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# MONEY BLOG

*Learn How To Earn Significant Income  
Online With A Simple Wordpress Blog*

# Money Blog

## Learn How To Earn Significant Income Online With A Simple Wordpress Blog

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# CHAPTER ONE

## *Introduction*



# *Learning How To Make Money Online*

After five years of learning online marketing and teaching newbies to start their online businesses, I've developed a habit of delivering information efficiently, without fluff. On paper, that sounds great. But in reality, it can read kind of dry, and it doesn't really get your blood pumping with excitement.

I will admit, that when it comes to the finesse of motivation, I am not very talented. So expect what you read in the following pages to be very practical, straightforward advice and instructions on how to start your business.

However, I wanted to take a few short paragraphs to really explain to you the incredible potential of making money online.

Most of us work a "normal" job. We get up in the morning, go to work, come home at the end of the day, and collect a paycheck at the end of the week or month. We get paid by the hour, and if we work the same job for a decade, we might see our financial situation improve only slightly over time.

The world of owning an online business is something completely different, and very unique opportunity.

While a typical brick and mortar business will cost you a few hundred thousand dollars to start up, and require the knowhow of hiring staff, dealing with permits, and whatever else goes along with that, starting an online business requires none of that.

You can start your business on an \$11 domain name and run it 100% by yourself in your free time.

If you start coffee shop and don't open up shop one day, you make \$0. If you don't log into your website one day, it still makes the same amount of money as yesterday. Since you're not paying rent, and not paying staff,

your expenses are going to be extremely low. \$100 earned is \$100 in your pocket.

With regards to income, growth can be exponential in a short period of time.

I made \$4000 in my first year of starting an online business. No, that's not a full time income, and not enough to support anybody for a full year, let alone an entire family. But break that down month by month, and you may see \$200 earned in June, \$500 earned in July, \$1000 earned in August, and so on. That kind of income growth in the offline business world is unheard of. Even if you do experience massive growth offline, you have to expand to new facilities, hire more staff, or pay people to work longer.

Even if your website quadruples income over a year, it's basically still a single unit that you can manage yourself.

So what we have is a type of business that is low cost, easy to manage, and has massive income potential.

There are many methods of earning money online, and in this book you are going to learn the one that has produced incredible results for me. Getting profitable won't be a cakewalk, but being successful online is possible for anyone.

I hope you enjoy learning how to start your first online business!

## ***Who This Book Is For***

If I've learned anything over the past 4 years building profitable websites it's that you need to define your audience. So let me tell you who this book was written for, who is going to benefit most from reading it, and how.

### **For The Complete Newbie, Motivated Learner**

If you have never attempted to build a website before, and don't have any idea how someone could actually make money online, then this book is going to open your eyes some amazing possibilities. I've written it with newbies in mind, and will try to explain everything in detail, along with analogies and even some links to videos to **SHOW** you how to do some of the things I talk about.

However, keep this in mind: there are limitations to what I can do in an ebook. I can't reach out through these pages and move your hands for you or fix the problems you'll run into. The path to making money is long and winding, and you will probably need to reach out to other resources to fill in some of the blanks along the way. Still, I'll do my best to give you everything you need right here in these pages.

### **For The Jaded Marketer Still Not Earning**

There are many marketers out there that have been following gurus and false prophets for YEARS and still haven't found a way to "go full time". For you guys, it's time to simplify. Get rid of that SEO software and backlink generating plugin. Unsubscribe from the serial Clickbank promoter and WSO hype-man.

True, you can earn money in 100 different ways online. Chances are, you've tried a few and failed. I won't speculate on your reason for failure, but this book is about getting back to the basics.

Learn how ONE guy earns money online through Wordpress blogs, without any fancy cheats or loopholes. You will be surprised at how little I do

in terms of SEO, and how I try to play *within* Google's rules, rather than break them with sneaky tricks. If you un-learn some of the SEO voodoo and start trying to help people, you'll be on your way to starting a strong foundation to your online business.

Some of you will scoff at these methods and say that the system is rigged. "Yeah yeah, I've already tried that and didn't make anything!" Please read with an open mind and understand that these methods can work if you *make them work*. I think by cutting the fat, and following a philosophy of less-is-more, you can get your business moving in the right direction.

# *Who This Book Is Not For*

## **Not for Someone Looking for a Job or Quick Money**

Sorry bro or bro-ette. Money is not going to come quickly using this method. It took me 3 months to make my first \$5, and 6 months to start making regular sales. But that's after building 10+ failed websites over that period of time. Yeah, I'm kind of a dummy, but for what I lack in brains, I make up for with persistence.

But even if you work hard, are you willing to grind for 6 months while earning \$0 from your effort? This is not a job where you work 6 hours and get paid for 6 hours!

I worked on my most recent affiliate website from Feb 2012 to June 2012 without making a single sale. I struggled with traffic, rank, and getting people to actually care about what I was writing. It was frustrating, and resulted in earning no money from hundreds of man-hours building.

This morning, March 24, 2015 that same website has already earned me over \$500 and it's not even 10:00AM. It took a long time to reach this point, but I'm glad I put in those non-profit months in the beginning. If you aren't willing to put in the work despite no guarantee of profit, then you are in the wrong business.

## **Not For Someone That “just wants” Some Passive Income**

The idea of passive income has been warped by hyped product advertising feeding into the desire of everyone for easy money. I get emails weekly from folks that are “just looking for some passive income”, as if it could be found and acquired by asking around.

Anyone who enjoys money in the bank without trading hours of work for an hourly wage has put a ton of work in the back-end to build it up that far.

Do I wake up to an extra \$1000 in the bank some mornings? Yeah, but I have been grinding away at my business for almost 5 years now, spending countless hours trying to build, grow, and expand.

I have more than a few failed projects. Some were simply wasted money on outsourcing jobs it turns out I didn't need (details in later on), and some are just wasting my own man hours doing things that I didn't really need to do.

The point I'm trying to make is that my "passive income" didn't come from being passive. If you take a casual approach to your business, you are going to get a casual ROI, which usually means \$0.

You can make big money in the blogging and affiliate marketing world, but you need to be willing to work for it.

OK, rant over, so let's move on.

# *My Story*

Just a little background on me first, then we'll move into how I got started and found success online.

I grew up in California, in a little redneck town called Atwater. After high school, I was fed up with school and wanted to do some traveling in Europe. A Czech foreign exchange student offered to allow me and my other buddy to use her house as “home base” while we traveled for the next year. We could earn money as private English tutors in our downtime.

Surprisingly, an 18 year old with a scraggly young-man's goatee and a dirty set of dreadlocks was able to find plenty of English teaching jobs in Prague, and even became a preschool teacher. In fact, I “taught” preschool for about 4 years, which mostly included playing guitar for the morning songs and telling everyone how great their pictures were.

After 5 years living in Prague I wanted to challenge myself and possibly open up some job opportunities by moving to China and learning Mandarin. So that's what I did.

I kept teaching English, though to older kids, for the next two years. I planned on being in China for a while, and possibly settling down there. English teaching jobs paid alright, but provided no kind of savings that I could take back to the US if I was ever forced to move out. The communist government there controls everything, and loves to use foreigners as a scapegoat for all their societal ills.

So as part of a backup plan, I wanted to look into how I could earn money online and create a nest egg of US dollars in case the \*\*\*\* hit the fan and I had to come back to the US.

I almost bought into an MLM scam called PeopleString (now defunct), and attempted to buy one other product, but my credit card was declined. I'm

a cautious buyer, but spent many nights sucked into those 20 minute videos talking about how financial freedom was just a click away.

Eventually I found my way to a legitimate affiliate marketing training center and started building my first website. I built a few free blogs on Wordpress.com and Blogger, and eventually bought a .info domain.

More than twenty incomplete and failed .info domains later, one rose out of the ashes as my first success. Being in China, I had inside knowledge into the VPN scene and started making some sales with my website unblockfacebookinchina.info. It's still making money to this day despite all the abuse I've put it through during the last five years.

A few months later I wanted to broaden my reach in the VPN scene and started mrvpn.com. Back when article directories and backlinks were "legit", I pushed that sucker up to 1000 visits a day in just a few months, and started earning over \$10,000 per month in VPN sales alone.

NOTE: That was *net income*, not *gross sales*.

Then came the massive Penguin update in April 2012, and it bombed my site down to fewer than 100 visits per day. My income was cut in half over just a few weeks, and I entered a period of deep depression. It was tough being on top of the world, then feeling like I had the rug pulled from under me.

I had no one to blame but myself.

Though it started out as a pity party, feeling like I'd been cheated, I eventually realized that if I did it once, I could do it again. After spending the next 12 months cleaning up the content and links for ALL of my websites, and recovering most of my previous income, I started [onemorecupof-coffee.com](http://onemorecupof-coffee.com), a blog about making money online through affiliate marketing, as I do it.

Most recently, I've started a website about craft beer and homebrewing which is a passion of mine. It's not hugely profitable yet, and has only



earned a little over \$800 since its inception last year, but is more of a slow-cooking project for me.

For ANY websites I build now, I no longer invest time in backlinks or complicated SEO strategies. I focus on content creation and user engagement, and it's working for me.

I currently work from home, whatever "full time" means. People are curious I'm sure, to know how much I make, but I don't like to talk about how much exactly. I support myself, my hobbies, and have money to save and invest. Any more detail than that isn't really necessary to understand that I actually know how to make money with the methods I'm showing you here.

I own about 40 websites, but only about 20 of them make money, with the majority of earnings coming from 3-5 sites. You do not need to have a huge portfolio of websites to earn an income that can support the typical American family. You only need one website to achieve that. I just happened to have that many websites because I've done a lot of failed projects over the years, and had time to build more than one successful business, then set it on 'maintenance mode' rather than 'growth mode'.

With this book I hope to help you avoid the mistakes of my past and benefit from the things I've learned with my new business ventures. I hope you enjoy the book and are able to implement what you learn to start your own profitable website on something that *you* are passionate about!

# Why Write A Book?

If you are following my website, or have seen some of my training modules on YouTube, you might be asking yourself, “Why write it all over again in a book?”

To be honest, there are three main things I hope to accomplish here.

1. I hope to reach a new audience. Expanding away from the typical blog and YouTube channel means I get to reach out to a completely new group of people that might not have otherwise found me.
2. I hope to challenge myself. Venturing into the world of ebooks and self publishing is something I’ve never done before. Whether or not it’s a profitable venture, I’ll still learn a lot that I *know* I can use to grow my business and possibly help someone else down the road. A lot of people who are interested in making money online want to do it by publishing ebooks or digital info products, and having personal experience means I can give rock-solid advice.
3. I want to create a resource that is going to be a way cheaper, way better alternative to anything else out there. For any kind of mentorship or membership you are going to pay between \$30-\$200 per month. Most legit training courses (without support) are going to cost \$50-\$100. Actually, some courses can cost you \$2000-\$25,000 dollars (not even exaggerating).

Plus, frankly, the majority of people writing Kindle books are doing either outsourcing the content or regurgitating what they “heard” rather than what they’ve actually done. This is going to be book about techniques that I have personally used to make money – not just something I read about and think has some good potential!

So I hope to find a balance of creating an inexpensive product with good information that someone can actually use as the first building block to the foundation of their affiliate website.

# CHAPTER TWO

## *Overview*

# *Big Picture Stuff*

One thing I've always hated about online business products is that they assume you know a lot of information, or assume that you're 'savvy' to some things about the industry. I remember the first product I tried to get involved in just kept repeating "grow your business" over and over again.

I emailed the owner and said, "I don't have a business, so how do I start one using your product?"

Luckily he never emailed me back, and I became frustrated and didn't end up buying his junk. The program he was promoting is now defunct.

So let's take a look at what type of business you will actually be building here with some BIG PICTURE ideas before we dig into the details of how you can start your own online business and make money with affiliate marketing.

1. You will be building a website. More specifically, you will be building a blog style website. This means that you are going to have a few core pages to your website, but you will be updating it with new articles to your website on a weekly basis.
2. This website is going to be an "authority" in a "niche". That means we are going to develop a highly respected resource for information on a very specific topic. The topic you choose is part of the initial phases which I'll discuss later. If you don't have any genius ideas right now of what to make your business about, don't stress.
3. This website is NOT going to be a virtual mall or Amazon clone! We are not going to simply list products with pictures and some feature blurbs. It's important that you bring unique value to the table for any business. In the case of building an affiliate blog, the value we provide is information, also called "content". How to do research and write content will be covered in this book.

4. By posting unique, insightful information on our website in these articles, or “blog posts”, we are able to drive traffic to our site for free via search engines. People look for information online. Our website contains that information.

That’s how they land on our website, and those visitors are collectively called “traffic”.

5. Some articles they find on our site contain links to other websites selling products. By affiliating ourselves (or partnering up) with companies and directing traffic to those websites, we can make commissions for each product sold. How to find these companies, add links, etc is all discussed later on in this book.

Here’s what the process of making money with a blog and affiliate marketing looks like:

1. You do some research to find out what information people are looking for
2. You write an article about this topic and publish it to your website
3. The next time someone searches that topic, your website turns up
4. Your post points them to an appropriate product recommendation
5. They buy that product through a vendor’s website you linked to
6. You make a portion of that sale
7. You then scale this over time, with more articles and more products

Remember! Our goal is not to be sneaky and just slip into the first page of Google to ‘intercept’ clicks and make sales of stuff people are already intending to buy. Our goal is to provide some kind of unique insight that helps a person decide if a product is right for them to buy.

Sometimes it's not so black and white. Not everything on your website will be "Yes, buy this" or "No, don't buy this". There's a certain amount of finesse that can be used to make affiliate sales through writing content. But in general, remember that our goal is to create a unique resource of information that can help people make more informed buying decisions.

# *Preview + FAQ*

## **Preview: What To Expect From This Book**

Before getting started, it's important to have a general idea of where you're going. Let's take a look at what we're going to cover in the book (not correlating to chapters, but pretty close).

1. How to pick a topic for your site
2. How to get your website live
3. What to write in the core pages of your site
4. How to find what topics people are searching for
5. How to write an article that covers those topics
6. How to get your articles found in search engines
7. How to find companies to partner with
8. How to write reviews
9. How to make sales from the traffic on your site
10. Basic ins-and-outs of social media and how it relates to your website
11. Basic outsourcing
12. Setting long term goals for success

Oh, one more thing. At the end of each chapter I'm going to have a checklist of a few tasks for you to complete to make sure that you are following along and engaged in the material. You can choose to do these along with the lessons as you read, or you can choose to read through the whole book first, then come back to the tasks when you are ready to start building.

The advantage of doing it the first way is that you can keep yourself on track and have fun following the lessons, kind of like a workbook. The advantage of doing it the second way is that you get some insight on how the entire process works, and can review the material as you start to take the steps needed to get your business rolling.

## **Making Money Online FAQ**

But before we get to that, let's look at some common questions new affiliate marketers have.

### *Can you actually make money online?*

Yes, I have personally been earning a full time income working solely online for 3 years now. I also know many people that do the same.

### *How does making money online work?*

There are many business models that you can use to earn money online. We'll be talking about just one in the book, which is specifically building a Wordpress website, writing articles for that website, and promoting products/ services through affiliate programs.

...More details to come!

### *How much money can you earn?*

The earning potential is infinite. The only limitation is related to time management. If you can earn \$5, you can scale it to \$5 million. The trouble is efficiently growing your business to include other people doing tasks for you.

There is a limit on how much work one individual can handle, but that will depend on each person's ability to learn, adapt, and grow.

In a nutshell, you can earn a bunch of money, and how much depends on YOU.



## *How fast will I start making sales?*

It's impossible to say. Some people get lucky or have some business/marketing/web experience and get a sale within their first couple weeks online. Others take years because they work on their sites sporadically and just take longer to absorb the information.

For considerable, reliable profit (not just making sales), I would honestly plan on working at least a year. I earned \$4000 in my first year of operation, but sales were sporadic and I couldn't quit my job yet. By 18 months into it I was earning over \$10,000 per month, but still had some income dips ahead of me.

It took me about 3 years to really have stable, diversified income coming in. Everyone's story is different and comparing yourself to other people is going to be a huge stress factor (I know from experience), so try not to do it.

## *Do I Need A Website?*

Yes. Well, there are ways to make money without a website, but they aren't any easier. For example, you can start a YouTube channel.

But to make money through affiliate marketing and blogging, as we're talking about in this book, yes, you definitely need a website.

## *Do I have to be tech savvy to make money online?*

No, but you do need to learn some new skills. Actually, once your initial website is set up, your main 'work' is going to be research and writing.

However, doing things like posting pictures to your website, creating links, or troubleshooting website issues are all part of your business. You can work through the problems yourself, or pay someone to fix them for you.

If you're the type that runs into a problem and wants to smash the computer screen or not touch it for a week, then you are in for a bumpy journey.

That's not to say that you can't learn new habits though :)

I started off my business as a total n00b, without a Facebook account and still thinking Hotmail was an awesome email provider. 4 years later I'm editing my CSS files on the fly via FTP – not that impressive to someone who knows what that is, but it's pretty cool considering where I started out.

There's a YouTube video or a written tutorial for just about everything.

Honestly, a really simple website with interesting content can do great. Having some technical skills can definitely take a good site and make it better, but those skills are not essential to earning money. Learn as you grow your business, and you'll be fine.

*I need to make money fast. Can you show me a faster way?*

No. I hate this question because it makes it sound like I'm showing people the slow way on purpose. If there was a faster way, I'd be doing it. Well, OK, paid traffic can be faster but that often leads to expensive advertising budgets and if you are a newbie, your sales pages just aren't going to convert.

Starting an affiliate website with search engine traffic is definitely a slow route to earning money online. However, it's also the cheapest and is the most newbie friendly in terms of allowing you to make mistakes without it costing big bucks. If you create a sales page with paid traffic that doesn't convert and it could cost you \$100's or \$1000's of dollars in wasted clicks. Make the same mistake with a poorly written article aiming for search engine traffic and it costs you \$0.

If you want the freedom to make cheap mistakes and don't have at least a few hundreds dollars extra each month to pay for advertising, then welcome to the slow road baby!

# ***Chapter 2 Summary + Tasks***

## **Summary**

We are going to be building a blog style website, and getting traffic from search engines. It's cheap and newbie friendly. It's also what I know best, and can teach you most efficiently.

## **Tasks For This Chapter**

1. Decide if you are in this for the long haul. If you need money next week or even next month, get a job. Are you committed to making changes to your time management and work habits to learn a new skill?
2. Prepare yourself to learn something new. Some of the information in this book might confuse you the first time around. If you prepare yourself for a challenge though, you will have a better chance of succeeding
3. Set aside some time each day to read a little bit in this book. It's better to learn in bite sized pieces than gorging on information once in a while.
4. Get excited! You are holding an incredible source of information in your hands right now. After reading this book, you will have the potential to create a significant source online income.

# **CHAPTER THREE**

## ***Picking A Topic For Your Business***

# *What Is A Niche?*

A *niche* is another word for the topic of your website. For the rest of the book I'll be using the word 'niche', so you can become familiar with internet marketing jargon.

A niche is just a group of people that you can categorize in some way. Golf, cooking, fitness, and tech are broad industries, and not what we're looking for. What specific subcategories of people can you think of in each of those industries? Here are some random niches I thought of off the top of my head.

- improving your golf swing for seniors
- Golf equipment for kids
- paleo cooking & recipes for families
- how to cook for college students
- indoor exercise equipment (people that live far away from gyms or are too busy to go)
- muscle building for women
- fitness gadgets and wearables (people looking for this type of technology)
- Learning games for kids

See how each of those submarkets targets a much more specific audience? There are many ways to drill down from a broad industry to a targeted niche. There are hundreds of niches within the fitness industry alone, and finding one that makes money is simply a matter of finding one interesting enough to you that you follow through with creating the business.

Some possible ways of defining your niche are simply filling in the blanks: [People] who want to \_\_\_\_\_. The following examples correspond to the examples above.

### **Golf**

- Seniors who want to improve their golf swing
- Kids who want to learn how to play golf (Or parents that who want to teach their kids golf)

### **Cooking**

- Families who want to eat a paleo diet
- College students who want to cook good food on a budget

### **Fitness**

- People who want to be fit can't make it to the gym
- People with disabilities who want to stay in shape but need special training equipment
- People who like to exercise but live in cold climates and can't exercise outdoors all year
- Women who want to gain muscle
- Fitness enthusiasts interested in technology, data tracking

### **Learning Games**

- Parents who want smart kids

Which ones make the most money? ANY niche can make money! Many training courses I've seen have you do a bunch of research before picking a topic for your website, but this is now how I am going to teach you. Yeah, niche research can be useful, but it can also be confusing to newbies,

meaning lots of people quit right in the beginning because they're unable to find the perfect idea and get it right the first time around.

**Picking that 'golden ticket' niche to make you rich is not what we're shooting for at this point.** We just want to find something that works for you, as a beginner. If you can make your first dollar in a niche you really enjoy, you can then use the skills you learned from building *that* business to start another website later on. By then you will have the skills to do research, test the market, and direct your business with more intent and foresight.

This is exactly what I did. I mentioned that I started out promoting VPNs. It's something I had decent knowledge about and enjoyed writing about. But I also saw the huge potential in the "make money online" industry, and most recently started a website in that category.

Using what I learned building my previous sites, I was able to grow my new business faster, more efficiently, and more professionally than before. What may have taken me two years before took me one year this time around.

Please don't stress about whether or not your niche will make money. *It will.* Any website with traffic can make money!. Keep that in mind, but we'll dig into that in the traffic section later on in the book.

## *Why Do We Need A Niche?*

Why not create an “Everything about golf” website instead of targeting something more specific? More topics = more traffic = more money, right?

Yes and no.

Sites like Mashable, BuzzFeed and Lifehacker cover a huge range of topics and rake in the cash because their “shotgun” strategy. But they have big budgets to hire website developers, writers, and social media managers. These articles are not written by experts, and published just to meet a deadline. The readers are savvy to this, as demonstrated by some recent articles I read about craft beer on BuzzFeed and Business Insider.

I’m a homebrewer and know quite a bit about craft beer. After reading these articles, I immediately knew that they were not written by someone who knew what they were talking about, and comments on the post reflected my own feelings.

Buzzfeed and Business Insider got what they wanted – their money comes from ad revenue so they just want views, and don’t care if readers like what they see or not. If I hate it and share it with my friends to tell them how stupid it was, these guys still make money!

This is NOT the way to build a trusted brand. I would never buy a ‘how to brew beer at home’ guide from these websites. They need tens of thousands of views to make money from ad revenue on those cheesy articles. As affiliate marketers promoting specific products to a targeted audience, we can make money much more efficiently than the big guys.

The point is, we pick a niche so that we can develop specialized knowledge on a very specific topic. Knowing a lot about one thing is much better than knowing a little bit about everything. By becoming an expert, or trusted source of information, people will buy stuff through our site based on our recommendations.



Another reason is simply to pare away the competition. You are starting at ground zero here, with nothing on your website. You'll also be doing all the work yourself. How can you expect to compete with a website that's been around for a decade and has 1000's of articles and loyal fans? You can't.

So we target a very small audience to make our job more manageable. The extremely specific articles we write make it easier to rank in search engines, and build traffic slowly over time. Once we start gaining traffic from those low traffic, low competition articles, we can begin to expand into broader topics.

Perhaps the most compelling reason to focus on a specific group of people is so we know who we are talking to!

Let's look at bodybuilding for example. Though you might think of this as a single group of people, there are actually competing subgroups within this arena.

Some guys want to build muscle mass. They love being the biggest guy at the gym and want nothing but 'gains' (slang for gaining muscle mass).

There are other guys that want a 'cut' physique, and could care less about size. They want to look good in a tank top and be beach-ready all year long. They don't care about gains, as long as they get the girls.

If you create a website about bodybuilding, who are you talking to? If you write an article about how to gain weight fast, the beach body guys won't care. If you write an article about how to lose body fat fast, the muscle dudes will worry about loss of muscle mass.

You could even break it down further to 'natty' (natural) or 'juicing' (steroids) techniques. Include men vs women, and now we have several possible audiences to target our website to.

- natural bodybuilding gains for men

- safe steroid use for bodybuilding women
- lifting techniques to improve physique
- bodybuilding for strength

How targeted you get depends on your level of interest or expertise in a topic, as well as how big of project you want to take on. It's also nice to leave yourself some elbow room for growth. Doing something like "freeweight gym exercises for women over 50 to gain strength" might be limiting if you run out of exercise routines to talk about.

But 'strength training for women over 50' leaves you possible room to include topics like home gym equipment, supplements, human biology, exercise mentality, and so on.

## *My Stance On Competition*

When deciding on a niche for their business, most people will start to look around at similar websites to see what others are doing. They soon realize that these awesome looking, established websites are going to be their competition, and the fear starts to set in.

“How am I ever going to compete with that?!”

I agree, it's pretty hard to imagine that you, someone starting with pretty much zero internet marketing skills could outrank and outsell some of the big boys, whether it be Amazon.com or The Huffington Post.

The easiest answer to explain at this point is that you have to start somewhere! If you don't start now, at zero, you'll never get started. The established players may have a lead on you, but remember, they too started out from scratch some years in the past, and grew to what we see today. In a few years time you will have a head start on some other newbies just getting started, and probably be happy that they have to work hard to achieve what you have.

The growth process isn't obvious, but it happens to everyone in every business. **No one starts out on top.**

The other portion of that answer is that no one stays in the lead forever. Many things can happen in the next few years. There are always things happening that shake up the business world, and new opportunities may open up that you never considered before.

One last thing I also want to help you understand is that it doesn't take that much work to be in the Top 10. To be #1? Yeah, it takes true dedication. But to be just “very good” is achievable just by being consistent over a period of time. If you are careful about the steps you take and focus on creating high quality content that delivers value to your visitors, you will *easily* outrank 90% of the competition. The vast majority of people in every

industry get lazy or complacent at some point, and that provides an opportunity for hard workers just like you!

No, it's not always as easy as having the answers written on the wall saying, "Hey, Business X didn't see this opportunity so now it's time for you to take advantage of it!". But the opportunities are always there, and it's just a matter of knowing how to identify them as they pop up. Imagine if we lived in a world where established players just never gave up their position and the new guys never had the opportunity to show them up?

Nothing would change in the world of business, ever.

The more difficult thing to explain is that you will learn tactics and become a savvier business person in the coming months. You might not see things clearly right now, but as you do your research and learn about affiliate marketing, you'll discover places where competition is extremely low, even in very competitive niches.

For example, weight loss for women is a very competitive niche. Even weight loss for women before weddings is well known as being lucrative and has a lot of established sites to compete against.

But what if you start targeting even smaller areas that the big guys neglect? If [usatoday.com](http://usatoday.com) is ranking for "how to lose weight before a wedding", what stones have they left unturned? How about these:

- how to lose 10 pounds before my wedding
- how to lose weight fast for a wedding for someone with high blood pressure
- how to lose weight 2 weeks before a wedding
- how to buy a wedding dress if I plan to lose 15 pounds

It just wouldn't make sense for a site like USA Today to just write these types of articles over and over again. So they write a generalized 500 word

pop article that their audience reads and forgets about. The real meat of research and help for people that actually need to lose that weight can be done by *you* and put on your site [loseweightbeforeawedding.com](http://loseweightbeforeawedding.com).

No, you won't get those big fat juicy rankings right away, but you can build up to that. We start with the scraps, but our day is coming!

One article can bring you 100 visits a day, or 10 articles with 10 visits each for a total 100 visits a day. Same deal.

So I mean to make these points clear.

1. Growth and competitiveness takes time. You've got to start somewhere.
2. There are plenty of ways to squeeze your way into any competitive market if you put in the effort

# *What You Need To Know About Traffic*

Another topic that many experts have different ideas about is whether or not you need to look up traffic (and other) stats related to your niche of choice.

My stance is that yes, it can help, but if it's going to confuse you and keep you from getting started, forget about it and just choose something you are interested in.

I can tell you right now that 'how to make money online' is a very lucrative niche. Keep in mind though, if you are not interested in helping people build their business, then it's a bad idea to go into this industry. Why would you want to trade a job you don't like, for a business you also don't like? Why supplement your current income by coming home to a website about something you don't care about?

Wow, that would suck!

Sure, now you say that you don't care what you write about as long as it makes money. But what happens when your business isn't making money? I'd be willing to bet that most people reading this book will need to work on their business for at least 3-6 months before even making their first sale, and maybe a year or more before turning a regular profit.

Are you willing to put in 12 months of work into a business that is not profitable, about a topic that you are not passionate about, let alone interested in?

For me, and for a lot of new online business owners, the first time around is like a trial run. We have to learn the ropes, see how to connect the dots, and then we can find our 'big break' somewhere down the road.

What are you worried about?

If you do build a website and find out that traffic isn't great, it doesn't mean you can't make *some* money from your website.

ANY website can be monetized and profitable. Let's say that worst case scenario you dedicate 6 months of your life to a website you are completely passionate about. You spend every waking hour building this site to be the most beautiful, most interesting, and most helpful resource in this niche.

But then you find out that traffic isn't as great as you thought, and you only earn \$100/month from it using general paid advertisements (like Google ads). Oh no, wasted effort, right? Wrong.

Now you can pay someone \$25/article and have them publish 2x per month to the site to maintain it. You make \$100, spend \$50 in outsourcing fees, and pocket the other \$50. Now you have a profitable business on your hands that runs by itself basically, and you can start site #2, with more knowledge and foresight.

This time around you have a better idea of some hot markets you want to go into, a good idea of how to get your pages ranked faster and where to target low competition areas of high traffic niches. Instead of taking 6 months to produce a website that makes \$100/month, you take 4 months to create a website that produces \$500 a month and still has potential to grow beyond that.

Was your first website a waste? Absolutely not.

This is why I don't want you to focus on traffic numbers while choosing your niche. Honestly, stuff like that will confuse a lot of you to the point that you won't even want to get started. Understand that your first website might not be an instant success, and you can always regroup later as you gain more experience. Let's move on.

## *Passion VS Profit*

I built at least 10 websites before I found the one that really worked for me. Most of them died out because I just couldn't bring myself to write another damn article about Plants VS Zombies plush toys (one of my first websites).

Yet, here I am spending my Friday night typing away at an ebook I have no idea if I'll be able to publish, or if it will make me any money. Even if it does make money, will it be worth the effort? I don't know, but I do know that I enjoy talking about this stuff, and really want to create a unique product that helps people accomplish the same things I have.

Some folks tell me that they don't have any interests, and don't care what they write about as long as it makes money. I call BS on that. Everyone has preferences.

You don't have to wake up in the morning drooling, unable to hold back the pure passion you feel for the niche you've chosen. That's a bit extreme. Just pick something that you think you might enjoy as opposed to something else that is boring. You like...*stuff* right? Think about what stuff you could enjoy writing about.

Breakfast is delicious. I could probably make a pretty interesting site about breakfast. How about an old fashioned cocktail website? I don't know much about them, but they sound pretty interesting.

You don't have to know everything about your niche right now. It's not necessary to be an expert at day one. Chances are, most of you are not an "expert" in anything right now.

If you dedicate 12 months of your life to researching a topic daily, you WILL become an expert in whatever you choose. So it's not necessarily that your business will be chosen for you based on what you already know, it's that YOU will choose your business based on what you want to know more about.



# ***Fear of Choosing The Wrong Niche***

## **In 10 Years...**

An idea I try to drive home to folks that get stuck in the “I’m afraid to pick the wrong niche” phase is to think about their potential failure and what that means. Consider the worst case scenario, and it might not be as bad as you imagined.

If all of your websites make \$0 for the next full year, lots of people would consider that a failed business venture. Wow. You’re a failure!

But what if after that year you scrap everything and start over. This time you build a website, and it takes you another full year to make your first sale. Slow, but progress nonetheless. At your 5 year anniversary, you are making regular sales and your business is profitable, allowing you to quit your job and work full time from home.

So fast forward 10 years from today. You have 1 year of utter failure, and 4 years of struggle. Then you have 5 years of working from home, then another couple decades of success ahead of you in the future.

Would it be worth it?

Would you trade 5 years of NON-success for 5 years (plus the future) of success? Most people would.

But for some reason when newbies get started they set unrealistic timeframes of just a few months to “test this thing out” and see if they can make it.

If I had quit at 6 months because I was failing I would not be here today talking to you.

So forget the idea of picking the right or wrong niche, and just pick something that suits you for now. Not *right* now, because we’ve still got

to talk about how to actually pick one in the next section, but I mean pick it by the end of this chapter.

## About Pivoting

If you are still concerned about picking the wrong niche because of profitability, or just don't want to waste your time, here's another thing to think about. You can always 'pivot' later, and change the direction of your site. If you pick a domain correctly, it won't lock you into a specific niche and you can just tweak the content as you grow.

For example, a domain like laserprinterreviews.com is going to lock you into laser printer reviews for life. But a domain like mrprintmaster.com can start off as a laser printer review website but change later. If in a few months you discover that this isn't your thing, you can tweak to to be broader, more narrow, or head in a different direction (while still *somewhat* related to the domain).

For example, you could start reviewing all printers later if you run out of stuff to say about laser printers. Alternatively, you could make a website about how to start a t-shirt company. "Print" fits with t-shirt printing, so no one would think it was weird that your domain is called mrprintmaster.com. You could even go a bit more abstract and do something like small home business advice, with a little printer-man as your logo. Kooky, but fun and still makes sense because small businesses use printers.

I chose the name [onemorecupof-coffee.com](http://onemorecupof-coffee.com) for my current affiliate marketing website because it had a story behind it. But when I started, I wrote about everything related to making money – real estate investing, stock investing, and passive income. As time went on, I realized I wasn't that interested in all those other topics, and just wanted to focus more specifically on affiliate marketing through Wordpress blogs.

I changed direction (pivoted) and no one noticed.

The other thing is that you can always put a project to the side for a while and come back to it later.

Maybe you start a website this month, unsure if it's really something you are passionate about. Then two months down the road you have your "aha" moment, and have a great idea for a different website. You can put the first on the back-burner and restart it later if you want.

Letting a website stew for a few months isn't going to harm it, especially if it's brand new. Nothing gained, nothing lost. The story might be different if you were generating traffic and revenue from the site, but I have a feeling if that were the case you probably wouldn't be putting the project on the back-burner!

# ***Big Mistakes To Watch Out For***

There are a few common niche-picking mistakes I see, and while making mistakes can be a great learning process, here are two concepts that are simple to understand and avoid.

## **Don't Pick A Single Product Without A Niche To Back It Up**

Sometimes it's easy to mix up 'niche' with 'product'. Beginners often tell me they want to promote the iPhone 6, or a specific brand of shoe. My response is always – what happens when iPhone 7 is released or the shoe goes out of style?

The other thing to consider is that you are going to be talking about this product on a weekly, maybe even daily basis. Can you think of enough content to back it up?

iPhone might actually be OK, since there are lots of related topics like app development, games, paid app reviews, and lots of rumors to speculate on.

But if I were to pick something like the Logitech c920 webcam, I might be screwed. What would I write about week after week on [logitechc920webcam.com](http://logitechc920webcam.com)? Not much...unless...I had a niche to back it up.

So in the case of 'iPhone', I could pick a broader niche like app development or iPhone game reviews. Instead of the Logitech c920, I might create a webcam review site, even something like 'staying in touch with friends & family overseas' (the c920 review would be one article on the website). Using the "person who wants to \_\_\_\_" example I used before, here's what those two sites would look like:

1. People interested in buying a webcam
2. Families that want to use technology to keep in touch

It would be a nightmare for me (personally) to dig into webcam specs every day for the rest of the year, but I could have a fun time reviewing webcams, talking about handwritten letters, teaching Skype to the elderly, or craft ideas that are easy to for kids to send in the mail. Both the webcam review website and ‘staying in touch’ website are interesting ideas for different types of audiences.

Actually, now that I think of it, the second example is a pretty good business idea! You can have that one. I don’t have the time for it right now :)

## **Don’t Pick A Broad Industry**

Some folks go in the opposite direction and say that they want to promote “everything technology”, or “video games”, or “fashion”.

Actually, video games and fashion are two of my biggest niche pet peeves. I hear them all the time and I really have a hard time thinking of ideas of how to break them down for folks because I just don’t know enough about them.

BUT, we’re going to do it here, right now, in case you were just thinking, “I love video games” in the last chapter. The key here is to break the industry down into “tribes”, identifying groups of people that are different from each other.

For example, someone playing Second Life is way different from someone that’s into vintage video game consoles. Now we have two niches from one industry! Other possible video game niches are:

- immersive video game equipment (gaming chairs, shock controllers, headsets)
- console repair
- indie games

- MMORPGs
- World of Warcraft
- DOTA 2
- Minecraft
- creating gaming mods

NOTE: WoW, Minecraft and DOTA 2 are huge games with massive followings and more than a decade of history behind them. They are very complicated games and I think could stand on their own legs as a separate niche. Need-4-Speed (a racing game) however, I think could not.

There are no doubt more sub-niches that I haven't thought of. If this is your passion, put on your thinking cap because "game reviews" just isn't going to cut it.

Honestly, I'm not even going to touch fashion because it's something I have a hard time with. I've seen some people do really good jobs of it, in ways I wouldn't have thought of. I don't want to give away their great ideas, but it can be done well if you think about *who* you want to be visiting your website.

Let's talk about something that's a bit more interesting for me to break down:

## **Dogs**

- how to train a puppy
- owning small dogs
- organic dog food reviews
- homemade dog treats
- health & nutrition for older dogs
- adopting rescue dogs
- showing specific breeds in competition

And how about one more just to give you an idea of just how many possibilities there are. Lots of people say “tech” or “smartphones” as their niche, but that’s just way too broad. It’s too much competition, and you would kill yourself trying to write everything about “smartphones”.

- mobile game app development
- app development for small businesses
- wearables
- fitness technology
- medical technology
- 3d printing
- drones
- smart homes

Hopefully these examples have made it clearer how to break down a broad industry into an actual niche. Coupled with last chapter’s advice on how to avoid going too narrow and building yourself into a corner, I think you have a pretty good shot at getting it right the first time around.

Even if not, remember that you can always tweak it as you move forward.



## *Chapter 3 Summary + Tasks*

We are going to be choosing a topic (niche) for our website that we know something about, or are interested in learning about. The main reasons we do this are to learn specialized knowledge about a specific topic in order to write quality content on the topic, and to reduce the amount of competition our website will face.

It's also going to help keep us motivated and interested while building our business. A topic too broad means that we won't have a defined audience, and it will be too much work. A topic too narrow means that we'll struggle to think of what to write about on a weekly basis. It's a balancing act, but it can be refined later on as we grow our business and learn about our audience.

### **Tasks For This Chapter**

1. Pick 3-5 potential niches for yourself
2. Read the chapters on affiliate programs and domains + hosting before you start buying anything. I know this is a lot of info to take in, but these three sections (niche, affiliates, domain) kind of go hand in hand

# **CHAPTER FOUR**

## ***Affiliate Program Research***

## *Just Looking...*

I labeled this chapter “research” because we don’t actually need to DO anything other than check stuff out related to affiliate programs right now. It may influence our decision to enter a niche or not.

Technically, you don’t need this step right now. I’ve said it before, and I’ll say it again and again, **any website with traffic can be monetized**. For newbies, not even thinking about how to make money from your website at this point means you can focus on more important things like choosing an appropriate topic for yourself.

Do you pick out a job before you go to college? Nope. But you trust that there’s going to be a job out there if you get a good education, right? Same story here. Build a website that gets traffic and there will be some way to make money from it. I don’t make many guarantees, but I do guarantee *that*.

That being said, if you have a few niche ideas and want to know which one is the best to go with, checking out the affiliate programs can definitely help you make a final decision. So, even though you don’t *need* this chapter right now, some people will find it useful. Also, I do want to show everyone the basics of how we plan to make money from our website so you don’t have to wait to chapter 13 to finally get it.

To find affiliate programs is very simple. Go to Google and type “my niche” + “affiliate program”. You can also do the same with related products and services, like “product + affiliate program”.

You don’t have to sign up anything for the time being, so just save the URLs of any programs you think sound interesting. We’re just browsing right now because we don’t have a website yet, and most programs require that you have at least a website to sign up. Oh, and FYI, the vast majority of affiliate programs should be free to join.

Now that you found some, how do you know which ones are good? In this chapter I'm going to cover some of the main things I consider when choosing an affiliate program to monetize my website with.

## Commissions + Cookies

This one is pretty simple. High commissions = more money for you. Physical products may start in the 3%-5% range, but go up as high as 20% in some cases. Digital downloads like ebooks or membership sites may pay up to 75%. Some recurring fee websites will even pay you 100% of the first month membership, but of course you don't get paid any recurring commissions.

Recurring commissions are something to really snoop around for. Memberships, or recurring orders that pay you every time the customer pays are *sahweet*. I would take a 1% lifetime recurring commission over a 10% one-time commission any day. That's just me though. Some folks prefer big payouts and they just focus on making more of those.

Along with commissions is something called "cookie length". That's how long your affiliate cookie lasts. The "cookie" is the code generated by your affiliate link that tracks how many sales you are making. It stays in the person's browser even after they click your link, leave your website, and go to the vendors website.

Cookie length varies from 24 hours to lifetime! There just can't be a wider difference than that. Standard is about 30 to 90 days, and longer is better. That means if someone clicks you link and goes to the vendor website, then leaves, you can still get credit for anything they buy in the next 30 days, as long as they don't click someone else's link in the meantime.

A lifetime cookie means that the person who clicked your link can come back and buy something from that website at any time (no limit), and you still get credit.

## *High Ticket Items*

This is basically marketing slang for expensive stuff. Ten percent of \$1000 is \$100 per sale and those types of commissions can add up pretty quickly. If you make a hundred bucks per sale and just one sale each day, that's \$36,500 per year in income – wowzers! You'll see a lot of buzz from the gurus about this, and a lot of the time that's how they con newbies into reselling their expensive private coaching courses.

“Joe made \$2000 in his first twenty four hours online!”

What they don't tell you is that Joe sold a \$5,000 marketing package to a granny who spent her entire retirement on a promise that she was *almost* guaranteed to make money.

Still, I can't deny that selling one item for \$500 is easier than selling five hundred items for \$1. I sold a homebrew sculpture for a couple grand one time and made a few hundred dollars from that one sale. I was pretty happy with myself that day.

There are high ticket items in every niche if you just look. They might not be immediately obvious, but if you can draw lines between things, you can get creative.

If your niche is beginners cooking tips, there's no reason you can't review some high end knives. If you are doing something about arts & crafts for kids, including some promos for stuff like backyard swing sets or club houses would be alright as long as you draw connection that the kids will be helping with this “big art project”.

If you the swing set you promote costs a grand, and you make a five percent commission, you only have to convince one person each day (out of six billion people in the world) that they need a swing set for their kids, and you can make an extra \$1500 per month.

## *Active Affiliate Managers*

When comparing affiliate programs, you can even see if an affiliate manager is included. For a newbie, this might be a bit daunting – to actually have someone there watching your site or checking up on how you're doing, but it's not a big deal.

In the beginning, I was super stressed to have an affiliate manager because i thought they would hate my site and kick me out of the program! (Just so you know, that's not going to happen)

Actually, the managers I've met so far are all pretty cool. Some will check up on your site from time to time if you are generating a lot of traffic and sales, but if you have got a bare bones website they'll pretty much leave you alone unless you ask for help.

This is great if you have questions about how to use their link tracking system or want to know about the products you are promoting. Eventually, if you start doing well you can even negotiate deals for higher payments.

Having an affiliate manager you can reach out to is awesome compared to sending questions to an empty inbox, which happens a lot.

Shoot them an email with some basic questions just to see if anyone's alive over there. If you don't want to do that, just check out their affiliate signup page.

Are there broken images and dead links? Is there no information about commission percentages or clear instructions on how to sign up? This might be a B-Level program you're looking at. Double check – send them an email to make sure the affiliate program is still active, because sometimes they discontinue them for whatever reason.

If they offer training, bonuses, or even stats on what their top affiliates are earning it means that they are probably actively involved and interested in seeing you perform well.

In addition to seeing what your future affiliate manager is up to, you can also see if they offer other things like banners, tracking links, and other marketing material. I have seen some programs that actually provide a list of high traffic keywords to their affiliates, and specialized (or customizable) landing pages.



# ***Product Research***

## **Product + Website Quality**

Don't forget to check out the website and the stuff they are selling. 50% commissions on some trashy RC-cars with bad reviews on Amazon should not be a priority. Compared to 15% on a similar product with good reviews, a nicely designed site, and other perks for the customer like free shipping? I'd pick the latter any day.

Different products will have different ways of being sold. Some physical products may be listed with images, info, and customer reviews. Digital products may have a single sales page. Visualize what the purchase process will be like people you send to this website.

Get inside your potential customer's head. Remember, you can have an awesome website, but you still have to send them to the vendor! Sometimes, even if you have poorly designed site and mediocre content, just getting people to click over to a fantastic sales page is all you need to do to close the deal.

After all, you are not selling yourself or your business. You are selling stuff from other people, and that's ultimately what's going to matter most to the people spending money.

## **Find Related Products**

Take some time to browse around for related products in related niches. Don't bite off more than you can chew by broadening your niche too much, but it's nice to see what's out there.

For example, if you choose Hawaiian honeymoons as your niche, you can also look into things like diamond ring affiliate programs, hotel referral programs, plane travel affiliate programs, or even stuff related to wedding gift ideas. I mean, if you knew your friend was getting married and going to Hawaii for his honeymoon, couldn't you get him and his wife something

related to that? Silverware sucks. How about sky diving lessons off a volcano?!!

## **General Product Research**

It's actually pretty simple – just find products that you personally like, or that you think are selling well. You can look at other websites' Top 10 lists, or on Amazon Top Sellers. Check the news for hot items, and see which ones might be able to fit in your niche.

Once you find a product you are interested in promoting, search for an affiliate program that will allow you to promote it. Some products will only be sold by one vendor, and it's either “Yes” or “No” whether they have an available affiliate program. Other products will be sold by multiple vendors, and then you just have to choose which website/company you want to work with.

It's OK to sign up to more than one affiliate program and promote competing companies side by side. You can compare prices, shipping rates, and customer service ratings if you want.

Personally, I find it easier to start off promoting just a few core products and focusing on that versus trying to re-create an ecommerce style website where *everything* is available on your site. However, I've seen people succeed with the second method too, just pumping out reviews of tons of items related to their niche.

## *Chapter 4 Summary + Tasks*

The main action we needed to take for this chapter was to conduct some research and take some notes. We are just looking to see what's out there to help us make a better decision on which niche to choose.

If you didn't find anything, don't get discouraged! I would rather see you choose a topic you are interested in than something just because you think it can make more money. To be honest, if you are a newbie, you might not be a very good judge of which niche has potential and which doesn't!

If you are still thinking, "I don't care what the niche is as long as it makes money", then you can spend more time researching affiliate programs and find one that looks attractive to you. If you do that, keep my advice from before in mind: A product is not a niche. I will also add that a brand is not a niche either. If you do choose a niche based on the affiliate program, re-read chapter 3 and make sure you have a group of people in mind you want to target.

We will discuss more about how to monetize your website in Chapter 13.

### **Tasks For This Chapter**

1. Find 3 potential affiliate programs based on your niche
2. Find out how much they pay, and what the cookie length is
3. Write down this information in a text file on your computer or phone, along with some initial impressions about their program, website, and products
4. Think about whether or not these observations affect your choice of niche

# CHAPTER FIVE

## *Domains + Hosting*

# *The Basics*

Many of you at this moment do not know what a domain or hosting is. I didn't either when I first got started!

A domain is just the website address...the thing you type into the web browser that looks like `www.website.com`.

Hosting is where your website files are stored. Domains and hosting are two major pieces to the puzzle that make your website work. You need a place to store your website information like picture files, articles, and code that makes your website work properly.

But people need to know where to find those files, and that's why we get a web address (domain) for it too.

Both domains and hosting are going to cost money, and there's no way around it. But to run an affiliate marketing business, these are the only two *essentials*, and they are considerably cheaper than any other type of offline business.

A .com domain name will cost you \$11/year, up to \$20/year with privacy protection from some domain registrars.

For a very basic hosting plan you'll pay between \$5 and \$20/month. Some places require you to pay for a year in advance, and others let you pay monthly. I will make some recommendations in this section, but there really are many places to choose from.

## *Brand Names VS EMDs*

When picking your website name there are two major schools of thinking. Both have advantages and disadvantages.

EMD means Exact Match Domain, and it basically means that you choose a domain name based on a keyword you find (see chapter 7). This would of course be a high traffic keyword. The idea is that by using this keyword as your domain name, you have a good chance of ranking for it and getting loads of traffic as a result.

If you can pull it off, great. More power to you!

The trouble is that this idea has been around for many years, and most of the good ones have been scooped up by domain hoarders who want to sell them at a premium, sometimes for thousands of dollars!

There are of course little gems out there, and as new products are invented, new, previously low traffic domain names suddenly become in-demand.

But in general, if you can think of it off the top of your head, it's probably already taken.

I remember when I was buying domain names and wanted to buy [beeer.com](#) (yes, 3 e's), I was shocked to see that it was already bought and squatted on. What was more shocking that up to 5 e's was already taken!

Someone actually bought [beeeeeer.com](#)!

Ok, bad example. It's a very low traffic keyword. But you can see that to find an EMD that really will help your traffic is going to take some work. If you think you are clever, there are probably 5 other clever people in the world that have already thought of your domain name, especially if it's based off of traffic stats you find using a keyword tool.

On the other hand, choosing a brand simply means that you pick a catch phrase or name that is unique to your website. You can use your name,

or a mascot, or, my favorite, create a *keyword rich* brand. “Keyword rich” just means that you include some kind of niche-relevant keyword in your domain.

Marketingwithmarie.com or learntotypewithmike.com would be good examples of using your name for branding. Learntotype.com and marketing.com are definitely already taken, so just tweak them and make them specific to you by adding your name. You still get a high traffic keyword in the domain, but add the unique brand of yourself to the mix.

Maxyourtaxrefundmaniac.com or videoeditingsoftwarez.com would be two examples of keyword rich, branded domains. Since maxyourtaxrefund.com and videoeditingsoftware.com are either established websites or owned by domain squatters, we need to get creative if we want to use those keywords in our domain name. All you need to do is add a word or a letter and and tada! You now have a unique brand with a high traffic, highly descriptive phrase in it.

## **Domain Extensions**

A typical domain extension is going to be .com, .org, or .net. There are a huge variety of domains extensions available nowadays, including .biz, .io, .guru, and even .cool or .website. You can actually register your own domain extensions to be whatever you want if you have enough money.

But think back to your recent searches and think about how many of them were non-dot-com domains? Very, very few. This is the big reason I always try to get a .com domain name, even if it means giving up a website name that I really want.

I have seen some case studies that consistently ranked .com, .org, and .net as the most effective domain extensions for ranking, in that order. I highly recommend you just go for a .com since it will help you rank easier than the others.

Why are the other ones available if they are just plain useless? It might just be an attempt from registrars to make more money, since they clearly don't really care about what Google's doing and how search engines actually rank the domains they sell. Maybe search engines will start to rank other extensions more equally in the future, but for now, .com what reigns supreme.

Also, keep in mind, that some websites just don't care about search, and are running mainly offline businesses. They want a catchy name, so mybusiness.website is pretty easy to remember. Some online companies may do other forms of traffic generation like social media, in which case search engines results are not very important to them.

Other extensions to consider would be local ones, like .ca (Canada), .co.uk (UK), .au (Australia), etc. These are viable options if you only plan on targeting a specific region of the world with your website. For example, if you are building a website for a local business in the UK, or promoting Amazon products specific for folks living in Australia, then a local extension would be fine.

The advantage is that you gain authority for your local market. Australian domains are going to reach an Australian market more easily, and won't have any problems outranking .coms. In fact, Australians might be more likely to click the .au because they know it applies to them! You become super focused on this market, and are able to market your website to them more effectively.

The downside is that you will struggle to rank anywhere outside of the country, meaning you give up most of the world market.

The analogy I always use is you need to decide if you want a small piece of a large pie or a large piece of a small pie. Most people will be better off just picking the .com because you can still target local markets with individual pages on your site.



# *Breaking Away From Old Standards*

High PR, aged, & bad grammar domain names are three things I'd like to call attention to and steer you away from. Some people scour the internet looking for 'aged domain names' like they were a fine wine or French cheese. An aged domain name just means that it was an established website for some years already, or has been registered for a long period of time.

However, these domains come with a lot of baggage, and aren't necessarily "more powerful" than a fresh domain. Would you rather spend \$1000 on a domain that might rank well but might also have ton of links from irrelevant sources pointing to it or \$10 on a brand new site that you know has not been meddled with?

True, you can do research and flush out some older domains with good link profiles that may get your business off to a quick start. But it won't guarantee the success of your business, and learning to do that stuff at this point adds a whole extra level of complexity, cost, and time to getting started. Skip it for now and come back to it later if it interests you.

The same thing goes for high PR (Page Rank) domains. Google doesn't even use Page Rank as a ranking metric anymore, so it's not worth discussing. In the past Page Rank was a method that search engines used to determine which websites had more authority than others. It's obsolete in Google, though Bing might still be using something like it, as they tend to be behind the times by a few years.

The other thing I advise you to avoid is using bad grammar keywords in your domain just because you found good traffic stats in your keyword tool. People type all kinds of gibberish into search engines because they know it's a machine, or autocorrect is messing them up.

Consider this: Google autocorrects mistakes and makes guesses based on natural language.

If someone searches for “lawnmower carburetor no gas”, they are probably most interested in results related to how to fix the mower and get gas to it. Buying the domain lawnmowercarbretornogas.com doesn’t guarantee you’ll rank for the term, and doesn’t guarantee that people will click on and like your site, and to be honest, it just looks kind of tacky.

People are much more likely to click on [howtofixyourmower.com](http://howtofixyourmower.com) or [mrcarburetor.com](http://mrcarburetor.com) rather than something that looks poor English.

Plus, it just looks unprofessional, and you may be using this domain for decades. Do you really want your business for the next few years to be [cooliphoncases.com](http://cooliphoncases.com)? Not me.

# *Shared Hosting VS VPS*

There isn't a whole lot to discuss here, but it's worth explaining briefly. The vast majority of new website owners are going to start out on shared hosting. This basically means that you are using the same "space" as other website owners. You have your own private logins and whatnot, but it's like living in a dorm, where you have your own room but everyone is in the same apartment.

It's cheaper, but it's generally slower and makes you more dependent on the actions of others using the same server. One guy draining the server's resources could affect your site negatively.

VPS is going to be way too much power and too many features for someone running one site, which also happens to be their first website. That being said, as you grow your business it's something you should seriously consider moving to. You get a server "space", which only you occupy, and you can do with it as you please. Moving will be super simple when the time comes (most hosts will do it for you), so I would just pick a shared hosting plan at this point.

Having a VPS can give you various management options for your websites which I won't explain because I'm not 100% clear on all the features and they aren't necessary to running your affiliate business.

For a basic VPS package, it's really not *that* expensive, but it is more expensive than shared hosting. A shared hosting account, even for hosting multiple websites, will cost about \$8-\$20/month, while a VPS package, depending on the amount of bandwidth and other features included, will cost \$40-\$100/month.

I started out on shared hosting, and now host websites in a variety of places, mainly on my VPS.

# *Hosting Recommendations*

There are tons of choices for where to host your website. However, I wanted to share some personal experiences with you to help you avoid headache down the road.

When I got started, I hosted at the cheapest place possible – Fatcow. I later realized that their first year discount was not continued to the second year, which made them much less appealing. I also had multiple issues dealing with websites going down, maintenance problems, and inadequate customer support.

I then switched to Hostgator, and was happy for a while, but then had two years of nothing but nightmares with this service. For being one of the biggest players in the industry, they really provide a horrible service. I really don't want to go on a rant here, but I will list the most egregious events that turned me off of their service.

1. Several “total blackout” events within 1 year
2. Monthly downtimes of 1 hour or more for my websites
3. Frequent Wordpress loading errors
4. Customer service telling me that upgrading will solve the problem  
I contacted them about, only to find out later that the problem was unrelated to my previous hosting package and still a mystery
5. Live chat and phone blackouts making support unreachable for weeks at a time
6. Week-long wait times on ticket support (sometimes)
7. 90 day wait for my refund (when I finally moved).

Now, I host the majority of my websites at a place called KnownHost. I have only hosted there for about two months now, but I haven't had

a single issue with websites being down, and although they don't have live chat, their ticket support usually answers within 30 minutes or less.

They are also a lot cheaper. I was paying \$100/month for Level 4 VPS at Hostgator, and for a similar setup, am now paying \$40/month at KnownHost.

However, I am hosting [onemorecupof-coffee.com](http://onemorecupof-coffee.com) at WebSynthesis now, which has been nothing short of amazing. I've noticed faster load times, they include things like Securi Security Monitoring, and have other technical stuff related to Wordpress specific hosting.

The price will scare most people off. I pay about \$40/month for hosting just one website. For me, it makes sense. My website works better, and the money I'm making from the site functioning better makes it worthwhile. With the profit I'm pulling in from that site, every hour that it's down, I'm losing money. So yeah, I'll pay \$1.50/day to have a web hosting service that actually cares about my business.

## Chapter 5 Summary + Tasks

Now we know the basics of how our business is going to be set up. We will store our website files at a host of our choice, and we need to buy a domain name that reflects the topic of our business.

To get your website live, there are three basic steps.

1. Purchase a hosting package, make note of what your DNS (nameservers) are called
2. Purchase a domain name\* and point your nameservers to your hosting (from above)
3. In your host, follow the steps they provide to build a blank Wordpress website

*\*domain names can be purchased at hosting company or domain registrar.*

Namecheap is great for cheap prices. Godaddy is great for extra customer service, including phone support.

How these steps are executed vary from place to place. Rather than pick just one configuration and show you how to do it, I'll let you make the decision of which companies you want to work with and contact their support centers individually for guidance. Just keep those three steps in mind, and you'll be fine.

### Tasks For This Chapter

1. Purchase a hosting package
2. Purchase a domain
3. Point domain nameservers to your hosting
4. Build a blank Wordpress website inside your host

NOTE: This part is probably pretty scary for some folks that have never build a website before. Keep in mind that we do not need to have 100% oversight of our website structure at this point. Our #1 goal right now is to get a “shell” Wordpress website built on our host and live so we can log in and start building.

Beyond that, don't worry about it! If you are worried though, you can also choose to read the rest of this book first to see what the endgame is.

**ATTN! Please read the last chapter to find out how to get free web hosting designed specifically for Wordpress.**

# CHAPTER SIX

## *Basic Website Structure*



# *Learning Wordpress*

Wordpress is one of the most widely used content management systems (CMS) in the world. It's not that difficult once you get rolling, but be aware that there is a bit of a learning curve, and prepare yourself for a challenge. Remember! Learning new skills is tough in the beginning, but if you persevere, anything is possible.

The great thing about Wordpress is that you don't need to know any code to get a beautiful looking website online. The only real challenge you'll face is becoming familiar with some of the parts of Wordpress (I may call it WP for short), what they do, and where they are located.

Unfortunately, I can't teach you everything you need to know! Wordpress can do a lot of stuff, and there is no way to explain it all, especially in a text-based ebook. There are tons of tutorials you can find on YouTube or written guides people publish on their own blogs.

I will give you a basic rundown of the main elements you need to know, and you can learn the rest as you go. In the last chapter I will direct you to some resources with tutorials on how to build Wordpress websites for affiliate marketing.

## **Wordpress Main Elements**

**Dashboard:** This is a quick snapshot of different things happening on your website. I rarely use this, but it's a prominent feature of the Wordpress back-end.

**Themes:** This is where you can find and choose the look of your website. There are 10,000+ free ones to choose from that you can download to your website automatically in this area.

**Widgets:** These are little "boxes" located in the sidebar or bottom (footer) of your website. The location, size, and features of widgets varies greatly based on theme. Don't forget to remove the default 'meta' widget from

your website as serves no purpose. I always like to start of a new site with a “recent posts”, “pages”, and “search” widget in the sidebar.

**Menus:** What they do is pretty self explanatory, but how to use them might not be very intuitive. Custom menus are located under Appearance > Menus. You can create a list of pages or posts on your site and put them in a variety of menu areas on your site. The design, location, and number of the menus you have depends on your theme.

**Users > Your Profile:** This is where you can write a short user profile about yourself. This will not be visible on the site unless you are using a plugin or widget that takes information from this page.

**Settings > General:** You can define the name of your website and your tagline on this page. DO NOT change the Wordpress Address or Site Address or you will break your website.

**Settings > Reading:** There are some interesting settings in here. We currently have a blog roll on our home page, but you can also use a static page if you want. You can set how many blog posts show on your blog roll, and whether to use a full text or summary for the blog roll. I highly recommend using the summary.

**Settings > Discussion:** This is your comment settings area. You can uncheck “Attempt to notify any blogs linked to from the article” and “Allow link notifications from other blogs” because we don’t need those. Leave everything else as-is.

**Settings > Permalinks:** You probably don’t have to mess with this area, but double check that the settings are set to “Post Name website.com/sample-post/” OR “Custom Structure website.com/%postname%/. This is important for search engine optimization (SEO).

**Plugins:** These are like little ‘apps’ that can add features to your website. There are tons of free ones that can be downloaded under Plugins > Add

New. There are also paid ones that usually have better features, better code, and support.

**Comments:** This is where you moderate comments on your website

**Pages/Posts:** Pages and posts are where you publish content to your website. Posts and pages look exactly the same to search engines, but there are some minor differences to consider when choosing which ones you want to publish your content to. In general, pages are for core elements of your website, while posts are for your keyword optimized content (Chapter 7, 8, 9).

Here's a more in depth discussion on posts vs pages:

<https://my.wealthyaffiliate.com/training/the-differences-between-posts-pages>

## *Core Elements To Your Website*

At this point, if you have an empty Wordpress website live and can log into the back end, **your business is live**. This freaks some people out and they worry that someone will land on their “incomplete” site. Don’t worry. No one is going to find your site until you start publishing content, and even then, you probably still have a few weeks leeway where no one important will see anything you’re doing.

**There is no website “launch date” in this business!** If you wait until your website is perfect for launch, you could delay rankings and earnings for several months. Every day that your website is live and indexed in Google is a point working in your favor. Please do not try to keep people off your site until you think it’s perfect for viewing because you are only shooting yourself in the foot.

### **Core Elements To Your Website**

How you build the core of your website – actually – how you build your entire website is up to you. There is no magic formula to making money online, and no website structure that is going to guarantee rank, visits, and sales.

That being said, there are a few core elements I always include in my websites, and if you are starting your first niche website, I am going to recommend you follow this structure, at least in the beginning. You can always make changes later. Content can be updated, deleted, or redirected to new pages. Nothing is permanent, and you have the option to be as creative as you want with your own business.

## ***Core Element #1: Blog Roll***

By default, your blog roll will be your home page. As you publish new articles to your website (called blog posts), an excerpt will be posted to your home page. When people land on your website, they can see a list of your recent activity. How this list is displayed will depend on the theme you use (like a ‘skin’ for your website). There are free and paid themes to choose from.

Free themes can be accessed within your Wordpress dashboard area under Appearance > Themes. Paid themes can be bought and downloaded from different companies on their website. They are then uploaded in the same area under Appearance > Themes > Add New > Upload Theme. You can just drag/drop the .zip file you downloaded or you can click the “upload” button and find zip file in your downloads folder on your computer.

Larger themes may need to be uploaded via FTP, a kind of “app” or “software” that allows you to access the directory of your website files. I prefer YummyFTP, but CoreFTP and FileZilla are two popular FTP clients. If you’ve never done this before, you’ll probably want to watch a YouTube video on how to do it, but for right now, using free themes will be fine so you won’t have to mess with FTP.

For paid themes, there are thousands to choose from. My personal favorites to use are from Studiopress, but there are many others out there like WooThemes, YooThemes, Elegant Themes, and more!

Having your blog roll on your home page will look quite boring in the beginning because you don’t have any content published yet. It may even say something like “There’s nothing here!”, or “Hello World” if you keep the default example post up there. *Don’t freak*. This should just be an incentive to start building your site and start publishing content ASAP. But if you take your time, it’s not going to damage your website, so don’t worry about it.

## ***Core Element #2: About Me Page***

This is a very simple way to get introduced to the Wordpress editor and publish your first piece of real content. No research necessary! Just write from the heart – something about yourself, and include a picture.

I always like to write something about how I became interested in the niche I chose, and what kind of activities I'm currently doing as related to that topic. Am I a beginner? An expert? Somewhere between? How does this activity affect my day to day activities?

Be sure to include a picture of yourself! Maybe not so surprisingly, people are curious about website owners. When they read your articles, if they like them, they will naturally want to see WHO wrote this great stuff other than just some "admin". *People want to be your fan.* By including a picture they can make that visual connection that you are a real person they can talk to. This increases your trust factor. While Google may not be able to see who you are physically, they do see when people return to your website, leave comments, and share your website on social media.

The more PEOPLE trust you, the more Google trusts you.

## ***Core Element #3: Contact Page***

Part of having a business is going to be engaging with your visitors. This can be done in the comment section on individual pages, but it can also be done through email. Being available for questions means more opportunities for sales!

Creating a contact page on your website is a must, and it's pretty easy. In it's simplest form, you can simply say contact me at myname@domain.com (or whatever email you set up for yourself). However, to get a pretty form where people can type in their information and get in touch directly from that page you can just install a plugin. A free one that I use is Contact Form 7.

Some plugins have a settings area and then you can add a bit of code to the page you want to define as your contact page. Some allow you to change the page layout by adding a "contact page" option to the Page Attributes section of the Wordpress editor.

## ***Suggested Page #1: Privacy Policy***

To be honest, most people aren't going to need a privacy policy at this point. You aren't monetizing your site yet, and you aren't taking anybody's information. There's no "internet law" that says you need a privacy policy.

However, it's wise to put one up, even if it's something you just make up. You can go to [freeprivacypolicy.com](http://freeprivacypolicy.com) and answer their questions to generate one of those long, complicated, "official" ones, but some of the questions might confuse you right now. You can also skip this step until later.

Honestly, the only people that actually NEED a privacy policy are the ones that are required to do so by the companies they work with, namely Google Adsense. If you plan on placing Google ads on your website at some point, you definitely need this! For many folks, Adsense will be how they make their first \$1 online (more on that later), but I am not a fan of this method of monetization (also more on that in chapter 13).

It's probably a good idea to have a privacy policy if you plan on doing email marketing as well.

The general idea is that you want to inform people of how their private information is going to be used (or not used). The sad truth is that most of us don't understand the legal jargon on these pages. You may want to just write something up in your natural language to make it easier for your readers to understand.

If you are unsure how to write one but concerned that you need one, just create a free one (shown above), and copy it verbatim to your website.

*Good enough.* By the way, I'm not a lawyer so this is just my personal advice.



## ***Suggested Page #2: Affiliate Disclaimer***

Again, this is an option for most people, and is mostly done as a courtesy to your visitors. The FTC recommends you have one, but as far as I know, it's not an actual law that you have one, though this may vary from country to country.

Some affiliate programs do require that you have one, so make sure you find this out while signing up. Amazon is the best example, and they actually require that you put your disclaimer on a spot on your website that is visible from every page.

How you write the disclaimer is usually up to you. The Amazon disclaimer should be copied directly from their website.

*[Insert your name] is a participant in the Amazon Services LLC Associates Program, an affiliate advertising program designed to provide a means for sites to earn advertising fees by advertising and linking to [insert the applicable site name (amazon.com, amazonsupply.com, or myhabit.com)]*

For others, it depends. I would say something about making money from affiliate links on the site. Someone in the “make money” niche may say that they are not responsible for traffic losses and cannot guarantee income as a result of following their advice. Someone in the holistic healing industry might want to have something visible that says you are not a doctor and you should consult a qualified physician before making any changes to your current lifestyle.

The basic idea is that you want to cover your butt in case someone comes to your website, buys something you recommend, and has some kind of problem as a result of your advice. Of course, we don't want to be giving bad advice, but people are crazy and always looking for a scapegoat.

I'll probably do something similar for this book in the beginning, just in case someone buys it and blows themselves up and decides to sue me for whatever reason.

I also wanted to provide some things from the FTC website that you can look at, and understand how I interpret them. If you are particularly concerned about the legal stuff, don't take my word for it. Be as obvious and open as possible about your affiliation with companies. I've seen some blogs with an (*affiliate link*) disclaimer right next to every affiliate link on their website and they still make money. Other people have no disclaimers and have no issues at all.

From the FTC: <https://www.ftc.gov/tips-advice/business-center/guidance/ftcs-revised-endorsement-guides-what-people-are-asking>

\*NOTE: Since the original writing of this book, some statements on this page have been changed or removed. Nothing has been changed that conflicts with my opinions stated here, but please see the link for yourself, and make up your own mind about what you want to do with your own website.

***Endorsements must be truthful and not misleading;***

*If the advertiser doesn't have proof that the endorser's experience represents what consumers will achieve by using the product, the ad must clearly and conspicuously disclose the generally expected results in the depicted circumstances; and*

*If there's a connection between the endorser and the marketer of the product that would affect how people evaluate the endorsement, it should be disclosed.*

***I've read that bloggers who don't comply with the Guides can be fined \$11,000? Is that true?***

*No. The press reports that said that were wrong. There is no fine for not complying with an FTC guide.*

***Are you monitoring bloggers?***

*We're not monitoring bloggers and we have no plans to. If concerns about possible violations of the FTC Act come to our attention, we'll evaluate them case by case. If law enforcement becomes necessary, our focus will be advertisers, not endorsers – just as it's always been.*

***I've heard that every time I mention a product on my blog, I have to say whether I got it for free or paid for it myself. Is that true?***

*No. If you mention a product you paid for yourself, the Guides aren't an issue.*

***Do I have to hire a lawyer to help me write a disclosure?***

*No. What matters is effective communication, not legalese. A disclosure like "Company X sent me [name of product] to try, and I think it's great" gives your readers the information they need. Or, at the start of a short video, you might say, "Some of the products I'm going to use in this video were sent to me by their manufacturers." That gives the necessary heads-up to your viewers.*

***I'm an affiliate marketer with links to an online retailer on my website. When people click on those links and buy something from the retailer, I earn a commission. What do I have to disclose? Where should the disclosure be?***

*Let's assume that you're endorsing a product or service on your site and you have links to a company that pays you commissions on sales. If you disclose the relationship clearly and conspicuously on your site, readers can decide how much weight to give your endorsement. In some instances, where the link is embedded in the product review, a single disclosure may be adequate. When the product review has a clear and conspicuous disclosure of your relationship – and the reader can see both the product review and the link at the same time – readers have the information they need. If the product review and the link are separated, the reader may lose the connection.*

*As for where to place a disclosure, the guiding principle is that it has to be clear and conspicuous. Putting disclosures in obscure places – for example, buried on an ABOUT US or GENERAL INFO page, behind a poorly labeled hyperlink or in a terms of service agreement – isn't good enough. The average person who visits your site must be able to notice your disclosure, read it and understand it.*

\*\*\*\*\*

Important concepts as I understand them from these sections of the FTC FAQ.

- You don't need to hire a lawyer and can write your disclaimer in your own language
- They are not actively monitoring bloggers and there is no fine for not following the guidelines
- These are a set of guidelines, not laws
- Most of these rules apply to people that get free products to test, or are paid by companies to write reviews. If you're not paid for the review, and are just paid a commission for sales, the rules are not as clear-cut
- If you do want to comply with the guidelines, make sure it's obvious on every single page, near the top of the page
- If anyone is going to get in trouble, it's going to be the vendor, not you

## Core Plugins

There are literally thousands of cool plugins that you can install on your website to make it do different things. You'll learn about these as you chat to other business owners and search for features you want to add to your site. You can search for "feature I want + Wordpress plugin", and there's a good chance that someone has already created something you can use.

When installing a plugin, make sure to check the last date it was updated. Some developers create a plugin, but stop updating it somewhere along the way. Anything older than a year or two should be avoided unless you see comments that people are still using it for some reason. Old plugins are sources of security issues, and may conflict with updated versions of Wordpress.

Also, keep in mind that poorly coded plugins, or too many plugins, can slow down your site. Try to keep them to a minimum. That being said, here are a list of core plugins I recommend you install on your website right now.

**Spam Guard:** Akismet is probably the most widely known and popular one. I have had troubles with it recently, and now use Anti-Spam.

**SEO Manager:** Many Wordpress experts recommend Yoast as the top SEO plugin, but I prefer All in One SEO. It's much simpler for newbies to figure out, and I don't like features of Yoast like the URL optimizer or keyword density feature. AIO SEO just works in the background and you can build your business while it works.

Don't forget to activate it after you install it All in One SEO > General Settings > Enabled. Type in the name of your website and a short description in the Home Title and Home Description area, and the search engine optimization for your website is now done. Easy, right?

**Sitemap Creator:** You can choose to use the AIO SEO plugin to build your sitemap. I have always used Google XML Sitemap plugin though, and

prefer this one.

**Social Buttons:** There are many social plugins to choose from with different looks and features. Only activate 2-3 social buttons of your choice. Too many buttons can slow down your website. I like Twitter, Facebook, Google+, and maybe Pinterest or LinkedIn. Reddit is another popular site to consider, but you'll have to pick the ones you think will work for your audience.

**Caching Plugin:** This is going to make your website run faster by storing "cached" version of your pages to show visitors. However, keep in mind that if you are making changes to your website, a caching plugin might confuse you by showing you the old version instead of the new version of a page. I use W3 Total Cache but there are others. Check rating stars!

## ***Core Concept AKA Cornerstone Pages***

Now the fun part! We need to think of 3-5 running themes, or ‘core concepts’ for our website. Think of them as the cornerstones to the foundation of our business – vital, yet just the beginning. They are going to give us focus, and help define our audience. They can be altered or completely changed later, but for now, we want to define them so we can have a good idea which direction we are taking our business.

There are a few ways to structure these cornerstone pages, all of which I’ve used at some point and had success to some degree.

### **Category Pages**

This is the simplest to set up at this point because it doesn’t require you to do anything except to set up some category titles on your site. Think of 3-5 ideas that you want to cover on a regular basis (related to your niche). Go to Posts > Categories, and create those new categories. You can also change “uncategorized” to something general related to your niche. This way your default category will not be “uncategorized” which is boring and bad for website optimization.

Then go to Appearance > Menus and create a custom menu with category pages. As you publish blog posts and choose a category each time you publish, those posts will be listed under that menu item like a “mini blog roll” based on that specific topic.

Just so you don’t start out the lazy way, if you choose category pages instead of long form content (below), be sure to publish one blog post under each category so you don’t have a menu item that leads to nowhere!

## High Traffic Keyword Pages

Another popular method is to do some keyword research (chapter 7) and find high traffic keyword you'd love to rank for, but feel that competition is too tough. Because you'll be linking to these core pages a lot, and driving traffic to them from other pages, they'll gain rank over time. Even if it takes several months or years to get there, you're in no rush because you'll be focusing on ranking other, lower competition articles on your website.

By targeting these high traffic keywords and driving traffic to them over time, you can then rank and get more traffic from these keywords, snowballing your website's traffic. Once you have boatloads of traffic, pick your choice of monetization strategy and you'll have plenty of data to work with to find out how to make the most money from that traffic.

Publish these high-traffic-keyword articles as *pages* (not posts), and try to hit that 1000+ word count if possible.

## Monetized Pages (Non Keyword Based)

You may want to start out with monetized pages from the beginning. Although it's not the best idea to include affiliate links right away (wait until you are generating traffic), once your site is moving along nicely, having some pages with affiliate links won't affect your authority in the slightest bit. You can load 'em up with affiliate stuff at that point if need be.

The advantage here is that you are free to write about whatever you want, and title the page whatever you want. You are not locked into any kind of keyword density or usage, and can simply tweak the pages how you see fit, without worrying about search engines.

These could be product comparison pages, product review pages, or even a squeeze page with an email signup form for list building and email marketing. It doesn't really matter what they're about or what they're called, as long as you have a plan to make money from them at some point.



Because we aren't relying on search engine traffic to rank this page, focus on quality of content and writing effective ad copy. We'll be driving traffic to these from other keyword-based posts on our website just like with the 'high traffic keyword pages' section.

## ***Chapter 6 Summary + Tasks***

We're creating some basic content pages for our website. These core concepts can be published in a variety of ways. Our goal is to get a solid content base to begin with and start displaying information on our website so it's not "under construction"! Having some running themes for our website will keep us focused, and our target audience in mind.

### **Tasks For This Chapter**

1. Decide how you want to display your core concepts on your website
2. Publish 3 pages or posts based on what you want to make them about. Shoot for 1000 words or more and include some pictures!
3. Set up your main menu to display these pages

# **CHAPTER SEVEN**

## ***Keyword Research***

# *What Is Keyword Research?*

In a nutshell, “keyword research” is just trying to find out what people are searching for online. There are quite a few ways to do this. I’ll introduce a few basic ones and a few advanced ones in this book, but just keep in mind that if you are writing stuff on your blog that you think people are looking for, then you are doing the right thing.

Even if you are very familiar with your niche, keyword research can give us more insight into what’s going on inside search engines every day. You might know that people are searching for ways to lose weight, but you might not have known that there’s a group of people looking to lose weight before a high school reunion. It can also help you find out which phrases and niches have more/less traffic/competition.

First I’m going to talk about some basic concepts, then get into some tutorials on how to actually conduct the research part. Detailed keyword research tactics are beyond the scope of this book, but I will link to some resources I’ve created so you can dig in once you get started with your own website.

Don’t skip this chapter (or the next one)! Using keywords properly to get your website ranked in Google is one of the most important things about building a Wordpress site that makes money through blogging.

Also, keep in mind that if some of the number stuff we’re about to go over makes your head spin, just use them as a general guide for now. High traffic is good. Low competition is good. That’s pretty much all you need to know to get started.

# *How To Do Basic Keyword Research*

When I start a brand new site, the keyword research I do is not very organized. I just find anything and everything that looks interesting, and put what I find into a spreadsheet based on the metrics.

- High Traffic, High Competition
- High Traffic, Low Competition
- Low Traffic, High Competition (But still a good keyword)
- Low Traffic, Low Competition (The majority of your keywords will land here)

This gives me a long view of where my site is heading. What are things that people are searching for related to this niche? What are topics that I will probably be writing about in the future?

I sometimes even get into closely related topics just to see possible future expansion possibilities for my site. For example, if I'm doing a site about barbecue grills, maybe I want to look into camping keywords, or RV keywords. That's because people who do those activities will probably want to barbecue at some point.

Without even looking, I can guarantee that there are some juicy, low competition keywords related to RV grills or portable grills. In fact, the whole RV niche I think is ripe for money! Think about it – retired folks with money wanting to live out their dreams of traveling, but not without the comforts of home. When else is a better time to splurge on a nice things?

This concept applies to any website topic. What if we had a website about vegetarianism? Visitors wouldn't blink an eye if your domain is called [vegetarianrecipes.com](http://vegetarianrecipes.com) and you have wine reviews or organic gardening tips. Some wines are not vegetarian because they use animal products for

fining agents. That would be a great discussion for a vegetarian niche website. Gardeners grow vegetables, and that's what vegetarians eat. Makes sense, no?

You can also use these keyword stats to pick a domain name if you want. I talked about this in a previous section, but if you do find a high traffic keyword with a .com available, that might be a smart choice to pick up the domain. At the very least you can sell the domain at a premium later, or flip a very basic site with lots of potential.

But as I mentioned in the domain section, a good keyword will not make or break a website. The best niches will have a good mix of high traffic keywords and low competition keywords. If you find that all your keywords are high traffic high competition, you may be going too broad with your niche. For example, something like "lose weight fast" is not going to reveal a lot of opportunities to muscle your way in, and you probably want to refine your target audience a bit.

On the other side of the coin, lots of low competition low traffic keywords but nothing in the high traffic area could mean that while there's opportunity here, the potential for growth may lie in broadening your keyword pool at some point. Any niche will have an unlimited set of keywords if you are really passionate about the topic, though sometimes they take a while to reveal themselves!

You can also use keywords to confirm or change the running themes for your website.

Maybe your niche is "backpacking", and one of your running themes was "choosing the correct luggage". But then you find out that it's very high competition and actually not that many searches. You may want to tweak this core page on your site to be "choosing the correct rucksack", which can actually be an in-depth topic if you talk to the experts!

Or the opposite can happen. You may find that there's not enough searches for something, and you weren't too hot on the idea to begin with. Research

and open up some new ideas, and maybe make some changes based on what you find.

At the end of the day, it's not like you are actually limited to just 3-5 topics per site. That's just a guideline to get you started. You can always change links, update pages, add more pages, or alter the general direction of your site as you grow.

# ***Keyword Tools***

When comes to keyword tools, let me first say that I have my preferences and I will base the training in this book based on that. Before we get started, let's take a look at some popular keyword tools so you know what's out there.

## **Market Samurai**

This one was the “go to” tool a few years ago, but after some Google changes, I found it less effective. I used it for about 6 months in 2011 or 2012. It does give a lot of data, but that data can be complicated to read. I also found it very slow, and had lots of annoying updates every time you used it. It's a software based meaning you download it to your computer.

Personally, I don't recommend Market Samurai but I know it's still available and some people do use it.

## **Longtail Pro**

This is the tool that most people in the “niche site” community use. The creator of this tool is very involved in the niche site building community so it gets a lot of exposure there. Pat Flynn from Smart Passive Income (a famous website and podcast) also uses this, so they have plenty of case studies, tutorials, and bloggers that also promote this tool.

It's a good one. I don't have extensive experience with it, but it does provide some useful insight into competition power, and uses a lot of data from Moz, a reliable site for SEO analysis.

I personally found it slow at times, and didn't really care about all the data it was giving me. Also, it was using Google's search numbers which aren't really accurate as far as I understand.



## **Jaaxy**

This is the tool I use. It gives me the basic metrics I'm looking for, namely more accurate traffic estimations, and it uses QSR (I'll explain that in just a moment) for competition ratings. It's easy to use, it's web based, and is easy to export my data into a simple spreadsheet that I can edit, use for Adwords, or send via email.

Again, this is just a tool I'm more familiar with. You can see my full comparison of Jaaxy VS Longtail Pro here <http://onemorecupof-coffee.com/jaaxy-vs-longtail-pro-keyword-tool-niche-site/> because those are pretty much the only two tools that I would really recommend. But for the rest of the book I'll be talking about data according to Jaaxy.

## **Traffic Travis**

This is another tool that I have heard about, but not one that I've personally used or heard much about. I'm not very familiar with how it works or what data it shows.

## **Google Keyword Planner**

This is a free tool that lots of people use. I do not use it, so cannot provide much insight into how it works, but at the very least it'll help you think of some keyword ideas and give you a general idea of high vs low competition and traffic.

## *Search + Traffic Numbers*

What are good traffic numbers to look for? Actually...*Anything*. Seriously. Why are you being so picky?

Sure, if you wanted to build up a quick niche site with impressive numbers so you could flip it to an investor, maybe you would want to look at creating some content with higher traffic stats, but since we are creating a long term business for ourselves here, any traffic number will do.

If you write one hundred articles with one visit per day, that's one hundred extremely targeted visitors to your website every single day that you can count on. My current website has almost 1,000 blog posts on it, which would mean I can pretty much count on one thousand visits per day (if I had a keyword for each post).

Actually, I have much more traffic than that, but that's besides the point.

If you could fast forward three years and have a thousand-post website with a thousand visits a day you could funnel to a list or to affiliate pages would you do it? Heck yeah! You can do it, but you have to build it one post at a time (which is a huge pitfall for many people by the way).

Talking about specific numbers though, anything with above 300 searches per month (using Jaaxy) is doing quite well. Above 500 or 1000 is fantastic. Even 100 or 200 a month is doing alright, but under 100 is pretty low. Don't count out those keywords, but do consider the amount of work you have to do for that traffic.

I always consider: Is the keyword attractive? I mean, does it makes sense, and what type of visitor do you think it will attract?

## Examples

Time to use your brain! Let's talk about some examples of good and not-so-good keywords we could potentially use on our website. Before you flip out, yes, coffee enemas are a real thing, and I actually have a website about it that does make money. It's a thing that's gaining some traction in the alternative medicine community. You learn something new every day, right? Ha!

*coffee enema blog – 32 searches 25 competition*

The amount of searches aren't great, but QSR is low. I could probably rank for it, but why? Maybe I could write a post about the Top 10 Coffee Enema Blogs Online, and it could generate some traffic, but this is not an awesome keyword. People coming to my site probably want to leave right away!

*coffee enema frequency – 56 searches 23 competition*

Slightly more searches than above, but still pretty low. This might be more attractive as people landing on my site will see that I have some knowledge on the topic and are interested in doing their own coffee enemas probably. I could then direct them to products I recommend like organic coffee.

*organic coffee enemas – 128 searches 190 competition*

More searches, but also more competition. Competition is still within the range of what we consider to be "low", but the keyword itself is quite broad, and may be harder to rank for. Don't count it out! It may be good for a core page on your website. You can also look for related keywords like "Where to buy organic coffee for enemas" or "Do organic coffee enemas work better than non-organic?"

*are coffee enemas safe – 136 searches 44 competition*

Grammatically correct, higher traffic (compared to other keywords in this niche), and very low competition. This would be a perfect blog post title. The other keywords shown above are OK, and I would target them eventually, but this one would be my #1 choice.

The examples above are all pretty mild as far as searches go, because this is not very popular topic. However, it's a great niche because the audience is very passionate. It takes an issue (illness or discomfort) and solves it (waste evacuation, caffeine stimulation).

For popular niches or high traffic keywords, you can expect searches to go into hundreds or even thousands per month. However, the majority of keywords you find for any niche are not going to be that high, and are probably going to land somewhere between 0-500.

Let's look a few more examples

*carp fishing pole – 112 searches 120 competition*

A decent amount of searches, but higher competition compared to the number of searches. Something I would consider going for, but I may find a lower competition keyword like *best carp fishing rods review*. It's showing less than 10 searches per month, but I see that *bass fishing rods reviews* has 32 searches per month and only 9 competition. I'd rather try to rank for something easy I know I can get some traffic from than tougher keywords.

*children fishing poles – 256 searches 121 competition*

A lot more searches compared to the previous example, but the same number of competition. Kids stuff is always a winner, so I would write a big post comparing some of the top fishing poles for kids, and defining which ones are best for which ages.

*hello kitty fishing pole – 120 searches 27 competition*

A good number of searches and very low competition. Worth writing for, but because it's a very specific product, I think I would have a hard time writing about it. I would instead write a post called *[brand] Hello Kitty Fishing Pole Review*, and make it a product review post rather than try to write a general article about Hello Kitty fishing poles.

*ice fishing pole – 306 searches 195 competition*

Many more searches, but also higher in competition. I could probably do several posts on lower competition keywords like comparing different ice fishing pole brands, or explaining how ice fishing poles are different from other types of poles. I'm not sure I would target this keyword as-is, but would definitely use it for a series of blog posts about ice fishing gear.

*Portable ice fishing shelters – 348 searches 206 competition*

Tons of searches for a potentially very expensive item. Competition is a bit higher, but I don't care. This is something I would definitely try to rank for!

*Crappie ice fishing techniques 79 searches 5 competition*

A great example of a very specific keyword with super low competition. Traffic is lower, but still OK and worth targeting. This is a great chance to write a tutorial, then link off to a crappie fishing pole review or #1 rated fishing pole!

*Ice fishing shanty plans 160 searches 94 competition*

Pretty good searches and pretty low competition. What's most exciting about this keyword is that there is probably a digital info product you could promote related to this topic. Rank on page 1 for this term, and you might have hundreds of ice fishermen visiting your website every day buying shanty plans through your website!

# Competition (QSR)

Competition is a complicated subject because there are just so many metrics that go into ranking a page. Not only that, but what those metrics are and how heavily each is taken into account is a complete mystery! Literally. Google doesn't tell us how they rank pages, otherwise it would be easy for people to get to the #1 position and stay there.

The #1 reason to never trust a product or service that guarantees page 1 rankings is that no one can actually guarantee this. If they can somehow boost you to page one with 'black hat' (bad) SEO tactics, it's only a matter of time before you lose that spot, and maybe even get a site penalty that damages individual pages or even your entire website.

## What is QSR?

QSR stands for "Quoted Search Results". It's a metric that is not measured by a lot of the so-called professionals, but it is a competition metric I watch closely, and pretty much the only hard number I pay attention to when assessing my competitors.

Other factors that come into play when assessing competition include the age of the website, frequency of posting, the size of their social media following, engagement in the comment section, use of keywords, and whether or not they are a marketer, or just a blogger that stumbled upon a good ranking position.

The "quoted" part comes from the fact that we do a Google search for the phrase we want to target with quotes around the phrase. Instead of searching for *how to make money online*, we search for "*how to make money online*".

The number of results that turn up are much smaller than if we did a broad search with no quotes. This shows us precisely how many websites indexed in Google have the exact phrase somewhere in their pages.

ATTN! The initial page will display something like 57 million results, but this is just an estimate. Scroll through the pages of search results as far back as you can go. Very often, especially for particularly long phrases (long tail keywords), we only get to page two or three before we reach the end of the results. Then we are shown a very precise number of how many results are indexed with that exact phrase.

The lower the better. Ideally we are searching for something with less than 300 pages. Anything under 100 is considered very low competition and is probably going to be easy to rank for.

Jaxxy is currently the only keyword tool out there that displays this information so you don't have to search for it manually each time.

## **Other Types of Competition**

Look at the next section *Ranking for Keywords* to see a list of factors that can affect the rank of your page. Those are things that I generally look at when sussing up the competition.

In the beginning, you'll probably look at everyone that's ranking and think to yourself, "Wow, I'll never be able to beat them!". But anything is possible, and I've seen plenty of newbie bloggers outrank sites like Mashable, Amazon, or even Wikipedia. Don't fear the competition, because at this point in time, you might not be 100% sure who your real competition is!

Sites you might look at now as "ranking" might not even be ranking for keywords you discover later on down the road. It's hard to imagine which direction your business will be heading in 6 months, so don't stress too much about who your competition is right now.

For example, Wikipedia might rank for the term "History of Ford Mustang" and the MotorTrends website might rank for "Fastest Mustang in 2015". But who cares? There are hundreds of other better terms that you'll be able to find that you can rank for that will probably be better for making money.

Being a small website means you are more nimble and can cover more detailed topics.

For example, “ford mustang clothing accessories” currently only has 10 websites in the whole world with that phrase on them. Easy to rank for! “Car covers ford mustang” and “ford mustang ignition” are also very low competition phrases that you could do simple blog posts on and rank pretty easily.

Speaking about competitive phrases that you want to rank for, what do you do if there really are a bunch of great looking websites ranking for terms that you want to rank for? Personally, I write an excellent post on the topic, link back to myself (discussed in the On Page SEO section), and then forget about it. It’s really not worth stressing over the rank of a single page on your website when you could be working on new pages.

Yeah, I may re-visit it from time to time to try to improve the rank over a longer period of time, but it’s not something I would re-visit on a weekly basis. It’s very possible that your website is just too new, and doesn’t have the “authority” to compete with other, more established sites at this time.

Last thing about competition – how do you know if someone really is tough competition? I mainly look at how often they post, how good their website looks, and how much engagement they get in the comments. I also like to snoop their monetization strategies. Are they building a list? What products are they promoting? Do they have a sales funnel set up?

You should stop seeing them as competition and start seeing them as peers. They are worth much more to you as a potential buddy for future joint ventures than someone you just dislike because they rank better than you!



# *Ranking For Keywords*

Possibly one of the most talked about topics in the world of making money from websites is how to rank for a phrase you want to rank for. There are thousands of guides out there that claim they have discovered the secret formula, and if you just follow their steps, you are guaranteed a #1 spot in the search results.

No matter who is saying it, or how they phrase it, if they tell you they have a guaranteed way to rank, they are yanking your chain. No one knows. Even with my own recommendations for how to use keywords in order to rank, I have surprised myself by not being able to rank for things I thought would be easy. I have also surprised myself with excellent rank on articles that I basically wrote willy-nilly.

Sometimes, it's kind of a guessing game.

That being said, I do have a set of rules I try to adhere to, to increase my chances of ranking highly in search engines (mostly Google). Let's use the keyword phrase "best way to grow hydroponic tomatoes". It has an average of 100 searches per month and a QSR of 10.

**1. Use the keyword in the title.** For example, the title of your post will be: "The Best Way To Grow Hydroponic Tomatoes In The Winter". That's pretty simple right? Oh, and your permalinks should be set to create matching links to your titles. I mentioned this before in chapter 6. Normally, you won't have to change anything, but it's worth mentioning. This means when you publish your post, the URL will be <http://website.com/the-best-way-to-grow-hydroponic-tomatoes-in-the-winter>.

Some people prefer to shorten it to something like [website.com/best-way-grow-hydroponic-tomatoes-winter](http://website.com/best-way-grow-hydroponic-tomatoes-winter) or even [website.com/grow-hydroponic-tomatoes-winter](http://website.com/grow-hydroponic-tomatoes-winter). Both of those are fine too.

**2. Use the keyword in the first paragraph.** For example: *Tomato lovers looking to grow their own vegetables with hydroponic systems start around*

*spring time, looking forward to harvesting their food in summer. But seasoned growers will want to keep a crop moving all year round. For you guys, I've come up with the best way to grow hydroponic tomatoes in the winter. This has worked for two winters for me already, and I'm happy to share my secrets with you.*

That's pretty much it! Shocking, I know. But I currently rank for thousand of keywords using this method. But before you close this book and write me off as a hack, hear me out.

You are not 'banned' from using your phrase again later in the pages. These are just the minimum rules I set for myself for keyword targeted content. If you write about anything naturally, the phrase will occur more than once over the course of a 1000 word article. Not only that, but you will be naturally using synonyms and related phrases without even thinking about it.

Rather than try to stuff your phrase in there to hit a 2% density which creates an unnatural feel to the article, just write from your head, and most of the time you will write something that is at least eligible for the first page...if you play our cards right.

Some other optional things you can do for on page optimization for a phrase include:

1. Adding an image with an alt tag using your keyword
2. Use a heading with your keyword (h2, h3, h4, etc)
3. Use the keyword once more in the last paragraph
4. Use text formatting for an LSI keyword phrase
5. Create an external link to a relevant resource with a related phrase
6. Create an internal link to a relevant resource with a related phrase

I realize that there are some things in that list that you might not understand right now. Honestly, it's not worth the discussion at this point, because I don't recommend you start off your blogging journey worrying about minute details that may or may not even work. You can come back to this portion at a later date and look each over the things you don't understand, as they've been written about many times over on different websites, including my own.

For now, just keep in mind, "Keyword in the title, keyword in the first paragraph". If you are aiming for appropriately low competition phrases, ranking for some, if not most of what you target, should be easy.

## **Other things That Affect Rank**

Let's talk about a few other things that I believe can affect the rank of a specific page on your website.

**1. Blog Activity.** The more active you are and the more fresh content you post to your website, the more Google will come to crawl your site. More content = more authority = more rank for your website as whole, thus affecting individual pages

**2. Content Volume.** Related to #1, the length of your posts also matters. For competitive keywords, it's rare to see a post that's less than 500 words make it to the first page. Even for medium competition, longer, more details posts will (pretty much) always outrank ones with 'thin' content.

**3. Social Signals.** Facebook likes, Google +1, Tweets, and shares on other social media websites are well known to contribute to the authority of pages on your site.

**4. User Engagement.** The comment section of your posts can be very important! To Google it simply sees that each time it's returning to your page, you've updated it with new, fresh content.

**5. Keyword Density.** Though I don't shoot for any specific keyword density, I do believe it can affect your rank positively or negatively. Not

enough density and your post isn't focused enough. Too much density and it's over-optimized.

**6. Keyword Usage.** Where and how is the keyword used? Is it bolded? Is it an h3 tag? Is it used as an alt tag or image title? Is it the exact phrase or a derivative? If you use a keyword 10 times in one paragraph that will have a different effect than using it 10 times evenly spaced out.

**7. LSI Usage.** LSI means Latent Semantic Indexing. It basically means “related words”. If my keyword is “how to make an authentic Italian pizza”, then *dough*, *pepperoni*, *bake in the oven*, and *make pizza sauce* would all be part of the LSI list. It's words you use when talking about your subject choice.

**8. On-Site Anchor Text.** This is when you link internally from pages on your site to other pages on your site. Using the keyword phrase as the text part of the link (called anchor text) can definitely boost your rank over time.

**9. Off-Site Anchor Text.** This is where other websites link back to you. The phrase they choose to link to your page is also called anchor text. When other sites link to you, it's also called getting a ‘backlink’, and is the subject of much discussion in the online business community. Getting high quality backlinks is great for ranking, but getting unnatural or low quality backlinks can poison your site and destroy it (I know from personal experience).

We will talk more about keyword rank and search engine optimization in the next chapter.

# *Research Without Tools*

Getting down to the basics, we actually don't need any keyword tools to figure out what people are searching for. Technically, if we were familiar enough with the topic we chose we could just write off the cuff and search engines would find our site. It's not "required" to do research and target a phrase in order to rank. We just do it to increase our chances of ranking.

If you don't want to invest the money into a keyword tool right now, here are a few ways to find out what people are searching for in your niche.

## **Google Instant**

This is probably the most fun, and easy to decipher. Simply start out with any word or short phrase related to your niche. Type it into Google. Hit space, and then type a letter. Yup, any letter. Google will automatically try to guess what you are searching for based on other people's similar searches. You can also type the letter before the phrase or in the middle.

Using this tactic will give you some serious insight into what people are searching for because Google creates these predictions based on what real people are searching for. It's also much more up to date than any keyword tool because most tools use some kind of historical data. Not only that, but you will end up with a ton of long tail keywords, which tend to have very low competition. \*NOTE: "Long Tail Keyword" simply means a keyword with more words in it, usually 3-5+

## **Q&A Websites**

Yahoo Answers is probably the most famous and well ranked, but Quora and a few others exist. Reddit would fall under this category as well. See where people are asking questions and discussing your topic. Notice which topics get the most comments, cause controversy, or are asked several times.

You can not only get insight into what makes people in your niche tick, but you also get some real answers, and start to gain more knowledge that you can use to create original articles for your own website.

## **Forums**

Join a forum and see what new topics are getting posted. See who's answering the questions, and how they are answering them. Notice what the brand new people are asking, and what's frustrating or confusing them. What are they excited about?

People dedicate time out of their day to participate in discussions on these forums. They are not paid, and the vast majority of them have get no monetary value out of participating. It's like spying in on your potential customers to find out what they are passionate about.

Remember! A keyword can be a simple question. If someone posts, "How Do I Replace The Fuel Filter In My Honda Shadow vt1100?" in the forum, that's a perfect idea for a YouTube video or blog post tutorial.

## **Other Blogs**

Browse some other blogs in your niche. See what their most popular posts are and which ones are getting the most comments. Take note of what new stuff they're posting. Get on their email list and check out what they are talking about. You can even investigate what stuff they are promoting on their website and get some ideas of what you can promote on your own.

I don't advocate copying at all! But there's nothing wrong with doing research and seeing what works for other people. Don't just creep one persons blog and drool over their traffic stats. Keep an eye on a few big players you see ranked a lot, borrow some ideas from each, and keep in mind that you want to work on developing your own brand over time.

I have seen a lot of people copy my websites in the past (or currently) and it's annoying. Please just use this for learning, not leeching.

## **Making Up Keywords**

The more familiar you are with your niche, the more you can just write anything you think of and have it stick. Seriously. Some of my most popular posts were done just by using my brain. Sometimes, this is the only choice!

When news comes out this week, you won't find it in any keyword tool because they rely on historical data. For example, when I was living in China and promoting VPNs, Gmail got blocked one week. So I wrote a post, "How to unblock Gmail in China".

The post was ranked within a week, and doubled my traffic over night. I probably made a few thousand dollars just from that one post over the next month. Of course, I eventually got pushed out of the #1 spot by websites like Mashable and Lifehacker, capitalizing on the traffic and ad revenue, but it was nice to know that I truly was on the top of my game, and had real insight that only I and a select few could provide.

This tactic isn't as available for newbies, and for people entering a niche they aren't very familiar with. But don't worry – as you grow, you will eventually have more ideas than you could ever write about. I'm now approaching 1,000 posts on One More Cup of Coffee and still have tons of ideas I want to publish over the next couple years.

## ***Chapter 7 Summary + Tasks***

Keyword research is something that you will never stop doing. It's important that you understand the basics because it will help you discover what your potential customers care about and are searching for. You can use a tool or do it via basic research methods. When using a tool, keep in mind that high traffic, low competition should be your focus. When doing manual research, look for longtail keywords related to popular topics.

### **Tasks For This Chapter**

1. Find 3 high traffic keywords or popular topics related to your niche
2. Find 3 low competition keywords or longtail keywords related to your niche
3. Find 1 forum related to your niche you can join for research purposes
4. Find 2 blogs related to your niche you can subscribe to or read for research



# CHAPTER EIGHT

## *Keywords + SEO*

# *Introduction*

More people waste money on SEO products than I care to think about. The one thing I want you to understand about search engine optimization is that *no one* can guarantee rank for any keyword, and even if you slime your way to the #1 spot with loopholes, there's a slim chance you'll stay there.

What I want to provide for you in this SEO chapter is two basic things.

1. General advice to keep in mind when optimizing your page
2. Specific steps that I use to increase my chance of ranking

However, there is no formula that will guarantee a #1 spot, no matter what the sales page of “Amazing SEO Secret Explosion” (or whatever the flavor of the week is) tells you.

For me? The #1 tool in my SEO tool kit is aiming for low competition keywords. Writing high quality content for keywords that very few people are trying to rank for can get you ranked on page 1 within hours of publishing. I do it on a weekly basis. Now, keep in mind that not all those posts drive huge amounts of traffic to my blog. They may only attract a few visitors per day, or maybe even a few visitors per week.

But once you get more posts under your belt, those few visitors that love your website will help boost rank for other pages on your website targeting more competitive terms. Think about this:

If you rank for a super low competition phrase and a visitor spends 5 minutes on the page reading, plus clicks around to other pages on your site, likes, comments, and comes back later, don't you think that will send some positive signals to Google? Of course! Those positive signals will seep into other places onto your site, improving your overall rank.

Then, let's say you creep up to page 2 for a competitive phrase. A person looking for a difficult answer is not satisfied with page 1 results, and does the unthinkable...he clicks to page 2 of search results. Wow, he lands on your page and stays for a couple minutes. Then leaves a comment to thank you for such an awesome post. I'm confident that in the next few days you'll see yourself cross the threshold into front page territory. As more visitors land on your site and enjoy what you write, you can work your way up to that #1 spot.

Of course, this is just a hypothetical example, and it doesn't always work like this. I'm also guessing as to how the algorithm works, so don't take it as gospel. But that's the thinking behind why low competition keyword phrases are so important for not only ranking those individual pages, but for improving your overall (brand new) website authority.

One more thing! Over-optimization is a real thing, and can get you dinged. Too much of any *one* thing is bad for your site. Too many keywords, too much text formatting, too many backlinks from one place, too many outbound links; they can all hurt your SEO. Keep everything in balance, and most importantly, keep your reader in mind. Google may be an imperfect machine, but they are always working to make it smarter, more intuitive, and better able to interpret your searches like a human.

Write with your readers in mind, and you are optimizing for the future of search. Write for search engines, and you aren't doing yourself any favors.

So let's get into how I optimize my pages for search engines.

# *On Page SEO*

On Page SEO is the stuff that you do on your own website. It's what you have the most control over, and compared to Off Page SEO, I focus on this stuff way more. Why worry so much about things you can't control?

Actually, my on page SEO efforts are quite simple. Broken down into broad categories, here's what I do.

- Keyword optimization
- Internal linking
- Good user experience
- Fast Website

## **Keyword Optimization**

Keyword optimization is probably the one most worth discussing. Again, it's pretty simple. My most basic form of keyword optimization for any phrase is going to be:

- Keyword in the title
- Keyword in the first paragraph

Yup, that's it. Sorry folks, no complicated strategy here. For longtail, low competition phrases, this is enough to rank on page 1. You won't always get it, but a lot of times you will. I'm not saying I ban myself from using any other optimization on the page, but most of what else happens on the page does so naturally. For example, if my keyword is 'BPA free water bottles for mountain bikes', I would definitely fit that into my title and first paragraph somewhere as explained in the "ranking for keywords" section of this book.

The rest of the post? I just write a natural article. Words directly related to my keyword choice will occur naturally, and I may even actually use

the exact keyword inadvertently! Things like ‘BPA free’, ‘mountain bikes’, ‘water bottle’ will occur in the context of other sentences as well.

I will also hit LSI keywords (those are the ones indirectly related to your phrase). Stuff like ‘chemical’, ‘hiking trail’, ‘adventure’, and ‘thirsty’ could possibly appear in the post, giving search engines more indication that my post is about riding bikes in the forest and drinking from chemically safe bottles.

Sometimes, when I feel like I want to do a bit of extra optimization to improve rank or give me an edge over the competition, I try to fit my keyword into a few most spots (naturally of course). Please don’t take that phrase “give me an edge over the competition” as an indication that this will guarantee you outrank your competitors. Sometimes it works, sometimes it doesn’t. You need to find a formula that works for you.

Anyway, here’s what I do sometimes:

- Keyword in an image alt tag
- Keyword as an image title
- Internal link to related post with LSI keyword as anchor text
- Outbound link to relevant article or website
- Keyword in h3 or h4 tag
- Keyword in the last paragraph
- Internal link FROM another post (on my website) using keyword as anchor text
- Bold/italics/underline relevant phrase

## Important Definitions!

1. Anchor text: the phrase you use as your hyperlink
2. H3, h4 tags: text formatting use to make your text bigger (like paragraph titles)
3. Alt tag: piece of code that tells Google what an image is
4. Image title: text displayed when you hover over an image
5. Internal link: A link from one page on your website to another page on your website
6. Outbound link: A link from your website to a different website

NOTE: I don't do ALL of these on EVERY post. I use SOME of them on SOME posts

## Internal Linking

Why do I keep mentioning this when it doesn't seem to be such a big deal? It's going to help your website in two ways.

For one, it's going to create a positive user experience for people. They can find and view related information to what they were originally searching for without leaving your website and doing another search. They will be able to dig deeper and investigate if they want, or just keep reading the current article they're on. It keeps people on your site longer, improving on page metrics, and overall rank of your website.

Secondly, it gives you some power to tell search engines exactly what this page is about. Your keywords already give a very strong hint, and that's often enough to get ranked. But as you create more links from other pages on your site TO this page, it tells the search engine bots even more loudly that your keyword is definitely the subject of the page. Link it three times from three different pages, and sooner or later they will take a hint.

Careful though, like any ranking metric, the more you do, the less power it has. You can do it once for a big hint. Twice for another good sized hint. The third time Google is thinking, “OK, I get it bro.”. And as you add more links to that page, you may see diminishing returns on your efforts. Also, using the exact same phrase every time probably isn’t a good idea. Mix it up with similar phrases of different lengths and related keywords too.

For example, with the BPA free bottle example above, here are some example anchor texts you might want to use. You can see that some are exact matches, some are broken down, and some just capture the concept of the article you are linking to.

- BPA free water bottles for mountain bikes
- BPA free water bottles
- Water bottles for mountain bikes
- Preparing water for your adventure
- Good water bottle
- Bring enough drinking water

**About siloing:** Some people flip their lids over over siloing, but it’s really just a form of internal linking. A “silo” is just a way to organize your website structure. You have a main site title, then 3-5 main categories based on keyword research. If your site is about mountain biking, your 3 silos could be:

- Mountain bike repair
- Trip planning
- Biking personal gear

Sound familiar? Yeah, we already did that when we chose made the core concept pages for our website in chapter 6. You may also divide those into

sub categories. For example, you can use the three phrases above as categories, then the four phrases below as tags in the *trip planning* category:

- First aid preparation
- Food and water preparation
- Map reading
- Emergency training

Categories, menu items, tags, breadcrumbs...these are all internal links to other pages on your website. Because Google sees these as running themes, or often-talked-about topics on your blog, you become more optimized for those keywords (and other related ones). I chose poor keywords in those examples, but you can dig up high traffic phrases for your own site if you want.

The interesting thing is that most people will create this structure naturally, either in the beginning through habit, or over time out of necessity. A well organized website won't make or break your business, but it can help to create a good user experience, make your job as a writer easier, and *maybe* boost some keyword optimization for your website.

## **Creating a Good User Experience**

This portion of building an online business is usually the last thing that folks figure out! I know, because I've been there. I made tons of terrible sites before I finally got a clue. Making sure your visitor can read posts easily and doesn't have to try too hard to find what they came to view are simple but important concepts. People that stay on your website longer and take actions like sharing on social media, viewing a video, leaving a comment, or returning later can definitely affect your rank in search engines.



Google's job is to deliver *relevant* information. The more indications that what the person is reading is relevant to their search, the more traffic you can enjoy.

There is no formula for a positive user experience, but having fast website, that's easy to navigate, easy to read, and delivers interesting, high quality information are some broad ideas to keep in mind.

## **Website Speed**

Unfortunately, this one is really hard to do for most people because it either involves spending money or learning complicated code. Two main things that are relatively easy for you to do that can improve the speed of you website are 1) Get good hosting, and 2) Get a good theme for your Wordpress website. A good theme will ensure that your site is running as fast as possible for the hosting you have. Code will be clean, fast, secure, and pretty.

Hosting is another thing you have control of, but good hosting comes at a cost. You can pay \$4/month at a minimum for shared hosting to over \$100/month for a dedicated server. Upgrading hosting for a newbie might not seem that important, but as your website starts making money, you will absolutely notice those 5 minutes where your website went down and wonder why it seems like your site has been running slow for two weeks.

I currently run the Genesis Framework with a Studiopress theme, and host with WebSynthesis, and my website is oh-so-much-faster than any other previous year. There are different sites you can use to check your site speed, but be prepared, they will spit out a bunch of stuff that is hard to understand.

Common suggestions I see are

- Loading javascript in the footer
- Minifying CSS
- Optimizing images by reducing their size
- Installing a caching plugin

Many of these can be done with plugins, such as installing the caching plugin, and even loading javascript in the footer too. Even images can be optimized in bulk if you find that you uploaded too many big ones, but this one is best taken care of by just keeping your image size smaller than 700 pixels or so as you upload images to your site.

None of these are necessary, and you'll have to view the readout of your own site metrics before taking any kind of action. They are just things to keep in mind when trying to improve site speed.

## **Mobile Friendliness**

When someone looks at your website using a mobile phone, does it look exactly the same as the desktop version? Sites like those can be a real pain to zoom in and out of and click tiny buttons. Most modern Wordpress themes are mobile optimized, meaning that they change the user experience for people on phones, simplifying navigation and making text more readable.

Not all of them do though! Double check you get one that is mobile friendly or “mobile responsive”.

## *Off Page SEO*

I focus much less on off page SEO for my own websites, but I do see the potential in it. I have seen some people build successful businesses with absolutely zero off page SEO efforts, and seen some people make it their focus, and create decent income as a result of it. You'll need to decide how much time you want to spend on it, and find a balance somewhere with On Page + Off Page efforts.

One huge advantage of doing off page SEO (as I see it) is that you can write whatever you want without thinking about keywords, and still drive traffic to your site. Keyword optimization can get a little bit tedious day after day, writing posts about keywords just because you might gain a little bit of traffic. Without concern for keywords, you are allowed a lot more freedom to get creative and write naturally.

NOTE: Some people would say that you need to match on page keywords with off page backlinks, but I don't do that type of backlinking. **Creating off page links to yourself is a great way to get unnatural link penalties.** When you use my tactics of getting other people to link to you, you essentially have little-to-no control over how they link to your pages.

The downside to off page efforts and driving traffic from sources other than search engines is that newbies will struggle a lot to get noticed. This will make more sense as you read below, but social efforts largely go unnoticed in the beginning. Newbies, lacking tact and finesse, are quickly 'outed' as just another marketer looking for traffic to his site rather than a genuine person.

## **My Stance On Backlinks**

In past years, building ‘backlinks’ was the core of any type of off page optimization. Backlinking is basically getting links to your website from other websites. One way that people would accomplish this was simply by creating their own websites and linking to themselves. “Link wheels” were popular, where you would create five or so Web 2.0 properties (modular style mini-website builders like Squidoo, HubPages, Weebly, etc), then link them back to you main website.

People (including me) also joined “clubs” where they could submit their website along with some mini articles. This service would then submit your articles to a network of websites they owned and link back to your main site. It was like generating fake votes and social signals for yourself, telling Google that people like your content and thought it was worth linking to.

Unfortunately, that strategy came to grinding halt in 2012 when Google began cracking down on these practices and started handing out “unnatural link penalties”. One of my main sites got hit hard, but all websites lost traffic and sales during that time. To be honest, I went through a period of depression thinking that my business had been killed, but luckily I was able to recover most of what I lost during the following year. That experience scarred me so badly that I personally do not do any backlinking to myself as a means to improve SEO at all now.

So far, I haven’t had any issue ranking or making money, so I recommend you do the same and avoid the headache.

Warning! People still promote unnatural linking methods, but just give it a different name. PBNs, or Private Blog Networks are very popular in the “niche site builder” community. They promoted these websites heavily until Google cracked down AGAIN in 2014 and many folks, including a few big names in the industry lost huge traffic/income as a result. Yet, just a few months later, they still had ads for PBNs and taught courses on how to build your own PBN.

Am I crazy, or didn't they just get a big fat warning to stop doing that? Whatever, it's not my website. Just keep the history of link networks in mind whenever you see someone promoting 'backlinks' as a way to gain rank fast.

Do I do any linking at all? Yes, when appropriate. If I leave someone a comment on a relevant blog, I will leave my website URL in the box that asks for it. If I join a relevant forum, I will put my website link in my profile page and signature. If someone wants me to do a guest post on their website and I like their site, I'll put an author bio in there. I don't consider this an SEO-driven activity however. I'm doing it as a means to connect with the community relevant to my niche. That's the line I draw in the sand. The optimization part is secondary to my real intention of engagement.

Backlinks aren't bad! People will link to you naturally as you create link-worthy content. But thinking that a good backlink profile will help you make more money is not a path I would start walking down.

## **Reaching Out To Your Community**

One excellent way to get noticed is to simply make the effort to reach out to communities and people relevant to your niche. Get involved! This borders on something I should post in the social media section, but I'll count it as SEO since the underlying effort here is to gain relevant links to your site.

## **Expert Roundup or Best Of Posts**

Probably the easiest way to start getting some attention, links, and shares is to create list of "experts" in your niche, or on a specific topic. For my beer site, I might create a post called "Top 10 Sour Beer Brewers". As far as content goes, I can then write a short bio of the people and what they do. Yes, this involves a lot of research, and you'd better be accurate since the people you write about will be reading it. But there's no reason to be afraid of hard work!

You can then notify the people you mentioned. Some may re-share your content to their followers, and as it gets passed around, you might obtain a link from another person in a similar niche. Either way, it ends up being an awesome resource you can use over and over, as well as add to as you discover new people and businesses in your industry.

The “best of” post doesn’t have to be person-based either. You can make a “Top 5 Websites About —”, or “8 Best Articles About — “ The point is to get the attention of people with established networks and get your content passed around. Sometimes it works, sometimes it doesn’t.

## **Interviews**

Same deal as above. Pick some experts or well known individuals that you want to interview. It can be via email, or just something that you piece together and post as a Q&A type post. It can be a face to face interview that you transcribe to text. It can also be a video interview that you post to YouTube.

Again, the idea is to reach out to people with an established audience and get your name and brand in front of those viewers.

## **Hashtags + Comments**

Commenting regularly on popular websites under the same name can draw attention to you. If you leave your website in the website box (not the comment section), you can get clicks, views, possible links from that. Don’t forget to leave insightful comments! “Nice post” won’t draw any attention to you at all.

Doing this type of commenting first may make interviews and other outreach tactics easier down the road when they recognize you as a regular contributor to their website. Otherwise, they might not bite! Sometimes, popular people are just plain busy working and doing other things, and might not want to spend 2 hours with you bumbling through your first Skype interview for a blog that may not be around in 6 months.

Tweeting and sharing content with popular hashtags is another way to get attention to yourself. If there is a trending hashtag related to your niche and you post some original, funny, or interesting content using that hashtag, it's going to absolutely get you some re-shares and grow your network as a result. That's just more eyeballs for next time you share content from your website, and at some point down the road you are going to get noticed by someone with a website who wants to link to you.

At the very least, it increases your social signals, helping you rank more, and you can then be discovered through search engines, increasing your link-worthiness!

## **My Off Page SEO Summed Up**

Really, the only type of off page SEO that I support is social media related stuff. Grow your social network by being genuine, insightful, and helpful, and your brand will gain a good reputation because of it.

## ***Chapter 8 Summary + Tasks***

Most of my SEO efforts are done on my website where I have full control, and I have personally seen good results using this method. There are however, some merits to reaching out to your community through social media, as a way to get noticed and gain some authority.

### **Tasks For This Chapter**

- Write a blog post for your website that uses 2 or 3 extra keyword optimization methods I mentioned in the on page SEO section
- Write a best-of blog post featuring experts in your niche and notify them via email or social media (then see what happens)

### **External Resources**

Video explanation of keywords for on page SEO:

<https://my.wealthyaffiliate.com/training/where-do-i-put-keywords>

You may run into keywords that are not written with correct grammar. You should never use keywords that don't look right to a human, and here's how I deal with that specific situation:

<https://my.wealthyaffiliate.com/training/how-i-deal-with-bad-grammar-keywords>



# **CHAPTER NINE**

## ***Writing Techniques***

# *Why Is Writing So Tough?*

One of the most difficult things for a new marketer to master is actually writing the content for the website. I think the main reason is because it requires a bit of creativity, and is not easily taught as a step by step process. I can show you in a video how to change the font size for your site, or how to insert a picture, and you can easily reproduce the same or similar results. But each article that you write will be a unique process based on the research you do for your niche.

You could watch me write 100 stellar articles and it won't make you a better writer!

I am not a professional writer, nor do I have any specific training. However, I did start off with some very basic writing knowledge that I think helped me learn at a faster pace than a lot of beginner affiliate marketers.

In this chapter, I hope to teach you these basic skills in a way that you can use them as the foundation for your own writing. Once you have these skills down and they become more 'second nature', you'll be able to embellish and expand using the research and knowledge you have of your own niche. You'll also be able to add your own flare to convey your personality through your writing.

That's the beauty of affiliate marketing with a blog! You can just be yourself, and you will naturally brand your website using your own personal style of writing.

# *Writing A Well Structured Article*

The core foundation for my writing was the *Five Paragraph Essay* I learned in high school. I went to public school in California, so I'm not sure what other schools teach around the world, but this is how I learned to structure all essays I wrote that were trying to convey a message or argument.

The essay is divided into five parts.

1. Introduction
2. Supporting Argument #1
3. Supporting Argument #2
4. Supporting Argument #3
5. Conclusion

From there, we can further divide each paragraph into a mini-essay of five sentences following the same formula of introduction, supporting arguments, and conclusion. When you get that granular, it can be hard to stick to the formula so strictly, but it's nice to have a structure to follow if you get writers block.

Let's look at an example of how this five sentence structure works first, and then we can look at the entire article.

I want to write an article about bottle conditioning beer, which is the process of using existing yeast to produce carbonation after the brew has completed the fermentation phase. One of the supporting arguments, or points I want to make, is that sanitation is very important to this process.

A rough outline for this paragraph could look like this:

- Sentence 1: Why is sanitation important?
- Sentence 2: Potential side effects of poor sanitation

- Sentence 3: Which equipment should be sanitized
- Sentence 4: Proper sanitation procedure
- Sentence 5: Rewards of good sanitation + transition into next paragraph

Just by looking at this example above, you can see that there's a lot of information to pack into just 5 sentences, but it can be done. Remember, this is a very basic outline. If you are struggling to write enough content, or content that you are happy with, start with the very basics before you move onto more complicated content writing methods.

Here's what the potential paragraph would look like. Notice how it follows the sentence outline from above.

*When you are preparing your beer for bottle conditioning, sanitation is very important because you could potentially spoil several weeks of work simply by letting wild yeast into your homebrew at this point. Poor sanitation could produce mild to terrible off flavors or even dangerous bottle bombs! The most obvious equipment to sanitize thoroughly is going to be your bottling bucket, tubing, and bottles, but be sure to clean your bottle caps, siphon, and anything else that touches the beer in the process. By spending a few extra minutes to double check you are running a clean operation, you can ensure that all your hard work up to this point can be enjoyed in just about 1-2 weeks after today.*

That's a pretty hefty paragraph, and I could probably expand it into two or three paragraphs if I really wanted to...maybe even a whole blog post including a video and some images. You will often discover that by planning things out, you end up with more content than you intended, which is good. At the very least, a five paragraph essay with 5 sentences in each paragraph will be about 400-500 words, which also just so happens to be the minimum word count we want to shoot for in our blog posts.

# *Writing An Outline*

We already touched on the importance of writing an outline for the beginner writer, but let's take a look at the article as a whole this time. Writing an outline using the five paragraph essay method is not just about filling our minimum word count and getting this sucker published. Remember, we want to make our articles easy to read and to actually convey a point to the reader. Many times, the people reading our articles will be searching for specific information. If we can't deliver that information, they are just two clicks away from someone that can.

Having an outline also gives us the ability to have an overview of our work so we can craft the flow from the foundation, then fill in the gaps. When I write a rough outline I don't have a set form I fill in per se, but I do have the general paragraph topics and some notes under each heading.

Your introduction and conclusion paragraphs are basically already written for you once you think of your three supporting arguments. This is because the introduction paragraph can be used to allude to your three points, and the conclusion paragraph can be used to wrap up your three points in a conclusion. Add an introduction and transition to each paragraph, and you now have five sentences each!

Let's revisit the bottle conditioning topic again for this next example.

## Introduction Paragraph

### Topic 1: Why bottle condition

- Cheap
- Easy to share
- Simpler to manage than kegging

### Topic 2: Process of bottling

- Equipment needed

- General setup
- Issues to watch out for

### Topic 3: Importance of sanitation

- Side effects of poor sanitation
- What is needed to sanitize properly
- Proper sanitation procedure

### Conclusion Paragraph

See! Using this outline, then following the sentence structure from the last section, you can see how easy it is to achieve more than five hundred words on any topic of your choice. Of course, the process of outlining your articles takes longer than just writing them off the cuff! But as a novice, sometimes we just have to take the long way in the beginning. As you develop your writing skills you can use a mental outline. It used to take me about 2 hours to write 400 words, and now I can write 1500 in about 60 minutes if it's a topic I don't need to research.

Before we leave the topic of outlines, I wanted to visit what a potential introduction paragraph might look like. I realize that the method of alluding to my three topics might not be obvious to some. Keeping in mind my three topic choices from above, and also considering that a potential keyword I could use for this article would be "how to bottle condition my beer", here's what an introduction paragraph might look like for this topic.

*Now that your wort is done fermenting, it's time to learn [how to bottle condition your beer]! (1) There are a few very clear reasons why a brewer would choose to bottle condition over keg, and many pro brewers choose to do this with some of their product. (2)The process of bottling can be a bit scary at first since your beer is so close to being done, but it's actually pretty easy once you've done it once or twice. (3)The main thing to keep in mind is sanitation and reducing the amount of oxygen you expose it to.*

*If you can keep those two points in mind, you'll have no problem getting your brew bottled up and ready to drink in a few weeks.*

I've marked the keyword with [ ] and each sentence with the number that correlates to the outline above. Your writing of course should not have those markings. For another tutorial on how to write articles for your website using this method, including a fully completed version, please see this extended training: <https://my.wealthyaffiliate.com/training/how-to-write-a-500-word-article-the-easy-way>.

## **Brain Dump**

One easy way to get some writing down on a page if you don't want to mess with the detail of creating an outline is to do a simple a 'brain dump' of the topic you are writing about. This just means that you write without structure, grammar or spelling checks, or even thinking of reader comprehension. The point is to just get everything down on (virtual) paper.

Once that's done, you can go back and edit to make it a comprehensive piece of writing. Sometimes I even find that I can divide up a single brain dump session into more than one article! Going back after that first draft means you can cut away a lot of fluff, but it also provides an opportunity to take one idea and expand upon it. In combination with your keyword research, you can also see what keywords might fit the text, and that can give you more direction as you chop it up into multiple pieces of content.

# Structuring a Blog Post

Writing a blog post is not the same as writing an novel, research report, or high school essay, and it can take some getting used to the internet world of writing. I've been blogging so long, that I can feel my book turning out a little like one giant blog post, because that's just what my writing style has turned into.

Blogging is much more natural in communication than other forms of writing. It's important to keep in mind that people on the internet have a very short attention span, and most niches will benefit from having content that caters to that type of mindset. It doesn't sound pretty when I say it that way, but *them's the breaks* dude.

In previous sections you saw me create a five sentence paragraph. Each of those sentences was quite long because I was trying to fit one complete idea into a sentence to demonstrate a point to you. Together they created quite a "chunky" paragraph.

When I write for my blogs however, I create much shorter paragraphs, often using paragraph breaks between each small idea, sometimes even arbitrary breaks just to separate the content so it doesn't turn into a wall of text.

Literature enthusiasts might kill me for what I'm teaching you here, but keep in mind that people probably aren't reading your blog for 'pleasure'. They are reading to find information that they want, and it's important to make that information easy for them to find and interpret. Your sales depend on it!

Breaking up your post into small paragraphs makes it easy to skim and understand information. Large blocks of text can be confusing if you lose your place, and may cause some people to stop reading after a sentence or two. Another tactic to use is h3 and h4 tags to give your paragraphs "titles" or "subtitles" to help carry the casual reader through your writing.



Yes, you have to do the heavy lifting when it comes to delivering information.

Below is a better example of how I might re-write my previous paragraph about bottle conditioning for my website.

Original:

*When you are preparing your beer for bottle conditioning, sanitation is very important because you could potentially spoil several weeks of work simply by letting wild yeast into your homebrew at this point. Poor sanitation could produce mild to terrible off flavors or even dangerous bottle bombs! The most obvious equipment to sanitize thoroughly are going to be your bottling bucket, tubing, and bottles, but be sure to clean your bottle caps, siphon, and anything else that touches the beer in the process. By spending a few extra minutes to double check you are running a clean operation, you can ensure that all your hard work up to this point can be enjoyed in just about 1-2 weeks after today.*

Blog Version:

### **Why Do I Need To Sanitize? (h3)**

*When you are preparing your beer for bottle conditioning, sanitation is very important! Unsanitary bottling practices could potentially spoil several weeks of hard work.*

*By letting wild yeast and other potentially harmful bacteria into your beer, you run the risk of creating a few potential off flavors.*

*These flavors can range from mild and undetectable to inexperienced craft beer drinkers, to completely offensive ones that make the beer undrinkable. Some bacteria can give the beer a slight tart, or sour flavor, while others can give a plastic, burnt flavor like bandaids.*

## About Re-fermentation (h4)

*Introducing other organisms that live on complex sugars our brewers yeast haven't eaten could also cause excess re-fermentation in the bottle, giving the potential for bottles to explode under pressure. Some re-fermentation is OK! That's how carbonation is created. But it's a fine line and too much can cause "bottle bombs".*

*Taking a few extra minutes to make sure your equipment has been properly cleaned and sanitized not only ensures that your beer stays fresh, tasty, and safe. It'll be ready to drink in just a few weeks, and can be stored for several months without issue. It's not that difficult or time consuming, but is quite essential!*

This is obviously a much longer version that's been embellished, but you can see that I kept the same basic structure. I've divided it into much smaller paragraphs, cut up into brief ideas. I've also added h3 and h4 tags (features on your Wordpress text editor) to give titles to sections of text. This helps immensely with skimming the page, but it also helps with reading comprehension because the reader immediately knows what you are trying to convey.

You shouldn't make your reader guess what you mean to say! Also, remember that using the h tags (h3, h4) also have the potential to improve your optimization for your keyword.

Keep in mind that there will likely be other media on the page like images, video, and possibly ads somewhere. Keeping the text portion of your post in short pieces ensure that you will not end up with walls of text, even on smaller mobile devices. Lots of folks will be browsing your site on a smartphone, and that number grows every day, so it's always good to double check the look of your pages on your smartphone.

Need a visual explanation? You can view a video training on how I create my basic blog posts, including image placement, embedding video, text formatting, spacing, and more, at these links:

<https://my.wealthyaffiliate.com/training/how-to-make-a-beautiful-blog-post-pt-1>

<https://my.wealthyaffiliate.com/training/how-to-make-a-beautiful-blog-post-pt-2>

# *Who Cares About Content?*

## **Branding Yourself Through Content Creation**

Content is the lifeblood of your business. Without it, why should anyone visit your website? When I got started writing, I always struggled because I thought that no one would care what I had to say and it seemed like everyone else was smarter and had more experience than me.

*How could I ever compete with that?*

There is no easy answer to this. If your writing is bad now, you need to practice to make it better. If you don't know very much about your niche, you need to do some research and learn more about it. It's hard to envision what your writing style will look like in a few years time, but if you are going to make money blogging, you need to start working on it now.

Follow the basic instructions outlined in this chapter, and you will be on your way to being able to publish several posts per week to your website. Consistency in posting is one metric that definitely helps with authority and rank in the search engines.

Creating unique, interesting, insightful articles is your opportunity to find a space in any niche you choose! I don't want to give you too big of a dose of hippie-dippie motivation, but I truly do believe that your unique voice is one of the strongest marketing points on your site.

One thing I really want you to walk away from this chapter knowing is that if YOU think a certain way, there are other people out there that think the same way! Maybe you are a novice in your industry, and feel confused about some of the language the experts use to explain certain things. Don't you think that there are probably one hundred other people out there that are just as confused? That confusion is your opportunity to help those people understand. **Helping people in some way is a strong foundation of any business.**

Even something as simple as presenting old information in a new way can be a powerful branding tool. What are you good at and how can you showcase that on your site? Are you good at explaining things? Do you know how to edit video? Are you funny? Are you compassionate? Are you a stickler for detailed research?

Any one of these qualities can go very far in branding your business in an already crowded space, so don't be afraid to be yourself when writing articles for your website.

When I started my One More Cup of Coffee website in 2012 I was certainly not an expert in internet marketing. But I took the things I knew, and did my own training tutorials showing newbies how to get started. They were not the best videos, and not the only ones on the topic. I was certainly not the first one to do a "how to make money online" website! But every day get views, shares, and sales.

The compliment I get most often is that the videos have very clear instructions and are easy to follow, and my reviews are honest. To tell you the truth, I think being simple, clear, and friendly can be a great way to brand yourself in any niche!

## **Getting Better at Writing**

If you still hunt and peck to find the keys or just know that you are an inefficient typer, you might want to take some typing classes either online or at a local night school/university. I was lucky to have taken a typing class in high school and though it took me more than decade after graduating to make use of those skills, my brain was still wired to find the keys while looking at the screen. It sounds silly, but having this skill means I can knock out a few thousand words in an afternoon rather than a few hundred.

I'm sure you're thinking, "Great, now I have to learn ANOTHER thing before I even get started!". Well, the typing thing is just a suggestion. I do a lot of writing every day, and couldn't live without it. I think a lot

of people get frustrated with how long it takes to actually pop out an article and get it published. In combination with how long it takes to start generating traffic to a website, the task of actually making money can seem too far off in the distance to be realistic. Being able to write at a decent pace just means there's one less obstacle on the path to getting your website profitable.

Getting better at writing is like getting better at anything else – practice practice practice. If you can't type very well right now, don't freak out. You'll manage. But being able to write confidently and efficiently is just one of the skills that I feel has a concrete impact on your ability to achieve success in this business.

## **Why Blogging Is The Best Way To Start Your Business**

One of the reasons I'm such a fan of blogging as a way to start your affiliate marketing business is that it allows for a large margin of error. It costs nothing to conduct research and write blog posts to publish on your website. If you create a piece of poor quality content, it won't damage your site. The worst that can happen is that it will generate no traffic and eventually just be forgotten.

Trust me when I say that I started off writing some very low quality articles simply because I didn't know the difference. It took me a few months to figure out what would rank and what wouldn't, but it took me *years* to actually start to really care about quality and understand the relationship between me as an online business owner and the visitors to my website.

You'll get there too, with time, and experience.

Other than the fantastic cost of \$0, and room for plenty of mistakes, it also allows you to be creative in a way that most people know at least a little bit about (writing). You hopefully chose a niche that you're are interested in researching and writing about, so even though it might not have been obvious, you already have the required basic skill set to run your business.

Most of the work involved with running a profitable blog is the research and writing stuff.

On top of that, at the very least, it's a pretty simple process to get results. We've all written emails to friends or book reports in school. This type of casual, personal writing is great for communicating things to your readers. If you can just pretend that you are writing an email to a friend teaching or telling them something, you're ready to write your first blog post.

In contrast, imagine jumping into the world of paid advertising where you have to install tracking software, manage budgets for campaigns, calculate cost per click and on top of all that, you have to manage the content of your sales funnel to make sure it's converting properly. Confusing? Yeah, it can be.

That's why blogging is a better way to get your first business rolling in my opinion. The process is quite simple:

1. Find a keyword
2. Write an article on the topic
3. Move on to the next keyword and article

In a nutshell, it's fun, cheap, creative, and (relatively) simple to make money from a blog.

# *Writing Without Research*

Not all writing has to be done with research, by the numbers, or trying to rank for anything at all! There are several reasons why you might want to publish something on your website without any traffic or competition research, or at least disregarding what you find. Here are some examples of what I'm talking about.

## **1. It's Part Of A Sales Funnel**

Not everything on your site has to rank! I will talk about this more in the next chapter (Funnel Strategies), but the gist is that you can leverage other posts on your site that rank to drive traffic to places that don't rank well or you don't intend to rank.

Ten articles that rank and get 1 visitor per day can drive 10 visitors per day to a sales page.

## **2. For Your Own Enjoyment**

This is a business, but that doesn't mean it has to be work! If you are interested, or maybe even passionate about your niche, then you are bound to have some ideas that simply don't fit nicely into the "niche marketing" box.

Maybe you learned something new, or have an idea you want to discuss. Maybe you just want to create a resource because you struggled with something for a while but figured it out now. You might see tons of competition for a particular phrase, but want to create your own original resource with unique tips that you can link to in the future. If it's good for your visitors, then it's good for your business.

It's also perfectly OK to mix personal posts with your business posts because people are interested in you! If you have a website about motorcycle maintenance and you had a frustrating day wrenching



on the bike, rant about it! As you gain followers in social media, people will enjoy these ‘sneak peeks’ into the life of their online friend and mentor.

### **3. Building Your Brand**

Sometimes, keyword posts, tutorials, product reviews, sales pages – all that can seem very stiff, especially if you are a new writer and really trying to hit your keyword targets. Writing for search engines instead of writing for your readers is a common newbie mistake. Adding some posts that are not keyword targeted will make you seem more like a person, and less like a business.

This increases your trust factor, which can lead to more sales down the road. Sharing your knowledge just for the enjoyment of being part of a community of enthusiasts racks up major authority points for you and your brand, even though the results might not be measurable in numbers. As people begin to recognize you as a trusted brand, they will return to your site more often, pick your URL over others in search results, read posts you share on social media, and offer up their opinion more freely.

From a practical standpoint, this provides you an opportunity to engage with your audience. Comments, likes, shares – they generate social activity and possibly new content for your website, which snowballs into more success over time. More social reach means more shares, which leads to more exposure for your business. More comments means more content on your website, and more content ideas for you to write about.

A perfect example is this post from Mr. Money Moustache:  
<http://www.mrmoneymustache.com/2011/04/10/post-4-what-am-i-supposed-to-do-with-all-this-money/>

It’s clearly not optimized for anything, and isn’t even that long. But notice the comment from Dave, and the response from MMM saying, “You have inspired a whole new series of posts on this area of retirement that I’ll start writing about right away...”

Offering your opinion starts a discussion. Even if people hate you or disagree with you, that's still views, shares, and comments that boost your rank and authority over time.

The Young Turks, a news media outlet I watch sometimes, leans hard left on the political spectrum. But in the comment section of YouTube there are always a lot of conservatives saying not-so-nice things about what they are reporting. Conservatives watching liberal media just to get mad? Sure, whatever works! TYT makes money on every view they get no matter if the viewer is conservative or liberal :)

Maddox, a somewhat-underground satirist regularly calls his fans "idiots" and argues with them non-stop. But people love it. They send him hate mail trying to catch him off guard, or leave voicemails for his podcast with "proof" that he's wrong about whatever he said in last weeks broadcast.

I'm not saying that you need to be rude or hated to be popular! That's just one angle to take, and it is probably the harder of two paths. The point I want to make is that writing personal blog posts allows you to create a unique brand within any niche, even the ones saturated with competition.

Your business might be just another yoga for 50+ website out there, but with a bit of personal branding you can be the funny Yoga for 50+ website, or spiritual Yoga for 50+ website, or something else!

# *Writing Product Reviews*

Writing product reviews is an essential part of making money online. Product reviews are awesome because they provide you with a simple, easy to understand method of monetizing your website. All you do is offer an opinion on a product, add an affiliate link, and you're pretty much done. Product review keywords are often pretty easy to rank for as well, meaning that you can double up on traffic through search engine rankings and sales funnels on your website (Chapter 10).

However, this is also one of the harder things for me to teach because there are so many ways to do it. There's no single "right" method that's going to guarantee that you make sales from a review page. I have plenty of review pages that make me \$0, but I have some that make \$1000's each month. It just depends on how you want to divide up your promotional efforts and how you monetize your website (Chapter 13).

That being said, there are a few basic rules you can follow! The hardest part of getting started is not knowing what a typical review looks like. As with other types of writing I've discussed so far, start with a template, then branch out with your own style as you get more comfortable.

## **Anatomy of an Effective Product Review**

1. Picture of product and rating or feature summary
2. General introduction to product and what it's used for (include text, images, video)
3. Pros, or positives
4. Cons, or negatives
5. Comparison to other similar products
6. Final review and summary

In it's most basic form, you can accomplish all of this with a simple text and image post. Add a video, and now you have an interactive, multimedia review that encourages visitor engagement. Sometimes, simple can be very effective! As you decide to invest more money or time into your business, you can make your reviews more attractive with plugins, or even hire someone to create custom code that you can 'fill in the blank' for each unique review (for example, adding star ratings).

The most obvious points to add some flare to your post are going to be the beginning and end. Having an attractive way to display basic product information and rating in the beginning gives the "I want it now" crowd an opportunity to make an informed buying decision using your affiliate link. Having a clear way to display product comparison and final rating towards the end of your post means that readers hungry for information will be able to make their final buying decision without much effort. The easier you make it for people to buy, the more people will actually buy.

A product comparison or related product section near the end of the post also gives an opportunity for folks 'just browsing' to stay on your website longer and maybe find something more suitable for them. At the very least, you will keep them on your site longer which I believe can contribute to authority, and thus, search engine rankings in the long term (Think about it, would Google trust a site more where visitors spend 30 seconds reading or 30 minutes?). Clicking through to those individual review pages and action taken on those subsequent pages can also increase rank for your reviews.

# *Content Traps*

Because content is such a struggle for newbies, there's a huge market for people trying to sell "easy" ways to get content on your website. I will admit – sometimes writing gets pretty exhausting, and I understand the attraction of having someone else do the work for you. But as you'll see in these two main content traps, turning to automation can end up destroying your business before it ever sees a day of success.

## **Automatic Content**

There are a lot of products on the market right now that claim to create content for you automatically. The majority of them do one of two things.

1. Some of this software "curates" content for you, meaning they grab articles from other websites and publish it on your website. Some larger websites are able to pull this off because they supplement the curated stuff with original content, as well as the fact that they have a do heavy social media marketing to drive traffic to their website.

Google doesn't rank curated content well simply because it's not original. Without an existing audience, plenty of insight to augment the curated piece, or a well-thought-out social media strategy, content curation is a waste of your time.

2. Other types of automated software just plain steal content from other websites and attempt to rewrite it. Some software will take content from foreign languages, then translate it to English (or vice versa). Others will take an original piece of writing, then "spin" it, rewriting it with synonyms to make it unique. The result is often unreadable to humans, and still shows up as only partially original to copyright infringement detection software. These types of software are a waste of money and what they are designed to do is steal the hard work of other people.

The main point I want to make is this: Attempting to game the system by copying articles from other websites is not only wasting time, but it can

also damage your business and reputation. Don't do it. If you really don't want to do the writing part of affiliate marketing you can outsource it, which we'll talk about in another chapter. Don't get too excited though – it's going to cost you, and you still need to know the difference between good writing and poor writing, so it definitely pays to have some experience in creating your own original content.

## **Done For You Content**

Many people shy away from blogging because they feel that their content creation skills are not up to par, and they don't want to work on them. This leads them to “done for you” content solutions.

Two popular ones are PLR content and email swipes.

PLR is “private label rights”, and it means that there is a source of content that you are allowed to copy and use as your own. To someone that doesn't want to write their own original content and doesn't want to pay the big cost associated with outsourcing the work to an experienced native English speaker, a one-time-fee for a file full of pre-written articles about your niche may sound appealing. However, this type of content comes with a lot of baggage.

The most apparent issue is that it simply won't rank as it stands. It's already been published on the internet for quite some time, on other websites. Putting it on your site will not drive free traffic to your business through search engines. Why would Google give you rank for something that already exists?

A less apparent issue is that this type of writing is often very general and not keyword targeted. It certainly won't keep people on your website for very long, let alone convert to sales.

Some writers will tell you that you can always tweak the article to be original, or add your own unique stuff to it. Personally, I think that it's just faster to write it from scratch rather than try to improve upon

the amorphous mess that most PLR starts out as. Creating a keyword targeted, helpful, and up to date article from original research requires a significant amount of work, but ultimately will produce better results than any other method of writing.

Another type of ‘done for you content’ is email swipes. These are pre-written emails you can copy into your own autoresponder email sequence for email marketing. Most of the time these are targeted towards the “make money online” crowd, but I’m sure that niche-specific email swipes exist.

While these can be a good way to get an idea of how an email sequence should be set up, or even provide a template for you to work from, copying emails directly from email swipes presents one big problem for you – what happens when you need to deliver support to your email list?

I don’t want to dig too far into email marketing, but part of creating an email list is showing that you know what you’re talking about and developing a relationship over time. If you are so unfamiliar with the topic you are writing about that you need to copy the content directly from another person, I’m not sure how you plan to actually help the folks that respond to your emails.

Using some high converting email swipes as a starting point or template for your own is fine. But copy/pasting messages into your autoresponder is not a formula for success in my opinion.

## ***Chapter 9 Summary + Tasks***

Learning how to write effective content for your website is going to be vital to your success. Other forms of online marketing may rely less on volume of content such as paid traffic and email marketing, but blogging is one where quality AND volume count. You can't expect to build an authority website with just a few posts!

But you don't have to start out as an expert to end up as one. You don't even have to be an expert to actually gain traffic and followers. You just need an opinion that people can agree or disagree with, and then deliver that opinion through your articles. Practice can really help you develop your own style and voice in any industry.

A journey of a 1000 miles begins with one step. That first step is going to be your first blog post. Don't think about the amount of work it's going to take to build up all that content on your website. Just imagine the awesome feeling you will have in 2 years time when you have hundreds of high quality articles on your website drawing traffic effortlessly every day and funneling visitors into your money pages (more on this later).

### **Tasks For This Chapter**

1. Write one 500 word article using the outline method
2. Write one article using the brain dump method
3. Consider the advantage of both styles and which one you prefer
4. Think about what type of writing style you want to use to convey your personality on your blog. (You might not be able to come up with anything right now, but at least give it a few minutes of thought)



## **External Resources**

<http://onemorecupof-coffee.com/live-training-creating-effective-content-the-basics/>

<http://onemorecupof-coffee.com/creating-effective-content-pt-2-article-writing-101/>

# CHAPTER TEN

## *Funnel Strategies*

## Two Step

What is a sales funnel? It's not that hard to visualize. You take a broad traffic source, or several sources of traffic, and steer them in the direction of pages on your website that make you money. Let's look at an example:

You have a Top 5 review page on your survivalist website with the top five bug out bags and links where visitors can buy each of them. It's definitely hard to rank for the term "bug out bag" (QSR 239, short keyword), and maybe even pretty hard to rank for "best bug out bag" (QSR 175, tough page one competition). So instead, you draw traffic from other sources to get people to land on your review page with affiliate links.

Instead of trying to rank for that *one* hard keyword, you rank for ten easy keywords and then send that traffic to your money page. You can write 10 blog posts called (based on real keyword research):

- Survival bug out bag list (QSR 32)
- Kids bug out bag content (QSR 0)
- Best bug out bag back pack (QSR 3)
- Best bug out back setup (QSR 0)
- Bug out bag winter (QSR 44)
- Urban 72 hour survival kit (QSR 7)
- Homemade survival fishing kit (QSR 5)
- Family disaster kit checklist (QSR 14)

There are literally hundreds of other keywords that have low competition you can target. I listed only a few that I found. I didn't list the traffic stats just so we could focus on the competition numbers, but some of these phrases get over 100 searches per month.

Now imagine that somewhere in your post, in the context of your article, you link to your Top 5 Bug Out Bags page. This is how we drive consistent, *relevant*, high quality traffic to you money pages! There are many ways to do this but I like to break them down into two basic formulas. The two step funnel and the three step funnel. There's no need to follow such a strict rule, but as I've mentioned before, start off with a basic formula, then branch off and get creative.

## **The Two Step Funnel**

Demonstrated above, we simply take low competition blog posts and send the traffic to our money pages directly.

Low Competition Blog Post ==> Monetized Page

One way of accomplishing this is to take an informational post, i.e. someone looking a piece of information and direct them to the solution to their problem. For example:

How To Prevent Winter Running Injuries ==> Nike Winter Running Shoes Review

This could be expanded to a broader audience and fit a third step in. The more steps however, the lower your conversions to paid customers will be. Still, if we are making sales, who really cares what our conversion rate is? For example:

10 Essential Tips For Safe Exercise In Winter ==> How To Stay Safe Running on Icy Roads ==> Nike Air Max Lunar1 Winter Running Shoe Review

You could share your 10 essential tips on Pinterest, Twitter, or a relevant Google+ circle and bring in a broader audience from social media. Everyone *loves* Top 10 lists, and who wouldn't want to keep their fitness friends safe? Your "how to stay safe running on icy roads" post isn't monetized because someone that wants to read the 10 safety tips might not necessarily be interested in winter running.

However, anyone that clicks a link about running from Post 1 to Post 2 is definitely interested in running, so now we have more of an idea of what they might want to buy. So within Post 2, we link to our third post, the Nike Air Max review.

## How To Link

One last point I wanted to make is that there are different ways you can link to this post. The two main ways that I use are the *casual reference*, and the *hard drive*.

The casual reference is where you make an offhand (but relevant) mention of something and link an appropriate phrase to an article on your site. This would probably be in a paragraph in the middle of the text somewhere (not first or last), and is just linked in case someone wants to find out more about that subject.

The hard drive is going to be near the end of the post. People are done reading about the subject they landed on your website for, and may be ready to follow up with another piece of content. You can use the last paragraph of your article to draw conclusions, then can use obvious language to send them to another place on your website.

For example, something like “Find out what my top 3 picks are for arcade cabinet restoration guides”. It says very loudly where the reader should go next. If the reader finished the article, they probably thought it was pretty good and are more open to reading more of your material. Don’t be afraid to make a suggestion of what they should read next.

## Getting Blog Post Ideas

One thing people struggle with in the beginning is simply thinking of enough topics to write about. Using the two step funnel, you'll need to think of lots of related ideas to your money page so that you can drive traffic to it. Here is a video I created using some very simple techniques to think of hundreds of ideas to write about related to keywords in your niche.

<https://my.wealthyaffiliate.com/training/generate-hundreds-of-blog-post-ideas-pt-1>

<https://my.wealthyaffiliate.com/training/generate-hundreds-of-blog-post-ideas-pt-2>

# *Three Step*

## **Three Step Funnel**

As I touched on in the last section, the more steps in your funnel, the more people are going to drop off. However, if you fill that funnel with extremely relevant, helpful, and engaging content, you can actually increase the interest of your reader. If someone is seriously interested in what you are saying, by the end of the funnel, they may not even care what ends up in their shopping cart because they just want to purchase what you tell them to.

How do I know? I've done it before. I've read reviews of homebrew equipment that were so stunning by the end of it I just wanted to know what the guy recommended so I could add it to my own gear. It takes a great writer and some finesse in your sales funnel to execute this properly, but I guess that's the goal, isn't it?

Here is one example of a 3-Step funnel

Low Competition Blog Post ==> Top 3 List ==> Individual Product Reviews

This is a really good fit because a Top 3 list isn't always the best way to make a sale. Even if you have a fancy product comparison plugin and some legit reasons to rank them in that order, these lists don't often display enough information for the info-hungry buyer. If you are recommending \$200 items, most people will want to know more than a few comparison points before buying.

Would you buy a flat screen TV after reading just 200 words of why it's a good TV? Probably not. So you follow up with "full reviews" of each. For example:

How To Make Beer On Your Stovetop ==> Top 3 Beginners Homebrew Kits ==> Full Review 1 // Full Review 2 // Full Review 3

From there, people can decide to purchase the item from the full review, or go back to the top three comparison page and further investigate the other choices. If you have properly outlined the benefits and downsides of each product, along with what type of buyer would benefit most from each, then you have a good chance of people buying from either your top 3 comparison post or your individual reviews. Alternatively, you can choose a clear winner and outline why it deserves to be in the top recommendation compared to the others.

Another type of three step funnel I use is in combination with an email list. You can use the same low competition keyword phrases to drive traffic to an email opt in form on your website. Here's a real example from one of my websites:

I created a separate page on my website with an email signup form. I write blog posts, then drive traffic to my email opt-in page. After someone signs up to my list, they receive some weekly emails from me. These emails have product promotions and I make money from sales of these products. Here's what that looks like:

Low Competition Blog Post ==> Relevant Email Offer ==> Begin Email Sequence Sales Funnel == Promote Products To List

Email marketing is a whole different thing that I'm not going to cover in this book. I know people say that "the money is in the list", but actually, the vast majority of the money I've made online has been without a list, so you don't need a list to be successful online. Still, it can be an effective part of your sales funnel if you want to work it into your marketing strategy.



# *Funneling Traffic For Ranking*

One thing that seems to be glossed over in the world of SEO is the power you have to essentially boost your own rank over time by linking to yourself within your website. (I'm talking about on site SEO, not building backlinks to yourself). In this section, I want to cover internal linking, and how it can help you improve the search engine rank of some of your pages.

When you write a blog post and link to another article on your website, what words are you using to link to that page? Those words are called "anchor text". Instead of using "click here" or "this post", you should be using contextual, relevant phrases. People are internet-savvy enough nowadays that when they see a link in a sentence, they know that it links to something relevant to the linked-phrase.

For example, "When trimming the trees in the yard, it's important to make sure your [chainsaw has a sharpened blade]."

It's pretty clear that the linked post is something about sharpening a chainsaw blade. You do not have to say "[Go here to see how to sharpen your chainsaw blade]", though I guess you can if you want.

By using relevant phrases to link to your own content, you are increasing your on page SEO. Let's say that the post you link to is called "How to sharpen a chain saw blade". The phrase you used to link (shown above) has the word "Chainsaw" and "sharpened" and "blade" in it. It's not your exact keyword, but it's quite relevant.

Attn: Using the exact keyword is a good idea when the opportunity arises, but doing it all the time can lead to over-optimization penalties. There's no formula for what percentage should be used, but I mix it up and just lean towards more relevancy.

If the topic is relevant and the link gets a lot of clicks, you will be sending more traffic to your chainsaw page. If your chainsaw page is high quality

content and keeps people on your site longer, that works to increase your website authority overall, as well as the rank for that page. Let's look at two examples.

Post 1: [diytooldude.com/how-to-trim-large-trees-in-your-yard](http://diytooldude.com/how-to-trim-large-trees-in-your-yard)

Post 2: [fancygardener.com/beginners-guide-to-trimming-trees](http://fancygardener.com/beginners-guide-to-trimming-trees)

These are just made up websites, but which one do you think will get more clicks to the chainsaw post I mentioned before? Probably #1 right? It's because it's a more relevant blog post (A tool guy is more likely to sharpen a chain saw blade than a newbie organic gardener, right?) Keeping the flow of relevancy affects many metrics on your website.

I'm kind of going off on a tangent here, so *let's bring it back in*.

The point I want to make is that by internally linking to relevant information on your website, you can drive traffic to other spots on your site, thus increasing your site authority and ranking power for keywords.

I have seen this work within a matter of weeks, but sometimes it can take over a year to have effect, if any at all. There are a lot of factors at play, some of which are not within your control. However, it is nice to know that you have this little boost of power in your SEO tool belt so you aren't completely susceptible to the seemingly random ranking process.

## *Chapter 10 Summary + Tasks*

Making sales from your website is not about building an “online mall” and telling people to go there to buy stuff. **You are not Amazon, you are a blogger!**

By providing people with good information about what they are searching for and then sending that traffic to relevant products, services, or offers, you can make money online. This is our business model. When you give people answers to their questions or tell them how they can fix their problems, you don't have to ‘hard sell’ anything. Your content is ultimately what delivers the information, and determines if you make a sale.

### **Tasks For This Chapter**

1. Create a review page that you can monetize later on down the road (Money stuff is coming up, don't worry)
2. Think of five relevant keywords you can write blog posts about that can drive traffic to this page
3. Write one blog post (just to start) and internally link to your future money page (the review page from task #1).

# CHAPTER ELEVEN

## *Social Media*

## *Keep It Focused*

Let me start out by saying that I have seen some very successful websites that run absolutely no social media campaigns whatsoever. Having a social media presence is not required to be successful or make money online. However, if you are not doing social media, you are certainly leaving some opportunity on the table.

Creating an effective, time efficient, social media campaign is very challenging. Honestly, I am not convinced that I have actually accomplished it myself. So to be fair, some of this advice is theory, personal belief, and simply “common knowledge”. I’ll try to provide some concrete examples from my own experience when possible.

Due to the fact that it’s very easy to waste time in the wrong places and you don’t actually need a social media presence to profit from your affiliate website, you can start your campaigns in a very limited scope. There are an infinite number of places you could choose, but the big four right now are Pinterest, Facebook, Google+ and Twitter. YouTube might also be considered a social network. There are more out there like Tumblr and Instagram too, but growing traffic to a website is not as cut and dry.

Choose 1 to 3 places to create profiles and learn the platforms.

NOTE: Some might argue that Google+ shouldn’t even be considered because it’s officially been given the ax by Google. However, there’s more to the story! There are some sizable communities and they are niche focused (opposed to Twitter which is very individual focused) that are still going to be around when Google+ dies out. Google hangouts is another fantastic way to reach audiences live and on camera. Google+ is the platform I enjoy the most, and if you keep your eye out for coming changes to the social network, I think it can still be a useful part of your marketing campaigns.

There is no need for any kind of auto-posting software, social bookmarking automation, or any of that automated junk that's aimed at building a large profile of low-quality backlinks. You can have 10000 "likes" from robots on your Facebook page but it doesn't mean your site is going to rank any better. The smart guys running these places like Facebook and YouTube are pretty savvy to buying likes and it's clear that having fake fans on any platform isn't going to get you anywhere.

Remain focused and dedicated in a small area, and you will see better results than just trying to explode your network on a massive scale.

Here is a brief outline of some of the benefits of each of the platforms as far as I see it.

**Facebook:** Despite people saying that it's no longer the "cool kid" on the block anymore, it's still pretty ubiquitous. My grandparents use Facebook, as well as many people my age (late 20's , early 30's). I'm starting to get out of touch with the younger generation's stuff, but age 30-80 is still a pretty wide scope of people to target.

Facebook allows you to create "groups" that people can participate in, essentially giving you the opportunity to have your own community, which can then infiltrate people's personal profiles. I'm involved in a homebrew club that has a Facebook page, and I see posts from the community as well as people's personal posts in my feed when I log into Facebook.

You can also create "fan pages" for your website or business, as well as create paid advertising campaigns that are extremely targeted based on location, interests, "like" history, and other personal activity. It's a very interesting integration of business into people's personal lives.

As a Facebook user, it's kind of scary to know how much data Facebook has access to. As a business owner, it's a really cool opportunity to get some eyeballs on your business.

**Google+:** This is my preferred platform because it allows me to reach out to people with similar interests to me. I can search for Google+

communities based on my interests (or my business), and share stories or comments with people in the community.

Notifications from the community pop up in a small icon when I log into gmail, but I don't have to actually view them unless I log into my Google+ account. Multi-column posts also means I can view more activity at once, whereas Facebook only gives me the one column that I have to scroll through.

Oh, there's also cool things like live hangouts on air (live webinar recordings) that you can run for free and they post to your YouTube channel automatically. You also have the ability to integrate Q&A with the audience, showcase links (affiliate opportunity), and meet with other people live for on-air discussions.

Unfortunately, Google+ really hasn't been adopted by a large audience and it's being discontinued at some point in the future. Just recently, I read an article that that Google will be splitting this service into two different entities – one just for photos and one social, possibly called “streams”. What these will actually do and how much of Google+ will still exist in the future is unknown.

**Twitter:** This is a very good way to simply make announcements and have short conversations with people in your industry. When you make a new blog post or find something interesting, a quick “tweet” can make an announcement to all your followers.

I have found it very hard to get noticed on this platform as there is A LOT of activity going, and it happens very quickly. I've actually had a few Facebook posts go viral, and some really awesome discussions on Google+, but I haven't seen anything very exciting happen on my sites for twitter.

Still but I do enjoy following businesses that I want to hear news about like breweries having bottle releases, or finding out why my hosting is down. “In the moment” news is great for Twitter.

**Pinterest:** Probably the most visual of all social media sites, and least content driven is Pinterest. The lack of written content and inability to add affiliate links means it's going to be a challenge to get people to actually buy the stuff they are looking at or even get to your website.

But don't count it out! It's extremely popular among women, and even some guys! Just speaking from experience, there are some really awesome beer pictures and infographics floating around in the community, even more so than it's "manly" competitor Manteresting (yeah, that's a real site). The picture driven nature of the site means it will probably work better for some niches than others. For example, a 'how to train a puppy' site would do great posting puppy pictures. A 'learn coding languages' site might not do as well unless you really get creative.

I could see this working for someone that really wants to develop a brand name that people will recognize, remember, and visit the website later. If you are hoping to drive traffic to your site directly from Pinterest, I might pick another social site.

**YouTube:** I didn't include this in the "big four" because I know a lot of people simply won't be able to handle video at this point. Without a camera setup and a desire to either be on camera or create tutorials, you probably won't be getting much action from YouTube.

It's definitely worth considering at some point though because it's one of the most-trafficked websites on the internet, and like a mini search engine just for video!

There are many ways to take advantage of YouTube if video is your thing. There are really easy ways to drive traffic to your site and even direct affiliate links by making use of the description area of your videos. You can develop a trusted brand on your own YouTube channel using some of the same techniques I outline in the next section.



# *Engagement*

The most difficult thing for people getting started in blogging, but especially the social media side of things, is feeling like you are publishing content into a vacuum. You post an article but nobody reads it. You tweet your published post, and nobody retweets. You post it to your Facebook page...you get the idea.

*How do you get people to care about what you are doing on your website?*

Well, as you publish content, if you follow the guidelines discussed in the chapters about writing techniques, keywords, and SEO, your stuff will naturally get found in search engines and shared by a few social-savvy visitors. But actually growing your social network organically is a bit different.

It's hard, but not impossible to succeed in traffic generation and brand growth using social media. If you are genuine, consistent, and maintain a high quality of content published to your website and social profiles, you *will* see results.

## **Engage With Your Peers**

The easiest way to start growing your network organically is simply by engaging with peers. It can be daunting to approach industry leaders (discussed below), so seek out other bloggers in your niche that you admire, but feel are more “on your level”.

Follow them! A lot of times following a person (on their social media profile) is enough to get a follow-back. New bloggers will be especially excited to have a connection with a real person. I mean, how would you feel if another person in your niche contacted you and said they liked/respected your blog? Once you are social buddies, every time you post something to your social profile they get notified. If they are active, you might even get some re-shares and comments.

By engaging with other people in our niche on an equal level, we are growing awareness of us as a person and website owner. Consistency counts a lot here. People come and go all the time in social media, so don't expect everyone to greet you with open arms from day one. But as you keep showing up, they start to remember who you are and it begins to be more of a conversation!

You might connect with just one person each week, but after six months, that's 28 people that can potentially share your content with their own networks, growing your followers exponentially.

## **Easy Ways To Engage**

- Say "thanks" for an awesome post on Twitter
- Retweet one of their tweets
- Comment on their blog with something insightful
- Like and comment on their Facebook post or share it on your Facebook Page

## **Advanced Ways To Engage**

- Write a blog post which mentions them in a positive way and let them know by email or social media
- Ask them a relevant question on one of their social media profiles
- Interview them for a blog post, podcast, or YouTube video

Not all of these strategies will be a success on the first try. But you have to swing a few times if you want to play ball. Frankly, a lot of people will ignore you in the beginning, but generating momentum starts with one success at a time. Once you have a few successes under your belt and a portfolio of great content on your website to back you up, you can start to set your sights here and begin engaging with some of the 'top players' in your niche.

## Engage With Industry Leaders

You should be following the leaders in your niche from day one. See what they do on a daily basis. Where are they active in social media? How often do they post? What type of content do they post?

This can provide you with two types of insight.

- 1) You'll know where they are seeing success. If they have a ton of twitter followers and tweet 5 times per day, you need a twitter account!
- 2) You'll get an idea of potential opportunities they haven't taken advantage of. For example, if they don't have a Facebook page, maybe you can get some untapped traffic from Facebook!

Which strategy you choose is up to you, but doing both is probably quite difficult with regards to time management. The easiest road is probably following in their footsteps.

Remember, as you grow your network of followers and start following other people related to the “experts”, chances are, you'll start to pop up in those “You might also like to follow” feeds. Even if not, you can still get your face or logo in front of other folks simply by engaging with these leaders.

Let's say I'm starting a website about getting fit after pregnancy. When an established business creates a post in a Google+ community, and I comment on it, people will see my business logo (or face, depending on whether you use your personal or business profile) in the comment section. If you do that every day for 3 months, people will start to recognize you and be curious about what you do.

For example, I follow a fitness channel on YouTube called Physiques of Greatness (POG). It's run by two guys by the names of Chris Jones and Vince G. They have done an excellent job of creating successful brand on YouTube.

In almost every single video there's a guy called strengthOVERsize that leaves very insightful comments. I don't know if the guy is just a social butterfly or is doing a bit of guerrilla marketing, but he gets a lot of upvotes, a lot of responses, and I definitely know about his YouTube channel now. He only has about 4,000 subscribers versus POG's 600,000 subscribers, but no doubt there is some crossover since they are both fitness channels.

NOTE! The smaller guy is not just some newbie saying, "Hey guys, come check out my channel!". Nobody likes that because it's annoying and spam. Don't be that person. Specifically talking about the example above, he has almost 200 videos of content uploaded to his channel and engages with people as a subscriber to POG, not as a marketer trying to 'steal' followers.

## **Ways To Engage With Industry Leaders**

- Do an expert roundup\*
- Interview them
- Ask to do a guest post\*\*

\* An expert roundup is like a list of important people and what they do or think. You can do something like "Top 10 Fitness Channels On YouTube". Write a short blurb about the channel, why it's awesome, and what they talk about. Then notify each of the people in your list via social media. This is a great way to get shares and likes from the leaders (Who doesn't like free press?). If they share your post, you will get a lot of activity from *their* followers, and maybe even snag some of them!

You can also do something like "Ask The Experts" where you ask 10 experts a short question relevant to your industry. Those that respond are compiled into a blog post to see the varying opinions on a specific topic. For example, "What 5 Expert Coffee Roasters Say About Starbucks". Again, follow up by actually notifying people when the content is published so they can either comment or share your post.

\*\* Guest posting is touchy because a lot of people just want to do it for backlinks. If you are going down the guest posting route, offer to do it without a backlink. Just be honest and say you are growing your brand awareness and wanted to reach out to some of leaders and write some content for them.

Personally, I don't do this. I'd rather write content for my own website. However, I know that some people enjoy the social activity and have achieved a certain level of brand growth by guest posting on relevant blogs.

# *Sharing Strategies*

Getting a positive ROI on your social media strategies is not as simple as  $X + Y = Z$ . You may find that some techniques work well for you, while others you need to tweak to work for your niche or personality style.

One mistake I made starting out was assuming that everyone was as anti-social and disinterested as myself. I never had a personal Facebook account before I started online marketing, and still don't use any other social media platform other than YouTube on a regular basis. Even then, I never comment, rarely 'like', and just watch videos for learning or entertainment. (I do a bit of Google+ for homebrewing stuff, but the majority of my "social" activity in that hobby space is in forums.)

I know a lot of you are in the same boat. You might not have any social media profiles right now, or really don't care about what's being tweeted at the moment. The good news is that you don't have to be a social butterfly to have a successful social media strategy! It helps, but it's not required.

Below are a few simple strategies to start out with and you can see what fits your personality type most.

## **Elicit Comments On Your Article**

Ideally you will get traffic from your social media efforts. A comment on your website does a lot more for you than a response on your Facebook share. Getting people from your email or social share onto your website can be a challenge though, because it's one more step.

Use lead ins, or 'hooks' to entice people's interest. Don't be shy either, just explain what they should do, and many people will follow. Say something like "I'd love to hear your thoughts in the comment section". It comes off as a bit corny, but people will get the hint that you want to move the discussion onto your website.

Don't get discouraged or angry if they don't though. Most people are too lazy to do it and will just do whatever is easiest for them.

## **Elicit Responses On Your Share**

If you can't get people to comment on your site, it's still good to have a discussion on the posts you share. It increases awareness of your brand because each time a person comments, it will show up in their own personal feed, and viewed by their friends or followers. If they have followers relevant to your niche, those people might chime in too.

Social activity within social media and not on your site doesn't necessarily have a concrete ROI. It won't boost your SEO or make your website any stronger. But it does connect you to more people as well as strengthen existing connections. Isn't that what social is all about anyway?

## **Become a Content Curator**

Some "professionals" quote a 3-1 ratio or 5-1 ratio, but whatever the exact numbers are, the strategy is to share other people's content way more than your own. If you are involved in your niche, while researching topics for your own articles, you will naturally run into interesting, useful articles, videos, infographics, and personalities along the way.

Don't be greedy! Share all that information. *How* to share this is another decision that you have to make. You can offer up a quick reason why people should read what you just shared, or you can accompany it with a few paragraphs about why you agree or disagree with what the author says. If you commented on the post and received an interesting response from the author, you can mention that too.

You essentially become a "curator" that people can follow so they don't have to do their own research. They can just check their feed or timeline, and the cool stuff you find will be ready for them to consume! Then, when you share your own content a select few times, people will read with

interest, instead of ignoring you as just pushing your own stuff day after day.

Be sure to notify people whose content you shared! Use a + or @ before their name and they'll get notified that someone mentioned them. Chances are, they'll check out what else you share and might even follow you. That's good news, as their followers will get notified that they are now following you, and you may start to pop up in "you might also like" or "similar to" feeds.

## **Post and Run**

This is the least effective of all strategies, but probably the most commonly used. Doing this begs the question, why post at all?

I am guilty of this, and this is probably the reason I haven't seen awesome results for my own social media efforts. However, this does offer one advantage over doing nothing at all: laying the foundation. Sometimes, doing something is better than nothing at all. If all you have is a twitter profile and tweet your own articles once per day, it's a foundation that you can build on later.

## **Revisiting Old Posts**

Sometimes you create an amazing piece of content that you are sure everyone is going to love. But you send it into the internet, waiting for it to go viral, and it flops. No one cares. It doesn't mean it's a bad post though, since a variety of things may have gone wrong.

You might have just gotten buried by something more amazing that day. Or maybe it wasn't as engaging as you originally thought. Was the accompanying picture poorly chosen or does it show a broken image file? Was the picture description incomplete or does it not make sense?

Just because it flops the first time doesn't mean it's your last chance to get some social action on it. Some experts create an epic post then share a few times during the day to catch the different crowds. Lots of people share old



content after they make updates to it, or find relevant news stories that relate to pieces they've previously written.

Revisiting old content and re-sharing can bring some new life to old content.

## **About Branding**

One more thing I wanted to mention was about branding. When you create your social media profiles, make them consistent. I made the mistake of not checking all platforms before going ahead and creating the profiles, and ended up a different name on each.

- On Twitter I'm @more\_coffee\_plz
- On YouTube I'm 1OneMoreCupofCoffee
- On Google+ I'm One More Cup of Coffee
- On Facebook I'm Facebook.com/NathaniellBrenes
- ...And I'm something completely different on Pinterest

People can figure it out after a while and if you are active, it's not such a big deal because you're going to cross streams a lot with your profiles. But since you are just starting out, I wanted to remind you that it would be a lot better to be consistent with your branding, including username, images, and use of colors. It also makes you easier to look up, and creates a more professional look for your brand.

## ***Chapter 11 Summary + Tasks***

Social media isn't as easy as liking and sharing everything you create. Seeing your social media efforts turn into real dollars is even harder. But if you aren't on at least one platform participating, you may be leaving traffic and dollars on the table. How much traffic and how many dollars depends on you and your business. Remember though, it's not required to be a social butterfly to have a successful marketing campaign, and it's not that hard to manage 1 profile and post some interesting things a few times each day.

### **Tasks For This Chapter**

1. Create 1-3 social media profiles for your business depending on your interest
2. Share 3 pieces of content from other people in relevant niches to your own
3. Share 1 piece of your content

# CHAPTER TWELVE

## *Traffic*

## *That's It?*

As far as getting traffic to your website goes, you now know my entire strategy of driving traffic to a website. We will get into monetization strategies and money related stuff in the next chapter, but I wanted to summarize the traffic stuff first. Why?

**ANY WEBSITE WITH TRAFFIC CAN MAKE MONEY!!!!**

For most people starting out in online business (including myself), we didn't attend business school and don't have any kind of experience in marketing. It's very difficult to sit down and write a business plan that we can truly believe in.

That is why, for most people, it's better to just focus on one thing at a time. I read a really interesting book called "The One Thing", that teaches a basic principle that has really worked for me and my business: Focus on one thing at a time. In this case, focus on traffic first. Once you get rolling with traffic, then you can start tweaking your website to make money.

If you are constantly focusing on making money from day one, it's going to be an uphill battle for you mentally. You will keep looking at the \$0 in your account, wondering why you are not earning anything, when actually you cannot earn that first \$1 without getting traffic first.

What is easier – making money from a website with two 500-word blog posts and an about-me page, or making money from a 6 month old website with fifty 1000-word blog posts and some page one rankings in Google? Obviously the second choice is preferable. So why even try to earn money from a website which is pretty much guaranteed to earn nothing?

**The #1 mistake I see people make all the time is that they want to skip to the money making part.** They create their initial pages, write a short Amazon review (or three), and wonder why their website isn't making any money.

I'm not saying you have to wait until you have a steady one hundred visits per day to start adding affiliate links or looking for products to promote. In fact, I'd be lying if I told you that was the way I build my websites. It's totally fine to do a mix of traffic-getting posts and some money pages. But I just wanted to remind you that your focus right now should be building traffic and rankings to your website.

This section will be pretty short because we've already discussed my main traffic strategies (keywords, content creation, social media), but I did want to spend some time summarizing what we've learned (and why) up to this point, as well as give you a few warnings about traffic traps that are common in the industry.

# *Traffic, Summarized*

In a nutshell, this is how I build traffic to my websites:

1. Do keyword research
2. Write blog posts based on keyword research
3. Share blog posts on social media
4. Create internal links to myself as I grow my website
5. Let the content stew, go back and update content if I'm unhappy with rank (but don't dwell on it)

Updating content isn't something I've talked about so far. Sometimes, you have a really juicy keyword that you would just love to rank for.

I understand that feeling. If you aren't ranking for it yet, you do have some power you can leverage without resorting to shady linking practices or boosting rank artificially.

I like to go back and see what I can do to improve the post.

- No video? Add one. No pictures? Add some.
- Is the content original or regurgitated from other research? Make it more unique.
- How long is it? 1000 words? Add another 500.
- Are there chunky blocks of text or odd formatting places? Make it easier to read.
- Have there been updates on the topic? Write something fresh.
- Are there new pages on your site you can link to? Link to them to keep people on your site longer.

There are probably other things you can do that fit under the umbrella concept of making your content “better”. All of this updating and expanding of your post will tell search engines that your site has been updated, bringing them back to re-crawl your new and improved page.

Also, by expanding your initial blog post into an amazing, “epic” resource, you are naturally going to reference it more on your website. Create a menu item to it, or link an image in your sidebar with something that says, “You can’t miss this post” or “Popular post”. Give that link a title and alt tag with your keyword in it.

Making these incremental improvements over time has the potential to boost your rank and authority of that page.

Sometimes, you just won’t rank no matter what. Or, maybe you just need more time, or more authority on your domain. Who knows. Don’t dwell on the rank of one page.

If your website is dependent on the rank of a single page, then you have built your house on quicksand. Focus on creating a broader base of more content that ranks for low competition phrases. In the meantime, you’ll probably be sending traffic and SEO power to that post you really want to rank for. Remember, a watched pot never boils, so just keep building and you might get a nice surprise in the near future.

If it never ranks, oh well. No big deal. Now you have 100 other low competition posts that are ranking and you can use those to drive traffic to that page, as described in Chapter 10.

## The World Of PPC

You'll notice an absence of PPC advice in the traffic section of my book. There are two reasons for this.

1) Most of you are on a budget and won't be interested in paid traffic methods

2) I honestly haven't had a lot of success in this arena

I have had some converting campaigns, and have used a variety of platforms to drive pay per click traffic to my websites. However, the vast majority of my converting traffic has been from free traffic methods, and none of my paid traffic campaigns have survived more than a few months.

One thing that really trips me up is tracking. There's a lot of technical setup involved in tracking which campaigns are converting (making you money) and which ones are not. If your affiliate program has the stuff you need to set this up – great! You're set and can experiment.

But most affiliate programs don't. Then you are stuck installing Prosper202 (self hosted) on your own server or paying hundreds in monthly fees for Tracking202. Now you've got to create a tracking pixel, get it on the correct page, and, well, beyond that I'm not too sure.

You can also set up no-indexed landing pages with your PPC campaigns and use affiliate tracking codes to track sales. That's a bit easier. But you'll still need a budget, and an affiliate program with the proper tracking tools.

Marketers make some serious money with PPC. It's a huge industry. But it's not as newbie friendly as blogging, and requires a budget to get started.

If you do venture into paid advertising, Facebook ads and Bing are the best place to start because they're cheaper and less hostile than Adwords, which can be expensive and hard to get ads approved for new marketers.



# *Traffic Traps*

## **The Allure Of Fast, Easy, Unlimited Traffic**

Multiple products are released every single day claiming to know the secret to unlimited, free, targeted traffic that will skyrocket your business results. But it's a super-duper-secret and they can't tell you until you pay them \$7.95.

The premise of such products is absolutely ridiculous.

I'll tell you one thing, if I had a traffic secret that would guarantee me unlimited 'hungry' visitors to my website, I wouldn't be writing this book right now. I wouldn't be sharing my secret with you. I'd be building a new website every month in a different niche and use the proceeds to buy my own private island (with internet).

The formula for creating these types of products is very easy, so I *will* share *that* secret with you. There are only a few different angles the traffic gurus take. If you are considering purchasing one of these 'game changer' (sarcasm) products, you can bet that it'll be about something discussed on this page.

## **Traffic Exchanges**

You join for a monthly fee, or a pay by submission basis. You submit your website to the exchange, and they send you traffic. Some allow you to join for free, but you have to "earn" credits by clicking and viewing ads from other members in the network.

Wait, what?!

Yes, people are incentivized to click your ad not because they are interested in the offer, but because they are trying to earn credits to submit their own site. The traffic they get as a result of their efforts, is also other people trying to get credits to enter into the system to do their own advertising.

If you ask me to click your ad and I ask you to click my ad, do we actually make money? Not unless someone buys what we are selling. For that reason, joining a traffic exchange simply doesn't make sense.

Some people do experience limited success in the (what I call) *extreme make money online* niche using traffic exchanges. To benefit from an exchange, you really need to embrace the mentality of using the most sensational ads to attract people's attention. Proponents of these exchanges then send people to a squeeze page (single-page website with email opt-in form) to collect an email address and start them on an email sequence.

Have no idea what all that stuff is? You don't need to because you don't need the low quality traffic coming from traffic exchanges, even if you are in the MMO niche. I've never used one and am doing just fine.

## Solo Ads

Some product advertising will say stuff like this:

Make money online with...

- No autoresponder!
- No list!
- No website!
- No traffic!
- No recruiting!

Etc etc. They want to suck you in by **showing you how much you don't have to do**. So how do solo ads work?

You basically "borrow" an email list from someone for a fee. For example, if you paid me \$100 to send an email with an offer to the 5000 subscribers in my list, that's how solo ads work. You rarely see these outside the make

money online (MMO) niche, so a lot of what goes on in these ads is typical “Find the secret to working from home” type of junk.

I’ll admit, it sounds like a good idea. I think it could actually be a good way to join up with some peers in your niche for cross promotion or other types of joint ventures. However, in practice, it rarely works this way. Many times the lists you’ll buy into are scraped email addresses (emails taken from other places online with software), or emails collected by other shady methods (buying/selling lists, tricky opt-in methods). By participating in these lists, you also run the risk of being a spammer simply by sending your offer to an unsuspecting audience.

The key to making solo ads work is to know the buyer that’s selling them and his/her reputation. I have, in fact, seen “shared email lists” work for some friends of mine. But they had established businesses to start with, including a product to market with proof that it works.

Yes, solo ads can work for all niches. But making money from them is not as simple as a lot of people selling them want you to think.

## **Social Media Tweaks**

There are some clever ideas out there on how to tap into the different social networks like YouTube, Instagram, Imgur, Facebook, Pinterest, Tumblr, etc. But I have purchased many products called “Something Something Traffic Monster Explosion”, only to find that it’s basically a one trick pony with very little substance inside the short PDF.

These guides usually demonstrate one case study where the person got a bunch of traffic in one day, and they pretty much outline how they did that.

Yes, having diverse traffic sources can make your business more stable and have more options to grow. Also, in the grand scheme of things, the \$10 you pay for the PDF is not that bad of a price if you can grow your knowledge of what’s possible in the world of internet marketing. If you

want to explore some traffic products like this and have the dough to do it, go for it!

But don't believe for a second that a cheap PDF guide is going to change your life or the future of your website. Ignore slogans that say they have discovered a "loophole" or an "untapped traffic source" that no one is talking about. I have yet to see anyone deliver on that promise.

## **Article Marketing**

I used to be a crazy, article marketing fool. Article marketing is basically where you write a blog post for your website, then write a few related articles and submit them to directories with links back to the original article on your site. Sometimes, those articles can get syndicated across multiple directories, creating more links to your site.

It used to be HUGE within the online marketing world and part of the reason I experienced my initial success with my first websites is that I just went nuts with this strategy. I would personally type 5-10 articles each day and publish them with links to my website. They were not very good, but they existed, and they ranked, driving lots of traffic to my sites.

Part of article marketing and syndication was the idea of "spinning" and "automatic submission". Spinning is where you re-write the same piece of text over a few times using synonyms and similar phrases. This can be done by hand or with software, but the software usually creates something unreadable by humans. There is also software out there that automatically submits these low-quality articles to low-quality directories, creating even more optimized links to your site.

It used to work really well, and I used to do that too.

Unfortunately, Google came down hard on directories and they simply don't rank well any more. Article marketing truly is dead. Now I write exclusively for my website. I am able to rank and convert to sales without

any kind of off-site writing, which is why I recommend you don't even bother with this strategy. Why make things harder on yourself?

## **Traffic Packages**

The bottom of the barrel is “traffic packages” that you can purchase from various websites. One popular place to buy them is Fiverr. You'll see gigs that say, “I will send you 100k targeted, human visitors to your website” for just \$5. Yeah right.

These packages are without a doubt extremely low quality clicks. Some are bots, and the ‘better’ ones will be click farms where people are just paid to visit your website, hang out for 3 seconds, click something, then leave.

Does that help you make money? No. Which is why you don't need these. Just say, “NO” to low quality traffic!

The vast majority of all “traffic secrets” I see are very much targeted towards the *make money online* crowd. In my opinion if you are in other niches like sports, health, animals, etc, most of these methods will be confusing and ineffective when applied to your business. If you are actually doing MMO, you may find some of these ideas intriguing. Be my guest and look into them, but also remember that learning how to actually get a positive ROI with any of these paid methods will require time and money to see what works and what doesn't.

## *Chapter 12 Summary + Tasks*

There is no such thing as a traffic ‘secret’, and low quality traffic that doesn’t create sales for you is a waste of money. Focus on driving high quality, targeted, (real) visitors to your website and amaze them with your content to keep them there.

Most of the time it’s painfully slow (sometimes not) building traffic to a website. I wrote a 1,000 word blog post every day for 5 months for One More Cup of Coffee and received less than 10 visits per day. By month 8 I had over 1500 visits per day. Some people will see a more natural traffic grown over time. But trying to supercharge or speed up your results is going to bite you in the butt sooner or later.

You don’t need a complicated strategy to get people onto your website, and I have seen excellent results with two main elements: keyword research & content creation.

### **Tasks For This Chapter**

1. Update an old post with fresh content and new media
2. Create a new post targeting a low competition keyword and link back to the old post
3. See if this improves your rank during the next week or two

# **CHAPTER THIRTEEN**

***Oh Yeah, The Money Part***

# *Any Site With Traffic*

## **ANY WEBSITE WITH TRAFFIC CAN BE MONETIZED**

I've said that already, haven't I?

One of the biggest struggles for me breaking through my barrier of failure was actually making money. *Duh*. That may seem like a no-brainer, but it means more than you might think! **Most people quit before they see results because they simply don't know if what they are doing is working or not.** Once you make that first sale, you can actually tell yourself, "Hey, I'm doing it right".

Even if you don't make a lot of sales, for most people, that first glimpse into making money online is enough to feed the fire of motivation 'til the next sale, then the next one, then the next one. My first sale earned me just \$5, but a lightbulb went on in my head: If one sale means five bucks, I just need to get my website to do this twenty times per day and I could be making a hundred dollars a day!

It's the *not knowing* that kills most people's motivation and thus, business. But what's this got to do with traffic?

The awesome thing about traffic is that it gives you data to work with. Instead of looking at the dichotomy of sales vs no sales, you can look at other stats to give you motivation to keep moving forward.

For example, with just a few visits per day, you can analyze your traffic using Google Analytics or Webmaster Tools. You can see where your visits are coming from, and get a 'hint' at where you should try to dig up more traffic.

Let's say you have a website about self-publishing books. You cover a lot of different topics, but the one post that gets the most traffic is the "How to Self-Publish On Amazon" post. This is a strong indication that you should do two things: 1) Dig up as many keywords as you can find about



Amazon self publishing and write a bunch of articles on the topic 2) Create a monetized post on your website relevant to this topic, then link all these articles to your 'money page' (maybe promote an ebook about how to self-publish).

Without traffic, you wouldn't have had that little hint, and you might not have known that there was such an interest in the topic of self publishing on Amazon.

Aside from data, traffic allows you to experiment with different strategies of making money, also called 'split testing'. If you have just 10 visits per day and you change your main menu, it may take an entire month before you know whether the old or new version of the menu gets more clicks. If you have 100 visits per day, you can collect this information much faster, and to a higher degree of accuracy.

NOTE: Low traffic numbers often create statistically insignificant data! 5/10 (50%) visits on your site taking some action might be a fluke due to the day of the week or time of year. 5000/10000 (50%) is much more accurate, telling you that about 1/2 of visitors on your site are doing that thing (whatever you are tracking).

**Extra Training:** How to analyze traffic for content ideas and sales

<https://my.wealthyaffiliate.com/training/analyzing-traffic-for-content-ideas-sales>

# *Affiliate Programs*

Monetizing my website with affiliate programs is where I have seen 99% of my success, and it's what I have the most experience in. In fact, although I have made money with all of the other methods listed in this book (with the exception of creating my own product, but that's going to change soon), affiliate programs are by far my favorite method of monetization and it's pretty much all I do now.

Since this book is about how to make money through affiliate marketing on a Wordpress blog, the other sections will be short, generalized, and limited to my own experience but I will be as in-depth as I can in this section about affiliate programs. I believe affiliate programs are going to offer you the largest return (both in value and dollar amount) on your time.

## **How Affiliate Programs Work**

You might not know it, but many of your favorite websites are paying individuals to do advertising for them. Search for “Walmart affiliate program” or “Amazon affiliate program” and a page will turn up explaining the terms and conditions of helping them do some advertising. **Being an “affiliate” basically means you are a freelance advertiser.** You are paid on commission, for each sale that you generate for the company. You decide how to do the advertising (within limits, e.g. no spam or pretending to be the company), and are paid every time someone buys something through your affiliate link.

An affiliate link is a link that is coded just to you. When someone clicks this unique link, it drops a ‘cookie’ in their browser. If they buy something from the vendor's website you sent them to, you make money. Basically, you want visitors to your website to click your link and buy something from a website you are affiliated with.

Not just big chain stores have affiliate programs! There are many brands of ‘affiliate software’ that smaller companies can use to recruit you and help you track your affiliate stats. For example, lots of companies use Post Affiliate Pro, so you might sign up for Company A selling organic dog food and Company B selling hockey equipment, but your affiliate dashboard will look the same.

To find an affiliate program that is suitable for your niche, type in “niche + affiliate program” or “product + affiliate program” into Google and see what turns up. You will probably be surprised at how many companies are excited to work with you!

## **How To Sign Up**

Signing up for affiliate programs is free and pretty simple. You just have to provide some basic information about yourself and your website. Many places will approve you instantly. Some will actually take a look at your information like website stats and email you to make sure you are real. There are a few exclusive affiliate programs out there that require a bit of an interview process (to keep affiliate quality high), but they are rare. More often than not you’ll be approved pretty quickly and can then focus on where to start using your affiliate link!

If you get denied the first time around, no big deal. You can reapply later once you have improved traffic stats and are a bit more savvy to what companies will be looking for. Some companies like Clickbank and Amazon will also revoke your affiliate status after a period of time if you don’t make any sales, but the same applies here – just sign up again at a later date. However, it’s worth considering that this is one of the reasons we don’t sign up for affiliate programs right at the get-go.

It may take you 3 months to ramp up traffic to your site, right in time to get booted from the program! I have seen this happen, and people then need to recreate all their affiliate links as the old ones don’t work any more. I know that a lot of newbies are chomping at the bit to get their affiliate

links up so they don't miss a single sale. To be honest, it's not worth the time to monetize your site until it's ready. Making \$5 by luck is not going to make a difference to your business income in the long term.

ATTN!: Don't put getting denied or booted from a program on your list of things to worry about, because it isn't a big deal. I just wanted to make sure you know that it does happen, and it's a good reason to hold off on joining affiliate programs until you are generating some traffic to your website.

## **How You Are Paid**

Different companies pay with different methods, but Paypal is probably the most common. If you don't have a Paypal account now, get one. An equal alternative just doesn't exist. Some places have the option to get paid by direct deposit or check, with direct deposit to your bank being the more common option. There are other electronic payment systems, but you don't run into them very often.

Many companies will hold your commissions for 30 days to prevent fraud and returns. Some will pay out immediately and deduct any returns from future earnings. Just keep in mind that the money you made in January might not be paid out until the end of February or beginning of March.

There's usually a payment threshold as well, varying from \$10 to \$100, even \$250 for some programs. It's a bummer in the beginning when you are grinding for that first sale or two and you can't even withdraw them until 3 months later.

But once you get some momentum it doesn't really matter and it can work to your advantage, helping you budget properly for the next month.

## **How Do I Know I'll Get Paid?**

I'm surprised at how much this question comes up, but people seem to have a genuine fear that they will do all this work and the company won't pay them. It does happen, but it's rare. There actually is a company that owes me \$2000 in commissions from 2011, but it's only happened to me once in 5 years. I just pulled all their links and replaced them with their competitors links and went back to business. To this day, I'm the only person I've heard of (in my circle of marketing friends) that happening to.

If it's a concern of yours, just search for "company + affiliate + scam/ripcoff/not pay" and if someone isn't paying, there will be an angry blogger somewhere to let you know. If you do find a post, also take into account that some companies don't pay for legitimate reasons like fraud and abuse. You can take screenshots of all your earnings weekly or monthly for proof of your earnings in case a company you work with decides to not pay you for whatever reason.

## **How Do I Know My Link Works?**

Another question that gets asked a lot – geez, you guys are suspicious! Depending on the affiliate software you use, you can look to see if it's tracking your clicks by clicking your own links and looking at the stats. Just make sure to NOT buy through your own links because most programs don't allow this. Without affiliate software, you can also take a look at the link in the address bar. If you see your affiliate code in there, then you know the link is working. Your code will usually have a question mark in it, though there are different styles.

For example, [vendorwebsite.com/product-page?aff=1234](http://vendorwebsite.com/product-page?aff=1234)

In this case, 1234 is your affiliate ID. Other affiliate software with advanced tracking abilities may have very long code, 50+ characters long with affiliate IDs, tracking IDs, subIDs and other useful data. Some places that sell only one product may give you a dedicated link you can use, like [vendorwebsite.com/1234](http://vendorwebsite.com/1234).

## How Much Do I Get Paid?

Commissions vary widely, ranging from 1% to 100%. Seriously. Last time I heard, Best Buy only pays 1%. Orbitz pays something like 3%.

Membership sites or recurring fee programs may pay you 100% of the first month for each person you recruit, but you do not receive anything from recurring sales. Others may pay you a 15-30% recurring fee for each month they are active.

So as you can see, there really are a lot of options. For physical products and big companies, you can expect a range of 5-10%. For digital products or anything that's web based, you can expect more, ranging from 10-75%

Cookie length is another thing to consider. If someone lands on your website January 1, clicks your affiliate link, then returns on March 25 to the same website based on your recommendation, you might not receive credit for the sale! Then again, you might. Cookies can expire in as little as 24 hours (Amazon), but they usually give you more time to close the deal. 30-90 days is what I've seen most. Some companies offer lifetime cookies, meaning that person will remain your referral as long as they don't clear their cookies or click on another affiliate's link.

If you start making a lot of sales, you may receive special treatment or be able to negotiate better terms. I've negotiated myself from 15% to 25% and from 8% to 12% in previous years. Other perks can include unique links or entrance points to the vendors website, or insight into the vendors data about their customers. You really have to gain some momentum to start seeing that stuff though, so I'd wait to cross that bridge when you come to it.

# ***What Products To Promote***

Once you've chosen some affiliate programs that you may want to work with, you now need to narrow down a few products you want to promote. Yup. Just a few. No, you will not be creating an online mall.

Affiliate marketing is not about creating an online shopping experience like Amazon. We are not going to make a website where people can view products, add them to a shopping cart, then go check out at another website.

**The vast majority of your sales will not be made with banners either!**

Yeah, another shocker. I also see a lot of emails asking me for website reviews with five or more banners in the sidebar because people think that this is how the website actually earns money.

Sorry if I sound uber-critical here. I just want to emphasize exactly *how* we will be making money so you don't accidentally go down the wrong road for several months only to find out that these methods don't work.

#1: No online shopping mall

#2: Banners suck (in general. 1 or 2 might be OK)

## **Selling Stuff With Content**

The main reason people are landing on your website is because of what you are writing. Your content is the selling point that spurs people to buy stuff. People want to know if Product X is dangerous or which is better Product A vs Product B. Here are some ideas to begin working with on your site.

- Product X Review
- Product A vs Product B
- Product D vs Product D 2.0
- How do I \_\_\_\_\_ ? (Solution = Product)

The last one is very powerful, and can be broken down even further

- Learn how to \_\_\_\_\_ (tutorial)
- How to stop \_\_\_\_\_ (bad habit)
- How to cure/fix \_\_\_\_\_ (illness, troubleshooting)

There are of course more ideas that you can add to this list.

What does this have to do with product selection? Well, we need to narrow our focus on just a few products we want to promote in the beginning so we can drive traffic to those pages. Later on we can get a bit more broad and do all kinds of reviews, but for now, just a couple. Three to five different ones will be sufficient.

As explained in the “writing product reviews” section in Chapter 9, there are a few ways to drive traffic to our reviews. But now, I want to talk about the product selection process.

## **Which Products Make Money?**

Billions and billions of dollars worth of *stuff* is purchased online every single day. Any of those products is a potential place for you to make money. It’s not about which products can or can’t make money, it’s about which ones you want to spend time focusing on. One mistake I made with a beer site in the past was trying to promote EVERYTHING. I even wrote reviews of \$5 items. It was a total waste of time since I was only making 5% commission, or \$0.25 per sale.

There is no single product that is going to make you rich, and no thing that is “guaranteed” to work. It’s all about YOU, the business owner, and how well you promote it. The things you should consider when choosing products to promote are pretty obvious: quality, ease of use, price, functionality, etc. I don’t think I need to spend too much time on those concepts.



What I do want to talk about is what ‘types’ of things have worked well for me in the past. Plug some of these ideas into your niche and see what you can come up with!

## **Collection of Products**

Keep in mind that having products which are somewhat related creates the opportunity to interlink your pages. If you have a website about “home spa days” and you want to promote a home manicure kit, you might also want to link to reviews of a pedicure kit and/or a facial mask set review. Maybe you can link to a wine review, and other stuff related to a home spa day.

BTW, this is what I imagine a good spa day would be – wine, face masks, and a pedicure. Correct me if I’m wrong ladies.

## **Brands + Product Comparison**

Check out if there are competing brands you can compare, for example smart watches. I could write 10 posts just comparing different types of smart watches.

- Apple Watch VS Samsung Smart Watch
- Pebble VS Apple Watch
- Android Watches VS Apple Watch

Even after you exhaust all these comparisons, you still have a Top 3 or Top 10 post you can write, PLUS, you can write individual reviews of each brand!

## Products You Can Talk About

When choosing products to promote, you definitely need to think about how much you can say about it.

Here's an example of what you shouldn't do: I found a really well designed padded ring-clip to hold an extra fuel bottle on my motorcycle. However, I can't say much more about it other than it works, and maybe do a quick tutorial on YouTube. I certainly can't write a 1000 word review, and shouldn't focus on something that costs \$10 for 4% commission from Amazon.

Here's an example of what you should do: They recently came out with a "Keurig for beer" called the Pico Brew. It's a really fast way to brew beer inside the house, without a bunch of mess. It's a fancy little machine. I could talk about it all day, how it brews, what it's made out of, recipes to brew on it, how to clean it, how to troubleshoot it, what upgrades are coming out, etc etc.

This would be a really good product to promote (too bad they don't have an affiliate program) because I can create lots of different content over the course of several weeks that focuses on promoting this one thing. I can create ten articles about brewing beer inside the house as opposed to in the garage, then link back to my Pico Brew review.

This strategy is better than creating just one piece of content that promotes one thing, and then you run out of steam. (Although, with one-off reviews can still work very well if you can get them ranked!)

## Avoid Sales, Free, Discounts, Budgets

Lots of you are on a budget and want to reach out to like-minded folks that are also on a budget. I agree that this can give us a warm fuzzy feeling to help people find good deal, but the fact is that it's the wrong audience to target. You are trying to make money, and need to aim your website at people with money to buy stuff. Providing free resources is excellent! But don't make your 'money pages' about finding the cheapest possible deal. They should be about finding the best *value* for their money.

## One-Product Website

Some websites can work well as a one-product promotion website. A really good example would be if you know of a really good guide on antiques that you want to promote. You can write tips and tricks every week about antiques, but at the end of every page, add a short blurb about how if they love your weekly blog posts and tips, they would probably enjoy your review of an excellent antique guide. The Motley Fool does this with their stock picking clubs.

Essentially, all your traffic is going to that review page, and you can tweak that page to convert really well over time. You might want to eventually add a few other things to promote, but it's very possible to have just the one money page, and the rest of your work is going to be writing content and driving traffic to that review.

## High Ticket Items

High ticket items, or expensive items are really nice to promote because you get a big fat commission for each sale. I wouldn't make *everything* you promote a high ticket item, but a few sales of these big boys can quickly boost your monthly income.

One thing to watch out for is that people spending more money on an item are more critical of the reviews they read. If you don't own it or don't have good knowledge of the item from research, it can be hard to write

a convincing argument of why someone should spend \$3000 on something. Many of the gurus out there that swear by high ticket items as the best way to make money, are the same guys selling \$25,000 “make money online” systems to grandmas and disabled veterans. They may also have an entire team of writers to help them create sales funnels and sales pages!

## **Recurring Payments**

Clubs, courses, membership sites – if you can find stuff like this related to your niche, definitely put one of these into your “stuff I have to write about” list. It would be a really good investment on your part to actually join the membership for a short period of time so you have some inside knowledge of what’s good and what isn’t. Did you know there are cigar clubs that send cigars every month? Yeah, there are affiliate programs for this too!

Recurring commissions have been a large part of me being able to make passive income while I’m on vacation or just having fun with my hobbies. A sweet day for me is making \$500 on a Sunday while brewing beer in my garage!

# *Display Ads*

Contextual ads are placed within the body of your articles. There are two main ways to do this. One is Google AdSense and the other is Infolinks. There are other companies that do similar things, and I'll list them at the end of this section.

## **Google AdSense**

Google AdSense is ads you've been seeing for the past decade but might not have realized it was Google. They are the blue/black/green text ads you see in sidebars, headers, and in the middle of articles. They may sometimes be pictures as well. They display ads based on the search history of the user on your website, not the content of your website. Though if the person found your site through search, what they were searching for and your niche site are probably the same thing.

This style of advertising offers some advantages and disadvantages.

The good thing is that if they were searching for electric guitars and your site is about guitars in some way, there's a good chance they will click an ad that shows up on your site. It might be for some sheet music, a distortion pedal, or online guitar lessons.

The other great thing is that it's very 'hands off' on your part. You slap some code on your website and go about your business. AdSense decides which ads to serve and you make money based on clicks. You get to focus on content and traffic, and don't have to deal with things like a sales funnel, what to offer, improving conversions, and other things that go along with "selling". Oh, and that's another bonus! You can write whatever you want without feeling like you have to be a salesman.

You can build a website with funny cat videos, and if you can get traffic to it, you can make money. No need to try to promote anything other than the funny/cool/amazing content on your website.

But, there are plenty of downsides too! In fact, I have a big chip on my shoulder towards them and don't recommend you use them, especially as a beginner. Why? They banned me for life from their program within just a few months of getting started. Before you think I did something horrible to get banned, it's quite common, and there is no (legitimate) appeals process. So downside #1? It's easy to get banned, and impossible to get back in.

Downside #2 is that you are sending people away from your website for cheap! This is huge! You spend all that time and effort to get them on your website and now you want to send them to your competitors website to go buy stuff. You get paid a few pennies and they get a (possible) big fat check for whatever that visitor buys. This alone is reason enough to not use AdSense. You could be making much more money off of that same traffic by advertising affiliate products from related companies through more targeted affiliate promotions.

A somewhat less compelling reason, but equally important is that this style of ads is common and just plain ugly in my opinion. Everyone knows they are ads and is prone to ignoring them. Internet savvy folks just have an ad blocker on their browser and don't even see them! Plus, why mess up your beautiful website with a bunch of text and pictures you have no control over? I have seen some "scam finder" websites with AdSense ads promoting scams right on their website!

There are a few alternatives to AdSense. Chitika and Media.net are two that come to mind since it looks quite similar, but I'm unfamiliar with their pay structure, rules, etc.

## Infolinks

Probably my least favorite way to monetize a website (yes, even less than Adsense) is Infolinks. Why?

For one, they pay pennies when you could be getting paid dollars. Second, they look terrible on a website. There are a few different display options, but the one that people choose the most is the actual “link” option. I’m not quite sure how it selects words on your posts, but it creates a hyperlink with certain words on the page. You have probably seen this before – sometimes it’s displayed with a double underline to distinguish it from normal hyperlinks. When you hover over the link, it displays an ad that you can click on.

This hyperlink version creates two problems. It confuses people, so they don’t know what’s a link on your website and what’s an ad. It also means people get “link blind”, ignoring links you want them to click because they don’t want to click any annoying ads.

Furthermore, Infolinks serves up some very poor ads on a regular basis. I could have a website about model trains and it may choose “track” in the word “train track”. For “track”, it could display an ad for GPS tracking devices, or maybe a pair of track shoes. Very often it takes words out of context, displaying irrelevant ads. This not only prevents you from making money, but it confuses people on your website, creating a negative user experience.

Exacerbating the situation is that people using Adsense are often unimpressed with the earnings so they double up with Infolinks, essentially turning their website into free-for-all for advertisers. You do all the grunt work getting quality traffic to your site, and they come to play and make money! *No thanks.*

Kontera is an alternative to Infolinks that does a very similar type of ad.

So in a nutshell, contextual ads are easy to set up and require little maintenance. However, they pay poorly and create a low quality user experience on your website. I'm just not that into them, but I know that some people have made decent money with Adsense in particular. These can also be good options if affiliate marketing is not an option for you, like if you are running a free forum.

## **Selling Ad Space**

I was originally going to create a separate section for this since technically it's a completely different way to monetize your website, but then realized I know so little about it that I can't really say much except to mention it as a possibility to monetize your site. A really cool website to check out is [buysellads.com](http://buysellads.com), which acts like a broker between people selling and buying ad space. I have placed several ads on other people's websites using this service. There are quite a few other similar services out there as well.

If you are renting space on your site, you might be able to get on [Fiverr.com](http://Fiverr.com) and sell ad space for a certain amount of time. \$5 isn't much, but you can set the amount of time low, like 10-15 days depending on the traffic you get. Just remember that every click you send away from your site is a possible sale you lost! You could *put your own banner in that same spot* and earn commissions. But if your own banners aren't earning much money, you might be able to make a couple bucks by renting out the ad space.



## *Building An Email List*

If you've ever heard that "the money is in the list", then you've heard about list building and email marketing. In fact, for many, building a list is one of the first ways to make money online that they hear of. It *can* be a very lucrative business model if done right, but it can also be a huge money drain if you don't. On top of typical domain and hosting fees, you'll also need an autoresponder which is going to cost you about \$20/month depending on which service you use. When I got started in affiliate marketing I was told by a "guru" that you should be building a list from day one, even if you don't understand what it's for.

So I spent two years building a list for my VPN sites, collecting about 10,000 people and racking up a monthly bill of \$70 per month, for a list that I didn't actually send any emails to. By the time I was savvy enough to set up a sequence, people from two years back didn't know who the heck I was, and all of my emails flopped. I will admit, a better marketer than I could have salvaged 10k subscribers for something profitable, but I didn't have a clue. I burned about \$1000 in autoresponder fees and who knows how many lost commissions trying to build that list, then it all went to waste because I didn't have a plan of what to do with it.

So from this experience, I would recommend that you only start building a list when you think you are ready, both financially and with regards to time. Plus, make sure you spend some time beforehand mapping out a potential follow up sequence, including which products and services you want to promote. The main issue with my ultra-failed list was that I didn't know what else to promote to this group.

## How Does An Email List Make Money?

There are entire websites and dedicated courses to email marketing, so I'm not going to teach you everything you need to know in just one section of this book. However, we can cover some broad concepts to help you understand how this method of monetization works and if you are interested in this method of monetization, you can dig deeper into it later on.

Actually, a huge number of so-called “game changing” internet marketing products do little more than explain the basic email marketing concepts that I'm going to talk about in the next few paragraphs. Anyone that claims to teach you how to make passive income, or autopilot riches, is probably talking about email marketing. It's just a bunch of marketing jazz because you still have to work hard to build the list, set up the sequence, and tweak it to be profitable. But yes, once your site is generating traffic, *and* your opt-in form is effectively collecting leads, *and* you have a sequence that converts to sales... *then*, email marketing can be pretty good at making passive income.

**Opt-In Form:** This is the method of email collection. It's a little box on your website or popup with a space for people to fill in their email address and name. There is usually some kind of incentive to give you this information, like a free guide, an email course, or something interesting they want delivered to their email inbox.

**Autoresponder:** This is the service you need to actually send emails. This service allows you to set up an automatically delivered sequence of emails. You can set the amount of days between each email, the subject of the emails, and of course the content. They track opens, clicks, and other stats about people reading your emails so you can refine your campaigns. There's also an option to send one-time “email blasts”. These are emails that you send to your entire list, but are not part of the automatic sequence.

Here's how email marketing works:

1. Get a visitor on your website

2. Offer them an incentive to sign up to your list
3. Deliver whatever you promised via email
4. Follow up with a sequence of emails on a relevant topic (offering *value* of some kind)
5. Promote related products and services within the follow up sequence

There are legit, helpful ways to do this, as well as scuzzy ways to do it. I really enjoy being on the email list of my favorite homebrew shops because I get notified of deals and events happening. I also like to be on the email list of biggerpockets.com because I can see what new articles they have and what the real estate markets are doing.

But I absolutely hate emails from internet marketing gurus with headlines like:

*“Your Commissions Are Ready To Be Deposited”*

*“16 Year Old Kid Makes \$6000 on Autopilot in 24 Hours”*

*“Confidential! Millionaire Money System Revealed To 10 Lucky People”*

Have you received emails like those? They are annoying. Sure, they get good open rates, and yes, they probably make some good sales because they are outright lying about the contents of what they are selling. But check out the refund rates and customer complaints, and now you know why many so-called internet gurus release products under pseudonyms and have several product launches every year.

The original idea of creating an email list to promote helpful, relevant products and services to the people that sign up has been badly perverted by the internet marketing industry. When someone sends you 2 to 3 “make money systems” in a single day until you unsubscribe, they are nothing but a spammer in my book. It’s too bad that’s what a lot of people teach.

## Is Building A List Easier Than Other Methods?

One major misconception believed by a lot of list-builders is that email marketing is easier or more lucrative than other ways of making money online. My theory is that they think this way because they want to use a squeeze page, which means they don't have to update their blog on a weekly basis.

**Squeeze Page:** A one-page website focused on getting the visitor to take some kind of action. In the case of list building, that action would be signing up to your list.

Because a squeeze page looks simple compared to writing 1000 words of content every few days, many newbie internet entrepreneurs gravitate to this type of marketing. But there's one HUGE missing piece to the puzzle – traffic!

Squeeze pages rarely rank in search engines because there's no content on them, so now you are stuck using paid traffic methods. But Google Adwords doesn't like squeeze pages because the content is 'thin' and they will get dinged as being a bridge page (a page that has the sole purpose of redirecting someone to an offer). Facebook Ads is a bit better, but they can get uppity about certain topics like weight loss or biz ops. Bing is pretty lax, but traffic is limited.

There are other methods of driving paid traffic to your site from places like Plenty of Fish, 7Search, and a few others but the point I want to make is that by trying to drive paid traffic to a squeeze page you are immediately starting out crippled (fewer choices) in the PPC world. As a result you are pretty much left with solo ads as your only way to drive traffic to your squeeze page.

Even if you do have a budget for paid ads and the skills to crunch the numbers, you are still going to need a follow up sequence that converts to sales. You need to learn how to write effective, engaging content within your emails to make sure people open the next one, then the next one, and

then the next one. Oh, and you might also have to write sales copy for the offer you plan to promote in your sequence.

Wow, that sounds like a whole lot of writing... and you thought this was going to save you the hassle of writing articles for a blog!

At least with a blog you can practice your writing skills for free. Remember, every day you delay writing that sequence you are wasting money on autoresponder fees. Every single click you get to your squeeze page that doesn't convert to a signup costs you money. If someone stays on for the full sequence but isn't interested in your offer? Bummer dude.

True, you can outsource all the content, but it's going to cost you money. Plus, if you are new to email marketing, it's going to be pretty hard to tell them what you want, or judge whether it's good quality.

## **Do I Hate Email Marketing?**

No! As I mentioned above, my current email list is converting pretty well and I have pretty good engagement with the people I send emails to. But it took me (a person starting out with no writing skills and no marketing skills) 4 years, plus plenty of mistakes and wasted dollars to reach that point.

If you want to focus on email marketing, go for it! It's actually pretty fun once you get into it. It can definitely be super profitable if you do it right. For example, I spent \$500 at CopyBlogger and over \$1000 at Northern Brewer this year as a result of their email marketing campaigns. But I recommend you start with a plan, and ditch the idea that it's faster or easier than any other method out there.

My personal suggestion is to start off with writing content on your blog like I outline in this guide. Once you start generating traffic to your website you can dig deeper into email marketing and see if it will work for your business.

# *Creating Your Own Product*

Creating your own product can be a very challenging, but rewarding venture. If you asked me 4 years ago if I would be interested in writing my own digital information product I would have said, “No way!”. However, now, I see how easy it can be, even for a newbie. The challenge is not creating the product – the challenge is marketing it!

## **Why Creating A Digital Info-Product Is Easy**

A digital info product may sound like serious business to you, but it’s really nothing more than a PDF or a couple of videos teaching something. Taken down to the very basics, you write down some information in a text editor, export it as a PDF, and now you have a newly-minted info product! There are many places you can sell info products like Clickbank or JVZoo, and they will handle the sale and delivery of your product for a fee. You could potentially sell it through your own site as well with a bit of research on how to set that up on your blog.

If you know a lot about *something* then you can create an info product. Even if you don’t know that much but want to do the research that works too. Heck, even if you just have the money to pay for someone to write it, that’s a possibility as well. It’ll cost some money and take some management skills to have someone else do the work, but again, it’s not rocket science. Some \$5 or \$10 products are just 20-50 pages long and written in a casual writing style! I truly believe even a complete newbie could manage to create their own digital info product in a short period of time.

## **Why Creating A Digital Info-Product Is Hard**

Creating the product is the easy part. The rest of it is hard. You cannot jump into this method of making money online thinking “If you build it, they will come”. There are three main things you have to consider on the marketing side of selling your own info product.

**Sales Copy:** You are going to have to write an effective sales page promoting your product. The “buy it if you want, but I don’t really care” attitude isn’t going to cut it. If you wrote the book you can probably tell a story about how amazing your product is, but there’s more to it than that. Do you have a good hook? Are there enough purchase points on the sales page? Are you pushing people’s emotional buttons and making them feel they *need* it? These are all things to consider for your sales copy.

**Traffic:** How are you going to get traffic to your sales page? Are you going to be handling all the promotion or hiring affiliates? Blogging is a great way to drive traffic to your ebook, so you could potentially do everything I’ve outlined in this book as a traffic generation method. Paid traffic (PPC) is also an option, but make sure you have a budget for it.

**Affiliates:** If you plan to have affiliates market your product, great! This can be the start of some passive income coming into your online business. But again, signing up for an affiliate network doesn’t mean that people will choose to promote *you* out of the thousands of other products out there.

You now not only have to write effective sales copy for people looking to buy your product, you also have to write a decent affiliate recruitment page, showing potential affiliates why they should promote **YOU** instead of someone else. They will also be looking at things like your sales copy, content quality, and payout percentages. Recruiting affiliates adds yet another complicated layer to the process of marketing your product.

Creating an info product can be fun and easy, especially if you are an expert in a particular niche. However, marketing and making money from that info product is where the challenge lies. Don’t let that discourage you if you do have a good idea! But just be prepared to do the same amount of marketing effort as you would if you were selling affiliate products (plus some extra work).

# ***Selling Your Website***

It's also possible to sell a website, regardless of whether it's getting traffic or making money. The value of your website will be determined by a number of factors. A mediocre website that is sold with some finesse in your sales copy can bring in a lot of money. A fantastic website with an ad that doesn't quite convey its true value will be largely ignored unless you are dealing with a really savvy buyer.

## **Factors Which Affect The Value Of Your Website**

**Traffic:** How many visitors you are getting to your site every day is certainly a selling point. If your site gets a lot of traffic but makes only a little money, high traffic stats will be attractive to anyone who thinks they can do a better job monetizing it than you. Consistently increasing traffic is more valuable than stable traffic and decreasing traffic or seasonal traffic.

If you have a high number of daily visitors to your site, I would consider using Google AdSense for a time just to get an estimated monthly earnings value, and you can probably sell it for more money due to consistent earnings.

**Monthly Earnings:** Depending on where you sell the website, a website that is consistently earning can get between 10x and 20x monthly earnings. People are not dumb and know that if your earnings for the last three months are \$0, \$0, and \$2,000, either something is up or they are taking a huge risk.

A site that makes \$500, \$1000, and \$1500 in the past three months would sell for between \$10k and \$20k but may go for more as you can see a rising trend. The opposite trend (decreasing earnings) will probably get less interest without a decent explanation (like seasonal earnings drop).

**Method of Monetization:** How the website makes money will affect the value of the site and interest from buyers. For example, the Amazon Associates affiliate program is a great way to make money online and very



recognizable, but it's not available in all countries or states. Adsense is popular and easy to manage, but people like me that are banned won't be able to make money with it unless they make some big changes to the site.

A site that only uses Adsense and is making good money might actually be more attractive to some buyers because they can add affiliate links and almost instantly increase their earnings. If you are using drop shipping or have some kind of inventory, that will also affect demand for your business since not everyone has the capacity for product storage.

**Work Involved:** People love passive income and will lose their mind if you tell them there's no work involved. *(Yes, that was a hint of irritation you heard there).* Unfortunately, the market is flooded with hyped sales pitches for pre-made 'business in a box' type websites. Don't sell yourself short – but don't exaggerate too much. Just be honest about what you do on your website so people know if they can actually run it. Offering limited support may be another selling point, but don't get stuck managing their business after they buy it.

**Domain Name:** You can actually buy and sell domain names without any website at all! If you find an exact keyword match domain name with high traffic stats and low competition, scoop it up and you might be able to flip it for a decent profit. It's not easy, but there is a market for good domain names. This year I sold a \$10 domain name for \$500. Some domains can go for several thousand dollars.

Flipping domains is not all cake though. There are a lot of people in this business with million dollar portfolios and software that scoop anything up once it comes on the market. You have to be keyword savvy, patient, and a good salesman to turn a profit in this business.

Two major players in the website brokering business are Flippa and Empire Flippers. Watch out for Flippa – it's dog-eat-dog on that site and there's a lot of scams, but there are some legitimate businesses sold there so it's

worth watching. Site's are sold at auction there, so you can bid on them much like on eBay.

Empire Flippers does a lot more work vetting the websites they broker and they also fetch higher prices in general (20x monthly earnings standard cost), but there's no bidding element like there is in Flippa.

## ***Chapter 13 Summary + Tasks***

There are many ways to monetize a website with traffic, so in the beginning, our focus should be generating traffic. This helps to build a strong foundation to our business by giving us:

- Motivation, since it's easier to reach traffic goals than money goals at this point
- Accurate data collection, to give us indication if changes we make are actually working
- Hints about which direction to steer out site

Although we discussed many ways to earn money from a website, the focus of this book is monetizing our Wordpress blog with affiliate programs. This is where I've made the most money in the past half-decade, and I believe it's the easiest, most cost effective, and most profitable way for a new online marketer to make his first dollar.

### **Tasks For This Chapter**

1. Take a look at Flippa and Empire Flippers to see what type of websites are for sale and how much they are selling for

### **External Resources**

<https://my.wealthyaffiliate.com/training/where-to-add-affiliate-links-for-results>

# CHAPTER FOURTEEN

## *Putting It All Together*

# *Order of Events*

Alrighty! We've covered pretty much everything. Still not making money? LOL. Yeah, there's a lot more we still have to do to get you from where you are now to where you want to be. The main things you are lacking right now as far as I see it are an action plan of what needs to be done, and tutorials on how to actually do it. In this chapter I'm going to set you up with the action plan part of stuff, and in the last chapter of the book I want to direct you to some training you can follow along with, plus, how to find other people just like you that you can chat with for assistance and peer review as you grow your business.

Let's start broad, here's what we need to do to get your business running and making money.

1. Pick a topic (Chapter 2, 3)
2. Set up your website (Chapter 4, 5, 6)
3. Write articles for your website (Chapter 7, 8, 9)
4. Find products to promote (Chapter 13)
5. Direct traffic to your money pages (Chapter 10, 11, 12)
6. Refine the process as you grow

When I lay it out like that, it doesn't look that difficult, right? The points where most people will fail is #3 and #6. Content is hard for many people because they just don't have the self confidence to believe that what they write is good enough. Even for those that believe it's good enough, they often lack the motivation to continue writing when they aren't seeing any earnings from their efforts.

I see so many people start this process and quit half way. I know how they feel – it's extremely difficult to continue work on a business that seems like

it's never going to make money. It's like building a space ship from some alien blueprints. Sure, the blueprints says it works, but how can you really know? **Who wants to waste 3 years of their life building something you've never seen before just because some piece of paper says it's supposed to work?**

The main difference I see between those that succeed and those that fail is this: People that succeed in this business KNOW that it's possible to make money online, and dedicate time to learning which way is going to work for them. If you go into this venture thinking that you will 'try it out' for 3 months and quit if you don't see results, you are starting out with the wrong attitude.

Remember the ten year analogy from Chapter 2? Let's discuss it again. Ten years in the future you are looking back on the past decade. You remember struggling for 1 year with your business, and then it took off and you enjoyed 9 years of profit. *Would you be satisfied?*

Now pretend that you spent 2 years struggling and enjoyed 8 years of profit? *Would it be worth it?*

Let's go to the extreme and say that you struggled for the past 10 years but are finally profitable enough to work from home and can enjoy the rest of your life working for yourself. You had so many failures that you could write a book about it, and are confident that no matter what the internet throws at you, you and your business will be fine. *Are you willing to work 10 years for financial freedom for the rest of your life?*

I think most people would take any one of those examples, even the last one, if they knew that it was going to work. Failure starts to creep in when they stop believing in themselves or the system they are following. I don't have an easy answer to keeping yourself motivated during the journey ahead of you, but this is how I always kept myself working even when I felt unmotivated: I told myself that learning how to make money online was

no different than learning a language or learning an instrument. If I practice every day, I will become good at it.

I don't know if you find that inspirational or not, but I do. I was lucky enough to have a good amount of sales coming in by the sixth month of starting to build my niche websites. I thank my lucky stars every day that I didn't give up before that. What a crazy world I would live in if in the fifth month I called it quits.

## *Daily Schedule*

It's hard to know what to expect of yourself if you've never run a business, so I'll let you know how I got started and what my daily schedule looks like now. I know a lot of you will have to juggle a job, a family, and other life events, so if you want to see results, you need to find time to work on your business. In the world of life, "I don't have time" = *No Results*.

When I started my first website I was living in China working off of a 3 year old laptop on a cheap plexiglass and wicker table too short for me so I had to hunch over to type or have the clogged fan burn my legs while I worked on the couch. I was also running a coffee takeout business I started with my friend, hand delivering fresh-brewed coffee to the city of Longyan from my 7th floor apartment that didn't have an elevator (yeah, I lost a lot of weight that year) During the summer I had 8-12 hours of teaching per day.

No, I don't mean to amaze you (but kind of hope I did) – I just want to show you that with the right mindset you'll find the time for anything. What was my motivation? I was sick of living in China! It was my 5th year and every person calling me Lao Wai on the street was just one step closer to me having a mental meltdown. I was working a dead-end job, teaching kids that didn't listen, and all my friends were starting to get married and have kids (Boo hoo, sad story, I know).

But I didn't have a college degree, and didn't want to come back to the US after ten years abroad to clean toilets at McDonalds. I had to figure something out, and because I didn't have any other choice, I found the time where most people couldn't.

Between coffee orders I watched training videos. When I had an hour off at lunch I wrote an article (or part of one). I stopped going out 4 nights a week. My mind was always thinking of what I needed to do differently in order to start making money.



No, you don't need to dedicate your entire life to your business at this point. Ease into it and avoid burnout! But the truth is that I saw fast and excellent results because I put that much effort into my business. Yes, you can get away with an hour or two per day. That's a great way to start! But compared to someone that puts 5 hours per day into their business, you are going to see 1/2 of the results that they do.

Here's a glimpse at what my day looks like now:

8:00AM Wake up & eat

9:00AM Answer emails, respond to messages

10:00AM Research & write an article before 12

12:00PM Lunch

1:00PM More emails, messages, comment moderation

Afternoon: Gym, projects around the house

6:00PM Dinner, relax

7:00PM Research & write an article

Extra Time: Training, Tutorials, Extra

11:00PM Watch a movie, have a beer

12-1 Go to bed

Now, because I work with a lot of people helping them get their businesses set up, I spend a lot of time answering emails, moderating comments, and responding to messages. If I didn't have a website in the 'make money online' niche, I would dedicate much more time to research and writing original content for my website.

The biggest issue with my schedule now is that my entire day is dedicated to my business. I know, I know, everyone gets into the 'work from home'

thing because they want more freedom, and I seem to have created another job for myself. But to be honest, it's pretty fun. I work my butt off for most weeks, but then I take long vacations. I spent a week in Vegas last year, and was in San Diego this June for the National Homebrewers Conference. I just got back from a twenty day motorcycle trip from California to New York and back. In the meantime, I've also experienced a 85% growth in net profit between 2013 and 2014.

When was the last time you got a 85% raise? Comparing my wage from China to what I'm making now, I'm now making ten times what I was earning then. I could probably chill out and work less, but seeing as I don't have a pension or any benefits, I want to plan for the future by making more money now.

The most amazing thing about affiliate marketing is that the amount of work you put into your business is the amount of money you get out of it. It may not be on a day-to-day basis like a regular job (work eight hours, make \$100), but if you stick with it, you eventually see ROI on all of your efforts.

*NOTE: Please don't take any of these income stats as bragging. I just want to give an example of what kind of exponential income creation and growth is possible if you put in the work.*

## ***Burning Questions***

After reading those 50,000+ words, you've probably got some questions. Here are the ones I get most often. I've included some links to one of my blogs where I write about my journey as an internet marketer. You can read these additional posts if you have time and want to dig into the subject more. There are also comments from other professional and beginner internet entrepreneurs worth reading.

### **How Long Before I See Results?**

I already touched on this a bit, but it's worth going over again. There really is no way to say when you'll start seeing results. Some people see traffic and a few sales in as little as three weeks. Others take more than a year before it 'clicks' and they start getting results.

I would say that most people that work on their business daily will at least see traffic coming in within the first few months of their business being online. Of this group, those that continue to create content and tweak their website can see regular sales coming in within a year. Three months is kind of a 'break through' point for many websites, and about six months is a sales milestone for many.

Additional Reading: <https://my.wealthyaffiliate.com/nathaniell/blog/how-long-before-i-see-results>

### **How Much Should I Be Working On My Site?**

It really depends on what type of results you want to see. It's like a student asking, "How much should I study to pass the test?". You can study two hours per week and maybe pass, or you can study two hours every day and finish the test in half the time with 100% passing grade.

There won't be anyone looking over your shoulder telling you to get moving. Decide what results you want to see, and be realistic about what you can do to reach that goal.

Additional Reading: <https://my.wealthyaffiliate.com/nathaniell/blog/whats-my-1-advantage>

## **How Do I Know if My Niche Is Profitable?**

Though any niche can make money, some topics are ‘hotter’ than others. How do you know which one is a slam dunk and which one isn’t? It’s impossible to know as a newbie. Sure, there are ways to look into what’s trendy or what products are selling, but to be honest, this is very difficult when you have so little experience in online marketing. This is why I spent so little time talking about niche research.

Would you rather get started now, knowing that you can make some money (even if it’s just a little) or spend a month researching various topic and still be unsure if it’s going to be a grand slam millionaire website? I’d rather see you get started in something you are interested in to serve as motivation. Make some money, and when you are a bit more savvy you can start another website. Otherwise, everyone is just going to start in the weight loss, dating, or make money niche. Boring!

Additional Reading: <https://my.wealthyaffiliate.com/nathaniell/blog/but-im-not-an-expert>

## **Should I Make One Site Or A Bunch Of Them?**

A lot of people like the idea of having a portfolio of niche websites in different industries to diversify their income. This can be a good idea if you have the resources, skills, money, and time to manage these sites. I have about 10 websites that currently make income.

But I don’t work on all of them at the same time! Building more than one business at a time is going to be extremely difficult. Considering that you are still in the learning phase, and any mistake you make will be across multiple businesses instead of just one!

Start with one site until you feel you can manage it easily, either because content creation is a no-brainer for you or you have the resources to pay

someone to manage it for you. Then start on business #2 if you want. You might find that your first website exceeds your expectations and you don't need a second one.

Additional Reading: <https://my.wealthyaffiliate.com/nathaniell/blog/5-failed-websites-from-nathaniell>

Additional Reading: <https://my.wealthyaffiliate.com/nathaniell/blog/nate-s-niche-reveal>

## **What Are Good Traffic Stats?**

Sorry, this is another “it depends” question. I have one site that gets only 50 visits per day but makes over \$2000 per month. I have another site with 200 visits per day that makes less than \$1000 per month. One site I created has 20 visits a day and makes about \$400 per year.

You can make \$10,000 per month from 1500 visits per day or 10,000 visits per day doing affiliate marketing. Using Google AdSense, you will need a whole lot more visits to make just as much money.

A lot depends on the method of monetization, quality of traffic, and effectiveness of your content. There's no right answer for this one!

## **How Much Money Can I Make?**

To be honest, the sky is the limit. You might max out one website's earnings at \$1000 per month. The next step would be to pay someone \$200 per month to manage it, and now you have \$800 passive income! Start a second site. Maybe this one makes \$5000 per month. Pay someone \$350 per month to manage it, and now your income has grown, but you are using less time than before.

You might also discover that this one website is your true passion and you only want to focus on this one niche. That's fine! Maybe you are getting 1000 visits per day and making \$3000 per month but you want to earn more. Start a YouTube channel and drive more traffic to your website.

Be more active in social media and get more recognition from the pros. Spend more time creating original content and rank better in Google.

Do more reviews. Find more products to promote. All of that increased traffic and those new monetization methods will lead to more money in your pocket.

There are many ways to expand your income once you're earning. My main limitation right now is time management. How do I effectively maintain my current income while looking into new possibilities for income? It's a balancing act that you too will need to face at one point. There truly is no limit to how much you can earn online because anything can be doubled, tripled, etc with good management skills.

## **Am I Doing This Right?**

This is very hard to answer without me looking at what you are doing right now. As a kind of "self check", go back and look at the content you are creating.

- Is it interesting?
- Do you enjoy reading it?
- Is the page nice to look at?
- Does it address the topic in a complete manner?

If you answered YES to all those questions, then you are at least moving in the right direction. Remember, traffic is the goal at first. Once you have traffic, you can analyze the data and look for ways to make money from it. Got traffic and still not making money? Then it gets a bit more complicated, and you need to learn about how to tweak your site to improve it and make it more effective at earning money.

I mentioned before that I work with new affiliate marketers to help them get their business moving in the right direction. I'll provide you with some

resources at the end of the book where you can continue your training and connect with other new online business owners to share ideas and get feedback.

# CHAPTER FIFTEEN

## *Outsourcing*



# *Getting Started Guide*

Outsourcing stuff on your website is a lot easier than you think, so I'll be covering it in just one section of this book. Your first job will be a bit scary, but once you get the hang of it you'll probably go on a power trip! It can be a lot of fun knowing that you have some people working on stuff for you behind the scenes.

Keep in mind though, that it's going to be a learning process. You will make some mistakes along the way, and those mistakes will cost you not just time, but money as well. Just make sure you have enough money to cover the costs, and remind yourself that every mistake made is a lesson learned, so it's kind of like paying for knowledge via the School of Hard Knocks (to your wallet). Just this year I spent over \$1000 for a project I "knew" I wanted to do, then ended up not following through with it and deleting all the work the person did.

\$1k down the toilet was a real bummer. I've outsourced a lot of stuff over the years, and hopefully you can benefit from my mistakes.

## **What To Outsource**

For your first job, there are two very good ways to start. One way is to start with something you already know how to do, but hate doing. It should be something that is repetitive, and can be learned. For example, you can hire someone to do your social media work, like having someone share an interesting article on your Facebook page every day.

Between researching, reading, and writing, it might take them 30 minutes. Paying them \$10/hour, that's \$5/day, five days a week. Is Facebook activity every day that you don't have to worry about worth \$25/week? You will have to be the judge of that.

Another thing you can do is outsource one-time jobs that you cannot do. For example, maybe you want a logo designed or a certain look added

to your website. You can hire a coder or designer to do something for you based on your specifications. How much should you pay? Do a Google search and see what tips come up. Also, you can just create a job and see what bids come in. You will get a wide variety of bids, so you can start to see what's "average" and what's above/below that.

The things I outsource most are menial tasks and writing. Earlier this year I had to remove some code from my blog, but it had to be removed from over 800 pages. I hired someone for \$6/hour to do it and it only cost me \$100 instead of 5 days of my personal time. I also have regular writers to some of my websites, and I'll discuss hiring writers in this section.

Here's a list of mistakes I've made over the years, that I want you to try to avoid!

## **Big Mistake #1: Not wanting to 'waste time' in the hiring process**

I hired a lot of low-quality workers simply because I didn't do my homework and take the time to talk to a few people. I wanted someone to do the job NOW because I needed it done and didn't want to do it. But I didn't want to waste time telling them how to do it, when I could use the same time to just do it myself.

Most of the time this resulted in me hiring low quality contractors that didn't fully understand the job, and a finished product I wasn't happy with.

Some contractors are very self-sufficient and have experience to match your requests but you have to sift through a bunch of the other kind to find these guys. Some contractors need to be babied and hand-held every step of the way. The former charge more, the latter charge less. You have to decide which to hire based on your time and your money.

Remember! Even if they do poor work, you still have to pay them.

## **Big Mistake #2: Hiring the Cheapest Person**

Sometimes it's great to get a deal, and there are some really good contractors out there that will do awesome work for a sweet price. But most of the time when you accept the lowest bid, you are getting someone that will slam it out quickly.

A lot of these guys will just say, "Yes, I understand" to everything you ask, no matter what. They want to deliver the ultimate customer experience to your utmost satisfaction...until you request a re-do three times because they just don't get it. Their response times will get slower and slower until you get fed up and end the project frustrated.

Check reviews of the people you plan to hire (most outsourcing websites have some kind of feedback system) and try to read between the lines. Are the good reviews just being polite or are bad reviews from a project manager that set them up for failure? Look for details about what exactly made this person such an excellent/poor hire. Use your instincts.

## **Big Mistake #3: Trusting That Everyone Cares**

Perhaps I'm just naive, but when I started hiring people I just thought that if I gave people a task they would do it 100% to the quality I expected. I found out quickly that they don't. I guess it makes sense – it's not their business. They want to earn some money and move on to the next project. Very few people go above and beyond (BTW if you find one that does, keep in contact with them).

The more specific you are with what you expect, the better results you'll see. Telling someone, "I want a cool logo for my landscaping business" doesn't mean squat. Give specific ideas, find examples, and be clear with corrections you have so they can make changes with confidence.

## **Big Mistake #4: Hiring Fluff Writers**

The thing I have wasted most money on in my time as an online marketer is what I call “fluff writers”. I was so concerned about having my blog active and producing content that I just wanted a writer to ‘write anything’ on a weekly basis. I didn’t want to have anything to do with the process, and wanted my blogs to basically run on autopilot.

So I had about ten websites that I hired writers for, and had each writer blog two times per week. They did the research, the writing, found pictures, and published the posts. I think I paid them about \$20 per five hundred word post they published (counting two hours, \$10/hour), so was spending \$20 per week times ten. That worked out to \$200 per week, or \$800 per month.

I got pretty much no results from this. The content wasn’t targeted, and certainly wasn’t inspired. It was just words on a page that didn’t reach out to anyone, and was a huge waste of money.

## **Big Mistake #5: High Volume Tasks Without Checkpoints**

If you are hiring someone for a big project, take the time to walk them through the process and check their work in the beginning as well as throughout the project.

It is a great feeling to have a big project done, the right way, without you needing stick your nose in every 5 days. But it’s an absolute horrible feeling to have that same project finish with a few mistakes repeated over and over again. It’s your fault for not paying attention, and now you either have to pay this person MORE money to do it right the second time, or hire someone completely new to fix their mistakes or start from scratch.

Here’s what works for me: Create a video showing them how to do it. Ask them to do it once with you live (via Skype or chat). Check their work. Ask them to do a few more the next day, then stop. Check their work and offer suggestions. Then have them work for a week, then stop (or report when

done). Check their work. Then send them off to finish the rest and check in weekly.

This very much depends on the size of the project, but that initial phase of you being 100% sure that they know what they're doing is very important and can affect the overall satisfaction of both you and the contractor when everything is done.

## **Outsourcing Content**

Most of you will probably be looking to outsource articles at some point in the future, if not right from the beginning. I'll tell you right now – outsourcing good writing is one of the toughest things to do.

When you are writing for yourself, you can write a 500 word, mediocre article that goes nowhere and it doesn't cost you anything but time. Not only is it free, but you get some experience and knowledge about your niche that can be used later. Outsource that same article to a native English speaker and it will cost you between \$10 and \$100, and the quality will vary just as much!

## **How To Get Good Content Written**

There are two ways to get good content written for your website, and neither of them are easy. However, it is very much worth your time to find a good writer or two. Having a writer produce content for you on a regular basis, the way you like it, and that converts to sales will help create more time for you to think about how to grow your business and make more money.

The first method is more random, but worth looking into. You need to find a writer that actually knows a lot about what you are writing about. If you can find someone with either direct experience or at least experience writing about your niche, that's a huge step in the right direction. However, remember that specialized writers are probably going to charge more!

The other method is to train someone. It won't work for all niches, but I have done this before, and it worked great for me. I actually paid someone to take some online classes about a subject I wanted them to write about. They then used that knowledge to write for my website. This is a huge commitment though, and I would only try it with someone you trust. The writer I had trained was someone that had written content for other websites I owned before and was confident that this was a trustworthy person that would actually learn the material and could use it effectively in the articles.

Some writers are very good at being chameleons. They can do proper research and write excellent articles on a variety of topics. To find one of these writers there's no easy advice except to hire different people until you find one that meets your expectations.

Speaking of expectations, you are 1/2 of the equation! You can't expect a freelance writer to read your mind. The more you communicate your expectations, and offer suggestions for corrections (stylistic or formatting), a good writer will learn what you are looking for and change accordingly. Being able to talk to someone on this 1-on-1 basis is why I like to hire writers on Freelancer and Upwork instead of content farms like iWriter which produce a lot of 'vanilla' articles.

## **Tips For Hiring Writers**

- Hire a new writer for a short project so you can easily end the contract if they don't turn out well.
- Don't hire non-native English speakers unless their English is stellar and you have low expectations. It shows in the writing, no matter how much you want to believe it "isn't that bad" (there are exceptions, for example, many people from northern European countries have excellent English skills).
- Have very specific requirements like keyword usage, heading usage, paragraph size, number of paragraphs, etc. The more specific you can

get, the more they will be able to write like you want them to

- Give examples of good articles that they can emulate the writing style of or take pointers from
- Decide if you want them to write just content for you or create a whole blog post with images, links, text formatting, etc
- Make sure you have a goal in mind. Are they writing just for the sake of content? (See Big Mistake #4)
- Give up some control because you can't make someone write exactly like you

The last tip is for people like me. You might be hiring someone because you think you can't write very well, and will be happy with a professional writer's work. For me, I wish I had the time to write everything myself because I love the content I write (sorry, but it's true). I'm a bit of a control freak when it comes to writing style, and I have to remind myself that sometimes content can be good even if I didn't write it.

## **Final Word**

This is a journey you will have to travel yourself to find what works for you, your website, and your style of working with people. Start with a few small projects as practice, and work your way up from there as you think of more things you can outsource. I mentioned before that *time* is the main limitation you face when growing your income online. If you can outsource properly, time becomes nothing but a dollar amount that you can pay for with your profit and grow your business to infinity. Just remember to start slow and don't blow your budget.

# CHAPTER SIXTEEN

## *Shiny Objects*



# *Pitfalls For New Blog Owners*

The allure of shortcuts is the pitfall for many new marketers online. Some people start out wanting (or needing) fast results, while others get frustrated with the slow speed of their progress. It doesn't matter what method you're using to make money online, unless you start out with previous experience or training of some kind, making consistent profit is going to take time, and require a lot of mistakes. As soon as you start taking shortcuts or looking for "the easy way", you become susceptible to scam artists who feed right into your desires.

I write about scams every day, so there's no way I can cover them all. Thousands are created every year, all under the similar banner of learning the secrets to success so you can make money fast, with no work, guaranteed or your money back. Though I can't show you all the scams, I can generalize a bit and help you defend yourself against typical misleading offers, programs, and guides.

**Fast Traffic Methods:** The only way to get fast traffic is to pay for it. Any other kind of traffic requires work and time. There may be some exceptions to the rule, like images and videos going viral, but there's no way to put 'popularity' into a formula. Anyone that promises fast, unlimited, free, targeted traffic is lying to you.

Also, stay clear of "traffic packages", as most of the time they are outsourced to click farms located in developing countries.

**Secret Traffic Loopholes:** A similar, but equally misleading method is the "amazing secret traffic source" that you can buy for just \$5.95. People talk about where to get traffic all the time on forums and blogs, and the vast majority of traffic sources are already known and published somewhere on the internet. That secret method you just bought is most likely a website you already know, with a link to your own website pasted somewhere. I've

bought products that named, Facebook pages, Reddit, Imgur, and Yahoo Answers as their ultimate secret. Not surprised or impressed? Me either.

**Skyrocket Your Earnings:** Very rarely does someone stumble upon something that makes a huge change in their business overnight. In my experience, income increases have come over a long period of time, with a lot of changes in between. I have grown my income 1000%+ over the past 5 years, but there's no single thing I did to accomplish this except to learn from my mistakes and always try to improve my business.

**Make Money Fast:** The vast majority of make-money-fast guides involve reselling what you just bought to friends and family. For example, the oldest trick in the book is to sell someone a product that teaches them how to make money quickly and inside product is says to resell it to two friends! Another example is if you have to pay to join a membership, and are then encouraged to sell this 'business opportunity' to people you know.

One more common quick-profit scheme is to spam affiliate links anywhere possible. A popular example is to upload videos to YouTube then put affiliate links to ebooks in the description. Can it make money? Yeah. But conversions are extremely low if any, and most of what you are doing is annoying people instead of starting a real business.

Recently, binary options trading software has become popular. This has replaced the Forex trading scams from a decade ago. You have to deposit \$250 and the software is supposed to tell you which way the stock market is going to you can make winning trades. Personally, I think if something like that truly existed it would cost \$250 million instead of \$250 dollars.

**Autopilot Profits:** Does making money with no work sound appealing to you? Yeah, me too. Make money while you sleep, while someone else turns all the gears of the business for you. Sorry, that's just not the way the world works. If you want money, you have to work for it.

Can you make money in your sleep? Absolutely. I do it all the time. But remember that I work during the day, and worked on my websites for

several months without profiting at all. Anyone who claims “instant profit on autopilot” is either lying to you, or has a lot of experience and crafted a decent plan before launching their idea.

Making money on autopilot is possible, but someone still has to be in the driver seat and know how to work the controls. You have to learn how business works, how to pay people to run it, and how to make sure you make more money than you are paying people. There is no ‘set and forget’ system or ‘virtual ATM’.

Interesting Read: <https://my.wealthyaffiliate.com/nathaniell/blog/back-in-business>

**Done For You Systems:** This is another idea that appeals to lazy people who don’t want to put in the work required to start a business. The “done for you” thing is promoted in many types of online marketing. DFY email campaigns, DFY affiliate websites, and DFY passive income. Sorry, but nobody is going to do the work on your business for free, and website visitors are not going to buy something from you without a good reason.

I get emails like this all the time: “I have no job, and need rent money in a week. I also have two kids, and no time to run a business. Can you build the website for me and get it profitable, then I’ll give you 20% of the profits. Make it snappy. Thanks”

Yes, that’s an exaggerated look at some of the emails I receive, but lots of people do actually believe that there’s some kind of done for you system out there. Let me drill this into your head again – there is no easy money out there, at all. Every single dollar ever earned in the history of online business took some kind of work, somewhere. The sooner you get ready to put in the time, the closer you will get to actually turning a profit.

# **CHAPTER SEVENTEEN**

## ***Funding Your Business***

# *Are You Willing To Work?*

## **Money For Startup**

Lots of you are starting out on a budget and feel like you don't have enough money to start a business. Actually, it's just \$11/year for a domain and \$100/year for hosting. That means it's about \$0.30 to run an online business. If you don't have that much money, personally, I think you need to get your finances squared away before you think about starting a business.

Once you factor in any kind of training, any kind work on your website, themes, plugins, and whatever else comes up, it's clear that having at least a bit of disposable cash on hand to run your business is a good idea. In my first year of business I spent \$600. That's amazing compared to the \$100k+ that most brick and mortar businesses need, but it's not like any of us have hundreds of idle dollars just laying around. So let's talk about funding your business with other online work.

If you truly are in need of money and at the same time are 100% committed to starting an online business, you are going to have to work extra hard. You might not even realize right now how hard you have to work – that's how hard.

The good news is that you have at least two skills *right now* that you can use to make money to fund your business. It won't be tons of money, but it'll be extra money that you didn't have before. I'm talking about finding work online. My favorite site is oDesk (now Upwork), but Freelancer is another one, and there are many more.

## **1. Be a VA (virtual assistant)**

People need all kinds of mini-jobs done online. You can answer emails, manage social media campaigns, sort through photos, spell check, do photo editing, help research topics, and a host of other things. You'll have to browse jobs and see what skills you have that can be marketed. There's a very good chance that you can do *something*, but you have to look for it because the job isn't just going to land in your lap.

To compete with developing countries, you may have to work for \$5 an hour, but the work can be done in the evenings or whenever you have time. Some jobs that require more brain power or experience can pay \$10, \$20 or more per hour. Just five extra hours of work per week at \$5 per hour is still \$100 extra dollars per month to put towards your business.

## **2. Write Articles**

Native English speakers are in demand, and if you sell your English writing skills at a discount, you can definitely win some job bids. Once you get a decent portfolio of satisfied customers and writing projects complete, you can start to charge more.

As I mentioned in the outsourcing section, finding good writers is hard. Be a good writer, and you'll be in demand. Afraid of writing or working online? You have to start somewhere, and fear is not an option for those that want to turn over a new leaf in their life.

One really good article can land you \$50. Write one article a week, and that's another \$200/month you have in your pocket that can be used to fund your business.

## **Only 24 Hours In The Day**

Those that are not battling money issues are worried about time. They have kids, a wife or husband, a full time job, and other commitments. Time constraints I understand, but again, we all have to make choices. If you want to create change, *you* need to be the catalyst for that change.

There are tons of ways to be more efficient, like the pomodoro technique, which requires you to work for 25 minutes then rest 5 minutes. There are many different ways to get up earlier in the day and squeeze an extra hour or two of work in the morning before the family wakes up.

Whatever technique you find or philosophy you adopt, you need to find at least an hour a day to commit to *learning* (even by making mistakes) and *doing* (getting real work done) things on your business. Doing something unproductive while you think about how nice it would be to have passive income isn't going to get you anywhere.

Don't burn yourself out though! There's no use in spending 8 hours a day for the next week getting your business rolling if you are just going to get frustrated and give up some time in the next month. When I started out with my first website, I only worked on it about 3 hours a week. Then I started doing one hour a day, then two hours day, and eventually I quit my job and went full time.

There's no way I could have built my business to the size it is today continuing to work just three hours a week. But if I started out working 10+ hours a day like I do sometimes now, there's no way I would have survived the first month! I built a tolerance and an affinity to affiliate marketing over time, and I think the same method could work for you.

# CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

## *Summary*



## *What Did We Learn?*

So, you are finally here! You've reached the end of the book, and the beginning of the rest of your training. If you have read through this whole book, you have taken a great step in the right direction, and shown commitment to starting your first affiliate marketing website. If you got bored half way through and skipped a bunch of chapters to see what happens at the end, just remember that skipping steps in the real world of business just means you don't get results.

Either way, it's time to take action. Let's do a review of what we've learned, then we'll take a look at how to continue your training in the next chapter.

Here is the basic broad concept of what we are doing in order to earn money with our affiliate marketing blog.

1. Pick a topic (Chapter 2, 3)
2. Set up your website (Chapter 4, 5, 6)
3. Write articles for your website (Chapter 7, 8, 9)
4. Find products to promote (Chapter 13)
5. Direct traffic to your money pages (Chapter 10, 11, 12)

Written like that it may look uneventful, but that's really the basics of what we're doing, and how I run my business.

*It's simple, but it's not easy!*

The vast majority of my time every day is spent writing in one way or another. Now I'm answering a lot of emails, responding to comments, and creating training, but I also do a lot of writing for my websites. I write a blog post every day for One More Cup of Coffee, sometimes two in one day. On top of that, I also have two writers on staff that I have write 5-10 post per week that I also publish to various websites.

No, you don't have to start out with that much work, but you do need to realize that you have to put in time to get this business off the ground.

The other thing you need to really consider right now is how much commitment you actually have to this venture. Can you work 3 months without seeing any profit? 6 months? A year? If you are planning to "test the waters" for a few weeks to see if you can save up for a new Xbox, this is the wrong type of business venture for you. If you need to pay the rent in three weeks, start looking for jobs on Upwork first, and come back to affiliate marketing when you have more time.

Maybe aside from time commitments, you also should consider how bad you want this. There are going to be a lot of ups and downs during your journey to profitability. I actually quit working on my websites for a short period of time about 4 months after building them because I was just too busy with the cafe and the sites weren't making that much money.

Lucky for me, we shut down the cafe just two months later because of some financial issues, and now I had no choice but to dedicate more time to my sites. By the year anniversary of building my very first website, I had made \$4,000 and invested just \$600 into training, outsourcing, etc. By year two I had quit my job in China and was moving back to the US to do internet marketing full time. It's been almost 5 years since I started. Imagine if I had quit everything at the 4- month mark?

One piece of advice I really want to stick with you is that you need to prepare for feeling frustrated, confused, and wanting to give up. *Know* that it's coming, and understand that it will pass. Learning any new skill is going to be difficult!

Count your successes in small doses. Did you get an article published today? Congrats! Did you get ten visits today instead of just two? Awesome! Did you watch another instructional video and learn something new? That's another success. If you beat yourself over the head every day that you don't make money you are going to go crazy.

I hope I didn't scare you off with all this "work" talk, but I want to make sure you have some tempered expectations of what building a business is actually like (or at least what it's been like for me).

If you can work through those times though, the stuff you will be able to enjoy at the end of your journey will be amazing. You can wake up whatever time you want, spend more time with your family, buy the food and drink you always tell yourself is not in your budget, and have the freedom to say what's a work day and what's vacation time. I wouldn't trade this freedom for anything in the world!

# **CHAPTER NINETEEN**

***Taking Action From This Point***

## *More training, video, step by step, visuals*

Did I ever tell you the story of how I got my first website up and running? I started out with no experience at all, and not a clue of how to market affiliate products online. The online business training center that taught me everything I know today, including the information you learned while reading this book, is called Wealthy Affiliate ([WAsignup.com](https://www.wa-signup.com)). It's an awesome community of internet marketing beginners and experts sharing tips and advice on how to get profitable.

There really is no other community like it, because they are very straightforward in how they market themselves. They do not tolerate any spam or solicitation from other members within the community, and keep the vibe very positive. This is in stark contrast to a lot of the other online marketing communities that greet you with the cold shoulder and assume you are savvy enough to know the difference between legit and poor advice.

The Wealthy Affiliate community had a huge hand in my success as an online marketer not just from a technical standpoint of helping me get my site up and running, but also that they supported me when I felt frustrated or confused about the direction of my business.

If you are excited to get started but worried about taking that very first step, Wealthy Affiliate is for you. I mentioned a few times throughout the book that I spend a lot of time helping new online business owners get their first website up and running, as well as offer support during the building process. I offer this support through Wealthy Affiliate. I publish training videos, tutorials, and lots of blog posts with insights into my old and new marketing campaigns.

It's a paid membership site, so I am able to refer people to the website for a commission, then manage my referrals and help them through the support systems Wealthy Affiliate has set up. You can comment on training

modules, contact me and other members via private message, or post public questions in the forum. As your referrer, I get notified every time you need assistance and can post answers publicly or privately.

They also make my job as mentor much easier since they have systems in place to help you set up your website like push-button website creation, **free hosting + hosting support**, and step-by-step training to help you start your affiliate business. You'll see a lot of the same info in the training as you just read in this book, but in a lot more detail, accompanied by pictures and over-the-shoulder video training.

Remember, hosting alone will cost you about \$100 per year, so free hosting included in your membership is a real deal!

If you would like to be able to personally contact me for 1-on-1 support to discuss anything related to your website or online business (yes, it's actually me, not some outsourced support desk), I offer this service as a bonus for anyone that joins the Wealthy Affiliate Premium membership. Instead of doing some kind of expensive consulting at \$100/hour, you pay \$47/month for a membership to this website.

So, not only do you get access to the hundreds of video/written training modules, step by step affiliate marketing lessons, weekly live webinars, live chat with other members, and a forum to ask questions, you also get direct access to me while you build your business.

I am currently running a full time internet marketing business, and will still take time out of my day to help you. Imagine if you could contact Elon Musk or Richard Branson about your business goals! Imagine if you could shoot hoops with Kobe Bryant or ask Warren Buffet what his stock picks are going to be next month! This is your chance to connect personally with an expert in the field, and have some guidance while you take your first steps into the world of internet business.

They offer a totally free version of their membership for anyone that just wants to see inside, take 10 beginner lessons, and chat to other members

about their businesses. If you would like to join the community for free and see what it's like, plus enroll to have personal access to me during your free membership period you can sign up using this link: [WAsignup.com](http://WAsignup.com)

That will redirect you to a signup page where you can choose a username and password, and start on your free lessons. Live chat will be open to you for 7 full days, so if you have any questions, you can ask anyone hanging out in the chat area, or you can leave a message on my profile.

My username is 'nathaniell', and I'm on the website just about every day (unless I'm brewing beer).

Oh, and I also want to add, that as a member of WA and my referral, you will also receive monthly checkups from me, and access to exclusive training NOT published to the internet. I make it my mission to see your website through to profitability!

Even if you don't sign up for continued training and support through Wealthy Affiliate, I hope that his book gets you and your business started in the right direction. You can also see a series of 10 in-depth blog posts I've done on the topic of getting your business running, complete with videos and expanded resources here: <http://onemorecupof-coffee.com/tag/bnmg/>

Additional Reading

Full Wealthy Affiliate Review: <http://onemorecupof-coffee.com/wealthy-affiliate-review/>

5 Day Beginner Email Course on Affiliate Marketing: <http://onemorecupof-coffee.com/learn-to-make-money-online/>