and permission -- you can market to these same people repeatedly. Even lukewarm prospects can eventually be converted into long-term customers. But without a funnel, you'll lose out entirely.

If you just go for the sale right out of the gate, you may very well succeed some of the time. Unfortunately, you'll also miss capturing a larger segment of the entire market.

There's always a much larger pool of potential customers who aren't ready to buy now.

But your funnel allows you the opportunity to win them over and turn every prospect into a lifelong customer who buys again and again.

Tip: Segment Your List

Many marketers set up one autoresponder across all their related niches. So if they're selling dog-training products, they set up one autoresponder to capture all their dog training prospects.

But this isn't the best approach.

Consider this: if you segment your list into "micro niches," you have a better chance of converting them into buyers. That's because you can send emails and promos that speak directly to their very targeted interests. And that always means more sales for you.

So how do you segment your list?

For starters, set up different autoresponders on your different websites, squeeze pages, sales pages, blogs, and so on. Each autoresponder should be as targeted as possible.

For example: if you have a page on your site that talks about housetraining, then set up a "housetraining" autoresponder series. If another section of your site refers to obedience training, then set up an obedience training autoresponder. Likewise, set up separate autoresponders where ever you can see micro niches on your site, such as obedience training for golden retrievers, obedience training for labs, housebreaking for toy dogs, training for deaf dogs, and so on.

Another way to segment your list is to determine on the squeeze page what type of solutions most interest them. Simply ask them to choose a "free gift" with their subscription, and then give them the option of choosing from among four or five different ebooks.

The free gift they choose is for your benefit, because when they place a checkmark next to their choice, they're automatically segmented into "micro niches" in your autoresponder. (However, when they get to the download page you can surprise them by giving all the gifts to them, if you'd like.)

Another way to segment your list is to ask them what their interests are. For example, when they join your newsletter they can place a checkmark next to all the topics that interest them. Again, the checkmarks they place automatically segments them in your autoresponder.

Does this mean you'll be promoting different products to different segments of your list? In some cases, yes. But in other cases, you can pitch the same product to all your micro niches ...the only difference being in how you pitch it to them.

Even something as saying "your golden retriever" or "your poodle" is much more persuasive than merely saying "your dog." Likewise, knowing what problems most trouble them means you can tailor your pitches to tap into those frustrations (and offer your products as solutions).

In other words, the more you know about your prospects, the easier it is to sell something to them. Segmenting your list helps you do exactly that.

Using Unannounced Freebies to Boost Response

Assuming that you've built a list of real prospects rather than mere freebie seekers, you can use further unannounced freebies to help boost the response of your list. All you have to do is send out a free report or other relevant freebie from time to time to keep your prospects engaged and alert.

The reason this tactic works so well is because it encourages prospects to always open mail from you, as they never know when they'll find a freebie inside.

Consider this: your prospects (like yourself) are inundated with email. When they first get up in the morning they need to sift through tons of spam to separate it out from letters from friends and family, and newsletters they want to read. Even after the sifting, they likely still have an inbox full of email.

So what happens?

Some of it always gets put to the side to "read later." But you know what happens: the "read later" file keeps growing and growing, and the prospect never does have time to read it. Eventually he probably just flushes the entire file and starts new. He might even realize he subscribes to more newsletters than he's able to read, and so he starts unsubscribing.

Good content, of course, will help your emails from going straight into the trash or even into the "read later" file. Your goal is to get your email read immediately. Right now. Not "later" ...now.

A newsletter that's consistently engaging and useful will get read. But inserting extra (valuable) freebies from time to time into newsletters "trains" your subscribers to always open your newsletter.

A note: don't go overboard with this tactic, however. You want to be sure your paying customers get your very best freebies, and that they get these freebies more often than your free newsletter subscribers.

After all, your goal is to move free subscribers from the "free" list to the list of paying customers. If several good newsletters, some time to build a relationship, and a few good freebies don't push them over the edge, it's unlikely that they ever will become paying customers.

In other words, you don't have to spend two years and send a freebie a week in order to try to convert a prospect into a customer. The person who is taking every freebie you send without spending a dime isn't a true prospect. There's a good chance he's just a freebie seeker – someone who is unwilling or unable to buy.

Instead, focus most of your efforts on getting your existing customers to purchase more products. It's a lot easier and less expensive to do that, as opposed to trying to convert a true freebie seeker (or otherwise unqualified lead) into a customer.

TAKE ACTION! Worksheet

It's time to brainstorm again. Get out a blank sheet of paper (or open up a new word processing document on your computer) and get ready to brainstorm what sorts of freebies you can give away to your subscribers.

Remember, your BEST freebies should be reserved for your customers. However, you should still be creating extremely valuable and highly relevant freebies for your subscribers ...and these freebies should help work to convert your prospects into customers.

Set aside 15 minutes now and brainstorm as many freebies as you can think of. Be sure to include free ebooks, reports, courses delivered by email, software, services, templates, tools, audio products, video products, and other resources. You may also consider physical products (here you may charge for shipping).

[illegible]

Summary of Using the Email List as a Piece of Your Funnel

Without a funnel in place, you'll only get a small percentage of the money that could be yours. Only some will actually buy and the one time sale is the best you can hope for. You're only selling on the front end. But the lion's share of profit is only available on the backend.

Once you've made the first sale, subsequent sales are much easier to come by. Most satisfied customers would gladly spend more money with your business over time, as additional products and services are introduced.

For a Bigger Payoff -- Look at the Bigger Picture

Producing sales on a frequent basis helps to maintain a healthy cash flow and keep the wheels of your business turning. But too strong an emphasis on today's sales without taking into account the bigger picture of long term growth and profitability could prove fatal over the long haul.

For most, a constant stream of new customers in the pipeline is a necessity. But it's less important to those business-minded entrepreneurs who know how to maximize the value of existing customers.

Funnel Your Way To Huge Backend Profits

The funnel system is a proven approach to consistently build the value of your greatest asset. One purpose of this system is to attract high-probability prospects on a continuous basis. This gives you fresh new potential customers to market to.

Your funnel also compels prospects to raise their hands, thereby identifying themselves as prime candidates for your kind of products. Additionally, every new prospect supplies their contact information (usually a name and email address) and in effect, gives you permission to market to them repeatedly over time. And that's the first key to amazing backend profits.

Here's a brief summary of the key advantages to using a magnetic marketing funnel:

1. It offers a valuable "bait piece" which lures in targeted prospects.
2. This product offered as bait is designed to appeal to specific target markets, rather than the general population, so it lures the right kind of prospects.
3. A marketing funnel can be promoted many different ways.
4. In exchange for the free offer, those entering the funnel are required to leave their contact information.
5. By providing their email address, prospects in effect authorize you to continue communications with them, until requested otherwise.
6. You can set up your funnel as a system that works on virtual autopilot, using the same offer over and over again.
7. Offering something valuable right up front makes it easy for prospects to respond because there's no cost and therefore no risk.

A funnel is a pressure-free way to connect with genuine prospects. It's an open invitation to your target market. You're making the first move by inviting anyone who's interested in your free report to contact you, or visit your website. And the valuable free gift provides a compelling reason for people to respond. All you

have to do is offer a free report, ebook, downloadable video or audio clip that contains helpful, pertinent, and wanted information.

But if you distribute your free offer without first capturing the names, street addresses and/or email addresses – you’re defeating the whole purpose of the bait piece and your funnel will remain empty. Being able to reach prospects and customers again and again is the foundational principle to making the funnel work for you.

Your free offer gives you an opportunity to connect with people who will eventually become customers. And it gives them a chance to get to know what your business is all about. It also provides the opportunity for you to build trust.

Once trust is established, that first sale is much easier to attain. As long as they’re satisfied with your product and your customer service, they’ll be many times more likely to buy from a second, third, forth, fifth, or twenty-fifth time.

So the first task is to build a list of prospects.

Next, you want to turn as many of these prospects into buyers. Your focus at this stage is to make that first sale to as many prospects as possible. You’ve already got them to step up and request your free offer. But you’ll need to convert prospects into buyers to make any money.

Most won’t buy the first time they see your offer. But you’ve already laid the foundation that enables you to approach them again.

An obvious starting point is a low-cost, introductory-level product, maybe a special report, e-book, or audio CD in the \$7 - \$19 range. It’s a small baby step, but it’s a huge step in the process. And these values vary from market to market.

You can always bump up the value with an upsell that’s offered immediately at the point of sale. Making the right offer at just the right time can prove hugely successful – and highly profitable.

With a funnel system, you then continue to elevate their level of spending with a series of offers of increasing value. And many satisfied customers will buy from you again and again if all you do is let them in on a good deal and ask them to make another purchase.

How to Avoid Freebie Seekers

One thing you must watch out for is filling your free newsletter list with freebie seekers. These are people who, by definition, are unwilling or unable to buy anything from you (ever).

In some cases they might be people who feel entitled to getting everything for free. They see the internet as a big “free for all,” and expect you to hand over any information you’ve learned. It doesn’t matter if it took you years to learn this information, or if you spent thousands of dollars of trial and error – those feeling entitled to getting everything for free will want you to hand it over.

In short: these sorts of people are likely able to pay ...they are just unwilling to do so.

These are, of course, the type of “prospects” you do not want on your list. They simply will never convert into buyers. And on top of that, some of these people with entitlement mentalities will try to bully you (or guilt) into giving your information to them for free.

You don’t need those sorts of headaches.

In other cases you’ll run into people who don’t have the money to pay for your products. They may be willing to pay, but they’re unable. They might send you stories of how these hard times have made them unable to pay ...but they sure wish they could. Indeed, that’s probably true. And you may feel a soft spot for these people who seem to need your information but can’t afford it.

But whether you feel that soft spot for them or not, one fact remains clear: they aren’t really a part of your target market either.

You see, most of the time when we define our target market, we define it by certain characteristics such as, “people with golden retrievers who want to teach their dogs how to be field dogs.” Or perhaps, “people who are seeking to lose at least 40 pounds, but they’re tired of fad diets.”

If you really want to get qualified leads, then you need to add something to your market profiles. Specifically, you must aim to attract people who are willing AND able to pay for your products and services. Indeed, you can take this a step

further by looking to attract those who are not only willing and able to pay, but also eager to do so. This is, indeed, the classic hungry market.

But how do you attract such a market? Or more to the point, how do you avoid attracting a lot of freebie seekers since you are handing out freebies to attract your market?

It all comes down to how you emphasize these freebies.

If your site is optimized for the search engines to pull in people who are looking for freebies, you might have a problem. If your mailing list is designed to get people to cough up their email address JUST for the purpose of getting that freebie, you might run into problems.

How do you fix this?

By avoiding making the emphasis of your site on all the freebies people can receive. For example, don't build your newsletter list solely by exchanging emails for freebies. If you do that, people will use throwaway email addresses. Or they'll cry "spam" because they didn't realize you'd be following up with them. Or they simply won't read your newsletter, because they're not all that interested in it.

Instead, you should make your newsletter the centerpiece of your squeeze page (or other email capture). Make your newsletter the reason people join your list. Show all the benefits of receiving your newsletter, so that people actually anticipate your newsletter.

In other words – don't make the newsletter an after thought or a bonus to the freebie. Make the newsletter the main attraction... and offer the freebie as the bonus!

That way you'll get people who are interested in receiving and reading your newsletter. You'll have people interested in your recommendations as opposed to just interested in what else you can give them for free. The end result? A more responsive list and higher conversion rates.

How to Increase Your Response Rate

The easiest way to increase or maintain a high response rate for your newsletter subscribers is this: give them what they want, and give them what they expect.

The expectations begin on your squeeze page. Why are they signing up? Are they expecting to get a newsletter, or do they just think they're getting a freebie? Do they expect to get a once a week newsletter, or do they expect a daily or perhaps a monthly newsletter?

If they expect one thing but you give them something else, your conversion rate will plummet.

If you promise content, content, and more content, but instead deliver solo ad after solo ad, then you can bet your readers will stop reading ...and your conversion rate will plummet.

But the flip side is true, too. If you promise to deliver exclusive deals on current products, your readers will be sorely disappointed if you don't deliver on those promises. And just like that your readers aren't as responsive to your offers.

In other words: it doesn't matter WHAT you're delivering to your readers or how often you deliver it. There isn't necessarily one type of newsletter that gets read more than others. The key is to give your carefully targeted market what they want and what they expect.

When Should You Start “Pitching” in a Free Newsletter?

You already know your newsletters serves as a tool to help you start building a relationship with your subscribers. When they feel like they know and trust you, they'll buy from you. The more “touches” (contacts) you have with your subscribers, the more likely it is you'll earn their trust and they'll eventually buy.

So that brings up the question: when should you start recommending paid products in your newsletter? That is, when should you start “pitching” to your subscribers?

Some experts suggest that you solely focus on building the relationship first, meaning you spend 7-12 newsletters sending pitch-free articles. But is this really the right approach?

Not necessarily.

Think of it this way: if you held a product that could cure cancer, would you withhold it from those suffering from cancer merely because it would cost them money? That is, would you spend a month or two telling them about free ways to deal with cancer, while not saying a word about something that could actually save their lives?

Of course you wouldn't. And that's why you shouldn't be afraid to tell your prospects about your paid products either. Indeed, you should tell them about paid products from the very first email you send them.

Of course your product doesn't cure cancer. But it does alleviate some suffering or solve a problem, right? So why wouldn't you tell your prospects how to make their lives better? It's silly to keep it from them.

Now that doesn't mean you need to "hard sell" in every newsletter you send, nor does it mean you should hammer your prospects with solo ads. But it does mean you should immediately start weaving recommendations for products into your newsletter content.

For example...

Let's suppose you're writing an article about how to lose weight. Inside this article you talk about an appetite suppressant that's been proven to be safe and effective. Giving your prospects an affiliate link to this diet aid within that article does not in any way take away from the relationship you're trying to build with prospects.

As mentioned before, however, don't be afraid to pitch low-cost products. The quicker you can get prospects to start purchasing low-cost solutions, the quicker you can further build their trust and start moving them through your sales funnel.

Getting Interactive to Increase Responsiveness

Here's another tip to help you build the responsiveness of your newsletter subscribers: get interactive.

For many people, getting a newsletter is a really passive activity. They receive the newsletter, read the information, and move on with their day. They don't really know if a "real person" exists behind that newsletter. Indeed, sometimes the newsletter comes from a "do not reply" address... and sometimes there's even a note that says not to reply to the newsletter as no one will read it.

That feels a bit cold, doesn't it? How is a subscriber supposed to build a relationship if the newsletter publisher seems so unreachable?

It would be like being waited on in a restaurant by a robot. Sure, you might get good food, just as a newsletter reader might get good content. But it leaves the prospect wondering if anyone will help her after she orders something.

The solution? Make your newsletter interactive.

One way to do that is to post articles from your newsletter on a blog or forum, and then ask your newsletter subscribers to meet on the forum to discuss the issues. That way subscribers can interact with you. And as a bonus, in some instances you'll be able to conjure up a bit of "social proof" when you need it.

Another tactic you may want to employ from time to time is to ask your readers to give you specific feedback on something, such as a product you're thinking of creating. Then when prospects email you, you personally email every single one of them back – personally – to thank them for their feedback. You should also be sure to write your email in such a way as to make it clear that you did, indeed, read their feedback.

Of course if you already have a huge list, this sort of thing could be time-consuming. But if you're getting product feedback, it might just be worth the time you invest. And the reason is because you're actually helping to build anticipation when you get your prospects involved early on in the process.

Once again, the end result is that your list becomes more responsive, which means more sales for you.

Summary: The First Sale is the First Step

That first sale is significant. But it's also the most expensive sale you'll make. But each successive sale made to the same customer continues to pad your profit.

Bottom line: Your initial "free offer" provides a no-risk way in. But it's your first sale that signifies that a level of trust has been established. Once you've made that first sale it's time to look at how to profit on the backend...

Backend Sales System

Profit is the goal and in fact, purpose of any business. No business, online or offline can survive indefinitely unless it is profitable. And the sooner your business reaches the point of profitability, the better and the easier it becomes to expand those profits exponentially and systematically – and at very little cost.

That's the purpose of this report. I'm going to show you how to tap into your greatest asset and uncover amazingly easy (and often huge) additional profits at the absolute least possible expense.

So keep reading and prepare for a major transformation in your business and your life.

Success Starts Here

In every business, you need customers -- and lots of them -- in order to succeed. It's customers who put you in business. It's customers who keep you in business. And it's a shortage of customers that drive many disillusioned entrepreneurs out of business.

Clearly, customers are the most valuable asset you have. And the more customers you have on your list, the higher the potential value of your business.

But that's only part of the story.

Customers are the key... but profitability the target. You can have tons of customers and still be struggling. The secret is to make those customers far more profitable to you.

You've heard of Jay Abraham, right? Jay is one of the highest-paid marketing consultants and strategists in the world. His concepts have generated billions of dollars for thousands of clients in virtually every industry. Among the breakthrough strategies Jay teaches is the following gem.

There are only 3 ways to grow any business profitably:

1. Increase the number of people you sell to (build your customer list).

2. Increase the revenue generated from each sales transaction.
3. Increase the number of time each customer buys from you again.

That's it's -- just three methods. But using all three maximizes your leverage. It gets your business firing on all cylinders. You're not just looking for first time buyers. Sure, they're an essential component -- but they're also the most expensive customers to attain. And you're not just bumping up customers at the point of purchase, or selling to established buyers either. If those are your only approaches, you're severely limiting the amount of money you can make from your marketing efforts.

But if you can integrate all three methods... automate these as much as possible... and keep each strategy in play -- you're using maximum marketing leverage and correctly applied, can lead to an astonishing boost in profits.

Blunders That Can Stifle Growth & Even Kill A Business... Maybe Even Yours

Have you ever thought to yourself -- "Life would be great... if we only had more customers"? The desire for more customers is a common reaction whenever business slows down. So what do most business owners do? Nothing. They hope and pray that things will improve. And those who do take action venture out to try and drum up new business, which invariably means attracting new blood.

Not only do most businesses focus on the initial sale only, but they miss out in other ways too. There's often no qualifying... no upselling... and little to no follow-up with those fresh new customers they manage to attract. And that's a huge waste of your marketing time and dollars.

Naturally you want to pull in as much business as possible and therefore, are willing to sell to anyone at any time. Nothing wrong with that -- a sale is a sale, after all. But problems arise when your marketing is addressed to the masses, or the general marketplace -- instead of a more specific niche or target group.

This is actually the most expensive way to do business.

Target marketing on the other hand, is the key to yielding maximum results for your time, effort, and investment. Narrow your focus to more specific segments of

the overall market and you'll get far better results. You want to reach out primarily to those who are most qualified as buyers for your product or service.

Are You Leaving More Money Behind Than You Rake In?

You don't have to look very far to find a business that's leaking money. Retailers do it. Manufacturers, wholesalers and distributors do it. Even some direct marketers do it.

What most typical businesses do is they open for business, promote their product in some fashion, and then wait for prospective buyers to step up and take action. So the business either converts the sale – or it doesn't. End of story... until the cycle is repeated with the next potential customer. They miss out on the opportunity to build their prospect list.

When they sell something, they're happy. After all, making sales at a profit is what business is all about. But those first-time customers are the most costly customers to acquire.

If that's your *modus operandi*, you're choking your own growth and putting your business in a precarious position. Yet this is often common practice. The one-time-shot-at-the-sale approach is both limiting and costly. But there is a much better and far more profitable way.

The answer, of course, is to snap the pieces your funnel into place so you can make money on the backend. And you should start upselling immediately.

Consider this...

Your customer had to spend money to make the purchase and the best time to get any buyer to spend more is while they're comfortably engaged in the buying mode with their wallet still opened.

That's why 'point of purchase' displays are so effective in stores. You're already spending money anyway... so what's another few dollars going to hurt anyway? It doesn't. In fact, it feels so good to buy, that adding additional items only enhances the feeling.

Once you've converted the sale, you have a perfect opportunity to upsell buyers and increase your profit. The hottest prospect for your product is someone who just purchased something else from you. Top marketers always offer an upsell as standard practice because they know the value of this limited window of opportunity.

If your customer just purchased a book, your upsell might be a combination package with print and audio CD versions of the same book for an extra \$19. That's just one simple example. There are many ways to upsell buyers. It's likely that a significant percentage of buyers will take you up on the offer, giving you additional profits at virtually no added cost.

The Secret To Making The Most Of Your Customer List

Communicate with your prospects and customers frequently. Offer valuable, and relevant information and products and they'll welcome your mail. You'll sail through the filtering process because you will have established a track record of providing valuable information.

It's of little value to own a list of customers if you don't put it to use on a regular basis. One of the secrets to making your list highly-responsive is to maintain frequent communication.

You must deliver both quality products and superior customer service. That's a given if you want to get customers to buy from you again.

But it's also important to maintain frequent contact. If you forget about your list and only communicate occasionally, you'll get less response than if you stay in touch on a regular basis. In fact, the more you reach out and communicate information, offer related products, and provide appealing offers -- the stronger the bond between you and your customers.

Make people feel special and highly-valued as subscribers and customers and you'll find that a sizable percentage will buy gladly send you more of their money. Not everyone purchases with the same level of frequency. But most will become repeat buyers at some point, if you utilize these ideas and make the most of your magnetic marketing funnel.

Are You Bothering Your Customers Right to the Unsubscribe Button?

We just discussed the main points of creating a strong list: namely, by making your customers feel special, and by staying in contact with them.

But sometimes people get a little worried about their list. They don't want to alienate these important customers, as they know there's a good chance they'll buy again if they're happy with their overall experience.

So what does the marketer do? He pulls back. He gets “nervous” about emailing his list too much. He starts feeling like he’s bothering them. He feels like he might be pitching too many products.

When he starts seeing the unsubscribe requests come in, he feels that his theory about “bothering” his customers is confirmed. So he pulls back even more, so he’s hardly emailing any pitches to his list at all.

Is this a real problem?

Not exactly.

If you are sending unrelated product pitches to your customers, then yes... it might be a problem. They might be unsubscribing because they’re upset with too many pitches.

But consider this: the only reason people feel like they’re getting too many pitches from you is if they feel like the products you’re suggesting are irrelevant.

Think about that for a moment...

Have you ever turned down the commercials when you’re watching TV? (Or maybe you know someone who does this.) The reason is because those commercials seem irrelevant. But if a commercial comes on that is relevant to you, I bet you turn the volume back up in an instant.

Likewise, consider the ads you see in the newspaper. You ignore a vast majority of them because they aren’t relevant. But some of them DO catch your eye.

For example, if you see an ad for the exact car you’ve been shopping for, you’ll read the ad. Or if you recently developed back pain, you’d likely read any ad that deal with back pain. Or if you’ve decided to go on vacation, an ad for cheap airfares would definitely catch your eye.

Do you think of those relevant ads as “bothersome?” Not at all! In fact, you’re probably happy that you saw ads that could lead you to the car you want, or to a cheap vacation, or to freedom from back pain. Indeed, you’re likely grateful you saw those ads.

The same goes for your customers. If you are truly interested in helping your customers, then you'll recommend products that are directly relevant to their problems and frustrations. When you do this, your customers will be grateful. They won't get "mad" at you for pitching something every time you send an email. Instead, they'll be happy that you care enough to help them with their problems.

That means you don't ever need to feel guilty about promoting products. If you DO feel guilty, then it's time you take a second look at what you're promoting. Is it possible that you feel guilty because you're promoting a product for the commission... rather than the fact this product will really help your customers?

If that's the case, then you need to reconsider your criteria for promoting products. Ask yourself this: if your mother or your best friend had the same problem as the niche, would you recommend the product? If the answer is "no," then you shouldn't recommend it to your list either.

Summary

The underlying value of a marketing funnel is that it allows you unlimited opportunities to convert prospects to customers and first-timer customers into long-term customers. It's the easiest and most cost-efficient way to consistently increase the average value of the contact names in your system.

5 Surefire Ways To Instantly Boost Your Backend Sales and Multiply Your Profits

1. Take action at the right time. Your best opportunity is at the point of purchase.

The optimal time to make a backend offer on any sale is immediately after the initial sale while the customer still has their credit card out. Astute retailers have this figured out quite well. For example, I just bought a sweater as a gift for my wife. Once I had picked it out, the sales lady asked if I wanted the "ideal" blouse to go with it. At the cash register, she mentioned that all socks were on sale, 2 for 1.

Buy a new car and they'll upsell you on rust-proofing, upholstery treatment protection, lifetime oil-changes and so on. Smart offline businesses figure out what else they have that's compatible, so they can offer an upsell on the spot.

You can just as easily use this technique online too. The easiest and most profitable way is to offer your upsell immediately after the customer makes an initial purchase. At this point, they're hot for more and open to the suggestion of buying something else. Place the upsell offer on the thank you page, where they're sent right after the original purchase.

It's at this precise point that you're presented with a glorious opportunity to upsell your customer. They're already in a buying mood. By offering one, or even several similar products at this exact moment, you can increase your overall sales by 10% - 30% instantly. And it won't cost you a penny more, giving you a larger percentage of profit on any subsequent sale.

Upsell Tactics

Have you bought something on Amazon.com lately? Then you've no doubt seen their upsell tactic. When you place something in your shopping cart, they inform you that people who've purchased the product you're about to purchase have also purchased these products (and then they list a handful of related products).

That's an upsell – and it's a powerful one, because it uses “social proof” to persuade people to add even more to their cart. (Social proof is when you use other people's testimonials, comments, or just their purchases to persuade others to buy.)

You can do the same thing on your order form, directly after a purchase, on the download page or in the first email you send out to new customers. Basically, you can use social proof to help you make the upsell.

However, keep this in mind: while Amazon's strategy of merely suggesting complimentary books works for them, it might not work for you. You may need to sell the prospect on adding to their purchase. And to do this, you need to apply your copywriting and persuasion skills to your offers.

In other words, it's likely not enough to simply say, “buy this too.”

Instead, you need to hit the prospect right between the eyes with the benefits of buying the upsell product. And we're not just talking about the benefits of the product as a standalone product. Rather you also need to address the benefits of how this upsell product will enhance their overall purchase. You need to make them feel like they're missing out on something if they don't buy the upsell.

Let me give you an example...

Let's suppose I'm selling a diet book to you. When you get to the order page, you're hit with an upsell. For just a few dollars more, you can add a recipe book to your order. If you buy the recipe book later you'll have to pay twice as much. But order now and you get it at half price.

There are two "fear of loss" issues. First, there's the simple fear that later on you'll want the book but you'll have to pay double to get it.

Secondly, if the copy does its job, you'd have a fear of loss about the book itself. That is, you'd be afraid that you're missing out on a big part of the diet book if you don't also get recipe book. And that's because they naturally go hand in hand. The recipe book will enhance the overall use, benefits, and enjoyment of the diet book.

In other words, don't just tack on any ol' product as an upsell. Make it directly relevant to the main purchase. Make the buyer feel that the upsell is really an integral part of the package, that the upsell enhances the overall purchase.

Note: *you're walking a fine line here. You can't make the buyer feel like the main product is "incomplete" without buying the upsell. Rather you need to make the buyer feel like the upsell significantly enhances the purchase, but at relatively little extra cost.*

It's like the fast food upsell, "do you want fries with that?" Of course you can eat a hamburger without fries. But enjoyment of the meal is enhanced greatly by adding fries (and the relative cost is low to tack on this enhancement).

The next thing you need to remember is that buyers are already sold on the main purchase. As such, you don't need to "re-sell" them ...all you need to do is make your pitch for the upsell. This is particularly true when it comes to discussing price.

Here's what I mean...

Let's suppose your main product is \$99, and the upsell is \$25. You don't need to sell the prospect on buying a total of \$124 for the package. That's because the prospect is already sold on the \$99 product. So instead, you ask if they want all these extra benefits for just \$25 more.

Again, look to McDonalds as an example of this strategy. They don't ask you if you want to super-size your order for a total of \$5.65. Instead, they say, "would you like to super-size your order for just 37 cents?"

Do you see the difference? Tacking a few cents on doesn't seem like a big deal. Likewise tacking a few dollars on a hundred dollar order doesn't seem like a big deal either. It's partly a psychological tactic to increase the total purchase price.

2. Hit them again when your product is delivered.

Your next opportunity to make customers a backend offer is inside the product package. Don't just ship a product – add an upsell. It's always a good idea to include some kind of offer or catalog of other products and services with every shipment. Properly executed, your marketing materials ride free. And it gives you an obvious opportunity to make another pitch.

One way to do this is to provide a time-limited offer. Include a coupon offering an attractive discount on anything in your catalog – but good only for the next 14 days. The trick is to make it advantageous to the buyer to act now.

If you use a fulfillment service or drop-shipper, you can always send out your own thank you letter and include your backend offer inside. Every outgoing package is another opportunity to make your buyer another offer.

3. Following up makes good sense.

Your existing and past customers are your best prospects. So it only makes sense to approach them regularly. Top direct marketers report that it is 6-10 times easier and less expensive to sell to a current customer than it is to attract a new one. When you market to your current customers, you've got the odds in your favor.

What's the best time to approach customers again? It all depends on what you sell. If you sell a consumable product such as vitamins or shampoo, there's a natural cycle you can follow. Get in touch again when the average customer would normally be running a little low on their supply.

If you sell information products, maybe it's every 2-4 weeks. Top newsletter

publishers often advertise a different product with each new issue. But it really depends on your customer's buying cycle and the nature of your products. For example, customers would be ready for your next 20-page report before they'd be ready for your next multimedia home-study package.

4. You can profit from prospects who never seem to buy.

Junk leads? That's what most people think. But here's how you can turn them into cash. What do you do with prospects who get into your funnel -- but still don't buy?

Most online businesses consider these names to be pretty much worthless. But to the savvy entrepreneur interested in generating maximum profit from every asset puts these leads to good use.

Look... these prospects are obviously interested in what you offer. They're interested in the subject, since that's what caused them to originally respond. OK, so they didn't want to buy your product, for whatever reason. But what if you were to offer a similar product instead -- once you're done with the follow-up sequence for your original offer?

It's definitely worth testing on your prospect list. You could also try working with a business who sells similar products and swap leads. This way, you get to offer your product to his unsold leads and he gets to offer his to those you weren't able to convert. Follow-up costs are such a bargain online, that this kind of added profit technique is something you should at least consider.

5. Introduce a “forced” continuity program and generate an extra and consistent income stream.

Ideally, every business wants to attract repeat buyers. But there's a way to cash in month after month, without having to sell your customers over and over again. It's called “forced continuity” and basically it's a recurring purchase that's automatically delivered to customers, until they decide to cancel. It's also known as “negative option” marketing and it was pioneered by the late Maxwell Sackheim, the genius behind the Book-Of-The-Month Club.

Every book, CD, or DVD club uses this method to get subscribers on board. Entry is unusually inexpensive, but the buyer agrees to a minimum purchase up front. This also works well with consumable products like vitamins, or with website memberships or newsletter subscriptions.

Forced continuity puts the onus on the buyer. It's assumed that they want to continue to receive your goods or services, unless directed otherwise. But for you, it's a great way to create a continuous income stream from a single sale.

Who Else Wants To Start Claiming The 70% - 90% of the Total Profit Others Continue to Leave Behind?

Above are just 5 simple techniques you can use to start generating extra cash profit TODAY from your business. These are yours to use – free for the taking. Are you going to test these techniques in your business... or are you satisfied with what you are making right now – even when there's so much more available?

There Are Just 3 Ways To Make Money In Any Business...

Customers are the lifeblood of every business. And the degree of success you enjoy is directly related to your effectiveness in consistently attracting new prospects into your funnel... converting them into customers... and getting these customers to buy from you repeatedly over time.

Keep your funnel open and operating and it will continually feed your business with new prospects and customers, stimulate sales, and net you larger and larger profits.

And that brings us to our next important lesson...

How to Retain Your Best Customers

Just a few lines ago we noted that customers are the lifeblood of your business. Without them, you don't have a business.

You've already discovered that the real money isn't in the front end of your business, but rather in the back end. That is, your best customers are your existing customers. But while it's easy to sell more products and more expensive products to an existing customer, it's just as easy to lose that customer.

The problem? Poor customer service.

Excellent customer service should be a priority in your business. After all, it can literally make or break your business. A skeptical buyer can become a rabid fan who buys all your products based on an initial good customer experience. But on the flip side, a customer with a poor experience may decide to never do business with you again ...and in fact, they may tell their friends to stay away from you too.

Think about your own experiences and you'll know this is true. We don't very often rave about good customer service experiences to other people. And the reason is because we EXPECT good customer service. It doesn't matter if we paid \$5 or a \$5000, we expect good service.

But what happens if we get poor service? Then we tell people. We complain. We warn friends not to go near the business.

Indeed, you can see this on message boards as well. People "rant" about their poor experiences. But rarely do they rave about their good experiences.

The bottom line is that unhappy customers will tell others. Happy customers may not tell others ...but they WILL buy from you again. Here's how to make sure your customers are satisfied:

1. Honor your policies.

If you have a refund policy (and you should), honor it.

It doesn't matter if you think a customer might be taking advantage of you. If you have a policy in place, you need to honor it no matter who's asking you to honor it.

If you truly think someone might be taking advantage of you, give them their requested refund ...then remove them from your list and bar them from purchasing from you again. But don't change your policy just because you don't like the person. Word will get around.

2. Answer all customer inquiries promptly.

Have you ever had a wonderful pre-sale customer service experience, only to have the post-sale experience lacking?

For example, pre-sale you find that all of your questions are answered promptly and courteously. But then after the sale you spend days, even weeks trying to get one simple answer to a question. For example, maybe your download didn't work, and all you want is the download link. And yet you can't get a reply.

What happens? You feel ignored. You feel neglected. You have the feeling that the marketer spent an awful lot of time "courting" you to get your money ...and now that he has your money, he doesn't care about you any more.

That may or may not be true. But the point is, if you don't answer customer inquiries promptly, this is how your customers (or prospects) will feel. It doesn't matter if they're pre-sale or post-sale questions – all of them should be answered with equal urgency and professionalism.

Yes, answering pre-sale questions will help you land the sale. But answering post-sale questions quickly and professionally will help you earn the customer's trust. And that means you may very well develop a lifetime customer.

So how fast should you answer?

This of course depends on your schedule, whether you've outsourced any of your customer service, and so on.

At a minimum all customer service inquiries should be answered the same day they arrive, as long as they arrive within your business hours. Ideally you should set aside two or three times per day to specifically handle inquiries. That includes first thing in the morning, at noon, and in the late afternoon or early evening. You may also want to check (and answer) inquiries last thing at night too, if your schedule permits.

Regardless of what schedule you choose, you'll want your customers to know what to expect. When they go to your help desk page, they should see your office hours plainly posted, along with an estimate of when they can expect an answer. You should also let people know if you answer inquiries on weekends.

Note: *Be sure to note whenever you are gone for holidays or other reasons. You don't have to tell people that you're off on a beach holiday or anything like that. Instead, let them know you're out of the office until a certain date.*

If you're just gone one business day (such as Friday), you can let customers know you'll reply first thing on Monday. You may also consider giving them an alternative contact method for emergencies.

For example, you may give them an emergency contact number, or you may direct them to the email address of a staff member you've hired for the purpose. That way if they need something like a download link, they can get it from you or your trusted virtual assistant.

If you're going to be gone for more than a day, it's best if you hire someone to deal with all inquiries promptly. Just because you're on vacation (or sick, or attending a reunion, or whatever else) doesn't mean your customers and prospects should have to wait days to hear back from you. They still deserve immediate service.

In addition to posting this information on your help desk page, you'll also want to set up an autoresponder message that reminds them of when they can expect a reply. Thank them for their message, assure them that you answer all inquiries, and let them know they can expect a reply on the same day if their email arrives during your business hours.

Note: Keep in mind that your customers live all over the world. If you state your business hours as “9:00am to 5:00pm,” they could assume that’s in their time zone ...and get upset when they don’t get a reply. Meanwhile, it might be the middle of the night in your time zone ...and you have no idea a customer is getting angry with the wait.

As such, be sure to always state what time zone you’re in. You may also link to worldtimeserver.com to help them calculate time zone differences.

3. Handle refund requests promptly, too.

Don’t take refund requests personally, and don’t assume that your product is “bad” or that the person is “mean” for asking for a refund. If you have a refund policy in place then you should treat it like any other customer inquiry: namely, handle it professionally and fast.

There are plenty of legitimate reasons for people to ask for refunds. Many times the product just won’t help them the way they expected. And that’s ok. Provided you give them a good customer service experience by handling their request fast, you’ll likely be able to sell something else to the customer.

Think of it this way...

Suppose you went into a department store that you’ve never shopped in before, and you bought a pair of jeans. When you got home, you realized the jeans just didn’t fit well or even look all that great. So you bring them back to the store to return them.

Let me ask you this: just because those jeans didn’t work out, does that mean you’ll never shop at that store again?

Of course not! The product didn’t work out, but that doesn’t mean you have any thing against the store or its owner.

Now suppose you went to return them, and the customer service person gave you a hard time. Maybe she argued with you and tried to deny giving you the

refund (which goes against their store policy). Maybe she was rude. Maybe she strung you along and made you wait a long time for this simple refund. Would you go back to the store in that case?

Probably not! And that's because now you DO have a problem with the store and perhaps the owner.

The same is true of your customers. If a product doesn't work out, BUT they have a good experience, they're likely to return as customers. If the product doesn't work out AND they have a bad experience to boot, they won't be back...and they might tell their friends, too.

4. Use a help desk.

We've already touched on this one before, but we'll mention it again: don't rely solely on email. There are simply too many ways for email to get lost or overlooked, both on your end or your customer's end.

Even if it's not your fault – such as the case if the customer's ISP has blocked your email, or the customer hasn't noticed that it went into their spam folder – you'll still be blamed. This will not be viewed by the customer as a “emails getting lost.” In all likelihood, the customer will probably assume you simply decided to ignore his email.

The solution? Always use a help desk instead of email. And as a nice alternative, provide a telephone number, live chat, or even a fax option as well.

5. Answer calmly and without injecting emotion.

Sometimes you'll get emails and phone calls from customers and prospects who are very upset. For example, the download may have failed, and they're worried they've been scammed. Or perhaps they misunderstood that they're getting a digital product, and are upset because nothing is coming in the mail.

At other times you may get abusive emails from customers. Perhaps they don't think your product is as advertised, and so they threaten to report you to all sorts of authorities. They try to bully you. They may use abusive language.

Some of these people are indeed bullies or abusive people. Others (especially those who are merely upset) likely have had bad experiences online in the past, and they have that feeling rising up out of the pit of their stomach that tells them you might be a scammer too. Or perhaps they're just frustrated because the sales process hasn't been as smooth as they hoped.

In all cases, it's your job to remain calm.

At times that can be difficult, especially if someone is being unfair about you or your product. You may want to lash back and "zing" them with a really good email. You have a feeling that it will make you feel better to lash back, be sarcastic, or be "difficult" to them as they're being difficult to you.

But don't do it. You're a professional.

Instead, take the high road. Write a non-emotional response that sticks to the facts. Offer a solution. But whatever you do, don't take it personally and react in an emotional manner.

Indeed, if you present a calming attitude and you focus on solving the problem professionally, the person will usually calm down. After all, that's what they really want: someone who understands the problem and is willing to fix it.

In most cases, that's what you should strive to do.

However, do note that you are under no obligation to appease a bully. If someone is threatening you, trying to bully you into doing something, using abusive language, or similar, you don't have to solve their problem. Instead, refund them, remove them from your lists, and ban their IP address so they can't order from you again.

In other words, the customer isn't always right... at least not when they're being abusive.

6. Only promise what you can deliver.

This seems like common sense, and yet marketers all over the internet are making this mistake. Basically, they're promising something they can't deliver.

Are they scammers? No. But they are people with a lot of enthusiasm and good intentions. And sometimes that combination can get a person in trouble.

Maybe you've even experienced this. Maybe you've told potential joint venture partner you'd be glad to help them, but then you ended up dropping the ball. Perhaps you just took on more than you could reasonably handle, and something had to slide.

Or perhaps you had a product idea and told plenty of people about it. You promised to get it to market soon. But your priorities changed, and you never quite got it done.

Sometimes it's not that our priorities changed, but rather someone else dropped the ball (which we're ultimately responsible for). For instance, perhaps we promised our customers that we'd give them a new report, but our freelancer didn't get it finished.

The problem in all of these cases is in promising something we can't deliver.

Here's the bottom line: if you're going to promise a product to a customer, don't promise it until the product is actually finished and ready to deliver. Otherwise, there are dozens of reasons something could prevent you from delivering. And your customer won't care about the reasons – he'll just know that you didn't deliver on a promise.

Likewise, don't make any promises to JV partners that you can't keep. If nothing else, you may need to learn to say no.

7. Focus on solutions.

Finally, you'll want to be sure to always focus on solutions and not excuses.

Things happen. Sometimes you create the wrong download link, and then forget to check it. Sometimes you upload an older copy of the product. Sometimes you forget to add bonuses. And yes, even with the warning from point number five above, sometimes you can't quite deliver what you promised.

So what should you do?

Offer solution and not excuses.

It's human nature to want to blame someone or something else for these sorts of mistakes. Maybe our freelancer didn't finish the bonus, so it wasn't done in time for launch. Maybe our partner loaded up the wrong product. Maybe our virtual assistant relayed the wrong information in an email.

Regardless of what happened, the bottom line is that it IS your responsibility. Even if you didn't personally make the mistake, it is still your responsibility. The buck stops with you.

The second point is that your customers don't really care what caused the problem. They are only interested in a solution. They are only interested in seeing if you care about providing them a fast, courteous solution.

So what does all of this mean? You need to focus on solutions and not excuses. Take responsibility for the problem, and take quick action to solve it. Do that, and you'll likely salvage your reputation with those customers who were affected.

Your Post-Launch Checklist

Customer Service

Ensure all launch customers have received their downloads/shipments
Ensure you have staff in place to handle post-launch inquiries
Create a FAQ based on common inquiries received so far

Customer Mailing list

- ☐ Touch base with customers to reduce buyer's remorse (and refunds)
- ☐ Give unannounced bonuses
- ☐ Remind customers of benefits of product
- ☐ Upsell to premium products
- ☐ Ask customers to become affiliates
- ☐ Ask customers for testimonials

Joint Ventures / Affiliates / Launch Partners

- ☐ Thank them for helping you launch
- ☐ Ask them what you can do to help them
- ☐ Ensure you pay commissions on or before the promised date
- ☐ Be sure to pay out affiliate contest prizes'
- ☐ Keep in touch with list (personally) to build on these relationships

Backend Products

If you're still using affiliate products as backend products, start creating your own products and inserting into your sales funnel:

- ☐ Change links in your products from affiliate links to your product links
- ☐ Change your customer autoresponder series to include these products

Prospect Mailing list

- ☐ Start sending new customer testimonials to pre-launch leads as social proof (to help close the sale)
- ☐ Create "evergreen" autoresponder series to convert new leads into buyers

Post-Launch Traffic Generation

- ☐ Search Engine Optimization
 - ☐ Google
 - ☐ Yahoo
 - ☐ MSN

- ☐ Pay Per Click Traffic generation
 - ☐ Google AdWords
 - ☐ Yahoo Search Marketing
 - ☐ MSN
 - ☐ (May consider smaller engines like Kanoodle)

- ☐ Continue to seek joint venture partners
 - ☐ Article Swaps
 - ☐ Link Swaps
 - ☐ Co-Promotions
 - ☐ Endorsements

- ☐ Continue to seek out affiliates
- ☐ Viral marketing (videos on YouTube, ebook, etc)
- ☐ Blogging
- ☐ Email Marketing
- ☐ Banner ads
- ☐ Text ads
- ☐ Ezine ads
- ☐ Online classified ads
 - ☐ Craigslist
 - ☐ USFreeAds
- ☐ Press releases
- ☐ Two-step classified advertisements
- ☐ Post card mailings

Conclusion

Each product you have isn't a standalone product, but rather a piece of your sales funnel. Each advertisement you send and every bit of marketing you do isn't to sell just one product, but to bring a customer into your sales funnel so that you can sell to them over and over again. Profits aren't calculated based on how many people buy one product, but rather how much each of those new customers will spend on all the other products in your funnel.

Lots of marketers view their businesses as "money makers." Whenever they want an influx of cash, they churn out a new product and then scramble around looking for someone to sell the product to. But you know there's an easier way. It's much easier to keep selling to existing customers, rather than to always having to look for new customers.

And that's where the old saying, "the money is in the list" originates. What the saying really means is that the money is in the sales funnel. The money is in the backend of your operations. Indeed, you can even lose money on your front end sales and yet still build a million dollar business.

In other words, it's all about how you view your business. When you look at the big picture – when you see that the money is in the CUSTOMER and not in the product – you'll see your business boom.

Copywriting

Introduction

There are lots of copywriting courses out there that provide an introduction to sales letter writing. There are another handful out there that allow you to really understand the art and science of copywriting. This module does both.

In the first part of the module you'll discover how to put together the framework of a good sales letter. You'll find out the proper format, how to write headlines, and everything else required to put together a killer sales letter.

In the second part of the module you'll discover the insider tips and tricks that will mean the difference between "pretty good" sales letters and million-dollar sales letters.

Let's get started...

How to Build the Framework of Your Killer Sales Letter

Here's a rough outline of what your sales letter will look like:

Insert Your Headline Here

Insert Your Sub-headline (Hook) Here

From: **[Insert your name here]**

Date: **[Today's date]**

Introduce yourself. Confirm the problems/challenges your prospect is facing.

Sub-headline: Introduce your product here

**FIX
PRODUCT
IMAGE
HERE**

Explain the benefits and features of your product.

Sub-headline: Insert your testimonials/endorsements here

Include a collection of neatly-lined up testimonials and endorsements.

Sub-headline: Bonuses (optional)

Sub-headline: Guarantee

Sub-headline: Buy now!

Persuade your prospect to buy now. Include Order Form here.

[Privacy](#) | [Disclaimer](#)

How to Write a Good Headline

You must have something at the beginning of your web page that you do not see on majority of the web pages out there – **a headline!**

This is a hard and fast rule: your sales letter **must** have a headline. That is the first thing your prospect is going to look at when he visits your web site. Not having a headline is like looking at a headless person!

Your headline serves as an advertisement to your prospects. Your headline must grab the attention of your visitors or else they will not read the rest of your sales letter. This is **very crucial** – the headline will **make or break** your sales letter!



The size of your headline should be bigger than the rest of the text in your sales letter (like the screenshot above). You may want to color and stylize (e.g. underline, **bold**, *italic*, **highlight**, and ~~strike-through~~) your headline text.

Since your letter's headline is the first contact your prospect has with your message, it must reach out to him. Promise him a benefit. Tell him how he will be better off if he reads the rest of the letter.

Headlines can be classified into the following 5 basic types:

[1] News Headlines

This form tells your prospect something he did not know before. "Now – a copy machine that copies in color" is an example of this type headline.

[2] Promise Headline

Here, you are promising something if the prospect follows your advice. For example: "Switch to XYZ Abs Flex and you will no longer see those spare tires in 6 weeks – guaranteed!"

[3] Selective Headline

Headline such as "To all who are suffering financially" or "Bald men – lend me your ears" limits to a specific group of prospects. Caution however, that this type of headline can eliminate potential customers so use carefully or draw in targeted prospects to read your sales letter.

[4] Curiosity Headline

The purpose of this headline is to arouse the prospect's interest enough to make him read your letter. An example of this headline would be: "Do you have trouble going to sleep at night?" The drawback, however, is that this headline often appears "cute" or "clever" and sometimes even deceptive.

[5] Demand Headline

Watch out for this one as most people resist pushiness. "Do it now!" or "Get your copy today!" headlines generally can be improved by changing to less obtrusive words such as: "Call for your key to success!"

Effective headlines often combine two or more of these kinds.

Warning! Remember that when your message is printed in all upper-cased or capital letters, it is difficult for your prospect to follow and remain interested in your offer.

DOES THIS LOOK COMFORTABLE TO YOUR EYES?

I bet this sentence is easier to read and comfortable for your eyes compared to the upper-cased sentence above.

Even in headlines, ALL CAPITAL LETTERS should be refrained from being used. Even if you plan to use ALL CAPITAL LETTERS, limit this to only a selected few words, and make sure they are “hot buttons” or meant to grab your prospect’s attention.

Sub-headline

This is the next most important component after the headline. Your sub-headline serves as a “hook” that will encourage your prospect to read further.

Basically, your sub-headline summarizes your sales letter and must elaborate on the benefits of reading your letter thus creating the urgency for your prospect to read – today, and no later!

You can also provide the “if problem, then solution” scenario in your sales letter. Usually, your sub-headline is smaller than your headline in size, and bigger than the regular fonts on your web page.

Examples of a sub-headline are:

Do you think you could learn something from someone whose websites are all within the top 1% of all sites visited online and several of which are in the top 1/10th of the 1% of all sites visited online?

At last, the truth will be unveiled in 212 **power-packed** letter-sized pages, PDF Format, so that YOU can CURE your asthma and get your breath back in the comfort of your own home!

Addressing Your Prospect

Below your sub-headline, comes the “From”, Date and Greeting lines.

From: **[Insert Your Name Here]**
Date: **[Insert Automatic Script That Show today's Date]**

Dear **[address your prospect]**,

Alternatively, you can write the following sentences:

- From the keyboard of **[Your Name Here]**
- From the desk of **[Your Name Here]**
- From the laptop of **[Your Name Here]**

This is important as your prospect wants to know where the letter he is reading comes from.

As for the script that automatically show today's date, your prospect would appreciate you having him aware of the most recent date. Therefore, there is absolutely nothing wrong with using a date script. In fact, it is the same as using a direct mail piece where the date is located at the top of the letter.

You can search the Internet for a free date script, but I will save you the trouble by including the following HTML codes into your web page below which I have personally found and used.

```
<SCRIPT LANGUAGE="JavaScript">

<!-- This script and many more are available free online at -->
<!-- The JavaScript Source!! http://javascript.internet.com -->
<!-- Author: www.cgiscript.net -->

<!-- Begin

// Get today's current date.
var now = new Date();

// Array list of days.
var days = new
Array('Sunday', 'Monday', 'Tuesday', 'Wednesday', 'Thursday', 'Friday'
, 'Saturday');

// Array list of months.
```

```

var months = new
Array('January', 'February', 'March', 'April', 'May', 'June', 'July', 'A
ugust', 'September', 'October', 'November', 'December');

// Calculate the number of the current day in the week.
var date = ((now.getDate()<10) ? "0" : "")+ now.getDate();

// Calculate four digit year.
function fourdigits(number)    {
    return (number < 1000) ? number + 1900 : number;
}

// Join it all together
today =  days[now.getDay()] + ", " +
        months[now.getMonth()] + " " +
        date + ", " +
        (fourdigits(now.getFullYear())) ;

// Print out the data.
document.write(today);

// End -->
</script>

```

Now, address your prospects with a:

Dear Friend,

If you want to target a specific group of people or qualify your prospect, you can be more accurate in your address. For example, if the only type of people who will be interested in your ringworm remedy are those who are suffering from such infection, you can address:

Dear Ringworm Patient,

If you are targeting another Internet Marketer as only they will be interested in your offer, you can address:

Dear Internet Marketer,

While this makes your sales letter as laser-focused as possible, be warned that you can possibly lose potential customers who are not whom you addressed. For example, maybe a non-Internet Marketer can also be interested in your product but is not an Internet Marketer?

If your target market is broad, you will be safe to use “Dear Friend” to address your prospect. Not only is it a friendly approach, almost anyone can pass by as a friend.

Your Opening Paragraph

Address the problem(s) your prospect is facing that you are going to solve.

Now, the biggest challenge in writing an effective sales letter is keeping your prospect involved, engaged, and interested in reading your sales letter from top to toe.

If you forget for a moment to emphasize the “What is in it for you” nature of your offer, your prospect will tune out, turn off, and click away from your sales letter.

So, write your introduction to notify that there is a problem your prospect is facing. No, do not create a problem. Address the problem that **already** exists. Your prospect, like anyone else alive, is already having enough problems. You want to reduce as many problems as possible for your prospect and that is why your prospect should be interested in reading your sales letter.

If he is your target prospect, he will confirm and agree the problem you have addressed.

Below is an example of an introduction of a sales letter addressed to asthmatic prospects:

Dear Asthmatic Friend,

My name is **John Doe** and I have something to share with you.

At the tender age of 2 years, I was diagnosed as asthmatic. This marked the beginning of a what-seemed-to-be-never ending struggle between life and death with a condition that almost destroyed my health life.

I remember vividly the pain and the deep agony I went through. I even tried to *pretend* that everything was all right!

**Asthma, If You Were A Somebody, I
Would Have Murdered You Terribly.**

Now it's a small wonder why I wage a personal crusade against asthma even to this day.

The sleepless nights, constant hacking cough, the frightful feeling of suffocation, and continuous wheezing brought pain beyond words in the chest area, which can only be described as very unpleasant and difficult to manage.

It was a childhood stripped off from the frolics, merriment and fun. I felt like an outcast when it comes to curricular activities. I envied my friends who don't seem to have my health problem.

Not being able to participate in sport activities and events, missing school on a regular basis and frequenting the hospital became a habitual routine and one that left an indelible and a disturbing effect on the psyche. The scar that was made on my health was, needless to say.

So, I had a dream.

I wanted to **eradicate** asthma **once and for all**. I decided that it is too expensive to deny myself of a good and healthy life so I didn't take too long for me to spring into action and set out to look for a cure.

At that time, I didn't know how to do it but backed by confidence and a small array of hope, I knew it was possible.

I continued life as it was. But I didn't lose focus of my main goal. In trying times, all I was armed with was faith.

After all the intensive research, buying books on the subject, traveling to other countries, meeting health experts and doctors, and trying out *countless* ways to cure my asthma disease, I felt it was time to go for a medical test. I did just that.

I was nervous until the report came out. As I read through it, my frustration built over the years have stopped. I knew my primary goal was achieved.

I Did It!

The report surprised my parents and family members. I was, too, though I knew what I had done to bring such results.

Only in my adulthood did I realize that my asthma was congenital and that I was born with it.

Asthma, as a *chronic disease*, can only be described with absolute profundity and in detail by someone who has actually experienced the *terrible* effects of this condition first hand.

That said, I am qualified to explain how asthma can affect the psyche, how both internal and external factors can influence our well-being and lifestyle... and needless to say, **the solutions!**

Fear, anxiety and even the fright of a probable attack can be most disheartening and a ghastly experience. However, there is **no need to worry** anymore.

Now, the reason I'm telling you this is **NOT** because I want to *impress* you, but to **impress upon you** that asthma is a disease that can be totally eliminated *without* having to **burn** a **BIG** hole in your pocket on your part - because I already did that for you!

From the sales letter introduction above, notice that:

- The writer has addressed to a specific group of people, namely people who are suffering from asthma. He has got quite a huge demand here, as there are about **300 million** people from around the world who are suffering from this painful, killing disease and that people do go online to search for a cure.
- The writer addresses and confirms the problem his prospect is facing, which in this case, is the asthma disease. Note that if the prospect is healthy or has other kinds of health problems, this letter is obviously not meant for him as the solution the writer has applies only to asthma patients.
- The writer connects very well with his prospect. The writer has something in common with his prospect and can relate his experience to him. The writer was an asthmatic, too. The writer suffered from tight breathes, wheezes and coughs at night like any other asthmatic people. His experience can be easily understood and appreciated by his prospect because they both have had them, too!
- The introduction was interesting, especially to the asthmatic prospect. He, too, would definitely like to murder asthma if it were a “somebody”! The writer was good at telling his story on how he had asthma at a very young age and later ventured on to search for a cure.
- Most importantly, the writer has already got a cure that his prospect can definitely use!

You will want to write your sales letter in an almost similar manner, no matter what solutions you have or market you are targeting.

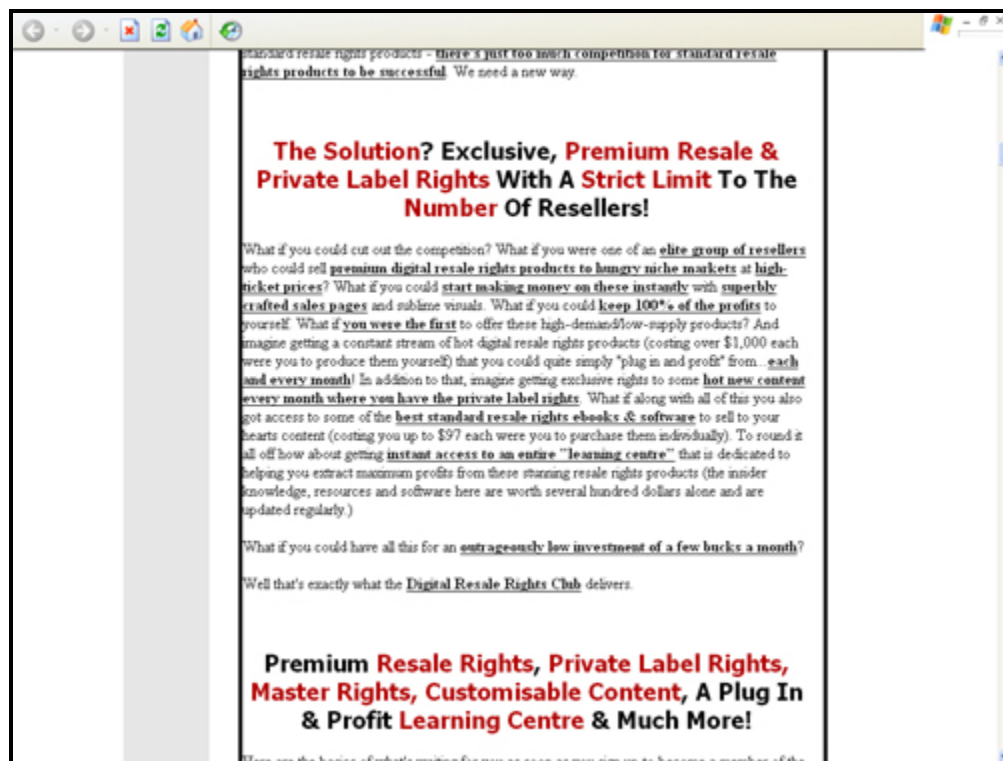
Announcing Your Solution

Now, what? Follow through with the solution! Become a problem solver in writing. Once you confirm the problem your prospect is facing (and he probably nods to that), introduce your solution.

Your solution can come in the form of a tangible product, digital product, membership access, or even a service!

Example #1: Digital Resale Rights Club

<http://www.digital-resale-rights.com/>



Example #2: Megapreneur Million System

<http://www.megapreneurmillions.com/>



Benefits vs. Features

Copywriting 101, Lesson 3: What happens when you do not explain the benefits of your product in your sales letter?

Answer: **No sales!**

That is right. You do not have to be a savvy copywriter to know that. But somehow, most of us make this terrible mistake.

More often than not, features are often being mistaken as benefits. I have been asked by friendly business associates to review their sales letters and sadly, this is a common mistake I always see in their sales letter. If I were in the shoes of a potential customer, I am more interested in how a product can benefit me than

know what it looks like. Recall the last time you bought a product, online or offline. Why did you buy it? Did you buy it because of its features? Or did you buy it because it can benefit you or solve your problem?

To learn the distinct definitions of benefit and feature, see below.

- **Benefit.** According to the Pocket English Dictionary's definition, it means an *advantage; to be useful or profitable to*. In the case of selling your product on your web page, you want to tell how useful or how your product can solve your prospect's problems.
- **Feature.** According to the Pocket English Dictionary's definition, it means *characteristic*. In the case of selling your product on your web page, you want to also tell your prospect in what form your product is (digital or physical).

The following are examples of benefits and features:

- You sell **slimming powder** on your web page (physical product). The feature of your product is **easy-to-digest powder packed in a tin or carton**. The benefit of your product is that consumers **can now lose weight the easy way!**
- You sell **turtle pellets** on your web page (physical product). The feature of your product is **small and easy-to-digest green pellets** for your pet amphibians. The benefit of your product is that it is **easy for your pet amphibians to consume and grow healthily because they are going to get all the nutrition they can get in the pellets!**
- You sell an **information product** on your web page (digital product). The features of your product are **.PDF format** and **have Master Resell Rights**. Therefore, the benefits are your customers **can download it instantly** as soon as they pay and they have an **income opportunity to make money and keep all the profits to themselves!**

All in all, write BOTH features and benefits of your product. **But sell a SOLUTION, NOT a product!**

I know you are cringing when you hear this. All these while we have been talking about selling your product or service through your sales letter but remember, you do not buy a product for the sake of buying a product! And neither do anyone else on this planet. You buy a product because of getting the benefits or solving

your problems! You did not buy a refrigerator because it was a refrigerator, did you? But you bought one because it sure is going to be a problem keeping your food out in the open!

Top Internet Entrepreneurs know this business principle very well. This also explains why exclusive product membership sites continue to thrive and grow. Their selling point is **not in the product** but **the solutions and benefits** the product gives.

Endorsements and Testimonials

Sure, you could go on and on rattling about what a good offer your prospect is looking at and why he should buy from you, but he would also be interested in the kind of results other customers who have tried out got from the product or service before he dives into the offer.

So, you need testimonials.

Testimonials from your customers are one of the strongest marketing tools available.

What is a testimonial? It is a statement, usually written by your customer, saying nice things about some aspect of you, your product or service, and your business.

What to Have In Your Testimonials

- **Testimonials about YOUR product, not you.** Do not be fooled by the simplicity of this statement. Testimonials that say you are a great person whatsoever are NOT the type of testimonials your prospects are looking for, though such testimonials can build trust and your name. But your prospects are more interested in how your product can benefit them or solve their problems. They did not read your sales letter to see you praising yourself.
- **Testimonials that mention results.** The more specific they are, the better. Interested prospects want to know what the results other customers have benefited from the usage of your product or service.
- **Quality / quantity.** If you can get top names in your niche or field to endorse your product, it will help you increase your sales. If you do not

know any experts or top names who can help endorse your product, you can make up in the quantity of testimonials. The more testimonials you have, the more convincing your sales letter will be.

- **Customer essential details.** Include your customer's Full Name and City/State/Country after his or her testimonial. You can include your customer's web site URL or contact e-mail address where applicable (with permission). And if you can, get your customer's photo and paste it into your sales letter. Using photos can increase your credibility and shows how pleased your customers are when using your product.

How to Collect Testimonials

There are many ways to get testimonials from your customers. You can:

- ☒ **Hold contests** for the best-written testimonials. Give them a reward, gift or some publicity in exchange for their testimonials.
- ☒ **Ask for letters of endorsements** from your customers, vendors, suppliers, and any associates you have. Use them to promote your products and services. When you use testimonials to add credibility to what you do, you are letting your customers do some of the marketing for your business.
- ☒ If you are just starting out fresh, give a **sample version** of your product or **trial service** to those whom you know. They can be your business associates, friends, or people whom you know need your solution. This is the fastest way you can get testimonials. You start with proving your worth.
- ☒ **Get top names, influential people and experts to endorse your product.** So, look for top names and experts in your field and get their e-mail address. E-mail them and politely ask for their endorsement. Since they are only an e-mail away, why not? And if you
- ☒ You can **participate in active forums and newsgroups** where people of similar interest and mindset gather around and discuss on the same topic. This is a good place where you can meet people and get their testimonials simply by asking for their permission and give them a sample of your product. If your product is of genuine quality, you can count on them to send their honest testimonials in and spread the word for you.

When you use these testimonials, you want to weave them into your marketing story. Use them to support your claims and promises. For every benefit or objective you need to overcome in your products or services, it is the best scenario to have testimonials establishing or referencing each of those benefits or objections.

The benefit of using testimonials on your web site can help link popularity in search engine results as well. Whether you use this marketing tool for either inbound or outbound reasons, you will have an advantage over your competition. Check them out next time you visit their office or web site and see for what people are saying about their business practices. You will be amazed!

Examples of How Testimonials and Endorsements Are Used

Example 1 : My Wizard Ads

Find That Special Article **With Every Order**

EZINE ADVERTISING & TARGETED WEBSITE TRAFFIC

All orders come with additional free classified advertising. Your ad (similar to an ezine ad) is placed on a prominent and well advertised web page here at MWA. Targeted traffic is purchased specifically for that page to ensure thousands of individuals see what you have to offer. Again, this is a free service in addition to the services detailed below.

Ezine advertising is your 6 line classified ad figured prominently in the paid advertising sections of online newsletters and ezine publications.

You have a choice to subscribe to the ezines or not, depending on the service you choose. Ezine advertising has the benefit of appearing inside the various issues and, frequently, these issues are archived online. Thus your ezine advertising remains online long after the original run date.

Solo ad advertising is similar to ezine

The service and response I have received using My Wizard Ads has been second to none. Extremely good investment and I plan to come back over & over again. It truly has increased visits to my website and also sales revenues!

Regards,
Dan Yoraway
QCF.com

Thanks so much for the time and effort you spent helping me get my ad campaign going. I really like the 2nd ad you created for me - very impressive. I look forward to seeing the response I receive.

Best Regards,
Debbie Suess
Ways to Prosperity

Wow, thanks for the quick response

I like how quickly you set up my campaign and took the time to catch that mistake [on my webpage]. You don't find too many people in business willing to take that extra step.

The testimonials by happy advertisers arranged neatly on your right. If you want to know more about the results of using this service, you


can check with the testimonial writers who have left their web site URL under their names.


Example 2 : Trafficology

Here's my promise: Before you buy a subscription to my site I'll tell you all the surprising, rarely-revealed information I personally researched, tested and successfully verified from some of the richest men on the Internet.

But don't take just my word for it...

" TRAFFICOLOGY... is jam packed with the useful, the arcane and the fascinating! If your goal is web traffic, it's hard to think of a better place to start."
Seth Godin, best-selling author
"Unleashing the Ideavirus"





"TRAFFICOLOGY... is absolutely brilliant! I keep wondering how long you can keep serving up useful new stuff, and with each issue you surprise me." Allan Gardyne, AssociatePrograms.com

Before I give you the keys to the castle, let me get something off my chest: Far too often I see supposed "gurus" making online marketing o

The top names are endorsing this service. Is there anymore doubt to using it if you need web site traffic?

Giving Bonus Incentives (optional)

Sometimes, I have been asked on whether one should throw in bonuses or not when selling a primary product or service on the Internet.

Now, this is not going to be a simple right or wrong answer that I am going to give.

For one, I have seen people making money beyond their wildest dreams, partly owing to the amount of attractive bonuses they give as an incentive for their prospects to buy their primary products from them. I have also witnessed those who are wondering when the next sale is going to come in spite of the amount of bonuses they throw in together.

And then there are other Internet Business owners who still sell like hot cakes even though there were little or no bonus incentives offered.

So, bonuses: **to give or not to give?** That is the question.

I might sound as if I am taking this too lightly if I were to tell you that it is really up to you but the truth is, I have sold products WITH or WITHOUT bonuses before, so it is obvious that the bonuses factor is not the constant when it comes to making money, but rather the sales copy is one that decides the perceived value of your product.

Here are a few general ways you can pitch your sales letter to make people buy from you, whether you throw in bonuses or not.

If You Throw In Bonuses

Example : Megapreneur Million System

<http://www.megapreneurmillions.com/>



[1] You get \$1,000.00 worth of bonuses along with my main product. This is an offer you would not find elsewhere.

[2] Let's do the math. You get Product 1 + Product 2 + Product 3 + Product 4 = \$1,000.00. You get \$1,000.00 worth of products for only the price of one. It would have cost you \$1,000.00 if you purchase them ala carte elsewhere.

If You Are Not Throwing In Any Bonuses

[1] It is obvious that there are little (or no) bonuses added to this offer. But if you are not convinced of the true value of this product (or service), no amount of bonuses will ever convince you.

[2] Unlike most offers out there, I am NOT going to give you any bonuses. But look at it this way: I have kidnapped a top copywriter who charges \$10,00.00 per sales letter written to spill his guts out for you, and you get to have his brains for only \$97. Which one are you more interested in? Getting the \$1,000.00 worth of bonuses which you might or might not come around using or invest your \$97 in the product alone and write your own professional \$10,000.00 sales copy and profit from it in a long time to come?

As you can see, both sides have valid point of views. And in general, as long as you can convince your prospect of the true value they are going to get from your solutions, you will be sure to make your money, *with or without* bonuses.

Guarantee

After telling your prospect all the wonderful things your product can do for him and proudly showcasing your precious testimonials, he is probably thinking, "That is good. But should I be taking the risk to buy this product from you?" And the answer is a resounding **NO**.

Purchasing anything online is risky. Don't blame your prospects for being scared. There are more idiots out there ready to rip and scam innocent people than you can count the stars in the night. I do not know why they choose to be crooks when it is too easy to do business legally and in a harmonious manner but I guess I will never find out.

But you can find out how you can win your prospect's trust. Show your prospect that you are concerned and care for him. And you can easily demonstrate this by giving a money-back guarantee policy.

Usually, a money-back guarantee for digital product is 90 days.

Here is a real-life example of how your money-back guarantee policy may look like in your sales letter:

Example : The Ultimate Success Manual

<http://www.theultimatesuccessmanual.com/>

TRY IT RISK-FREE TODAY!

Click to see our [90 Day Money Back Guarantee!](#) [Collapse](#)

I want to take this offer one step further.

I'm going to give you **100% RISK-FREE**, 90-day money back guarantee.

You can't lose! Consider this...

There is absolutely **NO RISK** to you when you check out The Ultimate Success Manual.

Pay attention to this part:

Get The Ultimate Success Manual, follow it, and if you don't agree that you've received great value from it, send me an email at support@theultimatesuccessmanual.com within 90 days, delete the manual from your system and I'll refund you every single cent no questions asked!

What's more, ALL the Bonuses are yours to keep as gifts from me for simply having the courage to take action to change your life. It's a **GUARANTEED GAIN** no matter what you decide. **It'll only be a LOSS if you don't grab hold of this opportunity!**

This way, let your prospect know that you are shouldering all the risk for him. Giving a money-back guarantee also demonstrates how confident you are in the quality of your product. If for any reason your customer does not like your product or think it is not for him, he can promptly ask for a refund and delete the product from his PC. **Your prospect cannot lose.**

And then, here is another example of what your guarantee policy can be written like:

ABC's *100% Rock-Solid, Satisfaction Guarantee*

Buy Access to ABC Plan, and give my program a good try. If you don't agree that this is one of the best decisions you have ever made, simply cancel your access within 30 days and I will refund whatever amount you have paid in FULL.

Warning! Being in business with your prospects can be risky for you as an Internet Business owner, too. You will eventually learn that there are also idiots among your prospects who buy your product from your web page, and later ask for a refund (for the wrong reasons) and still keep your product! Worst still, he copies your product to his contacts! I am afraid that nothing much can be done about this. While you might be able to source for ways to protect your product as much as you can, it can be really effort and time-consuming to deal with these idiots. Your time is best spent on improving or bringing in more revenue for your business. Fortunately, there is only a minority of such people among the prospects in general. You can make up more in sales than the amount of refunds that they are almost negligible.

Persuade to Buy Now

You have confirmed the problem your prospect is facing or what he wants to achieve.

You have introduced your solution, whether it comes in the form of a tangible product, digital product, membership access, or service.

You have described the benefits to your prospect.

You have proudly show-cased your collection of testimonials that back your claim.

You also let your prospect know that if he is to buy from you, he is protected by your guarantee. Now, what?

Now is the time to close the sale. After the good gamut told, do not give the prospect a chance to draw back or even a second to hesitate!

So, follow up with a sub-headline that presses your prospect to buy now. The sub-headline can go like any of the following:

- Get your copy now.
- Don't procrastinate.
- It is time to get a better life, isn't it?
- Order now!
- Are you ready?
- Test-drive XYZ program now.
- Try ABC out for 30 days, risk-free.

You can remind your prospect about your risk-free guarantee policy. But, to prevent that, you can use **guilt** in the next paragraph. It is true that the fear of loss coupled by the "bragging rites" ego can trigger your prospect to buy from you.

Name the price now, if you have not hinted or told your prospect yet up until now, and justify it. Let your prospect know that the price you have labeled is a bargain, or even a steal. Otherwise, you would not be able to make a sale! Your prospect might think that it is not worth his money's spent or that he is paying too much for too little.

A simple way to justify your price is that you show the math or calculations of the value to your products is and later reveal how much the investment is required on the part of your prospect.

For instance, you show that the total value of your products is **\$3,000.00**, but you are charging only ~~\$3,000~~ **\$97**. This is often true for people who sell multiple products.

If you sell only one product, you can very well say that if your prospect would see you in person for personal consultation, you would charge \$100 per hour. If he would see you for 3 hours, it would cost him \$300.

Thus it would make sense for your prospect to buy your \$30 E-book as you can possibly dispense more information than in even 5 hours.

Of course, \$30 to you is a lot less than \$100 but face it, you have only 24 billable hours in a day, and that is assuming you give consultations around the clock.

By selling E-books, you can sell as many copies as you wish to those who want your advice, information and wisdom thus earning you residual income without having to depend on your limited time!

This is also where you include your **Order Button** or **Order Form**.



Tip: Make your prospect **see the future** *with* or even *without* your product.

For example, if you sell an E-book that teaches your prospect how he can slim down and get fit with the easiest solutions and methods found in your electronic manual, you want to have him picture a good future of seeing himself slimmed down and become attractive. That is the good future.

You can also make your prospect see the BAD future. Call it reverse-psychology if you want to, but if done correctly, it can also be responsible for converting at least 2 to 4 out of every 100 prospects who visit your web page into customers!

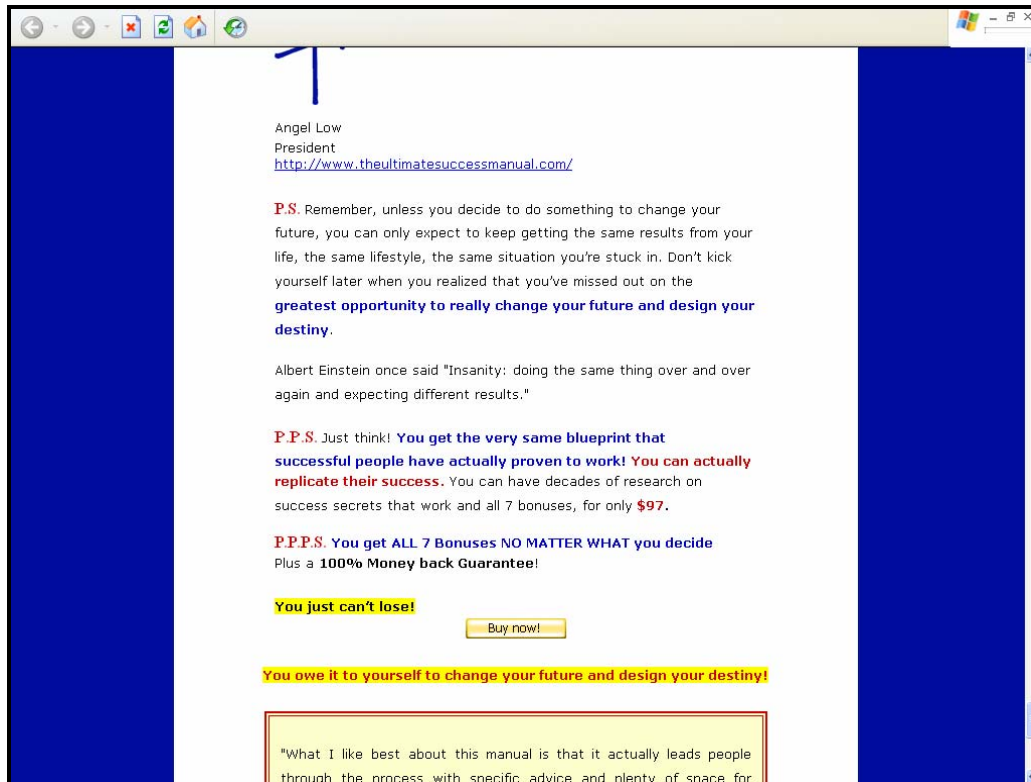
Using the same example, you can tell your prospect that if he does not buy from you now, nothing will change. Your prospect will still look fat and his peers will still pick on him and maybe worse, he will probably be single for the rest of his life, simply because he does not even have the desire or discipline to slim down!

Post-Scripts

Post-scripts (P.S.) summarize your entire sales letter and persuade your prospect to **act NOW**. Usually, prospects will scan the sales message and shoot straight to the P.S.

Below, I use the same example to demonstrate my point.

Example : The Ultimate Success Manual



The writer of this letter summarizes her sales copy using a series P.S.es. She reminds her prospect that if he wants to change his lifestyle for the better, the solutions are found in her E-book. She is using the “make your prospect see a good future” technique!

She also reminds her prospect about her risk-free guarantee policy and that he can keep the bonuses even if he did ask for refund, should he find the E-book non-satisfactory or not what he is looking for.

\$97 is very **cheap**, because having a lousy life is more expensive to the soul!

Summary: Now you know the nuts and bolts of putting together a good sales letter. What you’ve learned so far will easily bring thousands to you when you start applying it to your own sales materials. But now it’s time to discover the secrets of writing Million Dollar Copy!

Let’s get started...

Part II: What is "Million Dollar Copy?"

First, it isn't necessarily copy that sells a million dollars worth of product. The factors that go into turning that kind of volume include a lot more than the copy itself. Any copywriter who tells you otherwise should be avoided.

In fact, it's quite possible to sell a million dollars worth of product with less-than-perfect, even mediocre, copy - if you get enough of those other factors right. It's just a lot harder.

Don't make things harder on yourself than you need to.

The first thing that differentiates Million Dollar Copy from ordinary copy is that it converts a higher than usual percentage of targeted prospects to buyers.

After that, it's not quite so obvious.

The main factors that separate "Million Dollar Copy" from everything else are, in no particular order:

- ❑ The copy creates appropriate expectations in the reader. It highlights every benefit, while never exaggerating or misleading - even by omission. It also never leaves the reader feeling manipulated, whether they order or not.
- ❑ It increases the likelihood that the prospect will not only use the product, but use it correctly and get the results they're looking for.
- ❑ It doesn't call attention to itself. It communicates with the prospect without them thinking about anything but the product and what it will do for them.
- ❑ It's more powerful every time you read it.
- ❑ Instead of just trying to provoke emotional reactions, it creates an experience that engages real prospects. When this is done correctly, the reader feels as though they're interacting with the copy and the benefits of the product while they're still reading your letter.

- ❑ It doesn't start with the letter or end with the order. It begins with the way the prospect talks internally, and sets the stage for any communication that follows the purchase.

It's part of the customer's experience with your product and your company.

True "Million Dollar Copy" focuses on building your business, rather than just making the current sale. It sets a positive tone by which your firm is judged, reduces refunds, encourages future sales, and helps to create customers who feel more like "partners in the product" than just "buyers."

Put in its shortest form:

"Million Dollar Copy" starts in exactly the same place as the prospect, and guides them through a positive experience that makes your product a necessity in their mind.

Think about that. Go back and look at your existing copy and see how much of it can be changed to make it fit this model better.

If you're not sure, have someone else read it and tell you how they feel as they go through the copy.

Then consider how that fits with what you've just read.

Before we get too deep into the actual copywriting aspect of things, there are some mistakes about the process that you may have learned. Some of these mistakes can be dangerous to your income.

The next section will clear up some of these myths, and give you a better idea of what it really takes to become a great copywriter.

You're in for some surprises...

Copywriting Myths You Must Discard

Before we get into what you need to do to write great copy, let's get started by killing off some myths that you very likely have bought into. Many of them are spread by copywriters. Most copywriters even believe them.

They're what I call "Myths of Perspective."

Myth #1: The term "Copywriter" is an accurate description.

It is not. We'll use it for convenience, but it's just that... a convenient word. Shorthand for the real thing. The fact is:

Good print salespeople don't just "write copy." They certainly don't try to manipulate a prospect's desires using sneaky tricks and false promises.

They introduce the prospect's desires to the supplier's solutions. They guide the conversation far enough to get the prospect to accept that first date - the first order.

They create and manage expectations.

A good copywriter is a matchmaker.

If you learn to think in that mindset, your odds of creating effective copy increase dramatically.

Myth #2: Only "Masters" can produce million-dollar copy.

This belief is probably the single biggest obstacle to you producing the kind of copy that can make you rich.

Good technical skills and an understanding of advanced techniques can certainly improve your conversion rate, but they are far from the most important element of producing effective, million-dollar copy. And anyone who's produced that kind of copy knows it.

Nearly anyone can produce million-dollar copy, if they're willing to learn a few things that really are critical to the process.

Yes, even you.

Myth #3: Long copy is the best.

Really. How many times have you said, "I hate long copy. I can't stand to read it. Just give me the facts, and let me make my decision."

But how many magazines, newspaper articles and reports have you read this month?

Read any good books lately? THAT is long copy.

Most businesspeople will read more in the course of their daily activities than any sales letter they'll ever encounter.

Really - haven't you read sales letters that were interesting, full of details that were important to you, and often even entertaining?

Of course.

The ones that you remember as being long are just those that were poorly written, didn't talk to your own personal interests, or were just not relevant or believable.

If it's 5 pages of irrelevant stuff, it seems long. If it's thirty pages of solutions to problems that are important to you, it goes by like a great short story. When you're finished, you want more.

That's why you order. That's the difference.

Understand this clearly:

**There is no such thing as long copy.
There is only copy that's long enough.**

Myth #4: Verbal skills are the most critical part of effective copy.

More nonsense.

Yes, good verbal skills are useful in turning a good letter into a better one. They are a distant second to the skill that is truly the most critical in producing great copy:

Listening.

Listening to your prospects. Hearing what they really want from you. Understanding what need, want or desire they're hoping to satisfy with your product.

That is the one great skill that lies at the heart of compelling, million-dollar copy.

That leaves one more myth. An important one...

Myth #5: The customer is always right.

The client is NOT always right. If they were, they wouldn't need you.

The customer is NOT always right. If they were, they wouldn't need your product.

Yes, you've run into situations where the customer wants something that you believe isn't what they really need. It happens to anyone that's producing any product, especially information products.

Their DESIRE is right. Never forget that. They simply lack understanding of the benefits that you can offer because of their less-extensive experience. But that difference in experience is why you're valuable to them in the first place, no?

Don't argue with them, and don't try to educate them all at once. It's like trying to teach a pig to sing. It'll only frustrate you and annoy the pig.

Your prospects are a whole lot smarter than pigs. That doesn't mean they'll welcome being "educated" about how wrong they are. It means they'll be a whole lot more annoyed than the pig...

The only time you should outright refuse to provide what the client truly desires is if it would be unethical, uneconomical or harmful for you to do so.

Here's a simple formula that will solve your frustration and let you provide the maximum benefit that you want to provide:

Sell them what they want.
Give them what you sold them.
Sneak in what they need.

Everyone gets more of what they want, need and desire. That's a real win-win.

If you really grasp these ideas, and keep them in mind as you practice writing your sales materials, you'll find that you're way ahead of the curve.

If you look carefully, you'll notice that none of them are what people usually think of when they think of "copywriting." They're not the skills or attitudes that seem typical of the trade.

They're much more powerful. They're **human** skills. And, unless you've tapped markets I've never been able to reach, that's who you're selling to: Humans.

Remember that.

Yes, there are specific skills you can learn that can help you to create powerful copy more quickly. I'll tell you about some books and courses you can use for that in a later section.

There are a few other things you need to learn before you get started on those.

The next section will tell you the one thing you absolutely **must** know in order to make a lot of money from your efforts at creating sales copy.

Read on, MacDuff...

The First Key to Million-Dollar Copy
This one is deceptively simple:

Offer people solutions they already want to problems they already have.

If you've done any market research, you already know what your prospect wants.

You can drive people to a survey site and find out what their most common and powerful desires are.

If you've got a list and want to work within the same market consistently, you can probably get the information even more quickly: Send them an email and ASK!

If you don't have a list of subscribers, there's a simpler system yet. It takes a bit more time and patience, but it works. Surf the web-based discussion boards and look for the questions and topics discussed most. Take lots of notes.

Alex Mandossian's "ASK Campaign" is a great way to get the information you need to develop products in this fashion. It has a number of advantages, the biggest being that it can be very fast.

This is a very handy tool. For more details on it, go to:
<http://www.askdatabase.com/>

Here's a key point to making the most of your feedback, however you get it... Don't just listen for the most common responses. **Listen for the responses that sound the most desperate!**

The most common are your bread and butter benefits. They'll sell copies of your products for you in enough quantities to make them profitable.

The most desperate ones, the ones that talk about real pain, are the ones that will turn a profitable promotion into a monster. Those are the ones that can kick your conversion rates up by multiples instead of fractions.

Those are your million-dollar selling points.

They're also the things you should focus on for your higher-priced back-end products and services.

I've been called all sorts of unpleasant names, including ghoul, predatory creep and leech for telling people to focus on the pain. That's fine with me. The people slinging those names are just missing the point:

**People WANT to get rid of pain,
and they'll pay for the relief.**

Who does the world a greater service: The guy who provides an evening's entertainment or satisfies an idle curiosity, or the person who helps people feel good and achieve the things that are important to them?

Remember: You're not creating the pain. You're removing it.

The more pain you remove, the more money you'll make. And the happier your customers will be for having met you.

Your homework today is to sit down and think of all the things that create pain for your customers and how your product or service removes that pain.

Make a list of every point that occurs to you, and keep that. You'll need it later.

Next, we get into the fun parts of creating killer sales copy. The best way to virtually guarantee your success in selling, and a little-known trick for creating products that have unusually high chances of being wildly successful.

Yes, all that in one section. ;)

The Second Key to Million-Dollar Copy

This is where it gets fun.

You've heard the saying, "Build a better mousetrap, and the world will beat a path to your door." You almost certainly know that is a myth.

The second key is much more direct:

Build a Better Offer!

Then beat a path to the doors of people who already want it.

If you make the right offer to the right prospect at the right time, you can have the worst copy in the world and still make a fortune.

The way to do this is as simple as the rest of this system, and just as non-intuitive.

--> Write the sales letter before you create the product. <--

Start by listing every single desire your research has uncovered. Promise your prospect specific ways to fix those problems or satisfy those wants and desires.

If you're selling a low-ticket item to a consumer market, you can do this in a matter of a few hours. Remember: You have to be believable. Don't write a 40-page letter promising the world to sell a \$30 product.

That's an impulse purchase. You don't need to create a burning desire. Just an impulse strong enough for them to act on.

On the other hand... If you're looking to create a higher-ticket item, **get outrageous**.

Seriously. Get truly outrageous. If you think there's a remote chance you can deliver, include it. Don't worry at this point about how, and don't worry that you're doing anything deceptive. (You're not.) Just do it.

Make several edits, adding as much as you can at every point.

(For some ideas on this, watch for the section creatively entitled: "Thud!")

Get excited about it. That will show through in your copy, and it will get your creative juices flowing. You will be amazed at how much better your efforts will turn out if you try this.

Now comes the interesting part. There's a very good chance that you could deliver on every promise you've made in that letter. List them all, and decide how you're going to fulfill them.

Match the method to the market. Do they prefer audio? In what format? Are they likely to be able to use spreadsheets? Have they asked for worksheets or examples or templates?

Don't just give them what they want. Give it to them the way they want it.

They'll read your letter and have just exactly the response you want: "Yes! This is what I've been looking for!"

Even if they had never thought about it before.

Here's a little-known secret to organizing an offer for maximum results: The desperate needs should determine your central product. The rest should be offered as separate bonuses.

You should also keep ***the central product*** to one medium. Audio, text, software... whatever. Everything else should be a bonus.

A major exception is audio training programs that include printed worksheets. The worksheets are essential to the main product and can be used at the same time as the audio, so they should be described as part of the central product.

The psychology behind this is pretty straightforward. If there's too much stuff addressed in the main product, it looks unorganized or generic. If things are addressed separately, the perceived value and credibility is raised substantially.

Yeah. This stuff does make a difference.

Every item in the offer should address a clear and identifiable need that your prospects have said they want help with. Every one. If you just threw it in because it sounds cool, but it fails that test, get rid of it. Or offer it as an upsell or follow-up offer.

Or include it as an unadvertised bonus.

Oh yeah... The stuff you promised in the letter and can't deliver on? That's easy.

Delete it.

Never make a promise that you can't deliver on. That's something every honest businessperson knows. What most of them don't realize is that they can deliver a lot more than they are.

And, often, more than they know.

Creating the sales copy first is a wonderful trick for removing the limitations and letting your imagination show you what you've been missing. You'll come up with options and features and improvements that you might never think of otherwise.

You'll promise things in your "vision copy" that might later seem impossible. Look at those things before you delete them, and see if there isn't a way to make it happen that isn't as obvious as what you came up with at first.

This really is the master key to copy that sells in a truly big way. Make a powerful offer to people who already want it.

In some ways, the rest is just a matter of getting out of your own way and letting the prospect make the obvious decision.

The next section will give you some concrete ideas on ways to increase the perceived (and real) value of your products. It's a reprint of an article that originally appeared in my newsletter, TalkBiz News, under the imaginative title, "Thud!"

This lesson is a reprint of part of the March 4, 2003 issue of my newsletter, TalkBiz News. It's a little long, but I think you'll find it worthwhile.

As you read it, consider how you can use the suggestions to improve your offer.

Remember: The offer is the key!

And now, on with the show...

--==(*)==--

"THUD!"

alternatively titled:

Adding Real and Perceived Value to Boost Profits and Make Happier Customers

A while back, I read a post on the Warrior board in which someone asked "How long should an e-book be?" One person suggested that 240 pages was the minimum, and anything less would leave him feeling ripped off.

My first response was:

"When did we start valuing information by the pound?!"

Duh. What was I thinking? We already do.

It's called the "Thud Factor."

....

In the info-product world, the phrase refers to the noise the box makes when you drop it. If people spend a lot of money on a hard copy information product, they want mass to justify the cost in their mind.

This works differently for various types of products, but it all boils down to one critical part of the buying process: Perceived value.

When you buy an information product, you generally buy on the basis of the results promised. Unfortunately, many people have a comparison-mode that kicks in when they get the package that requires that they judge information as though it was all of the same value - by volume.

For instance, a person might judge a 100-page book that will solve a serious health or business problem for them by the same criteria they'd use when looking at a book on Cajun cooking. That's not a valid comparison of the value of each product, but it's what happens. It's what they're used to.

People get into perceptual ruts.

....

This can cause some serious problems, ranging from high returns and customer service issues to (more importantly) failure to use the information. This means the customer misses out on the true value of the work.

There are a number of solutions to this. The easiest and most common is to add to the package, mixing the media so that you don't get snared by the problem of misperceived familiarity.

In other words: Break the pattern.

....

Warning: Don't mistake volume for value.

The most common example of this online is the site that offers "\$1600 worth of ebooks as a free bonus for signing up for our newsletter!"

Puh-LEEZ, people!

If you're not making the package more valuable for your customer *IN A WAY THAT'S RELEVANT TO YOUR MAIN OFFER*, you're wasting your time.

And theirs.

....

In order to add to the "Thud Factor" in a way that your customers will respond to and appreciate, you must actually make the product more valuable as well as increasing the perceived value. A few possibilities to consider:

Add media: People learn better if more of their senses are engaged in the process. If your product is primarily audio in format, add transcriptions, with worksheets to make the information easier to grasp and apply.

A 3-minute narrated video demonstration of some things can take the place of 20 pages of text instructions. The text can, and should, focus on the principles behind the process: why it works the way it does, how to make it most effective, etc.

Or consider adding audio tutorials. Many people grasp information more readily when they listen to it.

If you're sending hard copies, deliver the audio in standard CD format, rather than packaging it as MP3s to save money and space. Standard audio CDs are more convenient, thus more likely to be used, and they add to the perceived value at the same time.

Add supplements: Additional "advanced" or "extra" information that goes beyond the specific product description make very useful bonuses. As a word of caution, I'd avoid including them in the same binding as other material. They have to LOOK extra or they won't be seen as BEING extra.

Deliver it as a course (or deliver a course in addition to the main work): This is simple enough. Sequential material with worksheets makes it more likely that the customer will actually use the information. It also reframes the content as educational, and intended for progressive usage.

Add personal service: Consulting, critiques, etc. Anything that involves you directly interacting with the customer is clearly a substantial value.

Look at your product or service, and see what you can come up with. There's a very strong chance that you can add significantly to both the perceived and the actual value of your offering without adding substantially to your costs.

That means you make more money AND the customer gets more real value. Everyone wins.

We like that.

....

Note that relevance is a key factor in all of this. One of the fastest ways to kill the psychological "Thud" your product carries is to add a lot of material that doesn't relate to what the customer is ordering.

One common mistake is to constantly interject political, religious, philosophical or social beliefs throughout the content - IF they're not directly relevant to the customer's success with the product.

I like to know about the creators of the various products I buy. Most of us do. But that sort of thing is best kept to the introduction or "About the Author" sections of a product. Or put on a separate page on your site. Or put in your newsletter in a section that's separate from the main content. (Unless, of course, your opinions are the main content, which is often the case.)

Anywhere but in the middle of "how-to" instructions.

In short, if you're a liberal Calvinist, don't beat people over the head with tuna sandwiches when they paid to learn how teach their cows to play billiards!

(Name those cartoonists...)

....

Side note: Don't include obscure references like the one above, except for example or humor purposes. ;)

....

It's often a good idea to give the customer choices. You don't want to make them confusing, so you need to balance this carefully.

This is quite common online. You'll often see a package offered in Bronze, Silver and Gold options, with additional value at each level, but the same fundamental content at the root of each.

The various options let each person choose the parts that are most important to them. This generally increases sales and opens further options for future products. Let people acquaint themselves with your material's quality at their own pace.

Letting people become comfortable is a major addition to perceived (and actual) value.

....

Let's look at some specific examples of increasing the "Thud Factor" for different types of products.

One powerful way to do this with pure digital products is to offer multiple files. A lot of people misunderstand the concept and just give away bucketloads of ebooks, without concern for their relevance to the offer, or even their value to the reader.

An offer with a solid "Virtual Thud" will contain useful and original information combined with one or more of the ideas on the following page:

The "THUD!" Checklist

1. Relevant and (at least somewhat) exclusive software.
2. Proprietary data.
3. Bundled services that relate to the product.
4. Expanded info on related techniques.
5. Audio files to add depth to the process of learning.
6. Video, for clarity in learning.
7. Worksheets and checklists
8. Phone or email consultation.
9. Exclusive follow-up info or free subscriptions.
10. Case studies. (Separate, for illustration purposes.)
11. Sample text, scripts, ads, and anything else that will help the customer to better use the product.
12. Free or dicounted updates.
13. Spreadsheets.
14. Easily imported "Bookmarks" or "Favorites" collections.
15. Access to membership areas.
16. Contact lists for vendors, potential partners, or other relevant companies or individuals.
17. Separate package of reviews of related products.
18. "Quick start" guide.

19. Interactive tutorials or self-assessments.

20. Hard copy material mailed separately.

Note that every one of these is intended to add VALUE, not just bulk.

REMEMBER: The real goal is to get the customer from purchase to results as quickly as possible.

Re-read that. It's important.

Really. I'll wait.

....

When looking to increase the value of a hard copy product (both real and perceived), all of the above are useful. Some additional things to keep in mind are:

- ❑ Separately mentioned print material should be under separate covers. Make sure your customers have no problem finding each piece individually.
- ❑ As of this writing, CDs have become more popular than cassettes for audio presentations. Bonus CDs should be in separate packaging.
- ❑ Stick to the main theme of the product.
- ❑ For business-to-business or other "How-To" material, make the packaging appropriate to working documents, rather than being too slick. You want people to write in the margins.
- ❑ Save the slick, "professional" look for lower cost consumer goods.

Yes, that last is counter-intuitive. It also works.

....

For affiliates, one brilliant strategy (first used by Phil Wiley) is to offer your own bonuses to people who buy using your affiliate link and send you the receipt.

In this way, you add sales and add to your own customer list.

Leave it to Phil, eh?

....

So - Does this actually work?

How about an example or two?

#1: I recently went to Tampa for a brainstorming session that included some extremely sharp folks. One of them asked "How would you take this \$39 product and turn it into a package that's actually worth \$1500 in real value?"

In a half hour, using just these strategies, we did it.

He suggested that he'd probably sell the resulting product for around \$400.

The increased cost of delivery is about \$10. He'll get 10 times the price, and the customer will get 40 times the value.

Not a bad deal for anyone.

....

#2: I attended Jay Abraham's (<http://www.abraham.com>) "Advanced PEQ" conference last year. When I got the home study package (which sells separately for \$5000), I was surprised at the sheer size of the box.

Included were the entire contents of the seminar in cassette, CD and video formats (along with the promised bonus materials.)

This may seem like just a way to "pump up the volume," but it's actually what most of Jay's clients wanted.

The program is designed to be used by anything from small companies and professional practices to large organizations. Many of the attendees wanted ways to incorporate the material in their in-house training programs, and the different formats accommodated that need perfectly.

Rather than explain the information themselves, with the inevitable omissions and lack of clarity from second-hand instruction, they can use the multiple formats to make sure it's all clear and accurate.

That's adding value - perceived AND real.

....

#3: Jimmy Brown (<http://www.123webmarketing.com>) has a much more straightforward way of adding to the "THUD!" factor. He offers many of his products with reprint rights. This allows you to sell them and keep the resulting income.

It doesn't get a whole lot simpler than that folks.

....

Look over the checklist above. How many of those ways can you use in your business to add value to your product or service?

By the way, don't make the mistake of thinking this is just for digital information producers. Any business can use these ideas to add profits, increase value for your customers, and increase your customer loyalty.

Take a few minutes right now and see how many of these ideas you can incorporate in your business within the next week.

I think you'll be pleasantly surprised.

Paul

PS: Making an ebook fit a mandatory size expectation is a Very Bad Idea. If you take 240 pages to teach me something that requires 240 pages to teach well, I'm going to be happy.

If you take 240 pages to teach something that could have been done in 50 pages, I will probably never buy from you again.

Time savings can be one of the most powerful additions to perceived value. Sometimes less really is more.

--==(*)==---

Yes, that really was from a free electronic newsletter.

Your homework, should you choose to accept it, is to apply at least 3 of these ideas to your current offer. Any business can do this, not just information businesses.

For example, a restaurant might offer printed copies of some of their favorite recipes, a "subscription" card, which would be good for three meals - all prepaid at a discounted flat rate - and access to a private web site or phone number where your best customers can make advance reservations.

A consultant might offer recordings of each session for the client to review, so they get more out of the advice they're given, spreadsheets that they can use to set and adjust targets, and a set of worksheets allowing them to plan out how they're going to employ the ideas they've learned.

Get started. You can stop at three if you like, but do at least those.

The Third Key to Million-Dollar Copy

This step is crucial:

Make sure the offer is presented in the prospect's language!

To do this, run it by a few people in your target market that you know. Listen carefully to their feedback. If they're not drooling to get their hands on it; if they haven't got brush burns on their butts from whipping out their wallets; if they don't say HOLY COW, I WANT THAT NOW!...

Work on it some more.

You need to use the same words the prospects used when they told you what they wanted. You need to hit on the emotions they described, and point out that the solution will do what they want, the way they want it done.

Perry Marshall covers a powerful technique for testing the offer fast: Google AdWords. Or, if you have your own list, send an email to a small subset of that list asking them what they think.

Using these approaches, you can very likely get the feedback you need within a matter of a day or two.

Once you get a consistently enthusiastic response, you're ready for the next step.

Not sure how important it is to be really tuned in to your prospect's desires AND language? Here's an example of the difference it can make. This is "Million Dollar Copy" at its finest. And, surprisingly, its simplest.

....

Scott Stratten had developed a Flash movie (<http://www.workyourlife.com/movie.html>) based on a viral email that he'd received several times. Nice stuff, and people loved it. They were telling their friends and driving tons of traffic to the thing.

Problem: It was a great lead-in for his newsletter, but less than 1% of those visitors were subscribing. He was burning up the bandwidth bills and getting almost nothing in return.

It was a perfect match, all the way around. And the people who subscribed loved him and his information. He was stymied as to why so few people followed up and subscribed. It made no sense.

So, he did the smart thing. He went to a discussion board where he knew he could find people who knew what they were doing, and he asked for help.

I took a look at the site. Beautiful. Hallmark quality animation, with a black background and a great message about how we spend our most precious resource: Time.

The page that came up after it was white, thanked them for coming, and tried to sell them stuff, some of which was great and some of which wasn't really related to what they'd just seen.

Ooops. Major disconnects.

For a complete case study of why this worked and what the challenges were, grab the report at: <http://www.talkbiznews.com/ViralStudy.pdf>

I typed up some replacement copy and sent it to Scott, with the suggestion that it be put on a black background in white text.

The copy was:

Sometimes, just sometimes, we all need that reminder.
The reminder that life is too short to waste, and too
precious to leave to routine.

We need a reminder to give more time to our families
and friends and, just as importantly, ourselves.

"Work Your Life" is that reminder. It's a little nudge,
to get you remembering what's important to YOU. It's free,
and it's the kind of thinking you'll find adding joy to
your life.

To start receiving these precious reminders, just twice
a month, enter your email address below and click on the
button that says, "I deserve more!"

He had gotten around 100 subscribers from this page in the previous month. After making this change, he was soon getting 500 or more subscribers PER DAY.

Suddenly that bandwidth bill didn't look so bad.

He had taken 2+ years to build a list of 4300 subscribers before launching that site. In the next two years, his current subscriber list reached over 250,000 - and still growing.

Scott knew that his market liked the message. They were already passing it around. He tested the format, and found that it worked. But after they viewed it, he offered them what HE wanted, rather than what THEY wanted.

To top it off, the offer was confusing and had too many options. Plus, it was in a different language than was used in the "sample" - the movie.

Ooops.

No second date.

I just changed it so they were getting more of what they wanted. I offered to extend the experience for them. That was all the difference, in exactly 100 words and about three minutes.

That's the power of a consistent language match.

That's million-dollar copy.

I want to point out here that Scott was brilliant in the way he handled the whole process. He looked for something his market already wanted, and went to them for cues.

He took an email that was already circulating widely, and added "Thud" by turning it from a few words on the screen into a truly beautiful video presentation.

His follow-up offer contained a perfect match. His products, his newsletter, even the screensaver of the same video.

There really was only one thing wrong – the close - and, when he realized it was broken, he asked for help. He didn't know what to fix because the break wasn't in an area in which he specialized.

He needed a copywriter.

I'd estimate that any competent copywriter using the traditional approach could have turned Scott's conversion rate up to 5 times what he was previously getting.

The factors that made the difference between that 500% and the 1500% (and more) that he ended up with are all part of the "Million Dollar Copy" mindset.

Go back to the second section and go over those factors, and you'll see how they all fit into that small space of words.

Better yet, go through the experience. Watch the video at <http://www.workyourlife.com/movie.html> and read the copy that follows. Watch how it all fits together as part of a single experience.

When you do, remember that the copy is a tiny part of that process. It doesn't create the demand or the end result. The offer did all of that, and Scott put together a hell of an offer.

The copy simply eases the way for the reader to do what they already want to do. It sewed the offer and the order together, without bumps or jostling.

And literally anyone could have written it.

An Important Note

Something to consider while we're on the subject:

"Million Dollar Copy" isn't something that can only be done one way. There is at least one right way to do it for every person writing and for every project.

Copywriting is something of an art and a science both. The art is very much an individual thing. The science has been nicely outlined in many books and courses.

When you're starting out, it's helpful to have a formula that you use to structure your letters. That keeps you focused on the content, while making sure that you include everything you need in an order that makes sense and has some power to it.

The course that I learned the most from in that regard is "Power Copywriting for the Internet," by Bob Serling.

<http://www.power-copywriting-for-the-internet.com/>

The best step-by-step process for writing a sales letter I've ever seen.

Whatever process you use, remember that the only important judge of its effectiveness is the market. You'll hear from a lot of people that you're doing something wrong, no matter how you do it.

Just watch the numbers. Cash never lies.

The next section gets into improving your product, preparing to sell, and ways you can boost your conversion even more.

We'll also look at a simple way to help protect yourself from copycats...

The Fourth Key to Million-Dollar Copy

Okay. You've got your sales letter. You've rewritten it to make sure it's in your prospect's language.

NOW you create the product.

By the way... If you already have a product, you may want to go through this process anyway. It can help you to see how you can improve your overall response in ways you might not have considered when you originally designed it.

You might find an idea for an extra bonus that could be the thing that kicks sales up in a big way. Or you might get some good ideas for new and more profitable front- or back-end products and services.

Never stop looking for those million-dollar selling points.

Creating the product is simply a matter of organizing and developing something that fulfills as many of the promises you made in that sales letter as possible, with an emphasis on the things that your prospects told you they wanted most.

If you have the time and money, you'll want to create several versions right away. The basic, or "lead" product, which will be the least expensive, an upsell, and one or more back-end offers. A simple way to do this is to create the entire product you described and take things away to make the lower cost versions.

If you've done the previous steps right, the odds are very good that you've got a winner on your hands. You want to be able to capitalize on that response from the start.

This is one way to prepare for the nearly inevitable knock-offs of your offer. People who steal ideas usually do it for a quick fix, and won't understand this whole process. By having a series of products and offers in place, you establish yourself as a more prepared and professional choice in the market.

Having these offers available will boost your profits, even if no one ever buys them.

Of course, we hope they buy them in massive quantities. ;)

If you don't have the time and money to create the whole sequence up front, get the main product rolled out as soon as possible, and start building the follow-up materials while you're rolling it out. Finance it from sales, if you have to.

Remember, most of your money will come from repeat buyers. Million-dollar campaigns can be made or broken on this concept alone.

Before you start selling it, make sure that it's well liked by a few of the people in your market. The best folks to run it by are some of the ones who helped you out with suggestions. They'll be looking for the value, instead of critiquing it. And they're very likely to give you great testimonials.

Side note: When you get testimonials, ask the senders what specifically they liked most. "Great stuff!" is not a great testimonial.

"I used the suggestion on managing expectations (page 132), and it's saved me about 2 hours a day in customer service hassles. I'm spending one of those building my business even more, and the other playing with my kids, who I'd felt like I was ignoring. This is terrific. Thanks!"

- Jim Davidson, Walton's Beach, AZ

That is a great testimonial.

It's a good idea to run your product by other folks in your industry for critique, but don't get sucked in to believing that they know what your customers want. They can help you find glitches, and suggest ways to improve, but if their suggestions don't echo the concerns of your customers: Politely ignore them.

Remember: Your peers are not usually your market.

One note on the testimonials you get from reviewers: Make sure you mention that they're from people who got pre-release copies. There is a significant difference between testimonials from paying customers and from reviewers.

The Fifth Key to Million-Dollar Copy

You're almost ready to roll it out.

Revise the letter to reflect the actual finished product and what it delivers, and then do a test campaign.

Do not test to your list!

Do not try to set up JVs or endorsements yet!

Test using Google AdWords or other pay-per-click or paid traffic methods. Get a feel for the conversion rate, and make any adjustments your prospects might suggest. Consider putting in a pop-up that comes up when they go anywhere but the order page. Ask them why they didn't buy. (Ask less bluntly, but ask.)

Your list, if you have one, is composed of people who are much more likely to buy from you, so you want to make sure they get the best promotion possible.

Once you've got it ready for them, do a phased rollout. A pre-sale announcement, with a compelling story or other "hook" will get people into a buying mood. Curiosity alone can create a lot more traffic to the site, and more of a desire to find out what the deal is.

That always means more sales, assuming your set-up was consistent with the offer.

Use something to really drive people to the site. Curiosity, scarcity, a time-sensitive discount, exclusive bonus or any of the other techniques that increase desire.

Track your conversion rate.

The second phase of the rollout, assuming the first is profitable, is to look for partners to help you promote it. Affiliate programs are the simplest route. Don't play this as a passive game, though. You need to approach potential affiliates in a proactive fashion, and make sure you can tell them what's in it for them.

Conversion rates aren't enough, but they're essential. Tell them the estimated EPC (earnings per click) that they're likely to get, or that other affiliates are getting. EPC is basically the visitor value, from the perspective of the affiliate.

Test other traffic sources as well. Endorsed mailings, pop-ups on niche sites, exit pop-ups on the sales pages of related (or even competing) products, banner networks, combined product ventures, niched discounts to tap existing customer bases. Anything else you can think of that could generate targeted traffic.

When you're preparing your marketing materials for partners, make them as easy to use as possible. Cut and paste pop-up code, banners already completed and ready to go, sample endorsement letters for them to model (NOT copy), etc.

Focus all of your traffic driving materials on the concept of pre-selling. Get the prospect to the page knowing what they're going to find, and interested in the solution your materials offer.

If you just try to drive a lot of untargeted traffic, you will most likely find that it costs you a bunch of money, since most of these traffic sources provide more than one option for the visitor.

If your ad is cute but unclear and the other guy's is clear but less appropriate, the serious prospect is going to visit the other advertiser, if anyone at all.

I'll take 1000 serious prospects over 100,000 curiosity seekers any day of the week. Even if the curiosity seekers are in my market. Curiosity seekers are far less likely to buy, and far more likely to ask for refunds if they do order.

Serious people go looking for solutions. They're proactive, which means they'll buy more if they like what you gave them in the first place. And they're many times more likely to buy high-ticket items and consulting services.

Do the math.

Who do you think will get you to your goal the fastest?

The Sixth Key to Million-Dollar Copy

Feedback.

The breakfast, lunch and dinner of champions.

The most direct form of feedback is already in place: How many buy?

Most people are lucky if they can tell you that, surprisingly. In recent months I've encountered no less than 3 established and savvy businesspeople, who've been selling their products online for from 1-7 years, who could not tell me what their conversion rates were.

They wanted help with copy. That's all well and good, but if your conversion rate isn't the problem, that may not be the best place to look for improvements. You may just need more traffic.

And if'n the traffic yer gettin' ain't targeted, the best copy in the world ain't gonna sell stuff fer ya, ya know what ah mean?

To really know what the weak points are in your process, you need to watch all the important variables. That information comes from two main sources: Testing and visitor comments.

When you test, you want to focus on a small group of variables:

1. Your Offer.
2. Your Copy.
3. Your Traffic sources.

If people aren't staying at your site more than a minute or two, the problem is most likely to be your traffic sources or your opening copy.

If they're staying long enough to read halfway through, it's more likely to be your offer or a speed-bump (deal killer) somewhere in the copy. Another common problem here is the pre-selling (traffic generation materials) not being targeted enough.

If they read the whole way through and aren't buying, it's either your offer or the closing copy.

Test all the variations, using this as an initial guide. To help narrow down the search for the weak points, ask your visitors. And ask your customers what would have made the package even better for them.

Never take a single comment as more than that. The opinion of one person, no matter how perfect a prospect they might seem to be, isn't enough. That's something that is difficult for a lot of people to accept. **Get over it.**

Until you determine a trend, you don't have a basis for anything but a blind test. If you're going to do blind testing, do it with a separate URL, and drive traffic from the same sources. This way, you can test without putting your entire income stream from that product at risk.

That doesn't mean you should shy away from those kinds of tests. Just that you want to narrow down the focus to the real weak points as quickly as possible. Make sure you go into every test with a clear and realistic understanding of the validity of the data you're depending on.

The more consistent the comments, the more dependable the data will be for a test. Just remember, ALL comments are to be considered probationary until tested. People will often tell you what they think they're supposed to say. They don't always act on what they've said they would.

An excellent program for this and most other kinds of testing is ProAnalyzer.

<http://www.proanalyzer.com/cgi-bin/affiliates/clickthru.cgi/talkbiz>

Recommendations on process from professionals with Clue can be a great place to get ideas for testing. As an example of this, Perry Marshall heard something at a conference recently during a panel discussion of copywriting. He went home and tested it, **adding a single paragraph of copy** early in his letter.

His sales doubled.

Yeah. One paragraph meant a 100% increase in sales.

Those are the things that create million-dollar copy.

Test, track, and refine.

Along the way, you're going to find that a lot of things make small differences. A few will make huge differences, like the single paragraph that Perry added, or the 100 words I created for Scott.

Small or large, they all add up. And even tiny looking differences can make for very significant increases to your annual income.

The only way you're going to be able to consistently increase your conversion rate is to test. The more tests you do, the more accurate your future testing will be.

You'll hear a lot of people talk about testing. Don't ignore it. It's the surest way to get the most from your efforts.

In the next section we'll talk about creating your own sales techniques, and show you some examples of how others have gone about it.

After all, you're unique and your product is unique. Why shouldn't your sales approach be?

The Seventh Key to Million-Dollar Copy

Innovate.

Create new approaches.

This one is best explained through an example.

When Mark Joyner decided to shut down his main business, he had some powerful assets he wanted to capitalize on. There were a number of perceived problems with the offer, though:

- ❑ **There were over 2 dozen different software products, 3 e-books, a database and 15 different audio products in the package, each of which could have had its own sales letter. There simply wasn't a way to give people enough info to make a sound decision on any of the products individually.**
- ❑ The audio interviews spanned the entire spectrum of online business activity. Hardly a niche-targetable promotion.

- ❑ **The software covered a wide range of uses and was written in several different languages.**
- ❑ It came with minimal documentation and no technical support.
- ❑ **There was a "no refund" policy, on a \$1000 purchase.**
- ❑ Customers would have to spend additional money on programmers to use most of the software.
- ❑ **The company was going out of business.**

On the plus side, this stuff cost a lot of money to produce. A lot more than \$1000. It represented a significant head start for the person or company with the resources to put it to work.

The biggest trick to the copy was overcoming the sheer volume and variety of the package. No one could really know how a given person would choose to use the code, or what code they would find useful.

The offer included the right to re-purpose the code, modifying it into other products. So, we went with that.

The technique used to get the value across was simple. For each software module or application, I gave a few examples of different ways the visitor could modify it for their own use. By the time they got through a few different applications, they were thinking up their own ideas for how they could adapt the code into new products and services.

We didn't know the benefits of all the aspects of the product, so we allowed the visitors to create those benefits themselves - while they read the letter!

That's powerful. There's an aspect to it that isn't obvious:

If you tell them, it's a statement. An assertion. Nothing more.

If they tell themselves how a thing can be used, it's an accepted FACT.

You can do this by presenting lists of alternatives, or by asking open-ended questions that relate to the feature you're presenting. The key is to do the same thing at least 3 times. If you can, do it seven times or more. By the time they get to the seventh, their imaginations are fully engaged, and they'll figure out all the ways they could want to get more than their money's worth from the offer.

There is really no more honest way to approach a sale than to provide the prospect the necessary data and let them define their own benefits. They know their needs and interests better than you ever will, and they're motivated to find solutions that fit their goals.

Using this approach, we sold 1500 copies (\$1,500,000) in the first 3 1/2 months. Then things stalled.

Meanwhile, Mark was listening to the folks who told him what it would take for them to buy. He also got some folks together on a conference call to discuss ways to complete the 2000 package limit.

On the call, he mentioned that he had come up with a way to handle payment options for the people who had asked for them. (Mind you, the price went up to \$1500 at the same time.)

We had been focusing on the source code up to that point. It was suggested that we re-focus on the audio portion, since so many of the people who wanted to promote it had audiences that were less technically skilled, but serious about marketing online.

The testimonials on the audio segments themselves made it clear that people considered them more than worth the package price, so why not?

There was one small problem with the idea. ***I had absolutely no desire to rewrite the letter***, which several people insisted would be necessary. But how to do it without that?

That was simple.

We drafted a new series of promotional emails that included comments from paying customers about the value of the audios. We then told the readers about the installment plan, and suggested that they skip the technical stuff and go straight to the section with the audio training materials.

We reframed the entire offer in each email.

The remaining 500 packages (over \$500,000) sold out in about 3 days.

Understand what happened there. By reframing the focus of the promotional copy, we appealed to entirely different markets. The software became the bonuses, and the audio was now the product. **Completely different offer.**

When your campaigns get "stuck in the mud," consider new ways to promote or package your offers. You'll be surprised at what you might come up with. Little things like that can be all the difference.

What aspects of your offer do your prospects suggest improvements for? Is there a way you can give it to them that doesn't cut down your sales or increase your costs?

Can you:

- 1. Tailor packages?**
2. Offer a la carte bonuses?
- 3. Offer installment plans?**
4. Provide personal consulting?
- 5. Offer combination deals, including products from others?**
6. Offer membership features?
- 7. Provide a continuity product?**
8. Offer web-based services?
- 9. Provide custom software?**
10. Offer expert advice from others?

Spend a few minutes thinking about this, and you'll start to see more ways you can quickly increase your product line and price points, as well as providing your customers more and better solutions to their problems.

Look for approaches that aren't obvious. Ken Evoy created the technique of breaking sales letters into smaller pages, with phrases designed to get people to click to the next section. He outlined it in "Make Your Site Sell."

<http://makethat.sitesell.com/>

Tom Kulzer developed the follow-up autoresponder that's used to deliver this course.

<http://lists.aweber.com/>

Mike Stewart pioneered the use of audio testimonials, and has done more to teach marketers how to use audio than anyone else in the business.

<http://www.internetaudioguy.com/>

Armand Morin, Rick Raddatz and Alex Mandossian recognized the potential in Mike's ideas and developed the idea into a simple approach that anyone can use to put audio testimonials on their sales sites.

<http://www.audiogenerator.com/>

Allen Says has developed the process of "selling through adrenaline" to a fine art. His sales pieces don't look like sales pieces, but they pull like almost nothing else.

<http://www.paulstoolbox.com/posts/>

These guys are all very successful. They're all innovators. They took ideas that were different and tried them out. Sure, some failed. But the ones that succeeded, like those above, have made the effort of testing and innovation extremely profitable.

The most important thing they all do is to remember who their customers are and how they look at things. What their expectations and preferences and "languages" are.

Then they adjust their approaches to their prospects' desires.

Satisfying those desires is what benefits are all about. It's also an area where even lifelong salespeople can be easily confused.

The next section will explain the difference between features and benefits. And, unless you've already read the article (it's another reprint from my newsletter), there's a good chance it's very different from what you might think.

Features vs Benefits: Where's the Party?

This section is a reprint of an article I wrote for my newsletter a few years back. Like most things that relate to human beings, it seems to be just as apt today as it was back then.

Understanding human nature is the best investment a copywriter can make. They don't upgrade the species all that often...

On with the show.

---==(*)===---

Yet Another Blasted Article On The Difference Between Features and Benefits

(alternatively titled)

"Where's the Party?"

The primary function of marketing is simple: To create a situation in which people willingly give you what you want in exchange for what you offer.

You need to do one of two things to make any deal work:

Find the people who have what you want and who already want what you've got, and propose a deal...

...or, find out what those people already want, get it, and give it to them. (This is actually a simpler process, as it doesn't matter what you start out with in this approach, and your risk is much smaller.)

One of the most curious things about marketers is their almost universal failure to grasp the most important aspect of their trade:

They don't understand what people really want.

Sometimes it's because they're wrapped up in the way they present the deal. These are the folks that win Clio Awards for their cleverness and "creativity," and find themselves clientless shortly thereafter. (Because their clients either went elsewhere or went broke.)

Sometimes it's because they try to fit the market to the product, which is something like resizing your feet to fit your boots.

Sometimes it's because they separate branding from response, which should be punishable by being barbecued over old issues of the Wall Street Journal.

Most often it's because they fail to recognize - and emphasize - the difference between features, products, and benefits.

This is a Very Bad Thing®.

....

A long time ago, in a lifetime far, far away, I was employed by a "Corporation." (To you creative types, this is something like the Empire in Star Wars, only less benevolent.)

They wanted me to teach their people to sell a line of nutritional products. Vitamins and the like. Great products, but not real "sexy" stuff.

You can imagine the training process, eh?

They all wanted to do the same thing: List ingredients. The more, the merrier.

"We gotcher vitamin A, yer vitamin B, and yer vitamins X, Y and Z. Absorption rate's over 90%. Cold processed, just like yer faveright beer!"

"Ummm... No," says I, in my most professorial voice. "That ain't how you sell vitamins."

"Huh?"

"Huh?" seemed like a wall in their minds. Even the fitness fanatics couldn't get past the Ingredient Approach to selling vitamins.

We explained that the ingredients were of no interest to the customer, except as far as they produced a benefit the customer was looking for. (Benefit being defined as "Whatever brings the customer closer to the state in which they'd like to live." Well, that's the definition we used back then, anyway.)

The customer, we pointed out, was similarly uninterested in the product. Little tasteless pills that they had to remember to take every day? What a nuisance! That's too much like taking medicine.

They didn't want the features (the ingredients), and they didn't really even want the product itself. So why do people buy vitamins?

Vitamin C sells big because people know it helps them feel better when they've got a cold. That's easy. Removing pain that people understand is a simple sale.

Anti-oxidants help people minimize wear and tear on their bodies, by cleaning up poisons. Sort of nebulous, until you tell them the unpleasant things those poisons can cause.

B vitamins help reduce the effects of stress. People who are interested in their health "got it" right away.

The salespeople didn't.

We'd explain to them that what people get from vitamins is the key. More energy to enjoy the things they do. Less stress. Reduced risk of certain illnesses. Better sleep. Stuff that makes a difference.

With vitamins, as with any product, the key is simple:

They don't care what's in it until they know what's in it for them.

Some of them learned. The rest needed a more "concrete" example.

But how do you make the point? If your salespeople (or you) are focusing on the features of your product, how do you get them to switch their attention to benefits?

....

Try something like this.

One day, put a bag of groceries on a desk somewhere in the office. Include a 5 pound sack of flour, a gallon of milk, a dozen eggs, a pound of sugar, a stick of butter, and miscellaneous flavorings. Generic stuff.

Tell them you grabbed someone else's groceries by mistake, and ask each of them individually if they want to buy them from you. ***At a markup, of course.***

Hey, the store makes a profit, why shouldn't you?

They'll look at you like you have two heads. At the end of the day you'll still have those groceries.

A couple of days later, have a birthday party for one of your staff. If it isn't anyone's birthday, get someone to play along. (This works best if you time it for a birthday, though.)

Play music. Have someone bring out a cake, complete with candles and balloons, and sing "Happy Birthday" to the victi... err... lucky celebrant. Do it up right.

The next day, get everyone together and ask if they enjoyed the party. (Except the Grinches. Never ask a Grinch about a party.)

When they say yes, ask them, "Then why didn't anyone buy those groceries from me?"

The confusion will be a tangible thing. Let it simmer for a moment.

"Those groceries are the ingredients that go into a cake. The 'features' if you will."

"You know, if I had gone in to buy that cake and been offered the flour, butter, eggs and all that went into it, I wouldn't have bought them either. I paid for a cake, not a sack of groceries."

"I paid for a cake, but that's not what I bought."

"What I bought was a party."

"THAT is the difference between features and benefits."

----=(*)=----

Think about this. That's your homework for today. Just spend some time and figure out what the real benefit is that your prospect is looking for from you.

In the example above, the cake wasn't the list of ingredients. And it was just one ingredient in the recipe needed to get the real benefit: The party.

In the next section, you'll learn about something even more powerful, but you'll need to understand this to get the ultimate benefit from that lesson.

That's the "more powerful" thing you'll learn about next.

Ultimate benefits.

Ultimate Benefits

This is possibly the most important lesson you'll ever get in writing million dollar copy. If it's not, I'm betting it's at least near the top.

Last time, we talked about the difference between benefits and features. I'd like to clear that up even further. It seems that we need an even more distinct line, something that you can use without fail to make the distinction. And this one does the trick:

If you can touch it, it's a feature.

Simple enough. But do you really understand how it's applied?

True benefits occur in the head and the heart. They're emotional, or they're based in our own self-image.

This is much more important than it sounds. Consider, for example, that better health can be "touched," in the sense that it can be measured. Blood pressure, cellular activity, hormonal levels, etc can all be quantified.

Good health is something that most people consider a benefit. Rather than argue with those people, let's call it a subsidiary benefit. A "something" that's necessary to achieve a more important thing that is a true benefit.

Think of it as an upgrade to their feature set.

When you are selling something, you want to present benefits to your prospect. The more precisely you target the features that are emotionally important to each prospect as an individual, the more sales you'll make.

For the ultimate in sales, you want to offer Ultimate Benefits.

What is an "Ultimate Benefit?"

It's the most important emotional payoff that the prospect hopes to get as a result of using your product or service.

Interestingly, the closer you get to an Ultimate Benefit, the simpler the desire will seem. The key is to understand how your product or service helps the prospect move toward that state.

Before I explain any further, let me provide an example that might serve make the whole thing easier to understand.

While attending the conference at which the original version of this series was presented, I took a break and went outside to hang out with some of the attendees. (It was January in Orlando and I live in Erie, PA after all.)

We were talking about sales copy and I used the phrase "Ultimate benefit." One of the gentlemen there, a friend of mine, asked what that was. When I asked if he'd like a demonstration, he agreed.

Some people are just gluttons for punishment. ;)

The sequence went something like this:

Me: "What do you want out of your online efforts?"

Him: "I want to make a lot of money."

Me: "For what?"

Him: "To do more and to have more security."

Me: "What does security mean to you? Mind you, I'm talking about the specifics. I don't want to get into a pop-psych thing here."

Him: "Well, it means being able to provide for my family. Making sure my kids have good educations and a decent place to live and good health. It means giving them all stability and a chance to grow and be successful

and happy."

Me: "What's in it for you?"

Him: "Huh?"

Me: "What do you get out of providing all of that for your family?"

Him: "I'm not sure what you mean."

Me: "Does it give you the freedom to do something else? Does it give you a sense of accomplishment? Is there a specific feeling or next step that comes after giving your family all of that?"

"What's in it for you?"

Him: "I'll have fulfilled my responsibility to my kids."

Me: "What does that feel like?"

Him: "Like I'm a good father."

That is an Ultimate Benefit. Not being a good father (which is a subsidiary benefit), but **feeling** like you are.

This sort of questioning process is how you find the Ultimate Benefit(s) your prospects are looking for. Notice that every question is a "What" question. They're all open-ended and asking for specific information.

I could easily have gone back to the part where he said "To do more..." and started over from that point in a different direction. There are other Ultimate Benefits to be had from a successful online business.

There was no need. I knew this direction would provide one, and it was just to show him what an Ultimate Benefit is.

Normally, the person you're speaking with won't be so free with that last step. It's usually very personal, and they won't always be close friends who know they can trust you with that kind of ammunition.

Think about it. Telling someone your most important goals and most powerful motivators is giving up a lot of control, isn't it?

Think about that for a while. See if that doesn't help you to understand sales resistance a bit more.

Go ahead and take a few minutes. I'll still be here when you get back.

Most of the time, as I said, they'll stop you before they get to an Ultimate Benefit.

So, what do you do when you "hit the wall," and they stop telling you anything useful? How do you even know?

Well, in this case, it would have happened by my buddy saying "Like I fulfilled my responsibility to my kids," and stopping, instead of going on to "Like I'm a good father."

They'll either start repeating themselves, or insisting that what they've just said is really the goal, or they'll go off in circles. If you press someone at that point, they may even get angry. And they will almost never know why they're being so defensive.

If it gets to one of those points, either drop it or go back to something earlier in the conversation, like the "To do more" comment.

You see, while it's helpful, you don't really need to know their Ultimate Benefit. You just need to know what would make it possible for them.

Anything more than that is just fact-checking.

People spend their lives wishing for or moving toward what they see as the perfect state. That can be very different for each person, but there are certain things each has to accomplish before they can move to the next stage.

Every person knows that, short of a magic event like winning the lottery, they need to advance through those stages in order. Each stage is a significant step along the way, and carries very strong emotional payoffs for reaching it. Each stage, as the individual defines it, is an Ultimate Benefit.

Students of psychology will hear echoes of Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs at this point. That's a concept/process/model that's often mentioned by salespeople and copywriters, but they don't do a very good job of explaining how it fits the business of selling.

It doesn't. It's not supposed to.

It's a useful example, and illustrates the concept well, but it's not very practical as a copywriting model. Unless you're selling self-actualization.

So, why the psycho-babble about Maslow, and how do you actually use this to sell stuff?

Maslow's Hierarchy shows a number of needs one must fulfill, in a definite order, to reach a state he calls "self-actualized."

Upon fulfilling each need, you automatically focus on fulfilling the next and moving up to the next again, until you reach the goal of self-actualization.

Real people do actually make jumps like this, although they're not always as neatly defined as Maslow's diagrams.

That's the key. It's why you don't need to know the prospect's Ultimate Benefit in order to appeal to it in your sales copy. All you really need to know is what they have to achieve or get in order to move to that next level they're looking for.

Then you refer to it in your sales copy.

Watch how you do it, though. For instance, it wouldn't make any sense at all to say, "This follow-up autoresponder script will make you a better father!"

That sounds ridiculous, doesn't it? You'll lose them right there.

Biff! Bang! Pow!

(Can you tell I watched a lot of Batman as a kid?)

You can say the same thing in terms that actually make sense. You might point out that the proper use of a good follow-up autoresponder series will help them to make more money in less time.

Then ask, "What would you be able to do with that extra time? Add to your marketing, so you can build you business even more? Spend some of it with your family? Volunteer at a local charity? Play more golf? Buy a fancy car? Maybe just relax and enjoy your Saturdays again?"

Wherever possible, you want to know what your prospects' desired Ultimate Benefits are, so you can tailor your examples to fit their wishes.

If you can make a credible case that your product will help them achieve one or more of their Ultimate Benefits, you've as much as made the sale.

When you refer to these, you want to be specific. Use examples that represent the achievement of the desired state, rather than referring to the state itself.

People don't always associate anything concrete with a state. They **always** associate a state with a specific activity or situation.

For example, picture yourself in this scenario:

You decided to come home early today and, as you pull your car up in front of the house, your gardener mentions how well the orchard is doing this year. You already know because you can smell the blossoms on the fruit trees all the way up here.

You pick a rose on the way up the stairs and, as you open the door, you catch the scent of a fire in the fireplace and hear the laughter of your kids playing in the family room down the hall.

As you pass the mirror on your way to put your briefcase in your den, you stop and smile.

"Yes," you think, "it's a good life."

How did that feel?

Here's something interesting: There are no benefits mentioned in that description until the last two words. "Good life." The rest is nothing but a list of features, each associated with a specific action.

The thing that makes that list powerful is that they're tied together into an easily imagined scenario that evokes a very strong feeling of state.

The name given to that state will be different for different people. For some, it will be wealth. For some, security. For others it might be peace or stability or just "the good life."

Some people will be attracted by the freedom. Some by the possessions and what they represent. Some will welcome the image of happy family life.

Just as with their Ultimate Benefit(s), you don't really need to know the name they'll put to the state. You just need to know what will make it possible for them, and present your offer in a way that credibly provides it.

You want to hint at it very near the top of your sales copy. If possible, in the headline and/or opening paragraph. If you can evoke a strong sense of the desired state at that point, they'll read your entire letter.

Well, until you get boring. So don't.

Weave these associations between your product and the state they're looking for throughout your copy. Keep them focused on what they want from your product or service.

Don't overdo this. If you do, and you manage to avoid looking like a snake oil salesman, you'll overload them and they'll back off because they don't believe you.

Keep it credible. If you can evoke a particularly sharp and clear state that your product can credibly deliver, you've done your job better than the vast majority of professional copywriters.

And your sales will show it.

A little homework for you: Call a few of your prospects or customers and ask them the sorts of questions outlined in the example above. "What" type questions, that require specifics as answers. Find out what Ultimate Benefits they're looking for from you.

Then look over your sales copy and see how well you address them - if at all. Try working up a modified version to better appeal to those desires.

The next section will show you what Ultimate Benefits all have in common. And what one thing is THE Ultimate Benefit. For everyone.

Yes, everyone.

I suspect you're going to be surprised at this one...

THE Ultimate Benefit

In the last lesson I mentioned a gentleman whose Ultimate Benefit was feeling that he was a good father. That's why he was attending the (rather high-priced) seminar where we talked.

This is further proof of the old saying:

Sex Sells!

"HUH?"

"What," I hear you saying, "does being a good father have to do with sex? Becoming a father, yes, but being a good one?"

Doesn't sound like it makes any sense at all, does it?

Once you really understand this, you will never have to worry about your sales copy pulling well again. Learn to use it and you're golden. Except when you forget. (And you will forget, from time to time.)

Fight it, and you're fighting the entire history of the human race.

That said, there are a lot of people who will fight the ideas in this section because they don't want to believe that they're driven this much by things they aren't even aware of. That's the funny part. It's the stuff you're not aware of that has the most control over you.

Please, take this seriously. This section gets a little into psychology, but it has everything to do with writing copy that sells.

Bear with me. You'll either be very glad you did or you'll hate me by the time we're done.

Or both.

Let's start with something we all know already. There are certain things that make people buy products in mass quantities. They're universal.

Here's the list of things people really want - **BADLY** - boiled down to the 10 most fundamental:

Money

Power

Romance

Prestige

Self-esteem

Freedom

Physical fitness

Security

Good health

Luxuries

Everything any person wants fits into one of those categories.

Everything.

But... If you have decent health and basic security (food, water and shelter from hostile elements), everything else is a bonus, right?

Clothing? There have been many cultures in which clothing was unneeded and unused, except for decoration. If you live in the right sort of climate, clothing is optional.

If you felt a twinge at that statement, just wait. You're in for a shock.

What do all of those things besides health and security have in common? They're all about sex. Not in the usual meaning of the word, but something much larger. The driving force for almost everything anyone does in life:

Reproductive success.

Sex is the most obvious and direct aspect of this, but it's just the start. The most primal urge of every living thing is to reproduce itself successfully. And giving birth or shedding seeds or laying eggs isn't enough to guarantee success.

The most successful organisms give rise to more of themselves and equip and "train" their young to do the same.

Any species that doesn't do this - dies.

In higher mammals, this leads to social institutions that are geared for that one thing: Reproductive success.

This explains the old rule of "women and children first." It explains wars. It explains male "coming of age" rituals. It explains parents nagging their kids for grandchildren. It explains the desire for fast cars and cool clothes and high-tech toys.

There really isn't much in human existence it doesn't explain.

Some of the explanations aren't quite as obvious as others, though.

To understand those, we need to think further about what reproductive success means to a modern day human.

It doesn't have to mean having and raising children. There is enormous power in the entire process, from the start (mating rituals) to the end (training children to be successful.)

Everything in that list of things that people really want points toward some part of the process. The things that appeal most, of course, are those that relate to having more potential choices for mating. Those are at the beginning of the process, and are the most powerful drives.

Think about all those infomercials you see for exercise equipment, and what the "models" look like.

Let's face it: No-one really wants to look like that for themselves. You want to look like that because of what other people think of you. Or what you think they'll think of you.

Why does that matter? Because it impacts your ability to defend yourself and your family, your confidence, your prestige, your romantic life, your health...

In short, your mating opportunities.

It doesn't matter if you have no children and never intend to have them. The drive to expand your mating opportunities is powerful. It may be the single most powerful force in human existence.

It's an established fact that, psychologically speaking, powerful people almost always have very powerful sex drives. This includes political figures, businesspeople, inventors, actors/actresses and successful artists of all kinds. The urge for productive effort and creativity is a facet of the sex drive.

That's where all human advancement comes from.

The desire for reproductive success.

To understand how this all works, think about the cycle.

We'll simplify it a bit for illustration. Just a bit. ;)

It starts with the process of selecting a mate. Then it proceeds to conception and birth, to providing for the young, training them in basic survival skills, and then - teaching them to repeat the process successfully.

The drive is stronger in different parts of the process for different people. While it's usually at its most active and demanding in the area of selecting a mate, some folks find their greatest satisfaction in providing or training or teaching.

People who have turned their efforts to humanitarian pursuits are training and equipping other people's kids to succeed at the reproduction game.

It may sound strange to describe charity work as being part of the drive for reproductive success, but it's true. After all, what is more selfless than making the survival of the species your first priority?

As though you really had a choice.

You don't, you know. It's just a question of how you go about it. If you're not seriously damaged upstairs, that's your principal goal.

Reproductive success.

In fact, some of the most seriously damaged people alive are also the most devoted to the process. They've let it take over their thinking because of something that happened to them, and they've got a different outlook on what reproductive success for the species means.

But they're still driven by it, just like you are.

We're all just about three steps outside the caves. We're all motivated by the same thing.

Reproductive success.

We'll do anything to achieve it. It's in our genes. Literally.

That's why sex sells.

So, again, how do you use this to sell?

Understand what part of the process your product appeals to, and address the concerns and desires of the person who's striving for success at that stage.

For someone looking for a mate, you're going to appeal to strong, fiery, powerful drives. Personal power and raw sexuality.

For someone who's looking to be a provider, you're going to appeal to their respect for security and personal responsibility.

For someone who wants to train people, you're going to appeal to either their nurturing side or their desire to teach responsibility and discipline.

They really are the same thing. Biology dictates that, for the most part, the first will be the tendency of the female and the second the tendency of the male.

I don't think saying that makes me a sexist. I think it makes me a realist.

Remember, the roles are not absolutes, and one is not better than the other. The species wouldn't have survived this long without both in proper measure. We just tend toward what we're built for. We're more comfortable with it. We're better at it.

No matter how much we know that it's a choice intellectually, there's a real and very strong bias in one direction or the other, and it's hormonal. We all know it.

We can overcome it or learn to deal with it differently. That's the experience aspect of being human. But, on the whole, the bias remains.

It's how we're wired, for reproductive success.

When you're writing copy, consider which of these drives your product satisfies. Draw mental pictures for your prospect of the circumstances that would need to exist to satisfy those drives.

They'll provide the feeling of state that goes along with it. That state is the Ultimate Benefit your product delivers.

Some people will consider this type of approach to be manipulative. As a rule, those people will be reacting from what they've been taught they should think, rather than what they know in their guts.

Understand what the word manipulative means. According to Merriam-Webster Online (<http://www.m-w.com>) it means:

1: to treat or operate with the hands or by mechanical means especially in a skillful manner - 2 a: to manage or utilize skillfully b: to control or play upon by artful, unfair, or insidious means especially to one's own advantage - 3: to change by artful or unfair means so as to serve one's purpose

The first definition doesn't have anything to do with the use of the word in this kind of case. So, let's look at the second and third. The main characteristic of each is the devious control of another for one's own benefit.

Yes, it is possible to misuse this in manipulative ways. That can be a very powerful thing. Until you're discovered and that same elemental drive is turned against you. And it will be. The old D&D'ers called it "The Angry Villager Rule."

That's not a fun place to be, boys and girls.

Just say no. You'll live longer.

But is that what's going on when you actually give someone what they really want?

They know you want money for your product. You're being up front about that, so there's nothing unfair or devious about that part. And if you deliver on your promises, there's nothing dishonest about it.

What you're doing is giving them what they **really** want. You're making the effort to understand and address drives that, quite often, they haven't even acknowledged themselves.

You're talking to the core of their desires, in their own language.

That's not called manipulation. There's another word for it entirely.

Empathy.

I mentioned very early in the series that the most important skill a copywriter can have is the ability to listen.

Empathy is the ultimate expression of that skill.

This whole section is just a way for you to get a head start on achieving it.

Empathy is the thing that gives you the juice to communicate the benefits of your product in a way that motivates your prospects; that gets them excited right along with you.

It's what tells you when you've used the wrong word, or when you're hitting a wrong note with an explanation. If you're really "in tune" with your prospect, you'll feel what's right and what's not in your copy.

This takes some practice. How much depends on how well you communicate in the first place, and how comfortable you are with putting yourself in someone else's shoes.

Remember, unless you're selling a book on seduction or child-rearing or the like, you don't want to hit these notes head on. You want to consider which aspect of the process your product addresses and tailor your copy to the emotions that would exist if the prospect were to achieve the state they're buying.

You do that by painting pictures of the state and using language that drives home that your product can help them achieve that state.

For instance, consider the following situation: You come home. A woman meets you at the door. You have dinner. You get a phone call. You listen to some music.

Those are the facts of the case. How the prospect perceives them depends on the emotional parts of the description. They are very different, for example, if the woman is described as your maid, your wife, your current girlfriend or your daughter.

The description of the house will change the "state" that's created in the prospect's mind, as will what you actually have for dinner.

The phone call is a perfect state-setter. What is it about?

What kind of music do you listen to, and with whom? What are you doing while you listen? What else is going on around you?

If you're describing an autoresponder system, you can tailor your copy in much the same way. The ability to schedule follow-ups could be portrayed as a matter of control (power), convenience (freedom), automation (security), professionalism (prestige), or even technical sophistication (luxury).

A lot of you probably just read that and thought, "So what? He's talking about benefit statements. I already knew that!"

You'd be almost right to think that.

The difference between copy that uses this effectively and copy that doesn't can be very subtle. It's a matter of awareness and the consistency of the state you evoke. There are specific and powerful emotions that are associated with each part of the spectrum that leads to reproductive success. You want to keep these in mind while writing.

For example, suppose you've just delivered a strong summary of the benefits that your product will deliver to the middle manager who follows its advice. It grabs the reader's attention and makes it clear that you really can help them advance in their firm, get more and larger raises and do it all more efficiently.

Many copywriters would stop there. All they've really done is convinced the prospect they can upgrade their own "feature set" by making the purchase. That will work often enough to make the ad profitable, but it leaves a lot of money on the table.

How much more effective do you think it would be if they added something that created a feeling of the state that your prospect desires?

Paint a picture of what they can do with the extra money and time and security. Tailor it to the desires that are typical of the person most likely to want your product. In this case, middle management, you would be talking about primarily married folk with children and not a lot of disposable income. The provider/teaching stage. So, you'd describe a better house and car, better schools for the kids, more time with the family... Things like that.

If your prospects are younger women and your product relates to their own self-image, you'd address very different things. Confidence, attractiveness and relationships (romantic and otherwise) would be among the top triggers.

Making this work takes practice and thought, as well as a lot of sensitivity. You really want to be sure that you're respecting the prospect's legitimate desires, rather than just banging away at unfocused emotions.

Look at your product. Think about how it relates to the process of reproductive success. Then see if your marketing materials talk to that part of the prospect's motivations. If so, how can you improve it? If not, how will it help them and how can you express that in a way that matches their goals in that process?

This will take some time and effort to master. How much depends on your understanding of the concept and your level of real empathy.

It's worth whatever effort you have to make to learn it.

Conclusion

Like I said, it's not a course in copywriting. Just some thoughts, from a guy who's been there.

Copywriting is an evolving process. As you practice each technique or increase your understanding of each concept, you will find your results increasing along with it.

I firmly believe that the most important skill any businessperson can achieve is a mastery of the art of writing effective copy. I hope you find this useful in helping you to reach that state.

Copywriting Worksheets

TAKE ACTION! Worksheet #1: Defining Your Target Market

Until you define your target market and really understand them, all your marketing materials will be pretty aimless. You need to know your audience, know their language, know their hopes, fears and desires. Only when you truly understand them will your sales letters and other ads “click” with them, touch them, and compel them to buy what you’re selling.

You need to get inside your prospects’ heads. To do this, you can “infiltrate” your niche market. For example, if you’re targeting golfers, than hang out with golfers (online and offline) to find out what they want and need. And once you’ve done that, it’s time for you to sit down and list everything you know about your target market, including the questions on this worksheet...

Defining the Target Market Worksheet

Who is your primary audience?

What are the demographics of your audience? (e.g., where do they live; age; gender; income; highest level of schooling; what sort of job do they have; etc)

What are your target market's political viewpoints?

What are your target market's religious viewpoints?

What are your target market's hobbies? What do they do in their free time?

What types of books, magazines and websites do they read? What sort of TV programs do they watch?

Where do they spend their extra money? (e.g., maybe they spend money on going to the movies every weekend ...or buying CD's ...or buying remote controlled airplanes ...etc)

Are they interested in and knowledgeable about tech-related things (including the Internet and computers)?

How would you describe the personality of your typical customer?

What does your customer want?

What is your customer afraid of losing?

How can your product help your customer get what he/she wants, and/or help him/her avoid losing something that's important?

What is it about your customer's personality or beliefs that you can use to more clearly communicate your sales message? (e.g., will appealing to your customer's ego help? Are they skeptical or even cynical, which means you should provide more information and proof to get over that obstacle? Do they

believe that hard work brings success ...or are they looking for a magic bullet?
Etc)

Now brainstorm: what ELSE do you know about your target market? No matter how seemingly trivial or irrelevant, write it down. Brainstorm for at least 10-15 minutes without stopping, and without censoring your brainstorm:

TAKE ACTION! Worksheet #2: The benefits and features of your product

You've already discovered the difference between features and benefits. Features include parts of your product ...in the case of a physical product, that means the tangible parts of your product. However, what's important to your prospects are the benefits they'll receive when they use your product.

In other words, you need to connect each feature of your product to the benefit the prospects will receive when they use your product or service.

Let me give you an unusual example. Let's suppose you were selling poodle puppies. Three of these poodle's features might include:

Curly, wool-like coat
Smart
Friendly

What you need to do in your copy is spell out how these features translate into benefits for the poodle owner. So here are the benefits of the above features:

Curly, wool-like coat: non-shedding, meaning you don't have to constantly be vacuuming up pet hair. Plus the non-shedding poodle is the best dog for those who suffer from dog allergies.

Smart: The poodle is ranked #1 in intelligence, meaning you can teach your poodle a new trick in just minutes.

Friendly: The perfect dog for families with children or for people who have frequent children as visitors. You'll never have to worry about your dog biting anyone.

Now while it might seem obvious how the features of your product translate into benefits for the customer, the customer doesn't always make the connection. That means you need to do it. When you list out your bulleted benefit list, you can weave together features and benefits into each statement.

Example: *The poodle's curly coat is non-shedding, meaning you don't have to spend hours vacuuming up pet hair.*

Your Turn: Take out a clean sheet of paper (or open up a new document in your favorite word processor), and create two columns. On the left side, create a “features” column, and on the right side create your “benefits” column.

First list every single feature of your product (no matter how insignificant it seems to you). When you’re done with that, figure out how those features translate into benefits for your user.

Once you’ve completed this worksheet, you’ll have a nice list that you can rework slightly when you start writing your bulleted benefit list.

TAKE ACTION! Worksheet #3: Brainstorming your USP

When your prospects read your sales letter or other marketing materials, they'll be asking themselves why they should buy from you instead of your competitor. What makes your product (and business) different from your competitor?

If you can't answer that question, your prospects won't have the answer either. And if they don't have the answer, they'll run over to your competitor.

As such, you need to figure out what makes you unique and different. That means defining your unique selling proposition. That's what this worksheet will help you do.

For this exercise, get out a blank sheet of paper (or open up a new word processing document on your computer) and list the things about your product and your business that you could use as a USP.

You might touch on things like:

- A high price (think the prestige of Rolex or Rolls Royce)
- A low price (like WalMart – but be careful, as it's difficult to be the low price leader in a market)
- Outstanding customer service (but define how it's outstanding – for example, do you offer 24/7 phone support? Free installations on software? Live chat?)
- An unusual guarantee (perhaps you have a lifetime guarantee where others have a year? Or maybe you have a “double your money back” guarantee?)
- There's something about you or your business that's unique and interesting, that makes you uniquely qualified to offer this product (for example, you're a nurse offering health care articles, whereas your competitors are all marketers using ghostwriters to write healthcare articles).
- Your product is created in a unique way (for example, Folgers positioned themselves as having “mountain grown” coffee. All coffee is mountain grown, but Folgers was the first to actually say it).

- You or your product is “first” or “best” in a category. If you can’t think of a category where you’re first or best, you can invent one. (example, perhaps you’re the first offering a product or service in your state, city, or county)

The above are just some ideas to get you thinking. Now it’s your turn. Make two lists – one listing unusual or unique things about you/your business and one that lists unique things about your product.

Traffic Module

All Traffic is not Created Equal

It's the mantra of the Internet marketer: "must get traffic ...must get traffic..." After all, without traffic all we have is a killer product and a pretty website – but no sales, no customers, and certainly no money.

And so marketers focus in on the numbers in their traffic logs, trying to boost the traffic ...because if the traffic boosts, so will the sales. Right?

Not always.

You see, sometimes we marketers can get a little too focused on the quantity of our traffic, much to the detriment of the quality of the traffic. It can even become a point of pride when we brag around the 'Net how much traffic we're pulling. And certainly if we ever decide to sell advertising or even sell the site, these numbers will be impressive.

But here's the problem: traffic does NOT equal sales, even if you have a high-converting sales letter. The only time higher traffic means a proportional boost in sales is if your traffic is targeted. That is, people who are interested in what you're selling are visiting your site.

This is the thing you must keep in mind as you read this traffic module: traffic is only valuable if it is targeted traffic. Traffic for traffic's sake is worthless.

Consider this...

Let's suppose you have a site that appeals to people who want to lose weight. If you send skinny teenage boys to the site – people who actually want to gain weight – how many sales do you think you'll make? Exactly zero.

Or suppose you have a site centered around wrestling. What if you decided to get traffic by advertising on a site for those who enjoy making quilts? How many sales do you think you'll get? Again, at or near zero.

These examples may make you chuckle because they are extreme, and yet many marketers make similar mistakes every day. Their first mistake is not understanding and defining their market. Their second mistake is not focusing on pulling traffic directly from their targeted niche.

So you may find the person selling the weight loss product trying to appeal to “everyone who wants to lose weight.” So they advertise on sites for body builders looking to shed weight before a competition. They place ads on sites for mothers who may be looking to lose weight after the baby. They put ads on teen sites to get at overweight teens, and sites for diabetics who need to shed weight for health reasons. And so on.

Sure all those groups need to lose weight, but one product and one sales letter simply cannot be all things to all those people. You **MUST** focus in and choose one niche, and then create all marketing materials to speak to that niche, and pull traffic directly from places where that niche congregates.

Do any less, and you may find yourself with lots of traffic ...but no sales, subscribers, customers, or income.

TAKE ACTION!

Defining your target market...

Write down what you know about your target market. Who are they? Gender? Age? Where do they live? What are their problems? What motivates them? What solutions are they looking for?

Use a separate sheet of paper to define your market, and write a summary of your profile below:

The Truth About Traffic Diversity

In addition to focusing on highly targeted traffic, the second thing you need to take into consideration is diversifying your sources of traffic. In other words, don't put all your eggs in one basket.

When you're just getting started, naturally your sources of traffic are going to be pretty limited. For example, you may start out using pay per click traffic, and while you are getting other ad methods underway, pay per click traffic may be your only traffic source.

However, once you DO have a traffic source up and running well, then it's time to focus on other traffic sources.

Why?

Because you never know when a source of traffic may just dry up. For example, suppose you're using pay per click advertising, and suddenly a huge competitor moves in on you and outbids you on every word. Suddenly you're not making money any more because you can't compete – and if you try, you may even lose money.

Or suppose you're using organic search engine traffic, and the search engine changes its algorithm. Your site could drop completely out of the rankings. Indeed, this exact thing has happened before, and it deeply hurt those whose entire business depended on traffic from the search engines.

That's not to say you should spread yourself too thin and become unfocused. Instead, my suggestion is that you spend most of your efforts on using the top traffic strategies that work best for you, such as joint ventures, search engine optimization and pay per click traffic.

Once you get a handle on those strategies, then further diversify using the methods you're about to discover. That way if any of your traffic sources dry up, it will be a minor hurdle for you rather than a major, debilitating roadblock to business success.

A Preview:

In the following module you'll discover dozens of both free and paid traffic strategies that you can add to your marketing arsenal.

You'll note that we'll focus on three major strategies (JV's, SEO and PPC). These are three of the top strategies, so you should devote a good chunk of your initial time and resources to getting these traffic tactics up and running.

Once you've done that, you can start focusing in on the dozens of other traffic methods mentioned.

Let's get started ...and we'll begin by looking at the top free methods of driving targeted traffic to your site...

Free Ways to Pull in Targeted Traffic

If you're like many marketers who are just starting out, you probably have more time than money. If so, this section is for you.

Even though these traffic generation methods are free, don't discount them as being inferior to paid methods. That's simply not true. Indeed, some of the most effective ways to pull in traffic – such as using JV's and the search engines – are listed in this section.

Indeed, the world's wealthiest companies – those who could easily drop \$1 million on a 30 second TV commercial – still use the methods you're about to discover. Why? Because they work by bringing in massive amounts of traffic and sales.

Let's get started...

Joint Ventures and Affiliates

Joint venture (JV) partnerships and affiliate marketing are often lumped together because affiliate marketing is one of the most common types of JV's. For that reason, we've included these topics together in this traffic module, too.

However, please note that while an affiliate is a type of JV, a joint venture does not always come in the form of an affiliate partnership. You see, a JV is when two or more marketers come together for their mutual benefit. So that means these marketers could be creating products together, doing link swaps, or partnering in any number of ways that do not include the traditional "pitch my product to your list for a commission" set-up.

And yet you'll see people approaching you to do a "JV" that really is nothing more than an affiliate agreement. If you want to do a joint venture in this form, then ideally you should offer your partners something more. We'll talk about that later on in this section.

Let's run through the basic steps of how and where to find JV partners (or affiliates), how to approach them, and how to create a good offer for your potential partners...

1. Creating an Offer.

Before you can start looking for any potential joint venture partners, you need to decide what you'll be offering them. And that starts with deciding what type of project you'd like to do.

For example, are you merely looking for JV partners to help you launch your product? Or are you looking for JV partners to help you create a product such as a co-authored ebook or a teleseminar series featuring a panel of experts in your niche? Or perhaps you have in mind a way to "co-promote" each other, such as by swapping links, reviews, blog articles, newsletter ads, etc.

Once you've decided what type of project you'd like to do, the next thing is to structure the offer. As you do this, remember this: you need your JV partners more than they need you. As such, the deal should tip heavily in their favor – and it should be easy on your partner.

For example, let's suppose you wanted to co-author an ebook with a JV partner. If this person was big and well-known in the field, then chances are he's not only very busy, but he's also able to pick his JVs carefully because he gets so many offers on a weekly basis.

As such, imagine for a moment that he sees your offer where you each write half the book and then market it together.

That sounds like a lot of work, doesn't it? It is.

And for your partner it simply won't be worth it. After all, he has such a large following in the market, that there's no reason for him to co-author the book, do most of the marketing (he has a big list), and then split the profits with you. Indeed, that's a bum deal for him.

If that was your offer, he'd laugh in your face – because he'd sooner take a little extra time to write the entire book himself and keep all the profits.

So what's a better way to structure a deal like this? Here are two ideas:

1. You write the ENTIRE book, put a marketing plan in place, and all he has to do is lend his name to the product and tell his list. That's much easier for him.

Better yet, do this instead:

2. Bring together dozens of experts to co-write the ebook. That way each person individually has very little to do (just write an article), and yet they get the benefits of having their name on a product, and they get the exposure. Much easier for the partners, and a better return on their investment of time.

That's just an example – obviously the way you structure the deal will depend on the specific type of JV you're doing, and who your partners are ("big" partners can demand better terms, because you need them, but they don't need you).

For example: if you're setting up an affiliate partnership with perks, then your JV partners should get higher-than-average commissions. Instead of giving them a traditional 50%, give them 75%.

They should get special perks, such as a personalized landing page that may include special bonuses and discounts for their customers.

Where possible, they should also be offered a deal with some exclusivity (e.g., it's not open to everyone out there). For example, make a "pre launch" offer available to your top 12 JV partners ...and only after a few days do you allow other affiliates to start promoting.

In summary: tilt the deal heavily in your partner's favor, and make it as easy as possible. Do as much of the work as you can so that your partners see that they need only put forward a small investment of time for a relatively large reward.

2. What to look for in a partner.

Sure, you'll want to find a partner who can bring resources to the table, such as a well-known name, an eager following, and a platform to talk to those followers (such as a high-traffic blog or a big newsletter list).

But those shouldn't be first on your list. What you should be looking at overall is reputation. As with any business deal, you need to do your due diligence first – because whether this person's reputation is good or bad, your reputation will be linked to that person for a long time after you do a deal. As such, you only want to do deals with people who have highly favorable reputations.

So how do you research them? Simple: use Google to search their name, website name, and product names. Be sure also to visit the top niche forums to see what is being said about this person.

Note: You're likely to find a complaint or two even among the best business people, so look for a pattern of complaints rather than a few individual instances.

3. Where to find partners.

You know what you're looking for – but WHERE should you look?

Chances are if you've researched your market, you already know where some of your potential partners and affiliates are. To some people they may be your competitors – but make the right affiliate or JV offer, and they'll become your partners.

In addition to the list you've already likely been compiling, find your partners using these methods:

- Use a software like AffiliateElite.com to find partners promoting your competitor's products.
- Enter in your niche's top keywords to see who controls the organic search engine results in the market. *
- While doing the above step, take note of who's buying the traffic for your niche's top keywords.
- Enter your niche's top keywords along with words like "forum" and "blog" and "newsletter" to see who has platforms and audiences in your niche.
- Join these newsletters, blogs, and forums to see who the owners are promoting and talking about.
- Check Clickbank.com, Amazon.com, Lulu.com, CJ.com and similar to see who's selling what in your niche.

- When you find partners, ask them to introduce you to other people in the niche they know who might be interested (a two-tier affiliate program works wonders to encourage these introductions).
- Don't forget to look offline – in niche publications, classified ads, even local stores and offices.

** **TIP:** Are you unfamiliar with the keywords your niche uses to find you online? Go to Wordtracker.com to find out!*

4. How to Approach Partners

Here's the moment of truth: you can compile a huge list of partners, dash off a note to them, and not have a single one of them say "yes." This is true even if you've created a killer offer that tilts in their favor!

So what's the problem? There could be a couple problems:

1. You didn't communicate the offer clearly enough.

A JV letter is a sales letter, so you need to write it using your best salesmanship skills. You can't just dash off an email as if you're writing to your aunt and expect JV partners to say yes. You need to write it in such a way that your good offer looks irresistible.

We'll talk about how to do that in just a moment. But first let's look at the other common problem...

2. You're a virtual stranger to the potential JV partner or affiliate.

The big marketers in your niche gets dozens of offers every week. Most of them get sent to their trash cans without hardly a second glance. After all, these are busy people, and reading the same ol' offer from dozens of people quickly becomes a waste of their time.

But there is a certain type of email that almost always gets read by your potential partners (and by you too, for that matter!): an email from a friend.

Think about your own experiences for a moment. When you have an inbox overflowing with email, how do you deal with it? Chances are you scan it quickly to look for familiar names from friends, family members and other people you know.

You read those first.

Then you glance at the subject lines of emails from people you don't know to see if you're even going to bother opening them. Suspected spam goes straight to the trash, while email that looks to be legit is often opened.

The problem with this is that it's easy for a legit piece of email to end up in the trash, unopened. However, that rarely happens in the cases where the recipient recognizes the name of the sender.

And so it is with your potential JV partners. If you've already developed relationships with them and exchanged a few emails or phone calls, they'll be much more likely to open your email – and if you're friends, they'll likely say yes to your request.

At the very least, however, you need to establish name recognition with your partners. That means that even though you might not have developed a relationship, the person still knows who you are (e.g., they've heard of you).

Your first step should be to start developing relationships, by meeting people at offline events, becoming an affiliate for them (people take note of those who make money for them), become a customer, and so on.

However, if you haven't yet started building relationships, then use these tactics to start building name recognition:

- Do JV's with lesser-known marketers, so that you start developing a following in the niche.
- Be a frequent poster on the most popular forums and blogs.
- Run your own forum, blog or newsletter.
- Use your SEO skills to secure top spots for your niche's keywords (your competitors WILL notice!).

- Ask people you know to introduce you to those you want to know.
- Create a controversial report or video that goes viral and gets attention from your customers ...and potential partners.

In other words, get known in your niche by being visible and putting out good products. Do this, and a good marketer will know who you are as they've likely been following your progress for a while. When your email hits their inbox, I guarantee they'll read it. They might not say yes, but they WILL read it once you've developed this recognition!

Now let's talk about how to increase your chances of a partner saying yes to your offer...

5. How to Write a JV proposal.

Except in those instances where you are very good friends with a potential partner, you'll need to write a well thought-out proposal in order to get a positive response.

Note: Once again, it makes sense to develop relationships first, as doing business together later becomes much easier. But assuming you haven't done that, this section shows you how to write a letter that gets results.

As mentioned before, a JV proposal is a sales letter, as you're selling a partner on the benefits of working with you. That means your proposal will include all the parts of a sales letter (such as a headline as your email subject line, a good hook, benefit oriented copy, a call to action, a P.S. and so on).

It should also include the non-tangible components of AIDA, meaning your subject line should get Attention, your opener should hold the reader's Interest, the copy (especially the bulleted list of benefits) should increase the person's Desire to work with you on the project, and finally the letter should compel the person to take action.

Here are some tips to help you write a compelling JV letter:

- Research the potential partner thoroughly so that you understand what makes them “tick.” When you understand what motivates someone, then it’s easy to write a persuasive letter.
- Spell their name right! Check, check and double check this. Many marketers write “cookie cutter” JV letters and either spell the name wrong, use a generic title (such as “webmaster”), or worse yet the letter is addressed to the last person they copied and pasted the message to.
- Along the same lines: don’t use a “one size fits all” letter. Make it personalized – not only by using the person’s name, but also by making references to certain items (like obscure articles they’ve written) that shows you’ve done your research.
- Write one-to-one, in a friendly yet professional manner, as if you were writing to a friend.
- Consider your subject line (your headline) carefully – it should arouse curiosity and interest so the person feels compelled to open your email. Read up on how to write sales letter headlines for tips on this topic.
- Get to the point quickly, and keep your letter focused on your reader. As your partner reads the letter, he’ll be thinking “what’s in it for me?” You should hit him up with a big benefit immediately – perhaps in the headline – and ensure the rest of the letter hammers in benefit after benefit.
- Create a sense of urgency, such as a deadline to respond. Creating a strong “fear of loss” (a feeling that they’ll really miss out if they don’t say yes) can also work wonders if done carefully. In other words, you want them to take action right now – not later today – now. So give them a reason to do so.
- Go ahead and name drop for social proof purposes. If some of this person’s friends have already said yes to your proposal, tell him so! He may be more likely to agree to the JV offer if he sees his friends are doing it too.

- Pack your proposal full of benefits for the reader. What will he get if he says yes? A huge commission paid daily? Backend marketing opportunities? More subscribers to his newsletter? A backlink from a high-ranking site? Be specific and always let the reader know how these items will benefit him.
- Use the word “you” generously to ensure your copy is focused on the reader and not on you the author.

Remember this is a number’s game, and so you’ll likely get more “no” replies than “yes” replies. Thus the more proposal letters you send out, the better return you’ll get.

After the Joint Venture...

A JV is not a one-time deal. Once you’ve partnered with someone and impressed them, they’ll likely be happy to work with you again in the future.

That means you need to run a smooth JV that results in happy partners. But it also means you don’t abandon your partners after the project. You need to keep in touch with them, and most important, ask them what you can do to help them.

Make contact from time to time, help them whenever possible, and the next time you need a hand you’ll likely see several of these partners lining up happily to help you again.

TAKE ACTION!

Attracting JV Partners

If needed, take out a separate piece of paper or open up a new document in your computer to answer the following questions:

1. What keywords can you use to locate other related niche sites in the search engines?

2. Who do you know in your niche that you can approach for a JV?

3. Who do you know in your niche that could introduce you to other JV partners?

4. Who in your niche may possibly already recognize your name, perhaps because you're an affiliate, a customer, a regular contributor to their forum (or one they frequent), or similar?

5. Who would you ideally like to do a JV with in your niche? List the top individuals, along with two ideas of how you can get recognized by each person and/or start building a relationship with them.

6. What can you offer your JV partners? List all the benefits they'll receive.

SEO: How to Rank High in the Search Engines

Search engine optimization (SEO) is the art and science of getting high rankings in the search engines for your chosen keywords. It's not over-night traffic, as it takes time to develop these rankings. However, it is free traffic ...and once you get it coming in, you'll become addicted to getting high rankings for even more words.

What words does your market use to find you?

Anyone can rank high for a set of meaningless keywords. Doing so is just an ego trip more than anything else. What you want to do is rank high for the exact words your market is entering into search engines.

You see, there are plenty of SEO "masters" out there who guarantee you'll get number one rankings. The problem is, they're choosing words that have no competition – and the reason they have no competition is because no one is actually searching for them.

Take your business name as an example. If you're just getting started, who else but your mom, spouse, and a few good friends know your business name? No one, right? So it doesn't make sense to pat yourself on the back for ranking high for your business name IF no one is actually putting your name into the search engines.

So here's the key: you need to rank high for targeted keywords that your niche market will use every day. For example, your dog training site may be optimized for words like "toy poodle training" because your market is indeed using those words to find you. But ranking high for a keyword like "fishbowls" is meaningless, as then you'll be pulling in untargeted traffic who aren't interested in your site.

So how do you find targeted, meaningful words that your market actually inputs every day? Simple. By going to WordTracker.com or your favorite keyword tool.

WordTracker not only tells you how many times a word is searched for each day, but it also tells you how many competitors you'll have for that particular word in many of the top search engines (including Google, Yahoo, MSN and others). That means this tool helps you uncover words that get actual searches each day,

but you also have a good shot at getting a top ranking for that word in the search engine of your choosing.

And that's exactly what you want. Unless you're already a search engine optimization wizard (in which case you wouldn't be reading this), you'll find going after the low-hanging fruit to be a reasonable and profitable approach to SEO.

For example, while everyone else fights over their Google rankings, you see if you can get ranked high in MSN. And while everyone else in the niche struggles to knock each other out of the top slots for the most competitive keywords, you quietly pull in hundreds or thousands of visitors using less-searched words.

Sure, the top keywords in your niche pull in massive traffic for those who hold the top spots – but it's a dirty, competitive fight (and you have to know what you're doing). Instead, someone who's new to SEO may instead choose to go after dozens if not hundreds of less-searched words. One keyword may not pull in a ton of traffic individually, but collectively the traffic from all these words adds up quickly.

Once you've done your keyword research and you know what words you'd like to tackle, then you need to turn your attention to on-page optimization and off-page optimization...

On-Page Optimization

Just like it sounds, "on-page optimization" refers to those things you do to your own page to help it get ranked high in the search engines. These activities are discussed below...

In order to help you get ranked high in the search engines for your keywords, your keywords need to appear on your web page (obviously). But there's a fine line here, as you can't just repeat your keywords ad nauseum on the page, as the search engines will see this as keyword spamming.

Instead what you need to do is write high-quality content (such as articles) that your visitors will benefit from, and insert your keywords into these articles at a density rate of about 2% to 3%. Use a higher density rate and not only does the content become more stilted for the reader, but you also risk your page looking like spam to the search engine bots.

Here are some tips to help you achieve the right balance:

- Optimize each page for one or two sets of keywords, no more.
- Write high quality articles and post them on your site ...or better yet, on a blog. Most blog platforms format articles in a search-engine friendly way.
- Include your keywords in your article title and sprinkled throughout the content two or three times per 100 words of content.
- Make sure your keywords appear at least a couple times higher up on the page, as some search engines consider words that are higher on the page to be more important.

In addition to using your keywords in your article, blog post or other content, you'll also want to use them on your page in other places. Use them as your page title, as well as including them as part of the page filename where-ever possible. Include your keywords in your navigation links as well.

Also, you'll want to consider including your keywords in your "meta" tags. Many of the big search engines don't use meta tags any more, but if you're optimizing for the smaller search engines you may benefit from listing your keywords in these tags.

If you're unsure of how to do this, ask your webmaster how to include these tags in your source document.

Off-Page Optimization

Years ago it was easy to get front-page rankings for any word of your choosing – you just stuffed your webpage full of keywords. Those who designed the search engines quickly became wise to that, and penalized those who they perceived to be keyword spamming.

Then they took it a step further, and started taking into consideration what other websites were "saying" about our website.

In other words, our rankings in the search engines were no longer a function of how many times we could use our keywords on the page. Now we had to get

related and high-quality outside websites to give us a “nod” – a vote of confidence if you will.

How? By linking to our site.

As such, the on-page optimization discussed above have really become a small part of search engine optimization. Now the savvy marketers know that if they want to get high rankings – especially for competitive keywords – they need to focus in on their link campaigns. That is, they need to secure one-way incoming links from “good” sites.

Google in particular has made this a priority, since the Google PageRank (PR) is largely a function of how many other high-PR sites link to you (preferably giving you a one-way link). The more “good” sites you have linking to you, the higher your page rank, all of which helps you get higher search engine rankings for your keywords.

To put it simply: suppose there are two sites that are nearly identical, both optimizing for the same keywords. Based on the on-page optimization, they would be about equal in the search engines. However, the site with the most incoming links from high-quality (high PR) sites will win the ranking wars and edge out the competitor.

If you want to edge out your competitors, then you need to start considering your linking campaign. Here are a few tips to get you started:

- The search engines want to see links from related sites. So if you have a dog-training site, you shouldn't have links coming in from gambling sites. Your links should be coming in from other dog-related sites.
- One-way incoming links are preferable. The search engines figure you're trying to “game” the system if you just do a reciprocal link campaign.

If you're exchanging links with someone, it works best to “triangulate” your linking if one of you has two sites. For example, your site 1 links to your partner's site, and your partner links to your site 2. That way all links look like they're one-way links.

- If you're optimizing for Google, then focus on getting incoming links from high PR sites (sites with at least a PageRank of 4, but of course more is better). Use Google's free toolbar on your computer to quickly determine PR.

Note: don't discount links from low-PR sites, however – as long as they are high-quality sites, the link won't hurt. And some day that same site may have a high PR.

- Avoid getting links from "link farms." Remember, the search engines like to see links from related, high-quality content sites.
- **Important:** your anchor text matters! The anchor text are the words used to create a link to your site. Many people use "click here" as their anchor text, which is wasteful. Instead, use your keywords as your anchor text on all incoming links.

Now that you know what your links should look like and what types of sites you should get these links from, the question is HOW do you get links? Below are a few of the more common ways.

Keep in mind that links aren't just good for search engine purposes – they're also good ways to pull in human traffic via click-throughs. As such, whenever you get an incoming link, ensure there's a compelling reason for human visitors to click on that link.

Where to Get Links:

Link Exchanges: here you ask other webmasters to exchange links with you. Remember, try to triangulate your links whenever possible, so that both partners are getting one-way incoming links. Also, be sure to specify to your link-exchange partner what anchor text you'd like to use for your link.

Blogrolls: this is the same idea as a link exchange, except you appear on someone's list of favorite blogs instead (and they appear on your blog in exchange).

Buying Links: Webmasters with high-PR pages know their links are in demand. Instead of exchanging links, they instead offer to sell you a one-way incoming link. You can find these sites by running a search for “paid links” or “buy links.”

Submit Articles: Some of the more popular article directories (like ideamarketers.com, ezinearticles.com, and goarticles.com) get lots of search engine traffic. Submitting articles to these directories means you get a backlink for each article you submit – but the bonus is that you’re likely to get human visitors coming through on these links as well.

Links from Directories: Seek out all the high-quality directories that your site is qualified to be in, and submit your site. These include blog directories if you have a blog, newsletter directories if you have a newsletter, forum directories if you have a forum, niche-specific directories, and local (city or state) directories.

Blog Comments: This is where you make thoughtful comments on other people’s blogs, and then leave your link. Do note, however, that some blogs include a “no follow” tag, which means search engines won’t follow your links and they won’t count for linking purposes. However, human visitors will still come in on these links.

There are various software on the market that allow you to “automate” your blog comments. The software searches for blogs containing your keywords, then leaves a generic comment that you create (such as “wow, what a great blog post!”).

Bloggers see right through this spam and will delete these comments. Instead, post thoughtfully so that the blog owners know you have read the post. That ensures in most cases that your comment will remain standing.

Note: some people believe that links coming in from .edu and .gov domains are more valuable. You can get backlinks from .edu and .gov sites by seeking out blogs to comment on.

Forum Posts: Many forums allow you to leave a signature link at the end of your post. And some of these links will help you rank better in the search engines, while others are likely to be clicked on by human visitors. As with blog commenting, be sure to post thoughtfully so it doesn’t come off as spam.

Your Own Network: You can also create one-way incoming links by setting up multiple related site and inter-linking them. Some experts suggest that these sites should not be hosted at the same webhost.

Keep in mind you can also set up free websites to link together, such as Blogger.com blogs.

Others: you'll find plenty of other ways to get links, such as web rings, submitting to blog carnivals, getting links from wikipedia pages, answering questions on Yahoo Answers, creating free blogs on Blogger, WordPress and LiveJournal, creating a profile on forums (even if you don't post), submitting press releases through PRWeb.com, and more.

You may also do joint ventures with webmasters where you exchange content such as articles instead of merely exchanging links.

Blogs – SEO's Best Friend

Blogs are useful marketing tools in many different ways. They're a great way to keep in contact with customers, prospects, affiliates and JV partners. They're content-centered approach makes your site "sticky," meaning visitors will return again and again to read the latest on your blog. And of course having a blog can help establish you as an expert and help you get that name-recognition in the field.

However, blogs are also great marketing tools because they are so search-engine friendly. Many blogging platforms format your content in such a way that the search engines eat it up. For example, if you include your keywords in your blog post title, then you'll see your keywords appear on the page title, in the page name, and even in the navigation links.

When you post to your blog, you also have the option of "pinging" blog directories. This is a way to inform the blog directories that you've updated your blog, so their bots will visit and index your new posts. Services like pingoat.com allow you to notify the directories for free.

Another advantage of some blog platforms (such as WordPress) is the trackback feature. A trackback is basically a way for two bloggers to communicate. When one blogger posts an article, and a second blogger wants to comment on that

article (on his own blog), a trackback link points to the second blog and related article.

The advantage of course is that you get a link from someone else's blog to your own. When you receive trackbacks, however, be sure that they are from related blogs. Sometimes spammers use trackbacks, which will undermine your SEO efforts if you're getting links from unrelated or "bad" sites.

Finally, another advantage of using a blog is that you can syndicate your content using a web feed, or RSS feed (RSS = real simple syndication). That means content from your blog can show up on various sites around the Internet, plus it makes it easier for users to read all their content in one place (because they can "subscribe" to your feed).

The search engine advantage is that if you optimize your posts, then your feed itself will be optimized for the search engines. Indeed, there are even RSS search engines that you can submit your feed to. As always, your posts should be fit for human consumption ...but you should use keywords that will attract the search engines too.

TAKE ACTION!

Starting Your SEO

1. Look at your keyword list and find five sets of longtail keywords you can write articles around. List them here:

Will you outsource these or write them yourself? How soon will you have them done and submitted to article directories or posted on your site?

2. List three ways that you intend to use to kick off your linking campaign. For example, will you do link exchanges, buy links, submit articles, etc?

3. Brainstorm domain names you can use to set up your blog. As soon as you find a suitable name, register it at NameCheap.com.

4. Spend 20 minutes right now in the search engines finding suitable link exchange partners. Write down the URLs for these sites here:

Other Sources of Free Traffic

Once you have set up an affiliate program, sought out joint venture partners and focused on your search engine optimization, you'll want to turn your attention to the veritable cornucopia of ways to drive in free targeted traffic to your site.

These free yet effective strategies include...

Lead Generation Using Free Products

You can use freebies to entice people to sign up for your newsletter list. But your freebies can also stand alone as ways to draw people to your website – and this is especially true if the freebie goes viral (e.g., people start passing it around, posting it on forums, etc).

So what type of freebie can you offer potential customers? It should be something useful, perhaps controversial, but definitely of great interest to your target market. After all, you're looking for targeted, quality traffic.

The freebie may come in any form and include things like a free report, free podcast, free audio interview recordings, free video, free worksheet or spreadsheet, free access to a private site, free access to a package of products, free access to a service (such as hosting), etc.

The more useful, entertaining or even controversial your freebie is, the more likely your target market will post it on niche forums, mention it on their blogs, and in general pass it along to their friends.

However, you can also encourage a report or other freebie to go viral by allowing people to rebrand it. In lesser cases this may simply mean people get to have a link inside of your report. A better scenario actually financially rewards people by allowing them to rebrand the report with their affiliate links.

You can rebrand these freebies manually if you're concerned about people putting in unusual links (such as links to a porn site, which would reflect badly on you since your name is on the book). Or if you think there's very little risk of someone doing that, then you can use a software like ViralPDF that allows affiliates to rebrand selected links themselves.

TIP: Have you created something that's controversial and likely to offend a certain group? Then ensure the controversial and offensive freebie ends up directly in the hands of the people who are most likely to be offended (e.g., get it posted on their blogs or forums).

People who are offended talk and create a big buzz around things that offend them. This draws all sorts of people to you – including the people who are on your “side” (that’s your target market).

For examples of this very thing happening, look to shock jocks like Howard Stern or Ann Coulter in the US. When they offend someone, it’s the offended group who gets the buzz going!

Your freebies can be used to draw your target market to your site (perhaps to sign up for your newsletter), or they can be used to help pre-sell potential customers on one of your products or services.

Using Free Events

Freebies needn’t come in the form of products – services such as a free consultation and other events can also pull targeted leads into your site.

For example, free teleseminars work great in this regard. That’s because you can spend 45 minutes or more gaining your listener’s trust as you deliver high-quality content. Then you can field questions one-on-one, further developing trust. And finally you can pitch your product or service at the end.

The bonus of doing a free teleseminar is that if you record it, you can then make the recording available for download. Or if you’ve provided enough high quality content, you may even consider selling the recording to bring people in your sales funnel!

Of course you can offer free events offline as well. For example, you can offer a free local workshop, or you can do free luncheon talks for various clubs (e.g., those in the garden niche can do a free talk for the local garden club).

Whenever possible you should record these free events so you can reuse them as lead generators online.

TAKE ACTION!

Freebie Brainstorm

Set aside ten minutes right now and brainstorm as many types of freebies as possible. What would your market find entertaining and useful? Also, is it possible for you to create something controversial for your particular market?

[illegible]

Sell Resell Rights to Your Products

Another way to get people to pass along your marketing message is to financially reward them in an even bigger way than merely rebranding a report. Instead, you can sell (or even give away) resale rights to your product.

This means that those who hold resale rights are free to charge whatever they want for the product (such as an ebook), thus they make money every time they sell a copy. The bonus for you, however, is that it's YOUR links that appear in the book – so you have plenty of backend income opportunities.

An even better way to make the report spread around the Internet more quickly is to offer master resell rights. That means that everyone who buys the report is allowed in turn to sell the report to others for any price.

Keep this in mind, however: a report that looks like a sales letter and is full of links won't be very valuable to the reseller – and his customers won't like it either. As such, you should only offer resell rights to VALUABLE products that you would be comfortable selling.

Secondly, don't stuff the report full of links (as that decreases the perceived value of the report). Instead, include two or three well-placed links, with the rest of the ebook being solid-gold content.

This ensures that your resell rights buyers are happy, which means they'll sell loads of your report to their customers. But it also means their customers are happy, which increases the likelihood that they'll click on the links, visit your site, buy your products and/or join your lists. It's a win-win-win situation.

TIP: You can sell resell rights to your products on sites like eBay and the WarriorForum.com's "special offer" section. You may also consider DigitalPoint's forums.

If you give the resale rights away, then simply market these free rights as you would any other freebie (e.g., give it away when someone signs up to your newsletter, mention it on your sig link on forums, etc).

Forum Marketing

Forum marketing works for a variety of reasons (provided you are posting in forums that are closely tied into your niche).

First, in most forums you're allowed to leave a signature link, which is a few advertising lines and a link back to your site. Depending on the type of forum software being used, that link may count as a backlink for search engine purposes. But even if it doesn't it's still valuable because human visitors will click through from the forum to your site.

The second reason forum marketing is so effective is because it builds your reputation and allows you to establish yourself as an expert in the niche. In other words, it's great for networking opportunities, and it helps you establish that name-recognition we talked about in the "Joint Ventures" section of this traffic module.

Here are a few tips to help you make the most of your forum marketing:

- Use your real name, even if it's just your first name. Even a pen-name will do. People would much rather do business with a real entity as opposed to someone hiding behind an Internet handle.
- Where-ever possible, use your real picture as your avatar. People tend to trust those who they're able to put a face to the name. It goes back to doing business with a "real" person.
- Read the rules of the forum carefully before posting. Some forums don't allow signature links ...or have various other rules that can get you booted quickly if you don't follow them.
- "Lurk" before posting. This means you can sign up for an account on the forum, but you should spend a week or two just reading posts (including the archives), and getting a feel for the "flavor" of the forum. Different forums have different personalities, and you'll do best if you understand how to fit in with the forum regulars.
- Once you do start posting, don't draw particular attention to yourself. For example, don't come on the forum making outrageous posts or making dozens of posts per day. You'll get attention all right, but many

forum regulars will view you suspiciously (as they are used to people using these tactics to use the forum strictly for their own gain).

- Give first. This means you should be working hard to help people on the forum, and “giving” whatever you can before you start posting your links. Post thoughtfully so that you become a trusted member of the forum.
- Consider your signature link carefully. It doesn’t exist solely for the search engines (and indeed may not even matter at all). It exists first and foremost for the human readers – so give them a reason to click on your link.

TAKE ACTION!

Find Your Forums

Go to Google and run a search for your niche keywords followed by the word forum or message board or discussion (e.g., “dog training forum” or “lose weight message board”).

List the top ten forums in your niche:

- | | |
|----|-----|
| 1. | 6. |
| 2. | 7. |
| 3. | 8. |
| 4. | 9. |
| 5. | 10. |

Now start creating accounts at all of them. Make notes next to each forum above to remind you of any special rules unique to that particular forum.

Article Marketing

We’ve touched on the benefits of article marketing from the standpoint that you can get a backlink from the article directories for every article you submit. However, an even better benefit is that the article directories tend to draw in real visitors who’ll read your articles ...and click through to your site.

What does that mean when you sit down to create an article? It means you need to spend some time writing it to flag down and draw in search engine traffic – but primarily you must write it in such a way that it holds the interest of your readers and gives them a reason to go to your site.

Here’s how to accomplish both of these objectives...

First, you need to go to WordTracker or refer to your list of keywords to decide which of them can be folded into an article. You’ll want to use “long-tail” keywords here – those that are searched for, but don’t get a lot of traffic, and as such hardly have any competition. Usually this means your keywords will be three, four or even five words long, as opposed to one or two.

Once you have your words (preferably one keyword per article, two at most), start writing. You'll want to include the keywords in your article title as well as sprinkled into the article itself at approximately a two or three percent density rate.

But remember: you're writing for human readers first, and for the search engines second. That means your headline needs to attract attention so the reader dives into the rest of your article. And the article needs to be engaging enough to compel people to read the entire thing ...right down to your byline (resource box) at the end of the article.

While the headline is likely the most important part of your article (since a headline that doesn't attract attention means no one will read the article), the resource box is probably the second-most important part. And that's because it holds the important job of getting readers to click off this article directory and onto your site.

Many article marketers make the mistake of using their resource box to talk about themselves (perhaps because it IS the author byline, after all). So their byline reads something like, "Joe Schmoe is a dog trainer with 17 years of experience. To read more articles by Joe, click here."

You know what? That's boring – and it doesn't give a reader a compelling reason to click. Firstly, no one cares about Joe Schmoe – they care about their problems and how to solve them. And secondly, no one wants to read "more articles." Instead, they want to find solutions!

This means your byline needs to be centered around benefits for the reader – perhaps a promise that they'll receive a big benefit if they click through. Don't worry about talking about yourself in your byline, because the reader just doesn't care about you (she cares about herself).

So instead of the boring "Joe Schmoe" pat-on-the-back ego-driven headline above, try something like this instead: "discover how to teach your dog to sit in seven minutes flat! Click here now to learn this secret ...free!"

See the difference? This byline is all about the reader and the benefits/solutions she'll receive if she clicks on your link. In essence, you should view your byline as a mini-advertisement. In the case of short byline, then your byline should be a headline and a call to action (giving people a reason to click).

Social Media Marketing (SMM)

The experts say the web is turning more and more towards social media marketing. This is where online users interact with one another, network, and create content.

These include sites like:

- MySpace, a social networking site that is composed of millions of members who are interested in thousands of niche topics.
- Digg, a social bookmarking site where you can share your favorite sites with other users.
- Squidoo, a place for users to create articles, interactive features, blogs and more on a webpage centered around nearly any topic of their choosing
- YouTube, a place where users can upload and share videos, and where other users can comment on these videos.

Here's how you can take advantage of these popular sites (and others like them):

1. You can take advantage of these social media sites by creating content around niche topics (on sites like Squidoo, blog sites like blogger.com and video sites like YouTube). YouTube gets millions of visitors from around the world, while content sites like Squidoo draw in search engine traffic like crazy.
2. You can bookmark and share your sites on places like digg and del.icio.us. You may even join networks where you bookmark other members' sites, and they do the same for you.

Keep in mind, however, that in order for this to work you need to bookmark pages of your site that are of great interest to your niche. The page may include content that's funny, extremely useful, or even controversial.

Essentially you're trying to get your site to go viral by bookmarking it (and hoping others bookmark it too). So your page needs to be something unusual to get others to bookmark it.

A sales page will drop like a rock on sites like these. Something offensive or funny will likely get the thumbs up from others ...and rise in the rankings.

3. You can network and build lists on social networking sites like MySpace.com and Facebook.com.

TIP: just like on forums, most of these social media sites frown on blatant attempts to profit commercially from their sites. Indeed, many of these sites have warnings in their terms of service that you can get terminated from the site if you use it for commercial purposes.

Bottom line is, be careful how you use sites like MySpace. You can set up a blog and you can build a list of “friends” that you can send bulletins to – just watch that you don’t get pegged as sending spam.

How to Get Free Publicity

Here’s an old stand by: send press releases to the media. If you have a good “hook” for your story, you might just get free publicity in the form of a mention on a radio or TV station, or an article in a print publication.

But here’s the trick: the article you’re sending must be news, and not promotional. Your article needs to make it past an editor who’s looking for news, not ads (those you pay for). Editors know that businesses will submit releases for a bit of free publicity – and since editors need to fill their papers every day, they’ll print them. But only IF they’re newsworthy.

Flip open your local newspaper to the business section and check out the press release-type articles that have been printed. Notice that they’re newsworthy, and generally written in a more passive third-person voice (as opposed to the aggressive voice of promotional pieces).

That’s the way you need to write your press release too. Indeed, emulating some of the pieces you see in your local newspaper will help you write a release that’s likely to get accepted. If you’re lucky a reporter will call you to get more of the story from you and print an even bigger piece than you hoped.

Here are a few tips to help you nab this free publicity:

- If you can't think of anything newsworthy, CREATE something newsworthy to write about (such as you sponsoring a charity event, or doing an outrageous publicity stunt).
- If you've never written a release before, research first to be sure your release is in the correct format and is written like an article and not an ad. Better yet, hire an expert to write it for you.
- If you're submitting these releases yourself, take the time to ensure you are submitting them to the correct person, and in the correct form (e.g., some editors won't accept email submissions).
- If you've purchased a list of names and addresses, be sure you're purchasing from a reputable company that has up-to-date contact info for editors.
- You can also submit online and get picked up by editors when you use services such as PRWeb.com and WebWire.com.
- Build relationships with editors! Remember that editors who print your releases are doing you a favor. Nurture these relationships, and in the future you can expect to get even more free publicity.
- When in doubt, hire an expert who'll not only create the release for you, but also submit it too.

TAKE ACTION!

What's Your Hook?

Set aside ten or fifteen minutes and write down all the different newsworthy “hooks” you could use to create a press release. Be sure to include newsworthy events and stunts that you create:

Still More Ways to Get Free Traffic

We’ve covered dozens of ways for you to bring massive traffic into your site. Using just the methods above could help you earn a comfortable living. However, the more ways you can bring traffic into your site, the better position you’ll be in should any of your traffic streams dry up.

As such, here are five more free traffic generation ideas for you to use for fun and profit:

- Use Craigslist.org to promote your business services and products. Keep in mind that CL and its users hate spam, so post in the appropriate category – and limit the number of cities you post to.

Tip: UsFreeAds.com is another free classified site you can use to generate sales and leads.

- Lulu.com is a way for you to turn your digital products into physical products quickly and easily (which increases the perceived value of the product and makes you look like an expert). However, another advantage is that you can set up an author page and blog to promote your book – and yourself.

- Become an expert by become an “About.com” guide or even a columnist for your local newspaper (with or without pay). Do this and you can include links to your own sites in your column ...or certainly at the end.
- Review other people’s products and provide testimonials that they can print on their websites. Often the product owners will give you a link back to your site that appears alongside your name.
- Provide reviews on Amazon.com and elsewhere, and include your link at the end of your reviews.

Is that it for profitable free traffic generation ideas? Of course not. There are plenty of others you could consider, from handing out flyers at a trade show, to passing out business cards and brochures at niche-specific events. But use what you’ve learned so far, and you can easily set up a six figure business.

TAKE ACTION!

Your Top Three

We've discussed several ways to pull free traffic into your site. Take a moment now to choose your top three favorite methods:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Now list the action steps you need to take to put each of those strategies in motion.

For example, if you're forum marketing than you need to 1) find the forums, 2) create accounts at the forums, 3) spend some time reading the current posts and archives, 4) start posting, 5) create a signature link.

List your action steps here:

Method #1 Action Steps:

Method #2 Action Steps:

Method #3 Action Steps:

Now you've created a "to do" list that you can use to track your progress. Starting with your first choice traffic generation method, go down through your list of action steps, crossing them off as you accomplish them.

Once you've started getting traffic from one method (or if you've completed all steps and have nothing left to do), then do the same with your second and third choice method.

Quick and Easy Paid Traffic Generation

If you have more money than time, then you can start using these paid traffic generation techniques immediately. Otherwise once you start making a profit using the free traffic methods, you can invest some of the money into these paid advertising methods.

How to Use Pay Per Click Search Advertising

Pay per click advertising (PPC) are those sponsored results you see when you run a search in Google, Yahoo, MSN or your favorite search engines. However, the advertiser isn't paying for each view of the ad – rather the advertiser only pays when someone clicks on the ad.

So how does it work?

Generally advertisers all bid on a keyword (like “lose weight”) to see who gets top placements in the paid ad results. The higher one bids, in general the higher their ad will appear in the results (although how many times your ad is clicked also factors into the equation – after all, the PPC provider doesn't make money unless your ad gets clicked on).

One advantage of using a PPC campaign is that you can test your marketing very quickly. That's because generally you can have traffic rolling into your site just minutes after you set up the campaign. It's a quick and easy way to split test a sales letter, a squeeze page or anything else you'd like to test.

Do note, however, that you should set up a strict daily budget. Otherwise you're likely to find an unhappy surprise in your account if you don't cap the daily limit.

A successful PPC ad campaign is composed of the following: choosing the right keywords, creating an ad that gets attention and will get clicked on, and creating a landing page that will result in the desired action. Let's look at these...

Choosing Your Keywords

Your goal in choosing keywords for your PPC campaign is to ensure the traffic coming in is highly targeted, and ideally they should be in a buying mood (unless you are using PPC advertising mainly to build a list).

This means that broad keywords simply won't work for you. For example, a keyword like "dog training" doesn't tell you exactly what the searcher wants. Do they want a book on dog training? A video? Do they want to train a dog to help the blind ...or to be a field dog ...or simply not to jump on guests? Do they want to train a deaf dog? Or do they want to purchase supplies like dog training treats, collars, and fences?

As such, you need to really focus in and bid on keywords that are closely related to what you're offering. Suppose you have a housetraining book, in which case a keyword set like "housetraining book" or "dog housetraining book" would match what you're offering. Even better, a keyword set like "buy housetraining book" lets you know what the person wants ...and that they're willing to pay for it.

And better yet? Where ever possible, bid on the keywords for the actual name of the product you're selling (e.g., "Dell Inspiron Laptop"). If you're an affiliate, do note that some companies don't allow you to bid on their product names and other trademarks.

In sum, look for tightly focused keywords, especially those that suggest the person is looking to purchase something.

Note: avoid bidding on words like "free," which may pull the freebie seekers out of the woodwork. Doing so means your ad costs could go up very quickly, but you're not getting a return on that investment.

So now the question is, how much should you pay for keywords?

Naturally this is going to depend on what you expect your return on investment will be. If you think your sales letter for a \$50 product will churn out a 1% conversion rate (so that one out of every 100 people buys your product), then you need to bid on words that don't exceed your profit.

For example, suppose you have to pay 25 cents per click for a particular keyword. For every 100 people who click on your ad, on average you'll get one sale if you have a 1% conversion rate. That means you spent \$25 to make \$50 (minus your payment processor fees and such). That's a good deal!

Of course this is a completely fictional example. Your sales letter may convert more or less ...and this fluctuates even more depending on which keywords people are coming in on. Your cost per click could also be more or less.

My advice to you is to start slowly with a strict budget, and test everything. Google Adwords and others allow you to set up campaigns so that you can see which keywords and which ads perform best for you. Of course you'll want to test your site's sales letter as well.

Choose very targeted keywords, and bid according to your best guess of what sort of conversion you expect (figure a ½% or at most a 1% conversion rate if your sales letter has never been tested before). Also be sure to set a daily budget as it's easy to spend hundreds of dollars daily if you don't set a limit.

Creating Your Ad

Choosing the right keywords ensures your ad gets seen by members of your target market. However, the next step is to get – and hold – their attention ...and then compel them to click on your ad.

That's why you need to focus on creating an advertisement that gets attention, includes benefits for your target audience, and gives people a reason to click on your ad.

TIP: use the words people searched for in your ad, as it will catch their eye. For example, if they typed in "dog training book" into the search engine, then ideally your ad should mention those words too.

Go ahead and type in some of your niche's keywords into Google right now. Look at the different ads and see which ones catch your eye. Note also which ones aren't compelling.

Generally those that aren't compelling are bland ads without benefits. For example, just now I typed in "buy laptop computer" into Yahoo. Some of the ads give no reason whatsoever for me to click on them. The headline says "buy laptop computer" but the headline nor the ad isn't eye-catching. For example, one says "find providers of laptops in our directory."

That isn't much of a benefit, is it?

However, there are some ads that do a great job. They list benefits and things that arouse curiosity, such as promising to show me the top ten laptops, or tell

me the truth about laptops (oooh, I'm curious now!), or even offering me a deal such as \$200 cash back and free shipping.

All of those ads give me a reason to click, whether it's mere curiosity, or because I want to save money.

And so it is with people who will see your ad. The headline of your ad needs to grab them by the shirt collar (perhaps by shocking them), and the ad itself needs to sell them on clicking on your ad.

Note that last line. I didn't say the ad should sell the product to them. No way, as there isn't enough space in a couple line ad to do that. Your ad's job is to simply get them to click on your ad, which is usually achieved by arousing their curiosity and/or promising them a big benefit.

Note: *if you're selling a product, you can weed out the freebie seekers by including words that indicate you're selling something. For instance, saying something like "free shipping" is not only a benefit to entice your prospect, but will ward off freebie seekers who have no intention of buying.*

Similarly, you can use words like "discount," "bargain," "coupon," "rebate" and similar to entice prospects while sending freebie seekers away.

As mentioned before (but it's worth repeating) –test everything. See which keywords pull best for you, and see which ads pull best. When you find an ad that works well, test and tweak it.

However, be sure to test just one element of your ad at a time. For example, run two identical ads, with the only difference being that they have different headlines. Or run two identical headlines with slightly different ads. Or run two identical ads against different keywords to see how the keywords affect your conversion rate.

Of course the other thing that will affect your conversion rate is what sort of copy the prospect finds when she clicks on your ad...

Creating the Landing Page

The landing page is where your prospects end up after they click on your ad. It may be a pre-sell page for a product, it may be the actual sales page, or it could be a squeeze page (where you work to get the prospect onto your newsletter first before attempting to sell anything).

Note: Ideally you should always work on getting the prospect on your newsletter list, because if the prospect hits the back button, they're likely gone forever. But as usual, you need to give them a good and compelling reason to get on your newsletter list.

Above all, your landing page needs to deliver what you promised in your PPC ads. If you promised they could buy cat collars with free shipping if they clicked on your ad, then your landing page better be full of cat collars with free shipping.

While the above advice may seem extremely obvious, many marketers make the mistake of taking shortcuts and not giving searchers what they're looking for. Instead of setting up landing pages that are directly related to the searcher's keywords, they send all PPC traffic to the homepage of a site ...which requires further effort on behalf of the prospect.

For example, a person searching for "cat collars" with free shipping doesn't end up on a page of cat collars. Instead, they're taken to the front page of a large pet supplies store, where they have to search for those elusive cat collars.

Why make prospects jump through hoops? They shouldn't have to. As soon as they click on your ad, whatever you promised in your ad should be staring back at them from your landing page.

Note: as usual, test your landing page! How well is it converting, whether it's a presell page, a review page, a sales letter or a squeeze page? If it's not converting at a number you like, start tweaking and split testing different versions.

But remember, only change one element of your page at a time, while holding all other variables constant. Start with your headline, as that usually creates the biggest change in conversion rates.

ACTION STEP:

Preparing for Your Campaign

1. Comb through your keyword list and look for words that are very specific and indicate the searcher's willingness to buy. List them here:

2. Write down the benefits of whatever you're trying to sell here:

3. List what you know about your target market here:

4. Now create at least five versions of an ad you could use:

5. Finally, brainstorm a list of 25 (yes, 25) headlines you could use for your PPC ad. This is brainstorming, so there are no right or wrong answers here ...so don't edit your headlines, just write them down as they pop into your head:

Other Ways to Drive Targeted Traffic to Your Site

Below you'll discover even more effective methods of driving targeted traffic to your site using paid advertising. While all of these are paid methods, some of them – such as using eBay for lead generation – are downright cheap.

But don't think that cheap means ineffective. Just as some of the most effective ways to drive targeted traffic are free, some of the most effective paid methods won't break your budget.

Lead Generation on Ebay

Marketers have long used eBay as a way to generate leads. How? By selling cheap products on the front end (sometimes they actually lose money, AKA “loss leaders”), and then making their fortune on the backend.

Indeed, you can see this very method in action right now if you visit eBay. You can even see it's inner workings by buying into some of these deals and see how they work their backend. Just browse through the information product categories, and you'll find plenty of ebooks being sold for rock-bottom prices – anywhere from a penny up to a couple dollars.

Obviously these sellers aren't doing this to make money on the ebooks, as the insertion fees cancel out any profit if the ebook is only going for a few cents. But it is a way to get your ebook circulating on the market, as well as building a list of customers.

However, all the marketing needn't take place in the product itself, and all the marketing doesn't even have to be done through backend channels with existing customers.

You see, an eBay ad that can get a lot of attention can siphon off some of these ad viewers to the seller's “About Me” page, where the potential buyer is then given a compelling reason to sign up for the sellers' list. As such, even people who don't buy the cheap report that's up for auction can still get on the seller's list.

That's one of the reasons that you'll from time to time see really outrageous auctions. For example, you'll see ebooks or even other items like domain names up for incredible prices – perhaps hundreds of thousands of dollars. The seller

knows the product won't sell at that price, but what happens is the outrageous price draws curious eyes to the auction.

After all, getting potential buyers to click on your ad is half the battle. And sometimes it's not the promise of a one-penny report that will do it, but rather an ebook that's being sold for thousands.

The seller then writes a compelling sales letter which is actually designed not to sell the product, but rather convince the potential buyer to go to the "About Me" page and sign up for a newsletter (perhaps getting a free related report in the process).

Mission accomplished.

So in summary, here's how you can use eBay for lead generation:

1. Sell a report for cheap, and get buyers on your customer list so you can market more products on the backend. Be sure to include links in the ebook for more backend marketing opportunities. You may even include resale rights with the ebook so that others pass it around.
2. Run an outrageously expensive auction just to get eyeballs on your ad. Then siphon off potential buyers to your About Me page, where you get them to sign up for your newsletter

CPA Networks

A CPA network is a company that brings together affiliates and advertisers for CPA (cost-per-action) promotions. A cost-per-action means the commission is paid only after some specific action has taken place. While this may mean the browser converts into a buyer, it could also mean the prospect takes some specific action such as filling out a form to request more information, asking for free trial, etc.

The benefit of promoting your deal through a CPA network is that you don't need to build relationships with affiliates yourself, manage your affiliates, keep them motivated, etc. Instead, you sign up at the network, and for a fee the CPA network sends affiliates to promote your program.

Also, some of these networks screen affiliates, so that only those who perform can be in the program. That means you'll have a higher percentage of affiliates working hard for you.

The downside of course is that you are paying to have someone else manage the program. Of course if the network has too many advertisers, they may not pay as much special attention to your program (as opposed to if you hired an affiliate manager or JV broker, which is mentioned in the next section).

The other downside is that you may not have direct access to your affiliates (since they belong to a network). If you come out with a new product you'd like to promote, in many cases you'll need to pull it through the network since you don't have access to your existing affiliates.

The other downside is that some networks require the CPA action to be something along the lines of paying for leads, free trials, etc. That means the affiliate may get the traffic to your site to sign up for your offer ...but once they've done that, they're done.

It's then up to you to convert that traffic into sales – and if it's not 100% targeted traffic, that can be a difficult task. Since you don't control the traffic, it's hard to know the demographics of this traffic. You'll also need to be aware that if you set up a CPA where the action is signing up for a list or something else that's free, some affiliates will try to game the system (by having their friends sign up).

In summary: a CPA network can be useful, especially if you want to build an army of affiliates very quickly. However, before you do this you should thoroughly test your sales page, squeeze page and marketing system so they're running optimally.

If you're interested in pursuing this avenue, start by checking out some of the top CPA networks like Hydra Media Network, Azoogle.com network, and CPAEmpire.com

JV Brokers and Affiliate Managers

Another way to have instant access to a large number of eager affiliates quickly is to go to a JV broker or affiliate manager who specializes in your niche.

Usually a JV broker has spent years developing relationships with all the “big players” in his niche. For a fee he will encourage his list of affiliates/JV partners to promote your product or service. That means you don’t need to develop the relationships yourself – and yet you can still get the big marketers on board via this third party.

Some JV brokers ask for an upfront fee, while others take a percentage of the overall sales. Some JV brokers merely introduce you to the marketers (while encouraging them to join your program), while others will take on affiliate manager roles (by keeping in contact with affiliates leading up to a launch, keeping them motivated, perhaps running affiliate contests, and more).

An affiliate manager typically doesn’t have the big list of contacts, so he can’t do any introductions for you. However, an affiliate manager will go out and build relationships on your behalf, ask affiliates to join your affiliate program, manage the affiliate program, run affiliate contests, etc.

Affiliate managers can be trained to do their jobs (meaning you can even find someone locally to work with, although you’ll obviously do better if you start with an experienced manager). Meanwhile if you’re looking for a JV broker, you’ll need to run a search in Google for a broker that specializes in your niche, or ask members of the WarriorForum.com for their recommendations.

Using Co-Registration Leads

Have you ever signed up for someone’s newsletter list, and during the process you were asked to sign up for other similar offers as well? This is called co-registration, because you are signing up for multiple offers simultaneously.

So what are these “other offers” that you can sign up for? You’ll notice that some of them are generic. In other words, you’re not signing up for a specific newsletter with a specific name, but rather you’re signing up to receive mailings on a particular topic – but you don’t know where this mail might be coming from. The type of mail you receive from that point forward depends on who buys you co-registration lead.

Now jump on the other side of the table and put your marketing hat on, and you can see how being the one who buys the co-registration leads can be a way to build your own list fast.

But before we jump into this any further, let me put out a warning: using coregistration is not for beginners. You need to have an understanding of how to convert luke-warm (almost cold) subscribers. And you need to also have an understanding of the dangers associated with co-registration.

What sort of pitfalls can you expect?

First off, co-registration generally means you are sharing leads (hence the reason they are so cheap). So you don't singularly own this list. Instead, anywhere from one or two people to dozens of other people might be emailing this exact same list with their own offers.

In short, you need to read the terms carefully for any co-registration company you're thinking of working with, to ensure that only a small number of people will receive the leads.

Secondly, these leads are generally only single opt-in leads. That means that the person has officially subscribed simply by entering their name and email address. The other type which is generally not used is called double opt-in, which means all subscribers must confirm that they want to be on the list.

So what's the problem with single opt-in leads? Spam complaints are higher than with double opt-in. And the reason is because I could go to a co-reg form and enter YOUR email address and name. You never requested any information, and yet your name is now being sold all over the Internet. As far as you're concerned, you're getting spam (and in truth you are, because you never personally requested it).

Another problem with a single opt-in lead is that there can easily be errors in the email addresses. Someone legitimately looking for information signs up for the newsletter, but enter their email address wrong – since a confirmation email isn't sent, the wrong email is being sold to those buying co-reg leads. Of course the email goes nowhere, so it's a wasted lead.

Now if you're willing to take on the associated risks, here are a few guidelines...

First, don't try to sell anything when you email these leads. Instead, entice them with free offers if they sign up for your newsletter list. In other words, you want to work on getting these leads to legitimately and specifically request to be on YOUR list ...preferably your double-opt-in list.

Second, once they're on your list don't hammer them with offers. Remember, in all likelihood the other marketers who bought the co-reg leads are hammering them. You want to stand apart from the crowd by offering highly valuable content (although it never hurts to weave "soft sell" recommendations into your content). Then after you've spent some time building a relationship can you start engaging in some more "hard sell" pitching.

Also, because of the associated risks, you may want to consider setting up a special autoresponder account and domain just for dealing with these co-reg leads. That way if your domain does get shut down for spamming it won't hurt you since it's not your main site.

And finally, the best way to mitigate the risk is to deal with a reputable co-registration company. Do your research and your due diligence thoroughly before jumping into this type of lead generation. If you deal with a reputable company, you'll get better leads ...and indeed you WILL be able to build your business quickly and easily using co-registration.

Buying Ads Online

There are some online newsletters (ezines) and websites that allow you to buy text ads, banner ads, links and more on their sites.

Before you do this, you need to have tracked and tested your ads and sales letters first. That way you'll have a rough idea of your conversion rates, which helps you determine whether a certain ad buy is worth it or not.

However, keep in mind that usually you need to use a two-step system to make sales on someone else's site. That is, your ad's job is to get people to your site, and once they get on your site you get them on your newsletter list (and from there you work on closing the sale).

Before purchasing ads from sites or newsletters, ask the webmaster about his demographics (in short, who are his visitors and subscribers?). Also ask him where his traffic and subscribers come from. Of course you'll also need his actual traffic numbers so you can have a sense of how many people will see your ad.

Finally, do your due diligence on the offer. Ask around and see if anyone else has purchased ads on the site in question. You see, sometimes webmasters

cannot monetize their own sites, so they sell ads to others. In other words, their traffic doesn't convert so they sell ad space.

Of course that isn't always the case, but you need to research to ensure you'll have a somewhat responsive audience. Your best bet is to start off with a small ad buy, and if you get results, then put more money into getting your ad seen by more subscribers and web visitors.

TIP: if you're buying an ad in a newsletter, subscribe first and read the content for several weeks. This will give you an idea of the quality of the content and what sorts of subscribers it might appeal to.

Secondly, if a newsletter editor or webmaster doesn't have specific information on their site about selling ad space, consider offering them an affiliate deal first. This motivates the editor/webmaster to help pre-sell the product, which can result in more sales.

Buying Ads Offline

Another way to pull in qualified traffic is to buy advertising offline – on the radio, on TV, and through the more-popular newspaper classified and space ads.

As usual, you need to do two things before you purchase these ads. First, ensure that you're placing ads where your target market will see them. That means niche-related print publications and ads placed in market sections (e.g., a sports ad in the sports section of a paper) are better than placing ads in general publications.

Secondly, you'll need to ensure your ads and sales letters are up to par before placing them. You should test your marketing systems using other methods before turning to offline media.

If you're using a classified ad, your ad should NOT sell the product. The reason is because you simply do not have enough room to get attention, interest, and desire for the product in just a few lines.

Instead, your ad should work to compel the reader to take a specific action, such as call a toll-free number, visit your website to get a free report, or send away for free information. Once you have the prospect's contact information, then you can work to close the sale through follow-up marketing.

TAKE ACTION!

Your Top Two Paid Methods

We've discussed several ways to pull free traffic into your site. Take a moment now to choose your top three favorite methods:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Now list the action steps you need to take to put each of those strategies in motion.

List your action steps here:

Method #1 Action Steps:

Method #2 Action Steps:

Method #3 Action Steps:

Now you've created a "to do" list that you can use to track your progress. Starting with your first choice traffic generation method, go down through your list of action steps, crossing them off as you accomplish them.

Once you've started getting traffic from one method (or if you've completed all steps and have nothing left to do), then do the same with your second choice method.

Conclusion: Pulling it All Together

Congratulations, you've just completed the traffic module. You've certainly learned a lot – indeed, the information you've just learned will make you hundreds of thousands of dollars if not more.

But of course you know that money won't just fall in your lap. You need to actually apply what you've learned. The “Take Action” worksheets you've completed so far are only a first step in this journey. Now you need to keep putting one foot in front of the other and keep making progress.

If you're new to all of this, it may seem overwhelming. Where do you start? How do you get going? How do you keep going?

That's why we've created this Take Action checklist to guide you in an explicit step-by-step manner in the top three traffic-generation methods. No guesswork involved! Just start working down this checklist worksheet, and in no time you'll start seeing the results showing up on the bottom line!

Instructions: As you complete these items, cross them off the list or place a check next to them. If it's not applicable to your situation, write N/A next to the item.

TAKE ACTION: Traffic System Checklist (top three methods)

Defining Your Market

- ☐ Did you complete the “define your market” worksheet?
- ☐ Have you selected a specific niche (a subsegment of your overall market) to focus in on?
- ☐ Do you thoroughly understand your niche?
- ☐ Can you create a product specific to this niche’s needs?
- ☐ Can you create marketing materials that speak directly to the niche?
- ☐ Have you researched to see if this niche is profitable?

Top Three Traffic Generation Methods

Joint Ventures:

- ☐ Have you created your offer?
- ☐ Is the JV easy for your partners to do?
- ☐ Is the offer tilted in favor of your partners?
- ☐ Do you have site set up for partners?
- ☐ Have you created marketing material for partners:
 - ☐ Email/Newsletter ads?
 - ☐ Banner ads?
 - ☐ Blog ads?
 - ☐ Reviews?
 - ☐ Short ads for online classifieds, etc?
- ☐ Do you have a tracking system set up for partners?
- ☐ Will you be using a JV broker? *(if yes, skip the rest of the steps)*
- ☐ Did you look for partners in the search engine results?
- ☐ Did you look for partners in the PPC ad results?
- ☐ Did you look for partners on Clickbank?
- ☐ Did you look for partners on Amazon and similar?
- ☐ Did you use AffiliateElite.com to find partners?
- ☐ Where else did you look for partners? _____
- ☐ Have you completed the JV worksheet?

- ☐ Have you written your JV proposal?
 - ☐ Does your proposal include a compelling headline?
 - ☐ Does your proposal get to the point quickly?
 - ☐ Is your proposal full of benefits for the partner?
 - ☐ Does your proposal include a strong call to action?
 - ☐ Do you have marketing stats like conversion rates to show partners?

Note: once you've completed all of the above JV steps, then start sending out your JV proposals. Use a separate sheet of paper (or a Word document on your PC) to track who you sent proposals to, on what date, and if you got a reply.

Here's a sample:

| Partner Name | Website | Proposal Sent (date) | Reply |
|--------------|-----------------|-----------------------|-------|
| Joe Black | joeblack123.com | June 23 rd | Yes |

After a week, return to your list to see who you haven't heard from at all. Resend your proposal to these potential partners, and tell them you're looking forward to their reply. You may also consider following up with all committed partners and potential partners with a phone call or with a letter sent through the postal mail.

Search Engine Optimization (SEO)

- ☐ Have you used WordTracker or similar to compile a keyword list?
- ☐ Have you found low competition words you can compete on in the SE's?
- ☐ Have you set up a blog to post content?
- ☐ Have you started posting to your blog at least 2-3 times per week?
- ☐ Do you ping using pingoat.com every time you post to your blog?
- ☐ Are you writing (or outsourcing) content (like articles) on a weekly basis?
- ☐ Do you optimize for only one or two keywords per page?

- ☐ Do your keywords appear in your meta tags?
- ☐ Do your keywords appear in your navigation menu?
- ☐ Do your keywords appear in your page title?
- ☐ Do your keywords appear as part of the page file name?
- ☐ Do your keywords appear in the title of your article?
- ☐ Are you using a keyword density rate of 2% to 3% for your articles?
- ☐ Have you created a link-exchange proposal?
- ☐ Have you compiled a list of potential link-exchange partners?
- ☐ Have you let partners know how you'd like your link to appear (anchor text)?
- ☐ Have you downloaded the Google toolbar to determine PR?
- ☐ Are you sending out link-exchange requests weekly?
- ☐ Are you triangulating your link exchanges?
- ☐ Have you submitted articles to article directories?
- ☐ Have you set up a Squidoo site (or similar) content page?
- ☐ Have you submitted your site to ezine directories?
- ☐ Have you submitted your site to blog directories?
- ☐ Have you submitted your site to forum directories?
- ☐ Have you submitted your site to affiliate directories?
- ☐ Have you submitted your site to niche directories?
- ☐ Have you submitted your site to your local directories?
- ☐ Do you participate on niche forums and leave your link?
- ☐ Do you make comments on other people's blogs with your link?
- ☐ Have you searched for .edu and .gov blogs to comment on?
- ☐ Do you swap content with other webmasters?
- ☐ Do you submit testimonials to other product owners?
- ☐ Do you answer questions on Yahoo Answers?
- ☐ Have you posted quality content on Wikipedia and similar?
- ☐ Have you set up a network of sites that are interlinked?

Pay Per Click Search Engines

- ☐ Have you compiled a list of potential keywords to bid on?
- ☐ Are the keywords tightly focused?

- ☐ Do the keywords indicate the searcher is a buyer and not a freebie-seeker?
- ☐ Have you included exact product names as keywords?
- ☐ Have you completed the "PPC worksheet?"
- ☐ Have you set up a Google AdWords account?
- ☐ Have you set up a Yahoo Search Marketing account?
- ☐ Have you set up an MSN AdCenter account?
- ☐ Have you estimated your conversion rate?
- ☐ Have you chosen a low per-keyword bid amount based on that rate?
- ☐ Have you created at least one advertisement?
 - ☐ Have you created a headline that gets attention?
 - ☐ Did you include your keywords somewhere in the ad?
 - ☐ Does the ad stress the main benefit?
 - ☐ Does the ad give the reader a reason to click on the ad?
 - ☐ Does the ad discourage people looking for a freebie?
- ☐ Have you created a separate landing page for each ad group?
- ☐ Are you tracking and testing elements of your ad campaign?
- ☐ Have you set up multiple campaigns for testing purposes?
- ☐ Have you set a maximum daily budget across all campaigns?
- ☐ Have you eliminated keywords in your campaigns that produce little or no response?

Outsourcing

**Achieve More Results, Expand Your Business Faster
and Automate Your Business!**

1.0 Introduction to Outsourcing

1.1 Outsourcing – What it is and How it Benefits the Internet Entrepreneur

People sometimes wonder when they hear the term “outsourcing.” Here is a brief overview of outsourcing, along with some ideas on how it can benefit the business entrepreneur ...especially one who is making a go on the Internet.

Actually, outsourcing has been going on for years. The essence of outsourcing is simply employing the services of an individual or organization to handle certain aspects of your business plan. Instead of you or your full-time staff handling these tasks, you employ a freelancer.

These aspects may be public relations, marketing, writing, graphics, web design, clerical and administrative functions, or IT management. In fact, with today's virtual environment, there is really no part of the business that cannot be outsourced effectively.

Of course, the big question is whether or not there are any benefits to outsourcing, especially for persons who are building their business on the Internet. Actually, there are several good reasons to outsource certain functions. Here are a few examples:

Often, an Internet business is set up with a shoestring budget and one person doing all the work. As the business grows, it is easy to get caught up in dealing with general office functions, such as answering emails, handling correspondence, creating content, and maintaining client lists.

By outsourcing your clerical support needs, you can spend more time focusing on the expansion of your business, not the day-to-day details of running it.

Second, promoting your online presence is a full-time job all by itself. You can hardly manage that and still be involved in making the big decisions that impact the overall operations of your company. Using outside agents to promote your presence and to stimulate sales makes it possible for you to do what owners need to do -- which is grow the company's roster of goods and services.

Last, outsourcing allows you to not get bogged down with employee taxes, withholding and providing a benefit package. When you outsource to an agency

or to another individual, they will not expect a benefit package to go along with their pay.

You will save a great deal of time and money on accounting functions; these savings can be pumped right back into your business and used for expansion.

Outsourcing is a great way to expand your online company without undue stress on your resources. Why not look at your present situation and see if you would benefit from outsourcing a function or two?

1.2 Outsourcing: Now or Later?

If you have a business, there are probably a number of day-to-day functions that could be outsourced to great advantage right this minute. Here are a few examples...

Outsourcing your sales efforts can be great for your business on several levels. First, by outsourcing to independent agents, you do not have to worry about salaries, benefit packages or taxes.

Structure the agent program properly and you will not have to pay commissions until you receive payments from the customers your agents bring into the fold.

Everyone knows that the invoicing process can eat up a lot of resources. Outsource your invoicing to an independent firm that specializes in doing the billing for small businesses.

Make sure they use a program that is compatible with the software you use to track your AR and AP reconciliation, so you can upload everything into your system when they close out a billing period.

You can also get the service to handle the distribution of the invoices to your customers.

For a modest fee, they will even handle emailing your invoices as PDF documents or print and mail them for you. You can use the electronic files you get at the end of the billing cycle to upload into your system and then post payments as you receive them.

Customer care is another important function that you can outsource. Make sure you get people who know your business and also have a background in providing excellent customer service via the phone and online methods.

They use their own computers at home, which means you do not have to maintain a large inventory of equipment in an office somewhere. All you do is point a toll free number to them, set up access to a central customer service email box, and you're in business.

Keep in mind that when you outsource for just about any function within your company, you do not provide full-blown employee benefits. Your outsource provider is an independent contractor and as such will be responsible for handling their own taxes, insurance and vacation time.

Note: you should still check with your tax accountant to be sure you're handling your outsourcing properly.

You supply your freelancers with work and whatever compensation the two of you have agreed upon. All the money you would normally sink into benefits for full-time employees can be funneled into other aspects of your company, which ultimately will benefit everyone.

1.3 Full Time Staff versus Outsourcing to Agents – Pros and Cons

Outsourcing various functions with your company can be a great thing, given certain circumstances. Here are a few examples of when outsourcing may be to your advantage, as well as some ideas of when you might be better off with a full time staff.

For businesses that have a national or international client base, outsourcing functions such as customer care and sales only make sense.

This allows you to engage the services of persons in a number of different locations that can speak to the needs of a growing clientele in various geographic locations ...without the need to actually open a branch office there.

If your business is more of a local nature and there is a chance that clients will drop by rather than phone or email, then you will present a much better image by having someone at a desk that your customers can relate to.

Public Relations is another area where there may or may not be a reason to outsource. Again, if your company has a focus on providing a local service, chances are you can devote some time to developing the materials associated with your local advertising campaign.

But if you need a full media approach that would cover a larger geographic area than fifty or so miles, chances are you will be much better served by outsourcing to a public relations firm and let them develop the strategy for you.

Both full time staff and remote agents may handle clerical tasks, such as taking orders, handling correspondence, and setting appointments very efficiently.

The thing to consider again is the size of your business and if there is the chance that your customers will be coming into the office to drop off documents and arrange appointments.

If this is not the case, then any small or large business can benefit from having someone perform those functions in a virtual environment. There is no office to rent, and no facility to keep up ...which saves your company a great deal of money.

When it comes for being able to do the job, you can find qualified persons who are happy to work in a brick and mortar office or a virtual one. The trick is to determine which model is best for the way you run your business and how you want to interact with your client base.

Once you have answered those two questions, you will quickly see whether a full time employed staff or an outsourcing staff of agents will be the best idea for your business model.

2.0 Tasks You Can Outsource

2.1 Outsourcing Your Advertising and Marketing Needs

If you have a small or mid-sized business, chances are that you can maximize the use of your resources by utilizing an outside agency to handle your advertising and marketing needs.

Here are some tips on how to find reputable firms and agents, what you can expect to pay, and how much lead time you should give when it comes to individual projects.

Excellent quality advertising and marketing agencies are probably no further away than your phone book or a Google search. Just about any city with a population in excess of 40,000 will have a few agencies to choose from.

In some cases, they will be locally run agencies that know the business climate very well. In other cases, the agencies will be part of a national organization, and be in a great position to provide you with national exposure. Depending on what your company does, one type may be a better choice over the other.

If the local agencies don't serve your needs, then take to the Internet. You can find these agencies by using Google (search for whatever service you need), placing an ad on Craigslist, or even posting your specific needs on freelance sites like elance.com and rentacoder.com.

Please note that many of these firms will want you to sign a contract of some duration, normally at least a year. However, this is less likely to happen if you post a one-time project on a freelance site or on Craigslist.org.

You may have a monthly fee you pay; in some cases, it may be a matter of providing the agency with a fixed percentage of the billed revenue generated as a result of their efforts on your part. In some cases, it may be a combination of the two. Depending on the nature of your business, you can anticipate a minimum charge of \$10,000 annually if you engage an agency.

When deciding on an agency to outsource all your advertising and marketing needs to, make sure you see story boards of other campaigns they have done and get some references. You want to know how easy these people are to work with, and if you will get your money's worth from them.

The idea is to have someone reliable that will come up with great ideas that make your company desirable to new customers, and help you increase your net profits. With a little work, you can find an agency that has all these characteristics.

2.2 Why Outsource Your Content Writing?

If you have a web site, newsletter, or marketing materials, chances are you need good writers. While you can hire full time writers to join your staff and produce for you as needed, there is another option. You can outsource your content writing needs when and as you require a project.

There are several advantages to outsourcing your content writing assignments. Chief among these is the immediate savings on benefits and salary that you enjoy.

Unless you own a large corporation that requires a constant feed of content for your various marketing and PR functions, engaging a writer on a per-project basis just makes good financial sense.

Second, no single writer is an expert in all things. When you choose to outsource your content writing projects, you have the opportunity to find someone who is both a competent writer and has first-hand knowledge in the subject matter. This can lead to a piece that has a believability that may be lacking in content written by someone who did some quick research but has no real affinity with the subject.

Of course, you will need to begin searching for competent freelancers several weeks – even several months-- before you need the actual content. The best freelancers tend to be booked well ahead of time.

Booking ahead not only ensures you have time to properly consider any responses to your ads, but it also will allow the writer or writers you choose to have a decent amount of time to write and perhaps rewrite the project before your deadline.

Pay is very important to both you and to the content writer. Generally, a fixed rate per word with a minimum amount of words required works very well for the writer.

Depending on the type of content you require, along with the amount of time it will take the writer to compose the pieces, the rate per word may be relatively low.

SEO articles, as an example, usually take less time to write, and will usually net a lower rate of pay. Content for magazines, newsletters, and print media will usually be in excess of \$0.50 USD per word.

Finding quality writers for your content writing needs is easier than ever. A number of freelance writing sites online allow companies to post job ads that are seen by thousands of writers every day. One of the freelance sites is elance.com – but do your due diligence, as some writers whose native language is NOT English will bid low on your project. The price may be attractive, but chances are you won't be pleased with the quality.

In addition to online sources, you can also check with local agents who will represent a number of writers skilled in writing short informative pieces. Don't discount contacting and state level writer's associations as well. Most of these will be connected to a national writer's association of some kind, which means you can broadcast your offer for freelance work far and wide.

Finally, you may even consider posting a local ad in your newspaper, or placing ads in your college newspaper or college bulletin boards. Many college students are good writers – and they could use the extra money.

2.3 Finding a Competent Graphic Designer for Your Next Project

Any company that has a marketing and sales arm will need the help of a good graphic designer from time to time. This is true for print projects as well as web sites, online ads, and other types of electronic public relations.

Finding a competent person or persons to handle your graphic design projects may be as simple as checking with a local graphic design company. For a monthly fee, you can open and maintain an account with one of these firms.

In exchange, they will support your graphic design needs within a specified set of perimeters. You would also be entitled to discount rates for any projects that fall outside the scope of the basic services. Depending on your location, the monthly

fee could be anywhere from a few hundred dollars to around \$1,000.00 per month.

Independent graphic designers are also found via the Internet as well. A query for graphic designers will turn up not only a bevy of web sites advertising graphic designers, but also several job boards that you can use to advertise for a specific project (again, elance.com is one of the most reputable of such boards).

Most of these sites will have guidelines about what to put in the ads, so you will be able to supply the right information to attract quality applicants. Depending on the complexity of the project, you can expect to spend anywhere from a few hundred dollars up to several thousand dollars.

It is important to remember that you will be at a distinct disadvantage if you wait until the last minute to advertise for help with a graphic design project. If at all possible, begin the process at least one to two months before you need the final product delivered.

That gives you plenty of time to evaluate each application as well as allowing the graphic designer of your choice the time to thoroughly complete your project.

2.4 Finding a Great Virtual Assistant

With so many people working from home these days, the concept of having a virtual assistant is a great way to convey the sense of a brick and mortar office when the reality is that you are actually on the go. Here are some guidelines to help you outsource your personal assistant needs into a virtual environment...

Modern telephony and Internet applications make it possible for people to work just about anywhere. The result is that you can find a qualified virtual assistant who can keep your appointment calendar, handle projects, book flights and do just about everything but make you a cup of coffee.

The best part is that you can find a number of persons who have excellent administrative and clerical abilities that want to work from home.

While the average pay for a virtual assistant will vary, based on the tasks assigned to your assistant, you can have an excellent assistant for anywhere

from \$15.00 to \$30.00 per hour, with no benefits as part of the agreement. All it takes is a little effort on your part to connect with qualified candidates.

Note: You may find virtual assistants willing to work for less if you seek out qualified candidates from India and other foreign countries.

Employment agencies in your city may be a great way to find persons locally that are more than happy to put in a full day for you in their own space. Many of these persons will have impressive credentials when it comes to office management and various clerical and computer skills.

An employment agency also offers the security of a screening process, so you can depend on the credentials being valid.

Online opportunities to hire a virtual assistant are also expanding. Again, you can find people who have functioned successfully in brick and mortar businesses for years but now wish to telecommute. As usual, do your due diligence before formally hiring anyone.

Depending on the job responsibilities and the part of the country where the person lives, you may be able to strike an hourly or weekly rate that is cost-effective for you and still agreeable to your virtual assistant.

2.5 Getting Help with Your Blogging

So you have great ideas for several blogs, but don't have the time to handle them all yourself? No problem. What you need are some expert bloggers who have both the knowledge and the time to make your blogging sites shine.

Here are some tips to help you find these experts, what you can expect to pay for them, and how you should structure deadlines for blogging copy...

Online writing opportunities are attractive to a great many writers these days. With a blog, there is the unique opportunity to focus on subjects that are of especial interest to the writer.

When you are looking for persons who can write creative and informative blog entries, you want to advertise for persons with some background or interest in the subject of your blog.

Rest assured there will be several persons respond who will do a great job. Make sure when you compose the ad that you include expectations for the blog entries, such as word count, the number of blog articles per day or week, and whether you will assign topics or if they should be cleared with you first.

Pay for blogging is often done on a per word basis, with paydays offered either when the blogger meets a minimum amount that is due or on some type of weekly or monthly basis.

While per-word rates vary according to the subject matter and the experience (and quality) of the write, you can expect to pay anywhere from \$0.10 to \$0.25 USD per word for an expert blogger.

The best chances of advertising for quality bloggers will be at online job sites. Pay special attention to sites that allow job postings for freelance writers. Here you will find people who actively want to work in an online environment and are most likely used to meeting daily or weekly deadlines with no delays.

It is always a good idea to provide deadlines for each blog article. In general, try to give at least a week between assigning the article and having the finished product ready to go live. Some bloggers like to have several articles in the pipeline in advance, just in case of illness or other unexpected situation.

2.6 Outsourcing Your Copywriting Projects

Writing copy for the web site, creating brochures, and penning catalogs, and other documents are the types of tasks best left to professional copywriters.

But where do you find good writers that can handle your copywriting needs? And what should you pay them? Here are some tips to help you with those questions...

The first thing you will need to do is be very clear on what you want from the project. No copywriter is a mind reader. If you have specific objectives for the copywriting project, such as specific angles you want to highlight, then make sure those elements are part of the copywriting project.

You want to draft the specifications for your project before you begin to advertise for copywriters. Your specs do not have to be perfect, but they should be comprehensive enough that you only get responses from qualified copywriters.

When it comes to pay for a copywriting project, you can try one of two methods. The first would be to offer a flat fee for the project. Generally most copywriters prefer this method – and they'll give you an estimate once you've told them about your project.

The second model would be to include a range of word count for the finished project, including a minimum and maximum amount of words, with a rate per word.

This generally isn't used because a copywriter's job is more about research, finding a hook, persuading the audience, and in general selling rather than merely writing ...and as such, it doesn't make sense for him or her to be constrained by a specific word range.

Finding an excellent copywriter can be done in several ways. One is word of mouth. Ask other business professionals of your acquaintance if they use freelance copywriters. If so, ask them for recommendations. A second excellent source is one of the writer's message boards on the Internet.

Many of these sites allow companies and organizations to post ads for paying assignments at no charge. Do not discount print media as a source for finding the right copywriter, either.

Magazines devoted to writers are not only a great place to advertise your needs, but you may find an ad placed by a copywriter that appears to be a good fit for your project.

Advertise your copywriting projects at least a month or two before you need even a thousand word copywriting assignment completed. This give the writer time to do his or her thing and you plenty of time to see if there is anything you need the writer to change.

2.7 Programming Needs and How to Outsource Them

Your company may not yet be large enough to justify the expense of a full time programmer on the payroll. If that is the case, you are in luck. Freelance programmers are ready, willing, and able to handle your projects.

The trick is to find the right programmer for your project, still keep within budget, and have the project completed in a reasonable amount of time.

Here are some tips to help you accomplish all three goals.

Before you ever begin to search for a freelance programmer, be clear on the goal of the project. Any programmer that has a specific set of goals in mind can ask you the right questions to develop a decent quote for your project.

Think about how you want the new programming to interact with other software and devices that you already have in-house.

As an example, would you like the sales database to automatically create a profile complete with rates in your billing database? If so, then make sure the programmer knows this is one of your goals for the project.

When it comes to pricing out a programming project, one big factor will be what you can reasonably budget for the project. If you know you only have \$1,000.00 for the project, then don't waffle on your ceiling price.

Asking for bids from persons who respond to your ad will help you see if the funds on hand are sufficient or not. You will soon be able to know if you will need a larger budget to cover the expenses of the project.

When it comes to locating freelance programmers, there are a number of programmer job listing sites on the Internet. In addition, you can use your browser to locate the web sites of freelance programmers in your city or state.

Often, the web sites will provide some information about the type of projects the programmer has done in the past, and may even include some general pricing as well. Many freelance programmers will also advertise in the local newspapers and city magazines. Checking with the local Chamber of Commerce may also turn up several competent programmers.

As with any business project, you do not want to wait until the eleventh hour. Your project may be one that will require very little time – but the programmer may already have a full schedule. As such, start looking several months before your deadline. This is even more important if you have a bigger project that may take months of coding.

2.8 Need a Book Ghostwriter?

You have a great idea for a book, but simply do not have the literary prowess or talent to transfer your idea to the written page. If that is the case, you need the services of a good ghostwriter. Here are some ideas on where to find good ghostwriters ...and how to enter into a business arrangement with one.

Book ghostwriting requires someone who has a writing style that compliments your natural style and personality. If you hire a good ghostwriter, most people won't know that you weren't the one writing the book.

That means you want someone who has a demonstrated track record with ghostwriting and someone who understands the subject matter.

The right ghostwriter will be someone who can ideally spend time with you and talk with you about your hopes and dreams for the project, as well as help organize your thoughts and edit them into a cohesive work worthy of publication.

Finding the right ghostwriter requires that you first look in the right places and then do some interviewing of your own. A good way to start is to contact agents who represent successful ghostwriters and arrange to meet with writers who have experience with the type of book you want to write.

Keep in mind you will pay top dollar when going through an agent, but the end result is that you may very well have an agent who is willing to pitch the finished product to the appropriate publishing houses.

You can also advertise for book ghostwriters online at various web sites devoted to writers and freelance writing projects (again, check out elance.com). In addition, a simple Google search for "ghostwriter" will turn up dozens of qualified leads. As usual, do your due diligence.

Chances are you will encounter persons who are just beginning to break into the ghostwriting end of the profession. The advantages are those persons will likely be very eager to succeed and be quite willing to work with you.

They will also often be willing to work for a flat fee or at least a more modest weekly stipend. Pay will depend a great deal on how much work is involved.

Be prepared to pay at least a few hundred dollars for relatively light projects and several thousand dollars for more comprehensive projects (plus expenses if airfare or other matters come into play).

2.9 Farming out Editing Jobs

Many people have a gift of writing great copy, but are not so great when it comes to editing their own work.

If you fall into that category, then you may want to outsource your editing needs to a freelance editor. Here are some ideas on how to find the right candidates for your editing jobs, how much to pay, and what type of turnaround you should expect.

With the work-at-home movement in full swing, there are a number of freelance editors who are able to work with copy for just about anything from brochures to web sites to print media. When you are talking about hiring a freelance editor on a per-project basis, chances are you will pay at least \$25.00 per billable hour.

Make sure you have a ceiling for the number of hours that you will fund for the project. An alternative is to offer a per-page rate, or even a flat rate for the project.

Finding qualified persons to do your editing can be done online or offline. Advertising locally will probably provide you with persons who can pick up a manuscript and return it with you with corrections and notes personally. The advantage of this arrangement is that the two of you can discuss any changes face to face if necessary.

Online, you can engage with a number of services for anything from a flat monthly fee to a per project fee. There are also job boards online where you can advertise for freelance editors, either for an ongoing working relationship or for a specific project.

However you choose to advertise the availability of your editing project, make sure your ad sets reasonable expectations as far as the type of project, the amount of time it will take, and the pay.

Being clear on the perimeters for the project will allow interested persons to determine if they are qualified and if they can deliver the finished edits in the time frame you require.

As usual, start your search for an editor well ahead of time (perhaps before you've even completed your manuscript). You may need to pay a deposit to hold your "place" in their schedule.

2.10 Going the Agent Route with Your Sales Initiative

In more than one industry, the trend is to outsource the sales function to independent agents who handle the task of securing new customers. This works very well in many fields, and also helps to decrease expenses for the company, while still providing excellent pay for the sales agents.

For many independent sales agents, the pay structure often involves a buy rate. In effect, the service provider handles the billing and supplies the service. The agent sets the rate to the customer. When the client pays for services rendered, the agent receives the difference between the quoted rate and the buy rate.

This model is increasingly being used in a number of fields (such as teleconferencing), and allows the agent to make his or her own judgment call on how much of a profit to make off each unit of usage.

Another model is based on generated revenue rather than paid revenue. In this scenario, the agent is paid a percentage of the revenue generated by his or her efforts in a given period of time, such as a month or quarter. It is not unusual in some industries for the percentage in this type of arrangement to be between five and ten percent. Online the rates are even higher for digital products, typically around 50%.

Finding qualified sales persons is not hard to do. In some cases, you can find qualified sale agents through trade shows, local chamber gatherings, and job fairs. Another avenue is to advertise on your web site, outlining the basics of your agent program and allowing interested persons to apply.

Note: If you're selling a digital product, you can use Clickbank.com to find affiliates. You may also personally write to other marketers to ask if they'll promote your product for a 50% or more commission.

Make sure to set your basic criteria, such as some experience with your industry type, background on sales generated as well as what type of support the agent can expect from your firm.

Agent agreements are often for a specified amount of time and are typically open to review by the company on annual or biannual basis.

This means if things are just not working out, your company does not have to hang on to an agent that is not performing. The good news is that since you do not have salary and benefits invested in the agent, replacing him or her is less of a financial burden to the organization.

3.0 How to Negotiate Outsourcing Deals

3.1 Negotiating Your Outsourcing Deal

For many companies, the decision to outsource certain major business activities can be a difficult one. Hiring another company to perform certain functions, be they services or manufacturing, off the premises, often in another country, is a difficult decision.

It does not matter that it has become a common practice or that it has been a successful method of cutting costs and upping profits. It is still a business decision that companies do not take lightly.

So, when a company has decided that for its financial health outsourcing a product or service would be beneficial there are many things to consider.

For starters, one needs to find companies who can perform the job they need done. This in itself can take a long time of searching. Then one needs to evaluate the applicant or do the proper vetting and due diligence.

You will want to carefully check this out and make sure the quality of their work is excellent. This is especially true of outsourcers who become the “public face” of your company, such as your customer service representatives.

When you have decided which company or individual you’d like to hire (after doing a comprehensive background check, a quality control check and a financial check), then it is time to enter into negotiations.

This process in itself may require using another company as the go-between to get the negotiations where you want them. It is not unusual to make use of a company whose sole business function is to negotiate contracts for businesses that want to outsource certain products or services.

Whether it is financial and accounting work, manufacturing, information technology or office functions the need to have a company who knows what you want, how to bring the other side to the table and eventually to sign a deal can be a big benefit to the success of your company and how outsourcing works.

Hiring a firm to negotiate for you may be the fastest and most efficient way to get the right deal. There are many companies who offer this service.

See what their success rate is and what type of companies they have represented and this will help you to find the right company to represent you. It may cost a little more than doing it yourself, but it should save you in the long run.

3.2 Choosing an Outsourcing Company to Handle Your Phone Needs

Outsourcing does not always mean leaving the country to get the services or products you need. It may just mean that your company needs to subcontract to another company to get the work done.

Depending on the type of business you have and how many employees are on your staff, you may find that many of the office type practices would be better done by a company that provides outsourcing services.

The concern here is that you need to ensure that you will find a company that provides these services in the way that you want. That is, you want them to be good representatives of your company.

That means asking questions like this: Can they take orders over the phone? Will they understand enough about your products? Do they have the skills to make it appear that they are part of the company and not solely an outsourcing service?

The right company will make the answers to all of your questions a resounding yes!

The way to discover if the company will do the job the way you need it done is to set up an evaluation process. This process ensures you will be satisfied with these services. This can be done initially by checking references.

The opinions of others who use this outsourcing service will be very helpful to you in seeing if the company you are evaluating has the skills you want.

If the references you get are satisfactory, ask the reps them to show you how they will handling the incoming phone traffic.

Outsourcing the client care of a company is becoming very common. Many businesses prefer to worry about developing their products and ensuring the quality of what they make and sell instead of spending time on the phones.

That is why these outsourcing companies have become so popular. They take the mundane day to day services and handle them ... giving you the opportunity to concentrate on making money.

3.3 Outsourcing Contracts Can Be Confusing

When beginning to develop a written contract for an outsourcing deal you, must first determine what type of relationship you are working towards. If the company you are looking to work with is going to only do one project for you that will require a very different contract then if you are looking at a long-term relationship.

The problem is that you do not want to commit to anything long term until you have seen if the outsourcing company can provide you with a high quality product or service.

There are two options in preparing contracts at this point. One is to simply write a contract based on a trial period to see if the other company can perform to the standards you are looking for.

This can be done if it is clear that the deal is limited to one run of a product or a certain period of service. The other option is to make a long-term contract. But be careful not to be too specific in the terms.

You see, contracts are supposed to be binding agreements -- but what if the arrangements you want to make do not reflect clearly where the business will go? Obviously you will have goals in mind, but nonetheless as the business relationship proceeds the goals may change.

If they do, then your contract could be too binding and therefore make it more difficult to do business.. This can cause legal issues to become more time-consuming then doing the business.

Outsourcing contracts have one other potential difficulty. If you own a company in the United States and are outsourcing your product or service to a company in

India, China or any other country, you must consider that your protection in business might be hindered by which country's laws the contracts are written up in.

You will need to determine if you can use American contract law or must you use that of the country you are dealing with. Be certain to have explored this very important point before you begin having your contracts written.

Be sure to meet with your lawyer on these issues, and have him or her draw up your agreements. This will save you a lot of time and money in the future.

4.0 Outsourcing – Tips and Tricks

4.1 Outsourcing Tips and Tricks

Once you have made the decision to outsource various functions of your company, there are a few areas that you need to make sure are clear cut and agreeable to all persons involved. Here are a few tricks to help you be successful with the use of outsourced assistance.

The first thing that must be addressed is communication. Define what avenues will be used to communicate with your virtual staff members. Will the chief means be email? Keep in mind that email can and does get lost in cyberspace.

Perhaps you have a virtual office set up on the Internet and everyone is able to communicate through this medium, including leaving messages for other persons associated with the company.

Would a weekly conference call with all virtual staff members be in order? You will need to decide on the communication devices that are to be used and make sure everyone understands how and why they will be used.

Second, there is the matter of accountability. What means will you use to measure the productivity of any virtual staff member? Will there be a weekly status report that must be filed? Perhaps there are specific tasks that must be completed on a daily or weekly basis.

Completing tasks on time certainly is one way to measure productivity. Keep in mind that by having accountability measures in place, you are helping your virtual staff to think about how to get the work done in reasonable time increments. Don't think of accountability as punitive, but as a support mechanism.

Last, allow for coverage when one of your virtual staff needs time off. Even persons who are working on outsourced projects get sick, or may need time off for vacations, personal reasons, etc.

Make sure there are resources available to meet those needs, just as you would do if you were employing a full-time staff at a central office.

The key to successfully outsourcing functions is to make sure you understand what to expect and the outsource provider understands what to deliver. Once you have that handled, then you can work through just about anything.

4.2 Outsourcing: Project Planning and Completion

One of the reasons you look for outsourcing is so that you can handle a specific project without having to pull away other employees from the tasks they are already deeply involved in handling.

However, if you are going to successfully execute and complete a project using an outsourcing provider, there are a few things you should keep in mind.

First, you must define the nature and the perimeters of the project with your outsourcing provider. There is no way that your provider can accomplish the job for you without understanding what you need, how you want it done, and when the deadline for completion is set.

By going over the over all specs for the project, including the delivery date, you give the provider the tools needed to complete the job. Your provider can come back to you with a more precise step-by-step list of action items, the completion date for each of those action items, and ultimately meeting the deadline set by you.

Second, it is imperative that you and the provider speak regularly about the progress on the project. There is no such thing as a project that goes off without some sort of hitch.

At some point in the process, there will need to be modifications to the original model for some reason. The more open and consistent the communication flow between you and the provider, the quicker these small bumps in the road can be addressed and resolved.

Last, build into the action items the opportunity for you to see drafts of any necessary documents long before the project completion date. Just like the regular communications, a quick review of the first draft of the documents will help to keep both you and the provider on track with your vision.

You do not want to wait until the last minute to review the documents, especially if one part of the project builds on the next part. To do so could mean a lot of last minute scrambling which is unproductive for all involved.

Solid communication coupled with clear and concise action items leading to the completion of the project will help to keep everything running at a brisk pace, even when there are little things that need to be adjusted.

4.3 Rewarding and Motivating Freelancers

When you hire freelancers to complete projects such as your content writing or programming, chances are you'll be working with an individual who's in business for herself or himself. Just as the name "freelancer" implies, this individual is a free agent ...and that means she's free to choose who she wants to work with.

Indeed, the very best freelancers have a lot of freedom to choose. They don't have to accept every project that comes their way, simply because they have people lining up eagerly to work with them. Their calendars may be full weeks and even months in advance.

Sometimes you'll get lucky and find a very good freelancer who's just starting out. If she provides quality work on time, with good communication and good prices, it's only a matter of time before she'll get completely booked. That means as time goes on, your projects will take longer and longer to do (and her prices will inevitably increase).

Yet if you find someone like that, you need to hold on for dear life – because good freelancers like that are rare.

So how do you do it?

For starters, make it easy for the freelancer to work with you. Remember, she has plenty of others lining up to work with her, so if she's currently working with you it's her choice.

Being an easy person to work with includes the following:

- You should always pay on time. Many freelancers ask for 30% - 50% deposits up front, with the remainder due immediately after delivery of the project. Other times you may be paying weekly. Still other

freelancers (especially the ones who are in demand), ask for full payment upfront.

Don't try to set the rules or change the rules that an in-demand freelancer has laid out. If you're not paying in a timely manner (early is even better!), she'll find someone who does pay immediately.

- Be clear about your vision for your projects. Communication is key, because your freelancer isn't a mindreader. If you want to give your freelancer "free reign" that's great – but don't get upset at the results if you do so.
- Keep all promises on your end. If you say you'll review her draft in three days, then be sure to get it reviewed in three days (or earlier if possible).

You see, the busiest freelancers have very tight schedules. If you don't give your freelancer what she needs to complete the job, you'll get her entire schedule off track. That means she'll likely be scrambling to get your project – and her other client's projects – done on time.

In short: respect her time by giving her what she needs when she needs it.

- Give generous cash bonuses for jobs well done. Remember, your freelancer has her pick of people to work with – if you're the one paying her more than everyone else, she'll give your projects a higher priority.

These are just a few ideas, but by no means is this an exhaustive list. Overall just remember to keep your freelancer happy if you want to keep working with her.

Outsourcing Checklist

By now you should have a pretty good idea of whether it makes sense for you to hire a freelancer to provide certain products or services for your business.

If you're still unsure, ask yourself this: what value do you place on your time? And once you've determined that value, find out if it's more cost-effective for you to farm out a project.

For example, let's suppose you put a value of \$50 on your time. And let's suppose you need to write a set of ten articles. Perhaps you hate writing, so something like this tends to go slowly for you. Maybe it takes you 10 hours to write the ten articles.

If your time is worth \$50/hour, then it "costs" you \$500 to spend ten hours writing the articles. However, you should be able to find a freelancer to do that same job for less than \$500 – and chances are, the freelancer will do a much better job since she's a professional.

In other words, it makes sense for you to hire someone to write the articles ...which frees up ten hours of your time to focus on the real money-making aspects of your business.

That basically is the bottom line when it comes to whether you should hire a freelancer. If it's a job you despise, and/or the pro could do it better, and/or the pro could do it in a more cost-effective way ...then farm it out.

The following is a checklist you can use to help you decide where hiring a freelancer might be most appropriate.

Outsourcing Checklist

Instructions: answer “yes,” “no,” or “not applicable” to the following questions:

Do You Need Outside Help?

Customer Service:

- ☐ Do you handle a large volume of customer service inquiries?
- ☐ Do you have to stop many times a day to answer emails?
- ☐ Do you take orders by phone?
- ☐ Does you offer a product (like software) that requires support?

Web Design and Maintenance:

- ☐ Do you have multiple websites?
- ☐ Are you constantly creating new websites?
- ☐ Does your site need to be regularly updated?
 - If so, can you do it yourself quickly?
- ☐ Do you frequently need graphical work done?
- ☐ Do you need scripts installed frequently?

Programming:

- ☐ Do you need custom scripts created for your site?
- ☐ Do you sell scripts or related products (and need a programmer to create them?)
- ☐ Do you buy private label scripts and need help with debugging?

Marketing and Miscellaneous:

- ☐ Do you have an affiliate program (e.g., do you need an affiliate manager)?
- ☐ Do you spend time weekly submitting articles to directories?
- ☐ Do you ever submit press releases to the media?
- ☐ Do you spend a large amount of time running PPC campaigns?
- ☐ Do you spend a large time optimizing for the search engines?
- ☐ Do you spend time growing your “friends” list on social networking sites?
- ☐ Do you place ads regularly on eBay or CraigsList?
- ☐ Do you need help marketing your products?
- ☐ Do you need help with product fulfillment?

Content Writing and Copywriting:

- ☐ Do you use press releases for your business?
- ☐ Do you need someone to write sales letters?

- ☐ Do you need someone to create PPC ads?
- ☐ Do you need someone to create brochures, classified ads, and other marketing materials?
- ☐ Do you need someone to write articles?
- ☐ Do you need blog articles written?
- ☐ Do you need someone to write emails?
- ☐ Do you need someone to create an autoresponder series?
- ☐ Do you need someone to write reports/ebooks?
- ☐ Do you have audio products that need transcribing?
- ☐ Will you be translating any of your reports into foreign languages?
- ☐ Do you need a proofreader/editor?

Where to Find a Freelancer:

- ☐ Did you ask your friends if they can recommend a freelancer?
- ☐ Have you asked local business people for recommendations?
- ☐ Have you asked around on forums for recommendations?
- ☐ Have you emailed your trusted colleagues to ask for recommendations?
- ☐ Have you placed an ad on Craigslist?
- ☐ Have you placed an ad in your local paper?
- ☐ Have you read ads placed by freelancers in your paper and Craigslist?
- ☐ Have you posted a project on freelance boards like elance.com and rentacoder.com?
- ☐ Have you done a search in Google or your favorite search engine?

Before Hiring:

- ☐ Have you checked references?
- ☐ Have you checked samples?
- ☐ Have you researched the freelancer's name online?
- ☐ Does the freelancer answer emails quickly?
- ☐ Does the freelancer present him or herself professionally?

After Hiring:

- ☐ Are you starting with small projects first to see if you work together well?
- ☐ Have you drafted an agreement that covers issues like delivery, payment, and other expectations?
- ☐ Have you talked to the freelancer about your expectations?
- ☐ Have you set up a reliable means of communication?
- ☐ Have you paid cash bonuses for good work?
- ☐ Have you rewarded your good freelancers in other ways?
- ☐ Have you otherwise shown your appreciation for good work?