

HOME BUSINESS NEWSLETTER

Issue 124

8

10 Rules
To Achieve Anything
You Want in Life

17

\$5,000 a Month
Mini-Case Study
Using Other People's
Kindle Books

23

The Sneaky Trick
To Getting Heavy
Hitter Affiliates to
Promote Your
Products

26

How to Spend
\$1 and Receive
\$5.78 Back

13

Exclusive Interview
Armand Morin



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Tic Tac Toe

We've probably all played Tic-Tac-Toe at some point in our childhood, if your parent or friend taught you, they might have let you win. As I grew up, slowly I realized, that you shouldn't play to win right away. What you should actually do is play to a stalemate, and in trying to counter that method, your opponent will generally open up a window for you to win or the game will end in a draw. For two good players it will always end in a draw.

In my view that is the purpose of the game, it's not about winning or losing but more learning that you can both win by playing to a draw. It may surprise you to learn that Tic-Tac-Toe is actually one of the fundamental games used to teach strategy and tactics, partly for this very reason.

In our businesses we are often seeking to dominate or succeed as quickly and completely as possible, and in doing so we will often overlook the smaller moves or choices that may not bring as much gain in as short a time. Tactically speaking an opponent that moves into those spaces and builds slowly and steadily has a much firmer footing overall than one that moves too quickly.

Military history is littered with examples of decisions and moves made too quickly that resulted in defeats often against smaller inferior opponents that were better prepared.

Sun Tzu wrote in *The Art of War*:

If you know the enemy and know yourself, you need not fear the result of a hundred battles. If you know yourself but not the enemy, for every victory gained you will also suffer a defeat. If you know neither the enemy nor yourself, you will succumb in every battle.

Tic-Tac-Toe is all about learning about yourself and your enemy. Business is all about learning about yourself and knowing your market before launch and not as a result of. Keep that in mind and be well-prepared before making any new moves.



A man with grey hair, glasses, and a goatee is sitting on a white sofa, reading a newspaper. He is wearing a white short-sleeved button-down shirt. The background is a blurred indoor setting with wooden paneling.

Resources and news

Twitter Testing Dislike Button – With a Catch

Some Twitter users on iOS devices can now press a small thumbs down under some posts. Twitter says the option to downvote posts is an effort to gather feedback about which replies are relevant.

As talk show host Stephen Colbert quipped, “Finally, we’ll be able to tell if people on Twitter hate something.”

But there are a couple of catches: The option to dislike a post is only available on replies to tweets, rather than the original post. And not every user will see the same options.

Downvotes won’t be visible to posters or to the public, which is a proactive step in keeping things positive on the social media giant.

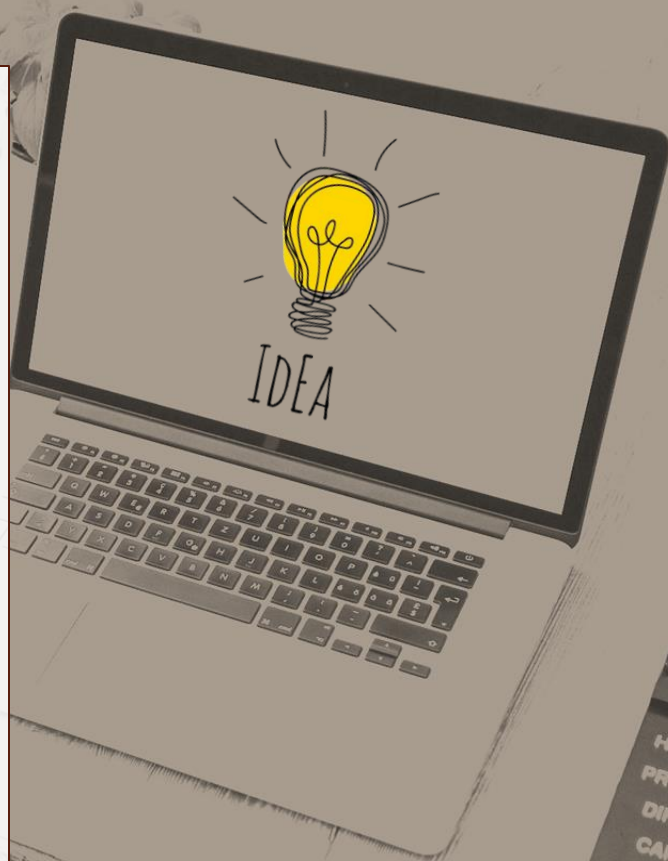
<https://www.irishtimes.com/business/technology/twitter-begins-testing-dislike-button-but-there-s-a-catch-1.4627848>

Persuasion Science: Marketing Insight from Robert Cialdini

Want to grow your Instagram reach and exposure? Wondering what to post? Learn how to grow your Instagram account without ads by watching this in-depth guide from Instagram expert Jenn Herman. Learn what types of posts to use in the Instagram feed and Instagram Stories, and how to format and structure your posts for better organic reach and active engagement.

You'll also get tips for using color, calls to action, and human elements in your posts. Finally, you'll learn how to use Instagram Insights to find trends that will inform and improve your Instagram content performance.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1ENfKylm4k>



80 Things to Check Before, During, and After Launching a Website

Websites are complex. There are so many things that are easily overlooked, like a broken link or a misspelled word.

And of course, a handful of things could go very, very wrong. Like what if you forget to test an important data capture form and then lose out on generating a bunch of new leads? Or worse, what if you forget to properly set up site redirects, and those valuable search engine visitors get a 'page not found' message?

Instead of worrying about the what ifs, wouldn't it be much easier to have a comprehensive website checklist to run down before every site launch? Here's one you can use for enterprise websites, microsites, landing pages, and everything in between.

<https://blog.hubspot.com/marketing/website-launch-checklist>

A close-up photograph of a person's hands counting a stack of US dollar bills. The person is wearing a dark blue t-shirt and a black bracelet on their left wrist. The background is blurred, showing a wooden surface and a white bowl.

One Tiny Tweak Adds \$12,000 per Year to Income

Actually, this has grown by far more than that initial number, but \$12,000 a year is where it started.

This is a bit tedious and may take you an hour or two, but \$1,000 a month isn't a bad payoff. To make this work, you need to already have a business in place, complete with at least one product and multiple download pages.

If you have a core product, such as a high-end course or coaching, that is your most likely candidate for this.

Place a link to your core product on all of your download pages. ALL of them.

Depending on your traffic to your download pages, this should bring in a few extra hundred or more per month.

And it gets better... above the text link you inserted on each download page, you're also going to place a screenshot of the sales page there, too. This will further increase your sales, but don't stop there.

Add a button that takes buyers to the sales page of your core product, but do NOT make the button the same color as the download button. If it's the same color, things get confusing for your customers and sales will go down. This has been tested, and please feel free to test it further yourself.

There are many other ways to set up this offer on all of your download pages, but according to testing the above method converts the best.

Remember, it's a text link, a screenshot of the sales page and button that is a different color than the primary download button on that page.

Test it yourself and see what happens.

10 Ways to Tell WordPress Hackers to Kiss Your A**

Here's how to protect your WordPress website from hackers with these 10 security tips:

1: Secure your site with HTTPS – With HTTPS your data is encrypted and hackers can't read it, even if they have network access.

2: Use strong, unique passwords – Did you know the most common way hackers access websites is simply through weak passwords or passwords previously exposed to data breaches? Use strong passwords that are different from any other password you've ever used.

3: Use password managers – This way even if someone is watching you type in a public network, they won't be able to see your passwords.

4: Add CAPTCHA – Use CAPTCHA on the login and registration form to protect from brute-force attacks.

5: Block failed login attempts – Use a WordPress plugin such as WP Limit Login Attempts to further protect from brute force attempts by blocking failed logins by IP address.

6: Use Two Factor Authentication - This might seem like overkill but it's not. If hackers obtain your password, the only thing stopping them from accessing your website will be Two Factor (2FA) Authentication.

7: Keep WordPress Core up to date - Enable WordPress to do minor updates automatically by adding this line of code in wp-config.php, since these updates include security patches for the core:

```
define( 'WP_AUTO_UPDATE_CORE', 'minor' );
```

8: Update WordPress Plugins - When vulnerabilities in plugins are discovered, updates are offered to prevent websites from being hacked. That's why you want to keep those Plugins updated to the latest version.

9: Use Security Headers - These offer extra protection by protecting against Clickjacking and Cross-site Scripting (XSS) attacks. Get a WordPress plugin that enables Security Headers to protect your site.

10: Set File Permissions for WordPress Files - File Permissions are rules that set how files can be read, edited and executed. This is especially important if you host a website on shared hosting, because when any other website on your shared hosting gets hacked, attackers can access files on your website and then gain complete access to your site.

Here are the file permissions for maximum security:

All files – 644

All folders – 775

Wp-config.php – ideally 600, but if this causes any issues, use 640 or 644 instead.

If your website is hacked, here's what to do first:

1: Immediately change all of your email and other personal passwords.

2: Restore your website to the latest known backup version prior to the hack

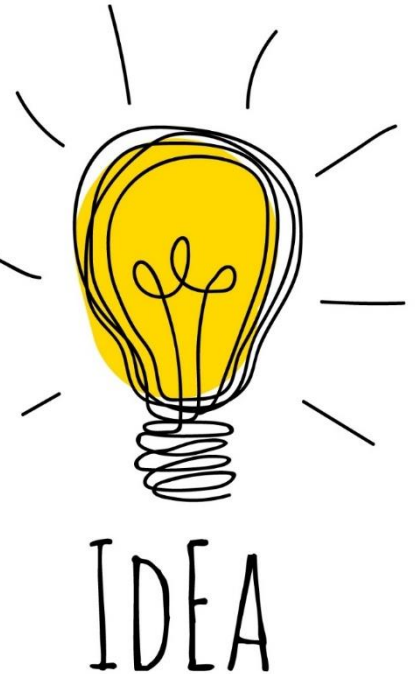
3: Reset passwords of everyone who has access to your website

Instagram Growth With Organic Content: A Comprehensive Guide [Video]

Want to grow your Instagram reach and exposure? Wondering what to post? Learn how to grow your Instagram account without ads by watching this in-depth guide from Instagram expert Jenn Herman. Learn what types of posts to use in the Instagram feed and Instagram Stories, and how to format and structure your posts for better organic reach and active engagement.

You'll also get tips for using color, calls to action, and human elements in your posts. Finally, you'll learn how to use Instagram Insights to find trends that will inform and improve your Instagram content performance.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1IENfKylm4k>



How to Beat Your Competition in Blogging [Video]

Neil Patel: "Video is going to be the future. It's much more interactive. You can do step by step. You still need to do text-based content, but now you have to do omni-channel. You have to do podcasts, video and text. You can't just do one anymore. See blogging is much more competitive. There's over a billion blogs. That's roughly one blog for every seven people in this world. You need to do more than just create a blog. You need to do the video content. You need to do a bit of everything if you want to do well now".

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SE7t5kHTvSs>



10 Rules To Achieve Anything You Want in Life



Maybe you feel stuck in a rut, unable to break free.

Maybe you can't even remember what your dreams are (or were).

Or maybe you're on the verge of massive success but can't seem to get over that finish line.

Here's some help.

These are the 10 rules I use in life to create success in 3 out of 4 endeavors.

That's right. About 1 out of 4 times I fail.

But then I pick myself up, wash the grass stains out of the seat of my pants and get back to work.

Here are my rules (tips, suggestions, laws or whatever works for you).

May they help you to achieve all your dreams:

1: Forget motivation.

Motivation is temporary, fleeting and one of the biggest scams ever perpetrated on the self-help industry.

Instead, focus on commitment. How committed are you to your goal? Why? What happens when you reach it? What will you sacrifice to achieve your goal?

2: Focus on the journey.

People who focus on results see their will to succeed wither and die like a daisy in the dry desert the first time they hit a roadblock.

But people who focus on the journey – learning, exploring, experimenting, improving – keep moving forward despite obstacles.

3: Have fun

Why is it that all these success books never talk about FUN? If you're not having fun, you're not going to continue moving towards your goal.

Life is an awesome game (yes, a GAME!) and if you take it seriously you will lose all perspective.

Even the biggest goal can be achieved if you treat it like a game and just have as much fun as possible on the way to that goal.

4: No stinking thinking

If you're awake then you're probably thinking. And those thoughts do indeed determine your future. Feeling hopeless, insecure, pessimistic, doubtful and afraid? Good luck being successful because it's just not going to happen.



But if you choose instead to feel happy, hopeful, optimistic, excited and ready to step out of your comfort zone at a moment's notice, I can about guarantee your success in life.

5: Reframe the crap

You're not stuck in a dead end job – you're learning valuable life skills you can use in your own business.

You don't have tinnitus - you can hear the sound of the universe cheering you on.

You don't have a lack of education - you have an open mind ready to absorb new information not for 4 years, but for your entire lifetime.

That lady that cut you off in traffic? - She's on her way to see her dying mother in the hospital. Aren't you glad you're having a better day than that?

That failure you experienced on your last business venture? - That set the ground work for your inevitable success in this new venture you're launching next month.

Reframe all the negative stuff right into positive stuff and watch the magic happen. I can't tell you how many times this simple trick put me back into a positive mood and enabled me to move forward with energy and focus.

6: Feel the fear and do it anyway

Whatever it is that you're scared to do, here's how to get over that fear as quickly as possible:

Just do it.

If you don't, the fear will grow until it appears insurmountable.

But if you do whatever it is that's scaring you, I promise it won't be one-quarter as bad as you imagined. In fact, you might even find you enjoy it.

7: Kill the distractions

Can't stop watching TV? Cancel your TV service and give away the TV.

Are you cleaning house when you should be working on your business? Hire someone to clean the house for you.

Do you have a hobby that keeps calling your name? Rent a storage unit and move all of your hobby stuff into it. Don't open it again until you achieve your latest goal.

8: It's all you, Baby

Don't expect anyone else to do it for you.

Your partner, your spouse, your parents and friends all have lives of their own. Whatever it is that you want to accomplish, you are the one who is going to make it happen.

That includes being happy. No one (NO ONE) can make you happy except for you.

9: Enlist the help of others

Yes, I just told you that whether or not you're successful is 100% up to you and you alone.

And it is.

That doesn't mean you can't hire experts to make the journey easier. You are still responsible for choosing the right people and making sure they do the work you want done.

If you're going to be successful then it will be because you accomplished what need to be done to be successful, and sometimes that means bringing in other people to help you along the way.

10: Make a plan

You've got the goal, but what's your plan for achieving it? You should know the next three steps you need to take to achieve your goal. Schedule when you will have these three steps accomplished and then get busy on your plan.



21 Must Have Smartphone Social Media Marketing Apps

Here's how to manage everything from your posts to your plans to your ad campaigns. All of these can be found in the App Store or in Google Play.

Adobe Spark Post – create graphics on the fly with tons of templates and ideas, including animate effects when you really need to grab attention on social media.

Amplifr – social media scheduling app helps you post at the best times with optimized messages and makes it easy to reuse high-performing content.

Anchor.fm – audio recording app for micro-podcasting, audio broadcasting and transcriptions.

Believe.tv – use their freemium service to broadcast live to your brand's Facebook followers.

Boomerang – video flip it and reverse it content creation app for Instagram.

Buffer – post and schedule updates to Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn and Pinterest.

Canva – prebuilt templates and editing features for professional, creative designs.

CoSchedule – get a bird's eye view to manage and edit social media posts.

Facebook Ads Manager – optimize copy or adjust budgets from anywhere.

Hootsuite – create, schedule, plan publish and monitor your posts.

Hyperlapse – shoot timelapse videos without tripods and video equipment, even if you're moving around.

Iconosquare – manage your overall Instagram strategy and presence.

IFTTT – “If this, then that” tool lets you build connections between more than 600 apps and tools.

Mention – monitor any topic, name or keyword on social media.

REP – businesses post a product to feature and then influencers apply for free, paid or PPC collaborations.

Restream.io – broadcast your live video to multiple platforms at once, including Facebook Live, YouTube, Instagram, Twitch, Periscope and more.

Ripl – tons of templates to help you create shareable, professional social media videos and animated graphics.

Slack – stay in touch with your team to delegate, collaborate, send updates and get feedback.

Smarp – online team communication and advocacy software that turns everyone on your team into a brand ambassador, sharing content on social media.

Snapseed – advanced and easy to use photo editing app for fine-tuning your visual content.

Trello – track in progress social media projects and tasks, update your team and check in to see what you should be working on.



Back to Basics: How to Create a Facebook Business Page in 7 Steps

If you don't already have a Facebook Page, your business is missing out on a powerful way to connect with current customers and reach new ones, too.

If you don't have time to set up and run your Facebook Business page, you might consider hiring someone to do it for you. They can set it up and manage it on an ongoing basis, creating custom content to engage potential customers while you focus on other things.

Or if you'd prefer to do it yourself, here's how to get started:

1: Log in and register

You can't create a Facebook Page until you have a personal Facebook account. Log into your Facebook account, and in the right-hand side of the blue toolbar look for the 'create' button. Click that and a drop-down list will appear. Select 'page' to create your Facebook Business Page.

Two options will appear: 'Business or Brand' or 'Community or Public Figure.' If you have a for-profit business, choose business or brand.

Pretty easy so far, right? It makes you wonder why you haven't done this before.

Moving on...

2: Enter your business info

You get to tell Facebook what to name your business page. Usually this is the same as your actual business name.

Next, choose the business category that best fits your business.

3: Upload images

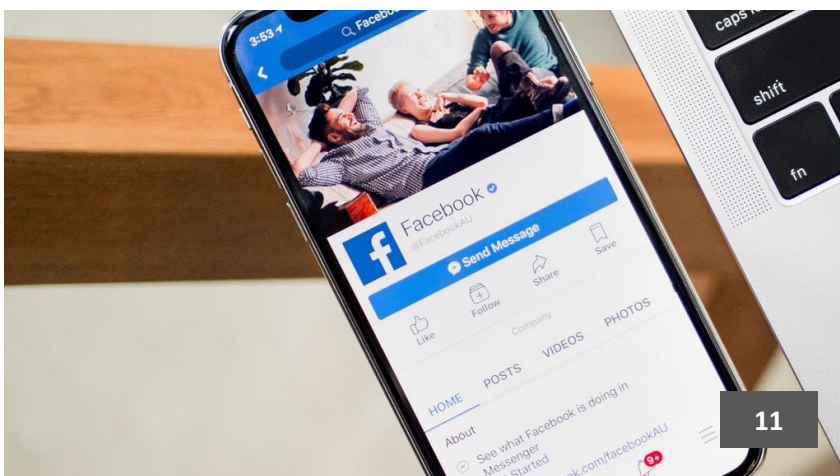
You're going to need a business page profile picture. This could be your logo, your headshot or any photo that represents your business' branding. NOTE: People's eyes are drawn to faces, which is why it is sometimes better to use a face – yours or someone else's – to represent your business.

Be sure your image is a good one and that it doesn't get cropped in the uploading process.

Next, you're going to upload a cover photo. This is the background image that appears on your Facebook Business Page.

Choose something visually appealing that represents your business. This cover photo should be at least 400 pixels wide by 150 pixels tall.

If you don't have an image, Canva is a good resource because it includes Facebook cover templates and it's free.



4: Get your initial base of likes

Facebook is going to ask you if you want to invite current Facebook friends from your personal account to like your new business page. This might seem strange because you're mixing personal with professional, and it's certainly not required. However, it can be a good way to get some real likes on your page so that when prospective customers show up, they don't feel like they are the first ones (and the only ones) to view the page.

5: Add more business details

Look in the left-hand menu to find and select 'about.' Add information that tells your readers about your business, including your products, services, website and how to contact you.

Be sure to complete everything. Given Facebook's domain authority, it's entirely possible for your business Facebook page to rank higher in organic search than your website. That's why the first time a customer ever sees you might indeed be on your business Facebook page.

6: Add a CTA button

Click the blue "+ add a button" option on the left-hand side of your page below your cover image. You're going to add a call-to-action button which will appear in the top right-hand of your business page beneath your cover photo.

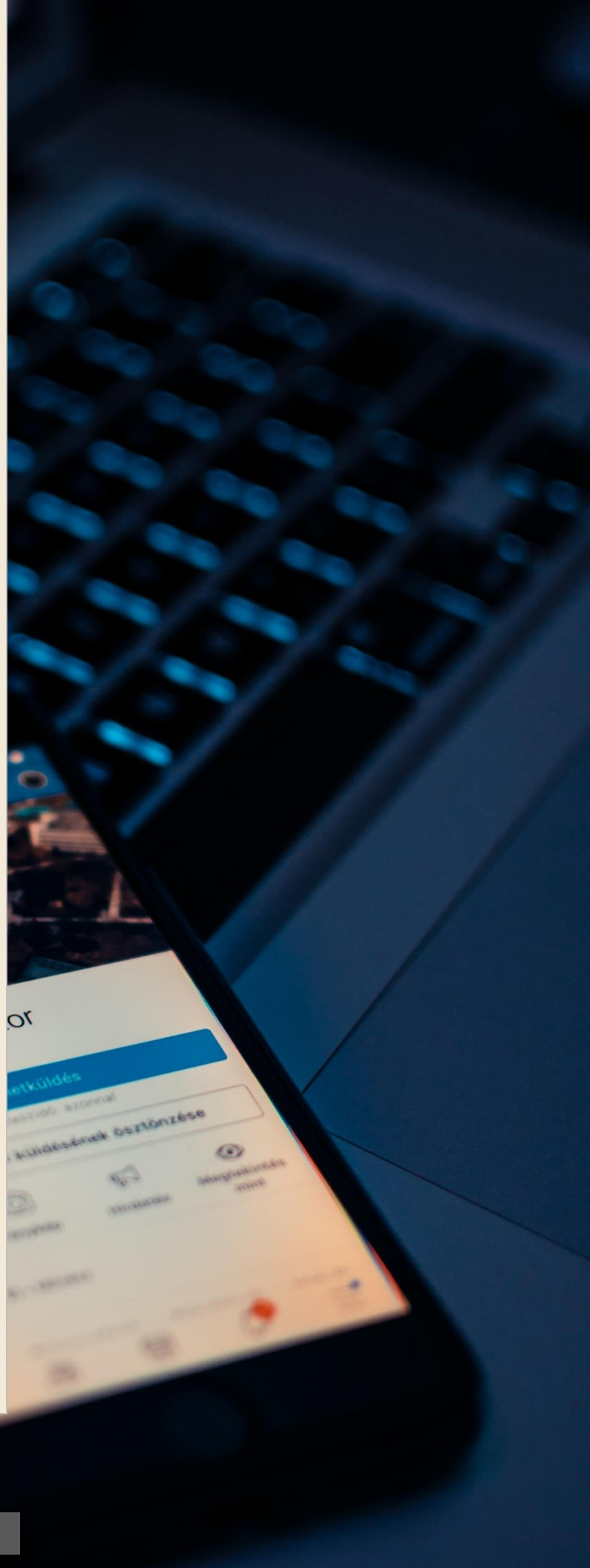
You can choose from 'book with you,' 'contact you,' 'learn more,' 'shop' or 'download.' Select the button type that works for your business to get more leads and make more sales. For example, if you're listing building, you might use the 'download' button to offer your lead magnet.

7: Get active

Congrats, you've got your Facebook Business Page up and running! But guess what... that's only the first step.

You'll need to be active on Facebook to market your page and grow your audience.

Be consistent in posting to your page and remember to actively participate in relevant groups where your target audience can be found.



Armand Morin

interview



Editor: I am super excited today to be chatting with our special guest, because he's someone who's become something of a figurehead in the world of online marketing. He's done over \$200 million in sales and he heads up what has become the longest running internet coaching programme in history. He's written books, he's been a keynote speaker at countless conventions and above all is a great guy who practise what he preaches. So it's a great pleasure for me to welcome Armand Morin.

Armand Morin: Oh, thank you very much for having me. I'm excited and I think we're going to have a lot of one today.

Editor: Me too. Well, Armand, you've been around the internet now for many, many years, but how did your journey start?

Armand Morin: When I got started on the internet, it was many, many moons ago. It was back in 1996 is when I first got started and what happened was, I had just had one of my first companies created and it was a long distance company, which means that we sold long distance services to local people, home residences and businesses and things of that nature. I just sold that company for a stock in another company, which by the way, isn't always a good idea because I kept that stock and a few years later, I got a notice saying that all that stock that I sold my company for was valued at 1 cent.

Editor: No, no.

Armand Morin: Yeah. It was just a crazy, crazy experience, but it was great. It was my very first company and that first company did a \$1.8 million in seven months and I was extremely excited. Of course that's the gross, that's not what I kept, of course, because basically what it turned into was only 1 cent. After that, I had a bit of time on my hands and at that time I was the technical person. I was the CEO of the company and I handled all the tech things within the company.

So when I closed down the company, I kept really two things. I kept my laptop, which back in 1996, was state-of-the-art. It had a CD player and a three and a half inch floppy disc. So it was very special, but at that same time, I also kept my desk. So those are the two things I left that company with and everything I read was about the internet and Bill Gates made a statement way back then and that was, "If your business is not on the internet, your business will be out of business."



Armand Morin: At that time, Bill Gates was the richest man in the world and I thought, if he said this, then I must pay attention to this. So I did what everyone else did at that time. AOL was sending out these discs and I popped it into the computer and I jumped on and honestly, I didn't even know what to do. I surfed around AOL a little bit to see what it was and then someone told me later on that day that that's not the internet. That's just the AOL.

So I'm confused. I said, "Well, what's the internet?" They said, "Well, you have to click little E. That little E." Of course, they were talking about Internet Explorer at the time. So I opened that up and I'm like, "Well, what do you do now?" They said, "Well, you search for things." I'm kind of flabbergasted.

I'm like, "This is never going to work. People are not going to do this. Who's going to sit around all day and just search for things on the internet?" Little did I know that that's what I basically do now all day. The fact is, is that at that time I started doing what other people are doing. I started searching around and within a few minutes, I started searching for my competitors in the previous company that I had and I discovered that they were actually selling things on the internet.

Now, again, this is 1996. We have to put things in perspective. There was no Google, there wasn't Facebook, there wasn't all these social media. Social media, wasn't even a thought at all back then.

So when I discovered that someone was selling something, I just thought, well, what should I sell? Again, remember, this is actually still day one. I'm probably about two hours into my whole internet journey. So, of course I'm a pro at this point. So now what happened is I ran across this one website and this one website changed my life forever.

When I went to this website was a very basic plain website and it said, "If you give me \$25, I will list your website on my website and because I'm driving traffic to my website, you in turn will probably get traffic to your website." So it was like a link directory, if you will. So I thought, "Man, that is the most simple idea that anyone could possibly do and need to do something like that."

My website said this, "If you give me \$25, I will put a link on my website to go to your website and because I'm going to advertise this, you should get traffic to your website."



So basically, yes, I admitted, I copied basically that other person's website. The other thing that I kept from my company though, was a tiny software programme that at the time was legal where people could give you their checking information online and you could print a check that didn't require a signature on your end.

Editor: Oh, wow. Okay.

Armand Morin: It was very interesting. So I put this website up in my ... Now again, I had everything going against me because my website address was something like this, members.aol.com/some name/some name/some other name and then you finally get to my website. So it wasn't the easiest URL in order to remember and also it wasn't on a secure server and I was asking for people's checking details on an unsecured form.

So everything was going against me, but I advertised it on AOL and their classifieds and their different forums and message boards and at the end of that first week, I had in total around \$8,000 in sales.

Editor: Wow, wow.

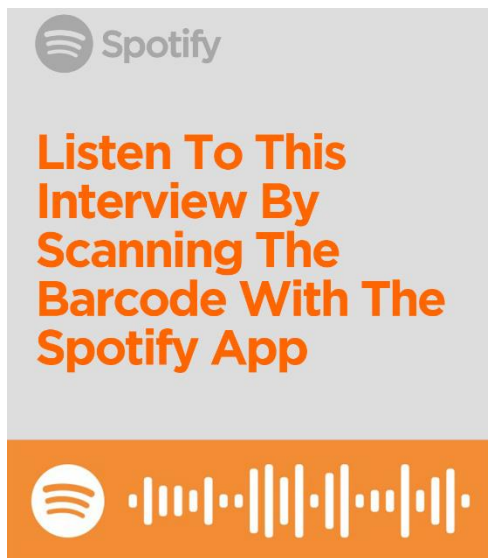
Armand Morin: I had \$25 each and I had this big stack of checks now that none of them had a signature on that I had to go to my bank and try to cash. So they didn't believe me at first, but I brought into the law that actually told them that it was true that you can do this. I had no problems from that point on, but again, this was my very first internet venture. We made \$8,000 the first week and there was a lot of work that had to be done because every person that ordered, I had to add another link to their website on my website.

So you can see that my website went into multiple pages and it was very crude and it was all manual. There was nothing automated about it and against all odds, it succeeded. That was my very first venture where I made money but I also knew that that wasn't going to well, be long standing as far as a business idea.

So I started looking around at other things on the internet and I started saving things. I started saving things. Different bookmarks, different websites, websites that said free internet access, free magazines, free calendar, free this, free that. I thought, "Man, all these things sound really, really cool."

Armand Morin: I had this big list of bookmarks and at that time it was about six or 700 bookmarks and I had this idea one day. That idea was basically, well, if I think these things are cool, I bet you that other people might think these things are cool too. So I said, "Well, if I could put these bookmarks in an area where people could access them, then I could charge people for it," and that's what I did.

...



Note from the editor:

This is a bridged version of the full interview which is available to listen to separately.



This might seem a big dodgy to some people, but when you think about it, it makes sense.

The instructions on how to do something are often similar, regardless of who is teaching the process.

For example, you could have ten internet marketers all teaching how to maximize your Facebook advertising dollar, and the information in all 10 courses is likely to be somewhat similar, even though the courses were made by 10 completely different people.

Mark (not his real name) buys “how to” books on Kindle and then uses the content to create paid courses. The books he chooses are usually the kind that teaches how to turn a hobby into an income. “How to Make Money with Crochet” and “How to Make Money Golfing” could be two examples.

Mark looks for BIG, detailed books of 200 pages or more because he needs lots of material to build a course. If he can find two or three books on the subject, all the better because he can glean tidbits from each.

He learns the material inside and out, creates an outline for his course, and then records videos for each chapter of his outline. He talks about the topic in great length with lots of detail and examples. Then he gets the recordings transcribed and offers the whole thing as a drip-fed course.

The trick here is Mark is able to absorb a lot of information, make it his own and then teach it to others. This takes some practice and skill, and no doubt it’s easier for some than for others.

But by using this model a person could also rewrite the content found in the books and then simply have a professional read the content into audio files. I suggest using a professional, because when most of us read we don’t sound natural, which can be a real turn-off for listeners.

The point is to create a course that is valuable and drip feed it over a fixed period of months, charging a monthly subscription fee for a set period of time.

Mark lets prospects know up front that this is a 6month, 9 month or 12 month course because this increases subscriber retention significantly. He also tested making the memberships open ended with new information added as long as a person remained a member, but found the fixed term resulted in fewer members dropping out and a bigger bottom line.

\$5,000 a Month Mini-Case Study Using Other People’s Kindle Books



He gets his new members from advertisements in magazines and online newsletters and websites. His favorite method for attracting members is to team up with list owners and give them a percentage of the income.

Something I found really interesting is that because he is creating these courses in hobby niches, he is able to pay less than the standard 50% to his affiliates. Many of the list owners he approaches are thrilled to receive 30%, namely because they're not all that familiar with how to monetize their lists.

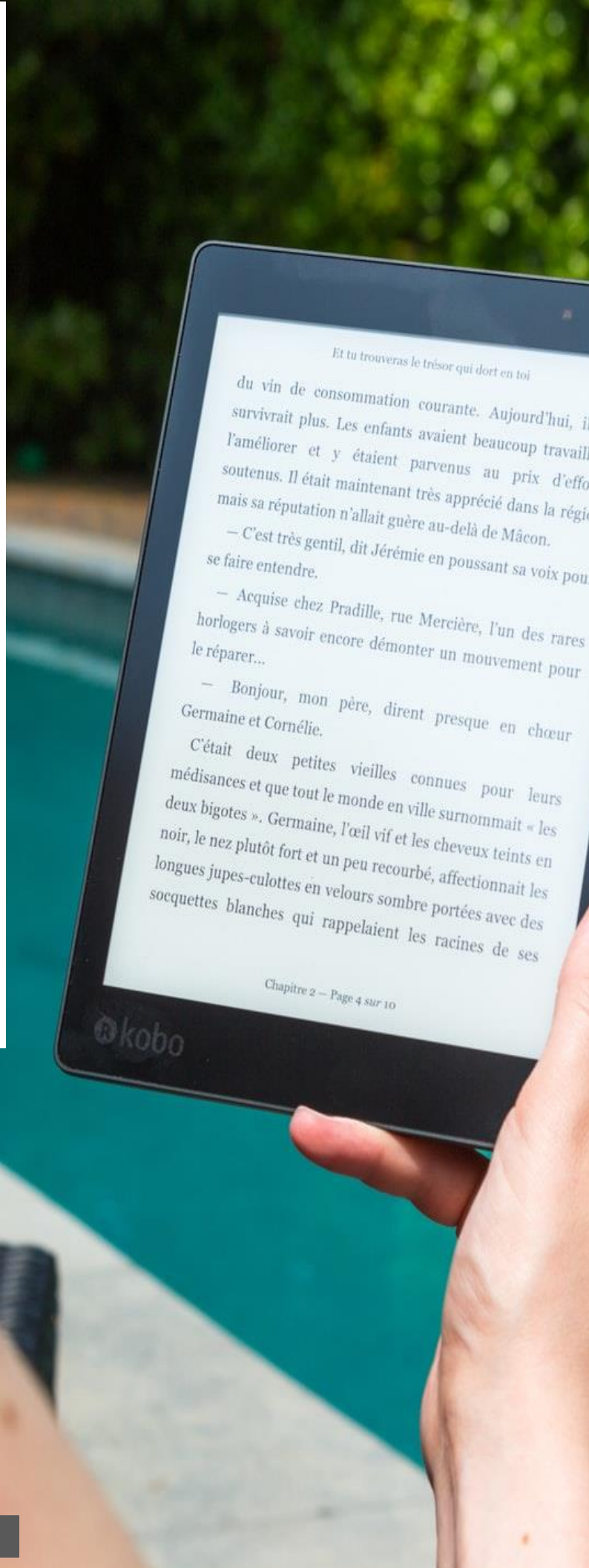
But this will depend on the niche and the list owner. Niches like golf and dog training seem to have savvy list owners than say, knitting and woodworking.

His ads always use a variation of this theme: "Turn your hobby into your full-time job." He says that regardless of the niche, this theme brings in the buyers and gets the vast majority to stay with the course until the end.

His websites and prospecting emails are cookie-cutter, meaning they easily adapt from one niche to the next by simply changing the key words, phrases, testimonials and stories.

He has 9 of these membership sites right now with plans to add at least 3 more. And the majority of his time (about 10 hours a week) is spent placing ads and striking JV deals to get more members.

He charges from \$9 to \$19 a month for the memberships, and he's making well over \$5000 a month doing this.



3 Clever Ways Internet Marketers are Using Instagram Live

Thanks to the global pandemic, in March 2020 Instagram Live finally took off for the first time in its history. And it's been super popular ever since with people who are looking for more meaningful ways to connect with one another.

This video feature is being used by influencers, content creators, celebrities, brands and everyday users.

Users can discover what their favorite brands and influencers are doing in real time by simply tuning into Instagram. This means you can strengthen your audience relations, create a stronger bond with your followers and showcase your products and services in a much more meaningful and impactful manner.

Here's how to get ready for your first Instagram Live:

- Make sure your account is public before going live to get maximum reach.
- Place your phone in a vertical position to take up the entire live screen.
- Make sure you have adequate lighting before going live.
- Use a tripod or phone stand to hold your phone steady.
- Have a good microphone to sound your best.

And here's how Internet Marketers are making the most of Instagram to further their success:

1: Collaborating with an Expert on a Hot Topic

Choose a topic and find an expert, and then host an Instagram Live in which you interview the expert on your topic. If you get the right topic or the right guest, these live events can bring in a lot of traffic. Get them both right and things can blow up, getting you more traffic than you thought possible.

2: Doing a Live Product Launch

This might take a little nerve but it can work wonders. If you're releasing a new product, why not do it LIVE on Instagram? Have a few affiliates or experts in your niche lined up to do short, 5-minute segments talking about the need for your product, the benefits of your product they like the most, or even testimonials of how they've used the product.

Show your sales coming in to further validate your product's success. Showing live sales will beget more sales which can cause an avalanche of sales if you pull this off correctly.

3: Do a live Q and A

If you're an expert on your topic, why not hold live Q and A's where anyone can come and ask you questions? For those questions that require in-depth answers, give them the abbreviated answer and then be sure to send them to your appropriate product links if they're interested in getting even more help.

Bonus: The secret recipe for success on Instagram is to use all of Instagram's features. Post a feed story, a story, a reel and going live on Instagram all at the same time will get you maximum exposure.

Then remember to save your Live video by clicking on "End" in the top right corner, click save the video to your camera roll, and add the content as an IGTV when you're finished.



I'm pretty sure it is, if you give credit where credit is due. Keep in mind I'm not a lawyer, but I see other marketers use this method all time, as do I.

Check this out...

Two thirsty friends were driving in Alabama on a hot August day when they pull up to a water pump in the yard of an abandoned farmhouse. One of the men starts pumping on the handle of the water pump and the other fetches some water from a nearby stream.

In order to get the flow of water going, you have to put some water in. As a great man once remarked, in the game of life before you can get anything out, you must put something in. Unfortunately, there are many people who stand in front of the stove of life and say, 'Stove, give me some heat and then I'll put some wood in you.'

In the spring farmers start doing the work that is required to have a bountiful harvest later in the year. We all know the proverb, "you reap what you sow." You have to do the work up front if you want the results later on.

After several minutes of pumping the man starts questioning whether there is any water in the well. He's getting hot and tired and decides to quit.

But the other man grabs the pump handle and resumes pumping. He yells, "Don't stop now, Bernard; if you do, the water will go all the way back down and then you'll have to start all over again."

Sometimes it feels like it too much work to plan, like you will never get there. Unfortunately, if you quit, things will slide back and much of the work will need to start all over again. The tough part is you never know how many times you will need to pump to get the water. But regardless of what you are doing, if you will pump long enough, hard enough and enthusiastically enough, sooner or later the effort will bring forth the reward.

Just as you score no run if you stop on third base, you can't quench your thirst with the water that almost comes out of the pump. Fortunately, once the water starts to flow, all you have to do is keep some steady pressure on the pump and you'll get more water than you can use.

This is the story of success and happiness in life, and this is also the story of success in planning. Sometimes it moves quickly and sometimes it takes years. The key is to not quit and keep pumping.

Is it Okay to Borrow Other People's Stories for Emails?



Thanks to Zig Ziglar for that marvelous story of what it takes to be a success.

Bam!

Did you see what happened there?

The story of the water pump isn't mine at all.

But by giving the real originator credit, it's okay to use it in your email. This was actually a story Zig Ziglar told to his live audiences back in the day, and it's still just as valuable now as it was then.

Just be sure to credit your sources and don't pass it off as your own work.

You might even start the story with, "I heard a story the other day," or "I just read this great story and had to share it with you."

Anyone can share a story as long as it's factual and non-defamatory.

How does this help your marketing?

Simple... just find a way to relate it to your subject, your product, your philosophy or anything else you're writing about.

Think of yourself as one-third reporter, one-third storyteller and one-third marketer and you'll get the idea.

Right now I'm going to go to today's news to find you an example of using a story found in the news to write an email promoting a product.

Here it is:

Subject Line: One man's poo is another man's pennies

Today I read on GoodNewsNetwork that some people are saying Cho Jae-weon has a dirty mind. This environmental engineering professor believes that thinking outside the box can solve all kinds of humanity's problems, including what to do with human waste.


Cho has found a way to convert human waste into digital currency with his BeeVi toilet. His compost/currency commode uses a powerful vacuum to pull feces down into a composting tank, thereby eliminating all water usage.

Bacteria break down the feces, channeling methane into a solid-oxide fuel cell which powers building functions such as hot water heaters. And most interesting of all, people earn digital tokens called Ggools – which means Honey in Korean – for using the toilet.

But converting something that's going to waste into money isn't a new idea at all.

For example, take all of the content you've ever written for the internet that is now collecting dust on your old websites and hard drives.



A woman with blonde hair, wearing a pink hat and a blue and yellow floral dress, is sitting at a dark wooden table. She is leaning her head on her hand and looking down at an open book. On the table, there is a small black device, a white mug, and a stack of books. A vase with dried lavender is also on the table. The background shows a staircase with a black railing and a white wall with a circular mirror.

There is a way to convert this old content into new cash using a system called **Dusty Content Cash Creator**.

Here's how it works: (And then you would continue to extoll just enough of the program benefits to get the reader to click the link and learn more.)

Here's another example using a story about Lisa Kudrow of Friends' fame:

Did you know Lisa Kudrow was set to play Roz Doyle on Frasier before filming for the pilot took a turn?

According to US Magazine, Kudrow is quoted as saying, "I wasn't right for the part [or] for the chemistry of the group, so that wasn't working."

Kudrow then went on to audition for Friends but was worried she wouldn't get the part. The actress explained how she felt director James Burrows let her go from Frasier because he didn't like her acting, so she was worried when she had to audition for him again.

"I did it and he went, 'No notes,'" Kudrow explained. "I left going that either means, 'She's beyond help and helpless, just like I always knew,' or 'Yeah, it's perfect. I have no notes.'"

As you know, Kudrow got the part and went on to star in Friends, earning as much as a million dollars per episode.

"No notes" is also how I would explain the XYZ program because there is absolutely nothing to change about it. Just follow the steps exactly as written and the results you get will surprise you. Here's how it works: (And then you briefly explain how it works and encourage them to learn more by clicking the link.)

Using this method you can pull any story off the net and use it in your own emails. The key is to give proper attribution for the story and to relate the story back to your own product.

Now you'll ever run out of material. Everything you hear and read can potentially be another email to your list, another article to your readers or the beginning of a chapter in your next book.



The Sneaky Trick to Getting Heavy Hitter Affiliates to Promote Your Products

Let's say you've got a new product out and it's performing spectacularly. It's converting at 10% or better, the earnings per click are through the roof, and the upsells are doing fantastic, too.

Now you're in position to contact MAJOR joint venture partners and affiliates and get them on board to promote your product, right?

After all, these heavy hitters want to promote stuff that makes them serious money, and you've already proven that your product can do just that.

Plus, even just one of these joint ventures can potentially put some very serious coin in your own pocket.

Of course your next step is to send out JV emails announcing your conversion rate, earnings per click and so forth.

You let these potential affiliates know you've got great swipe emails, banners, a product that is unlike any other and endorsements from your current affiliates, too.

You've got it all, and you're offering these big time affiliates the chance to make a LOT of money.

Naturally, they bust down your door and promote your product until the cows come home, right?

Actually, no.

Despite having all of the key ingredients in place along with a proven track record to make these affiliates money, very few of them will respond to your email.

Just what is it you're supposed to do to get their attention? Knock on their door in a clown suit toting a live chicken and dancing the Charleston on skates balancing 22 spinning plates on your nose?

Come to think of it, that might work. But there is an easier way...

Let's first look at what happens when your email lands in a potential affiliate's inbox:

Your email does in fact arrive.

And the affiliate does in fact see it.

But...

Affiliates are like everybody else – lazy.



Sure, they can see they will make money with your promotion. They might even intend to promote it.

But they just never get around to it.

Put yourself in their shoes for a moment and imagine you have a large, responsive list. Every time you promote a product to your list, you make \$500, or \$2,000, or maybe even \$5000.

This is your normal state of business and oddly enough you don't even get excited about it anymore.

Everyday, you see sales coming into your accounts from continuity products, coaching, affiliate promos, your own products and so forth.

The money is flowing like a river during spring thaw without you lifting a finger.

Which is why the thought of reading a review copy, cuing up a swipe, customizing it with the affiliate link and personal touches, logging into Aweber, pasting and formatting the whole thing and then sending it out just seems like too much work.

You know you should do it. And you think you will do it. Later.

But of course, later never comes because you get distracted with other things.

It might sound strange if you're not already making \$1000 or more per day from your own list, but this really is how a lot of the big affiliates operate.

They've gotten big and fat and yes, a little bit lazy.

Not to mention the fact that they get 4 or 5 of these requests every single day.

Every.

Single.

Day.

It's hard to feel sorry for someone earning \$30,000 a month from their list, but this promotion lethargy does happen with some marketers.

Fortunately, there is a way to greatly increase your odds of getting your products promoted.

Here's what you do:

Realize the affiliate doesn't care about your product; she cares about the return she gets for the emails she sends. Some marketers would promote a course on how to blow up the world if there was enough profit in it for them. (Okay, yes, that was harsh. But true.)

Your product is only one out of dozens she'll hear about this week. Blending in with all the others will kill your odds of getting promoted which is why you've got to do something different – provide the affiliate with a solution to her problem.



What's her problem?

She has to decide what email to send that day and then do all the legwork to make it happen. But now you're going to do as much of this for her as possible.

When you contact her via email, IM, Skype or however, do NOT ask for the promotion. Instead, tell her that you've got a ready-to-go promotion for her mailing schedule next week if she hasn't already filled it.

Hopefully you're on her mailing list and you know how she likes to do her emails. Provide a swipe email custom-tailored to her audience and written in her voice. Insert her affiliate link into it, too.

Provide her with a review copy and all of the data in easy-to-read format: Earnings per click, conversion rate, commissions, etc.

Let her know who else has promoted your product, too.

Doing these things will make your email stand completely apart from all the rest and it will get read.

The key is to take the inertia out of it for her and to make her realize she has to do almost nothing to profit from promoting your offer. By doing this you stand apart from all the other product promoters contacting her. You let her know your promo will make her money and it is ready to go and can slot into her schedule next week.

And you get the promotion, the sales, the new business relationship and yes, the profit, too.





How to Spend \$1 and Receive \$5.78 Back

What system of marketing that has proven to be an effective way to increase brand awareness and drives sales sees a return on investment of \$5.78 for every \$1 spent?

Influencer marketing.

That is, paying influential online people to promote your brand or product to their networks and followers. You might hire a blogger to make a post or video about your product, or perhaps get a social influencer to promote you via Instagram and Facebook.

The key is the person you are paying has their own follower base. And in exchange for free products, money or some other form of payment, they spread your message to their followers.

Companies and marketers who establish long-term partnerships with high-performing influencers tend to be successful. You have a product, they have the audience and most importantly they have credibility with their audience.

Not to mention the fact that influencers will create original content that is tailored to their audience and features your product.

But don't think that a one-off post is going to solve all your marketing woes. The key is work with an influencer on a series of campaigns to yield the most success.

How do you choose which influencer to hire?

You want someone who is in touch with your best prospects. For example, if you market to beginning golfers, find bloggers and other influencers who are in touch with new golfers.

Then test an influencer before committing to repeat campaigns with them. Assess how well they perform by analyzing the content they create and how well it performs. Don't expect miracles, because one piece of content will only go so far. But you should see something tangible come from it, such as sign ups to your list or hits to your sales page, depending on what call to action you ask for.

The more often an influencer promotes your particular brand or product, the more their audience will trust and act upon the recommendation. That's why once you find an influencer you can work with, you want to continue using them for some time to come.



What should I look for in an influencer?

After your initial test, ask yourself the following questions:

- Did the content the influencer created for you align with your brand?
- Did they publish this original content on the agreed-upon date?
- How many likes, comments, shares, views, click-throughs or sign-ups did you receive?
- Using a trackable link or affiliate program, did they drive traffic to your agreed upon link? This might be your website, your sign-up page or your sales page and so forth.
- Did their audience react well to the content created by the influencer for your business?

How do I find and hire influencers?

If you've never worked with influencers before, you might want to begin by working with an established influencer network.

Influencer networks have a database of influencers categorized by niche, audience demographics, engagement ratings and a lot more.

These networks can help you not only recruit the best suited influencers for your business, but also oversee content creation, analyzing data from the campaign, handling payment and so forth.

Networks may provide flat-fee compensation to influencers, or they may pay on a cost per click basis. The latter is the preferred method because it incentivizes influencers to work harder to drive traffic to you.

How much does influencer marketing cost?

This is kinda like asking how long a piece of string is. It just depends.

On one end of the spectrum, you can literally pay influencers in free products. For example, let's say you sell your own line of cosmetics. With prior permission, you can send a sample package of several of your products to influencers for their review. Those who give you a high review (and most if not all probably will) are influencers you might want to contract with to continue promoting your product, at which point you will begin paying them in real money.

This 'real money' could be anything from \$50 for a one-off video to considerably more for a long-term ongoing relationship.

The niche you're in will in large part determine how much it costs to hire an influencer to promote for you. Some niches are relatively cheap because there aren't a lot of businesses vying for the attention of influencers.



In other cases, it can cost quite a bit of money to bring influencers on board.

Truly, the cost doesn't matter as long as the influencers are making you more money than you are spending to get their help.

Lastly, anytime you can get an influencer to become your affiliate, it's usually the best thing for both you and the influencer. They get paid according to how many sales their promotions make and you only pay for sales.

What are some examples of what influencers are paid?

A Snapchat influencer might be paid \$10 per 1000 followers for their post.

Another influencer might be paid 10 cents per like on Instagram.

A million impressions might cost \$3,000.

Really the prices are all over the place, but here are some numbers from Influence Marketing Hub for Instagram influencers to give you a better idea.

- 1,000 to 10,000 followers - \$10 to \$100 per post
 - 10,000 to 50,000 followers - \$100 to \$500 per post
 - 50,000 to 500,000 followers - \$500 to \$5,000 per post
 - 500,000 to 1,000,000 followers - \$5,000 to \$10,000 per post
 - More than 1,000,000 followers - \$10,000+ per post
- Keep in mind this is only a general guideline in no particular niche. You can and will find much better deals with influencers if you keep searching and asking.

A key tip is to discount whatever price you are thinking of so that you have room to increase that price during negotiations without paying more than you want to.

What are the factors that impact influencer rates?

- The influencer's reach and engagement with their audience
- The particular channel they use (Instagram? Facebook? Etc.)
- How many posts you want them to make
- Whether or not things like images, videos and audios will be included in those posts
- How much work is involved for the influencer (Hint: You can create content for them that looks like they made it themselves. This will save you money because it cuts down on their work. Essentially, they are copying and pasting what you supply.)
- Where the post is promoted and cross-posted
- Agency fees (Only applies if you are using an influencer agency)

What are the top 5 social media platforms for influencer marketing?

According to the 2020 Influencer Marketing Outlook report, the top platforms in order are:

- Instagram
- YouTube
- TikTok
- Twitter
- Facebook

How do I get started?

First, figure out what your goals are when using influencer marketing. What do you want the influencers to accomplish for you? Sending traffic to your Facebook Group page? To an email sign-up page? To a sales page?

Next, set an initial budget and timeframe. How much are you willing to spend, and when do you want to see results? If you want help with a product launch, then your timeframe is already determined by when you are launching your product. But if you simply want a steady stream of traffic to your squeeze page, then your timeframe and goals will be different.

Think about who you want to reach. You might create an avatar of your ideal customer if you don't already have one. Where do these ideal customers hang out? On blogs or certain sites? Or on Facebook? Instagram? Odds are you already have the answers to these questions if you've been in business for any length of time.

You now have a plan of action you can use to find your own influencers or begin talking to an influencer network.



THE **BIG** SECTION



How To Build Your Own Online Tribe of Advocates

When you successfully build your own online community, you'll be creating a place where people who share your passion can get the latest news, express their own love for the niche and even become your best, most vocal product advocates.

But building an online community doesn't necessarily mean people will come. It takes effort on your part, as well as a great deal of listening and some strategy, too.

Successful online communities have personality and momentum. People come not just to see what's happening, but also to participate, to advocate and to have fun.

Just look at the forums on Reddit and you'll see what I mean. There are Redditors who visit their favorite Reddit communities every single day and sometimes several times per day. They start their own posts and comment in others. They vote comments and threads up and down, and the next day they come back and do it all again.

This is the kind of loyalty a marketer is hoping to achieve when they start their own online community. But how do you get started?

Choose your niche wisely

This may or may not be a time to be product specific. For example, let's say you're selling the ABC Guide to Super Duper Copywriting. Instead of trying to base your community around that specific product, you might choose instead to base it on copywriting tips, critiques and instruction for new copywriters in general. You're still free to promote your own copywriting products inside the community you create, but you'll attract many, many more people (and potential customers) if you widen your circle to include people who do not yet know about or care about your products.

Know who you are serving

You may think that because you're already in that niche, you know pretty much everything there is to know about how people in your niche want to interact.

But... you don't. You are one person with one point of view. Taking our copywriting example, you might think that every aspiring copywriter is looking for the ultimate copywriting course to get started. But many of them are still investigating if copywriting is something they want to do, what it entails, how to market it, if they will even like it and so forth.

Your best bet is to contact as many aspiring copywriters as possible, ask questions and listen. I mean listen a LOT. Take notes. Don't try to convince them of anything or change their minds when you disagree with something they say. Just get their points of view on all things directly related to your niche and then use this information to form your plan to build your community. Yes, this is somewhat tedious, but the payoff can be huge.

Befriend your early adopters

The first people to be active on your community are also the first ones to contact personally. That's right... call them up and find out how they found you, what they like and dislike about your community and so forth.

This might be hard if you're one of those folks who prefers to do everything digitally, but I promise you it's worth it. The early adopters you personally contact will often go on to become your biggest advocates and even your community moderators when you want help.

Realize not everyone will be active

There is a rule that says 1% of users create content, 9% of users interact with content and 90% of users simply view content without contributing.

While the numbers will surely vary, it's worth noting that the vast majority of your community members will be 'lurkers,' and that's just fine. Lots of lurkers means your community is growing. If you can find ways to turn some of those lurkers into actively participating members, that's even better. And lurkers buy products, too.

That said, you're going to design your community for the active users. Make them happy and the rest will follow.

Rule with a soft glove instead of an iron hand

As your community grows, you'll discover that your users have their own desires of how the community should work and what it should offer. Listen to them. These people have a stake in your community and in most cases their insights can be extremely valuable in growing your community and providing a better experience for all.

When adding new features, you might also need to remove some older features. This can cause trouble because change is never easy. People will be alarmed when their favorite feature is going away. That's why you might want to overlap features, to give users time to get used to a new way of doing things before they are forced to make the change.

Things you need to know when building an online community:

1: Critical Mass is... Critical

You might think you can start an online community with a tiny number of people and grow it from there.

It's a nice idea, but it almost never works. Think of the last time you went to a forum that hadn't had a new post made in a month. What did you do? You left and never came back.

And that's what will happen if you don't start your community off with a critical mass of passionate users or customers.

If the community is going to be based around your brand, then ask yourself if you already have enough loyal people who would jump at the chance to interact with each other in a private community.

If your community is going to be topic based, can you reach enough people to get a few hundred new users in your community in the space of just days?

If so, then you are ready to build a community of your own.

2: Your community is not your community

Take a deep breath because even though you built the community, you do not get to say what is discussed and what isn't (unless it's spam).

Don't sanitize negative feedback. Don't squash certain topics. And never discourage open discussion.

If you do, you'll alienate your users and they'll vanish.

It's okay that you don't have all the answers, and it's okay that you don't like every topic being discussed. Take deep breaths and let your community grow naturally. Pay attention to what is discussed and if possible, use this information when building and selling your next product or service.

3: Provide ample options

Not everyone will be attracted to your community for the same reasons. That's why rather than offering only one or two options, see how many different venues you can offer. An online product support forum, a discussion forum, a feature requests area, a knowledge resource base, job boards, software, Q and A, help request area, personal story area... the list is endless.

Try out new features and see where the activity is highest. If a particular feature doesn't get much attention despite your efforts, change it or eliminate it. Ideally you want each area of your community to be robust and busy with activity. If any one area appears dead and if that happens to be the first place a new person lands, they might think the entire community is dead.

4: Provide a robust infrastructure

If you are using an existing social network for your community, then you don't have to worry about infrastructure. Of course, you do lose a good deal of control by building your community on another platform such as Facebook Groups. If at any time Facebook decides, for whatever reason, to shut you down, they will do so in heartbeat, and you have no recourse.

If you are hosting your own community, then you need the right software to make your community pleasant and easy to use, as well as almost never crashing.

The idea here is to be on top of how the community runs, but not monitoring every communication. You're providing the structure and ensuring things run smoothly, but you're not providing a hall monitor to interfere with users' communications.

5: Don't stress about ROI

Naturally you want to look at your dashboard and see how many sales have resulted from your online community. The problem is, you'll never know for sure. Someone happens upon your community, joins your list from the community and a year later purchases your \$3000 coaching program. For 11 months that individual made you no money... or did they? Actually, they told a friend about your community who then told their friends, and those folks bought products from you the week they joined. Someone else couldn't decide if they wanted to buy your service. Then they found your community, decided they wanted the service, and went back to the original link to purchase.

Really, you'll never know exactly what your ROI is with your community, so relax and have some fun with it.

Post interesting questions, give some great teachings, and let your community naturally grow and thrive.

Which brings us to...

7 Strategies for Achieving Huge Community Growth

Your online community can help you reach influencers, gain brand recognition, increase your website traffic, get user feedback and connect with new potential customers.

Here are 7 strategies to grow our online community faster and smarter, even if your business is brand new and you don't have a clue where to start.

1: Start now

The best time to plant a tree is 20 years ago and the second-best time is today. The same goes for starting an online community. While it might be tempting and even smart to wait until you know what the heck you're doing, today is the right time to start formulating your plan for how your community will work, what it will achieve and how you will get a large influx of new members from day one.

2: Match your community to your audience

A community built around young professionals is going to look and feel far different than one that is tailored to bass fishermen.

Once you have your audience in mind, search online for all the places where they are found. Look at the style, colors, language and so forth of these sites. Your goal isn't to blend in as much as it is to appeal to what they already know and like. Create a look and feel that your ideal audience is already comfortable with, so that when they visit your community they immediately feel right at home.

3: Promote your community

If you're building your community on a social media site, you might think your goal is to move people from the community to your website. But if you do this, the energy of your group will be a fraction of what it could be.

And even if you're building your community on your own site, it's still vital that you promote the community itself and not just your website. Invite people into the group via email and social media.

Use any and all resources you have for bringing in new members, including guest posting, getting mentions from other marketers and even paid advertising.

By actively promoting the group, it will begin to grow on its own.

4: Develop and contribute content

How much time you spend developing content for your community is up to you. It might seem at first like you are spending valuable time creating content for a small group of people who may or may not appreciate it. But over time your community will grow in large part because of your content.

If you don't build in value for your group, the fact is your community will wither and die. Even just a few minutes per day of participation by you can make a big difference in whether or not people continue to come to your community.

5: Reach outwards for new members

Third party groups and sites are hugely important when it comes to bringing new members into your group. Network with other group owners and forum moderators to cross promote to one another's communities.

Reach out to news media, influencers and bloggers to get your community on the "best of" lists they promote, as well as getting a guest spot on blogs and podcasts where you invite audience members to your community.

6: Ask for advocates

Ask your current customers, readers, users, influencers, colleagues and so forth to not only participate in your community, but to also become your advocates.

Ask them to share on social media, to invite friends and their own readers, and to help you promote the community for the betterment of all.

You might wonder why people would want to advocate for you and your brand if they're not being compensated. Sometimes it's because they truly believe in what you're doing or in your brand. Other times they like being an early adopter who is on the leading edge of something new, exciting and fun. And sometimes they just like to help you out.

7: Realize your community is for keeps

Building our own online community isn't a short-term business model. The most successful communities are built to last a decade or more, so get ready to either stay committed to the community or sell it after it becomes a big success.

That's right, selling your community is a real possibility. Or you might even take it public and sell stock.

While the scope of what we're discussing isn't about building and flipping a community, it's worth knowing that you are building an asset not unlike an active email list or even a specialized social media site that can then be sold for a profit.

Common Q's and A's About Building an Online Community

Q: Just to clarify, what is an online community?

A: An online community is a group of people who are unified by some common interest, opinions or goals who meet online.

This might be as small as a private group of your very best customers or even a mastermind group, all the way up to a group of tens of thousands who gather to share experiences, resources and feedback on the chosen topic or niche.

Q: Why do people join online communities?

A: There are probably as many reasons as people, but here are a few:

- To discuss topics that fascinate them
- To engage with a brand, a person or some sort of community figure
- To learn together
- To help them achieve a personal goal
- To work together to achieve a group goal (think environment, politics, etc.)
- To share advice and news
- To meet like-minded people
- To have a sense of belonging

Q: Why would you want to build an online community?

A: There are two main reasons and probably a thousand reasons under each of those main two. Either you want to build an online community for personal reasons or for professional reasons.

Personal might be because you want to share a passion with others, find like-minded people, network and so forth.

Professional is probably going to about furthering your business. Again, it might be networking, growing your audience, increasing your authority in your niche and so forth.

Let's say you sell how-to woodworking products. You could join a woodworking community already online (and hopefully you have) but you're just one little fish of thousands in that community. You have no authority, you're not well known, and you certainly can't plug your products.

So, you create your own online woodworking community. You make it different in some way so that it stands apart from other, similar communities.

Over time you grow your membership base with great info and plenty of opportunities to interact with each other.

And you also expose your members to your full line of woodworking how-to products. You're never pushy about this but you don't need to be. Those members who are also your customers tell others about the results they get from your products, which naturally sells more of your products.

It's almost like creating your own shopping channel with built-in testimonials.

Q: What are some more benefits to building my own online community?

A: You can be seen as a leader in your niche. You're growing your network, your audience and your reputation as a leader.

You get tons of feedback from the very people who are or can become your customers. You learn not just what they think of your products, but also what else they want and how to market it to them. And when the market is shifting, you'll be among the first to know and hopefully adopt to the changes.

You increase revenue. With a more engaged audience as well as a larger audience, sales will naturally follow.

You're creating brand ambassadors. People in your own community will speak up about your products and tell others about the results they've gotten.

You can create products organically. Some of the most successful course creators, for example, started out by creating learning communities first with Facebook Groups. Their own communities then asked them to create courses for them, and when those courses launched sales were immediate.

Q: What are the most common types of online communities?

A: Learning - members are brought together around a specific course or to learn about a specific topic. Members meet to discuss topics and assignments, collaborate on coursework and engage with each other and the instructor.

Interest - this group is centered on one common interest, such as organic vegetable gardening or building a thriving publishing business.

Profession - this group centers on all aspects of a particular profession and how to excel at their job, such as orthopedic surgeons or household electricians.

Action - this group is dedicated to changing something, such as reversing climate change or getting a particular candidate elected.

Place - these groups have specific geographic boundaries, such as gardening in the northwest or hiking a specific mountain range.

Brand - these groups are based around a specific brand. This could be a common mission, goal or lifestyle that is championed by the brand, such as Nike's "Just do it."

Speaking of brands, if you look at Apple, you'll see they've done an incredible job of turning their customers into raving fans who wait in line for hours to just spend hefty sums on the latest version of a product they already own. If you can generate one-tenth this kind of loyalty and with your customers, you'll be able to build a brand-centric community that will absolutely thrive.

As you might guess, groups can overlap two or more of these categories, such as a group that is dedicated to building thriving chiropractic businesses in the Midwest- that could be interest, place and professional.

Q: What software can I use to build an online community?

A: That's going to depend on the sort of community you want to build.

If you want to use an established social media network, you could for example start a Facebook Group. The problem with this is Facebook retains control of your Group and can close it at any time for most any reason. The good thing about using a social network such as Facebook is it's much easier to find and bring in new members, since they're already on the network to begin with.

But assuming you want to build your own community separate from any social network, here are a few solutions to consider:

Disciple - Building your own community app with no coding required.
<https://www.disciplemedia.com/ga-community-build>

Higher Logic - create lasting relationships with your customer or member base.
<https://www.higherlogic.com/lp/higher-logic-engagement-platform-brand>

Influitive - build a community of advocates and invite your customers, developers, partners and employees to complete challenges. <https://influitive.com/>

Mighty Networks - build a membership site by community
<https://www.mightynetworks.com/membership>

Mobilize - Build communities that delight your audience and achieve incredible results.
<https://www.mobilize.io/>

Socio - integrated virtual software and live event platform for when you want to hold major events for your online community. <https://get.socio.events/socio-event-platform>

Tribe Community Platform - fully customizable community platform to connect, engage and retain customers. <https://tribe.so>

Verint / Telligent - allows you to connect with your audiences in the digital spaces that matter the most. <https://www.telligent.com/community-platform/>

Vanilla Forums - a community platform that provides a seamless experience.
<https://page.vanillaforums.com/community-engagement>

There are many other Community Website Software providers. These are just a few to get you started.

One Last Thing About Building Your Own Community:

The easiest way to get started is to build a practice community centered around one thing - it could be a product of yours, a product of someone else's that you love, a particular location like your hometown, a certain breed of pet or so forth.

Think of this community as a learning exercise. This is where you get to make all the mistakes, do things haphazardly, and most of all learn what the heck you are doing.

After 6 months of building and growing this small community, you will be ready to tackle a big one that will potentially yield you six figures in sales per year, and one day allow you to sell it for another six or even seven figures.

The idea is to just jump in now, see how it works, and then build the community you've always wanted around the topic or business you can't get enough of.

Your knowledge and enthusiasm will shine through, people will be attracted to that, and they will become your biggest advocates and ambassadors.

And you'll also have the time of your life running your own successful online community.

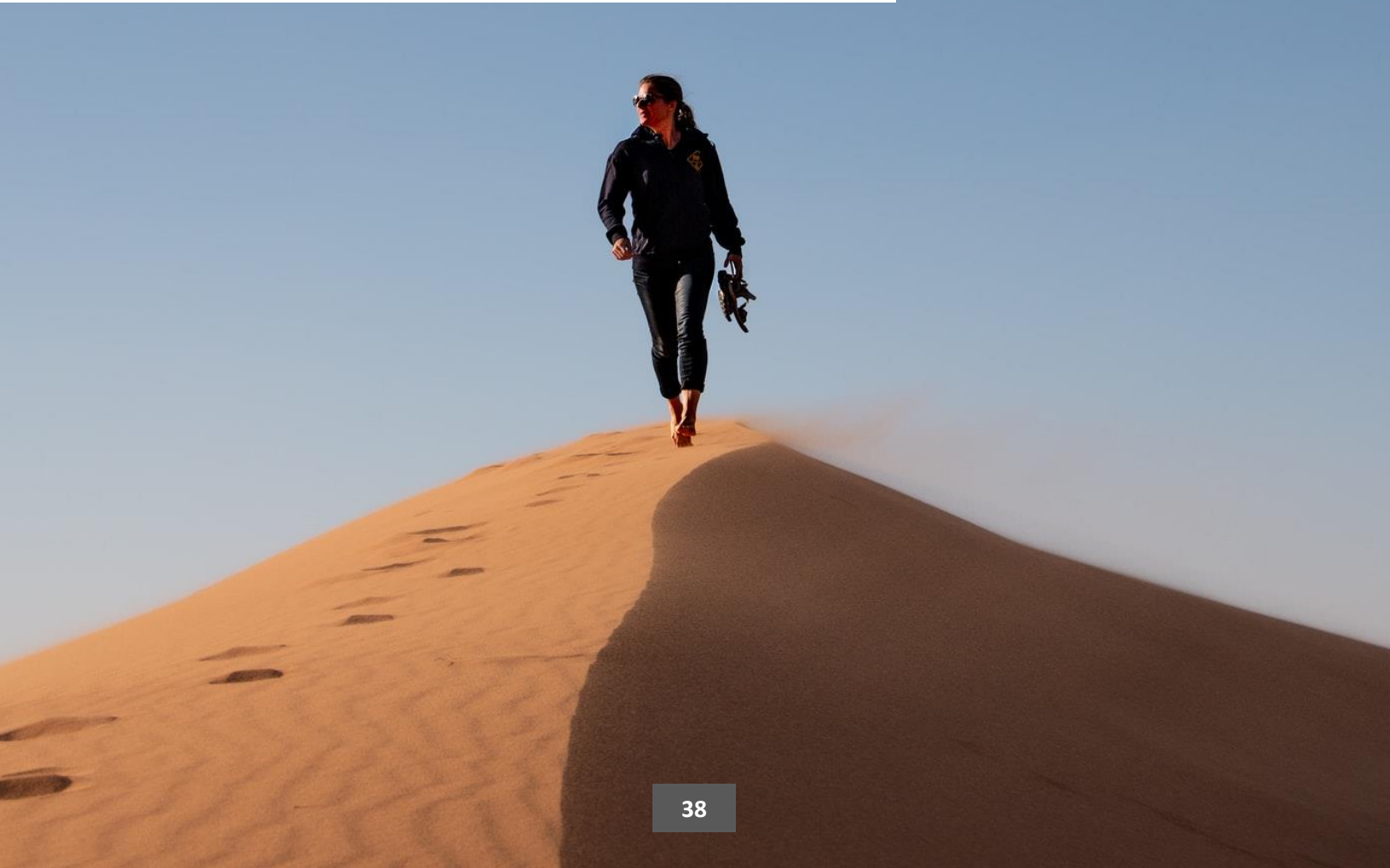
Moving Forward

In all things we can only ever move forwards, as we all know we cannot travel backwards in time- even if we turn left or right- from the moment we make that turn, we still move forwards. Even when we think our lives are standing still, we are still moving forward in both time and our purpose, it's just at that moment, our purpose dictates that we should rest a moment.

"And te tide and te time þat tu iboren were, schal beon iblescet."

- St. Marher, 1225

The above is the earliest known form of the commonly used quote "Time waits for no man". It's a quote that we often pay lip service to, but when you think about it, it's completely true, because regardless of any human actions -intentional or otherwise- time moves forward at the same pace as before, and likewise so does our purpose.



As leaders and entrepreneurs, our instinct is almost always to jump forward first, to go where only angels and mountain goats are prepared to tread, and often we find that standing still or slowing down is very boring or alien to us. And this is because it's in our creed to always be moving forward, seeking new challenges, progressing new ideas. People may find our focuses to be fleeting or in some way scatterbrained, but it's more that we process our ideas and concepts so fast that we've seen it all grow in our heads already. We've taken those steps forward in our minds, before everything else has had the chance to catch up to us.

This week, take a moment to do two things:

One is to ensure that in your drive to focus on the future and to keep adding products and services to your bag, you have not skipped on quality and learning from past products. Make sure that you have the patience and reflectivity to really allow a product to settle and evaluate it before moving ahead onto a new idea. This helps us to really see what is working, what is flawed and what people are responding to.

The second thing is to equally not dwell on past failures and make them your mantra. Sometimes things are not failed, they just need a tweak so keep your spirits high this new year and focus on what can be done in the future with the lessons you have learned.

It is the balance of these two things in time that makes a business work.

See you next month!



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