Why Some People
Fail At Internet
Marketing

Why Failure Sometimes Happens

Getting into Internet marketing is like going into business for yourself. What most people fail to realize is that the same types of obstacles and challenges that people have when they go into business offline are the same obstacles and challenges they might face online, except in a different format. If you have difficulty selling items in a regular brick-and-mortar store, don't think that slapping a website up on the World Wide Web is going to transform you into an instant super sales person. It won't. Instead, seek to become a better business person all around, taking your cue from basic business practices, and then transferring those skills online to be successful.

YOUR ATTITUDE IS HALF THE BATTLE

Business is a competition, just like sports. You don't go out to the playing field assuming that your team will lose. You don't let a few setbacks sour you on the entire game. You give it your all until the umpire blows the whistle and the game is over. Then, there is time for regret, but until then, the game can always be turned around at the last minute.

Having a positive attitude when you go into Internet marketing is essential, just like it is when you are competing in sports. If you think you will fail, you will. There is no better self-fulfilling prophecy than someone who half-heartedly goes into business only to make excuses for why the business failed. It didn't fail after they started doing it. It failed the minute that they didn't believe in themselves. If you want the stamina and persistence to get into Internet marketing and to be successful, you have to understand that there will be setbacks, but you have to be able to use everything as a learning experience to finally cross that finish line as a winner.

UNDERSTAND YOUR STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

Every business is a reflection of the owner who creates it, and Internet marketing is no different. If your strength is in structuring a product lineup and not in sales, then you have to get people on your team who can cover the weakness, while you cover the strength. Sit down right now and carefully assess any businesses you've created in the past. What were you good at? What did you fail at? Learning from failure is the key to success. Those people who fail to learn from their mistakes, as it is said, are doomed to repeat them. Therefore, you already have a fertile history of what types of

obstacles you might encounter in this new venture, and can prepare an alternate plan to get you past them even before they occur.

False Expectations Can Trip You

If you've heard that you can make BIG money on the Internet, it's true. You can. Will you make it immediately? While some people appear to have done so overnight, the truth is that they have gathered those skills over time until, one day, it all came together for them. If you think that all you have to do to make money on the Internet is to put up a website and wait for people to show up, you have a set of false expectations that are completely unrealistic. Here are the three biggest misconceptions to Internet marketing that will only lead to disappointment if they're not tempered with some common sense.

YOU CAN QUIT YOUR JOB WHEN YOU FIRST START

If you have a job, keep it. Internet marketing is best learned as a side business until it becomes more profitable. Unless you are independently wealthy, you are going to want some steady source of income while you get more real life experience with the Internet and with making money online. Set some monetary goals, but don't make them so outlandish that they demoralize you instead of inspire you. Do you want to make an extra $500/month? If so, do you have a strategy planned to make that income. Once you reach a goal, increase it. At the point you're making what your job offers you, quit! Then, you are at the crux of learning how to zoom way past the small amount of money that your job offers.

DOESN'T TAKE MUCH TIME TO LEARN

Internet marketing is an exciting field to learn, and if you hitch it to your passion, it will seem like fun learning and not like homework. However, if you think that all you have to do is to learn how to put up a blog, that's just the bare minimum. You will have to learn how to get traffic to the blog and then have the right offers to create income from the blog. It's not just the technical aspects of setting up a website that take time to learn. It's the art of marketing online, which is even more important, that will take some time to learn. Expect that there is some work and time involved, and don't be discouraged if at first you don't make a single penny and spend a few weeks simply learning the ropes.

BUILD IT AND THEY WILL COME

This might have been true five years ago, but today, the Internet is flooded with competing sites. Don't expect that you can just put up a blog or site and people will flock to it. More than likely, you'll start off with one or two visitors a day, and then you'll have to take action to attract traffic back to the site. That's where learning the art of marketing starts.

Trying To Be Too Perfect

The first thing you have to remember about the Internet is that you don't have to be perfect to start making progress with Internet marketing. You just have to have a solid niche, an online presence to expose that niche, and traffic that is targeted to your chosen demographic. That means that, as much as a fancy, colorful, and perfect website is nice to have, it's not as important as your marketing. Instead of spending thousands of dollars putting up a very complex site, think in terms of simple, fast sites that you can put up quickly and many at a time if necessary. Until you know which niche is going to be profitable for you, you may want to experiment with several sites at once that are quickly put together, don't cost much to host or maintain, and can easily be dumped should they prove to be losers. The following elements are the basic mistakes beginners make when setting up an online presence.

YOUR NOT-SO-HOT NICHE

Hitch your passion to a profitable niche, and your chances of success increase dramatically. Do a little research before you even pick a domain name to decide what niche you want to target. This way, even before one piece of HTML code is installed onto your website, you have a good idea of how much success to reasonably expect and to avoid the losers before you spend too much time on them. Once you pick a topic or niche of interest to you, you can check out the competition just by entering search terms related to your niche on Google. Look at some of these sites, and then check them out on quantcast.com. It will give you an idea of the demographics of the site and whether they can attract sufficient eyeballs to reasonably market the niche. Pay attention to the types of products and services that appeal to that demographic. Think how you can market to the same niche, while putting your own unique twist to it. Once you have a few possibilities, start to see what domain names are available to the market.

YOUR MANGLED DOMAIN NAME

Pick a descriptive top-level domain name that is easy to remember, flies off the tongue, and isn't easy to misspell. Avoid hyphens and other odd characters if you can, as these are very hard for people to remember. Make it all one word. Go to GoDaddy.com and see if the domain name is available. You may have trouble with getting one- and two-word domains, as these have mostly been sold out. However, a three-word domain is still a pretty good choice and you can get these very cheaply through online domain name registrars. Pick a few good domain names that are representative of your niches and get a package to host your website too.

EXPENSIVE AND FEATURE-LESS HOSTING

There are multiple Web hosts out there that offer packages for a basic website with limited e-commerce, and they step up to include that service too. While you're learning how to do this whole website thing, it is better for you to grab a package that puts up a website pretty quickly without too much of a learning curve on your part. You can do that by setting up a blog, which anyone can do, using Wordpress.org. Hosting sites like Dreamhost.com will give you instant installations of the most popular website packages without having to learn a single line of code. Pay upfront for one year, and you avoid extra charges, including setup fees, in some cases. This way, you won't be billed on a monthly basis, and if the website fails, you can simply let it expire and move on to a more profitable one.

COMPLICATED WEBSITE DEVELOPMENT

If you're still stumped about what to do to get a website up and need a little HTML training, why not get someone to show you? There's no reason you have to go it alone for this entire process, and what you don't know, you should hire out. The idea is to get as many of these basic sites up as you can reasonably manage and leave them somewhat basic until you know whether you can drive enough traffic to them to make them profitable. Don't worry if they don't look perfect; just get them up quickly. If you're worried about looks, just check out Twitter. It has got one of the most basic and ugliest interfaces around, yet there are millions of users on this site. You do want your site to look professional, but not so perfect that you spend a fortune getting it there. Keep it simple, put them up quickly, and get it done fast.

NOT UPDATING FREQUENTLY ENOUGH

Once it is up, you need to update the content fairly frequently to keep people coming back to your site. If you only update once a month, people will quickly forget to check back with you, and you will lose traffic instead of gaining it. If you get writer's block and just don't update the content on your

site, you risk the chance of letting your site go stale. You can hire ghostwriters to add content to your blogs and websites for a small fee.

NOT USING SEO

Learn what you can about Search Engine Optimization (SEO). This way, when you hire someone to write content, it can include SEO techniques to make it search engine friendly by adding keywords that attract visitors to your site and that make you money. This is the very first step to optimizing your site so that it becomes not only popular, but a moneymaker. Without a plan to make money from the site, it will never be a success in Internet marketing.

Not Having A Clue How To Make Money

In a brick-and-mortar store, all a business owner does is set out his/her merchandise, do a little advertising, and if he/she got a good enough location, buyers will come. Taking this approach is deadly online. Not having a solid plan to make money with the site was a main reason for the biggest failures of the dot-com bust, and is still a big mistake for beginners. How do you expect to make money from your website? Internet marketing is about making money, so if you haven't got a plan, you are planning to fail.

PICKING GOOD PRODUCTS AND SERVICES

The first idea that comes to mind for ways that business owners can make money is to offer a product or service. That's great! You should include your products and services on your website, as well as include those affiliate offers that give you commissions for sales of other people's products and services on your site. You have to be a bit selective on the types of products and services that you offer on your site so that they match the demographics of the people visiting you. You can't market very high-end products to low-income people. Always keep your demographics in mind when picking the products and services that you will offer.

NOT PUTTING UP SUFFICIENT OFFERS

If you only offer one or two products, once your audience buys these, what happens next? Make sure you have many products and services in your lineup so that no matter how much your audience buys, there's always something new to consider purchasing. Having too few offers is one of the many ways in which you can fail to achieve significant income with your site.

OFFERING THINGS YOU HAVE NO EXPERIENCE WITH

Be very careful when you start listing affiliate offers in your lineup of products and services. Your reputation is on the line, even if you're not the one providing the product and are just the salesperson making the offer. The best offers to put up on your site are those that you have some experience with or have a good deal of confidence in the person selling them. You don't want to put up offers that end up resulting in fraudulent claims and/or that make your customers unhappy. You will be the one that ends up with the blame, not the unknown product creator or provider. Your site is representative of your good name. Take pains to keep your reputation as clean as possible and listen closely to customer feedback on affiliate offers. Remove any that fail to live up to their rhetoric.

Not Expanding Money Options

Selling products and services is just one way to make money online. You may even find that it's not the biggest portion of your income if your site gets very popular. Try to expand your moneymaking capabilities so that you aren't limiting yourself to a brick-and-mortar model of selling only a product or a service. People make money online in many different ways. It's important to understand these models and to implement them to expand the ways to increase your income potential.

TWO TYPES OF AFFILIATE MARKETING

When first getting into affiliate marketing, you will see many pay-per-click or pay-per-sale models available to choose from within your affiliate network, the most popular being the Google AdSense PPC program. These offers depend on people coming to your site and clicking on the links you set up. A pay-per-click (PPC) offer will pay you at most a few dollars for the click, and usually a few cents for each time a person clicks a link. A pay-per-sale will pay a percentage commission that depends on the affiliate offer, but is much harder to generate due to the action requested, completing a sale. Along with PPC offers, there are cost-per-action (CPA) affiliate offerings that can generate income from your site. These offers pay out much better than PPC and only ask that a specific action be taken by the visitor, which can be to fill out a survey, add their email to a registration form, or opt-into a newsletter. The action can also be a sale, but there are many CPA offers that are looking just for sales leads, not for actual sales. These are far easier to market on your site and lead to more income because a visitor isn't being asked to purchase anything, but just to complete some action that will eventually put money in your pocket, even though it's not directly obvious to the visitor.

NOT EXPLORING OTHER WAYS TO MAKE MONEY

You can make money via advertising space on your website. If the site becomes very popular, advertisers will line up to put their ad or banner on your page and give you a monthly stipend for that exposure. This can happen with traditional websites and with blogs too. That's just another way that you can exploit the website you have to create income without doing much additional work.

You can make money by putting up search engines that pay for every time that someone searches your site. You can also set up a membership area where special content is given to members for a monthly fee. You can offer discount coupons on your site to your offline businesses and reduce the cost of printing offline, thus creating more money in your retail budget. There are many ways to make money online that are different than what you currently know.

Having No Sales Pipeline Outlined

Even with all of these offers lined up, if you don't have a plan for what to present first, it can get rather confusing, for both you and for the prospective customer. Online, you need to plan out a sales pipeline and always keep some offer in front of your prospective client. You should know what they've seen before and what they're going to see next. You should plan out and understand how demographics will affect your pipeline too. Once you have an email list with people's names on it who have agreed to be marketed to, it's up to you to make sure that they hear about you and your business on a regular basis. It's not like a regular retail store where they might take the chance to go to your site to buy some particular item. Instead, they will be hopping all over the Web, and unless you repeatedly pull them back to your site, they will soon forget all about you. The sales pipeline thus serves two purposes: it's informational and it's for sales.

SEVERAL DIFFERENT CONTACT LISTS

For all of your sites, you might have one master contact list that sends out information emails about where you are and where your business is headed. It can discuss business interruptions and other procedural things that have nothing to do with sales. They can be entertaining, but are generally used for the purpose of relaying vital information that everyone on all of your lists needs to know.

After that, each site should have its own contact lists, and they should be categorized based on demographics. If you have a three-tiered group of products and services, low-income, middle-income, and high-income brackets, then you should separate people's email addresses based on that information and market different products from those categories to the right group. If you don't know what demographic they belong to, just stick them in the low-income bracket until they actually buy a product and give you a better idea. Every now and then, offer them a product from the next grouping to see if they bite. Then, if they do bite, move them to the new list and market those products to them regularly.

PLAN THE SALES PIPELINE ALL YEAR

You should now have a good idea of when you are sending out emails, to whom you are sending out emails, and what products and services are being offered in your email campaigns and online. You should know when a holiday promotion is in order and what you plan to do about that to generate income. It seems like a lot of work, but it will make the operation of your website smoother and more profitable in the end.

Not Promoting Your Site

We talked about the false expectation that if you build it, they will come. Putting out several money buckets to monetize the site for when visitors arrive is just the first step. You also have to heavily promote the site to get visitors to show up. As a single person online, you don't have the same resources to advertise a massive campaign on television, radio, and in newsprint. Instead, your choices are going to be limited to what you can do online. Prime the pump by starting to toot your own horn as quickly as the sites go up. Have a marketing campaign set up to go with content to distribute; then when the site goes live, you can start the promotion. Here are some simple methods that you can use to promote your site online.

SET UP EMAIL SIGNATURES

Set up different email addresses for each website and add an automatic signature that promotes the site or a recently featured product or service, CPA offer, or anything else that can make money for you. Now, when people email the site and you respond, the signature is inserted and automatically promotes something of value to you and to your customer.

SEND OUT PRESS RELEASES

Write up press releases for all new products and services that you are offering and make sure to go online and add them to press release sites. You can buy a service that will take one press release and post it to multiple sites. As long as you have your Web address and what you are offering, it's a great way to promote across the Web and to gain more traffic to your site.

WRITE INFORMATIVE ARTICLES

You can also submit informative articles to article directories for free. If you write up a great article and it gets lots of attention, it can bring loads of traffic to your site. In the resource box included with these articles, you are allowed to post two links. Choose what you advertise there carefully and be sure to stay within the terms of agreement of the site for those links.

UPDATE YOUR SOCIAL NETWORKS

Use an automatic service like Ping.fm to send out status updates on new offerings to all of your social networks. This way, you centralize those functions, but still get the word out to everyone.

Not Tracking Results

After all this work, you probably will have some idea on whether your strategies are working on not by tracking the bottom line. That's just the very basic way of tracking your Internet marketing success. The three main things you want to track to tweak further for better results are traffic, conversions, and marketing effectiveness.

TRAFFIC

Your website will track traffic by way of the unique visitors and hits to the site, along with other statistics. While that's a good way to know how popular your site is, it tells you very little about where your main streams of traffic are coming from. Taking a further look, you see what countries give you the most hits and which sites as well. If you're testing a specific promotion, however, it doesn't really show up unless you take the time to use a URL shortener that will track how many specific hits to that link showed up on different days. Include techniques to view traffic and analyze it in as many ways as possible.

CONVERSIONS

Conversions typically refer to converting a visitor into a customer. However, if you are using CPA offers, you may just be converting them into someone who completes an action that delivers money to your pocket. You may want a free area where people subscribe and convert from an anonymous visitor to someone with an email account. There are numerous conversions that can show you how well your site is doing and where it needs more work.

MARKETING EFFECTIVENESS

When you do email campaigns, wouldn't it be nice to know how many people opened your emails and clicked your offers? Using a system like Aweber.com, you can automate your sales pipeline and also track the effectiveness of your email campaigns, down to the emails and links that got the most attention. This helps you to start to recognize what works with your audience and what doesn't.

Split testing is another way to test the marketing effectiveness of different sales pages. This can be done with email marketing too, but it's often used with Web pages. The idea is to set up two different versions of a sales offer and send half of the traffic to one Web page and the other half to the other Web page. The one that has a better conversion rate is the better advertisement, even if all that was changed was a title or the position of a "Buy Now!" button.

Going It Alone

The worst thing a budding Internet marketer can do is to go it alone. Whether it's trying to do everything manually and not using tools to make the process more efficient, a lack of networking, or a failure to listen to the experts who went before him/her, going it alone is a sure recipe for distress and high disappointment. There is a steep learning curve, but there are so many tools, forums, and experts out there to help lend a helping hand that it's really sad when someone tries to do things the hard way.

TAKE ADVANTAGE OF ONLINE TOOLS

We've discussed a number of tools as we went through this short report. There are many others just waiting to help you out with the job of automating important everyday tasks. Once set in place, they free up time that you can spend elsewhere, raising your productivity. It may take a bit of time to learn how to implement the tools, but the sooner you learn and implement them, the less time you will waste doing things manually from then on.

NETWORK ALL THE TIME

The Internet has facilitated the ease of meeting new people online. You will want to frequent Internet marketing forums, like the Warrior Forum at www.warriorforum.com, and contribute to the group. You can read some of the same issues that you are having and how people are resolving them. You can post your own questions and get answers from experts online.

The same is true with social networks. You can attract people who are in your niche and see what they're doing to build their online businesses. Befriend or follow as many Internet marketers as you can, watch how they promote themselves online, and then just copy them. Often, by viewing what they're doing, you'll get some great ideas to implement on your own sites.

LISTEN TO THE EXPERTS

Go where the experts are and listen carefully. Don't just listen, but also do. Go out and implement some of what they're promoting and see if it really works or not. Some things will work for you and others won't, but don't blame it on the tools or the experts. It could just be your audience or niche is far different than what those methods were used on before. Always customize everything you hear to your own sites and niches. Take into account that everything you hear has value, but you will be the one to decide

exactly how it can work with your Internet marketing practices and sites. By carefully discriminating between what works and what doesn't for you personally, you keep tight control over the information out there and learn to sift the gold out of the sand very quickly. If you can find someone who truly excites you and understands your niche, see if they offer a mentoring or coaching program. These types of programs can be expensive, but they can literally catapult you into action and help you achieve in one year what it might take a few years otherwise. Just be careful to choose reputable coaches and to always keep your eye on the results.