Making Money Online

Let's Get Started

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Making Money Online: Let's Get Started

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Is it <u>REALLY</u> Possible?

If this book represents your first foray into the world of making money online you may be asking yourself the question "is it really possible to earn money on the Internet?" The answer to this question is an unmitigated 'yes'.

Millions of people all over the world earn part or all of their income online. I'm not just talking about big companies by the way, but individuals working from the comfort of their own homes using websites they created to earn incredible sums of money every year, in and year out. When faced with this fact you might then begin to think, "yeah but those people are probably computer geniuses who have spent all their lives behind a computer." Actually, nothing could be further from the truth.

Earning significant income using the Internet doesn't require any specific skill or a long history of becoming familiar with computers or the Internet itself. There is an incredible amount of information available to you to help you get started with your own profitable online business no matter how much or how little experience you may have.

With this book, we hope to familiarize you with some of the basic information needed to get your Internet business up and running including such topics as what kind of business to choose, how to design a website, and even attracting visitors to the website once it's built. Make sure to take your time and study each section carefully because throughout the book we have provided you with detailed information and website links that will give you all the resources necessary to get started today. So what are we waiting for? Let's get started …

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So You Want an Online Business

I want to kick off this section by drilling a point home in your head. The topic of deciding what type of Internet business to own is immense. The area of choices available to you can simply be overwhelming at times and this fact alone causes many to never get past the starting line.

You'll never earn a dime if you don't take action so deciding on what type of business you will own and what type of product you'll sell should be something that you decide on rather quickly.

If you follow the information that we have outlined for you, then building your initial business won't require a lot of startup capital so if in fact you decide that the product you chose to sell is either unprofitable or simply doesn't interest you then switching gears and taking a different route won't represent a huge financial loss; having said that, we will provide you with tips along the way to help greatly minimize the risk associated with your initial decision.

One of the easiest ways to get up and running with Internet business is through the sale of information products. Information products are simply those that provide you with information about a particular subject that you want to know more about.

Anyone who has an interest on any subject would welcome more detailed information about their interest and providing this to them in an attractive easy to consume product has been the basis of more than one success story on the Internet. Let's take a look at some of the ways you can find a product to sell on the Internet.

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Affiliate products

Becoming an affiliate of someone else's product is incredibly easy and can be incredibly profitable. You're simply acting as a salesperson for a product that someone else created and you'll use your website to help sell this product. The product creator pays you, the affiliate, a commission for each sale you make, and in turn, you won't be in charge of any of the overhead or service related to creating, delivering, or servicing the product once you make the sale.

Many large and well-known companies have affiliate programs and will pay you a percentage of the sales made from any visitor you send to their site. In addition, many *info marketers* have created individual products for sale on the Internet and will allow you to earn commissions on the sales as well. These *info products* are incredibly popular on the Internet and because of this and the potential profits that can be made quite easily, they will be the focus of most of our discussion throughout this book.

One of the easiest places online to find all of the affiliate programs you may ever need is www.clickbank.com. Click bank offers you the ability to sign up for free and become an affiliate of thousands of products. Simply choose one of these products and build your website and marketing efforts around it.

Click bank offers tutorials on how to get started and support can often be obtained through the creators of the product as well. Once you sign up for a program you will be allowed to use a myriad of graphics and advertising materials to help you achieve your sales goals.

While earning a percentage of a sale through an affiliate program is attractive, especially considering how quickly the programs can be set up, earning 100% of the sale can be even more attractive. The only way to do this is to create your own product.

Creating your own product

This statement may shock you, but I'll bet you yourself have inside your mind information that would make for an incredibly valuable and profitable info product. The fact is, all of your experiences, talents, and skills if put down in the proper format, could very well represent a value to someone else that doesn't have that knowledge or skill.

Simply make a list of any hobby or talent that you have that you could teach to somebody else. If there is a big enough interest in a particular subject matter that you have knowledge about then don't hesitate to create a product. As far as the world of online goes, an expert is merely someone who can provide specific information about a topic that someone else wants to pay to learn.

Creating your product doesn't require any special skill either. A salable product could be as simple as an e-book, such as the one you're reading now, or a more detailed program that may include a series of videos, audio lessons, or a combination of any of the three.

There are many places online you can use to outsource the work to be created. If you can type or talk into a microphone then someone else can take this recorded material and turn it into an information product you could sell on your website. For more detailed information about this particular subject, simply go to Google and type in **how to create an info product** and a plethora of solutions will be available to you.

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Now that you've got the goods, it's time to set up shop

Once you've decided on a particular product to sell, it's time to begin building your storefront. In this case, of course, your storefront will be your website. The first and one of the most important subjects we're going to talk about in creating your website choosing a domain name.

Picking and buying your domain name

There is no rule that says the first step of creating your website should be choosing your domain name but the name of your url will be used throughout your marketing and on your website so it makes sense to go ahead and take care of this one now. Just to clarify, your url is your actual website address such as www.yourwebsite.com. In this case, *yourwebsite* would be your domain name.

Choosing your domain name is important and the simpler and more specific you make it to what your website is about, the better. If your website is about learning how to play tennis better, then www.learntoplaytennisbetter.com would make a pretty good website address.

The shorter you can make it the better. Most really short domain names are pretty much gone these days but if you can find one that fits, it might make for a great choice. Here is a quick breakdown of some tips that can help you choose a good domain name for your online business.

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1. **Keep it simple**-use few words, but make them specific to your topic

2. **Incorporate keywords if possible**-If you can include keywords that people are searching for in your domain name, this will help your site show up in the search engines when people are searching on your topic

3. **Choose your extension**-in the website www.yourwebsite.com, .com is your extension. There are others available for different industries such as .edu for education and .biz for business, but .com is the oldest and still most popular. If you can get a .com for the domain you select, then grab it

When choosing to purchase your domain name one company has risen above all others:

www.GoDaddy.com

There are certainly many places where you can purchase domain names online but Go Daddy has made them their specialty and their familiarity with the needs of their customers and providing a consistent level of quality customer support has made them the true leader. They offer domain names for less than $10 per year and much less than that if you purchase them for several years at a time. Their full-time customer service support team can take you through the entire process with ease.

Hosting

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The best analogy I can give to the relationship between hosting and your website is hosting is like a piece of land, and a website is like a home that you put on it. Your website needs a place to live on the Internet and that's exactly what hosting services provide. They help to ensure that your website is online and visible to everyone on the Internet 24 hours a day.

There are several things to look for when choosing a hosting service and only one of those is price. Because of competition in the marketplace, the price of hosting has gone down dramatically over the years while the amount of services they provide has gone up. The key thing you want to be concerned with is the quality and level of service you receive from these hosting companies

It's unfortunate to think about, but the fact is problems can and probably will arise with your website at some point in time. It's comforting to know that the hosting company you've secured will be there when you need them. This should include a variety of ways to communicate with them including of course e-mail and phone.

If the hosting company you work with only provides e-mail service, this could lessen their effectiveness in times of trouble. In addition, make sure to note their hours of service because unlike a bricks and mortar store, your website will be available to customers 24 hours a day seven days a week; you want your host to be available for you as well.

Your hosting account is where you will upload the graphics of your website to then be sent to go live on the Internet. The process of doing this is called FTP, or file transfer protocol. The process is incredibly

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simple using the control panels that will be available to you on your hosting account, and depending on the level of customer service that the hosting company provides, they may be able walk you through this process the first few times to make sure all goes well.

Below are just a few hosting companies that have provided markedly good service over the years and are backed by an overwhelming amount of positive feedback from past and existing customers. We have provided a few basic specifics about each company, but make sure to visit each site to investigate the terms and services of each company to decide which one will be right for your online website project.

- http://www.hostgator.com/ -Host gator has a great reputation in the industry and depending on the scope of your project, can host your website for as little as $4.95 per month. In addition to the 1-800 number prominently displayed on their website, host gator provides a variety of ways to communicate with them and operates on a business model that features 24/7 customer service.

- http://www.thirdspherehosting.com/ -Third sphere hosting is a somewhat new kid on the block and they're making a big splash with the incredible variety of services that they are offering to clients. While other hosting services provide you with some options to help you build a website, third sphere actually features this as one of the main benefits of signing with their company. Again, the level of customer service and communication has been mostly positive from folks who have dealt with this firm.

- http://www.cheapwebhosting-1.com -for those of you just starting out and who are on an extremely tight budget, you may consider cheaphosting-one.com because their beginner plan is priced at just $12 per year. While their services are not as comprehensive as those listed above, and they don't offer phone support at this time, the company does stand behind the service of its products and can represent a great choice for someone just starting out.

Because of the low prices associated with hosting companies today and the general ease of use in working with them, many people take their website hosting services for granted; this is a mistake. All of the amount of work that goes into designing and building a website not to mention driving traffic to it in order to sell a product you are featuring would be completely a waste of time if no one can see it.

Developing a strong relationship with a reputable hosting company should be your first step into your online marketing venture. If you latch onto a good one early, you may have just started a relationship that will last for years and wind up being very, very profitable for your business.

Building Your Website

So, we've purchased the land (hosting) and now it's time to build the house (website).

Like all aspects of products and services that are available on the Internet, there is almost an unlimited amount of directions you can go with the creation of your website.

Gone are the days of simple static business card type websites that featured a bit of info about your business and a phone number at the bottom or a link to an e-mail. Nowadays, Internet customers are savvy and it takes a good deal of marketing and sales initiative to encourage them to make a purchase with you versus another online vendor.

There are several aspects that must go into creating a successful website and they include the **design and graphics of the website**, **the sales page presented on it**, the **customer tracking or follow-up** capabilities, and finally the use of other types of technology on your website to encourage sales and grab attention.

Elements of a successful website

- **Website design/graphics-**if you've spent any amount of time at all searching on the Internet you've probably seen some pretty flashy websites. Some of the blinking lights and flashing designs that jump out at you almost make you think you're visiting the strip on Vegas. All too often, people assume that they must make their website as bold and

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graphically intense as possible but this just isn't necessary. Your website is designed to do one thing and one thing only: convert visitors into buyers. There is no specific rule that states that you must have a ridiculous amount of loud graphics in which to do this and oftentimes a simple website will work even better than one that is flashy. Having said that, you don't want a website that contains nothing but words either because your visitor will quickly become bored and click away.

A good combination of attractive graphics that are specific to your product as well as a decent amount of content designed to help sell it is what is required. You'll certainly want to have a logo of some sort and may choose to incorporate this in a header, which is a graphical bar that will go across the top of your website.

In addition, pictures of the product you are selling as well as any other pictures that pertain to the product are often helpful. Don't be too concerned with graphics at this point because if you are a complete beginner there are plenty of graphic and website creation services available that can handle the process from start to finish for very reasonable fees.

- **Creating your sales page-**when someone hits your website it is your job to make sure that the message offered is compelling enough to encourage them to purchase the product. This is done through the use of the sales page.

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Basically, the content, at least on the front page of your website, will be a part of the makeup of the sales page. You'll want to include all of the features and benefits concerning your product as well as testimonials from satisfied customers. Creating a sales page that really does an affective job of converting website visitors to purchasers is somewhat of an art form.

Many successful copywriters charge thousands of dollars to create such sales letters but there are much cheaper alternatives available for you. One way is simply to create the sales letter yourself. If you take the time to include the compelling reasons of why someone would be interested in purchasing your product you can have great success doing this on your own without spending any money at all.

If you choose to go it alone there are some great resources on the web to help you out, just search for how to write a sales letter on the Internet to get a hold of all of the free information you need to help you on your journey to completing your first sales letter. In addition, there are some web and software applications that will help you with this process. Here are a few links to some that can help you get this job done:

- o www.pushbuttonletters.com
- o www.salescreatorscreator.com
- o www.instantsalesletters.com

- **Customer Tracking and follow up-**once you get to the point where people are actually visiting your website you want to make sure that you capture some of their information because if they don't buy the very first visit, you have no way to follow up with them if they leave. The best way to do this is through the use of an autoresponder. An autoresponder is simply a type of software that will allow you to load prewritten messages into it and send them out to your potential prospects at regular intervals.

  You can encourage the visitors to submit their name and e-mail address in a small form located on your front page by enticing them with free offers if they do so. The free offers associated are the follow-up messages you will send using the autoresponder that are in the form of tips and valuable information pertaining to the subject of the product you're selling. These follow-up messages won't be necessarily sales messages, but they will allow you to stay on the mind of the prospect and remind them that your product is available.

  Offering any helpful tips and information pertaining to the subject they're interested in is often valued by the prospects and they may stay on your mailing list for some time and eventually buy the product you are selling when they signed up, or maybe choose to purchase something else you begin selling at a later date. When speaking on the subject of autoresponders, one name stands out as the reigning champion: www.aweber.com

Simply put, Aweber results are second to none and the combination of quality customer service as well as the type of services they offer make them an incredibly valuable choice for anyone looking to establish a profitable online presence. Remember, your autoresponder basically acts like an employee for your company and will work tirelessly to remind everyone of your presence in the types of offers you have available.

If you rely on trying to sell everyone on the first visit to your site and don't take advantage of this incredibly helpful technology, you will be leaving a lot of money on the table. Setting up an autoresponder account through Aweber is extremely easy and the customer service they offer will help to walk you through the process the first time if necessary.

Taking Payments

When the Internet was first developed, online payment processing was all but nonexistent. Most businesses simply included information of where you could send your check or money order or a 1-800 number that you could call to make a purchase over the phone. The high-speed world of the Internet makes these options almost obsolete now. If someone is interested in your product and they're ready to buy it you have to provide them the ability to do so. This brings us to the point of payment processing.

Your website must have the ability to process customer's payments in order to deliver the product they wish to purchase. There are two main ways to do this, one being a traditional merchant account, and the other being online payment processors like PayPal. In order to make the most money from your website you want as many payment options as possible so choosing both of these options is the best way to do this. If you're brand new to the world of making money online, using a PayPal account provides an extremely easy option to get started.

With PayPal, you simply have to register and add your bank account information and have it verified. Once you've set up your account, you can install a *buy now* button directly on your website that once clicked allows the customer to make a payment that will be sent directly to your PayPal account.

When you're ready to make a withdraw, simply click *withdraw* and the money will be put into your bank account. PayPal simply takes a small percentage of the transaction as payment the same way the traditional

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credit card processors do. For more information on how these work we suggest you visit each of the websites below:

Merchant Account- www.1shoppingcart.com
Online payment processing- www.Paypal.com

Okay, we've chosen a product, picked a hosting service, designed our website including specific elements needed to help make it profitable so were pretty much done, right? Well, almost. If you stopped here, you would probably never make a dime. The reason why is that no one knows you exist. The next step in our journey to making money online is to attract visitors to your website.

How to Get Visitors

The subject of getting traffic to your website is immense. We could begin discussing a multitude of ways you could use to do this and at about 100 pages later, we would have just begun to scratch the surface. Attracting quality targeted traffic is perhaps the most valuable skill you can possess as an Internet marketer.

Without potential customers, you simply have no business. We decided the best way to handle the subject in our book here was to simply provide a list of some of the most common ways of attracting website traffic with the ones that are generally considered the easiest and will produce the fastest results first.

It is recommended that you begin to investigate and learn about each method in more detail because the more knowledge you gain about the subjects then the more potential money you can make with your online business.

- **Telling everyone you know**-once your website goes live, shout it out to the world! While not everyone that you know will be interested in the product you may be selling, they may know of someone who is or may be able to offer you valuable insight as to how to make your website better.

- **Include your website url in your signature-**think about how many e-mails you send in a week. You simply put the URL of your website underneath your name on every e-mail and it acts as a constant source of free advertising for you.

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Make use of this simple tip and you will get people visiting your website.

- **Article marketing-**article marketing is exactly what it sounds like: articles that are written about the subject of the types of products you sell are submitted to online directories. Once these articles have been submitted, other websites may choose to use your article as content for their own website and give you credit for writing it as well as a link back to your website.

  If the article is written well and piques the interest of the reader then they may choose to click on your website. In addition, the other websites containing your article at link will help to rank your website in the search engines. This way, if someone is looking for something in the search engines on the topic that your product is about, it is more likely that they will find your website in the search results.

  Article marketing is free and can result in immediate clicks if the content and writing of your article generate interest.

- **Linking from other sites-**just as in the case of article marketing, your website link featured on another webpage is a very good thing indeed. First of all, depending on the information provided with your link some people may choose to click on the link to get more information. In addition, all the links back to your website will help to push you up in of the results of the search engines as well.

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- **PPC-**PPC stands for pay per click. I do not recommend starting here until you get some background knowledge of how this program works. Basically, you bid on a keyword or keyword phrases that someone might type into a search engine.

  If your bid is high enough then your website will appear at the top of the listings thereby greatly increasing the potential that someone will click on your website. Unless your visitors are extremely targeted, however, you may end up getting a lot of traffic but no sales. Thus this method of traffic generation can be very expensive if you don't know exactly what you're doing.

  On the other hand, if you have a budget and understand how the process works, this could be one of the fastest and most effective ways to get traffic to your website.

- **SEO-**SEO stands for search engine optimization. This is the process associated with making sure that your website is found when someone types in a search term into a search engine. This is perhaps the most difficult and most misunderstood aspects about the subject of Internet marketing.

  Because the Internet has changed so much since its inception, search engines work dramatically different than they did just a few short years ago. Because of this, many people are still

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trying older tactics that no longer produce real results so therefore it is easy to become confused with the information that you find on the net. One key tip that does remain constant is to make sure that you change and/or update the content on your site regularly.

When the mechanics of a search engine are indexing websites for content in order to properly rank them, websites that feature fresh and updated content rank much better than others that stay static.

We recommend searching the Internet and reading everything you can about the process of SEO, but for the time being, sticking with the techniques above for now will provide faster and more easily obtained results.

There are many firms that offer search engine optimization services but be careful, and make sure to verify the results that they have obtained for others before entering into an agreement with them or you could wind up spending a lot of money with very little results to show for it.

You are Now Up and Running!

If you followed all the steps above, you should now have a website that is live on the Internet, offering a specific product to a specific market, and hopefully attracting visitors who are making purchases. The entire process is of course much easier said than done, but if you take the time to understand the information that has been given and investigate the resources provided to you via the various web links, you can have your very own profit producing website set up easily in less than a week.

Once your business is up and running, the work doesn't stop there. Because this is a business, you should treat it like one and work to constantly make improvements on all facets including the look and feel of your website, the conversion rate at which you turn visitors into buyers, as well as the different ways you can use to drive traffic toward it. The information created thus far on the subject of Internet marketing would fill several lifetimes of learning so no matter how much patience and diligence you have you will simply never learn it all.

The landscape is changing all the time and the best that you can do is try to stay abreast of the current information about what works and what doesn't work in the world of online marketing.

We hope this book has been of value to you in learning just what it takes to begin making money online as you continue your journey, we want to wish you incredible success and hope that this simple beginner's guide to making money online was just one part of your journey to become an Internet millionaire.

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