

Operation Money Pump



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Introduction

Welcome to Operation Money Pump. By now, you're already one step closer to untold online riches, IF you're prepared to work for it. The following information is strictly confidential, and should never be reproduced or repeated. By following the instructions in this book, you *will* make money. I won't beat around the bush any longer – I'm going to share with you everything I know about making money online, no-holds-barred, over the coming chapters. With step by step instructions, you will learn precisely how I, and others, go about making money, with some of the most effective, innovative strategies for specifically online markets.

Never before has there been such scope for riches and making money as there is today on the Internet. Predominantly through marketing information products and services to an online customer base, you can make literally millions of dollars - with a little help from this book of course. Learning the tried and tested strategies will give you the opportunity to generate at least enough to quit your day job, and probably enough to secure you financially for the rest of your life.

Important: Given how many of my readers prefer things the easy way, I wanted to mention an additional opportunity that is only open to OMP customers and only for a super limited period of time: what I decided to call the *Automated Money Pump*. The Automated Money Pump is a collection of affiliate tools and training content that literally puts the weapons of a six figure affiliate in your hands. It's quite simply your best chance to profit on-line without wasting hours creating campaigns. If you have ever wondered how some affiliates come make money from the start, slash their Adwords costs... and do it all with minimal effort, this is the answer.

The software cost over \$10,000 to develop, and it automates every stage of the affiliate process – from creating your Adwords ads to generating entire ClickBank campaigns. The software also allows you to generate unlimited cash-pulling affiliate websites, and “Google Cash” affiliate campaigns.

<http://www.automatedmoneypump.com>

I strongly recommend that anyone interested in becoming a full-time affiliate marketer as quickly as possible invests in the Automated Money Pump package:

<http://www.automatedmoneypump.com>

Now, what many people don't understand about affiliate marketing, or Internet marketing at a wider level, is that it isn't just as simple as shoving up a sales page and waiting for the customers. You really have to work at it, and it takes time and effort to learn and implement the fundamentals of Internet marketing, which vary greatly from 'real world' marketing practices.

The Internet has been both a commercial and social revolution, changing the face of business, and our lives, forever. In fact, given the prevalence of the Internet in everything we do, it's hard to imagine a time where we couldn't have access to what is essentially an infinite source of knowledge. Aside from the educational purposes of the Internet, it has also grown and developed into a commercial marketplace, bringing

together offline businesses from across the globe, opening up customers from the further regions of forgotten lands and presenting a marketplace for exclusively online trade, of which Internet Marketing deals with.

Over the last decade, the Internet has grown to penetrate our daily lives to a degree that none of us could have expected. While this good news for education and information, it's also great news for those savvy enough to seize the earning potential of a truly global market place, with direct channels into our homes, schools and workplaces.

The power of the Internet is as vast as its size, and where there is media there is money. Having access to this immense pool of potential customers is lucrative, provided there is a suitable conversion rate that can be attained. With a literally limitless supply of customers, any product can be marketed online at lower cost and, theoretically, more profitably than by offline means. Fortunately, the Internet is still a mystery to many, meaning it can only grow with prominence over the coming years. What this also means is that there is great wealth to be made in the realm of Internet marketing, and now more than ever it is essential you get your foot in the door for the success of you and your family.

The Internet functions in the first instance as a forum for the exchange of ideas and knowledge. Like every other medium before it, the Internet is predominantly funded by advertising from commercial entities. As an independent webmaster, it is certainly possible to publish advertising and to reap the revenues of doing so. This has been made particularly more relevant through contextual ad serving platforms like Google AdSense. Indeed with the rise of blogging as a media platform, programs like PayPerPost and Text Link Ads are providing web publishers of all sizes with the opportunity to monetize their web presence.

However, there is another way to make money online, and although advertising comes as a more regular income, affiliate income comes in larger chunks for the skilled Internet marketer. Overall, the advantage of affiliate marketing over ad serving is the degree of control – you can directly enhance your affiliate earnings through your efforts, which is much less tangible in the ad serving model.

The art of Internet Marketing has developed over the past decade or so, and is constantly altered and refined to take account of the latest updates in technology and the latest trends on the consumer radar. Whether its B2B (business to business) or B2C (business to consumer) trade you're looking for, the Internet is the prime location for drumming up business.

Internet marketing is an aggressive practice that involves hunting the customer. The traditional idea of putting up a 'shop front' and waiting for customers to wander in is completely rejected in favor of a highly targeted, accurate way of securing would-be clients. Even when customers do stumble through the door, they are quickly filtered towards opt-in email lists and one-time offers.

As such, the Internet is the home to exclusively-online millionaires – Joel Comm, Cory Rudl, Perry Marshall, Me –we've all established a name for ourselves online, and have found vast wealth through promoting our own and other people's products

exclusively over the Internet. Consequently, we get invited to speak at conferences, and give lectures on how to boost your business, often at several thousand dollars a seat. But at the core of our success is the Internet, and the determination to learn how best to grasp the fledgling market of doing business online.

Today, Internet Marketing is more than just a well designed and branded website. It is deeply rooted in the psychology of the customer, and in building that rapport necessary to bump up conversions. There are various tips and tricks that go along with marketing online, and in fact it is now possible to attend Internet Marketing classes and seminars to learn the skills necessary to cut it in the online world.

So what are your options in the world of online business? The net is a growing business arena, and there are a variety of opportunities across a number of fields for those interested in making money. Internet marketing is by far the most successful strategy for creating wealth online, and it is more beneficial than many other online money making strategies. However, it is fairly difficult to break through, and those that hope for overnight millions are sorely mistaken. Whether you're a complete novice or an expert, Internet Marketing requires a completely different skill set, and it can be quite difficult to get it right. Nevertheless, for those that manage to crack Internet Marketing, a life of wealth and fortune almost certainly awaits.

In the coming chapters, we'll look at marketing online with an emphasis on affiliate marketing as a great way to jump-start your online business career. Internet marketing is a complicated process and involves determination and discipline. It is more than likely that you will refer back to certain chapters time and time again to find the information you require. By dedicating yourself to learning the tips and techniques within this eBook, you can give yourself the best chance of success with affiliate marketing, and Internet marketing in general.

Again, this book is designed as a blueprint to make you money, and it is undoubtedly the most powerful tool in your online arsenal. Use it as you wish, as a source of reference throughout your online marketing if needs be, to tap in to the secret well of cash in online marketing.

Firstly, we'll start with a gradual introduction into the world of affiliate and Internet marketing. Whilst some of this might be old hat for the more experienced online entrepreneur, it will still provide value in ensuring that everyone reading this book is at the same level in order to take the tips and tricks contained within on board, to hopefully help them increase their online affiliate income.

Well over 98% of affiliate marketers start promoting an affiliate product and then quickly forget it, finding poor results as compared with other online money making techniques. As far as I'm concerned, these people are losing the potential to earn thousands of dollars a month from targeted, structured affiliate marketing, purely through ignorance and a lack of effort. Affiliate marketing is quite literally a gold mine, and is a perfectly scalable business model which revolves around the concept of building up and marketing to a list of opt-in subscribers. To say that's all there is to it would be a gross oversimplification, yet it is nevertheless one of the most central aspects to affiliate marketing, from which all other branches of marketing and branding online arise. In the following chapters we will look at the ways in which

you can prepare for building, maintaining and marketing to your email list, and the various degrees of strategy in between. By following these instructions, you can *learn* affiliate marketing, as you can learn any other skill or vocation, which should ultimately provide you with incredible value through a long-term, sustainable business.

The marketing and selling methods you will learn over the coming chapters are well known to the world's leading Internet marketers, and grasping these concepts will inevitably equip you too with the tools of the trade. It's important to always remember that whilst the theory is contained in these pages, it's up to you to go out there and make this happen. With hard work and dedication to making a living online, you will achieve success over time, but it's a good idea to remember that nothing comes easy in this life. The Internet and this book will present you with a fantastic opportunity to realize wealth beyond your wildest imagination, but like any business it's important to work, work, work at your brand and your product to make those killer sales.

I also suggest that you check out our Automated Money Pump offer – the package represents the cutting edge in tools and software for affiliates, including the ability to create unlimited websites and income streams. And the offer is liable to be pulled at any moment – two of the tools have already been removed since the offer launched, so this is not an idle threat. And with over \$10,000 worth of software up for grabs, along with some incredible content for beginners looking to make a full-time living on-line, I strongly recommend you secure your membership today:

<http://www.automatedmoneypump.com>

Without any further ado, let's get straight into how you can begin to make money online through Internet marketing. Let Operation Money Pump commence.

What Is Affiliate Marketing?

One of the most profitable aspects of Internet marketing is what has become known as affiliate marketing. Affiliate marketing has grown as an alternative to pay-per-click marketing, or rather this type of lead generation has grown as an adaptation of the affiliate model. Generally speaking, an affiliate is a third party who opts to promote another's product for mutual benefit. The principal, i.e. the party supply the goods in the first instance to the affiliate, benefits from increasing his sales and driving his revenue. And as for the affiliate? He is entitled to a predetermined commission on each sale, which can often come in at around forty to fifty percent of the product price, depending on the principal's margins. It is this commission that makes affiliate marketing an attractive prospect, and with a few select promotional tips (to follow), it can actually be quite profitable to solely work on promoting other people's products.

Affiliate marketing has been particularly suited to the Internet, allowing anyone with a computer and an Internet connection the opportunity to make money. At the same time, it has allowed principals, or rather anyone with a product suited to the online market, to reach beyond their own marketing potential to realize greater revenue.

In my experience, affiliate marketing is a mutually beneficial exercise, and one which can easily launch a product on a massive scale. Everyone with experience of online business understands that there's money to be made through marketing other people's products – the problem is, not everyone understands how to go about it.

Affiliate marketing is most prominent in the sale of information products – eBooks, reports, articles, and the like. In fact, information products form the bulk of the concern of Internet marketers. A great deal of these types of products relate to making money online, with health and self-improvement coming in a close second place in terms of popularity. Why? Quite simply, there has always and will always be a demand for information. Information, or knowledge, is power. People will always want to know the secrets of making money online – chances are they won't be able to figure this out for themselves, given the years of trial and error testing and the tens of thousands of dollars required to make it work. People will always want tips and guidance on how to lose weight, or how to attract the opposite sex, or how get further in the workplace. People will always want information and knowledge, and the Internet is probably the best way of distributing that information.

Alongside that, consider the direct costs of producing an information product. If you wanted to market a book with the same information, you would be looking at almost tripling your costs in terms of development, printing, distribution, and retailers' margins. Through the Internet, these products can be provided for next to nothing, yet they bear one strong difference to their tangible counterparts – online information products change hands for greater value.

People tend to place a value of tangible products, and the prospect of anyone paying \$997 for a book is preposterous, right? Well, take that same content and turn it into an online course, and you'll certainly find a market for it. Whilst this may seem bizarre, a great deal of it comes down to the psychology of the consumer, which we'll touch on throughout the coming chapters. What I'm basically trying to say is that because there is always a demand for information products, and the adaptability of

information to online media, has been the mainstay of Internet and affiliate marketing since the very early days. As a principal, you can manufacture and promote low-cost information products at a high markup, whilst as an affiliate, you can benefit from the very healthy commissions paid for selling these products, which is itself a by-product of the inflated profit margins those that create products experience.

The Benefits of Affiliate Marketing For The Affiliate

As an affiliate marketer, you can earn money without having the same costs of production and requiring the same marketing outlay as the principal. But the benefits of being an affiliate rather than a principal are significantly more in depth than that. Successful Internet marketers, regardless of their actual skills in Internet marketing, also require one powerful asset over affiliate marketers; a personality. The personality of the Internet marketer is something which must be created and nurtured over many years. It involves a combination of word of mouth, 'viral' marketing, and a concept known as personal branding, i.e. branding yourself as an expert or quality producer in your chosen field in order to create a strong image of your company and boost your sales. Many Internet marketing newbies make the mistake of jumping straight in with a product, a sales letter and some PPC spend, only to find a very poor return on their money. They see everyone and his mother claiming to be a guru, and think that simply by setting up with all the bare essentials, they can market their way to success. Unfortunately, this is not the case as dozens of wannabe marketers find out on a daily basis. The fact is that for the marketer, the name is one of the most valuable assets you can have, and once people start talking about you, you'll see the sales rushing in. Until then, it is pretty much impossible to shift ebooks or other products, no matter how good your sales letter happens to be.

As an affiliate marketer, you're more than likely starting out fresh. What that means is that to the average man on the street, you're a nobody. Why should anyone part with his or her money to find out exactly what you have to say on a given subject? What makes *you* the go-to guy in your given market segment? Your reputation, and at this point, you don't have one.

However, as an affiliate you can begin by promoting other people's products, and provided you understand the nuances of online marketing, to some success. As the creator of a product, you have to spend thousands getting everything just right: from the graphics, to the sales letter to the product itself, and even right down to investing time and money in creating the elusive reputation necessary to shift units. As an affiliate, virtually all you need is a laptop and an internet connection, and you can start making money for yourself, with no boss nagging over your shoulder.

So we've covered the fact that it's easier and cheaper to enter a market as an affiliate rather than a creator, but what about the back end of doing business online? Payment processing, invoicing, legal, customer service, dealing with refunds, product marketing – it's all vital to running a successful business. As the affiliate to a product, this is absolutely nothing to do with you. The business is run by the creator, and all the stress and hassle of dealing with the day to day management issues is out of your hands. For you, all you have to do is set up your sales channel and start promoting the hell out of these products, whilst waiting for the checks to roll in. And what's more,

you don't even have to invoice for your payments – the affiliate program will almost certainly take care of absolutely every stage for you, including sending you payments directly. The job of the affiliate marketer is to sell, sell, sell, with none of the background hassle or financial outlay of actually creating, marketing and managing an online product.

The Benefits of Affiliate Marketing For The Principal

As a principal, that is the original promoter or creator of a product for Internet marketing purposes, creating an affiliate program is a sure fire way to expand your reach and ultimately sell more products. You've worked for several months, if not years, to build a reputation for yourself and your personal brand, you've developed and refined a product that's worth selling, hired a professional copywriter for thousands of dollars to draft up your sales pitch, enlisted the skills of a professional graphic designer to come up with your site design and hyped up your pre-launch to your marketing list. So what next? Say you have a list of 100,000 addresses. Your product retails for \$49.00. With an average response rate of 1%, that's \$49,000. Not bad for one run, and you'll more than likely be able to see a few more thousand off the back of that now and again if you advertise and promote your product publicly. But what about enlisting the help of affiliate marketers prior to the launch? If you have a list of 100,000, and you manage to find 100 affiliates each with a small list of say 5,000, paying a 50% commission you could earn \$117,500, plus the original \$49,000 from your own list. Figures like this are perfectly obtainable, particularly for those that understand and appreciate the importance of affiliate marketing.

A common saying in business is to outsource anything outwith your core competence. What that means is that you should focus on what you do best, and outsource the rest to save time and money, without jeopardizing quality at the end of the day. This strategy can be applied to the affiliate marketing business model. Consider that the principal is best at marketing the main product, creating the product and fronting the launch. It is then sensible to outsource much of the selling to affiliates in return for their commission, which of course you'll gladly pay given you'll easily have covered your fixed costs by that point, provided you get the figures right. As the principal, affiliate marketing will plain and simply skyrocket your sales and your profits, leaving you with an altogether more successful product, whilst helping create wealth for the affiliates involved.

Another tremendous benefit for the principal, which is often underestimated, is the ability to indirectly tap in to other people's lists. If your affiliates know what they're doing, they'll have a dedicated list of prospective leads with whom they regularly contact. But this is where the real benefit comes in. Instead of you, the creator of the product, marketing it to a list of prospects, it's someone else recommending a product. Imagine hearing a recommendation from someone you trust and respect, for a product that deeply interests you – guess what? Affiliate responsiveness as compared to creator responsiveness is often way higher, and with greater conversion rates come greater profits for everyone concerned.

The affiliate marketing cycle, as I like to call it, works for everyone involved. If you're providing a quality product, it works for the customer, it works for the

principal and it works for the affiliate. In perpetual motion, online marketing revolves to a large extent around this tri-part relationship, of wealth generation and brand development. An affiliate endorsement is great for sales within their particular vertical, and when multiplied ten fold this dramatically increases. By enlisting a network of affiliates the principal can exponentially grow his sales and earnings from each product line, making affiliate market a very worthwhile process for the principal, as indeed it can be for the affiliate.

As with any type of business, there's money to be made in affiliate marketing but it doesn't come overnight. It's going to take a long time to build up the level of skills and expertise necessary to market an affiliate product to any success, not to mention the process of building and maintaining a list, which can take months and a great deal of creative thinking. Don't worry if any of this is confusing so far – we're going to run through every aspect of affiliate marketing and Internet marketing before this book is out, and we're going to look at exactly what you need to be doing to set yourself up for, and to get started, earning money from the Internet.

Now we've covered the fundamental ideas behind the affiliate model, and why it is beneficial to all the parties involved, we're going to look at some of the basic ways you can get started to make money online. So with your computer and Internet connection at the ready, let's turn to what we need to set up, and why, as we approach getting started as an affiliate marketer.

Getting Started

Note: if you are a complete beginner to Adwords, affiliate marketing, etc – then you should definitely consider securing membership for the Automated Money Pump:

<http://www.automatedmoneypump.com>

The package not only includes \$10,000 in advanced software, but it includes \$50 in free Google traffic to get you started, along with a copy of Google Wealth Wizard, one of the best beginner's guides for affiliates using Google Adwords:

<http://www.automatedmoneypump.com>

Having covered what exactly Internet marketing, and in particular affiliate marketing involves, it is now time to look at what we need to get started making money online, and how we can best go about achieving that goal. We shouldn't expect success overnight, but we should start to think about laying the foundations for a sustainable long-term income online, which involves learning what is required to establish our presence online.

So what do you need to get set up for doing business online? Well, unless you've got substantial investment capital behind you, you can forget about devising and launching a product of your own initially. Whilst this can be one of the most profitable avenues for Internet marketing in the long run, starting out on an affiliate basis is by far the most cost effective way to build up funds and to develop your name and image, in order to provide sustainability over the longer term, and to provide you with the opportunity later down the line of creating your own products and launches.

The very first thing you need is to set up a PayPal account to handle your customers' credit and debit cards, and receiving payments online. PayPal are an online payment processing company, and although they are far from perfect you simply must have a PayPal account to operate online. Without it, you could lose a lot of business, and unless you support PayPal you are seriously restricting your market. PayPal, owned by eBay, are the biggest online payment processor by miles, and anyone that buys or sells online has an account with them. The sign up process is free, although it is highly recommended that you quickly verify your account details with them. This involves receiving two deposits into your primary bank account or a postal verification system – without it, your account will lack credibility, and be bound by an upper ceiling withdrawal limit, after which any remaining funds will be locked inside your account. It is imperative that you undertake the registration and verification as soon as possible, to allow you the full freedom of buying and selling online.

PayPal works by acting as a third party to your transactions, taking money from your customer's credit card and paying it into your virtual account. Every so often, you then withdraw money to your bank account, which can take up to ten days to clear. It's expensive and it's very cumbersome technically, but PayPal is king when it comes to transacting online, and for the time being we just have to live with it. One word of advice is to remain patient with PayPal, and **never** to depend on PayPal funds as your sole source of income. Withdraw funds as often as you can, and try not to prompt too

many refunds or appear to acting 'suspiciously' – PayPal have a track record of freezing funds for six months at a time with no warning, so it is important that you make sure you've got this base covered just in case.

In order to set up your PayPal account, you will need an email account which will serve as your PayPal ID. I would highly recommend that you do this through a Gmail (from Google) account, even if you already have an existing email account for one primary reason – Gmail allows you to search through your mail. Say for example you wanted to find every email you ever sent or received from or about a particular customer – just type in his name in the search bar, and in an instant you'll see everything under that search term. With other accounts, you're forced to wade through tons of old emails in order to source those relevant, whereas Gmail saves a great deal of time, as well as categorizing emails into conversations directly. All in all, the Gmail service is far superior to other email providers, and is almost certainly your best option at a time when you are about to embark on an online business venture.

While you're waiting for your PayPal account to verify and setting up your Gmail account, you should get yourself along to ClickBank. ClickBank is the front running information affiliates service – it's easy to use, well stocked with the top affiliate products, and renowned for its back end support. Set up a ClickBank account and note down the password, which will come out as a sequence of letters and numbers, for future reference. This will allow you to quickly track your payments and products available for sale through the ClickBank marketplace. Your alternative to ClickBank is to locate principals and ask to be an affiliate directly, but this is more time consuming and far less likely for a new guy with no experience or reputation. Even some of the biggest affiliates in the game rely on ClickBank, and there's no reason you shouldn't either. By gaining access to the ClickBank database, you can also begin to see the ins and outs of the most successful products, which will help you understand exactly how the big boys go about marketing, without having to waste time or money in trial and error experience.

So now you're set up with access to affiliate products, a payment processor and an email account, you're going to need some web presence in order to build our list and eventually market our wares. We'll discuss how to set up your website in later chapters to greatest effect, and we'll look at how to mould that into your business model, but for the time being it is a good idea to get set up in order to build a website when the time is right. This will prevent any unnecessary delays in driving traffic to your site, which should allow you to quickly start building your list for long-term profitability.

For those of you that don't know, you're going to need to buy a domain name and hosting in order to support your site online. This usually costs around \$50 maximum, and is really essential in order to get a website up and running. You can buy these all over the place, although you may want to think carefully before buying your domain name as to whether it ties in with your chosen niche and the image you wish to portray. You can either choose to make the purchase now, or hold off until you have a better idea of the kind of products you want to be pushing, but regardless both these elements must be in place in order to set up a profitable web presence.

Another thing you might want to consider initially is setting up a Google AdWords account, that is a Google 'Pay-Per-Click' advertising account. This allows you to advertise your website along with search engine results under your chosen keyword that relate to your niche. Pay-Per-Click works by charging the advertiser a cost for every click-through made by a prospective customer. Whilst this is steadily becoming less and less effective and more and more expensive as a strategy, it is probably one of the best places to start marketing your site once it is up and running, to enable you to promote your affiliate products. It is a quick way to bring in traffic to your site, and if you get your landing page right, and you use PPC to best effect, it can lead to high conversions from a list building point of view, depending on how qualified the traffic arriving at your site is for your niche. Of course, it is quite expensive in terms of what you're paying per lead, and it is not the only way of gaining list signups. Again, this will be covered more thoroughly later on, but it is important that you set up the account to begin with to avoid any further delay with getting started.

On top of that, a crucial tool in the affiliate marketer's armory is the auto-responder. When people give you their email address, the auto-responder sends out the opt-in email, and allows you to instantly and periodically update your mailing list with information about your chosen niche. This helps to portray you as an expert in your field, whilst also familiarizing your list with the way you work, and hopefully offering them some value at the same time. Without an auto-responder, it is simply impossible to obtain the same level of value from email sign-ups, and managing your list will prove to be a complete nightmare. In order to really drive your bottom line, the auto-responder is a crucial tool in developing consistent, personalized communication to your list.

Finally, you should head on over to some of the popular webmaster forums, which provide an excellent opportunity to learn and network with people in your industry. The importance of getting to know your peers is often underestimated in business, yet it can be easily achieved whilst helping you learn the ropes of affiliate marketing in the real world. Places like the Digital Point forums, or V7N are great for the budding online businessman looking to expand his potential. After all, these can be great places to exchange ideas, meet friends and hook up for collaborative efforts, all with a view to driving the bottom line when all is said and done. Imagine the power of joining forces with someone else online – pooling your expertise and resources in order to target new affiliate channels and promote your existing strategies. Signing up for these forums is free, and it can be a great way to talk to experts in the field on a daily basis, as well as to promote yourself as the expert for your particular niche (see chapter on Personal Branding later on). Sign up for several of the forums, and try to involve yourself in conversations, as well as taking the time to read through previous threads. It can be a great way to learn new tips and tricks, and to develop a generally more rounded picture of the market you're about to enter.

If you're looking to build a more sustainable business out of your affiliate marketing, it may also be a good idea to invest in a statistics and tracking package, to enable you to fully understand where your sales come from. This kind of package allows you to leverage particularly profitable sales strategies and get rid of those that don't seem to be working too well for you, in order to maximize the efficiency of your marketing operations. Often, strategies you thought would lead to torrential sales fail to spark interest, whilst some surprising techniques can really begin to mount up after a while.

Unlike the rest of these set up stages, signing up for this kind of software isn't free, but it can be phenomenally powerful when you consider it gives you the ability to locate and exploit the most profitable marketing channels for your goods. Learn where your product sells, and understand why, and you will see conversions rocket through the roof. Knowledge is power, and knowing what works and what doesn't with your product is even more crucial to your success than you might think.

And that should be just about it. We've looked at setting up everything you need for a website, PPC advertising, handling payments, accessing products and even managing your sales and statistics. Now you have everything set up at the back end, you're raring to go except for one vital element; you haven't located a niche. 'Niche' is a term that's banded around a lot online, and for good reason. It's absolutely crucial to your affiliate success, along with building a list and branding yourself, that you have to form a well identified niche. Without it, you could be marketing health products to entrepreneurs, or business products to those looking for love. Creating and defining a niche is crucial to providing conversions of any decent rate, and in the next chapter, we'll look at just how you can go about doing that before embarking on your affiliate promotion.

Choosing A Niche

The word 'niche' seems to be quite a buzz-word in the Internet world, and there's a very good reason for that. Finding and working within a niche can be a great way to leverage natural demographics to the best of your advantage, resulting in increased conversion rates from your marketing efforts. Unfortunately, sometimes it gets confused with other concepts, such as 'theme' or 'demographic', but both fulfill equally important roles encompassed within this single term. In a nutshell, a niche is a small, refined subject market to which you target your site and products. It is also used to refer to the subject matter of your site, where the less mainstream, the better. What it means for you is locating a target market for your products amongst a broader overarching theme. So, if you're going for health products, it would be wise to select the nail care niche, or skin care. Rather than targeting the whole market, you narrow down your focus in an attempt to unlock an uncompetitive, profitable niche.

Choosing a niche can be quite a technical process, and analysis of search engine traffic and general market availability is often commonplace with those looking to establish themselves and their product within a given niche. The niche is also often used as a way of trying to drive sales from an otherwise average general publication – like turning a basic fundamentals of marketing book in 'Marketing for Lawyers', or something similar. When choosing this kind of niche, technicality is less of a factor, and indeed many successful marketers start with a niche in mind first, before doing any research on the market.

The niche allows you to narrow the scope of your interests, and establish yourself up front as an expert. It's far easier to be seen as an expert in 'white-hat search engine optimization' than it is to be considered an expert on 'the Internet'. Using the same example, it's also easy to see why finding a niche can be profitable – if you're marketing SEO (Search Engine Optimization) software, marketing to a list of white-hat SEO opt-in subscribers is far more likely to provide a sizeable conversion rate, as compared to marketing to a group of Internet users in general.

Within a tightly defined niche, you can target your relationship with the customer more effectively because you already know a great deal about him. For example, if you're operating within the 'Tips for your Blog' niche, you already know your opt-in list has or wants a blog, a domain name, hosting, monetization strategies, a computer, an Internet connection – as you can see, the niche paints a better picture of your demographic, which can allow even further targeted promotion than more general opt-in lists.

When it comes to promoting products as an affiliate, or indeed as the primary, or principal, marketer, having a responsive niche mailing list is critical. This can be the difference between a 0.1% conversion rate and a 10% conversion rate, which can translate into literally thousands of dollars from each mail shot. The niche allows you to refine exactly who your potential customers are likely to be – do you think people interested in information about how to catch more fish would be responsive to a fishing technique eBook? You bet.

Finding a niche is the most direct route to establishing a successful brand, and is a precursor to building your image as an expert and authority figure. This is one of the

most essential ingredients in effective affiliate marketing, allowing a stronger conversion rate than otherwise. By establishing your niche, you can begin to build that essential rapport with your opt-in subscribers, to continue as you grow and develop the reach of your list.

One of the most important things about being a successful affiliate marketer, or even a more general Internet marketer, is having and maintaining a responsive email list. A crucial way in which this is achieved is by establishing yourself within a niche market, and conveying the niche to qualify those opting in as far as possible. In other words, refining the niche as far as possible to ensure the list you have is likely to be more responsive to the products you have on offer, be they affiliate products or your own creation.

Identifying a niche is the first step to creating an email list that hangs on your every word. If you really want to build a list that converts on whatever you offer them, getting the niche right is a good starting point. It all comes down to this: if you're selling something to the general public, there are a great number of people that will never buy what you have to offer, so you're wasting your time. This kind of marketing is extremely inefficient, and the conversion rates are terrible. However, if you sort out a niche market for yourself, targeting that niche specifically with related products will yield a significantly higher conversion rate, for the simple reason that you are guaranteed some interest in the products you are offering. By promoting products that fit in with the needs and desires of a particular niche market, you can drive recurring sales and customer loyalty within a very short period of time.

So how do we go about finding a niche to operate in for our online marketing, and how can we be sure of success within our chosen field? The first thing to consider is what you're interested in. Obviously there should be some self-furthering element to it, for example public speaking, marketing, copywriting, blogging or health. These topics are generally best suited to affiliate marketing and there are literally thousands of affiliate products available within these sub-sects. Most people can find interest in these subjects, and can provide some kind of useful information that others would find useful or valuable.

Firstly, think about a topic within the general scope of online informational products that you are both interested about and knowledgeable in. What can you provide the customer information-wise, that is likely to prove of some value or interest. There are often innovative ways of doing this appearing – if you don't have any particular interest or skill, blogging on a general subject (taking care to target a niche demographic) is a great way to launch yourself out there for consideration. Provided you write something useful or entertaining on your blog on a regular basis, traffic will eventually start returning and following your information, allowing you to eventually push contextually related products down your communication channels. Crucially, you must think of a subject that you can passionately and consistently write about, or pay someone to write for you about, in order to maintain communication within your niche, which we'll talk about further.

Subjects that you are passionate about, or have some working knowledge of are probably the best for you. The reason you require some kind of interest or ability in a particular field is the email opt-in list, a vital tool in marketing your affiliate products.

You need to give someone a reason to trust you and to sign up for your information, and in order to provide that you should generally have some experience within the field.

Once you have located your niche, and established what you have to offer your opt-in subscribers, you're going to have to keep in contact with them in order to build a relationship to generate sales. Direct email marketing is probably the most effective way to do this, but it means you're going to have to write marketing material to send in these emails. We'll look at how to communicate with your list later on, but it's important that you remember you're going to have to write and share insightful information within your niche topic, so try not to pick something of which you have no or limited knowledge.

Having said that, it is perfectly possible to go down the road of a ghostwriter. Decent ghostwriters can be found for \$0.01/word all over the Internet. At these kind of rates, you can have someone blog every single day, writer auto-responders and your sales copy in a niche topic which you have no experience or knowledge in. It would also be highly possible to build a list from this type of third party practice, but the problem is having the resources to constantly pump into specialist writing, which could run into the hundreds or even thousands before you see any return.

The niche you select by definition should be narrow. By narrow, I mean refined down to the lowest possible level, so if health was the overarching topic, you could bring it down to 'dealing with stress' as your niche – something which is by no means of as widespread application as the health topic, but would still naturally remain relevant to a proportion of Internet browsers. The reason for working this narrowly is that the broader you go, the more you expand the competition for products similar to those you are promoting. There are hundreds of professed Internet marketing gurus willing to show anyone who is interested how to make millions overnight. But there are very few MySpace marketing experts, a niche topic which remains relevant to a number of businesses despite minimal competition from other marketers, as compared to some topics. It is also then easier to come across as an authority within 'MySpace marketing', given that you earn kudos and credit for innovation in Internet marketing circles. If you're the first person to offer tips and advice in a certain area online, and you become well known for it, you can become an authority almost by default. Furthermore, if you plan your angle of attack well, you can easily pick-up free linking from authority sites in your area of expertise, which will inevitably help support your own claims of expert status.

By the same token, it is advisable to make sure your niche is mainstream enough to attract some traffic. 'Ballet dancing in the Himalayas' is a bit too niche, and the problem with things as narrow as that, is that you're only ever going to find ten people at most that are interested in what you have to say. This is an example of a niche that is too deeply refined, so as to actively repel too many customers. What you should be looking to achieve is a sub-section of a broad topic, within which there is lesser competition, and more room for establishing a niche demographic from your opt-in signups. It's not an easy process, but you should bear in mind the overall impact of selecting your niche on your online business. Whatever you choose, make sure there will be sufficient interest in your message, whilst still keeping it relatively exclusive to your opt-in niche list.

Choosing a niche is one of the key concepts in Internet marketing today, largely because it allows the potential for very high click-through to conversion rates if you target the correct product. Selling a product to someone that you know is already interested in it makes the affiliate process much easier, and you will find that you can achieve a greater volume of repeat sales from that. A niche list is a highly responsive list, and if you feed them the right information periodically, they will continue to buy from you, and continue to generate revenue through your products for your affiliate business.

After choosing and establishing your niche, it's important to turn to marketing. Marketing is very much the hard work element for any affiliate, and it requires a knowledge and understanding of highly effective, tested techniques. Internet marketing, as a beginner, is not the place for innovation. Unless you know what you're talking about, it's far safer to stay within the parameters of proven guidelines to selling products, especially when you're trying to establish a name for yourself. In the next chapter, we're going to look at what you need to do to market yourself and your products as an affiliate, in order to provide the long-term benefits of marketing online.

Tip: if you still aren't sure about which niches & markets you want to enter, you should spend some time browsing the ClickBank marketplace at <http://www.clickbank.com/marketplace.htm> - and of course your Automated Money Pump package includes a custom database that ranks all 10,000 ClickBank products by profitability (using our own advanced ratings):

Check out exactly what's on offer: <http://www.automatedmoneypump.com> .

Making A List

Making an email list is perhaps the central focus of Internet marketing, and it is certainly the most valuable asset in any marketer's armory. Interviews with online marketing gurus frequently turn up the value of the email list, with many saying it's the only aspect of their business they couldn't survive without. Understanding the importance of the list is one thing, but understanding how you can use it to greatest effect is quite another. In this first part of this chapter, we'll examine exactly why list building is an important strategy, before moving on to how you can begin to build up that list to the best effect, and following with how to actually convert browsers through to your free product and signup in the next chapter.

Marketing is all about relationships, on both a personal and corporate level. It's about the relationship you share with your customers as a person and as a company, and the relationship you build through your branding and marketing can provide long-term value for your company. Forming a relationship takes time in business, like in life, and you need to work with your target in order to ensure you secure that relationship for the longer term. They say that on average, you need to have seven points of contact with someone before they'll consider buying from you. That means that you really need to hang on to every single email address you can find. Your website copy can act as the first step in the seven-rung communication sales ladder, and if you don't retain each visitor through opt-in, you won't ever be able to reach step 7 and make that sale. Whilst there will be a few sales from the face of your sales copy, the majority of visitors will need a bit more persuasion which usually isn't available. However, by making an email list and holding on to that vital personal information, you can ensure a higher success rate and conversion rate from your marketing efforts.

Traditionally, your website would be pretty much the only point of contact with the customer until he actually buys from you, giving you very little margin for convincing and forming that relationship. However, through offering the opportunity to build a relationship with your customers through ongoing correspondence and communication, you take the emphasis off your on-site sales copy and shift it towards your ability to communicate and sell through a relationship of trust and understanding.

Basic marketing and sales online relies on the impact of copywriting and the effectiveness of converting on impulse. Internet marketing experts understand that this kind of strategy is far too risky in terms of ensuring residual long-term value, and customers that do end up providing lifetime value from this kind of marketing is the exception, rather than the norm. That's where the importance of list building comes in. By encouraging the prospective customer to sign up before they even have the chance to read your sales copy, you can eventually hit them with the sales pitch, and convert into sales.

Most website visitors bounce almost immediately out of your site. They stay for a few seconds, have a quick browse, and then leave. If in that time you can gather their email address, you can communicate with them on a much longer-term basis, to squeeze more value out of their interest in your products and services. From this, you should be starting to get the picture as to exactly how important it is to build a list of prospects, with whom you should communicate regularly to increase conversion rates.

So where do you start building a list? What kind of numbers should you be looking for on your list? How does a list convert? All these questions are important considerations for any prospective marketer, but there are no real definitive answers out there. What you should understand is that there are a number of strategies for building an opt-in list, which we'll focus on here, as well as variable degrees of success and effectiveness depending on your niche and any number of other factors. Don't get caught up with figures until you have experienced building and profiting from your list – only then should you look to setting personal targets for list responsiveness and profitability.

Your email list is comprised of opt-in subscribers. What this means is that those addresses you gather will have opted-in to receive commercial communications from you. Without opt-in, you'll be nothing more than a spammer, so it's important for your reputation and conversions, and to cover your back, to make sure you obtain the double opt-in. Luckily, with mail management packages that's all taken care of on your behalf, so you don't have to worry too much about the technicalities of it – just make sure you check the double-opt in option where available from your admin screen.

As opt-in subscribers, these people are generally more willing to buy products in that same niche, whilst even more likely to buy from you if you are portrayed as a trustworthy, 'expert' in whatever it is you do. On this basis, conversion rates from the list are usually pretty high to begin with, and they can really only get better with time and effort. An important aspect of having a list is maintaining it, both in terms of keeping it fresh with data, and in keeping your relationship with the subscriber burning. By far the most effective way to go about this is to make sure that you provide content of value to the subscriber, as you would to a blog, in order to keep them reading your emails, and hopefully keep them on hand as a potential customer for your business. Learning how to communicate with your list is an essential skill, and a lot of it comes down to maintaining a consistent voice throughout correspondence (something we will focus on in later chapters).

Building that list in the first place is where much of the work of the Internet marketer lies. It's not an easy task, and it takes quite a bit of getting the hang of various techniques in order to convert in any serious quantity. The general method of list building is to offer something for free in return for the signup. This can range from a periodical newsletter about the industry, to something a bit more interesting like an email course or eBook. In fact, just about anything that is of value can be offered through free signup offerings, which are designed purely to harvest email addresses for further profit potential. For the budding internet marketer, this means you initially have to source some kind of product to offer for free, or prepare information that can be offered in return for the signup. We will look at how to increase conversions through 'selling the signup' in the next chapter in more detail.

Other ways to build lists today are to offer so-called '\$7 reports', which are effectively mini-ebooks sold for a mere \$7 each on the low-ball but high quality side. What they do is help generate revenue, even for those that don't have a good reputation, a list or a big budget. Through allowing affiliates to promote these reports at 100% commission, the product creator has the chance to virally build his email list, finding out the names and email addresses of everyone that buys their product.

Ultimately, this means they can send marketing messages to the list in order to reap the maximum 'lifetime' value from the customer.

If you have a small list yourself, or if you have a product ready and waiting, you may be able to jump on the back of another Internet marketer's list through a joint venture. The joint venture would most likely entail enlisting the larger Internet marketer as an affiliate for your product. He then pushes it to his list, whilst at the same time hyping you and your product. The return from that is that as well as generating sales, you will also build your reputation at the same time, to give you that vital credibility when you try to go it alone. Whilst this is good for first time Internet marketers, it is by no means a quick-fix solution. Finding a joint venture is no easy task, and as a new Internet marketer you have no guarantee that anyone is going to help you out. On top of that, your product will have to be pretty good if you want an established marketer to recommend it. Would you risk your hard earned reputation on helping out some newbie? Make it worth their while both financially and in terms of making it minimum hassle, in order to minimize any barriers to going along with it that they may have.

Alternatively there are companies out there that offer to email opt-in lists on your behalf, or rent you their own opt-in email list for a period. This method is not relied on too heavily by internet marketers, because it can never compare to building your own list, and the conversions that can be seen from there. Remember these opt-in subscribers haven't a clue who you are and what you stand for, whilst your own subscribers will have a very good idea from reading your newsletter, or updates on a regular basis.

Many rookie internet marketers are drawn in by companies promising mail shots for as little as a dollar. These companies seem to take all the hassle out of building your own list, and allow you to send millions of emails in an instance to their email list. Unfortunately, their list is nothing more than harvested email addresses, with no request for information or opt-in – in other words, it's quite simply spam. The problem is that they never advertise themselves as spam, and it can often be hard to differentiate between the real deal opt-in lists and these blanket spam lists. If you are unsure, ask the company whether they use opt-in. If that still doesn't satisfy you, go elsewhere. Your reputation is too precious, and you certainly don't want to throw it all away before you've even established it.

In Internet marketing there is no substitution for hard work, and if you invest the time and energy into building your opt-in list now, you should be able to reap long term value as you market and move on to other different projects. Whilst there may be many companies out there looking to offer you a shot of their email list, this is only a short term solution, and if you're wanting to experience the incredible click-through rates that are possible you need to start building your list immediately.

Work at building up your list in the short term, and you will be rewarded tenfold later on. A highly responsive, qualified list will convert at an astonishing rate, and you'll quickly find you'll be able to profit from collecting their names. And of course, once you've built up an email list, there's nothing to stop you building up another around another product, to expand your reach and earning potential.

Now we've looked at why building a list is important, and some of the ways in which you can try to build a list (as well as the potential pitfalls of trying to cut corners), we're going to turn to actually driving conversions to your list. In other words, how can you *make* everyone that visits your site sign up for your emailing list?

Getting the conversion from browser to subscriber is easy if you follow a few basic steps, but it is absolutely essential that you take the time to understand how it's done. The more efficiently you sign up browsers, the quicker your list will develop and expand and ultimately, the quicker you will begin to profit from your marketing. The next chapter deals with how to 'sell the opt-in', to convert browsers to potential customers through your landing page.

Sell The Opt-In

When it comes to promoting your Internet marketing landing page, you need to remember that your end goal is completely different from any other type of site. You're not trying to keep the customer browsing your back-catalog of wisdom, and you're not trying to encourage page impressions. You don't care about making any sales at this stage, and advertising click-through isn't even on your mind. What you are actively and consciously trying to do is to get that browser to commit his name and email address to your signup form, in order to build your email list and potential customer base.

Many rookie Internet marketers approach courting opt-in subscribers from the point of view that they are giving something for free, so the email addresses will follow. They think that simply because they have thrown together a product that might be considered useful or valuable because it was free, people will flock to them in their thousands, fighting to get their hands on a free copy and throwing you their details.

Well, unfortunately, the world of Internet marketing really isn't like that. Internet browsers are now quite savvy when it comes to signing up for free reports and products, and they know that afterwards you're going to try and sell them something. That's why you've got to actively work at convincing browsers to sign up. Whilst many will appreciate your free offering, you've got to let them know that signing up will also provide more long-term value in the form of ongoing information of the same caliber, in order to make sure they sign up, and that they remain interested in whatever it is that you have to say.

So how do you go about convincing the browser to sign up and convert to your list? Once you have them there, you can begin the hard sell, but how can you actually attract them in the first place, whilst still ensuring they remain a qualified sales lead? Getting the signup is something that many Internet marketers are willing to pay heavily for, and when you talk of building a list of several thousand, this cost can understandably mount up quickly. Whether through attracting PPC (Pay Per Click) or search engine traffic, the basic principles of 'guaranteeing' the opt-in subscription are fairly similar and equally valuable, and a lot of it comes down to the psychology and copywriting of your landing page itself.

Theory has it that you should approach gaining an opt-in in the same way you would try to court a sale, ensuring that your product is promoted and marketed in the same light as a commercial offering. Even before we get into this, though, it is crucial to devise a product that targets within your niche would appreciate and find useful. So, if you're selling diet and nutrition products, publish healthy meal menus in a report, or give away some diet secret tip in the form of an ebook – that's both relevant to your niche, and something that will provide value to your readers. Whatever you have to offer must be highly targeted to your niche in order to qualify the opt-ins. There's no point in offering a sales manual if you're trying to attract potential customers in the accounting software niche, because you're not qualifying your traffic. Whilst you may still find some conversions through this, the more targeted your product is, the more likely your traffic is to be interested in what you say and offer later down the line.

A fundamental principle of opt-in email lists is that you offer something for free. Whatever you happen to be offering, it should be free to charge to the customer, in return only for their email address and first name. The \$7 script which is currently causing quite a stir in the Internet marketing world has been heavily criticized for forcing the opt-in from customers – what it does is sells the product, THEN asks for the opt-in. Some would say it would be more effective if the product were free, at which stage there is no margin for complaint about forcing any opt-in, which ultimately only leads to disenfranchising your potential customers.

So you must have a free product, that must be targeted to your niche. But that's not all you need to bring value to your opt-in list. The product you offer must be of a very high quality, to start your relationship off on the right foot. If you send your customers a free report that has been quickly and cheaply thrown together, and contains nothing of any real substance, they aren't likely to see you as an authority figure, worthy of your trust and respect. On the other hand, if customers feel they genuinely have received a \$47, or even a \$97 product for free, chances are they'll stay interested in what you have to say. Furthermore, if you can say something that will make them money, or help them lose weight, or whatever is relevant to your niche, you'll find selling to the list later down the line is easy. Really work on your free product. Whilst it won't necessarily bring you more opt-ins, it will definitely create a better quality list, with a relationship of respect and admiration. After all, you're looking to be branded an expert, and if people agree with the quality and substance of your information, you're more than halfway there.

Creating the product is something you can do yourself, or hire someone to do for you. Either way it should be niche, and of high quality. If you're doing it yourself, clear your schedule for a few weeks to allow you to spend the time and effort planning and creating the product. Most Internet marketers choose the simpler route at this stage, and employ someone to write a generic report within that niche. You can find very good quality writing at freelancer websites (such as Rent-a-coder and e-lance) for between \$0.01-\$0.02 per word, which in copywriting terms is a bargain. Be willing to spend the time and money on developing your report, or whatever it is you choose to offer for free, and above all make it original. People don't want to come to you for another 'how to build a site for AdSense' free report – your customers have all read it before, and they simply don't care anymore. Try something innovative and worthwhile, whilst appealing directly to your niche for best results. That way, it will be easier to convince browsers to sign up, especially if they think they're receiving quality, original and useful material for free.

Once you actually have the product in place, it's time to sell it. Yes, even though you're giving it away, you need to work to sell the product to everyone that lands on your page. This is made easier by the fact that the 'buyer' doesn't feel like he's giving up anything, yet by giving his email address he is presenting immense value to you as an Internet marketer. The email address is worth working for, even though it's only one address. When working out the average lifetime value of each sign-up, you'll be amazed at how valuable each email address can be. Explain succinctly and directly 'what you'll learn' from your report, and what this information has done for you, before going on to talk about why your information is valuable. Only if you satisfy these criteria can you go on to stand a chance of converting traffic to your list. You've got about 7 seconds to get that impulse sign up. If you're relying on long,

drawling copy for this, you're probably not making the most of the traffic you send to your site.

Invest time and money in both your product and your squeeze page. The winning combination here is a free quality, useful product, and a short, sharp sales page to encourage sign ups and quickly. Even in the book, you should include a link to signup, or an email form to 'tell your friends' about this product – by encouraging natural circulation of your product, you're encouraging circulation of your name and high quality information, giving you a better chance of converting later on.

Selling the opt in is like selling a product for money value. You've got to convince the 'buyer' that your product is worthwhile, in order to collect their email address. Make them believe they need your product, and invest in good quality sales copy for your squeeze page – a professional copywriter will be able to improve your conversion rates to the list, and you will see a return on your investment fairly quickly as your list begins to accumulate.

This is where the quality product comes into play – if you've taken the time and effort to develop your free offering, you'll notice that your product takes an almost viral appearance, as it is recommended and passed around. Encourage this spreading of your brand, and embrace the avalanche of sign-ups that will follow. There is no better marketing device than word of mouth, and once your new email list subscribers tell their friends about you and what you have to offer, your list will grow exponentially. Quality products and quality copywriting make an affiliate marketer, and they have the ability to make your email list highly responsive from the off. Invest in getting it just right in order to maximize your list building potential, which will eventually allow you to begin your marketing efforts later down the line.

Momentum is a powerful tool in Internet marketing, and if you can capitalize on it, all the better. What this means is that you should follow up your opt-in offer with more quality information. Keep feeding your list with insider tips and tricks, and valuable words of wisdom specifically in tune with their interests, and your perceived area of expertise. Keep them going with interesting issues and your opinions to keep them loyal to your message. Above all, keep them reading your emails every single day, to enable you to keep on making money from them as a collective.

By keeping your subscribers interested in what you have to say, you're increasing the likelihood that they'll be interested in what you have to offer. Whether its an affiliate product, or your own offering, the more interaction you have with your list the more likely they are to buy from you when you ask them to. The bulk of your time as an affiliate marketer should be in strategy and writing copy in order to build relationships and eventually convert. Engage your opt-in list with compelling content that is actually within their interests and you'll find an increasingly responsive list of subscribers when it comes to selling products directly.

Converting browsers to an email list is like converting sales on a regular website. Selling the opt-in is just as difficult as selling a product for value, but the rewards are far greater and far more long term. Converting to your list isn't a given, and even when you have secured a name and an email address, there's no guarantee that they are ever going to be interested in what you have to offer, or even read your emails for

that matter. You've got to be good, and you've got to provide value for the subscribers – otherwise, your conversion is worthless, and you still won't be able to sell any of your affiliate products.

Aside from converting to your list, an affiliate marketer has to differentiate himself and his advice through marketing and branding. Marketing as an affiliate is a different process to marketing as an out-and-out Internet marketer, and is completely different from marketing in the offline world. Furthermore, marketing when you're selling other people's products can be hard unless you know the tips and techniques the pros use every day. In the coming chapter, we're going to turn our attention to marketing as an affiliate, and some of the many ways in which you can get your profile out there, and bring in traffic to your site and services.

Marketing As An Affiliate

One of the most crucial elements of success as an affiliate marketer comes from the marketing element. Naturally, those that succeed at marketing make money as an affiliate, but it's a totally different kettle of fish as compared to marketing in the offline world. The emphasis on marketing as an affiliate is often underestimated, and people expect results to come through without really understanding the need for clever, calculated marketing tactics. In the coming chapter, we'll address exactly what you need to do to market yourself and your products as an affiliate, in order to reap the greatest return on your investment and provide long-term stability as an affiliate.

Marketing as an affiliate is different to marketing offline, and there are a few vital proven tips and techniques that you simply must implement in order to make a success of your online endeavors. This starts with the fundamental understanding that maintaining and repeating contact with the customer for a longer period increases your chances of conversion. This has grown to encompass email opt-in lists, blogs, video and audio recordings on websites, designed to consistently brand and portray the marketer as an online marketer. Without this constant communication to your customer base on a personal level, you'll never build up a widespread reputation, nor can you be perceived with the expert image you're looking for.

Affiliate marketing requires hard work and effort in actually marketing your products. Whilst there are numerous ways in which you can boost conversion rates, and make the marketing process more fruitful, there is still no getting around the fundamental point that you must really work to drive sales, and push products – whether as an affiliate or product creator. What this means is working to create a rounder impressions of you as a brand, and the products in which you promote.

Online marketing is similar to advertising a brand firstly, but on a far more personable level. The brand you are marketing is you, and your knowledge. By marketing yourself well in the first instance, you encourage signups for your free auto-responder sequences, which can lead to a greater chance of a sale at the end of the day. We've all heard the clichéd '7 communications before you get a sale' rule, and to a certain extent this is true. On the other hand it depends on how well you have marketed yourself before hand, and the effectiveness of these points of communication.

Take Darren Rowse of ProBlogger.net for example. Darren blogs every day to around 30,000 RSS subscribers. ProBlogger.net is considered by far and away the authority blog on blogging, which in turn has created a persona for Darren as the 'blogging guy'. Any of these guys that sign up to Darren's newsletter are far more likely to buy from him straight off. Why? Because Darren has marketed himself through his blog and through his widespread online exposure as an expert in blogging and make money from your blog, during which time he has built up the rapport and respect you need to market successfully online. Darren's personal brand is incredibly strong, and he is widely considered as an open and honest online personality, which in turn allows him to market affiliate products to an impressive degree.

Personal branding is one of the key elements to being a successful Internet marketer. You must be understood by your customers to be knowledgeable, respectful and professional within your chosen industry. One of the best ways of achieving this is to

work on your personal brand, which is utterly different from your personality in the real world. Create a character from which to focus your online behavior and communication around, and maintain your persona throughout dealings with your customers and public exposure. Get it right, and this can be the beginning of a strong 'personal brand' from which to build your marketing success. If your opt-in list can't remember who you are, they're not going to buy from you. Work on your personal branding, and people will associate your name in their email inbox with the quality information you can provide, and the expert status of your personal brand. Ultimately this is designed to help conversion rates both in the short term and in the long terms, and if you constantly invest time and effort into creating the brand for yourself, you will be repaid once you start consistently marketing products through your list.

Personal branding is the term given to the most important asset in your armory: you. Because affiliate and Internet marketing relies heavily on selling information products, in the form of ebooks, courses, reports, etc., you are an important cog in the machine. Even if it's not your information you're marketing – your personality and image is essential in making you a trustworthy, authority figure within your niche market. People will buy from you if they trust you. Trust is crucial, in that it allows you to make suggestions to your readers – if you have provided them with good quality information through your newsletter, chances are high that they will appreciate any affiliate program you recommend as worthwhile and beneficial.

By establishing a personal brand that is as strong as your products, and communicating the brand image through your niche vertical, you can more easily convince your list that you are worthy of their attention. Add that to the impressive conversion rates you can find from a niche opt-in list, and your affiliate marketing efforts will be rewarded with a virtually limitless revenue stream. Ensuring you work to create that personal brand is one half of the battle when it comes to affiliate marketing, and can establish you well on your way to generating income from Internet marketing.

Communication of your personal brand is the next key Internet marketing lesson, and the primary strategy for doing this at the moment is the email opt-in list, with blogging coming in a close second. The reason the opt-in is more powerful than the blog is because you know exactly who your email readers are – after all, you have their name and email address. You do not, however, know much about your blog readership, and without making the conversion to the opt-in list, many of your readers will remain anonymous and their sales potential will be drastically reduced. The email opt-in list gives you a chance to communicate more intimately with your readers, whilst still publishing the same messages en-masse. From a psychological point of view, you are no longer the journalist broadcasting news to the world, but more of an insider, offering hints and advice 'on the side' to the average man in the street. The email opt-in list allows you to get closer to the ground, whereby you can create those vital customer relationships that eventually sell products. Furthermore, by continually scaling the extent of your list, you improve 'the numbers game' in your favor – the more customers you're marketing to, the more sales (numerically) you can expect. If you have a 1% conversion rate on a \$10 product, a list of 1,000 would yield \$100, whereas a list of a million would yield \$100,000. The more and more you grow your list, the more and more money you can expect to earn. Again, we'll go into more depth about how to structure your email marketing and how to encourage opt-in sign

ups in the coming chapters, as an essential way to communicate your personal brand and a crucial sales channel.

Aside from creating a personal brand and email marketing, you're going to need an online platform from which to trade, whether as an affiliate or Internet marketer promoting your own products. This generally comes in the form of a website or blog, although there are other vital considerations which must be taken into account. One of the key expenses in any marketer's budget is lead acquisition. For this reason, it is important to leverage every point of contact with the potential customer to get value for money from your efforts. What this means is that your website or blog must work to encourage sign ups, in the same way as your landing page or namesqueeze page. Every customer that comes into contact with your personal brand should be offered the option to sign up, hence it is imperative to build that in to your website or blog wherever possible. Your online home should showcase everything you have to offer information-wise, and should really work to sell the sign up process. As far as marketing goes, this is a cost effective way to maximize traffic efficiency, which will translate into a larger email list through time.

Hand in hand with that is the process of search engine optimization, which can eventually help bring in qualified traffic to your landing page. Search engine optimization is invaluable to your email-list building, because you're bringing in essentially free, qualified traffic to your landing page. From here, you will see increasing conversions to email sign ups, which will help grow your list. Combining off-page and on-page SEO factors, you should be able to improve your site's search engine rankings and bring in more value traffic to add to your email list. Whilst a great deal of SEO can be done in your spare time, it might also be a good idea to enlist the help of a specialist, and there is no shortage of SEO consultants out there willing to help you out. Search engine optimization is marketing at its best, combining technical matters with a desire to bring in traffic to your landing page. When it comes to effectiveness, you really can't beat it, and it is advisable that you learn the basics for your landing page in order to boost your visitor numbers.

Another essential online marketing tool, which has only really come to the forefront over the last year or so, is the blog platform. Whilst we will look at blogging in much more depth in later chapters, it is vital that you seriously think about getting started today. A blog, whether in conjunction with an existing static website or landing page, is a crucial point of contact with your customer for selling products, encouraging the sign up and establishing your personal brand image. Your blog should be set up to communicate news and valuable information within your niche to your readers, whilst also providing the means to subscribe to your email list. Like the Darren Rowse example above, blogging can highlight you as the authority figure, and can let people see the quality of information available if they opt-in to your newsletter. For this reason, it is important to maintain quality in your posting, in keeping with the personal brand image you have created.

Finally, as an affiliate marketer you may like to use PPC (pay-per-click) advertising as a way to attract traffic to your landing page and market your opt-in list. Whilst this is initially an expensive way to go about obtaining subscribers, it can be used to best effect with a few simple strategies that can both save you money and increase conversion rates. With PPC, it all comes down to qualifying clicks; that is giving

away enough information in the advert to dissuade 'interest' clicks. At the same time, it is also a good idea to ensure your adverts are eye-catching, and provide enough information to reel in the prospective customer, whilst ensuring you convert wherever possible.

Note: For a complete beginner's guide to promoting affiliate products with Google (worth \$97), \$55 in free Google Adwords vouchers, and an entire collection of Adwords tools, check out <http://www.automatedmoneypump.com> .

Online marketing is a sort of mesh of a number of proven tips and techniques which ultimately translate into creating a brand, and loyal customer following, before converting these followers into revenue. It allows you to squeeze long-term value from every single customer, who begins life as a free sign up subscriber and progresses to be a valuable asset to any business. Provided you have a loose grasp of the various concepts involved in promoting products online, you can expect to learn as you go along what works well, and what doesn't, to help maximize efficiency in your marketing.

Now we're going to turn to some of the main methods of marketing online in more depth, to help you understand exactly how you should proceed with your new online venture. Provided you prepare for the long haul, and are willing to put in work and effort, you should be able to get to grips with these strategies, starting with personal branding, to generate recurring revenue through affiliate marketing.

Personal Branding

I've mentioned briefly so far the importance of 'personal branding' in affiliate and Internet marketing, and as promised this chapter will focus on what personal branding is, why it's important, and how to go about setting up and promoting your personal brand. Personal branding is quite simply crucial in Internet marketing. If you've experienced the Internet marketing circuit, you'll know that everyone has a name. By that, I mean everyone involved in creating products and marketing products uses their own name in doing so. Very seldom will you see "XYZ Inc presents The Internet Marketing Guru's Guide to Success". But what you will encounter is Ewan Chia, Derek Gehl, Joel Comm, Yaro Starak, Jeremy Burns, Corey Rudl – all these guys present products with their personal names, and you should too.

What they're doing is reinforcing their personal brand. These guys work tirelessly to appear as they are perceived by the general internet market. They have tens of thousands of loyal follower that they keep in touch with on a regular basis through email marketing lists and blogs and they are highly trusted, respected Internet marketers in their own right. These names are the Coca-Cola, McDonalds, Nike and Apple of the online marketing world – they are brands reflected with a desirable brand image, designed to convert sales just like any other.

The difference is that they have all built up themselves as the brand, which is somewhat different from building a brand around a basic logo image and company ethos. Whilst the ethics and attitudes of the personal brand are equivalent processes to that of corporate branding, portraying personality and building relationships is something quite different from offline brands. In the field of online marketing, you've got to brand yourself as an expert in order to gain respect. Once you gain respect from at least some quarters you can begin to capitalize on the leverage this creates by making affiliate product suggestions and diverting traffic through your affiliate links. That's where the importance of personal branding comes in, as the precursor step towards establishing relationships designed to retain and squeeze customers over the long term.

Your personal brand is what you stand for, and what you know and have experienced. It is the sum total of your life experiences and your specialty within your niche that makes your person a valuable commodity in the Internet marketing arena. That is your personal brand, and it is that which you must try to enforce in everything you do online, in order to build a more rounded, generally respected profile of yourself and your work. A lot of this comes with providing useful information that actually makes a difference to highly targeted consumers, as well as utilizing the proven techniques for branding yourself to follow later in this chapter, and throughout the rest of this eBook.

First of all, you should consider what it is your niche is looking for. For ease, I'll focus all my examples on the 'making money online' niche. If you're trying to create a personal brand, you need to think what your ultimate customers require in order to perceive someone as an authority figure. Firstly, they want someone with a proven track record in the industry, and proof of experience. If you've made money online and are trying to teach others how to do it, you'll need to provide proof in the form of screenshots. If you can do that, you're well on your way to making a name for

yourself and coming across as an industry insider. Next, they'll be looking for examples of your previous successes, particularly from customers you have dealt with in the past. If you have testimonials from previous customers, that's excellent. If not, don't fabricate them, but approach other webmasters and ask for an honest review of your product (paying for it if necessary). Thirdly, you want to be discussed and referred to by name, which can now be achieved fairly easily thanks to blog marketing means like PayPerPost and ReviewMe. If you pay for a top blogger to blog about you and your experience, you stand an excellent chance of building on top of your personal brand the image of credibility, which is often hard to come by. Finally your customers will want someone they can relate to, and they want to know that you're not a superhero, but in fact just an average Joe with the talent and skill, combined with insider knowledge, to realize success online.

All these factors add up to your personal brand, and when combined with valuable information issued in your name, you can quite quickly become a perceived "go-to guy" for whatever niche market you happen to have chosen. So now we've got to grips with what is actually desired from a personal brand, and what your customers are looking for in finding an authority figure, let's turn our attention to exactly how you go about creating and growing a personal brand you can rely upon throughout the course of your affiliate marketing, and wider Internet marketing exploits.

One of the first things I suggest you do is get a good photograph or two of yourself in a suit. A smart, professional looking photograph can provide the image for your brand – the swoosh to your Nike, or the golden arches to your McDonalds. You don't need flashy graphic design – just a good photograph of you, and even an ink signature graphic can be enough to seal the deal. It is still important that you associate some kind of image with your personal brand, however. Without it, your marketing efforts will be less powerful. Image branding has been shown to instantly conjure brand values, so it's important to retain some consistency graphically across your work to maintain your personal brand for the long haul.

Next, setup a blog within your niche, to provide a point of contact and community with potential buyers. Setting up a blog is an absolutely fantastic way of turning one-off search engine traffic into loyal readers. If you write interesting a useful content on your blog on a regular basis, you can capture the attention of readers, and begin expanding your circulation. What that means is that you have the chance to portray your personal branding, whilst building tons of search engine entry points. From here, it's only a quick step away from converting readers into opt-in subscribers, which in turn will boost your mailing list no end. The blog should be professional, and revolve around giving tips and advice within your area of expertise. If you have already established yourself as a reliable, entertaining source of powerful information within your niche, promoting an eBook with your secret strategies, or pushing someone else's tips and techniques will be a much easier process.

A blog can be set up for under \$10. All you need is hosting and a domain name, and you're ready to rock. The WordPress platform is free to download, and is the world's major blogging system. It's easy to install, easy to use, and you can have your blog setup in literally no time. Blogging as a means of expounding your personal brand and promoting your affiliate products is discussed in more detail on our chapter on Blogging to follow.

Another great personal branding tip is to get your name out there. Article marketing is a good way of achieving recognition and build an expert profile, although it would seem to be slowing down as a marketing method with consistent over-submission as compared to readership. As well as that, there is always the option of guest posting on blogs within your subject matter. Keep your eyes open for bloggers looking for guest posts, or alternatively try a speculative email asking to guest blog about a particular subject. This can be a great way to build back links for SEO purposes, as well as get your name out there to readers within your niche as an up and coming star in your chosen field.

Alternatively, the ReviewMe/PayPerPost strategy mentioned above can be a great way to get your name out there, and to kick start the reputation that you so desperately need to make a success of your online marketing. It's by no means a cheap form of exposure, but it does have the potential to drive thousands of qualified visitors, depending on the quality of your post and the specifics of your niche.

Blogging as a medium has the potential to override our traditional news channels, with vast reader numbers available for those willing to grab them. Getting exposure on blogs has the potential to make or break your business, so it really is worthwhile trying to exploit these kind of channels as far as your budget will allow. The results in opt-in list conversions will be staggering, provided you have successfully identified your niche and played to your demographic.

Over the last few months the phenomenon known as Web2.0 has really come to fruition, combining social interactivity with the Internet world as we know it. What this has meant practically for Internet marketers is an opportunity to expand the reach of the personal brand. MySpace, Bebo and Facebook are essential tools in building your personal brand. Think about your profile page, and try to paint a picture of both your professional and private personalities, allowing those that come across your page to feel more comfortable in your community. This kind of marketing helps you appear more personable, rather than just another name on a page, which helps ultimately render an image in the minds of your opt-in subscribers. This image will help to reiterate your personal brand and successes, which should lead to improved conversion rates. It's also a great way to network and make friends within the Internet marketing arena, allowing you to explore the possibility of joint ventures, and build your profile within your niche. Social networking sites are probably one of the most effective ways of keeping on top of your personal brand, and it is a less obvious way of marketing to your prospective customers. Get a profile today, and get linking with others in your field to build up your reputation and get your name known.

Your personal brand can be reinforced through video and audio media integration. Integrating media into your website can be a great way to highlight the fact that you are an expert, and you're willing to shout about it. This works by lifting your personal brand off of the page into a three-dimensional, quality product in its own right, promoting you as an authority figure. It can also be a great method of increasing conversions from squeeze pages, whilst creating a long-term picture of you as the expert – a great start to a profitable long-term relationship. Creating a visual or audio impression adds a further dimension to you as a professional, and supports your claims that you are a knowledgeable, authority figure within your niche market.

Creating a personal brand is like creating a corporate brand. You are looking to sum-up everything you stand for in one image of your business, to provide residual value to your marketing efforts, and to everything you do promotion-wise. Personal branding allows the interconnectivity between various ventures and strategies that allow you to build up the crucial reputation necessary to convince and convert online. By seizing the opportunities presented to you to build an image of your personal experience and qualifications through online media, particularly within the Web2.0 classification of social media, you can create an online business with residual long-term value whilst expanding your horizons through networking and social interaction to increase the impact of your marketing and branding efforts.

Next to marketing yourself as an affiliate, it is vitally important to consider your landing page in order to create and stimulate interest in your personal brand and product offerings, as well as the first step to encouraging opt-in signups. The landing page is your first point of contact with a great deal of Internet traffic, and if you can learn how to convert from here, your opt-in list will grow exponentially. In the next chapter, we will look at how to set up your landing page to increase conversions without jeopardizing your personal brand, to provide you with the best chance of growing your email list and affiliate income.

The Landing Page

Remember that our Automated Money Pump offer allows you to create unlimited websites, affiliate links and landing pages. You can even edit your sites and track traffic and sales all from one panel. The whole process takes only a few minutes and you will never need to pay an expensive web developer or coder again:

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

The landing page, or namesqueeze page as it is often referred, is a highly important tool in building that crucial opt-in email list. Establishing your personal brand is one thing, but actually collecting the names is quite another, and is in itself an art form that must be learned in order to provide value through increased sign-up rates. The landing page may very well be your first point of contact from search engine traffic, and whether it's combined with a blog or part of a static website, it is imperative that you think carefully about the structure of your landing page to put it to best use in collecting names for your list.

Later chapters are dedicated to actually selling the opt-in process to prospective subscribers, and contain detailed discussions of the way in which you can ensure your conversion rates from free traffic to opt-in subscribers are maximized. In this chapter we're going to turn our attention mainly towards setting up a landing page, and marketing it to best effect, whilst ensuring browsers feel encouraged to sign up to whatever you have to offer, and ultimately your email list.

The landing page is for all intents and purposes your flagship point of contact with the majority of your future list members. This is where the prospective opt-in is confronted with your personal brand, details of your free subscription incentive, and the option to sign up. Statistics show that the vast majority of browsers stay on any given website for less than 30seconds. What that means for you is that you've got literally seconds to impress, and to attract the attention of the browser. It's a practice that requires constant fine-tuning and experimentation, but perfecting your landing page is crucial to your success rates, particularly from SEO and PPC marketing strategies. Getting it right is important, there's no doubt about that – the trick is *knowing* how to get it right, to benefit subscriptions and bring in qualified traffic.

But first things first, it's time to get your website set up and running. Normally, this is a fairly straightforward process, but there is a lack of information to point you in the right direction if things aren't working out, and it can often be confusing for those without technical abilities. What you're trying to achieve is a screen-sized page (i.e. no scrolling is necessary) which contains all the information necessary to encourage someone to sign up for your opt-in list. In order to get this in place, you're going to need a domain name and hosting for your site, as was clarified in the chapter on 'Getting Started'. By now, you should have a firm concept of the niche you want to operate within, which could make finding a domain easier. Be creative in your domain selection – a website that's branded onlinemarketingtips.com won't do here. You want something that really sells exactly what you have to offer, something that captures the essence of your product or niche. Alternatively, many internet marketers choose their own name as the domain, further adding to the weight of their personal branding. The problem with that is that as you become more and more successful at Internet marketing, you may want to use your own name domain as a central website

for all your ideas, in which case you would have to take down your current landing page. Decide on a domain name that is suitable for your niche and also appears professional to the browser. Make sure, above all, that you don't opt for adventurous ccTLD's, i.e. there's no advantage in saving \$5 to buy a .info domain when you could have the .com – everyone knows .info domains are cheap, and that will only devalue your brand. Invest in a quality domain name and you will reap the rewards throughout your branding efforts.

Next you need to make sure you have hosting in place. If a domain name is like a street address, hosting is the plot of land on which your house sits. Without it, you can't establish a website, and so you need to get a hosting package sorted that's right for you. I would recommend if you are a total newcomer to web design and development that you opt for a hosting company providing a Cpanel login section. Cpanel is a specialist hosting software that is particularly easy to use for uploading files. Some other hosts rely on FTP upload, which can be the cause of endless headaches if you don't know what you're doing. Check for a host with Cpanel hosting, which allows you to upload files at the click of a button through its File Manager. There are plenty of providers out there, and you could get more than adequate hosting for less than \$10 a month. This will provide sufficient space for all your affiliate marketing needs and then some, should you ever wish to branch out into further web business opportunities.

After both a domain name and hosting are in place, you're ready to start building your landing page, which presents you with two options: do it yourself, or pay someone else to do it. The first option doesn't need to be out of reach, and there are many visual, or WYSIWYG (what you see is what you get) web editors available that allow you to drag and drop shapes and colors, rather than relying on manipulating HTML code. Whilst I would recommend a beginner opting for professional help, those with some basic experience may feel inclined to go it alone, which can still produce results. There are also a number of templates readily available online which you might like to use, although exercise caution when making your choice – they don't all have that professional look you're after.

If you instead opt for arranging a professional to do it, you could save yourself a lot of money by hiring a freelancer through RentACoder.com or Elance.com. While you will save money above market rates, it's important to remember that quality can sometimes be hit or miss, and it depends which coder you ultimately select. Ask for portfolio samples, and read through previous user feedback. This should help you to better gauge the abilities of each prospective coder before you commit to continuing work. Realistically, you should be looking to spend no more than \$150 at a freelancer site for good quality design work and coding on a project of this size. Make sure the designers responding to your bid request understand what a squeeze page, or landing page is, and let them know that your objective is to get people to sign up for a free subscription newsletter. Make it clear that you know what you want from the start, and communicate all the key features you want incorporated into your page.

It's a good idea to draft content for your squeeze page first of all so that you can better form a vision of where you want to go. This can be helpful to the coder, who can incorporate your text into the design. Your copy should be short on the landing page. Many professionals opt to use the long sales letter sell even for free sign ups. I would

suggest keeping it short and to the point is the best way forward – if someone visits your website that is prepared to sit and read the length of a 6,000 word sales letter just to subscribe, they're a guaranteed sign-up anyway. Most others will be put off by the length of the text, and they will lose interest before having the option to sign up. The best and most efficient strategy for encouraging sign ups is sharp, punchy text that lets the opt-in know what he's getting. It's free, so you don't have to overcome too many barriers. Just make sure you get their attention and get their sign up before the 30second average browsing time expires.

Your content should be focused almost exclusively on what you're offering for the sign up. Is it a marketing course, a free ebook, or report? Is it a free daily tips service? Whatever it is you need to **sell** the free sign up as great value for money by bigging up your free product, and your credentials. Let the browsers know who you are and what you're offering. Provide a discreet link under your name to your primary blog, or website, to let them know that you have established a name for yourself and you're not a fly by night Internet guru. Around 250 words should be enough to get across your message and sell that free sign up to browsers arriving from search engines, or wherever.

Your page should contain some graphic element related to your niche, or a visual representation of your product. This helps to break up the text, and provide a more tangible image to associate with the free product you're trying to sell. Whilst this may sound peculiar, selling a free product doesn't come with anywhere near a 100% conversion rate. You really need to work to convert, and that's the main job of your squeeze page.

Headlines are also advisable, in the traditional sales letter style – big, bold, colorful headlines attract attention where attention is at a premium, and you need to hook the browser within the critical 2 second, first impression period. Make them sit up and take note, and let them know it's free. This is a proven way of getting more sign ups for your money, and anything that helps expand your list is good value.

You will also need to get your auto-responder code handy for passing on to your coder. This will deal with your list signups automatically, and most major responder clients allow you to track statistics and see sign up rates. Although you will end up paying a monthly subscription fee for the privilege, this is an essential tool in the affiliate marketer's toolbox, and without it you'll find it increasingly hard to manage email communications with your list. With it, your direct email marketing will be a breeze, and you can take advantage of the technology in place to ensure your lists are double opt-in and hence more qualified.

And that should be your landing page complete. Headlines, graphics, quick sharp copy and auto-responder. Make sure to provide more depth to your landing page if applicable, and a 'Who Is <Your Name>' page might be helpful in further establishing your personal brand. Now all you have to do is find traffic for your landing page to convert into opt-in subscribers. If you've got the right combination of all these factors on your page, and you manage to bring in traffic of any volume, you should notice your sign ups coming in as your list grows and expands in line with your earning potential.

Setting up your landing page is a crucial step in building your list, and it is one which can really make or break your subscription process, depending on whether or not you achieve the right balance in your page layout. Get it right and the sign-ups will come flooding in. Get it wrong, and you'd be lucky to receive a trickle of interest.

Provided you remain firm with your designer and ensure you get exactly what you want, and that you stick within the guidelines and rules suggested in this chapter, you should be able to use common sense to judge whether or not anyone will sign up. Put yourself in their shoes – would you sign up to your own landing page?

Next we turn to a particularly scientific aspect of marketing online and one which has proven even more technical than its creators had envisaged. Pay Per Click has intrigued advertisers like no other online media, and there have been volumes written on how best to advertise through the medium. We'll look in the next chapter at some of the key Pay Per Click strategies you can use in order to maximize cost per click efficiency and to build up your email list through your landing page.

Pay Per Click Strategies

Per-Per-Click is somewhat of an art form, with expensive pitfalls for those that don't understand the techniques and processes used by the experts. PPC as a medium is becoming increasingly popular but increasing costly in terms of acquisition rates. However, when it comes to building your list it can be a fantastic asset for your online business, provided you take the time to learn and understand how to go about it in an efficient, creative way.

Pay-Per-Click works by offering advertisers the chance to place a (usually) text-based ad in front of millions of potential browsers. Run predominantly by search engines, (although not exclusively so), PPC offers perceived value from paying online for interested browsers. The theory is that the interested browser will click on the ad to find out more, providing quality, more qualified traffic for the advertisers. Similarly, because the advertiser pays only for the actual traffic he sees from the ad, it is thought to be better value for money as compared to other advertising methods which rely on page impressions, or a flat rate fee.

Of course, the business model has developed to a greater degree of sophistication, to take into account fraudulent clicks, daily maximum budgets, cost per click bidding mechanisms and even quality of landing page. However, at its core, the theoretical foundation of pay per click stands strong as a seemingly effective way of bringing in the traffic.

Whilst PPC may have been highly effective on inception, it has become a very different mechanism over the past few years. Firstly, the market is becoming more savvy, and more conscious of the pay per click function. Many advertisers have blamed this on the rise in so-called 'click-fraud', whereby malicious clicks are made against targeted advertisers in order to exhaust their daily budget, and reduce the effectiveness of their advertising campaign. Secondly, PPC has become increasingly more expensive as it has matured, with increasing competition amongst advertisers for the prized first place. Finally, most sites have a significant bounce rate, meaning that the majority of their traffic stays on-site for less than 30seconds. At that rate, the majority of your PPC spend is effectively wasted on 30second viewers.

Aside from that there have been a great number of strategies developed in order to maximize the efficiency of Pay Per Click as an advertising method, and by implementing those strategies you can give yourself a better chance of success in achieving value from each cost per click.

A fundamental principle of managing any Pay Per Click campaign is striving to retain clicks; every person that clicks through to your site must be proactively retained for future, in order to squeeze as much value as possible. What this means as an affiliate marketer is that you must have a very high conversion rate to your email list through your PPC advertising; pushing 100% where possible. Chances are, depending on your keywords, that you're attracting clicks at around \$0.20 each, which is an expensive strategy if you lose the majority of your click-throughs before signup stage. One of the best ways to ensure signups from PPC landing is to employ the use of floating signup forms. Floating signup forms can be used on a subscription basis, and although you might find them annoying yourself, they've proven to increase

conversions to email opt-in lists dramatically. If your squeeze page is a summary of what you have to offer, the floating signup form must be a summary of the summary, with little more than why the browser should signup and the signup form itself.

Whilst on-page conversion is an important aspect of reaping value from PPC, so is pre-qualifying your clicks. What this means is ensuring that those who do click-through to your site have a full understanding of why they're clicking, and that they are likely to be interested in signing up to your email list. By employing pre-qualification measures, you can ensure that any traffic that you do pay for comes with the best chance of signing up to your email list, from which point you can convert sales and try to reap value.

This comes down to the logical conclusion that your ad must be clear and specific in what you're offering. 'Free Online Power Marketing Report' is good, whereas 'Online Marketing' isn't, for the simple reason that no one knows what you're offering. There's a time and a place for grabbing people's attention and clearly letting them know what you have to offer, and believe me this is it. PPC without this kind of qualification is nothing but a waste of money – each click you pay for is expensive, so you want the best chance of some return for your money.

Similarly you've got to reach out there and grab those prospective readers. 'Learn about online marketing' won't do you any favors, whereas the headline 'Want To Know My Marketing Secret?' would be a better way to get the attention of traffic. Whilst this still has to be qualified, i.e. click here for my free report, it is still better to reel the browser in beforehand, to make sure you're actually going to get seen by those you want to convert.

A crucial tip for anyone looking to begin a pay per click campaign is to employ split testing, whereby you run several different ads and track the results in terms of click-throughs and list conversions. To start with, run two ads simultaneously under two different keyword phrases, taking care to track the results of both. After a set period of, say, a week, switch round the key phrases and test again to allow a fair comparison. At the end of your testing, you should be able to notice at a glance which advert brings the most value for money, which will in turn enable you to gain more efficiency from your advertising.

Pay Per Click analysts and strategists recommend opting for niche keywords wherever possible. If you have already established a well-defined niche, this shouldn't be a problem. The more 'niche' you go, the cheaper it is to bid on PPC keywords, and also the more likely the traffic is to be qualified before you even get your hands on it. If someone is searching for 'free internet marketing report', and that's your key phrase, you can expect that any traffic coming through is already qualified at several filter stages; they've searched for that term, and read you ad-specific filtering techniques as discussed above.

A good way to get this kind of niche advertising, although this only works for certain limited niche markets, is to use geography-specific keyword phrases. For example, a free fishing tips report might reap value if you bid under 'fishing in Canada', or something similar. Place names attached to keywords very rarely see the same price competitiveness as the parent keyword, yet they can still see significant traffic

through search engines on which to capitalize. Obviously, something like ‘marketing in the UK’ probably wouldn’t work, because marketing in the UK is a lot like marketing in France, or Germany, or the US (at a fundamental level anyway). But where appropriate, advertising under region-specific keywords is a good way to save money without sacrificing relevancy of traffic through your PPC campaigns.

Effectively managing your PPC strategy requires experimentation, a heavy wallet, and more importantly recording and analyzing your stats. Keep a note of your figures on a day to day basis, to allow you to make comparisons. By contrasting the results of various strategies, you can quickly identify where the strengths and weaknesses of your advertising lies, to enable more effective and efficient marketing.

Another major way of attracting qualified traffic to your landing page is through search engine optimization. The higher your site ranks for your chosen keyword terms, the more likely you are to find traffic through those terms. Of course, the value saved from search engine optimization as compared to Pay Per Click advertising is astronomical, and simply by promoting your site through SEO, you can increase profitability and your conversion rates. In the coming chapters, we’ll turn to search engine optimization, both on-site and off, as a strategy for building your email list. By implementing these optimization techniques, you should be able to boost your site within the search engine results pages, in order to bring in more traffic and numerically increase the number of subscribers on your opt-in list.

Search Engine Optimization – On Site

Search Engine Optimization, or SEO as it is also known, is one of the most valuable tactics you can learn for any online operation. When you consider the benefits of search engine optimization in terms of the cost of a PPC program, a well optimized site could save you tens of thousands of dollars in advertising costs. What's more, the bulk of it can be done in your spare time, allowing you to focus on working on building your reputation whilst promoting your site. By now, you should have a landing page up and running, with a suitable domain name and hosting in place. Basically, your website should be sitting ready to start building your list.

If you've set up your landing page as described in the Landing Page chapter, you should be ready to seriously convert browsers into list subscribers. You may also have spent some money on PPC advertising for your landing page. The next logical step comes to trying to attract search engine visibility for your opt-in list, and what better way to achieve that than beginning to aggressively optimize your site. Traffic from search engine organic results is more beneficial than its paid counterpart in terms of cost efficiency and quality. When it comes down to it, successful optimization allows you to bring in highly qualified traffic within your niche, and target keyword phrases, without the expense of paying per click-through.

Onsite optimization differs from offsite optimization in the sense that it relates to how streamlined the site is in the indexing and ranking processes. Whereas offsite increases the volume of links pointing towards the site, onsite allows your website to be ranked to the best of its ability, to attract the maximum natural traffic to your landing page. Both are as effective as one another, but almost useless on their own. By combining a cross-section of tactics from both types of optimization, you can give yourself the best chance of improving your natural search engine rankings and driving organic traffic through the search engines.

It is worth clarifying at this stage that SEO techniques fall under the broad classifications of white-hat and black-hat, where black-hat equates to high risk, high yield strategies. If you're caught exercising black-hat strategies, your site could be permanently banned from the search engines. The focus of this chapter is largely on sustainable onsite 'white-hat' methods, which are tolerated by the major search engines and can build up your search engine rankings over the course of time. Whilst 'black-hat' methods might provide quicker results, and allow you to rank beyond high budget optimizers in your niche quickly, it will ultimately bring your brand and image into disrepute and banish your sites from the search engines forever. White-hat is tolerated to a degree, and it is these methods that we will focus on in these chapters to provide you with the safest possible means of attracting organic search engine traffic.

Search engines rank websites according to various complex and constantly updating algorithms. These highly in-depth formulae rely on spiders to be the eyes and ears of ranking mechanism – also referred to as crawlers, which consistently trawl the web and update the search engine information archives. This is then eventually translated within the search engine ranking results, according to the outcome of the spiders' findings. The SEO industry is built on second-guessing the top secret search engine algorithms, and making amendments to the on-site and off-site optimization

strategies, which attempt to present websites in a positive light for search engines, in order to attract higher rankings and boost traffic.

On-site optimization relates to what can be modified within your page in order to make it more appealing to search engines under given search terms. Whilst search engine optimization isn't quite rocket science, it does take time to understand, implement, and see results. If you're expecting an overnight success from your optimization efforts, you're in for a shock. Fortunately, what you can expect is results to begin to take effect over time, gradually improving as your site ages, and paving the way for more aggressive marketing strategies.

Your optimization strategy on-site and off-site should be centered on keyword phrases. Focusing on keywords is the best way to ensure that your website ranks well for those in your target audience. Rather than allowing your site to naturally index and rank with the text that happens to be on your page, building your content around a chosen keyword strategy allows you to channel your website to those that it may actually appeal to, in order to ensure the traffic that comes through your website is as highly qualified as it can be. This in turn will help ensure you bring in relevant traffic to convert to your list, thus adding to the reach of your opt-in list.

The first thing to make sure before beginning any optimization is that your landing page is search engine friendly. What this means is that your landing page conforms with what search engines are looking for, in order to allow the spiders from Google, Yahoo and MSN to access your full site and index it appropriately. Firstly, make sure your page is text-heavy, i.e. text forms the main component of the page. You should try to avoid embedding text within images, as this is impossible for search engines to read and process. Keep all text in text format, and make sure it is neatly organized into headings and paragraph text. This will allow the search engine spiders to process your information, and give you a better chance of ranking highly – after all, text is the main factor in the way search engines perceive sites. Additionally you should try to avoid 'frames' within your website, which provide various different sub-windows on your page. Whilst this is becoming a thing of the past for most modern websites, it is still worth mentioning the negative effect this has on search engine indexing.

Next, make sure any images within your website have alt text, to enable them to be indexed by the spiders. The alt text won't be visible unless there's a problem with loading the image, or your visitor is a search engine, allowing you to streamline your website for search engine compatibility. Without it, you're wasting yet another opportunity to be read and perceived favorably by the search engines, and you're throwing away a chance to have more content included in the search engine index. The alt text should contain your keywords as specified, which will increase the keyword count on your page to help you rank better under your specific terms. Furthermore, it'll make you look less unprofessional if there are server load issues and you have alt text in place to describe what should be in place of your images.

Another aspect of your website which must be configured correctly in order to provide quicker and more accurate search engine indexing and to ultimately promote traffic is the meta tags and keyword tags in your page HTML. You should be able to configure this from your HTML processor, or alternatively you can ask your designer to do it for you. Basically this involves updating your site's background information

in order to slot in your keyword phrases, for which you want your website to rank. The keywords you choose should be relevant within your niche, and ideally with little competition from other websites in the search engine results pages. The exact nature of defining meta tags and keyword tags is perhaps beyond the scope of this eBook, and is a little more technical in nature. If you're at all unsure, ask your web designer to help you out in choosing and setting up your meta tags correctly. Also, check your coding for HTML standards compliance, which will highlight any problems that could slow down the indexing process. By eradicating any coder errors before the spiders arrive at your website, you can prevent poor rankings as a result of HTML discrepancies, and allow your website to bring in the natural traffic it deserves.

Finally, you have to make sure your page content itself is well optimized. By this, I mean contains your keyword phrases present in your meta tags several times spread throughout the content, in order to make your page appear relevant to those searching for term in search engines. This helps the search engines identify that your site is relevant to the keywords you have specified, and this is what will attract real search engine traffic once your site is fully indexed and ranking. They say content is King, and they are still right. The more content you have, the more likely you are to rank better in search engines. Unfortunately, this poses a conflict when marketing a landing page or namesqueeze page, in that you are trying to keep text to a minimum to push the sale, and to avoid excessive clutter. One way around it is to insert your keyword phrases within the copyright notice at the foot of your page rather than too frequently in the body text. This will still be read by search engines, but won't dissuade sales through cluttered, excessive, waffling content. When you need short, sharp copy, the last thing you want is to get caught up in stuffing keywords. Think creatively, and include keywords in links down at the bottom of your page, in the copyright notices and in the 'About' section of your site, to provide maximum keyword density without ruining your sales message.

Another important change that can be made to the on-site setup in order to make it more appealing to search engines is through the robots.txt file in your site's main directory. The robots.txt file is the first file visited by search engine spiders when arriving at your site, if it's present. It allows you to set instructions for the search engine as to what is to be crawled, and what is to be left untouched, and it can be a great way to maximize the efficiency of the indexing and ranking process. By channeling the search engine spiders through your website and through each spiderable link, you can ensure everything you want to be included in the search engine results can be, to provide the maximum number of traffic entry points for organic browsers.

Search engine optimization is a complex and constantly updating process, changing on a monthly, if not weekly basis. Keeping abreast of developments isn't realistically within the scope of an Internet marketer, but a basic knowledge should be sufficient to allow you to achieve some success in ranking. Nevertheless, you can implement some basic but effective techniques in your own spare time, to bring your landing page up in the search engine results pages, consequently increasing your natural search engine traffic. And after you've tweaked your site to maximize conversions, this can lead to a rapidly growing email list with very little variable financial outlay.

In the next chapter, we're going to turn to off-site optimization measures, widely revolving around link-building strategies, which are designed to increase through-traffic, and boost search engine results under your anchor text keywords. Whilst many prefer offsite optimization techniques for their perceived effectiveness, the combination of both onsite and offsite allows streamlined indexing and ranking of your landing page, which in turn brings in more traffic and ultimately more opt-in subscribers.

SEO – Offsite

Search engine optimization covers methods both ‘on-site’ and ‘off-site’ in making your landing page both more amenable to search engine rankings, whilst physically improving positioning within the search engine results pages. Obviously, the further up the results pages you go, the more likely you are to attract volumes of traffic considering most people don’t search through seven or eight results pages to find what they’re looking for. Whilst on-site optimization allows your website to rank and maximizes the efficiency of off-site measures, it is off-site that can really boost your rankings and your traffic figures. And of course, as an Internet marketer, more traffic means more opt-in subscribers.

Offsite SEO is an equally important aspect of search engine optimization, which relies on changes made about your site on other sites, hence ‘offsite’. Offsite search engine optimization takes a number of different forms, and consists primarily of trying to attract better search engine rankings through link popularity. To summarize a significantly more complicated model, the more links to your site that show up in search engines, the better you will perform under your chosen keyword terms. Whilst this isn’t strictly true, the general concept holds true that those sites with more incoming links from other sourced rank higher than their less-linked counterparts.

Search engines rank websites according to highly technical algorithms, which take into account numerous on-site and off-site factors. Naturally they are far from perfect in returning the exact results relevant to you, and in interpreting what you’re looking for, but these consistently changing algorithms are shrouded in secrecy and extremely complicated in their scope and reach. What this means is that there is always speculation as to what works and what doesn’t in terms of getting your site up there under your keyword phrases, and when combined with information from Google and the other engines directly, theories as to what works and what doesn’t are always developing and changing.

There are literally hundreds of thousands of people willing to offer their services as search engine optimization consultants. Because everyone has their own theories, and most prolific webmasters have a strategy for optimization, you can buy services ranging from one off fees of around \$100 through to \$500 per hour consultancy rates. What I would advise is investing the time and effort on your own to increase back link popularity through the various methods outlined in this chapter.

Unfortunately SEO never stands still, and in six months time there’s no guarantee that any of this information will still be relevant. However, most of the offsite techniques detailed here can be implemented to bring in traffic as well as rankings, to provide more long-term stability and value as a process. By implementing these just now, you will be able to cheaply and efficiently publicize your web business, as well as reap short term search engine value, making it a worthwhile process overall.

Offsite optimization is a rapidly changing area of search engine strategy, and new tricks and tactics emerge throughout the course of any year, according to trends and changes at Google and other search engines. At the moment, one of the most crucial offsite optimization strategies is what is known as social bookmarking. Social bookmarking coincides with the rise of the so-called Web2.0, in which interactivity

and participation are the name of the game. Basically, by receiving votes or nominations through these social bookmarking sites, you can gain link exposure in addition to the obvious traffic generated by these measures. The more links you achieve through social bookmarking, the more beneficial this strategy will prove in terms of your search engine rankings.

One of the key tools in your social bookmarking armory is Digg.com. Digg.com is a massive user driven news site, in which the members vote up or down news stories as they see fit. It is used as a source by journalists and bloggers the world over, and is fed into any number of other websites. All in all, the impact of getting on the front page of Digg can actually ban your website from its hosting package, through too much server activity. Whilst the front page is a long way off for the time being, you should be able to get your stories fairly high up the list without too much hassle. Digg is a community and it requires participation and activity over a period of time to give value to your efforts. The more you give, the more you'll be able to reap, and this means voting up other people's stories to begin with. If you manage to catch on to a story that subsequently becomes popular, your account becomes stronger. Additionally, by nominating other member's stories, you create friends that automatically boost your Digg count with every story you submit. Internet marketing is probably less in-tune with Digg, and if you just have a landing page, you can forget it. If however you run a blog alongside your landing page, this will allow you to post the story to Digg. Stories like 'Top 7 Ways To X' or weird news usually do quite well, although you must remember and relate it to your niche or Internet marketing. If people like your story they vote for it, and the more votes you get the further up the list you move. And every time someone clicks to read your story, the browser is diverted to your blog, where you'll have a prominent signup box to catch those clickthroughs and turn them into subscribers. What's more, there's a chance you'll get blogged about and linked to from all over the place, increasing as your story becomes more popular, thus spreading back links further. It really is a win/win situation.

Offsite optimization for a landing page is rather different from other types of website, in that it is harder to build links. Whereas with a normal website, directory submission would be a key route forward for increasing back link popularity and boosting search engine rankings, it doesn't really tie in with the aims of an Internet marketing landing page. Of course it can still be done and it will still bring search engine benefits, although it doesn't seem to fit nicely with the basic idea of a directory.

One method that does work across both regular and Internet marketing landing websites is article submission. Article submission isn't beneficial from the perspective of directly gaining traffic. Today, no one reads what's published in article directories, unless they read it on a site that uses an article directory feed, which even still is unlikely. Information is far more accessible through search engines than article directories, and unless your article happens to rank particularly highly for a certain phrase, no one will ever read it. So why even both writing and submitting articles then? Writing and submitting articles to directories will bring you traffic by boosting your search engine rankings. Directories usually allow around 3 back links in articles that are submitted to them, allowing you to place 3, keyword-anchored links to your landing page. Copy and repeat this process to build hundreds, if not thousands of back

links to your site, spread evenly all across the net. If you plan your anchor text strategy effectively, i.e. use consistent key phrases as links back to your site, you will eventually improve your ranking for that phrase in the search engine results pages, which will in turn bring you more traffic.

In terms of spreading back links and generating traffic, blog commenting is another strategy which can help your search engine rankings. Provided you carefully select 'dofollow' blogs, which provide you with search engine benefits from your linking, each comment you make will boost your search engine rankings and might even bring in a bit of traffic too. Whilst this is primarily a link-building exercise, it is also advisable to make sure your comments are worthwhile – spamming blogs won't reflect well on your brand and your products. But by providing useful additional information or communication, you can engage in a more meaningful way to improve your site's search engine visibility through off-page factors.

Press release distribution is another classic way of increasing back-links and bringing in traffic. The press release appears very professional to those reading it, and if it contains a worthwhile story there is a chance you may get some coverage. The online press release is a typical form of viral content, and if it contains some newsworthy story you could see the release with your back links spread across the Internet. Furthermore, your press release will be relevant to the subject matter of your landing page, and hence the links from the release will contain more value and more potency than links arising from other, unrelated sources. A press release gives the impression that you are a bigger organization and of more importance, given that it is written from a third-person perspective. On top of that, you can hype your own products and information up no end, though falling short of straight sales copy. And with the added allure of back-links as determined by you, with your anchor text, your search engine rankings will almost certainly benefit. Simply by publishing your press release around the various free release newswires online, you can spread your message and your back-links to improve your search engine results under your anchor text phrases.

If you are not already a member of a forum in your niche, you are losing out on an excellent marketing opportunity as well as an excellent tool for search engine optimization. Forums generally allow you to place links in your signature back to your website. Unfortunately, forums tend to have a significant number of outbound links, which devalue links from that source by diluting PageRank and authority. Although these individually will not be very powerful for SEO, the more you post, the stronger the links. What's more, if the substance of your posts is interesting and relevant to what you have to offer, you'll see some traffic through your efforts, as well as the search engine benefits.

Another off-site optimization strategy which has grown over the last year or so is the paid blog posting genre. Paid blog posting allows you to pay a high profile (or low profile) blogger to write a review or a post on their blog related to your site. It then comes complete with back links to your site, which bring in traffic from the blog as well as search engine optimization benefits. ReviewMe and PayPerPost are the two major players in this market, encompassing most of the top-end bloggers. Whilst certain posts may be expensive, they are worth it even in terms of traffic, let alone with regard to their search engine advantages. Browse through the marketplace

listings at both to find out what's on offer – the handy ranking score will help you determine what's best for your website. Provided it is within your niche and the traffic/links are likely to be related to what you have to offer, you will reap both traffic and SEO advantages in the long run.

Buying links outright is another way to go about increasing your search engine rankings, although it is important to exercise caution when doing so. Paid links are strictly forbidden by Google as a perceived means of 'cheating' their algorithms. Whilst Google aims to rank according to the most relevant, most important websites under a particular search webmasters aim to get their own site to the top, no matter what it takes. And with the power of paid for links, this could create a marketplace where the biggest wallet and the deepest pocket take top spot – naturally against Google's ethos and objectives. However, there are ways in which link buying can be done discreetly. The first rule of thumb is to make sure any link you buy is closely related to your niche, and that's for a number of reasons. Initially, your ranking will benefit from related back links to your site, as indeed will your traffic figures. Secondly, if your link has nothing to do with the site in question it is most likely to be a paid link. Why would a mortgage site link to a pharmaceutical site? Furthermore, if that mortgage site also has links to webmaster directories, gambling websites and search engine optimizers, Google will pretty much guess these are sold, paid for links. Online, Google is the boss and if you're caught with paid links, your site could be banished from the index, or at the least penalized by Google in the rankings. What's more, only Google can decide when to allow your website to perform well in the searches, so you're pretty much stuck with abiding by the rules. If however you buy links in a discreet fashion, linked closely to your site, there is no physical way in which Google can differentiate a paid link from a natural link.

Buying back links is good for SEO but risky by the same token. If you're looking to invest in back links for your site, the first place you should visit is TextLinkAds.com. By far the industry leader in selling text link ads, they'll present you with an extensive list of link inventory. You can browse the site before you buy, check out the PageRank and traffic figures, and generally check the appearance of sponsored links on those pages. Furthermore, TLA isn't always expensive, and you can pick up some real bargains when it comes to unsold inventory, to boost your websites search engine rankings. It is also a good idea to visit the DigitalPoint forums, where members offer links for sale. The advantage here is that the links are cheaper than at TLA, but beware the number of outgoing links from the page. Also, ask to check out what the links will look like and where they will appear – after all, you don't want dodgy text links on unscrupulous websites damaging your personal and product brand.

Optimizing your website is one of the most powerful marketing strategies you can implement, in terms of driving traffic on a long-term, sustainable level. From there, harnessing the power of your traffic can only come with a full and comprehensive understanding of statistics and conversions, which you must track through every possible channel. Whilst there is software available to help you, there are ways in which you can leverage the facts and figures to your advantage in order to maximize sales channels and maximize your profits. Next, we're going to turn to how you communicate with your subscribers once you've brought in the traffic and converted to clickthroughs. The more you leverage statistics to your advantage, the more subscribers you can bring in, yet the less you know about talking to your list, the less

likely they are to buy from you. In the next chapter, we'll focus on how to communicate with your list to increase your reputation and maximize sales.

Mailing Your List

Having an email list is all well and good, but that alone won't make you money. If you've managed to collect opt-in subscribers, you've done very well, but you won't be able to monetize unless you know how to communicate, and market in a discreet but effective way. The first thing that you must remember about your mailing list is that they receive emails everyday, many of which will be from Internet marketers like yourself. The bulk of these emails will no longer be relevant to those that receive them, and the initial reaction may be simple deletion. What that means for you is that you have to differentiate your emails as valuable, worthwhile content from the off, in order to give you mail the best chance of getting opened when they are received.

Your mailing list is a fickle creation, and there is seldom any guarantee that your subscribers will even open the emails you send to them. Your unsubscribe rates could be high, and your mail could end up in the spam filter. It's a tough business, especially if you've spent money on building up your list and attracting subscribers. That's why, whenever you communicate with your list, you've got to keep up the selling process, by which I mean keep up selling the subscription services they have already signed up to. Keep them coming back for more through the quality and substance of the information you provide, and let them know of upcoming newsletters and their contents to try and keep them hanging on for as long as possible. Remember – the longer you keep contact with each target, the more likely they are to buy from you.

The key concept in mailing your list is providing content of value. Valuable content is what keeps your mailing list interested in what you have to say, and in what you have to offer in terms of products. Whilst this may seem like a lot of initial time investment for very little return, through communicating valuable, useful information to your list you can lay the foundations of a long-term relationship between you and your customers, which will ultimately allow you to profit from the names you have collected. The more you offer your list, the more you can expect in return from them. It is very much a give and take relationship, and you have to invest effort, time and money in building up that list to provide you with any sort of a business.

Many Internet marketers start with a bang, providing quality content through their initial free offering, then allowing the standard to slip after that. They often find that their mailing lists tend not to be too responsive, and there is a very good reason for that – send people dross, and they'll ignore it. There's no point in spending time and money marketing an opt-in service if you don't take the time and effort to make the service worthwhile for its subscribers. Internet marketers that do well treat the service as the mainstay of their business, rather than using it as an accessory to sell products. The list is your business, and as an Internet marketer publishing useful niche content to your list is your job. If you fail to grasp that fundamental concept, your readership won't stick around for much longer to listen to what you have to say.

Email marketing, like blogging, requires you to tender to the needs of your reader base. Tell them what they want to hear, and what they are interested in hearing to keep them on board. A blog that was geared towards relentless promotion of affiliate products wouldn't maintain any great readership, so too people will ditch your email newsletter if you focus on the hard sale. If, however, you take the time to provide

valuable content on a frequent basis, your list will remain engaged with you as a marketer, allowing you to profit from your authoritative position. Almost like University lecturers promoting their books to the class – if they think the book is likely to provide more in-depth information on top of what is already an interesting and valuable lecture, chances are they'll be fighting each other off at the bookstore to grab a copy.

Constant promotion plus sub-par information is the recipe for guaranteed unsuccessful Internet marketing. People are very skeptical of someone they've never met flogging them products they don't really want hard-sell style. If you don't offer anything of value other than a sales pitch, response rates will dive and profits will be near non-existent.

Another of the email marketing cardinal sins comes from the tactics of email 'bombing'. Email bombing is where the bright spark Internet marketer figures out that if he can make \$100 from each mail shot, he can make millions if he mails every five minutes. Unfortunately, I have found myself on many of these lists in the past, and to be honest there is nothing more off-putting than a hassle. Every time I checked my list email account I had a new message from the same one or two individuals, flogging me more information products than I could physically handle. My advice would be slow down! Take your time to build up each product, rather than processing it like spam. If you devote care and attention to each email you send to your list, and each product you happen to mention in your email copy, you will notice that sales grow naturally, rather than effectively spamming every email address on your list with terrible conversion rates.

So that's how not to communicate with your email list – what should you do to actually maximize returns from your email subscribers? The title of your email, i.e. the subject line, seems a good place to start. There is a vast difference between conversion rates and read rates, and without increasing the latter, you'll find conversions tend to stagnate. You need to get as many of your subscribers to open and read your emails as possible, and one way to go about this is by working with an interesting or engaging subject line. Titles like 'Hey, I've Got News For You' are pretty poor when it comes to read rates compared to lines like 'Do you want to know how to catch more fish?'. Remember you're niche and think in their mindset, what would you actively open and read. What would be intriguing enough to attract their attention from a whole host of other emails that may be sitting in their inbox? Target your email titles to be relevant, interesting and intriguing to boost your read ratio, which will naturally boost your conversion rate at the bottom line.

Next to the subject matter of the email, and in particular how to drop in certain advertisements and affiliate links without sounding as if you're pushing the sale too much. As we've mentioned before a lot of it comes down to trust, and creating a relationship of integrity and respect with those on your opt-in list. The only way you can create that relationship is through the text you display in your email messages. Nothing else will make someone respect you as a professional and an expert more than seeing it with their own eyes, through the information you publish and the advice you provide. So take time to focus on non-sales driven, valuable communication, that is worthwhile and helpful to your readership.

Affiliate products thrown in as suggestions very rarely see good conversions rates. A tactic often employed by email marketers is to say I recommend a product that does X, like brand Y or brand Z, with both Y and Z leading through affiliate links. A far better way of pushing the affiliate link is to come right out and recommend something as a favorable option, taking care to say exactly why and what you recommend it for. Don't recommend on the basis of what offers the highest affiliate commission, but rather focus on those products you feel most aligned with in a personal capacity, and that are actually likely to provide value to your email list. People will respect you for carefully selecting affiliate products to promote, and by making sure you only offer good quality in the products you push, you will be recognized as adding a valuable contribution by suggesting these products.

An important aspect of communicating with your list that many marketers get wrong, or fail to understand is the voice. People sign up to a list because they want to hear more from the person that got them there – the Internet marketer. Whether that's about golf, fishing, making money or gaining more confidence, they want to hear more from the expert behind all the branding and marketing, and actually get down to something of substance that will prove valuable in their lives. What they don't expect is a generic account of what to do and why – they want to be spoken to by the person that they signed up to hear from in the first place. It's all about personality, and that must come across in your email communications through your voice. When people read, they vocalize in their head the words on the page. They will have a voice in mind for you and your writing style, and you should try never to differentiate from that. It is important to remain consistent with your tone and approach, to keep your list interested and to keep up the impression of your valuable input.

Even when employing ghost writers on your behalf, you should try not to deviate too widely. Pick one or two ghostwriters and stick with them throughout, to try and maintain consistency. Anything that you do get ghostwritten should be read through and amended by you personally to make sure it is in keeping with your personal tone. Whilst this may sound picky, it is important not to give the impression that your work has been ghostwritten as well as communicating your message through your own voice and tone.

One of the most important aspects of Internet marketing and conversing with your email lists is learning the importance of the open and honest pitch. If you've been giving people valuable information with a few well-placed affiliate links here and there for a number of weeks, it is not unreasonable to dedicate one entire email to a sales pitch. People will appreciate your input if you've provided valuable information, and a straightforward sales pitch will also be read with interest by a number of those on your opt-in list. It's a great way to increase conversion rates as compared to recommendation emails, and it is obvious to the subscribers that you are offering them something they may be interested in.

Whilst a very powerful tool, it is important to remember that this can't be an every day or even an every week occurrence. People will soon get tired of the sale pitch over and over again. If however you remained focused on providing good quality information on a recurring basis, your list should remain targeted and remain on side to drive your sales and boost your bottom line.

Maximizing conversions through your list by effective communication is one step on the way to earning money from affiliate marketing. After several months of communicating to your list, you should have a fairly good idea of what works and what doesn't, and from there you can establish which methods to use in future mailing targets. Eventually, you may decide to turn your back on affiliate marketing and enter the top tier of Internet marketing, where creating your own product comes as the natural expansion to your business. The rewards are immense, but the risks are there too for the marketer willing to invest in creating a product. In the next chapter, we'll turn to how you can begin to approach creating and marketing a product of your own to best success.

Expanding Your Business – Into The World Of Product Creation

There comes a time in any Internet marketer's life that he is required to expand his business. Starting out with one mailing list and promoting affiliate products is fine, but the earning potential from that is fairly limited in comparison to the money that can be made elsewhere in the Internet marketing world. After all, most of your work is selling someone else's product, and chances are you're not his only affiliate –put two and two together, and someone somewhere is sitting making a heck of a lot of money from your hard work. Naturally, the leap into creating and marketing your own products will begin to seem attractive, but this is much more high risk. If you've run with affiliate products before and made some money from it, now is probably the time to reinvest some of that capital in building your next project. Bear in mind that your outlay is going to be comparatively high, and it'll take you time to make back your investment. However if it does pay off, you could be set for the big time, and set for unimaginable earnings from your Internet marketing.

Before you can even begin to think about launching your own product, you need to have money behind you, an email list of your own, and a reputation. Otherwise, you're simply throwing a lot of good money at an incredibly risky venture. By having a previous track record, you'll find it easier to get promotion for your products, and in building a fresh email list from which you can market and sell affiliate and your own products in future. You'll also find credibility is more easy to come by, and you might even start to notice independent write-ups of your products appearing on the net.

So how do you go about creating a product from which you can realize a return on investment? Internet marketing is not solely about the product, but also heavily down to the rounded package. In other words, a lot of it depends on the graphics, the copywriting, the pre-sell buzz (see later), and of course the affiliate effort where applicable. This all adds up to a substantial cost outlay, which is why many rookie Internet marketers fail to go anywhere with what are essentially good products. If you don't have substantial capital behind you to invest in the creation and marketing of the product, you're unlikely to be able to realize your true potential as an Internet marketer.

First of all, you need to create a product that is relevant to your niche, and that is likely to be desirable to your current opt-in list, and others outwith your primary target audience. It should be something with which you have some knowledge and experience, or at least enough to hire someone to create the product for you. Planning and vision are of key importance, and if you're employing someone to ghostwrite for you, you need to make sure they understand what you're looking for. Remember that vision is a very personal attribute, and one man's concept of a professional job may be completely different from the impression of the next man. The best idea is to get everything down on paper to articulate exactly the direction you're looking for, rather than leaving anything up to chance.

Freelancer sites are usually the first port of call for Internet marketers looking to develop a product from scratch, although it is a good idea to read over the finished copy yourself, and mould it to fit within your pre-determined vision. After all, it is important to inject your own personality into your product, in order to capitalize on

the personal branding element we discussed earlier. If you do opt for a freelancer site, it is important to understand that you might not get exactly what you want unless you hand-pick a skilled, experienced writer with a professional work ethic. Whilst the cheapest bid may often sound attractive, spending an extra hundred dollars could get you something significantly above the general standard of the market.

Once you have your product, you'll need to create graphics for that product in order to bring it into a third dimension. Marketing a digital product without packaging has been proven to suppress sales and devalue your product. However, a professionally design marketing eBook cover is a great way to make your product stand out, and to make it instantly more appealing. Many of the graphic designers specializing in sales page graphics will offer you a package comprising of a header, footer, order button and eBook cover. This can prove to be good value for money, and the consistency in design work will make your product overall appear more professional. It is surprisingly easy to find the graphic designers that work with top Internet marketers through their portfolio's, and their rates are more than reasonable considering the value they bring to your site.

Next it's time to draft the sales letter, which again presents you with the option of professional, freelancer or DIY. If money is no option, a professional, independent writer with a track record of writing sales pages may be the best option. Whilst this may cost your several thousand dollars for one sales page, it will inevitably provide you with strong conversion rates. These guys charge top dollar for a reason, and the fact that their clients are continually willing to pay for it is testament enough to the level of service they provide. If you can afford it, pay a pro – the return value will make it all worthwhile.

Alternatively, you can go down the freelancer route and obtain reasonable quality copy for several hundred dollars. The problem is that the freelancer won't profess to be an expert in sales copy writing. If they do, you have to start asking questions of their ability, given that independent writing work pays significantly better than work through freelancer websites. You can expect to achieve work of a reasonable quality, but more often than not it will be lacking in emotional clarity and power in terms of the call to action. If you know how to tweak it a little to make it more appealing to customers, this may be an option for saving time and money in producing your sales copy.

The third option is one which serious Internet marketers would almost never entertain – writing it personally. Whilst you don't have to pay anyone to write your copy, it is time consuming, and in essence a skilled job that needs a professional touch. Internet marketers would never try to develop graphics off their own accord, yet they are prepared to write their own sales copy – both are distinct art forms, that could really do with some professional intervention. Even if you're not hiring a particularly skilled writer, at least you are removing the labor burden from your own shoulders in creating the copy.

So by now, we have graphics, a product and sales copy for our new product. Believe it or not, we are still some way off launch, and many Internet marketers rush to market, before being sure their product and back-end preparation is fully completed. Firstly, we need to combine the graphics and sales copy through the sales letter. This

can be designed by the same person that put together your graphics, and again achieving consistency is what makes your site appear subconsciously professional to your prospective customers. Invest in good quality graphics for your product packaging and sales page in order to present your Internet marketing campaign. In the end, it'll make it significantly easier to market your product with a professional sales page and graphics behind you.

Before any product launch, you also need to build an affiliate network in order to promote a widespread diversity of sales channels. As a first-time Internet marketer, it is often not easy to attract the levels of interest of some of the more famous marketers, and affiliate won't run to help you market your products. Consequently you need to take the approach of 'selling' your product to potential affiliates, and by approaching marketers with substantial pre-existing opt-in lists in a personal capacity, you can increase your chances of getting them on-board.

Similarly, this provides an excellent opportunity for building a fresh emailing list. Whenever possible, you should take the opportunity to expand your email list and niche demographic, in order to spread the risk and provide yourself with greater revenue through an increased target audience. Before putting your own 'for value' digital information product on the market, you should come up with a different free offering to encourage sign up to a fresh opt-in list for those that you missed on the sales pitch. If someone doesn't buy your product, the next best thing is to get them on your list for future marketing efforts, and once they know you've successfully launched a product in the Internet marketing arena before they'll be far more likely to buy from you in future when you offer similar goods through your new opt-in list. Furthermore, the greater the number of opt-in lists you have, and presumably the relative increase in opt-in subscribers, will bring more marketing reach for each and every one of your product offerings.

The official release should be synchronized across all the affiliates you have plus your own list in order to make sure you present a consistent, professional launch. A tactic that can sometimes be used to good effect is the 'accidental leak', in which a sample of the product containing some valuable snippet of information is leaked to a specific blog or affiliate list. This can add even more hype surrounding the product, which can have a tremendously positive impact on sales. It's all about being creative and getting your name and your product name out there, to drive sales and create a long-lasting brand around your name.

There will eventually come a time, hopefully after you've successfully marketed to all your available list options, when you have to retire your book from the market. Whether it becomes outdated and you're beginning on version 2, or you simply exhaust the market, this will have been an amazing platform for your business, and you'll find quite a loyal fan base from your first offering, provided you've delivered on the quality front. With this will come a whole host of independent testimonials, which can make for a great sales pitch next time around. For many, they simply create product after product and launch after launch to create a cyclical earning structure designed to provide longevity and continue to boost their brand reputation. With the focus remaining on quality of information throughout, the more prolific Internet marketers work on a rolling basis with continually expanding lists and growing sales channels. It's a perpetual whirlwind of growth in Internet marketing

beyond this stage, and every additional product can become yet another six-figure sum in the bank account. OK, so there's a long way to go at this stage, but if you're aggressive enough to mould a sharp growth strategy for your Internet marketing business, and provided you've read and understood the tips and techniques we've covered for developing and promoting a product, it is certainly an attainable goal.

Once you've created your own Internet marketing product it's time to consider launching it to a (hopefully) receptive market. One of the oldest and most effective tips in the metaphorical book is to hype up your product launch, or as I like to call it – create a pre-sell buzz. Creating a pre-sell buzz is where much of the marketing effort is channeled during the development of the product, to make it ultimately more desirable when it is eventually released. The tactics are used by Internet marketers and multinational corporations in equal measure, and have been for many years for the plain and simple reason that they are highly effective. In our next chapter, we'll look at exactly how you can create a pre-sell buzz for your digital information product, to ensure it hits the ground running when you do get around to launch.

Pre-Sell Buzz

One of the most powerful techniques that can be used in both affiliate marketing and more broadly Internet marketing is that of the pre-sell. Pre-sell refers to the process of trying to sell a product before it's available, and is designed to create hype and desire surrounding a forthcoming products. Pre-sell effectively, and you could have a list of several hundred, if not thousand, buyers sitting patiently with their money in hand for your product. At the very least, you'll have created some interest in your product before the official launch date, at which point you can begin to more aggressively pursue sales. Pre-selling is not an easy technique to master, and you really must have a good product in the pipeline before you give it a go. However, once you've learned the techniques involved in pre-selling to your list, you should be able to see an increase in product conversions when you finally do put your product on sale.

The pre-sell is all about marketing, although it is differentiated from regular Internet marketing in that it occurs before the product is made available on the market, and through the initial early stages of the product life cycle. A great deal of pre-sell involves publicity stunts, like Joel Comm's recent 'leaked footage' of his upcoming Apprentice-style TV show, and widespread marketing of your brand and your upcoming product. As a general rule, the more people hear about your product the more they are likely to buy it. If you get the pre-sell right, a prospective customer could be confronted with your product offering or discussion of your product five or six times before it's even released. With that kind of promotion and pre-sell marketing, you really can't go wrong come launch day.

If you've got a blog in place, now is the time to use it. Let your readers know you've got a new product in the pipeline and that it is going to be huge. Most importantly, allow them the opportunity to pre-order before your release, and keep them up to date with all the publicity your forthcoming product is getting. The pre-order list will grow exponentially with continued marketing and product momentum, whilst at the end of the day you're simply marketing just another information product. This kind of marketing can catch many potential customers and create the conscious desire to buy your product, or to be included in the preorder list. It's a great way to keep track of exactly how your pre-sell is going, and of course to allow you to build up even more hype to launch.

For an example of how to pre-sell, look at Sony. Whenever Sony create a new games console, it is pre-sold with waiting lists across the world. It is hyped in the media to the ⁿth degree, and rumors about supply shortages or delays in shipping only further add to the buzz surrounding its release. When it finally does release, it sells out everywhere, and you have no chance of getting one for a while, unless you put your name down on a waiting list, or place an order. It's the classic buzz-generating technique – hype plus lack of availability equals a highly desirable product, which inevitably sees record sales once the initial promotional stunts are over.

In the Internet marketing world, that translates into 'hype plus exclusivity', with only certain people being allowed the first few copies. Jeremy Burns, an Internet marketer that runs SourceCodeGoldMine PLR products, uses the pre-sell to great effect. The SCGM website boasts a waiting list of over 7,000 people for a product that gets only a

500 unit distribution. Let's assume this is true. He gives you the opportunity to sign up for the waiting list, which will allow you to rank alongside the 7,000 others for a copy of the elusive product. Eventually you'll get your hands on this wonder product, but Jeremy is the real winner – by building up a backlog, and creating hype about his products, he has created a long-term revenue strategy which will certainly pay the bills for a long time to come. In Jeremy's case, every SCGM offering nets \$148,500 with a guaranteed income from his 7,000 strong waiting list. By the time he clears that backlog with SCGM products, Jeremy will have realized \$2,079,000 from that one product alone. What's more, his list is continuing to grow on a daily basis, setting Jeremy up for life. And he's not alone.

As you have probably established, the pre-sell technique is invaluable in Internet marketing and it can only really be achieved to any great success when you have a list of your own. The marketing begins weeks in advance, talking about an upcoming product that's really something special. The emails begin to get sent out direct to your own list about an upcoming product that's going to be a really hot ticket. Simultaneously the call goes out to affiliate with sizeable lists to offer their support in hyping up the product. Before you know it, you could have a decent coverage of several hundred thousand people hearing the hype and pre-buzz. If you've made it clear from the outset that, like Jeremy Burns, your product offering is severely limited, you could end up with a pre-order email list thus eradicating much of the work required in marketing and selling your offering. With that kind of successful pre-sell buzz, you can afford to sit and develop products all day long without ever having to worry about whether or not you'll make a profit.

An important aspect of creating any pre-sell buzz is bringing affiliates on board. It's one thing for you to hype up your own product to your own list, but it's quite another if word gets out from another marketer. The power of another Internet marketer broadcasting how good your upcoming product is shaping up to be is immense, and this kind of list promotion can gain you a ton of pre-sell orders to keep the bank manager happy. Another thing to consider is that if the affiliate is closely related to your niche market, there's a chance of a crossover on some subscribers, meaning they'll receive promotion from both you and your affiliates. Of course, this all adds up to create an all-round good impression of you and your work, which will in turn help you sell more units come release day.

Bringing in affiliates sounds easy, but it isn't. In all actuality, you need to convince affiliates with lists that your product is worthwhile and a viable opportunity. They won't promote your product on the back of a reassurance that it will sell. If you are an unproven Internet marketer, you need to take the time and effort to detail exactly how you are going about marketing the product, what's gone into the creation and development of the product, and where you want to go in terms of marketing. Don't be put off by affiliates looking for exclusivity in promotion rights – whilst it may be worthwhile for you and the affiliate to agree to this, make sure you know the affiliate has the resources to promote your product to best effect to avoid selling yourself short. Also, ask to see examples of the affiliate's previous pre-sell buzz emails, to see if you think they tie in with what you're looking for. Alternatively, you could ask an affiliate to draft an email for his list from you, from which you can pay the affiliate a small commission. Whilst this may not be as effective as the affiliate himself

recommending the product, it is certainly a good way to continue to build your message, and to keep hype surrounding your forthcoming product alive and buzzing.

As mentioned above, exclusivity is another key aspect of the pre-sell. Whilst for many products this can't be created on a supply basis, there are other ways around the problem. For an eBook, it's hard and fairly pointless to place a limit on the number of units you will sell. This may be a good technique for high-ticket eBook sales, or where you're trying to create the impression that your eBook is top secret, although it usually won't fit in with what you're offering. What will fit in is a price exclusivity, for example 'the first 100 buyers pay only \$47' for a \$97 product. If you're going about this, it is imperative that you do eventually raise the price, and be seen to be raising the price because of the expiry of that number of units. Far too often, Internet markets have introductory or special offer prices that last for months, leading buyers to believe there is no urgency. However, by saying the first 500 people signed up to preorder get 25% off sale price, and then actually effecting the increase later on, people will be far more likely to take advantage of your pre-sell offers in the first place.

Pre-sell is much more than just list marketing, and possibly one of the strongest tools you can use to achieve successful pre-sell is paid blog posting. A paid blog post on Yaro Starak's highly successful *Entrepreneurs-Journey.com* will cost you \$200, but it will bring in an outrageous amount of traffic to your landing page, and really help sell your product. Yaro has almost 5,000 readers by RSS every day, so that's not even including others that read his blog periodically. For \$200, you get an authority figure promoting your pre-sell product to thousands of interested potential customers – you don't even need a great conversion rate to be able to work out at a profit from your paid review. Either way, you'll almost certainly see an increase in your opt-in subscribers, allowing you to market the pre-sell for yourself as well as other products that may arise in the future.

Likewise kicking off discussions in forums is a good way to keep the buzz going. Tell people directly that you're getting ready to launch and direct them to some of the promotional links to your landing page. Alternatively, start up a conversation as an alias in the forum asking about the potential for your upcoming product, or whether or not it is thought to be good value for money. This will also help to gauge market reaction to your forthcoming product, and let you know if you need some more background hype to push up sales.

Creating a pre-sell buzz is a creative process that requires a great deal of trial and error before you can be sure of success. Whilst it is easy to lecture in the theory behind creating interest in a product before it's launch, there is always room for someone willing to break the mould and branch out in their own direction here. Basically, provided you focus on getting your product name and your name out there in front of your target audience and the people that really matter, you should be able to generate some pre-launch interest. Get your affiliates to mail there lists hyping up your products, and take every single opportunity that comes in your direction to talk about and promote what you have on offer. If you don't manage it too well the first time round, try again. Eventually, your name will become known to a segment of the market, and you will be able to generate sales from leveraging that portion.

One of the most important tools in the pre-sell, and indeed in Internet marketing in general is the blog. If you don't have a blog you're hampering your sales potential. It really is that simple. Blogging allows you to get in touch and stay in touch with interested browsers, whilst bringing in new traffic naturally from your blog promotion. People that read your blog are likely to eventually sign up for your list, and for those that choose to remain anonymous, it is your only point of contact and point of sale. In the next and final chapter, we'll look at blogging as a way to communicate your personal brand, and increase both your reputation and sales as an Internet marketer.

Blogging Your Personal Brand

If you haven't heard of blogging, you've probably been living under a rock for the last few years. Blogging is the newest mainstream media, built around the concept of citizen journalism – ordinary guys and girls keeping a weblog, or blog of daily events and news. This has been adapted significantly to become a crucial marketing tool in terms of both personal and corporate branding. If you don't have a blog, you're missing out on an excellent marketing and branding channel for your business, regardless of its size or target market.

When it comes to developing and enhancing a personal brand, there's nothing quite like blogging to create an impression of your business. Unlike any other medium, blogging allows you to mix almost subliminal-level personal marketing messages with your personality and passions, and makes for a far more convincing review of your capabilities than a page of sales text on a static website. Strategically, blogging requires a long term plan and blogger identity, which if achieved correctly should bring your business respect and kudos from your customers new and old, whilst reinforcing your brand character.

The idea behind blogging is corporate personality, and this extends back to what we were discussing earlier about the importance of personal branding in modern business, particularly online. Blogging is a very personal medium and, unlike a sales page, it allows you to show opinions and thoughts about certain areas of your market, making you seem more personable and more 'in the loop'. If your readers are learning from your blog, they're probably more likely to eventually turn into customers, because they will perceive you as an authority figure, and someone with influence within your chosen market. And after all, why would you ever go with someone else, if you read a blog within a specific niche?

Through blogging you can establish a personality behind the brand, to make the company more 'three dimensional'. Google have done it successfully through Matt Cutts' blog. Matt is an employee of Google that runs a very influential search engine/Google blog – what he says on the blog is echoed around the internet as the word from Google, whilst his personality and attitudes help shape the Google brand for those that read his blog. Personalizing a brand helps make it more vivid, and can bring a company to life. Where graphics are the personality tool of yesteryear, blogging can mould a brand to a significantly more intricate level, and create a far more in-depth impression of the way your organization runs and your attitudes and ethos.

As an affiliate or Internet marketer, running a blog can have the same effect on your services. In fact, blogging within the Internet marketing arena is fairly similar to emailing your opt-in list, in that it involves communicating valuable information to your readership. Both blogging and email marketing are fairly interchangeable in terms of the way in which you're marketing yourself, and through using both methods you can expand your reach and your potential customer base. The two are further complimentary, in that blogging can serve as a platform for encouraging qualified, knowledgeable signups. By offering a sign up form on your blog, you know the email addresses collected from there already respect you enough to read your blog regularly,

making them far more likely to take recommendations and suggestions for good affiliate products once they form part of your email opt-in list.

If you're intending to run a blog, you firstly need to find a domain name and hosting. Presuming you already have a landing page set up, you can simply make the blog an addon or sub-domain of your main page, which will provide SEO benefits for both pages and help save on costs. The first step is to install the Wordpress content management system (CMS), which can be done through Fantastico automatic installation on many hosting packages. Alternatively you can install it by hand, which takes only a few minutes regardless. Wordpress is my personal weapon of choice for the basic reasons that it is easy to use, and there are plenty of add-on support services, plugins and themes to keep you going. Even an utterly computer illiterate Internet marketer could publish on a Wordpress blog, so there really is no excuse for not posting frequently and building up your blog profile.

In the beginning, blogging can sometimes feel a bit embarrassing with the lack of responsiveness. For the first few weeks you'll feel like you're talking to yourself, which can be strange to say the least. Eventually your outlook will change when you receive your first comment on a post, which generally brings home the fact that there are people out there reading your blog. Position your sign up opt-in form at the sidebar of your blog to convert readers in to subscribers, and don't be alarmed if blog referrals are fairly sluggish to begin with. With time, your blog will help make you the Internet marketer you want to be, and referrals to your email list will grow rapidly as your blog readership continues to grow.

One of the most powerful tools for any blog is momentum, and you need to get behind momentum on your blog in order to really start growing. Once you start getting frequent comments on your blog posts, and discussion appearing on certain threads, get involved more often yourself, and post more frequently. John Chow posts 4 times a day some days on his blog. If he didn't he'd probably lose much of the momentum that he currently has with his astonishing RSS readership and blog traffic in general. Investing more time and effort into your blog as it grows will help to keep the ball rolling, and keep bringing in and retaining all important readers. Eventually, you will be able to directly market your products through your blog with a chance of seeing a return, as well as increase your opt-in list through converting blog readers to email subscribers.

Building up your blog as an Internet marketer is a combination of savvy networking and landing page advertising. A percentage of those attracted to your landing page will filter through to read your blog, and this could end up leading to some pretty impressive traffic figures to begin with. Make sure you offer an RSS subscription to your blog, as this will allow you to get an indication of how many potential email list subscribers there are on your blog, as well as capturing in interested targets. Your landing page should contain a not too obvious link to your blog, and anyone that's interested in more information from there is likely to be a very highly qualified visitor, from which you will probably squeeze value at some stage.

Your blog in it's own right should occupy a great deal of your marketing effort. Blogging is at the cutting edge of Internet marketing strategy and even as we speak well-known Internet marketers like Ed Dale and Joel Comm are blogging on a daily

basis to keep up with their subscribers and to advertise their own personal brands, as well as their products. What's special about the blog mechanism is that it gives your customers the chance to get back in touch with you, allowing a forum for discussion and debate on the topics you've posted.

Blogging is different from website copywriting to the extent that you are giving your opinions and thoughts on matters, as well as offering guidance and advice. In fact, blogging is a lot similar to email marketing (see above), and the way in which you communicate with your email list should carry over onto your blog. The comparatively informal tone of a blog should allow your own personality and voice to come through, and in conjunction with corporate branding, personality (i.e. your personal brand) adds an incredibly valuable third dimension to your product offerings. You should maintain your blog with regular, if not more than daily postings on topics ranging from news through to debate and helpful advice within your niche. What this means is that you're going to have to keep abreast of the latest developments in your industry. Blogging about yesterday's news isn't going to help you here, unless you are offering opinion and discussion on various elements of the old story. People want to read your blog as their first port of call for news and information in your niche, so invest the time reading and writing quality material to keep up your brand image and readership figures.

Growing your blog, however, takes more than just simply posting on a regular basis. You should approach marketing your blog as a separate process from marketing your landing page, although they will both compliment one another in the long run. Blog-specific marketing involves a number of techniques from pinging through to blog commenting and engaging in community. The more you engage in a community through your blogging, the greater the opportunity for networking and expansion of what you have to say and offer. To start with, locate a number of blogs on similar topics within your niche that encourage blog comments. Read the posts that are made on a daily basis and offer your comments. Most likely the blog will display a top commentators league table, which will give a link back to the commentators with the highest number of comments. Each comment you make is another link for the search engines to find, whilst another point of entry for 'live' traffic through the related blog. Of course, one blog comment will seldom make a difference to your search engine performance or to your traffic, but if you spend a few hours a day making a number of comments, you could eventually grow your blog to something more significant.

Social bookmarking is also a quick, effective way of growing your blog, while bringing search engine optimization benefits at the same time. Digg, Netscape, Del.icio.us, Furl – all these sites can be used to your advantage in bringing in traffic. Invest in paid bookmarking promotion services, which can be found on Internet marketing forums, to build up your blog's reach. The more and more time and money you invest in this kind of social promotion, the more viral your blog will become which will in turn lead to a dramatic increase in traffic and ultimately in your readership.

Additionally, you should link to your blog from your email marketing. If your opt-in list isn't reading your blog on a daily basis, what chance have you got of selling to them? Maximize the efficiency of your email list by telling them about your blog, which will help you to also maintain communication on days when you don't send out

emails. It will also allow them to have their say about your views and opinions, and allow you to gauge feeling towards the brand you have created. At the same time, it's keeping up your brand image, and allowing the email opt-in list to experience the public front of your brand. Whilst they may feel like 'insiders' the information you are offering at large will work to even further convince them of your authority and expertise in your chosen niche, provided you maintain that all important blog quality.

This does mean that you will need to create different content for your blog and email lists, but it will prove worthwhile in the long run through developing your reputation and brand. The job of an Internet marketer is so often managing product creation and writing marketing copy and blog postings, which can prove to be quite time consuming. Of course it will be worth it in the end when the sales finally filter through, and you can leave the day job behind you for good.

As you should now have gathered, Internet marketing is give and take, and the more effort you put in the more you will be rewarded by your readership. It takes a lot to make someone reach for their credit card and buy your information, but the more and more you can communicate with them and offer them something of genuine value, the more likely it is that they will eventually turn into paying customers down the line.

Conclusion

Internet marketing is one of the most well known, yet still one of the most poorly executed methods of making money online. The sad truth is that whilst there is money to be made in online marketing, most people simply don't know what they're doing, which ends up costing them their reputation and a heap of cash. Like any other way of making money, there is a precise blueprint to success, and whilst you can deviate within the parameters laid down to a certain degree it remains at its core a fairly uniform industry. Build a squeeze page, offer a product, mail your list, develop your own product, hype the pre-sell, blog your brand – it's a formula that you see repeated over and over again by players both big and small in the Internet marketing world, and it's certainly your best bet if you're looking to earn money.

Unfortunately, for those that think it's an easy road, they are sorely mistaken. Internet marketing takes time and effort, as well as money, to get off the ground and to make a success. Joel Comm has worked online for around a decade building up his reputation as an expert and professional Internet marketer, and so to think you can come in overnight and steal a slice of the pie is naïve to say the least. Of course, you can enter the market as an affiliate with a small list, but in terms of making the big time you've got to invest a great deal of time and effort getting there the hard way.

Internet marketing could also be described as plainly email marketing, although to say that is a misleading title is an understatement. List building is an important part of the precursory effort to any Internet marketing strategy, and it is a tactic that can make or break any marketing campaign. The bigger the list, the more the numbers weigh in your favor, taking much of the risk of Internet marketing away from your door. If you increase your list by ten, you'll probably proportionately increase your conversions by ten, which will increase your profits by ten. The more time and effort you devote to building up that list, the more money you can reap from 'harvesting' your opt-in subscribers.

Getting to that stage requires planning, and the development of both a product and landing page worthy of attracting interest within your niche. Whether you choose to invest money in developing your offering is up to you, but for the added professionalism it brings it really is invaluable – money well spent. Building the landing page should adhere to the guideline structure, which whilst it may not be original, is very effective in 'squeezing' names and email addresses from your traffic. Similarly by developing a product that is worthwhile and of substance for your free offering, you can start the ball rolling for your reputation, with the goal of further increasing your readership and revenue potential.

Likewise, marketing yourself as an affiliate or Internet marketer takes knowledge of the core fundamental skills of online marketing. Differentiating an offer of someone else's product is never an easy task, and it takes a degree of planning and skill to be able to attract readers to your list. A bit of a budget will certainly help, allowing you to devote time and attention to both PPC and search engine marketing techniques in building your business. And by taking the effort to develop your personal brand through blogging and social networking, you can create a more powerful branding message, allowing you to capitalize on your advertising spend.

After building the list, the move towards conversing and converting is only a logical step away. Through providing valuable information and useful guidance within your niche on a consistent basis, you can maintain relations with your list whilst increasing conversion rates through your affiliate and own product offerings.

And when you've worked through a list offering, you can begin to consider forming your own information products, and recruiting affiliates for your own products to increase distribution. Whilst it does take time to build your reputation and reach with your own offerings, it can prove to be a more profitable long-term strategy for the growth of your Internet marketing business.

Internet marketing is a complicated business, but the potential rewards are there for the taking. The so-called experts have risen from the ground as ordinary guys, and believe me they've learned the hard way. Books like this tend rarely to be comprehensive enough to give you any idea of where to start, and whilst they might be motivational, they tend to skimp on the cold hard facts that make you money. With this eBook, you've received the sum total of current Internet marketing philosophy, including a few original tips and tricks derived from experience thrown in for good measure. If this hasn't been enough to kick start your marketing career, I don't know what is. Whilst it's probably a good idea to read through each individual chapter again, you should also now feel confident enough to launch in to your list building campaign, which will in turn allow you to begin marketing affiliate products for profit online.