

SOCIAL NICHE

MARKETING MASTERY



**USING SOCIAL MARKETING TO FIND THE
HOT NEW NICHEs THAT WILL MAKE YOU RICH!**

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Social Niche Marketing Mastery

Using Social Marketing To Find The Hot New Niches That Will Make You Rich!

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Chapter 1 – Fundamentals of Niche Markets

Introduction To Niche Markets Through Social Networking



Everyone is familiar with the concept of a market, where a variety of goods, products and services are traded. A niche market is simply a subset of the market with a specific product focus aimed at meeting the demands of a particular target group, such as the price range, product quality and the demographics.

In fact, basically any product that is sold can be put into a specific niche market. However, because some products are aimed at a general target group because of the focus of the market subset (e.g. price), these are what is commonly known as the mainstream niche or high demand markets.

Not surprisingly, due to globalization and a world view of modern business, niche markets have found a very important advantage in the advent of the Internet.

Internet-based niche segments of larger markets can be tapped into by savvy entrepreneurs by the use of technologies to build websites, create blogs and other social network based marketing strategies. This allows the niche marketer to rapidly gain access and exposure, thereby better targeting their customer base to build loyalty and in turn a steady and passive income stream. The reproducibility of niche marketing allows the technique to be repeated across several other niche websites depending on the target income level one would like to generate.

As many niches become saturated with marketers, and the market share is divided amongst increasingly more competitors, it is important to find smaller and new undiscovered niches. Therefore, unlike traditional business, niche marketers also need to constantly evolve and adapt their business to the supply and demands of the current market.

With the advent of social networking sites like Facebook and Twitter researching niche markets that will practically buy everything you can throw at them has never been easier.

This guide will provide useful information for those who are interested in learning more about this cutting edge market and beginning a potentially lucrative career in niche marketing.

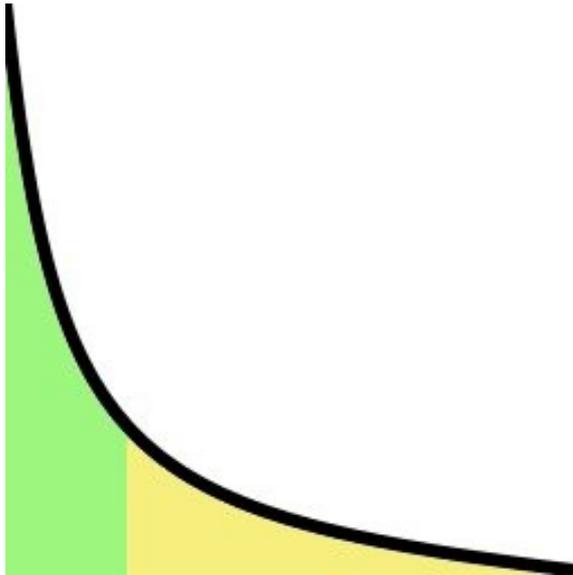
Throughout this book, you will learn about many of the benefits of niche marketing and how you can successfully start your own niche marketing business. Understanding the pros and cons of niche marketing can make going into it much easier and less stressful because you know what to expect before you even get started for the most part.

Why Niche Markets are Important

It is only recently that niche marketing has started to make a serious comeback with the advent of social networking websites where you can study openly what thousands of consumers tell each other about that things that interest them and what they want. Before the Internet and the growing popularity of social networking, a niche populated by a total of one thousand people scattered all over the Earth would have been impossible to reach. Put those 1000 people on the Internet, and they all search Google for a keyword phrase associated with their own interest which lands them at the one site that caters to that interest. Presto! A new niche market is born.

The problem in the past has been discovering what niche markets would be most profitable, and what the customers in those niche markets want. Now with everybody tweeting all of their wants and desires all day long, or messaging each other back and forth on Facebook niche marketing research has never been easier.

The ground-breaking book, "The Long Tail" by Chris Anderson, is one recent work from a few years ago that analyzed the niche market strategy. The name "the Long Tail" comes from what a graph looks like if we record the market sectors of any category of product ranked by popularity. Here's the proverbial picture worth a thousand words:



You can find this shape in the statistical distributions of many markets. Typically, there will be one or two hugely popular brands or varieties and as many as hundreds of less popular brands or varieties.

In this graph, you could say that the chart is the beverage market and the green area is milk and soda, while the yellow area is fruit juices, vegetable juices, alcoholic beverages, flavored waters, energy drinks, yogurt shakes, etc. Or you could call the graph computer systems, and the big green area is Microsoft, while the yellow area is Apple, Linux, BSD, Solaris, OS/2 Warp, ReactOS, Plan Nine from Bell Labs, and so on. Now, if this were your market, which part would you go for? If you go for the green area, you'll be competing with thousands of others who have the same idea. If you go for the yellow area, you'll usually have a bigger patch all to yourself - and the undying loyalty of a customer base!

You see many examples of "long tail" marketing all over the Internet, but the full realization of the power of this marketing method is just beginning to be understood. In the rest of this book, we're going to thoroughly explore the niche marketing strategy. Our studies will range from dry and scholarly to freakishly quirky, but always will be covering some very exciting territory!

The Importance of Choosing a Niche in Internet Marketing

Internet marketing has become one of the most profitable types of marketing available for any type of product that you may sell. The Internet has the capability of reaching a wide audience and those who take advantage of this widespread reach find themselves in a position where they can benefit greatly from potential clients from all over the world.

There are many people who are attempting to profit from selling products on the Internet but those who are truly successful realize the importance of focusing their

efforts on a specific niche. This means the investor focuses his marketing effort on a specific area of interest. This enables the investor to have a more focused strategy for reaching potential customers.

Is Niche Marketing For You?

Why Cater to smaller groups?



Even though marketing logic suggests that selling products to a large group of people will yield more profits than selling to a smaller group, niche marketing has been the driving force of many large corporations. You are a small business trying to compete with not only these large corporations, but other small businesses as well. Since large corporations for the most part do not view niche markets as profitable in the long run, you have the opportunity of catering to these groups without having to worry about the competition.

Another benefit to finding niche markets and selling directly to them is that you will already be familiar to their needs. This makes creating a product, whether it is an ebook, report, ecourse, or step-by-step guides, and selling it much easier because you do not have to convince niche markets that they need your business – they already know this because of the lack of information they have been able to find so far online in their interest group.

If you are the type of person who is easily bored by day to day tasks, being able to sell new products every few weeks or months to a different group will never become boring or old. Because of the research you will need to conduct, not only will you learn more about topics you might not have known existed, each day will bring different and exciting new challenges. You should be disciplined however, in order to thoroughly research niche groups, create email lists, correspond with customers, and create informative materials that they will want to purchase.

One final benefit is the ability to manage your own time. Working from home or a small office where you are your own boss gives you more free time to enjoy hobbies, meet with friends, and set your own hours so you can work when you want. There is no greater joy than being able to run your own business, help fulfill the needs of those who are being ignored online, and being able to decide which niche markets to

follow and which ones not to.

Below is a short list of pros and cons that can help you as you begin your first niche marketing project.

Advantages

- Small start-up costs
- Research is easy to conduct using Google, Facebook, and Twitter
- You can fit research into your schedule
- No 'hard selling' required because you find a niche first before creating a product
- Informational products can be sold and sent online to customers
- Easy to market
- You can have several products out there at one time
- Endless niche possibilities
- Can easily be a part-time or full-time job

Disadvantages

- A little overwhelming at first
- Research can be time consuming until you create a routine for yourself
- Internet can be a daunting place filled with a lot of information overload
- You probably don't know anyone who is in this line of work, so you may feel isolated at first
- Profits will differ from project to project
- Some niche markets will become unpopular faster than others

As you can see, the pros definitely outweigh the cons. Because it may take some time for you to get used to finding niches and creating products that satisfy a need, try to remain patient throughout the process. Once you have used some of the tools mentioned later in this book and others you discover on your own, you will find that niche marketing isn't that difficult at all.

BENEFITS OF NICHE MARKETING BUSINESSES

Now that you have learned more about the benefits of niche marketing for personal gain and financial stability, you should consider how easy it is to get started. Because starting a small business can be frightening, below you will find the benefits of selling products to niche markets as opposed to starting other types of Internet businesses.

These benefits include:

- Repeating the same simple routine
- Residual income

- Low cost of product delivery in downloads
- Ability to sell the same products rebranded in other markets

Niche marketing is a business whose growth is determined by the amount of energy you want to put into research and creating a product.

Repeating the Same Simple Routine

Even though niche marketing has become more popular over the years, most people do not take the time to learn how it works because of these two issues: research and product creation. Since these issues imply hard work, being innovative, and imaginative, most people are scared to move beyond learning what niche marketing is to learning how to turn it into a profitable business.

While you will have to spend a few hours a week researching possible niche markets, once you find them, you can begin creating your product and selling it. You can use the same research techniques over and over until they become second nature. This will reduce the time spent researching. What most people don't understand is that once you have learned how to spot a possible niche, your work is almost done.

Residual Income

Once you present your product, you can move on to the next niche market. Unlike other products where you make improvements to increase sales, niche marketing is short-term meaning you will only earn a certain amount on one project. But while you are busy working on another, your current product will continue earning you money.

After circulating a few products to different niche markets, you will be able to sit back and enjoy the additional ongoing income. You can take your time finding the most profitable niches, or begin working on other business ideas. Residual income gives you the freedom to make better business decisions over the long term.

Low Overhead Costs When Using Downloads

Chances are the informational products you will be selling include reports, eBooks, audio programs, video programs, or guides that inform and educate. These days, you don't have to create physical copies of your materials. Customers can download them to their computers from your website. This is very easy and does not cost much in monthly website fees.

By allowing customers to download your products, they will be much happier receiving products in minutes rather than having to wait for their materials to arrive through regular mail. They call it snail mail for a reason ya know! Your customers will be able to download materials at any time immediately after their purchase. You save money on printing and shipping costs and don't have to worry about running

out of books or DVDs to sell.

Ability to Sell Products in Multiple Markets

When conducting research, you may find that two markets share the same needs. This means you can create one product and sell it in different markets. Having the ability to increase your income from one product is another perk of this business.

To sell the same product in multiple markets all you need to do is make minor changes to the product's name and niche targeting. By doing this you can easily take the same product and target it to multiple niche markets over and over again without the expense of creating a new product for each of these markets.

Now that you have a better understanding of the benefits of selling products to smaller groups and starting a niche marketing business as opposed to other Internet businesses, it is time to learn more about how to go about finding niches and determining their value. Even if your Internet experience is limited, there are a few key websites to visit that can provide you with most of the information you need when choosing niche markets.

Benefits of selling in a niche product to a smaller group of people online include the following:

- Filling a need online that has been neglected in the past
- Providing a product to those who are already looking for it
- Endless amount of niche groups
- Low start-up cost
- Research, writing, and marketing requires less time than working a full-time job
- You can work whenever and wherever you please
- You can explore new topics at any time
- Endless income possibilities

SHORT TERM SUCCESS VS. LONG TERM SUCCESS



The Internet is a fickle place where customers come and go whenever they choose. It is the customers that are in control when it comes to the overall success of your business. Before you jump into any Internet venture, consider what you want from it. Do you want short term success or long term success? Both require you to put in the time and effort to create a website, product, and marketing strategies. But the outcomes can be very different.

Short Term

Niche marketing falls into this category because smaller markets are usually not around forever. Niche marketing is successful because for the most part it is offering a trendy product that caters to those interested in the latest fads or ideas. It is not offering long term solutions to problems that have been plaguing people for centuries. Niche marketing supplies mostly informational products that satisfy an urgent need that is not being addressed in many places online or off.

If an brand-new digital product suddenly becomes popular due to a celebrity endorsement or an exciting presentation at an electronics show draws lots of people, then you have found a niche market in which to cater to. You can create an eBook, report, or other type of informational materials to sell that focuses on teaching people how to use the product to its fullest potential.

And as this interest in this new electronic device starts to fade, you will be well on your way to finding the next niche market.

This is true of any industry, event, hobby, or idea that does not become a mainstay in society. This is why niche marketing is such a lucrative online business because there are so many niche markets online.

Long Term

Long term marketing strategies are used to promote products that have more staying power. For example, common flowers that people find easy to grow or those that have special meaning when connected to holidays or celebrations are considered to have long term interest.

While you can be very successful in this environment, keep in mind that you will encounter much more competition than when marketing to small groups. You will also have increased competition from large corporations that have more to spend on marketing than small businesses.

If you are successful, you will be able to market one product for many years by making only small adjustments. For some, there is a certain level of security that comes with selling products that you know people already need.

You don't have to decide which type of marketing you want to pursue right now. Take your time to look at each and determine the pros and cons. This will help you make a better decision that suits your lifestyle and work ethic.

Chapter 2 – How to Get Started in Social Niche Marketing

Laying down the ground rules

A wise saying I once heard goes "If your work is work, you're in the wrong line of work." Or, to put it in terms of a teacher who was a powerful mentor to me at a young age: "Do what you love, and the money will follow."

This especially applies to niche marketing. Working in niche markets applies the psychology of human nature on both the seller and buyer side. You're harnessing passion. Any old fool can go along with the mainstream and do what anybody else does, because that's, um, what everybody else is doing. But people occupying a niche experience something a little more special. To the buyer, the seller becomes more than a face-less entity behind a cash register; the seller becomes a part of "we". "We", the True Believers. We, the cult of fandom. We, the group that knows what's really going down!

For the seller, the daily grind of earning money suddenly vanishes and becomes instead a kind of quest. Frequently, the most successful sellers in a niche are part of the niche themselves. If you're participating in a market which also includes you, you get to feel very special. You're doing something you believe in. You get to be more confident, because you have the advantage of special knowledge in your market.

Marketing is psychology

Tour the local restaurants in your area that specialize in an ethnic category of cuisine, and you'll see an ingrained trend: each restaurant is decorated in a style to look like part of the country it represents! Think how strange it would be to show up for a Chinese buffet and find the building is adobe with a red, white, and green color scheme, has piñatas hanging from the ceiling, and the staff is wearing ponchos and sombreros. Turn it around and go to a Mexican restaurant; now, they don't have the building styled like a pagoda, Buddha statues and Foo dogs in the front, and the waitresses are geisha girls in white robes and wooden sandals.

Logically, this shouldn't matter! There's no real reason why the Chinese-decorated restaurant would be unable to produce the best tacos and burritos you've ever tasted. And why shouldn't I be able to decorate my restaurant in Mexican style and still be able to turn out perfect Chinese food? There shouldn't be any connection between my ability to make good chop suey and my idea to decorate the place like a Spanish rancho. After all, customers come for the food, not the scenery. Ah, but we humans have all of our illogical human emotions tied up in our decision on what to buy and where. So if we want food of a particular ethnicity, we'll set our hopes on

the establishment which wins the "cultural awareness" contest. We take that as a signal that that is the place which understands exactly what it is we want.

Human nature leads us to be the most likely to trust a person who shows an understanding of how we think. Every single one of us, given a choice of equally attractive options with all other factors being equal, will head for the person who demonstrates an understanding of us on the deepest level.

Thus, the other three rules follow from the first. Because marketing is psychology, niche marketing is based more on how you sell than what you sell. Because humans, everywhere, choose to do business with clients who "think like they do", the more authentic a member of that niche you are, the better you will do, and if you come off as a phony or a poser, you can kiss your business goodbye.

Now, let me back up here a bit. Just because you weren't born in a niche yourself doesn't mean that you will automatically be a failure in it. After all, you can sell toys to a five-year-old without being a child yourself. But the deck is stacked against you. At the best, you'll succeed in a niche with a lot of extra effort put into researching your market. You can also choose to adopt a niche. Throughout your life, you may be a part of several markets, and your views and tastes may change. But let's just make it clear that if you're marketing to a niche that repels you in every way, your success will not be impossible, but it will be very, very highly improbable.

Never forget that the person who is doing what they deeply believe in will have passion on their side. They will have more energy, work longer at it, attack problems with greater enthusiasm and more creative thinking, and will go to bed happy and rise the next morning looking forward to their work.

Finding a Niche that works for you

Everybody believes in something. Examine your background, your beliefs, your demographic. Note everything that you do. Include hobbies you like, TV shows you watch, music that you listen to. Everything that makes you - you! Don't worry so much about "But I'm weird! How am I going to make money catering to people in my tiny little group?" The Internet is here, and no matter how quirky you are, other people who think just like you do are only a few clicks away.

There are a number of ways to find a niche that works for you:

Be born in one

Obviously, if you're from India and have an interest in cuisine, you're all set up to start a curry business. You're an instant expert in whatever field you currently occupy. Being a member of a generation is another key. Clearly, if you remember the

sixties, you have a good chance to be a hit with the Baby Boomers. Or maybe you're a member of Generation X - if so, you can talk to them with a voice that will ring true. Likewise for social and financial class.

Adopt one

All through our lives, we discover new things that interest us. Take any pastime that you pursue, concentrating on what is associated with that hobby or pursuit that you spend money on. But even better, imagine what you could buy, if only someone sold it. What better way to corner a market than to create one? So, if you already have a niche which nobody caters to the needs of, cater to it yourself! Others who were also looking for that business will find you.

Invent one

Well, after all, look at all the niches that are around us. Each interest originated with one person who began to follow it. Somebody had to do it first. Think of the first person who put a "9/11 We Will Never Forget" sticker on their car. The first Seattle teenager to call their style "grunge". The first adult who posted pictures of their life-sized Lego models on the Internet. Every fad and "meme" started as an idea in just one person, who spread it around. In some cases, that person found a lifestyle.

Stumble upon one

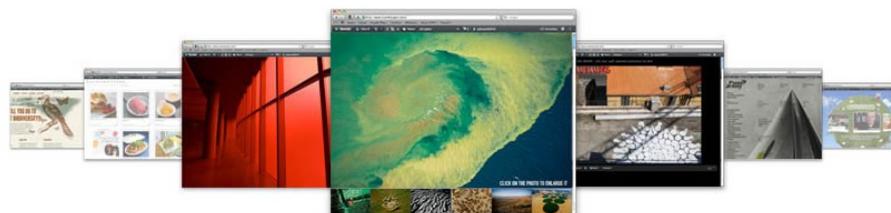
Niches are waiting all around us to be discovered. This may sound like a silly way to discover the new niche that will possibly make you millions, but have you ever checked out www.Stumbleupon.com

StumbleUpon is a very cool social website where you can either create your own account or login with your Facebook account to start stumbling around.



Discover the Best of the Web

StumbleUpon takes you to web pages, photos, and videos handpicked by your friends and like-minded people. [See a Demo »](#)



[Join for Free >](#)

or [Login with Facebook](#)

The cool thing about StumbleUpon is that it will actually keep track of the types of things that you were friends like and base the content you see on that. Knowing that you probably like your friends for reasons such as the things you have in common, StumbleUpon will show you very relevant content that is likely to be of a high interest to you .

What better way to start looking for new niches and coming up with great niche content ideas that a combination of things that you and your friends like. I highly recommend you spend some time on the site when looking for a new niche.

Social Niche Research

How To Research A Niche Market On Facebook

Researching your niche market on Facebook can be as easy as a few simple searches using the Facebook interface and even a few Google searches. There are quite a few different techniques that successful business owners use to research their specific market using social networks; today you'll learn about how to do it using Facebook.

Using Facebook's Interface

The Facebook search feature is more helpful that a lot of people truly realize. Not



only are you capable of searching for nearly anything, you can separate the results by different groupings. If you're searching for a person, you can search by name; by page or group, you can use keywords. The best part is separating them using the left-sidebar links.

Once you find various pages and groups for the niche markets you're interested in, the process is all downhill from here. Generally, people like pages that are relevant to their interests. While it isn't always the case and there are always people who just like a page because someone recommended it, it is likely that the majority of them are interested in the topic.

Groups are designed so people can have discussions about certain topics. This is beneficial for keeping an eye on both the issues and the things that people dislike and like. This data can all be used for knowing what people desire (their demands in the niche market you chose) and also give you a way to participate in the discussions.

Keep in mind that this is one of the best ways to utilize Facebook for getting your name out in the market. People will remember the beneficial and friendly conversation you add. So it is important to be respectful. The more helpful and respectful you are, the more beneficial to your purpose it will be.

Another useful way to get fans or 'likes' for your new fan page is to link to your page in some of your comments. Please notice the word "some" in that sentence. If you link to your page in all of your comments, it is considered spam and you may be booted from the group and/or other page. However, if you're giving insight on a topic to someone and you provide a helpful response, it won't be a disaster to add "I have more information about [topic] on my [blog/website] at <http://www.url.com> if you want to take a look."

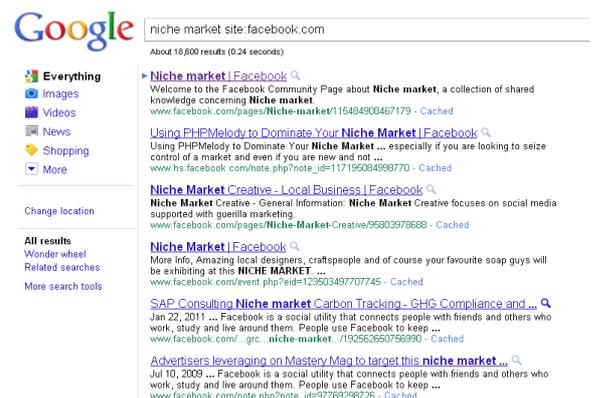
Another way to utilize the groups and pages find is to get into discussions with people and, in a way, make friends with them. Once you are friendly with people, it most likely wouldn't be an issue to send them a friend request. Then you're acquiring friends that are related to your niche market. Assuming you are using the tips provided and making good conversation, those friends may suggest friends for you that are also in the same target market.

Using Google to Assist You

Did you know that you can search for specific criteria using Google?

You can make your search results customized to what you are really looking for. By using the advanced search feature of Google, you can search for just things on the Facebook website. This allows you to get more accurate results for specific keywords, and also is an easier way to keep track of which pages or groups you've already visited.

When you click a link on Facebook to visit a page, there is no clear indication that you've been to that place before unless you specifically remember it. Chances are, you will be visiting a number of different groups and pages before the end of the day and things start running together. However, if you use Google's search capabilities, you are able to know which ones you have visited based on the color of the link in the search results. The blue links are unvisited and the purple links are the ones you've visited. This is a handy 'trick of the trade' to use.



The image shows a Google search interface. The search bar contains the text "niche market site:facebook.com". Below the search bar, it indicates "About 18,600 results (0.24 seconds)". The search results are listed on the right side of the page. The first result is a Facebook page titled "Niche market | Facebook". The second result is "Using PHPMelody to Dominate Your Niche Market | Facebook". The third result is "Niche Market Creative - Local Business | Facebook". The fourth result is "SAP Consulting Niche market Carbon Tracking - GHG Compliance and...". The fifth result is "Advertisers leveraging on Mastery Mag to target this niche market...". On the left side of the search results, there are navigation options: "Everything", "Images", "Videos", "News", "Shopping", and "More". Below these are "Change location", "All results", "Wonder wheel", "Related searches", and "More search tools".

Social Networking in Business

The use of social networks in business is increasing dramatically and has proven to be successful tools. If you learn to use them to your advantage, you can also be one of the people who benefit from them. While there are many other ways to use social networks, even ones other than Facebook, this will definitely be a good starting point for you and should give you the edge you need to expand further.

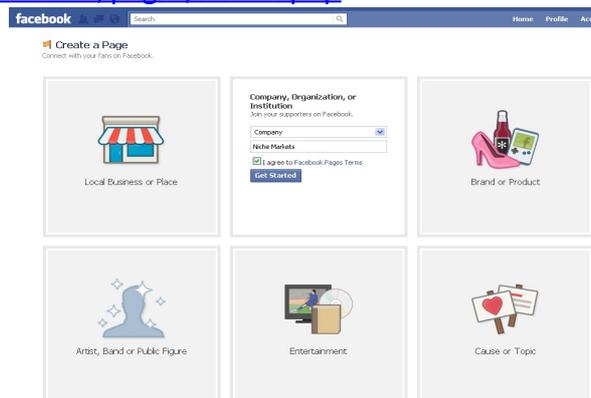
Using Facebook to Create a Fan Page and Get People to Like It

If you're just starting in your niche market and are looking for a way to get your name out there, creating a fan page and gaining likes may be a very handy tool for you to consider. You are about to learn how to create a page via Facebook and also some ways to get people to like it.

Creating a Facebook Page

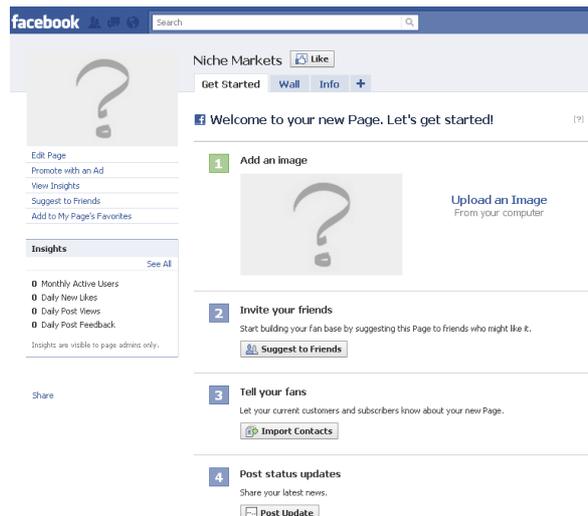
There are many people who are unaware of how you can create your own page on Facebook. In fact, there are actually pages designed specifically just to teach you how. No need to search for it any longer, the solution is simple.

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/create.php>



From this page, you have many options for creating your own page. You simply pick a category, a name to match, agree to the terms and conditions, and click “Get Started.” It’s really that simple.

When you come to the actual page, you get to customize the Page to your liking. You can add images, a description, and even custom tabs for your page. These can all be great features to offer the people who come in contact with your page.



There are a lot of different options you can edit on the Info tab of your new Facebook Page. Here is a breakdown of the various items:

- **Basic Info:**
 - Address
 - City/Town
 - Zip
 - Founded
 - About
- **Detailed Info:**
 - Website
 - Company Overview
 - Mission
 - Products
 - Description
 - Awards
- **Contact Info:**
 - Email
 - Phone
 - Website

As for the possible extra tabs you can create, there is the option to add the standard tabs, such as: Notes, Photos, Video, Links, Events, etc. You can customize your new fan page to look exactly like you want it to look, with the features you want it to have. Not to mention, you can allow others to post on the wall of your Facebook page or you can prevent them.

Getting “People to Like It”

Now that you have your new Facebook page setup and ready to go, the next step is getting the word out about your page. What use is a page with no likes or fans as Facebook used to call it? We’ll now show you how you can get people to like your page.

There is a neat little feature that Facebook pages offer that lets you suggest your

page to your friends. This allows all of your friends to be aware of the page you just created and gives them the option to like or ignore the request. This is a good starting point for getting even a few people to like your page.

It'd be advisable to give your friends a few days to like the page. Once there are a few people that have liked your page, you can post a status update from the page itself which will be shown on your friend's newsfeed in Facebook.

A friendly request for them to suggest the page to their friends has never hurt anyone. Whether they fulfill the request is solely their decision, but every little bit helps.

Another good way to get people to like your fan page is to tag your new fan page in your personal status updates. This gives people more of a chance to see the page and know of its existence. If people comment on it and it ends up being a popular post, it is likely to show up in friends of friend's "Most Popular" feed. Then you're spreading the word past your original friend list.

If you want to go the extra mile, you can even create a promotional ad for your page on Facebook Ads. This is a paid service that you can use to promote your ad to millions of Facebook users based on different criteria that you set. You can set it to be only people from a specific country, a specific city, gender, and even by keywords that people are interested in. These limitations make the targeting of this advertising very precise.

Other Paid Promotion Methods

There are many paid services on the internet that allow you to get fans or people to "like" your page. Some can be costly but they are guaranteed or you don't pay. The problem with these services is that the people who like your page may have no interest in its purpose. This is not a good way to get targeted people visiting your page, but only for those who want to increase the fan count.

Using Twitter to Find Niche Markets

If you are looking to start a business but don't know what a good niche market would be, Twitter might be the answer you're looking for. By using Twitter, you can find hot topics, popular trends, and even gaps in the current market that provide great insight about what might be the next great niche.

When people talk on social networks, they don't hold back. This gives you the advantage because you can use Twitter as a marketing tool, as well as a social network. The thing that makes Twitter

hashtags.org/music

User	Message/Tweet	When
@vient0_d0l_sur	http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S77CNh10rU German Meoro__dile de mi parte #music	2 minutes ago
@hrhsar	Hello #nowplaying #hillsday #music #dance #http://blip.fm/~1109wr	2 minutes ago
@khmcnally	A-Trak's soundcloud page is great. #HeyStaks #Music #fb http://bit.ly/hovsZj	2 minutes ago
@biz_online	(Free music mp3 tests needed. http://bit.ly/b8CBsd Press Entertainment. #music #mp3 #iTune)	2 minutes ago
@allmp3	Lyrics: #music #lyrics	2 minutes ago

one of the best marketing tools is that it's not formal and generic.

When people "tweet," it is a natural conversation. However, with other marketing tools, such as surveys, you're likely to get canned responses. When people speak naturally, this allows you to see what exactly people care about, what their questions and concerns are, and this all adds in to finding niche market information.

Let's Get Started!

Step 1 Niche Research on Twitter:

When using Twitter to find niche markets, it is important to know what conversations people are having and what they're talking about. HashTags.org allows you to find out which keywords are common in Twitter conversations. A hashtag is a way for people to have a big conversation with enthusiasts of the same topic. (E.G. #music)

It is best to find trends and conversations that interest you or ones that seem new and exciting. Your imagination is the key here! You have to keep in mind that Twitter changes so rapidly that a trend that is popular one day, may be left in the dust the next. Take your time and really do your research.

Step 2 After you've Found You're Niche:

After you've found the niche market you're most interested in, you need to get some followers that are relevant to your topic. This part is very important for the next step. If you aren't sure how to find and acquire targeted, relevant followers, read our article on "[Getting Niche Followers on Twitter.](#)"

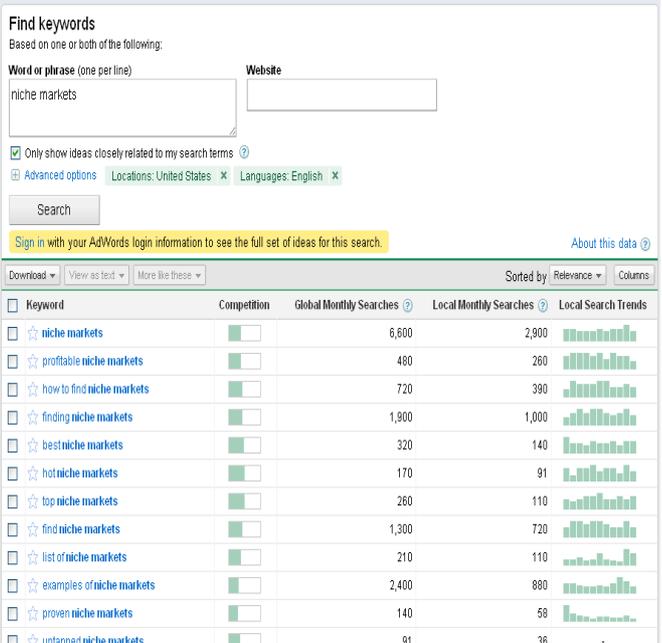
Step 3 Just Watch:

Once you have your niche market figured out, and also a good starting base for relevant followers, the next step in the journey to researching your niche market is simply to watch.

Whenever you have the time, log into your Twitter account and start doing your research. Listen to what people are talking about, follow their conversations and see where they take you. Use this information to find difficulties, problems, and gaps. Is there something that these people want but can't find? Are people asking questions about something? These are all questions that could lead into a great niche market.

Step 4 Taking It To The Next Level:

Once you have gathered some information about the niche markets you are



The screenshot shows the 'Find keywords' tool interface. It includes a search bar with the text 'niche markets' and a 'Search' button. Below the search bar, there are options for 'Only show ideas closely related to my search terms', 'Advanced options', 'Locations: United States', and 'Languages: English'. A table of results is displayed below, with columns for 'Keyword', 'Competition', 'Global Monthly Searches', 'Local Monthly Searches', and 'Local Search Trends'. The table lists various keywords related to niche markets, such as 'niche markets', 'profitable niche markets', 'how to find niche markets', etc.

Keyword	Competition	Global Monthly Searches	Local Monthly Searches	Local Search Trends
niche markets	Green bar	8,600	2,900	Bar chart
profitable niche markets	Green bar	480	260	Bar chart
how to find niche markets	Green bar	720	390	Bar chart
finding niche markets	Green bar	1,900	1,000	Bar chart
best niche markets	Green bar	320	140	Bar chart
hot niche markets	Green bar	170	91	Bar chart
top niche markets	Green bar	260	110	Bar chart
find niche markets	Green bar	1,300	720	Bar chart
list of niche markets	Green bar	210	110	Bar chart
examples of niche markets	Green bar	2,400	880	Bar chart
proven niche markets	Green bar	140	58	Bar chart
untapped niche markets	Green bar	91	36	Bar chart

considering choosing using these helpful Twitter capabilities, it is time to take your research to the next level and try to find confirmation. There are many other helpful resources at your disposal that you can use to capitalize your niche market.

For instance, take one of the niche markets and the information you gathered. Assuming you found a difficulty or something that people wanted, this doesn't automatically mean this is the ideal market for you. Google offers a free keyword research tool for finding out if the niche market you chose has good keywords. This is beneficial in order to ensure you have a good way to monetize your idea. It's also important to stay informed. Continue to watch the Twitter conversations about your niche market so you can get to know your customers.

Using Twitter is almost like eavesdropping on hundreds of conversations that are constantly right in front of you.

What's Next?

Once you've established your niche market and you've attained a steady follower base, the question remains: "what do I do now?"

You already know how to listen to your customers' demands and desires but it's important to know how to converse with them. This factor plays just as important of a role as listening does. It is important to understand what you should talk about, how you should engage them in conversation, and also the etiquette of using Twitter.

Knowing what is considered polite, how to start a conversation, and the common annoyances that Twitter users have is genuinely critical. Learning to use Twitter effectively may be the most challenging part about finding niche markets and starting a successful business.

You can find information about social etiquette all over the internet; look it up, study it, and you will be well on your way to polite social conversations about your niche market. You can then learn how to integrate all of this into your business plan.

Twitter is huge! It's time to make the same of your newfound business.

Getting Niche Followers on Twitter

At this point, it is safe to assume you already have your niche market decided. Now that you have that figured it, it is time to get followers that are relevant to your objective market, right? It sounds like it may be a task for marketing gurus, but you may be surprised at just how easy it can be.

Basic Tips

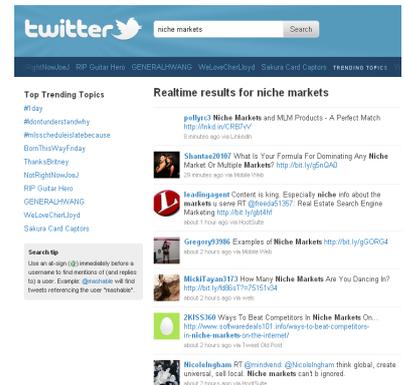
There are endless ways to find followers on Twitter. Some are more effective than

others, but it varies based on what you want to accomplish. This is the easiest and most efficient way to get followers relevant to your market.

More times than not, if you follow someone, it is likely that they will follow you back. This deals a lot with social etiquette and simply being friendly. However, they will also be just as quick to leave you in the dust if you make a mockery of yourself.

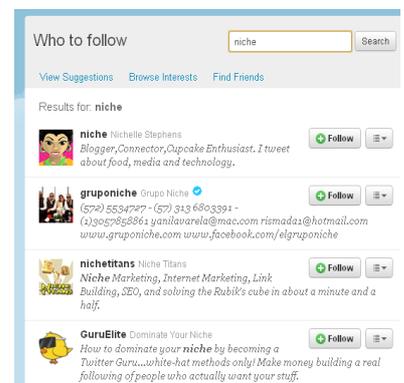
If you don't already have a Twitter account, go sign-up for one. Concentrate on finding people in the same market as you and follow them. Even if they don't follow you back, this is still beneficial to you for research purposes.

Go to search.twitter.com and search for a keyword that is relevant to your niche market. This will show you who is having a conversation about that topic and will also let you see their profile. If they seem like a worthy candidate, follow them. You can even check out who is following them and follow their followers. Chances are, they have a lot of followers who share similar interests.



Another easy way to find relevant followers on Twitter is to go to "Find People" and search for your niche market's main keyword. People with that keyword in their name will most likely show up. If they've taken the time to put that word in their username, it can be assumed they are an enthusiast.

Google can also come in handy when trying to find followers if you use it to your advantage. Search for a related keyword on Google. Find related businesses that sell products or services to your niche market and try to find out if they have a Twitter account. If they do, follow them. Their followers are generally going to be related to the same industry, which gives you a wide variety of targeted followers to acquire.



The same rule applies when using Google to find blogs related to your keyword. Using Google's Blogsearch, you can do the same thing and follow blogs that are relevant and have a Twitter account. Those are two quick steps that Google offers that can drastically increase your targeted follower list.

What's The Importance of Niche-Specific Followers?

No matter what niche market you choose, there are a lot of reasons why having targeted Twitter followers is important. Connecting with these people on Twitter gets your name out. That is the first step in succeeding in your niche market.

If you can connect with people that are related to the same industry, they will remember the person who offered them an insightful conversation.

Once you establish the connection with people in your niche market, you're on your

way! Helping other people with their issues related to the niche market, or even just having a conversation about it will help you out more than you may think. Word of Mouth is still the best form of advertising that any business could ever have. Many people don't consider the fact that the internet is merely another form of Word of Mouth.

When a user "tweets" something that promotes a business, this is actually considered Word of Mouth advertising because they are sharing their thoughts on a business for their followers (or friends) to see.

Keep in mind that there are both good and bad forms of Word of Mouth advertising so it's important to always use social etiquette when conversing with people on Twitter.

Another reason that connecting with people is important is because there is always the chance that someone else will see it and follow you. More targeted followers are at your disposal at all times of the day on Twitter. By being tagged in a tweet, you are opened to every person who follows the person who tagged you. If they're an enthusiast of the same market, they aren't following you, and they have similar interests – this may lead to them following you.

Chapter 3

Using the Rest Of The Internet to Find Your Niche

The Internet is a wonderful place where users can find a great deal of information. However, many are not aware that the Internet is also where some savvy entrepreneurs can find lucrative business opportunities. Internet niche marketing is just one example of how those in the know can turn their hard work and dedication into profit. This is not to say that Internet marketing is a simple field where anyone can prosper but there are opportunities for those how are willing to persevere in their efforts.

Facebook: With over 500 million people on Facebook talking back and forth to each other every single day there is a ton of information that you can collect from their conversations.

Simply join some of the Facebook group pages or fan pages that discuss some of the niches you may be interested in and you will find a plethora of information in that niche. You will be surprised when you find out how easy it is discover what people want by just hanging out on Facebook for a while.

Want to discover what they want, the simple part is figuring out a way to give it to them.

It's not hard to outsource the creation of a website, but if you create a website selling a product that nobody wants success will never come to you. This is why it is important to study what people want on social networking sites like Facebook so you can be sure to pick a winner.

Twitter: With the popularity of Twitter growing at a breakneck speed spotting new trends and niche markets it even easier than on Facebook. Just check out the trending topics to see what's hot at any given moment. You can also use the Twitter search functions to browse around and search topics that have interest to you to see what people are tweeting about different products that interest them.

Learning what people want in the current times will save you years of trial and error when determining the new niche you wish to sell a product in.

Learning Internet Marketing Online

Believe it or not Internet niche marketing is a subject that can be learned online. It certainly helps for those who hope to prosper in this industry to have some knowledge of marketing and business before venturing in an Internet niche marketing campaign but it is not necessary. There is a great deal of information on organizing and executing a niche marketing campaign available online. This information may come in a number of different forms including websites offering informative articles, message boards focusing on the industry and ebooks which are

available free of charge or for a fee.

Let's first examine learning about Internet marketing through websites. Type the search term, "Internet niche marketing" into your favorite search engine and you will likely receive millions of search results. Shifting through all the search results would be rather time consuming and many of them would likely not be relevant. Fortunately the search engines do a great deal of work for you and the most useful websites will likely appear on the first couple of pages of search results. This still leaves you with a great deal of information to sort through but considering you are likely planning to turn niche marketing into a career this research is certainly worthwhile.

Carefully examine the search results you obtain from your search and bookmark the websites which seem most useful. Next take as much time as necessary to comb through all of these websites to find the most useful information. Take notes as you do to create a comprehensive resource for yourself. After this review your notes and investigate items which seem unclear to your further. This research may include offline resources such as books or phone calls to experts in the industry.

Search Engines are Your Friend

Now that you have already used the Internet to learn about the industry of Internet marketing, you probably know that finding a profitable niche is imperative. A niche is essentially a specific area of interest. Ideally you will already be an expert in this subject and it will be a subject which has a wide Internet audience without a great deal of existing websites focusing on this niche. Once again, you can turn to the Internet for finding this niche.

You may already have a few ideas for niches. These are probably subjects you are passionate about and understand very well. Examining statistical information provided by popular search engines regarding the popularity of search terms related to your niche will give you a good indication of whether or not Internet users are interested in your niche. If keywords related to your niche are searched on these search engines often, it is evident there is an audience for your niche. Next it is time to enter these keywords in a search engine and evaluate the websites which are provided as results for these keywords. If there are many strong results the niche can be considered saturated. In this case, it is a good idea to abandon the original idea and search for another niche. However, if there are not many high quality search results, you may have found your perfect niche.

The Emphasis on Research



It is only after research and analyzing possible niche markets that a profitable one will surface. But why is this preparation and research so important when there are plenty of niche markets to be found online?

When researching a niche, you should look for:

- Size of group
- Competition
- Types of products needed
- Interest in these products
- How many tweets this month about this product
- Is there a Facebook fan page?
- How many Facebook users have this product listed in their interests?
- How many Twitter posts are there a week in your niche?
- Is anyone else marketing on Twitter in your niche?

Only after you have answered these questions will you be able to determine if a niche will be profitable or not.

Size of Group

The size of the niche market matters because if the group is too small, it will not generate enough profit. While niche markets are smaller than other markets, they still need to be large enough so you can sell your product and earn a profit. You can use Facebook and Twitter to get a really good gauge of the number of prospects in your niche.

Competition

If a niche market is being catered to by one or two other businesses, then chances are the group will not be as interested in what you have to sell because they may have bought it already or they don't have a need for more products.

Types of Products Needed

If the needs are too specific, you may not be able to meet them. Finding out which products are needed by visiting blogs, creating an email list and sending out surveys can help you determine the types of products are most needed and therefore will be the most profitable.

Interest in these Products

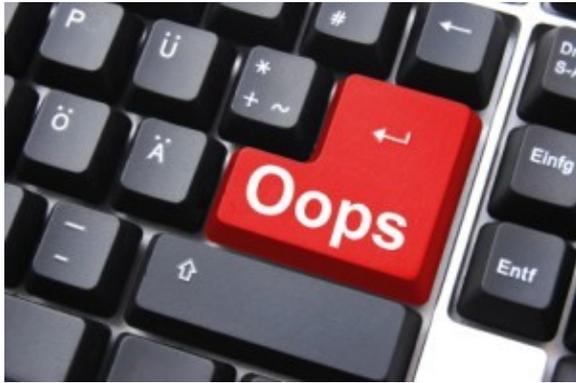
There should be a fair amount of interest in informational products by the group so you can make a profit. If not, then you may need to move on the next niche.

Is there a fair amount of people talking about this product on Twitter at the current time?

In your business, you want to be as successful as possible. This means catering to groups that will hopefully generate the most profit. Some niches will be more profitable than others. Throughout this book, you will learn tips and techniques that will prepare you for finding and researching niches, but in the end, the amount you make will depend on consumer reaction, how badly they want what you have to offer, and amount of competition in the marketplace.

Finding a niche market that is hot is essential if you want to sell products to small groups online. Once you have found a few niches that look promising, you can begin developing your product and prepare to sell it to those who have been looking for information about a particular topic for a long time.

SEVEN COMMON RESEARCH MISTAKES



Throughout this book, you will learn the importance of properly researching possible niches and niche groups before creating a product and marketing it. Unfortunately, many people who go into this type of online business, even if they have good intentions, fail to do all the research necessary or they ignore what the research tells them and market a product that may not be as successful as they had hoped.

After you finish reading this book, you will have the resources and the tools needed to research topics, find profitable niche groups, and create and market a product that will be successful. However, the work you put into it will determine how successful you'll be in this endeavor.

Below you will find seven common mistakes that many beginners and experienced niche marketers make when looking for profitable niche markets. Even though these mistakes seem small, they can potentially cause people to lose profits that could have been theirs if they had only chosen niche markets more carefully.

1. NOT TAKING THE TIME TO CONDUCT ENOUGH RESEARCH

The best way to consistently earn an income through niche marketing is by carefully researching possible niches until you find a few that will be profitable. While this concept is simple, there are many people who don't want to take the time to search online, visit their local bookstore, or read the newspaper.

By taking the time and spending a few hours researching niches, you have a distinct advantage from those who choose not to conduct research or those who conduct only a little research. Skipping this step in the process will not help you in any way, so please do not overlook the importance of research.

Another reason research is so important is that by researching what people are interested in learning more about, you will find materials that can be used in your product. This can save you a lot of time in the long run. While conducting research, you can build a list of possible sources to use when the time comes to write that eBook, newsletter, or tutorial. Combining steps is a great way to complete projects in a shorter amount of time.

2. IGNORING RESEARCH FINDINGS

Another common mistake that people make when engaging in niche marketing is ignoring all the warning signs that a niche will not be profitable. These signs include:

- Not enough interest in keywords related to your niche
- Very little talk on Twitter about your niche
- Few magazines or books written on the topic
- Is there already a Facebook fan page covering your niche?
- Hard to find ads in magazines or online that promote products pertaining to the niche
- The niche is so new that people are still in the very beginning stages of curiosity about it
- Too many keyword searches on the niche signals too much competition
- Saturated marketplace within the niche
- Product you had in mind has already been created

There are many warning signs that should tell you the niche, while it was a good idea, will not be a profitable one. Sometimes when people are engaged in the research, they forget that the ultimate goal of niche marketing is to provide people with new and valuable information that will yield you a handsome profit.

Even if you believe you have exceptional sales skills, you enjoy a challenge, or you are so interested in the topic that you want to market a product to others who feel the same, remember that there are hundreds of possible niche markets out there. Consider the amount of time you will be spending in creating a product, creating a website, and marketing – how much is this time worth to you? Isn't it better spent marketing a product you know will sell quickly and easily?

Once you've become more comfortable with the process and want to try your hand at marketing in more competitive markets, then it may be worth the risk. But for now, choose niches that will be profitable over those that may require more marketing savvy.

3. FAILURE TO NARROW DOWN NICHE CATEGORIES

Starting with a broader category and narrowing it down is part of the fun of niche marketing. But if you don't take the time to find smaller groups, you may not find many categories that aren't already saturated with products.

People who are new to niche marketing should begin by creating a list of possible niche groups as this will give them a base to start. During the research, this list should become shorter and topics should become narrower.

By conducting online research using Google and Yahoo, you will be able to discover

keywords and phrases that can help in this process.

Next take those keywords that you were able to narrow down to and use the search function on Facebook and Twitter to gauge consumer interest in that niche.

Narrowing your searches has other benefits as well. You may discover a few profitable niches that pertain to one of the topics on your list. It is only through brainstorming and seeing where the research will take you that you will find these niches. One category may lead to several subcategories that will lead to one or more niche groups that you would not have found had you not followed the research trail.

Another benefit is all the possible topics you can add to your list when you begin a new project. Try to always keep a running list of possible niches so you can refer to them whenever you have some spare time and want to conduct a little research. For many in niche marketing, it's not uncommon to have two, three, four, or more products out there at one time all catering to different niche groups.

4. NARROWING TOPICS TOO MUCH

On the other hand, narrowing your topics too much can cause you to miss profitable niches or find niches that are so small; there is little profit to be made. As you become more proficient in researching possible niches, this issue should resolve itself, however. While it's fine to follow the research trail to see where it ends, this can be very time consuming.

When you narrow your topics too much, you are also eliminating the possibility of finding niches that are related to your topic. You should stop narrowing your topics when you find a niche with possibilities or if you find other topics to research.

Ways to tell if you've narrowed your search too much include:

- Number of keyword searches is lower than 10,000 per month
- Limited amount of information found about the niche
- Niche has not shown any dramatic growth in the past few months
- Fewer than 10000 tweets per month on that niche
- Less than 10 Facebook groups with a combined following of 100,000

Another way to tell if you've narrowed your niche too much is there will be few keywords available for topics that are related to the niche.

5. FAILURE TO UTILIZE DIFFERENT SOURCES

As a niche marketer, you should enjoy the research process. Because it is similar to detective work, you should be actively researching throughout the day. If you mainly conduct research online, you may see the entire picture.

Visiting your local chain bookstore once a week, reading your daily newspaper, and

talking to friends and family, you will be able to find out a lot without having to feel like you're working all the time.

Utilizing different online resources is important as well in order to conduct thorough research. In this book, you have been given many resources, tools, and places where you can go to find out more on the topics you've listed. As you become better at spotting profitable niche groups, your research habits may change slightly, but for now use all available resources online and off to find the most profitable niches.

Another issue you could run into by not researching your niches carefully is that the product you create may already be out there. You don't want to sell the same or similar product as someone else, especially to a smaller group.

If another person has already built a reputation within the niche, it will be even more difficult to sell the same product. It is only through research that you will be able to learn more about your competition and what they already have out there.

Create a Twitter account with your niche keywords in your Twitter account name, then do a search

for your niche keyword and follow everybody you can find that has an interest in your niche. Now wait and see how many of them follow you back.

6. FAILURE TO RESEARCH THE COMPETITION

This brings us to another common mistake that those starting in niche marketing may make. You need to research your potential competition for several reasons. If a niche is too populated with products, then it may not be profitable. Niche marketing is successful when people are in need of the information you can provide them. If people have too many choices, then your profits will suffer.

You also want to know the types of products that are currently available for the niche you want to target to see if there is a new angle you can take. Creating a product that is the same or similar to one that is already available will not be as profitable as one that is unique.

Another reason why it is important to know your competition is to get a better idea of the marketing strategies they are using. If they have targeted this niche group, then it must be profitable. Review their product, website, and other information they provide to see which keywords they use, how their sales letter is constructed, and who their target audience. Many times you will find that there are several audiences within one niche. Finding the audience that is not being catered to can be very profitable.

There is nothing shady or unethical about checking out the competition, it is a great way to find out more about the niche and to see if there is any profit in it.

7. CREATING A PRODUCT BEFORE FINDING A NICHE

One of the best reasons to pursue niche marketing is the potential to earn profits by supplying those who are in search of information the materials they need. To ensure that each of your products will be profitable, finding out the needs of the niche is important. But some people reverse this and create a product to sell and then find a niche to sell to.

While you can still make a profit from creating a product first, you are taking a gamble because you may not find a niche that is receptive to it. Why take this gamble when you can find a niche that is definitely interested in your product by conducting a little research first? If you are not the sales person type, then niche marketing is for you.

Taking the time to research niches before selling a product will save you time, money, and allow you to move on to a new projects.

In today's age of social media be sure you spend a lot of time researching your new niche on Facebook and Twitter and interact with your future customers. By interacting with customers that have an interest in the niches that you are researching you can get a great feel for the level of interest in the types of products that your potential customers have.

Engage them in conversation and ask them what types of new products they would be looking for and how much they would be willing to spend if they're perfect product came along.

By interacting with your potential customers on a Facebook group page you can actually stir interest in a product you have not been created yet with some simple interaction with people interested in that type of niche product.

Now that you know more about the common mistakes people make when trying to break into niche marketing, it should be very easy to avoid them. Just make sure you do some interacting with people before you spend a lot of money and time creating a new product.

The screenshot shows a Twitter search interface for the term "coffee beans". At the top, there's a navigation bar with "Home", "Profile", "Messages", and "Who To Follow". Below the search bar, there are options to "Back to Home" and "Save this search".

The main section is titled "Results for coffee beans" and has tabs for "Tweets", "Tweets with links", "Tweets near you", and "People". The "Tweets" tab is selected, showing a list of tweets:

- Tawne_Roberts** (Tawne Roberts): "My spouse figured I was mad when I informed her I was going to buy **coffee** on the internet. Look! she exclaimed,l... <http://bit.ly/dWVF73>" (1 minute ago)
- emilybellin** (Emily Bellin): "Buying Gourmet **Coffee Beans** Online Isnt Crazy | JoinAndPostcom: My spouse figured I was mad when I informed her ... <http://bit.ly/eQy4w8>" (1 minute ago)
- LittleEarthCo** (Heather Sawyer): "Got a **coffee** shipment today. I LOVE the smell of fresh roasted **beans!** I even got a treat for me- cinnamon red hot flavored **coffee beans!**" (10 minutes ago)
- CoffeeLovers_x** (Coffee Lovers): "Grinding **Beans** for a Single Cup **Coffee** Maker <http://bit.ly/hMT12h>" (13 minutes ago)
- pixeltwidler** (pixeltwidler): "Does anyone know where to get good **beans** in Nowra? Desperate need of fresh ones, on hols down sth coast for another week @Beanhunter #**coffee**" (14 minutes ago)
- Rojibo** (Oliver Rowell): "**COFFEE BEANS**. Great success. This means proper freshly ground **coffee** in the morning. None of that instant shit :D" (19 minutes ago)

On the right side, there are sections for "People results for coffee beans" and "Trends".

People results for coffee beans:

- GreenBeansCafe** (Green Beans Coffee)
- Deans_Beans** (Dean's Beans Coffee)
- Joebeanscoffee** (Joe Beans Coffee)
- coffeebeans** (coffeebeans)

Trends:

- Los Angeles · change
- Old Spice Guy (Promoted)
- #dontunderstandwhy
- #superbowl
- #egypt
- Black Eyed Peas
- National Anthem
- Brian Jacques
- Fergie
- Vday
- HuffPo

At the bottom right, there are links for "About", "Help", "Blog", "Status", "Jobs", "Terms", "Privacy", "Shortcuts", "Advertisers", "Businesses", "Media", "Developers", "Resources", and "© 201 Twitter".

Generating Income from your Niche Market

Once you've latched onto a niche market or three, the rest is pretty basic business. Which is a good thing, because there's one other thing about new niche markets that I must point out: you have to act quickly! Delaying for months while you set up your strategy is inviting somebody else to swoop in and establish themselves in the niche that should have been yours.

In fact, you might want to keep a sort of "emergency action kit" for acting quickly to establish a skeleton site while you figure out the other details. This would be something like:

- Either a few parked domains or capitol to buy up domain names quickly.
- A web host in mind to use. It also doesn't hurt to have a free base or two such as a site on Blogger or MySpace which you can quickly optimize for your new niche.
- A website template that's "ready to go". Remember, all we're worried about is dropping in a placeholder, so no need for anything fancy yet.

But that's a side note. The real work here is deciding how you're going to turn the potential profit into cash. There are just two ways to make money on the Internet: selling a product or having affiliate ads to others who are selling a product. If you go with a product, you will need less content and more focus on using the website as an online store front from which to offer your product. If you go with an ad-supported site, you will need to focus entirely on content - and you'd better make it good!

The Product Model

We'll cover this one first. Remember that you do not need to be a manufacturer of tangible objects in order to have a product. Your product can be services, information, memberships in a group, or ebooks and newsletter subscriptions. You can use CafePress (<http://www.cafepress.com/>) or another online service to print up T-shirts, coffee mugs, bumper stickers, and other promotional materials associated with your niche. Here's a few niche areas and the ideas I might look at to create a salable product:

Coin Collecting

- An auction site service - charge membership or percentage of sales, let members join and auction to buy and sell coins and currency through your site.
- An ebook series - this is one area which is starving for information. Coin collectors are always hungry for the facts on the active market and the best grading, cleaning, caring-for, and markets for coins. You could publish a whole library on the history of US coins alone.
- A newsletter subscription - track events and conventions in the numismatic world, post bids, have articles for coin topics.
- Promotional materials - never hurts to get some designs on some T-shirts. But how better would be a wall poster with images and description of a class of coins?

Manga

Manga is a form of Japanese comic or graphic novel, similar to the Anime movie genre. It is one burning-hot market right now in America. You can hardly set foot in a bookstore housed in an indoor mall without finding a manga rack.

- Hello, we're talking collectors here, so once again an auction site for members to buy, sell, and trade manga books suggests itself. Remember also that there are a lot of artists interested in creating manga in America - Google for the phrase "how to draw manga" to see what I mean. Now, how about a membership board where artists, illustrators, publishers, and writers can all get together and collaborate, hire each other, etc.?

- Maybe not ebooks, but maybe some video tutorials on drawing manga, a magazine of articles on the manga market, and so on.
- Promotional materials! Your main target is young people, so T-shirts, posters, stickers, and anything else you can paste a comic book character on is absolutely mandatory.

Reptiles

Reptiles as pets, naturally. It's a niche, but a strong one; get used to some competition - a small, almost negligible amount.

- ebooks, newsletters, and video tutorials on the care of exotic pets. The market is sparse on this topic - I've owned the odd snake and lizard in my time, and there's nowhere near the information on them like there is for more mainstream pets.
- Promotional materials - even for the really niche pets, a visit to Petsmart will show that there is no Komodo dragon or chameleon that hasn't had everything from calendars to pens with its image on it. Pet owners love to announce their fondness for a species. Check out an office some time and notice that you can hardly miss the cubicle belonging to the pet fancier!

One big point we must make, here: you do not need to be your own writer, artist, web designer, or anything else to create these products. You can instead go to any of the many online freelancer sites on the Internet and hire writers, artists, designers, and so forth by the job or for a steady stream of work. We'll cover some more of this in detail in later chapters. But now that I've pointed that out, you might even think of hiring a programmer to design software affiliated with a niche. Maybe a game themed around the niche (good idea for manga!), or a useful tool such as a database for record-keeping (coin collectors spend a lot of time sorting and categorizing their pieces!).

In fact, the model of being the webmaster and hiring online freelancers to do the grunt labor is about the most common way that the Internet does business, at least as far as the Internet entrepreneur is concerned. The cycle is usually: the webmaster buys up sites, researches topics for business models on these sites, then parcels out the work to freelancers and puts that work on the site, then leaves the site to grind out money by itself while they move on to the next site.

This goes with the idea of having many niche topics adding their steady percentage together into your bottom line. And business brains and creative brains are seldom strong in the same person. Creative people tend to have gobs of talent, but little idea how to sell it. Business people have the sales savvy to know what to sell and how, but lack the creative talent to make it happen. This isn't always the case, but it's how it works out more often than not.

The Content Model

This is the classic website supported by advertising. "Content is king" is a well-worn saying on the Internet, with much truth behind it. Always remember that the Internet is a media, just like TV and radio. Content can come in many forms:

1. Text - blog posts, articles, databases, tables, references, and all.
2. Images - Can be offered as a product as well.
3. Video and audio - either of Flash animations, video formats. Audio files can either be a podcast - a kind of live audio recording posted as a blog - or a product also, such as cell phone ring tones.
4. User-generated content - sometimes the big attraction is the other visitors, who, given the opportunity to do so, will be more than happy to provide you with content, by way of chat rooms, bulletin boards, blog comments, and so on. Check out Slashdot and Digg - the whole thing is nothing but user-generated content.

Mainly, however, we have a reason to focus on plain old text: search engines can't index anything else (beyond titles, of course)! We're all looking forward to the day when we can Google for a sound bite from an hour-long video, but until that technology comes to us, we'll have to work up our keywords and text content to pull in the search traffic.

Here again, you can outsource and delegate to hired freelancers. We'll explore the content model in depth as well in a later chapter. In fact, we'll explore the whole method of putting the social web to work for you in getting links and building traffic. But I'll whisper one more word to you one more time: blogs!

Mix and Match

If you have a hard line drawn between the product model and the content model, you should change it to a fuzzy line instead. There's no reason at all why your site can't have partial content, ads, and products all in one. In fact, since you're playing to the niche market, let's think about that.

Say your interest is in the Renaissance lifestyle (SCA - the Society for Creative Anachronism, is a good place to start if you don't know what I'm talking about). You go to local Renaissance Faires and Festivals, you have friends in it, you're interested in history, you may dress up in costume at events and gatherings, and you may even go for Medieval crafts and hobbies such as woodwork, juggling, acting, alchemy, astrology, and so on. Now, you're a walking niche market looking for a place to happen. As long as you found this great site devoted to your niche (after scouring the depths of the Internet), you'd be all the happier if it was a one-stop for all your needs, right?

So you can cater to a "full-service" aspect. Articles and a blog on the topic, ads on the blog, links to buy T-shirts with logos appealing to the interest, offer an eBook or two related to the topic, offer some free wallpaper or a Flash game related to it, put up and moderate a discussion board for fans of the topic (and eventually fans of your site!) to meet and mingle. You'll get the idea.

OK, we've laid out the basic models for turning niche interest into market dollars. In addition, if you, yourself, have interest in the niche topic, you might have experience in it which you can sell. You can consult, sell your specialized services, create your own product - the possibilities are endless there, but you'll be on your own.

We'll next examine in depth the content/advertising model. Because if there's any area people need help in, it is there!

Chapter 4 – Crafting Your Niche Content Site

In this chapter, you will learn what it takes to build a simple, yet effective website that can be used to promote your product and also take orders electronically so you don't have to be involved in selling or distributing the product. Thanks to Internet technology, all you have to do is upload your product, and find the appropriate payment program that will accept payments and release your product for download.

You can invest in a shopping cart program, use websites like Paypal (www.paypal.com), or you can find a web host that provides payment acceptance programs to its customers.

Creating your Website

REGISTERING YOUR DOMAIN

In order to create a website that others can use to download products, your first step will be to register a domain so you can reserve a website address to prevent others from taking it. If you have other websites, then you already know how this is done. If not, then you have a few options. You can visit domain registration sites to see which names are taken and which are available. If a domain is available, you have the option of purchasing it. If not, then you need to keep trying until you find one that is.

Reputable domain search companies include:

- <http://domainabbey.com>
- <http://whois.net/>
- <http://www.mydomain.com/>
- <http://www.register.com/>

Keep in mind that you will still have to find a web host and rent some space online if you want to create a website even after registering a domain name. Some domain registration companies also offer web hosting and will combine the domain registration fee with the monthly web hosting fee into one easy payment.

While you may be tempted to use free web hosting services, they are not always reliable and can be shut down at any time. Also free web hosts are able to post any type of ads on your site in lieu of payment, so be warned that you may have to compete with other ads on your site when trying to sell your product.

Some companies that offer web hosting include:

- <http://smallbusiness.yahoo.com/webhosting>

- <http://www.DomainAbbey.com>

There are many more, but these offer low monthly fees and control panels that allow you to customize your website quickly and easily. You will also be able to track your marketing campaign with stats and trend reports that you know how well your sales are going and how many visitors you have each day.

BUILDING YOUR WEBSITE



When selling one product on a website, you do not need to create a fifty page website complete with flashy ads, lots of graphics, and other tricks that other online businesses do to increase awareness of their site. Because your product will be popular for a shorter amount of time, spending hours and hours finding the right fonts, creating articles, and customizing the sequence of the pages is not worth it.

Keep in mind that your niche group is hungry for information they are unable to find anywhere else. This means they will not need as much encouragement and pushing to place an order. If you are the only game in town, chances are you will receive business regardless of whether you have the website online or a professional, but simple site that highlights the benefits of the product.

You do not have to be a computer genius to create a professional website that promotes your products. Since you will be using other forms of marketing including PPC, keywords on your site, and joining forums and creating blogs, your website will mostly be used as a platform to accept payment after a customer orders your product.

Your web host will have many templates to choose from when the time comes to build your site. Most niche marketing sites contain a sales letter explaining the benefits of purchasing the product. You will learn more about writing an effective sales letter in the next section of this chapter.

Sales letters also include links to purchasing your product; offer a free gift, or bonus report that entices people to make a purchase immediately.

Images of your product will also help when making a sale. Depending on the amount of information you want to share with visitors, most sales letters are between two and eight pages.

Another benefit of niche marketing is that you don't have to spend days creating a website. By using templates, writing an effective sales letter, and adding a few images, you can create an efficient website in a day or less.

Probably the most common method of a professional website is to have content plus targeted ads. Sounds simple, doesn't it? Well, it may well be simple, but browsing online long enough will reveal some sites that, in a word, are hideous. Just because it saves me a lot of time by having some ground covered already, you should go to:

Vincent Flanders' Web Pages That Suck

<http://www.webpagesthatsuck.com>

Mr. Flanders has been working in the web design field for nearly a decade now, and has several books published. This site is an excellent education in what not to do, with examples pointing out offenders and plenty of reasons why. Mind you, this is just the basic, Common Sense 101 kind of stuff. Avoid these beginner mistakes. And beyond that, there are enough more mistakes out there not covered by Flanders to be enough to fill a whole other site.

We aren't just making a fuss about this because of our sense of artistic taste. There's nothing wrong with putting together a page composed of little more than plain old text, with no graphic decoration at all. Craigslist is an excellent example of this. No, the reason design is important is because for your content site to make money, you want:

1. ...Links to come to your site.
2. ...Visitors to be able to find what they came here for.
3. ...For them to be able to see the ads.
4. ...For them to feel comfortable clicking on the ads and visiting the advertised sites.

The Difference between 'White Hat SEO' and 'Black Hat SEO'

Now try this: search for a common high-volume phrase (I picked "college scholarships") and on the results page, click the link at the bottom to take you farther and farther back in the search results. We're looking for the real stinkers, the pages that ranked #800 or so. It won't be long before you find a site that goes something like:

"This page is all about college scholarships. You can find out everything you need to know about college scholarships. Our college scholarships resource is here to help those of you seeking information about college scholarships to find college

scholarships. There are many things to know about college scholarships. One thing is that many people are seeking information about college scholarships. Another thing is that pages like this are here to help you find out everything you need to know about college scholarships..."

...and on and on, filling a page with 600-800 of the most worthless words known to all humanity, with ads along the side. Hint: This doesn't work! Search engines have been around long enough now that everybody knows a gamed site when they see one. The search engine knows and blocks, bans, or cripples your site with a low page ranking. Even for that week between your putting the page up and Google canning it, any visitors you do happen to get will leave immediately, and probably complain to somebody about it, too.

And yet you still see hairy keyword formulas out there for "guaranteed 500,000 hits per day!" The same goes for link farming (having a whole bunch of sites linking to each other), "meta-tag voodoo" (putting a bunch of deceptive text into the page's meta tags to try to fool the search engines), and scams, schemes, formulas, methods, and dirty tricks of every kind. For all of this, you should remember that this is exactly the same as the people who go into Las Vegas thinking they have a system to cheat at the roulette tables: the casinos have seen every single trick before. The same is true with search engines.

All of these methods taken together are known as "Black Hat SEO", optimizing a page for search engines in a dishonest or deceitful manner. Opposed to this, there is "White Hat SEO", where we go about creating our site for people first, with a nod towards search engines on the side.

Here again, covering this area in detail is beyond the scope of this chapter. I'll summarize the key points for you, but in the meantime here's a site with good information:

Performancing

<http://performancing.com/node/3422>

This post is a good introduction to the field. Performancing is an established, credible expert site.

Unfortunately, there is so much misinformation in this field that I have to waste half a chapter debunking all the mythology out there before I can tell you what to do. So, let's get down to the business part:

Types of Content

There are five categories of content that you can create on your website:

1. Blogs
2. Articles
3. Visitor-driven content (bulletin boards, community blogs, etc.)
4. Salesletters (for supporting content to sell a product)

5. Ads

We will deal with salesletters in a later chapter covering selling a product.

Blogs

Do you want traffic? Then you want a blog! Blogs are your best friend. They are easy to maintain, come in prepackaged software that is easy to install and customize, and best of all, they use the magic of RSS to drive traffic to your site.

RSS stands for "really simple syndication". Most blog software is set up to use RSS automatically. The way this works is, every time you publish a new post to your blog, the RSS system will collect all the relevant data about the post and 'ping' the various blog indexing services out there. These services will provide automatic links around the Internet, and will also make links to your content available through newsreading software. Furthermore, the search engines automatically index your blog each time they pick up the 'ping' through the blog indexes.

This happens automatically! Just install the blog software, follow the defaults, and away you go! Your web host will usually provide some installed blog software for you already. The most popular blog software is usually Wordpress, Live Journal, or B2Evolution.

Anything goes in a blog post. It's kind of like a newspaper column or a journal. Blogs and niche focus go hand in hand. You can either handle your blog posting yourself (if you can send email, you can make a blog post!) or hire a professional blogger (cheapest work on the Internet!).



Here's a fast example I slapped together. Note that the current post is about the "Pirates of the Caribbean" ride at Disney. Note that even though I only mention Disney a few times in the context of the post, that was enough data for the Google adbot to display relevant ads to visiting Disney World. This is clue number-one: if the Google ads know what to display, your site has enough keywords for that topic to show up properly in search results as well.

Remember than nobody expects you to be William Shakespeare when it comes to a blog - that's what's so great about it! A simple paragraph or two per post will suffice. You can share interesting links, talk about a news story relevant to your topic, publish a handy list of tips of interest to your niche focus, and so on. The easiest content publishing known to man.

If you're stumped for blog content ideas, here's two places to find inspiration:

Stuff-a-Blog
<http://stuffablog.com>

A free online service where you enter a post topic and it provides you with links, images on Flickr, a map if a location is mentioned, recent news stories on the topic, icons, and much more. While I wouldn't make a whole site based on Stuff-a-Blog's content, this is good for padding out your posts for those odd days when the muses just aren't inspiring you.

Blogger Search

<http://search.blogger.com>

Blogger.com's own search system; enter your topic and get a slew of blogs talking about that subject currently. Browse for ideas.

Articles

Articles should typically be 500 to 800 words in length and be natural writing on the topic which visitors will actually read. As with blog posts, as long as the key focus is mentioned somewhere in the content a couple of times, that's enough for a relevant search hit. As opposed to a blog post, an article is a stable, static web page all in itself. Similar to a blog, you will want ads along the side or at the top. You should have a group of articles with an index page linking to all of them - about 20 articles on a topic will be enough to get the search engines to index you for that topic.

With articles, web surfers will expect a slightly more formal tone than with a blog. So, if you have some knowledge of the topic, you can write these yourself. Or you can hire a professional freelance writer. Finally, you can visit any one of several free article submission sites out there. A link I gave earlier for a different purpose:

Ezine Articles

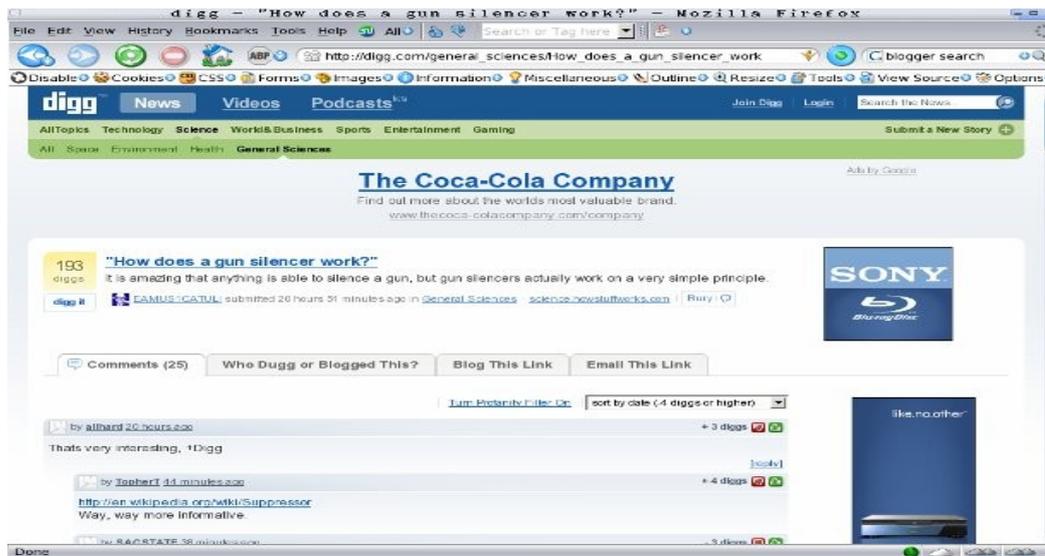
<http://www.ezinearticles.com>

How it works: articles are pre-written and stored here for you to use FREE! The only catch is, you have to include the link at the bottom of the article as well. That link will go to wherever the article's author wants it to go- usually to their own site. That might be not a good way to go. Say your niche interest is in wine - you publish a series of articles on wine written by somebody else with a wine site, linking to your competition! And you don't get paid for that referral, plus you've encouraged the visitor to leave without clicking on your ad. So use your judgment: if you're hurting for content and cash, you can post some free articles temporarily. But most webmasters hire a paid freelance writer for this purpose (and this is also cheap work - frequently around \$10. per article), or write their own.

Finally...

Visitor-Driven Content

It's better that I simply show you some examples:



I'm sure you're familiar with Digg and Slashdot. These are two hugely successful sites with much in common: They used to focus on niche "geek" topics but have expanded far beyond into general news sites. They are each little more than bulletin board systems: set up with rules for joining, submitting stories, and commenting, with other members empowered to moderate submissions and comments. They are examples of the "social web", where you can add other members to your friends list and thereafter anything that your friend submits gets bookmarked automatically for you as well.

Tons of other forms of this method exist, going back through sites like Yahoo and

Delphiforums all the way back to the earliest Usenet and BBS days. It is an entirely different game from straight web authoring. While you can hardly be a beginner and equal the success of Digg, most web hosts will offer basic message-board software, just like a blog system, that will be fairly easy to set up.

With niche marketing, some niche topics will be a good place to drop in a bulletin board and others won't. Remember that your target audience, because they occupy a niche, are passionate and devoted to the topic and will then have something to say about it. The pros and cons of visitor-driven content:

Pro

- Your visitors supply you with content for free!
- Once you get the site promoted, it can take off and become a popular center of the culture around your niche. Stimulating debate, helpful people answering each other's questions - it can be quite fun at times, as you engage your visitors in this shared experience.
- You may be able to charge membership in some scenarios.
- Once you set up a good system, it practically runs itself. You can have a peer-moderation system, for instance, so that the members can control undesirables.

Con

- Security risks - are you ready to protect yourself from identity theft, PHP injection attacks, attempts to hack into and take over your site?
- Spam - to allow the public to comment is to fight constantly with spammers. Boy oh boy, if you haven't had experience with this, it is a constant hassle! Not a week goes by that some idiot doesn't come along trying to exploit your web site for a free ride for themselves.
- Flamers and trolls - problem visitors who are just there to start a fight and cause trouble. About the 25th time you see two duelists cussing each other out with neither one of them ready to back down, you'll get pretty fed up.

Difficult to get it off the ground - nobody wants to be the first to join. Once you have a lot of members, more will pour in. With no visitors, you have to work to get them.

Ads

And now for the Ads...

Ads should not be too flashy. Especially avoid irritating ones, such as pop-ups, bouncing flashers, and most animated ones. Note each of the screen-shots I have provided above. This is where you want to put your ads, at the top or along the side. Note that in each case, the ads are either plain text or simple graphic banners. Not shoved too far into the visitor's face, but not impossible to find either.

Ads come in two flavors: content-focused or straight static ads. Static ads would be like a banner for a specific site or product. You pick it, you place it, and that's it. The content-focused ads are the much more popular choice, especially for blogs and bulletin boards. They crawl the page, analyze your content, and generate the ads that visitors are most likely to prefer, changing as the content of your page changes.

Google's AdSense is the number-one most popular choice, but don't let that stop you from investigating similar services provided by Yahoo, MSN, and Amazon.

The payment plan is up to the individual program, but frequently there will be a code of conduct to adhere to, which you had better follow if you want to keep doing business.

Whew! We had a lot of ground to cover in this chapter. Hopefully, you at least have a grasp of the basics of content and advertising as a web business model. This is a topic big enough to fill a book in itself (and there are many more out there), but we need to move on to an even better method for profiting from a niche market: your very own product!

Getting some extra help with your business



There are dozens of Freelancer sites out there. Some notable ones:

vWorker (formerly Rent-A-Coder)

<http://www.vworker.com>

The original and one of the best. Not just for coders (as in programmers) anymore, the site is a thriving resource to find writers, graphic artists, web designers, and any other creative worker whose field involves computer technology as a medium.

eLance

<http://www.elance.com>

One of the most comprehensive. eLance offers many of the same kinds of freelancers as Rent-A-Coder, plus a focus on consultants. Also a hugely popular and established site.

iFreeLance

<http://www.ifreelance.com>

A newer market, but one which has risen to some popularity. Slightly more upscale than the others, with an apparent focus on smaller jobs.

The way a freelance sites work

1. Sellers (providers) register with the site. Just like with any job, they submit a resume and usually have some kind of program through which they are certified.
2. Buyers (that's you) also sign up with the site and post projects on the job board. An auction begins, in which various freelance workers have the opportunity to view your job and post a bid. Usually, you will have to deposit money with the site, and will be able to adjust options such as the range of price you are willing to pay and the length of time the post should remain open for bids.
3. When you have selected the winning bidder, they begin work on your project. You will have the opportunity to view progress and interact with the seller until the project is finished.
4. The freelance site acts as an agent between you and the freelancers. Usually, they hold your money and their work until you approve the transaction. This is a "double-bind" transaction to ensure that neither party can be cheated. Since the reputation of the freelancing service is at stake, you will usually have a number of avenues to pursue should you think the freelancer isn't doing the job you wanted. You, the client, have the right to demand review by the site's arbitration board or to not approve the work, for instance.
5. If all goes well, you buy the work and get all rights to use it as you wish; the seller gets your money. The freelance site gets its money as well, of course, which may be via charging a commission from the buyer or seller, or charging a per-transaction flat fee, or a membership, or however they do it.

This is a very loose template, because different sites have different business models. Whatever you do, you should pick a reputable, established site to act as your agency. Check around for references. Search the Internet for testimonials. Check into a webmaster's bulletin board and ask around.

Tips to help you get what you want from freelancers

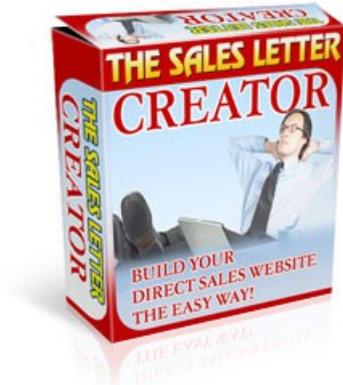
1. Post a CLEAR AND DETAILED description of what you want! This is the number-one reason jobs go wrong on a freelance site: A client will post a job with nothing for the description but "a picture of a kangaroo" and get offers to draw an encyclopedia kangaroo illustration, a 3D rendered kangaroo, a cartoon of a boxing kangaroo, etc. Meanwhile what they really wanted was a two-color vector graphics logo in a conservative style of a bounding kangaroo in profile for their business cards. Don't make people try to read your mind!
2. Choose somebody who really can do the job. A reputable, well-maintained site should guard against scam artists and have channels in place for you to

report wrong-doing and seek reimbursement for a bad transaction. Some signs that a bidder isn't all they're cracked up to be: little or poor communication, grandiose claims of being experts in *everything* (technology is huge; there is no walking, living being in this world who has a mastery of everything!), presenting themselves as a large company when it's just one person, or "spam bidding" where they bid on every single job on the board with a stock bid and the same message for every job. If you discover a shifty character, report them to the site immediately.

3. Ask for a sample or reference to previous work. The system on the site should be set up so you can correspond through the site to nail down the deal. You can ask for a sample of previous work, references from previous customers, a proposal outlining how they would do your work, or an example or rough draft (a sample chapter, a small watermarked version of a graphic, a demo of a software program, etc.). Just like the rules of business for any venture, you are the "boss" and you should conduct it just like a job interview.
4. Don't just award the bid and then disappear! Check back at least once per day to provide feedback and further guidance to the seller while they are working on your project. Questions and problems may come up, or they may send you a demo or rough draft and give you the opportunity to review their work and suggest improvements for the final revision which you will be buying.
5. Give a project deadline that takes into account all of the factors. If you need the job done in 48 hours flat, with no way around it, say so - but it will be difficult for the transaction to go well under such a tight deadline. Whenever possible, post the job as far in advance as you can and be generous enough with the deadline. A deadline padded with a few extra days at the end gives you time to review the work and ask for improvements. You have every right in the world to ask for revisions and corrections to the final product.
6. And one more small detail: when posting the job, be specific in what file format you want the work to be presented in. Computers being the pesky beasts they are, there are dozens of file formats on dozens of platforms. You can ask for writing work to be given to you in plain text, rich text, PDF, or Microsoft Word doc format. Specify whether images are .jpg, .gif, .png, or whatever it is you need. Specify that web pages be made portable for Internet Explorer, Firefox, Opera, and so on (actually, all web work should adhere to W3C standards so that they are usable in any web browser on any platform!). Indicate for software projects what platform you want the program to run on (Windows NY, Vista, Unix, Apple OS X, BSD, and so on.).
7. Millions of business entrepreneurs across the Internet do business this way every day, and in fact the freelance/outsourcing model is becoming the more popular way to do business in the 21st century. It allows all parties to work out of their homes. It exposes both buyers and sellers to the choices available in the global market place across international boundaries. Best of all, it is a direct trade of skill for money, without all that bogus bureaucracy getting in the way. For instance, you don't have to worry about the employee having a green card or providing their tax information, as the freelance site does this

for you. While you can ask for evidence of credentials such as diplomas and certificates, the real thing that counts is whether the person you're hiring can do the work, and the freelance market allows you to evaluate worker by their work and not their resume.

Chapter 5 – Sales Letters and Niche Markets



Many people are intimidated by the thought of creating a sales letter in order to get people to buy their products. By rethinking the purpose of your sales letter, you can create one that is interesting, tells visitors about the benefits of your product, the features of your product, and how they can order it quickly online.

The first impression - Headlines

Headlines are the most valuable tool you have when writing an effective sales letter. Headlines should not only direct visitors to the next section of your letter, but they should also create interest and suggest what the section will be about. While this may seem like a lot of work, you can reduce your stress by breaking the letter up into sections and finishing one at a time until you have a complete letter.

Creating headlines first can help you maintain your focus on each section. Your main headline should explain your product. For example, if you want to sell a product about starting an herb garden, which headline below do you think is better?

'Starting an Herb Garden in Your Home'

Or

'Five Ways to Start an Herb Garden Using Nothing More than an Old Flower Box, Some Dirt, and Seeds'

Which one grabs your attention and curiosity? Which one are you mostly likely to spend time reading? Don't worry about your headline being too long or too wordy. The more you can explain about the product, the more people will want to read it.

Subheadings should be just as bold, but they don't have to be as long. These headings should mention benefits of your product and continue to entice so the entire letter is read.

You may need to reword your headings a few times, but the time spent perfecting

them will pay off in increased sales.

Choosing a suitable tone for the Sales Letter

The tone of your sales letter should be conversational. If this is difficult for you, imagine talking to a close friend or relative. While your letter should be grammatically correct, it should also appeal to your target audience. By now, you should have a pretty good idea about who your niche group is and what they are looking for.

Presenting the Benefits vs. Features

It is this area that people have the most problems when writing a sales letter. Because most people buy products and services using emotional reasoning rather than logical reasoning, your sales letter should include all the benefits of your product that appeal to the emotional rather than the logical. Benefits can include:

- Ways your product can make a person's life more enjoyable or easier
- Reasons why your product can make it easier to pursue a hobby and why this hobby is beneficial in the lives of visitors
- Ways to improve a person's health, improve their financial situation, and other areas where people want to improve
- How your product can make a person happier

Make a list of benefits that your product can provide and talk about them in your sales letter. The more benefits you can use, the better your sales letter will be.

It is important not to make claims you can't back up, however. If you are selling a health product, for example, you will need to do your research and find benefits of specific ingredients, overall treatment, and include medical statistics and testimonials from experts in the medical field to back up your claims.

Even though you want your sales letter to include mostly benefits, you should include a few features, which invoke logical reasoning, so people will feel they are getting a full, honest explanation of what your product can do for them.

Features include:

- Background on product
- Physical description of product (eBook table of contents, list of topics, etc.)
- How the product has helped others

You can create a separate section that explains these features or you can sprinkle them in with your benefits.

Keep in mind that your sales letter should include all relevant information you have about your product. While this may seem like a lot of work, the research you have gathered when creating your product should be enough.

Adding Additional Content

In addition to writing about the benefits and features of your product, you can also include:

- Testimonials of satisfied customers
- Documented research
- Quotes from experts in the niche product you're promoting
- Free reports, newsletters, and other gifts you are offering
- Any other information you find when creating your product that you believe will increase sales

Any content that you add should only help to sell the product. Maintaining a positive outlook in your sales letter is the best way to inform people of your product.

How to Ordering Your Product

You should make it as easy as possible when it comes to ordering your product. Include a few links throughout your sales letter that visitors can click on when they are ready to place an order.

Make use of Fonts and Font Color

THIS IS YOUR HEADLINE HERE, AND IT'S PURPOSE IS TO GET SOME SERIOUS ATTENTION, GOT IT?

The font of your first headline should be the larger than the rest of the text. You can use different colors for your headlines, underline, or bold them. Subheadings should be a little larger than the rest of the text, but not larger than the main heading.

Don't use too much color, however. Choosing the wrong colors is difficult to read and could cause readers to not take you seriously. Your goal is to create a professional sales letter that persuades people to buy your product. Create colored links to ordering pages to grab the attention of visitors.

What it means in the end

While sales letters are used to encourage people to buy goods and services, they should also serve to inform, entertain, and encourage visitors to learn more. Adding humor, fun facts, and other information can only make your sales letter more effective. Don't be afraid to show your personality in your letter. While you want to remain professional, you also want to connect with people so they will build trust and become more interested in your product.

Chapter 6 – Your Product is Ready, now go and SELL IT!



By this point, you should have a pretty good idea about how to find niche markets. Your next step will be to learn how to market a niche product, promote your website, and attract people to that site so they can learn more about your product. There are several ways to do this including online marketing using Pay-per-click advertising(PPC), keyword optimization, and other methods that allow you to speak directly to your niche market and will cost you less in advertising costs.

When selling products online, you need to be aware of the types of marketing opportunities available so you can make the right decisions and make the most profit. Because people have different preferences when it comes to online marketing, once you've completed a few niche marketing projects and have made use one or more of the following online marketing methods, you will be able to find the formula that works the best for you.

Online marketing methods that will be discussed in this chapter include:

- Pay-per-click Advertising (PPC)
- Search Engine Optimization (SEO)
- Opt-in Mailing Lists
- Webmasters
- Forums, Blogs, and other Community Message Boards

These methods have been very successful for most Internet business owners and are acceptable ways to attract attention to a website. As the Internet continues to grow,

being noticed by target audiences becomes more difficult, so it will be up to you to create a marketing plan that works for each niche market you target.

PAY-PER-CLICK ADVERTISING (PPC)

Of all the online marketing methods listed above, this one is the most expensive, but also the most successful if you are able to advertise on search engine result pages that contain keywords relevant to your niche.

You have probably seen PPC ads when conducting online searches. These ads appear on search engine result pages at the top and to the right of the page. In order to place an ad on these pages, you will have to bid on keywords that you believe those looking for your product are most likely to use. Since there is limited space on these pages, only those with the highest bid will be able to place an ad.

Depending on the number of people who want to place an ad using specific keywords, you may have to bid high in order to get a spot. Bids typically range from thirty cents a click to a dollar or more. This means that each time a person clicks on your ad, you will have to pay the amount per click that you bid. If on a budget, this can be a tedious task because while you have to be competitive, especially if the keyword is a popular one, you need to be able to estimate how many people will click on the ad each month based on the keyword's popularity.

This is a tough marketing gamble to take if you are new to Internet marketing. While PPC can be very successful, there are other ways to advertise online that will generate interest in your product, especially if it is one of the only ones that caters to the niche.

If you want to learn more about PPC advertising, visit [Google AdSense](#) to learn more about the bidding process, how to track your bids, and how to choose keywords wisely.

SEARCH ENGINE OPTIMIZATION (SEO)

Another way to use keywords that pertain to your niche is to include them in your sales letter and other web copy. As mentioned in the last chapter, web spiders use keywords and other items when determining web rank. If you are able to choose the correct keywords, then your website will be ranked higher than others who use the same or similar keywords.

Depending on the size of your website, you should choose a few keywords and an overall keyword density of 2%-5%. While you don't want to saturate your copy with keywords, including them will increase your chances for a higher ranking. Determining the number of times a keyword should be used is called 'keyword

density'. Some of the free tools available online that can analyze keyword density in your web copy include:

- www.keyworddensity.com
- <http://www.seochat.com/seo-tools/keyword-density/>

If you are unsure about which keywords to use, your notes from the research you conducted should be enough to help you choose words that describe the niche. Use Google tools to find out which keywords are the most popular for the niche topic and then use those words in your sales letter.

You should also include keywords in headings, sub headings, captions in any graphic images you use, and in Meta tags, which are located in the computer code used to create your website.

OPT-IN MAILING LISTS

Opt-in mailing lists are a useful tool when it comes to selling products online. If you are planning to sell several products to one niche, or the niche you have chosen has several closely related niches, then you may want to include an opt-in email box that those who visit your site can sign-up to receive updates on when new products will be available.

One of the easiest sales you can make is to a repeat customer. If they liked the previous product they purchased from you, they will most likely return and buy the next product you have to offer as well. After collecting email addresses for your list, all you have to do is send a quick email to those on your list and sit back and watch your sales increase.

Since you probably won't have an opt-in list for your first product, you can buy lists from other online marketers, list services, and webmasters who cater to your niche. The number of email addresses on these lists varies, but a typical list may contain two or three hundred addresses or less. Don't buy lists that claim to have thousands of email addresses on them, as these may be from spammers and you don't want to be associated with that element when trying to run a legitimate business.

WEBMASTERS

If the niche you have chosen is a popular one, chances are there may be a few websites that have been created to offer articles, updates, and other information. Contacting the webmasters of these sites and letting them know that you have a product to sell that pertains to the niche is a great way to utilize word of mouth advertising.

Since webmasters control the information posted on the website, they may post a link to your website, a short introduction of your product, or they may write a review of the product if you allow them to have a copy. Getting to know the webmasters of the sites that cater to your niche is a great way to increase sales and introduce your products to those within the niche.

In addition to informational websites, you should also find online magazines, newsletters, and other publications that allow you to buy ad space or feature products that cater to the niche for free. Depending on the size of the niche, those who publish newsletters within it are usually in need of content and will be very happy to talk to you about your product and help you promote it.

FORUMS, BLOGS, AND COMMUNITY MESSAGE BOARDS

When targeting a niche, going directly to the source can help attract people to your website instantly. During your initial research, you may have come across community forums, blogs, and message boards for those interested in the niche. These sites are used for people to share in the same interests, swap information, and alert others when new information becomes available. By participating in forums and blogs, you can speak directly to your target audience, earn their trust, and persuade them to visit your site.

How you approach online message boards is important because if you post comments that are only about increasing the exposure of your product, your posts may be removed by message board moderators, or you will gain a reputation of being just another salesperson wasting space.

When you first visit a message board, take a look at some of the comments to get a feel of what people are interested in knowing about. If there are specific questions listed, use them to help post they right type of comment. Your response should address specific questions asked or it can be a general comment about the niche. Include your URL, but don't be pushy or make any false claims. A soft sell here works best.

Since you had to create a product that is helpful to the niche, you should have a lot of knowledge to share. By posting comments that offer solutions, help, and information, those who visit the message boards are more likely to click on your like and check out the product.

By earning the trust of those within the niche, you will begin to see an increase in sales.

THE REALITY OF ONLINE SALES

You don't have to be a marketing or a computer genius to sell informational products online. Because you already have a niche to sell to, you do not have to create an intricate marketing campaign. By making use of the marketing options mentioned above, you can alert those within the niche easily.

Even if you decide to pursue a PPC advertising campaign, you won't have to spend as much money as other Internet marketers who are trying to reach many audiences at once.

In order to be successful in online sales, you need to present your product in a professional way on your website, target your audience, who in this case, are those interested in the niche you are pursuing with a marketing campaign that draws them to the website. Making the ordering process as easy as possible will allow you to make quick sales and increase your profits.

After completing your first niche project, you will begin to see just how easy it is to sell products online to those who need them.

Chapter 7 – Boost your traffic and potential clients



Yet another topic that could fill a book on its own. I don't brag about much, but one thing I think I could do is get 5,000 hits per day to a blank page. It's because computers and I have kind of grown up together. I've gotten to see them evolve and take notes. And I do so totally legit, with no spam or scams. And I don't pay anybody. So let's get started with my process for traffic success tailored for the niche interest site:

Have you submitted your website?

Don't waste time with a paid search submission service or with tracking down every tiny little niche search page. You'll go crazy that way. Search engines share their results with each other, anyway. Here's the Big Five:

Google

<http://www.google.com/addurl/?continue=/addurl>

Yahoo

<http://search.yahoo.com/info/submit.html>

MSN

<http://submitit.bcentral.com/msnsubmit.htm>

DMOZ

<http://dmoz.org/add.html>

Alexa

http://www.alexa.com/site/help/webmasters#crawl_site

Go to each one, submit your URL, pick a category for it in the directory, whatever you have to do. Each of these engines either has ten other searches that use it, or in the case of DMOZ, that's a public open directory which is crawled by such services as AOL. Search engine crawlers find stuff on the web just like you do, by following links. Remember that you don't necessarily have to submit to every site on earth - once

one spider can find it, the others will follow. After all, it's their job to find stuff, that's how they stay in business. They shouldn't have to be hit on the nose with your URL. They should only require one link from anywhere, and be all over you like ants on a donut.

Are you using your sig?

"Sig" stands for "signature". Almost everywhere on the Internet where you post anything, be it an email, a discussion group, a comment on a board, a blog, etc. will allow you to append a signature. From now on, you will have your site's link in your signature. Suddenly, you will also become unusually sociable! You will be more likely to join places and post feedback, offer your two cents on discussion boards, agree with blog posts.

Be sure you and your site are seen in public places. Is there a story on Digg today that's getting all the hits? Then you go there too, and add your input in the comments. Note: DO NOT SPAM! But have something relevant to say for a sentence or two, and incidentally your site's link just happens to be included on the message.

Why not try publish link-baits?

Even if you have absolutely no interest in publishing content, you will need *some* copy on your page or when the search engines get to where you are, they will have nothing to index anyway! So you have no choice; you must have content. I have already made a case for blogs earlier, but I'll say it one more time: having a website in the 21st century without a blog is like nailing the door of your store closed and hanging a sign on it that says "STAY AWAY!!!" Search engines love blogs. People love blogs. Blogs have devoured the web by now, anyway. So get a blog on your own site.

What is link-bait? A delicious little morsel of blog content that is guaranteed to pull in hits. Even if you normally do all of your site content itself, you might want to especially pay one select writer for a small job. Explain specifically that you need 5 posts of about 200 words each of link-bait for a blog. And be sure to explain your site's focus and provide a link so they can go there and see what you've got.

Get your link-bait and post it one at a time. The best time to post link-bait (for the US anyway) is on a Friday or Saturday morning, at about 4AM so your RSS feed will dribble it in right when either (a) week-day cubicle-dwellers are bored and surfing at work, or (b) weekend net junkies will start surfing their weekend away. Now, have a membership to big name social sites such as Digg, Netscape, and Reddit. Go ahead and post your own link-bait to these sites to get the ball rolling. They probably won't get ranked very high unless you also happen to be a top submitter, but the few hits may catch on. All you need is one person who *is* a top submitter to think it's cool. That person - for free! - may post a link to another site that they frequent.

Some examples of link-bait, if you write it yourself:

1. HUMOR! Number one, the big enchilada, is anything funny. People gobble it up. A satire piece, a funny story that happened to you, a top-ten list like on David Letterman, light, funny stuff. A little goes a long, long way.
2. Any list. Net readers are skimmers. Most of your web audience isn't ever in the mood to read Einstein's theory of relativity - give them some fun lists to browse. Include the number of list items in the title.
3. Controversy. Be deliberately provocative. Don't be afraid to get people a little ticked at you; pick a subject that's getting a lot of ink this week and formulate an opinion - a reasonable one! - that goes contrary to the prevailing opinion. Your in-response comments will show about 75% people saying you're wrong with a feeble 25% saying "I thought the same thing, but was scared to say so. Thank you for saying it for me." Visitors will argue with each other. But through it all, there are your links! More traffic coming in. Be sure the controversial nature of your post is evident from the title. There is no such thing as bad publicity!
4. A tutorial. People love anything that teaches them something. A how-to, a guide, a step-by-step walk-through. Pick a difficult problem that pops up in searches a lot and go right for it. Even if it seems easy to you! Everybody in the world is good at one thing, and for everything that you're good at, there are one hundred people on this Earth who never could figure it out.

Are you using blog directories?

Having a blog gives you a free pass to engage in behavior that you'd never get away with a regular web page. Find blog directories and indexes and submit your blog there. Pay attention to category.

Are you using "Dummy" pages?

Some of you reading this might be wondering, why do I keep stressing a blog on your own site? Why not just use Blogger? Because that's the "dummy page" category: any free web host where you can post a "home page" of content for free. So, yes, start your blog on Blogger on the side. Give it five posts and links to "more" which just happens to be on your own website. Dummy pages and freebie sites are for leading people into your site, and should never be your main site in itself. Now that we've scratched your Blogger itch, go here as well and be sure everything you do links to your site:

- MySpace - throw up a home page.
- YahooGroups - throw up a discussion group. You can name it the "official board" for your site.
- GEOCities, Angelfire, and Tripod - throw up a page with one of your best link-bait posts copied there, and the link to your site is "find more like this".
- Your ISP or web portal. Be it AOL, MSN, Yahoo, etc. That's right, your home page becomes another dummy page. Even if you don't get your Internet access through them, you can still join free.
- Your profile - anything that you can join will give you some profile space. Fill

- it. And join a lot of places.
- Slashdot - join here and fill in your "journal", plus put your link in your sig and post a few interesting comments to topics every now and then.

Why not Google for a keyword in your niche plus the phrase "submit your site" or "submit your URL"

And anyplace you find, go ahead and fill it in.

Have you tried to post search-bait in your blog?

Here's an example of a search-bait scenario: you blogged about Renaissance Faires on your history-interest site. A week later, you notice searches coming in where the keywords were "good costumes for Ren Faires", "how to make a Ren Faire costume", "should I be a wizard or a warlock at the Ren Faire?" Even though you wrote nothing about costumes, people are finding you for the Ren Fair keyword. So post a new blog about costumes, treating these frustrated searchers as if they were asking you questions.

Also check the search engine traffic-monitors we discussed earlier in this book. Pounce on any interest that flares up in your specialized field, and give people something to find when they type it in next time.

Be patient – the three month rule

Actually, keep doing all of the above in your spare time for three months. While doing so, be a real geek about checking your site's traffic report. Note where the hits come from, which bots crawl you, how long visitors stay when they come to your site, and what search terms people use to find your site. Three months is sometimes how long it takes for everybody to crawl your site, accept your submitted URL, approve the moderated comment you made, and so on.

If your site is any kind of good, and you add some fresh content to it, you should be getting at least decent traffic. Now after this, the rest of the steps are optional:

If all else fails...

Now, spamming is rotten; don't do it. Don't email spam, don't comment spam, don't fake-referrer spam. Don't be a jerk, because you will be caught and get into trouble.

But... BUT... here are some slightly dirty tricks you can get away with if you only do them five times or less. Do them a lot, and you'll get caught and ruin it for everybody, including yourself.

Create some bogus identities. One hundred of them is stupid; you'll get caught. But three or four... hey, a perfectly legitimate user may have different log-in names. Make a few "extra" log-ins, and submit your site to some of the social websites, or

better yet vote up the submission you made under a different name. The concept is called a "sock-puppet", because you're making a dummy friend for yourself.

Become a Stumbler. Download Firefox, install the Stumble Upon extension, start a Stumble account, and vote for your site with a glowing review. Vote up a few other sites to make it appear random. Now forget about that ID. Uninstall Stumble and Firefox. Reinstall and create a new ID, possibly under a different email address. Get the idea? There's no harm in doing this three or four times, but that's it!

And you just might find an opportunity to work your site into the conversation in a chat room or two. Really, there's no harm in dropping the name of your site here and there. Don't spam, you'll be blocked, banned, and maybe get in trouble with your ISP. But one night, oops, maybe you got a little tipsy and posted a link in an AOL chat room or ten...

These are shady practices; they're also not very productive. But every now and then, at the right place and time, they can't hurt just once. If you skip these, it won't make much difference. And entirely excusable when you're just starting out. But if you can't get traffic without making a long-standing public nuisance of yourself, you probably are in the wrong line of work being a webmaster.

And it's not like Big Corporations don't drown the web in spam every single day. I hate to break this to you, but "astroturfer" is now a job description at companies like Microsoft and Adobe. The term "astroturfer" comes from the idea of creating a "fake grassroots" movement. People are hired to appear as impartial web citizens, but actually everything they say and do is done with a slant towards creating good word-of-mouth for their company, or modding down or flaming those who had something negative to say about their company or praising of the competition. Political campaigns are also famous for doing this.

Let's just say I didn't tell you this part, OK?

After all this, beyond these free tips, lies the realm of getting links through the direct involvement of others. That's either of link exchange or paid links or ads! We'll talk about both adding traffic and revenue streams to your existing web business in our final chapter, under the general category of "growth".

Chapter 8 – The Golden Rules of Niche Marketing



Always keep yourself up to date!

Technology in the 21st century is a blur of activity. A new trend will pop up on Monday, get blogged to death by Tuesday, have ten businesses adopting it by Wednesday, attract venture capital by Thursday, and be the subject of three podcasts and a YouTube mashup by Friday. Think about the technology we take for granted today, and how much was existing only five years ago.

Here are some news resources. You should make a habit of bookmarking them and scanning them at least once a day, as you would your morning paper over your first cup of coffee. These newsfeed sites will help you keep a finger on the pulse of the next big thing:

PopURLs

<http://popurls.com>

Wide area of general news.

Daily Rotation

<http://www.dailyrotation.com>

Huge assortment of news with technology focus.

Original Signal

<http://www.originalsignal.com>

News focused on the "latest thing" in the Internet

Linux News

<http://www.linuxhomepage.com>

Why should you care about Linux? Because it runs the Internet! Yes, Microsoft might own the home computer and office desktop, but on the server the penguin is king. Understanding Linux (and other Unix-clones like BSD and Solaris) will help you understand the Internet - most particularly how search engines work. The number-one web server, Apache, is native to Linux. Google runs on Linux - need I say more?

If you want to be an entrepreneur, then start acting like one

An entrepreneur is "is a person who undertakes and operates a new enterprise or venture", and it "applies to someone who establishes a new entity to offer a new or existing product or service into a new or existing market." You're in business for yourself, so be sure that if you're going to be your own boss, you are the best boss you can be. The list of visionary entrepreneurs grows and shrinks over time, but here, currently, is the "A-list" of sites offering the best advice to web start-ups and web masters:

Paul Graham

<http://www.paulgraham.com/articles.html>

Successful web start-up founder, now a web guru.

Creating Passionate Users

http://headrush.typepad.com/creating_passionate_users

Passionate users and niche markets; almost by definition, one is based on the other.

CopyBlogger

<http://www.copyblogger.com>

This guy's site is a sensation! Follow his examples, do what he says, and get traffic.

Promote, promote and then promote your site

Your first thought on waking in the morning should always be "What can I do today to promote my site?" A site that's left to rot tends to show it: its page design falls out of style, its traffic slows down, it drops off the radar. If your site doesn't keep growing, you have no-one to blame but yourself if your revenue doesn't grow. Everything I covered in the last chapter about bringing in traffic for free is just a starting point. That was the very least you could do. But I mentioned another way to get traffic is through direct deals with other web entities, and now here they are:

Affiliate Marketing

The number-one marketing method on the web. Google's AdSense, Amazon's ads, and a host of other programs like Yahoo's YPN and ClicksAdsDirect are all examples. Running ads to generate revenue I've already mentioned; but if you're offering a paid product, putting out your own ad through one of these programs may be helpful. In most cases, it's pretty cheap to set up, and you'll see the results come in.

PayPerPost

<http://payperpost.com>

This is a currently popular way of advertising. In the PayPer Post program, you put out an offer of payment in exchange for getting mentioned on a blog! Now, you might wonder why a blogger would be interested in turning their blog into an advertising farm, but in fact because this works on a per-post basis, a blogger can

take one-time advantage of the opportunity and still do business as usual the rest of the time. Especially this is useful in the niche market! Say your niche is wine; if you're selling an eBook on home wine brewing and I blog about wine, I was probably going to mention your book to my readers anyway. I might as well get paid for that traffic that I'm sending you!

Link Exchange Programs

This is kind of "iffy". Google and other search engines take a dim view of link exchanging, and if you have a ton of exchange-program links your site may get red-flagged! We're talking about over one hundred links on a page, here. But a few, select ones may be the ticket. Last chapter, I talked about simply searching for "submit your URL" and other phrases. More often than not, these will be link exchange offers; you submit your link, take their link and post it on your site, they come and check to make sure you're holding up your end of the deal and then post your link on their site.

Paid Freelancer Site Promotion

I've certainly seen it done. Post a job on a freelance board that has a category for site promotion. For example, I see jobs offering a modest sum for anyone who can generate 100 quality links to the buyer's site in a given time frame. While the freelancer who accepts this offer may only use the same methods I've already detailed here, you might find it advantageous to hire another hand to help out, doing the "dirty work" of promoting your site for you! Anybody with a clue on how to find their way around the Internet is qualified to do as much, so it requires no special knowledge. Operators in European countries with hard-to-pronounce names are standing by!

Offer advertising opportunities on your site

Well, you have the web space, you might as well devote a page to offering ad deals yourself! Make up or pay someone else to design some attractive banner ads. Post them on the page, along with a statement of how much you are willing to pay webmasters to display them. Include a special email address devoted exclusively to discussing deals of this nature. You will want to pick and choose from the offers you get; use Netcraft to verify a site's stats and check up on search engines and other analysis tools to make sure that the site gets the kind of traffic that will be worth your money to advertise on. Check out a legal resource for drawing up a contract stating the terms of the deal. Specify the method of determining payment - either how much time the ad is up, how many clicks you'll pay for, how many viewers you'll need, etc., and nail down the exact payment for each term.

Be a lifetime learner

Learn all the time; that's the only way to stay current. I've met dozens of Internet laborers who started out with a minor college degree and a website, fully up-to-speed on the latest methods and practices of web platforms. They then proceeded to let themselves go to pot, and ten years later they're hopelessly outdated

dinosaurs. There are still web masters out there who swear by Perl scripting, designing in Microsoft Front Page Express, having a metric ton of animated .gif images bogging their server down, and using nothing but HTML tables to format their site! These websites exist today as crawling horrors of the Internet. Do yourself a huge favor and keep your site updated, and keep current with modern web industry methods. Letting your site go five years without updating your practices is the equivalent of running around in bell-bottom pants, tie-dye shirts, and a funky afro.

Once upon a time all I needed to know was basic HTML and a smidgen of Javascript. Then I had to pick up Perl and SQL databases. Then I took a great leap and got familiar with CSS and PHP, and beefed up my web knowledge with Apache and MySQL. But even now, I'm not ahead of the race; I've been cramming on the AJAX platform, which is becoming more standard, and I'm designing now with an eye towards embedded browsers running on cell phones and portable game consoles. Once upon a time I only concerned myself with Internet Explorer and Netscape Navigator; these days I have to check my page on Internet Explorer 7, Firefox, Safari, Opera, Epiphany, Mozilla, Flock, Konqueror, Dillo, and a host of others.

Times change, and we have to change with them. I love all the latest and greatest techie stuff that I have to play with today, but I'm realistic enough not to fall in love with it; the cool technologies I work with today will be aging in five years and dead in ten. I accept that, and am always prepared to adopt the next change.

Don't be afraid to venture into new territories

Adding at least a few new revenue streams per year will help you stay profitable. Especially true in a niche market, where "market saturation" is a constant threat. When everybody who wants one of your products has one, the market is saturated, and the only way to make any more revenue is to improve on your current product, or add a new product to your line.

So, for the product-focused revenue stream, this will mean adding a new item regularly. For the content/ad-focused site, this will mean constantly adding new content.

This is pretty basic marketing stuff, after all. You only need to look at the big players such as Google, Yahoo, Microsoft, and Sun to see that a year doesn't go by without their offering a batch of new products and services. Google is a research playground who is constantly innovating. Yahoo is an ever-expanding portal which updates their services to keep their user base coming back. Microsoft aggressively chases every new market, and while they eat some mud because they never innovate and only copy, they have such deep pockets that they can usually force their way into a market, given the time.

Sun Microsystems - remember them? Well, they were once stuck in 1995 with their

Sparc workstation platform and a few software products, plus the Java language shackled in so much licensing that it was almost smothered. Sun has been declared dead countless times, but in the 21st century, they have been reborn. Now they have revamped Java and licensed it as open source, ported their Solaris platform to the Intel/AMD/IBM platform, contributed to the Open Office suite as a serious contender to Microsoft Office, and made darned sure that Apache runs on Solaris. As a result, they've been cited recently as a serious contender to steal both the server from Linux and the desktop from Microsoft! Amongst computer professionals, the mention of Sun today provokes excited debate, where it should have been dismissed as a dinosaur from ages past. Their profits have been doubling each quarter. Nobody is saying Sun is dead today!

Promoting Your Niche Websites

Promotion is one of the most important aspects of marketing an Internet website. It is through promotion that websites reach the targeted audience. Promoting a website can be done in a number of ways. One of the most popular methods for promoting a website is through optimizing the website to achieve high search engine rankings. Another form of promoting a website is by interspersing website links with insightful comments on industry forums. Inbound links are yet another form of niche website promotion. This form of self promotion has the added benefit of contributing to one of the other forms of promotion by resulting in higher search engine rankings. This section of this ebook will examine these three methods of promoting a niche website.

Using High Search Engine Rankings to Promote a Niche Website

Optimizing a niche website for particular keywords can be one method of promoting the website. Careful optimization can result in high search engine rankings which act as a form of free publicity. Internet users rely on search engines to provide them with the most relevant content for the search terms they use. Therefore, if your website ranks well in search engines your traffic will likely increase.

Search engine optimization (SEO) is serious business which is often best left to the professionals. Many savvy Internet marketers realize the importance of search engine rankings and are willing to invest in having their websites professionally optimized. Although this is an added expense it is worthwhile especially when you are fighting for rankings and an audience in a very competitive niche.

Promoting Websites through Industry Forums

Forums or message boards are online communities where like minded individuals or those who share a common interest come together to discuss the issues related to their common interest. Participation in these forums is one way website owners can promote their own niche websites. The key to promoting a website while participating in an online forum is to include a link to your niche website in your signature. The other part of the equation is contributing worthwhile information in

your posts to give other users a reason to want to click on your links.

Care should be taken to avoid spamming these message boards with your link. Examples would include posting often without adding anything relevant to the conversation and including your link. Other forms of spam may include posting your link in a manner which is perceived as inappropriate by other users. An example of this type of use would be posting your link in response to a question when visiting your website would not assist the user in finding an answer to his question.

Using Inbound Links to Promote Niche Websites

Inbound links are another method of promoting a niche website. An inbound link is a link from one website which directs visitors to another website. Inbound links can be either reciprocal or non-reciprocal in nature. A reciprocal inbound link is one where one website posts a link to another website and in return the other website posts a link back to the first website. Both types of links are looked on favorably by search engines although non-reciprocal links are often given a slight advantage.

These inbound links can be an effective component of a strategy to promote a niche website. Visitors to websites who provide a link to your website are given the opportunity to enter your website. We have already discussed how search engine rankings can be part of website promotion but inbound links essentially rely on the popularity and high search engine rankings of other websites to promote their own niche website.

In negotiating deals for inbound links, website owners should look for other websites which complement their own website and have a similar audience. For example a website selling novelty basketballs might look for websites which sell basketball hoops. Caution should also be used to avoid link farms which do not offer significantly promotional value to a niche website. A link farm is a website which offers nothing more than a list of links to other websites. While these types of links may not be harmful to a website they are also not likely to be beneficial either.

Chapter 10 – Planning for your next project



All good things must come to an end as they say, even in the niche marketing business. While you do not want a niche to dry up and become unprofitable, it will eventually and you will have to move on to the next project. If you are planning for the future, you've already moved on after launching your product. But if you haven't gotten that far just yet, in this chapter, you will learn some of the warning signs that can tell you when it's time to move on to the next project.

These warning signs include:

Noticeable decrease in sales

- Keywords for niche are not as popular as they were before
- Trend is decreasing
- Increased competition
- Advertisers show less interest
- Reduction in forum and blog activity

Keep in mind that even though the niche will not be as profitable, it can still bring in some money which is why you should maintain the website until you see little or no profits. Moving on to another project while receiving money from another is how many in this business build wealth and maintain a steady income.

Many times, most or all of these warning signs will be present. And while the decision will be up to you as to when you should discontinue selling your product, keeping an eye on the niche is important because you don't want to lose money by maintaining a site that no one is visiting anymore.

Sales decline is becoming a trend

Because you can track your sales using tools provided by a web host, you can determine when sales are the highest, lowest, and where the majority of the people who buy the product are coming from. These tools can also be used to gauge when sales begin to decrease as well.

Depending on the niche, you may be making sales several months from when you first introduced the product or sales could decrease within the first couple of weeks. As long as people continue to buy the product, however, a profit will be made. In the meantime, you should concentrate on finding a new niche.

Tracking your sales week by week is a way to determine when sales finally decrease so much that it's not worth maintaining the website. At this time, you should decide whether it is worth paying monthly website maintenance fees or if you should abandon the niche altogether. Tracking your sales for two weeks or more can give you a good idea of how much sales have decreased and if this is a trend that will continue.

Popularity in Keyword is dropping

Another way to tell if people have lost interest in the niche and your product is by researching keywords pertaining to the niche to see if they are still being used as much as they had been when you first launched the product.

If popular keywords have dipped below 10,000 searches a month, then interest in the niche has decreased too much for you to make any more profits. If keywords are still holding strong and sales are coming in, then you should keep selling the product a little longer.

Sometimes keywords for the niche change. This is for several reasons including the introduction of sub niches. Use tools provided by Google to see if there are any new keywords you should be aware of. Track these keywords to see what the usage numbers look like. Make your determination based on how sales are going and how the popular the niche seems to be. Just because the niche isn't receiving new interest, those who are involved in the niche may be enough to keep it going. They may also be sending customers your way, which is why you should track where sales are coming from using the tools provided by the web host.

Going against the Trend

All niches are usually trend-based, meaning they are popular for a short time and then those interested move on to the next niche. When researching the niche, you may have found online magazines, newsletters, and other materials written about the niche. Check to see if these online publications are still available and if they are still catering to the niche. If not, then the trend may be fading.

Check bookstores and other places to see if any new materials have been written lately. Trends that are on the decline receive less attention than they once did, so if you have difficulty finding the niche only a few weeks after you found plenty of materials about it, then you know the niche is on the decline.

More competitors

If you notice an increase in competition, you may want to start looking for a new niche. Even if the niche is still popular, increased competition will cut into your profits. While you don't have to shut down your site just yet, be prepared for a decrease in sales. It may be subtle at first, but it will become more noticeable over time.

Increased competition can also be a sign that the niche is on its way out. Those who want to come into the niche quickly and make a profit must know this also, or they wouldn't be wasting their time if the niche was already saturated. A saturated niche is not profitable for anyone for long, so be prepared to leave the niche and move on to the next one.

Decrease in advertising interests

Advertisers are in business to make money and they will follow the trends until they are no longer popular. Then they will turn their sights elsewhere. If you notice that the number of ads in magazines, trade papers, and other sources you used to find the niche has decreased or stayed the same, then the niche is probably on its way out.

By acknowledging these warning signs, you can predict how long a niche will remain profitable. Remember that decreased sales seldom have anything to do with your marketing campaign or product. This is just how the niche operates. Chances are if you profit from a product, then it was beneficial to many people. This means that by providing information that people were looking for, you have fulfilled your end of the bargain and have the profits to show for it.

Fall in forum and blog activities

A reduction in the number of comments found on forums and blogs that cater to the niche is another sign that people are losing interest in it. Pay attention to the number of new comments, repeat users, and the creation of new forums and blogs. If you are seeing fewer forums and blogs being created, then interest in the niche is slowing down.

Reduced comments and postings can occur for several reasons. If there is more than one product available, people may have found all the information they have been

searching for a no longer rely on the forums for tips and advice. Or there are fewer people who want information about the niche simply because they are not interested in it. Another reason could be that there are too many blogs and forums available, so those interested in the niche are too spread out for you to get a good read on the situation.

If you are curious about the interest level for the niche, you should contact webmasters and forum moderators. They may be able to give you additional information about the number of people who visit their sites and tell you if people are losing interest in the niche.

Preparing yourself for change/challenge

Depending on how you feel about the research process, you may want to jump right in and begin a new niche marketing project. While this may feel like starting all over again, remember the profits you made from all of your hard work. This should be enough to keep you going. Many people find that they really enjoy learning about new ideas, concepts, hobbies, and trends that are out there. And because you will be filling a need, you can feel good about helping another person by giving them access to the information you have compiled.

When preparing to find a new niche, revisit past chapters of this book for inspiration, tips, and practical advice so you can have the same success you did the first time around.

Review – What are you waiting for?

Now that you have a better understanding of how niche marketing works, you should be ready to begin your first niche marketing project. Armed with the tools in this book, you have the advantage many in this business never had. Because research is the most important step in the process, make sure you make it a priority. You will be ahead of many others who skimp on research and settle on niches that may be on their way out instead of up and coming.

Being aware of what is going on around you can help greatly in choosing the next profitable niche. Read newspapers, listen to the radio, and watch television to see which shape the latest trends will take. Make notes of possible niche topics and research them using the tools you have learned in this book.

Because there are so many niche possibilities out there, you will always be able to make a profit on one way or another. Most of all, have fun! You have the chance to be your own boss, keep your own schedule, and earn as much as you want. You can't say that about many jobs these days, so take pride in the fact that you are pursuing your dreams and building a future - one niche market at a time!