

JIM COCKRUM



**SILENT SALES
MACHINE**

VERSION
9.0

YOUR COMPREHENSIVE PROVEN GUIDE
TO MULTIPLE STREAMS OF ONLINE INCOME

SILENTSALES MACHINE.COM

Silent Sales Machine Version 9.0

For full audio of this book as read by the author (plus commentary) as well as an easily navigated digital version of this book with easy to click links, please visit:

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Chapter 1: Who Should Read This Book

Is this book for you? Let's find out as quickly as possible so I don't waste your time.

First a little dose of obvious reality: There is a lot of bad information floating around the Internet about exactly how to build a legitimate business online.

That's not how my team and I operate.

For over a decade, my team and I have been helping entrepreneurs launch multiple streams of online income. We will teach you how to use time tested, proven strategies that have already helped thousands launch life-changing businesses using the Internet in creative ways. In fact, I'd propose to you that we have the strongest community in the world for online entrepreneurs as a result of our years of mentoring and support.

To get a visual idea of how extensive our online family of entrepreneurs has become, check out our "stick a pin in the map" site. We invite you to take a quick look at our global community on our world map and see what other online entrepreneurs live near you. Optionally you can also put your own pin in the map. It's fully secure so you aren't sharing personal information, but allows you to easily connect with others near you if you'd like. Get all the details here:

www.mysilentteam.com/worldmap.html

If all of that sounds appealing to you, this book is for you.

Now that we've got that out of the way, you'll want to hear just a bit of my story for the sake of credibility. You should know who you are taking advice from, after all!

The last job I ever had—**I GOT FIRED**... and it was the best day of my entire employment history.

It took me a while to think of it as a positive development—it's not as if I loved the immediate shock of being let go. No one *wants* to get fired, but there are points in life where the news hits harder than it would have otherwise. This was one of those times. My wife Andrea was eight months pregnant, and if there's one time in life where having health insurance is a good thing—it's then!

In the hours and days *after* being fired I became very determined.

I didn't send out resumes. I didn't start calling my "connections."

I was done.

No looking back.

I decided that I was going to become one of the greatest success stories of online marketing that the world had ever seen. My wife was a wreck for a few days (as was I), but she believed in me and encouraged me. I had further proof that I had married an amazing girl! We had a few months of savings built up, and I had some ideas that were starting to pay off, but still—it was a huge leap of faith.

That was the start of my online career back in 2002—and I hope my story will stir something powerful inside of you. Change is possible!

This book HAS played a role in thousands of people’s lives since that time, as I’ll soon prove to you.

I wrote the first version of the book you are now reading and sold about 10 copies of it to customers of mine in early 2002 (just before I was fired). At that time, I had very few readers to give me feedback and even fewer who put my ideas into practice. Back then this was a book mainly about how to creatively succeed using eBay.com, but it’s about so much more than that now!

You are now reading the 9th major update and re-release of this book. This version has very little in common with the original because the online world has changed rapidly, and I’ve matured considerably in my approach to building serious businesses online. I keep updating this book to keep it relevant, effective, and powerful for my audience.

CES Dallas



CES Orlando



The above two pictures are from our first two live events. I hosted them for the readers of this book. Orlando was our first, held in 2013. It was a “spur of the moment” decision to invite our audience to meet up with my family in Orlando while we were on an extended

vacation. This event sold out fast (we had over 300 people on the waiting list). We called it our “C.E.S.” conference. I’ll explain that powerful acronym in Chapter 3.

Since that first conference, our audience has exploded. Over 500 people attended our next event (in Dallas), and again, we sold out in one day with a huge waiting list of folks that wanted to get in but couldn’t! As I write this update, we have just sold out our third event, which also sold out in a day. Are you detecting a pattern? I think we are onto something here.

Hundreds of thousands of people have either paid for, or received and read, earlier versions of this book. Such a large number of people have succeeded applying the ideas from this book that my team and I are now considered to be one of the most trusted sources of online business educational material in the world. This is a standard of excellence we hold in the highest regard and work diligently to maintain. Research my statements on your own—there’s no need to simply believe such a claim when you have the power of the Internet readily available to conduct some simple research.

I’ve received many testimonials and success stories from my past customers and readers and posted them on a few of my sites. To get an idea of what others have to say about this book (past versions and this version), please visit these two pages:

www.jimcockrum.com/blog/success-stories/

or

www.silentsalesmachine.com/testimonials/

or read the success stories from our most popular course for “newbies”:

www.ProvenAmazonCourse.com

I’d love your feedback as well. Perhaps the best way to leave feedback or research what others are saying is to find this book on Amazon (search for “Silent Sales Machine by Jim Cockrum” and leave a review there. We started selling this book on Amazon starting with Version 8.

Since 2002, my Internet marketing career has been rocketing upward—each year far surpassing the previous. I hope none of this comes across like I’m bragging, but I want to establish my credibility quickly. You should be able to relax knowing where I came from, who I am and why I’m qualified to teach you what I’m about to show you.

If you are ready to get serious about using the Internet the RIGHT WAY, as a tool of influence and income, then I hope I’ve made a strong case that I’m someone you should be listening to. Rather than just give you theories, stories, or encouragement, I intend to expose you in this book to three distinct and powerful business models that are time tested

and proven. I run all three models successfully myself and have trained thousands of others to successfully launch one or more of them over the past 12 years.

If you are looking for a push-button, simple system that will allow you to set up some websites, and then pay you substantial checks every month, then I'm sorry to report that I'm not going to be teaching you that garbage. (HINT: there's no such thing as a course or trainer that will get you there—I'm very sorry if you've bought into that lie in the past.)

There are plenty of courses for sale online that will try to convince you that they can help you achieve "little-to-no-effort-required" results. If you are so gullible that you believe the hype, then please **don't** read this book. Instead, go buy some of the "big launch" courses with fancy boats and expensive cars on the sales page. After you've realized that you've been scammed by psychologically appealing web copy designed to sell fluff to suckers, then you can come back and read this book with a renewed understanding of how the world works.

CAUTION: Reading the rest of this book could likely render you certifiably unemployable! In other words, it could make you so eager and excited about the opportunities you're about to be exposed to that you could find it hard to be satisfied with any "real job" ever again.

If you don't like being motivated or inspired toward achieving more in life, please put this book down. The dream of what "could be" or "might be" or "should be" can be dangerous if your new dream isn't backed up with the required motivation and work ethic to make it all happen. You CANNOT have one without the other.

IN OTHER WORDS:

You need to be ready to do some work. There's no business model that ever existed (or ever will) that eliminates effort from the success formula.

If you are ready to build something creative that you can be proud of, however, this is just the book for you. My life's mission is motivating and equipping my fellow entrepreneurs with the tools and skills for success. I love helping people become financially independent and I believe we live in the greatest time in human history to make that happen.

I've had several days now where I've put \$100,000 in the bank. There are no big secrets to making this happen either.

Time + consistency + a proven plan of action = what it takes.

For several years now, my team and I have taught literally thousands of people how to "make the leap" from their jobs to becoming independent and highly successful online business owners. We are passionate about teaching others how to begin making a great income from home by using the Internet creatively, and we are very proud of our work, their work, and the amazing stories of success we have witnessed. Each of those individual achievers started at the same place you find yourself right now.

They started at the beginning.

They each picked up this book, read it, and put some of the ideas to work.

To be clear, I'm talking about doing something you believe in for a living—something you are proud of, love doing, and can't wait to do each day. Mondays should be just as great as Saturdays—if not better.

I want you to get all of this while earning the level of income you need to support a family. To get you there, I'm going to show you the same strategies I've used myself for over a decade to provide 100% of the income for my family. The great thing is, we now have thousands of success stories from others who have used these ideas to prosper as well.

If that's what you want, I want to help make it happen! If you want to read more of my story to see how these ideas impacted my family as I started pursuing my new adventure, then please continue reading this chapter.

If you want to skip the rest of my story for now and just get to the "meat" as fast as possible, this is the time to skip to Chapter 2.

Here's a bit more of my story for the sake of credibility and to establish a foundation for why I do things the way I do:

Like I said earlier—I was fired from my last "real" job in November of 2002.

Even though it was what most would consider a great job, I'm happy to report that I've had several DAYS since that fateful day where I've earned more in ONE DAY than I ever would have earned in a good YEAR at my safe career sales position. My average month now is better than any year I ever could have had with my last "real job."

As an added bonus, I also feel more:

- **secure**
- **fulfilled**
- **liberated**
- **creative**
- **purposeful**
- **motivated**
- **healthy**

...I could go on.

At the time of my firing in 2002, things got pretty scary for a few weeks. My wife was eight months pregnant with our third child and I was the sole breadwinner. Yeah, that was not a fun time.

Like I said before, the job was what most would call “safe”—I sold software for Microsoft as a reseller during the prime of Microsoft’s dominance in the software arena. As a software sales rep, I’d been a top performer for several years in my industry. I was great—but the problem was I was bored. I knew I was meant for more. It wasn’t the dream I had for myself and it was clearly showing.

Stated plainly, in spite of the safe career path I’d chosen, I had a rebel entrepreneur inside of me raging to get out and I had a hard time hiding that fact! I was meant for more!

In my state of “boredom” with my career, I’d started playing around online with eBay in my spare time. I found it interesting and motivating. I felt creative and inspired when I was working online... and it was all starting to work for me. (Note: This book is about far more than just eBay, but that’s where my online dreams began to take shape.)

I quickly discovered that a few hours of spare time spent working on my online side business was now earning me a very nice income. I wanted to ramp it up—so I did! And then I did it again—and again... and things were really taking shape... and then...

While some online “experts” are continually coming out with new products and doing “launch” after “launch,” I’ve chosen to keep updating this one eBook over and over again. Every time I pass it out to all my past customers at no charge while charging new customers very little to get a copy. I’m doing my best to raise the service standards in my industry and raise your expectations of all Internet business “experts.”

Since my firing in 2002, I’ve been able to work from home with my wife and five kids nearby. We travel for weeks at a time; we’ve adopted three times internationally (twice since being fired); we support the causes we believe in; we volunteer; and my kids have the best tutors they could ever have schooling them in our own home—their mom and me.

There is no traditional job that could possibly lure me out of this lifestyle. I work the hours I want, work out, and run six days a week (currently training to qualify for the Boston Marathon). I take the day off for a movie or trip to the museum with my kids whenever I get the urge to do so, and I earn way more than anyone I know with any traditional “job.”

My \$36,000 ALL PROFIT eBay auction in 2009:

My audience of readers grows daily on auto-pilot and has been doing so since the mid-2000s.

I’ve enjoyed some of the most incredible experiences as I’ve conducted creative experiments (a.k.a. stunts). One of my most interesting, successful experiments

resulted in a \$36,000 all-profit eBay auction to a very happy winner! Five years later, he still says it was the best money he ever spent!

Here's that story:

<https://vimeo.com/user31749852/review/128814492/f7920f26a4>

If you share a similar goal to quit your job and work the Internet part-time, while pulling in a full-time income, then my goal is that this book will be the first step to getting you there.

My Goal for You as You Read this Book

What will this book give you?

This book will provide the information you need to start to establish hands-free income streams online. We are going to discuss three specific business models, as well as the basic skills you'll need in order to succeed using my formula.

Remember my list from above? These are the bonuses that came with the fantastic income I've established. I'm now more...

- **secure**
- **fulfilled**
- **liberated**
- **creative**
- **purposeful**
- **motivated**
- **healthy**

...and I want all that for you!

I love seeing parents getting to stay home—my heart especially goes out to dads who are now more involved with raising their kids every day instead of commuting hours a week. I love bringing dads home. I love helping leaders use the Internet in creative ways to spread their message. From the bottom of my heart, I want to help you succeed and I'm more confident than ever that I can help get you there—these ideas just keep on working over and over again.

A Challenge For You: Convince yourself that creative income that DOES NOT require tedious daily effort IS POSSIBLE online. YOU CAN ACHIEVE IT as so many others have already done—by using a little effort and a proven system. Do not proceed until you are CONVINCED. Need evidence? Read some of the pages and pages of success stories you'll find about this book and my strategies on Amazon.com, ProvenAmazonCourse.com, or www.jimcockrum.com/blog/success-stories/

A note about the “clickable” links in this book:

If you happened to encounter an outdated link, please let us know and we'll fix it for you. There is contact information on the download page for this book here:

www.mysilentteam.com/public/783.cfm

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Concluding Thoughts for Chapter 1:

I wrote this book for you. It contains my best ideas and it is my best effort to help you achieve your dreams online. I give this book to family and friends, and now to you. I get emails and messages almost daily from people who have been inspired to success with the simple, yet profoundly effective, concepts in this book. I'll equip you with some great ideas and the tools and training to get you there. Hold on for a great ride!

I look forward to hearing your feedback!

Jim Cockrum

JimCockrum.com



Chapter 2: What are Silent Sales Machines?

A “Silent Sales Machine” is the name I’ve given to my collection of online income streams. Each stream of income is a quiet, smooth-running machine that churns out sales and profits in a hands-free, or nearly hand-free, fashion.

Each business model I run is one that I’m proud of and freely share the details with anyone who is willing to listen. I use my real name at all times and stand proudly behind everything I do.

A word of caution: The Internet can lure you into a false sense of anonymity regarding your actions and endeavors online. Don’t ever compromise. Only do things that you are truly proud of and want to be known for. Only do things that you would willingly post publicly on your own blog, permanently, with your identity fully disclosed. Remember, the Internet is forever. I say this because reputations and relationships matter just as much online as they do in the “real world.” If you compromise yours, there will always be consequences. The business models I’ll be showing you are all models that you can proudly talk about with friends and family. When you are proud of what you do, the world supports you and helps propel you forward. Don’t settle for less.

More about the “Silent Sales Machine” models:

In some cases, I’m selling physical products on Amazon or eBay while others handle the day-to-day aspects of sourcing and selling and, in other cases, the product is digital. A digital product could be an audio, video, or text file (a.k.a. info product). I also run membership sites, have authored books (eBooks and physical print books), run discussion forums (both free and paid), I run large Facebook groups and have large email lists full of readers who are eager to hear from me on various topics. There are clients who pay me very well to advise and assist them with their Internet endeavors, and I’ve also recently moved into live conferences as well. Finally, my team and I also offer coaching and consulting.

All of these business models produce income because I’ve built a SYSTEM that requires as little day-to-day oversight by me as possible, while the *system* constantly improves and profits based on my management.

I’m going to show you how to build income-producing systems using the Internet in creative ways—WITHOUT chaos! I work fewer hours now than I ever did with a “real job,” and it goes without saying that I earn far more money. The Internet is the ultimate “multiple-income-stream” tool. We were clearly born at the best time in human history to be entrepreneurs!

The Power of Residual Income

The “Silent Sales Machine” techniques that I am going to show you will allow you to set up multiple hands-free, or virtually hands-free, income streams by harnessing the power of the

Internet. Even if it takes a little effort to get the first machine established, you will be well rewarded for your efforts! I set up my first “Silent Sales Machine” in less than a week from start to finish. Once established, it began making steady income for me while my time was free to create more income streams.

This reader made a YouTube video about how he went from zero income streams to nine very quickly using the ideas in this book:

<https://vimeo.com/user31749852/review/128814488/d17ecfee54>

Today, I have about 35 income streams—none of which require daily attention. Sure, some streams start to dry up and require some attention, and others require a bit of work by me, or someone on my team, every few days to maintain. Ultimately, though, I’m not reliant upon any one stream of income. They run silently and predictably, producing delighted customers and profits that flow nicely into my bank accounts.

If this sounds like chaos to you, check out this blog post to see how the “multiple-income-stream” strategy is NOT about chaos, but is instead about liberty and fulfillment:

www.jimcockrum.com/blog/2014/09/29/multiple-income-streams-without-chaos/

Some of my income streams are as small as \$100-\$200 per month. Some streams are significantly larger. Add them all up and I would have to work 70-80 hour weeks as the CEO of a major corporation to get the same income results—and I wouldn’t get to be home with my family during the day or enjoy the flexible lifestyle we’ve become so accustomed to since 2002.

I RARELY trade dollars for hours any more. I’m frequently approached by traditional businesses that want to work with me on projects. I typically scare them away by charging \$1,000 per hour or more. Even when someone is smart enough to pay me that much per hour (I’m more than worth it), I still often feel like I’m selling myself short; I’m trading the temporary value of “dollars” for my most valuable asset... my “hours.” There will always be another dollar, but there will never be more time with my family.

Side note: When I turn down clients or students who want to pay me for my time I often refer them instead to other trusted partner professionals in our community. These partners then pay me a percentage of all resulting billing. That’s another hands-free income stream I just now remembered!

One of the most popular blog posts I’ve ever written got literally HUNDREDS of replies when I posted it. It was on this very topic of automated income. Here’s the simple question I posed—it’s a choice between two income opportunities:

Imagine you are given a choice between two options.

OPTION ONE: You can have FOUR separate 100% AUTOMATED income streams that each produces \$1K per month consistently. (Total \$4k/month) with minimal or NO work involved in keeping them flowing.

OPTION TWO: You can have ONE income stream that requires a few hours of daily attention and produces \$6K or more per month. (Total \$6K/month)

What's your choice?

There's no right or wrong answer, but the way you approach this problem provides insight into how you value your time and understand the potential behind freeing up more of it. Hundreds of readers of this book have answered this simple question over the last few years. Check out their responses, and please—leave an answer yourself here:

www.jimcockrum.com/blog/?p=178

Click the comments button on that blog post to join the conversation.

I'm hoping you see the value in option one above. If so, it shows that you understand how truly invaluable your greatest asset is—TIME.

The Internet has been the foundation of all my income streams and my success in business. I'm excited to share with you the details of how my team and I have helped thousands of people create numerous Internet-based income streams.

As with any successful business, a good deal of work and some learning is required—especially when launching a new stream. Also, at least occasional maintenance and attention are needed no matter how automated you make it. Don't fall for the hype that says you can push a few buttons, build a website, and then live out your days on a beach sipping cool drinks. That never actually happens. That sort of unrealistic "hype" imagery is sales letter mind trickery used by unscrupulous opportunity peddlers. Don't fall for it.

If the income is tied to your hobby or passion, it may be something you work at every day and enjoy, and that's fine. In fact, that's great! However, I'll be showing you how to automate to the greatest degree possible so that you only work when and how you want to work. You'll be spending your time doing only the things that ONLY YOU can (or really WANT) to do. That's the goal. Here's an example of a success story from one of my students to illustrate:

I gotta give you credit for my story, Jim. You are the one who showed me eBay and how to harness it by driving traffic to my site. My efforts have now spurred a great cult following of my business. My thanks to you.

My story:

I use to be an indie filmmaker; it was my dream since i was a small kid that i wanted to see my work up on the big screen. I wrote, directed, edited, and produced 10 films all on

my own. I did them all on my own because i just did not have the \$\$ to hire people, so i made them dirt cheap.

I got into the Tribeca film festival, won numerous awards, and even had a feature action film go international. All was great! But there was no income really, I worked odd jobs to make a buck. Late twenties hit and I said I needed to make some money. I couldn't keep bumming off my folks. But I did not want to work for anyone else either. I knew I had the talents and the skills to do my own thing.

My idea:

All through my college and filmmaking years I had a classic VW, but I knew nothing about other cars. I only knew the bug. I am an artist so ya gotta have a bug. I grabbed a 1968 beetle rotted to hell for \$350 and I wanted to restore it. My father thought i was crazy but we did it together. I knew nothing about restoring cars, my dad had some mechanical skills when he was young working in a Brooklyn garage, but we had never worked on a VW.

Thanks to the Internet, there are many resources to learn any craft you want. If you have the drive and a desire to do something great and be independent, there's never been a better time to be alive than now!

I learned these skills from you Mr. Cockrum, and sold that bugger on eBay motors! We made food money on it! My father and I looked at each other and said, "we gotta get into this!" So from a one car garage to now a 2000 sq. ft. facility, we are kicking butt! We developed a nice track record on eBay and we are now taking orders for my "build-a-bug" program. We are running our business with a year and a half wait time. People want us to build a bug just for them!

What made me stand out from the crowd is that I filmed my bugs. No one is doing what I am doing when it comes to selling on eBay motors. All bidders are exposed to over 50 pics of my cars and full HD video.

I also do 'how to' tips on beetle restoration thrown up on YouTube (my ID on youtube.com is brighteyefilms), that led me to sell a full two hour DVD on headliner installation, (I sell the DVDs via drop shipping one at a time using kunaki.com like you showed me). I answer two hours of fan mail in the morning and two hours at night just for the bug biz.

Sorry this is so long winded, but my example shows if you have a passion to be successful with a product you love, you can do it.

Every resource is available out there for you. I am always learning and staying up-to-date with the trends, this will give you the edge and make you stand out from your competition.

Chris Vallone

classicvwbugs.com

Notice how he's leading a "tribe" (to borrow a term from Seth Godin). Notice how he's growing an audience of like-minded people and then giving them what they want. Can't you just daydream about ten new income streams for this guy just by reading his story? I'll share more success stories like this throughout the book that will help you.

CAUTION: Because of the example I just gave you, you might be tempted to think that I only teach students how to turn hobbies into businesses. I don't. The opportunities are far bigger than that. Please don't ever fall into the trap that says, "I'll only love my work if I can turn my favorite hobby into my business." This is a lie that I address later in this book.

I've met hundreds of fulfilled, excited entrepreneurs who are amazed by the PROFITS and LIBERTY that they have achieved as a result of having their own income streams, regardless of the actual business models they are using to succeed. Serving your fellow man, while creating value and earning a much-deserved profit are *always* noble ventures—and are extremely rewarding! Don't make the mistake of determining that you'll ONLY be happy if you get to spend your days pursuing your hobby while expecting the world to pay you to "play." We'll address this more in the "where not to start" chapter later in the book.

More about the Story of my First Silent Sales Machine

For me, it all started on eBay—but it didn't stop there as you'll soon see!

Before I launched my first "Silent Sales Machine," I was selling a handful of items at a time on eBay and making a decent side income doing it, just like tens of thousands of others.

This was not "autopilot" income by any means. eBay was (and still is, in most cases) a lot of hard work.

Then everything changed...

One day, I took a hard look at the "hit counter" for my auctions. A "hit counter" shows you how many visitors you are getting on each of your listings. I had HUNDREDS and even THOUSANDS of people, in some cases, looking at each of my eBay auctions. Very few of those hundreds of shoppers were sending me any money though. There could be only one winner/buyer per auction. All of my other potential customers went off to find other listings to buy from.

I also knew that EVERYONE on the Internet was talking about trying to get "targeted traffic" to their websites. Traffic is the same as "visitors." We've all heard the saying that a beautiful website is useless without targeted traffic, right?

So, while I was on eBay selling a handful of items and thinking how much fun I was having, I was actually ignoring the true opportunity! Virtually every visitor *except* for the one visitor who was my winning bidder was being sent away empty handed and I was missing the golden opportunity right under my nose!

I knew there was a goldmine waiting for me. I had to figure out a way to attract some of those eBay visitors over to other web-offers that were related to the eBay listing that the shopper was viewing. I knew I could sell other related items—or grow an audience, an email list, a fan base, or lifetime buyers for virtually any niche!

I set out to tap into the HUGE volume of traffic on eBay and funnel it to other places off eBay WITHOUT VIOLATING EBAY POLICY.

Once I figured it out, my business TOOK OFF FAST!

By listing a single item on eBay, I was growing my audience and increasing my sales EVEN IF the item I was selling sold for a total loss.

I began growing my email mailing list, making repeat sales and, more importantly, earning hands-free income from all that eBay traffic.

That was my first “Silent Sales Machine.” Now I have many “machines” running, and very few of them are reliant on eBay.

From this first eBay lesson I determined that I was going to stop doing exactly what everyone else was already doing. I wasn’t going to try to “drive traffic,” to search out customers, or toy with tricks and gimmicks. Instead, I chose to focus on finding creative ways to engage with customers right where they were already gathered online.

I also realized that I could shift my thinking in regards to “investing” in an online business. Sure, it was true that twenty years ago starting a business required a big investment of time, patience, and effort to even have a shot; but now it’s time for us to adjust our thinking about “investing in an online business.”

Success on the Internet is rarely, if ever, about making a large upfront investment into new and uncharted waters. It’s rarely, if ever, about starting with a big beautiful website and then desperately chasing down traffic and customers. It’s almost never about buying 5,000 widgets and then trying to “market” them successfully for a profit while risking your retirement savings. Those risky strategies just aren’t necessary—or smart!

Nearly all of the successful Internet entrepreneurs that I know are simply using inexpensive tools and slightly creative strategies in wildly successful ways. They are taking a piece of already proven, popular markets as they SERVE a niche market and CREATE VALUE in that market. Next, they automate...and repeat the process.

These “champions of success” simply go where the traffic is already gathered and give the people they find there exactly what they are asking for.

These ideas might seem foreign to you for now, but we’ll explain more as we dive a bit deeper.

Concluding Thoughts for Chapter 2:

Earning income from multiple online sources is possible and more easily obtained now than at any other point in human history. I'm going to show you where to start and where not to start right in this book.

Some words of caution: Even though this is a book about multiple income streams, don't make the mistake of thinking that you can launch multiple successful businesses all at once. Especially as you are getting started, each smooth-flowing income stream will require a period of intense, focused, effort and attention to launch and establish. Once established, each income stream can then be automated to whatever degree possible to free up your time for more streams. Do you remember the children's story about the racing tortoise and hare? The lesson from the book holds true online as well. Slow and steady wins the race.

A warning from the other side of the spectrum:

Don't "settle" for only one stream—especially if that single stream is reliant on a single platform that you don't control. For example, right now thousands of our students are succeeding wildly on Amazon. However, they don't like hearing me ask questions like this: "What would happen if Amazon shut you down tomorrow?"

I'm often told I'm being dramatic when I ask such questions but, as recently as a few years ago, I was asking eBay selling professionals the same question. They laughed at me then, but now 80 percent of them have been forced to move on to a different business model because eBay just isn't the same as it used to be!

The fact is eBay, Amazon, Google, YouTube, Facebook, Twitter, PayPal, and any other "big boy" sites could easily change direction, lose their "base" of loyal users, or shut you down tomorrow for a random reason out of your control. What would you do if that happened?

If you have multiple, independent, income streams rolling in, you'll be just fine because there is always a creative solution. However, if you've built your entire empire on ONE platform that you don't control, you could be looking at starting all over again—possibly even facing the worst nightmare of every entrepreneur—looking for a JOB!

Want some tips for keeping your priorities straight while growing multiple online businesses? Here's a blog post about that exact topic:

www.jimcockrum.com/blog/?p=2786

You also might enjoy this article, *How I manage multiple businesses and a large family*:

www.jimcockrum.com/blog/?p=2726

I've learned a lot about keeping priorities straight in the last decade. There are some great tips in those articles.

Chapter 3: Establishing the Foundation

You are likely very eager to get a glimpse of the specific Internet business models that I'll be covering later in this book.

It's important that you don't "skip ahead" right now, so I'm going to give you a teaser of some specific ideas!

Here's the plan:

Before I start to do some foundation building (I know that sounds boring, but trust me—it's necessary), I'm going to give you a glimpse of the EXACT THREE business models that make up the foundation of each of my multiple "silent sales machines." Then we are going to use the rest of this important chapter to lay down that vital foundation that will help ensure your long-term success in any Internet business model you ever pursue.

The foundational concepts of this chapter are necessary, regardless of whether you use one of my models or any other legitimate online business model you might discover (although I've yet to encounter a legit opportunity that didn't fall into one of these three categories).

Two ground rules for my "Multiple-Income-Stream" business models:

1. NO BIG INVESTMENTS

I'm proud of the fact that none of the models require a large (or, in some cases, ANY) upfront investment. Having cash on hand can help speed things up in some cases, but big investments are never required for success. Our most compelling success stories in our readership/student base come from those who started with virtually nothing. The era of needing a pile of cash or taking out massive loans in order to start a business is OVER. It's just not a necessary risk any longer.

2. NO NEW TECHIE SKILLS

None of the models we use or teach require you to perfect a new set of difficult technical skills.

Success online isn't about acquiring new technology skills—it's more a matter of understanding the available resources and then applying those resources creatively.

The three business models I'm going to show you are the same three "Silent Sales Machine" strategies that we've been teaching our students for a very long time. I've been using them myself to generate an incredible income as well with ultimate flexibility.

Here are the big three. I call them my "C.E.S." model of success.

Consult — Expand — Sell Stuff

1. **C = Consult.** Help other business owners online (and offline) apply the simple foundational (yet revolutionary to most) Internet Marketing truths to their business.
2. **E = Expand.** Find a profitable niche market, be a leader in that niche and give your followers fantastic content which leads to numerous monetization opportunities.
3. **S = Sell Stuff.** Sell profitable physical goods using Amazon, eBay, and eventually your own website. **MOST NEWBIES START RIGHT HERE ON "S"**

I've been doing all three of these business models for over a decade and have taught thousands of others how to do one or all of them as well. While you certainly don't have to do all three (we have thousands of students doing only one of the three), I've found that the models complement each other quite nicely as you automate and add new streams. Dozens of other possible related streams of income flow from these three foundational models.

Some examples of the three streams working in harmony:

- I have clients whom I've helped get established selling physical goods on Amazon that later go on to hire my team to do other online marketing projects for them. This is using the "S" (Sell Stuff) knowledge I've gained to acquire high-paying "C" (Consult) clients.
- In the previous chapter I told you about Chris—he started out selling his product on eBay "S" (Sell Stuff) and grew a large loyal audience "E" (Expand) for his other products and services.
- One of my training courses shows you how to set up an Amazon.com selling account (the "S" model) for "offline" clients (i.e. a small retailer), while keeping a percentage of each resulting sale. In other words, instead of having just one Amazon account (which is all you are allowed to have according to Amazon's rules), you can instead get paid a piece of multiple Amazon accounts owned by other businesses. Most businesses are intimidated by the thought of selling their goods via eBay and Amazon, but they are also quickly learning that they need to be on those platforms. This is a golden opportunity and another nice combination of the "S" and the "C" models.
- As I've established myself as an expert with a large and growing audience, I'm approached constantly by businesses and others seeking my expertise. As I help them out, and share the great success stories publicly, my audience grows. This is how my "C" business feeds my "E" strategy.
- As I grow my list of customers "E," I can easily alert them to any new products I'm selling. The book you are reading now will have a great sales day when I alert my audience that it's been posted to Amazon Kindle for example—resulting in some solid sales "S."
- I have a client whose product isn't selling as well as it should be. I'm helping him expand his audience by creating content and launching it as a book online. This will help sales as more people look to him as an authority in his niche. Our agreement is that I get paid a percentage of each new sale that results from this arrangement.

This is my "C" model helping a biz owner use the "E" model to grow his "S" business. The result is three new income streams for me!

Throughout the rest of this book, and in my best-selling book sold at 101freemarketing.com, you'll get numerous other examples of these three models working in harmony.

Here's a quick look at a blog post I wrote that breaks down my own multiple income streams in a pie chart if you want to see my business drawn out:

www.jimcockrum.com/blog/?p=2768

We've established that NO NEW SKILLS are required in order to succeed online, and I stand by that statement. However, it's now time to discuss a few basic FOUNDATIONAL concepts that you'll need to be familiar with, and ideally embrace, in order to prepare yourself for the business models I'll be teaching you.

People with SKILLS work for people with IDEAS. Be an idea person.

Now, let's lay down a strong foundation!

Foundational Idea #1: Only Do What Only You Can Do

If you find yourself working IN your business more than you are working ON your business, then something is out of order. You won't grow as quickly, or become as successful as you would otherwise.

One of the vital skills you'll need to acquire if you are going to live out the "Silent Sales Machine" lifestyle is OUTSOURCING (call it "delegation," if you like).

It is 100 percent true that no one can complete a task EXACTLY the way you would. It is also true that struggling to maintain control of every aspect of your business will keep you small and slow moving. It is your choice how you choose to move forward, and where you want to put your time and effort.

For example, one of my rules I teach eBay sellers is "Never Touch Box Tape." What does this mean? It means that you can pay a neighborhood kid a few dollars per hour and free up a BUNCH of your time by letting them pack and ship your boxes. Don't ever allow yourself to get caught up in the mundane tasks.

Any repetitive, mundane, or even any technically challenging projects that you find yourself trying to tackle on your own should be delegated. Find someone else who can do the job more easily, faster, and (in most cases) better than you could ever do it yourself. Your time

is the premium asset that you should be protecting when it comes to making business decisions. The more time you can free up, and the less money you can spend freeing it up, the more successful you'll become and the faster your business will grow.

Outsourcing (using a site like upwork.com) is becoming a vital component of nearly all successful businesses on and offline. Regardless of where you stand on the idea of using help from other countries outside of your own, the fact is that there are many skilled programmers, writers, web designers, and hosts of other talented people all over the planet. These workers are ready to do excellent work for a great pay rate. When I have a task to complete for my business, I don't limit my talent pool to only those who live inside of my own country. I open the job up to all eligible candidates and take those who best meet my needs.

In the news:

I read a news story recently about a top-rated computer programmer who was fired from a U.S. "big business" when it was discovered that he had been outsourcing all of his programming work to others around the world. These programmers were willing to do his work better, faster, and cheaper than he could do it himself. Instead of firing this guy, I would have promoted him! He would have been in charge of programming for my company, thereby saving me millions, helping me lower my prices, grow faster, delight my customers, and provide more jobs for the *right* people!

Few business owners realize it, but you can hire AMAZINGLY hard-working, talented, honest, reliable, VERY educated help for a few dollars per hour from the Philippines. Filipinos love the U.S. dollar (and the Euro) because the currency goes SO FAR in their country.

In the Philippines, as of this writing, a family of four which has a head of household making just a few U.S. dollars per hour can live very comfortably by local standards—far better than the average wage earner working locally in the Philippines. A local worker would JUMP at the chance to earn just a few dollars per day. Steady jobs are very hard to find there currently.

In the Philippines, there is an overabundance of talented, English-speaking, skilled, tech-savvy workers ready and willing to go to work TODAY. They are ready and eager to make your Internet business grow even while you sleep. I've hired web designers, writers, email customer service agents, and content distribution experts from the Philippines.

The Filipino culture is characterized by being hard-working and honest. They don't resent foreign employers as some people might suspect they would. They are typically extremely grateful for the work. In general, they love the chance to do meaningful work. I find that they will thank you frequently for the chance to prove they are worthy of your trust.

I see many business owners become bogged down in doing the day-to-day tasks that could and should be passed off to someone else's capable hands. Think through the tasks that you perform yourself on a day-to-day basis. Are any of those tasks ones that could be

passed to someone else if they were willing to work remotely for a few dollars per hour? If so, you should be focused on transitioning those responsibilities to someone else.

In my own business, I am constantly evaluating the way I spend my time, and I've given away several of the mundane tasks that can easily clutter my day. I have a handful of part-time helpers locally who help me run my business, as well as workers in other nations doing Internet-based work for me. I think of all of it as "outsourcing." Once I established the value of a "business hour" of my time, it was easy to justify investing some money, freeing up my business hours. My family hours are priceless.

What work should you as "the owner" actually be doing? Focus on working **ON** your business instead of **IN** your business. Think, create, plan, and **only do the stuff that ONLY you can do**. Over time, pass off all possible details to others. Even if you love the work you are doing, be sure that you are dedicating significant time to "replacing yourself." If you are unable to remove yourself from the equation of the day-to-day responsibilities of your business, you will never be able to take a break without losing income. You will quickly lose the ability to focus on expanding your business to the next level. There is also the factor of making your business transportable so that a new owner could buy and take over the business if it ever became necessary or desirable.

If you are trapped in the mentality of thinking that you are the best person to tackle every aspect of your business, then your business will never be very large. Your business will own you if it ever does grow because it will be entirely dependent upon YOU. Do not allow your business to own you. Outsource the tasks that could and should be getting done by someone else.

Interestingly enough, the **ONLY** skill I think you need in order to succeed as a consultant who gets paid **VERY WELL** to assist "real world" businesses with their Internet marketing and social marketing efforts is **OUTSOURCING**. At OfflineBiz.com (I'll talk more about that site in a later chapter), we have over 12,000 members who are all building businesses by consulting (assisting) "real world" clients with their marketing. We teach that basic outsourcing skills are vital to growing your business as profitably as possible. If you try to be the one who does all the "techie" work, you will never grow a viable business.

Again—People with SKILLS work for people with IDEAS. Be an idea person.

There's a reason that my students only need to learn a handful of basic skills.

In order to succeed online, you **DON'T** need to be able to do these tasks:

- Build websites OfflineBiz.com
- Add content to existing websites
- Program
- Create graphics

- Edit your writing (grammar, etc.)
- Edit video
- Edit audio
- Answer customer support email or phone calls
- Take great product pictures
- Edit or create graphics
- Put products up for sale on eBay or Amazon, etc.

All of these tasks and many more can be handled for a few dollars per hour by someone else once you know how to find good help.

As your business grows, outsourcing will become one of only a handful of VITAL skills you'll need to get comfortable with.

Bottom line for this first big idea:

ONLY DO WHAT ONLY YOU CAN DO FOR YOUR BUSINESS.

Hire good help for all other aspects of your business.

If your business isn't profitable enough yet to hire help, then one of three things is happening: 1) you are working on a dead-end or broken business model, or 2) you are still in the "startup" phase, doing all the work, and hope to start outsourcing soon, or 3) you aren't spending your time or money wisely and you are stuck in a rut. If your business is growing at all, it's time to bring in some help.

An example of how I "outsource":

In my Amazon and eBay business, I have others doing the sourcing, shopping, packing, and handling customer support. I never touch box tape unless there's an emergency and I'm needed. It's not that I consider myself to be "too good" for these tasks. Instead, I'm the one making the bigger decisions and adding income streams that support the weaker segments of my businesses. My only contribution to my Amazon and eBay selling business in any given month typically consists only of reviewing the numbers and checking in with the manager (right now, that's my mom). This frees me up to build other income streams. We have many in our community who are doing the same thing! As your online business grows, we have training for our students on this strategy in the [ProvenAmazonCourse.com](https://www.provenamazoncourse.com) course, which we'll talk more about in later chapters. That course starts you out very simply but, as you grow, it will push you to outsource and hire help for all aspects of a physical product business on Amazon or eBay.

Foundational Idea #2: Find Your Audience First

This “Find Your Audience” (FYA) idea won’t seem like a skill at all until I explain myself, but trust me, this is a VITAL skill (more accurately, you might call it a basic instinct) you’ll need if you are going to succeed online without making any costly missteps.

TWO FACTS that support this foundational idea:

1. I’ve yet to encounter a “failure story” online where this single section of this book wasn’t the EXACT advice that would have saved the concept from failure.
2. I’ve seen very few success stories among those who lacked this “FYA” mindset.

In spite of those two important facts, it’s rare to see experts teaching this obvious lesson. That’s probably because it’s not an “easy sell.” You might not like me or this book after you read this section, but if you fail once, twice, or more times at trying to build a business online, you can then come back to this chapter later (I hope you will)—and you’ll see immediately where you went wrong. It will make far more sense after you’ve banged your head on the wall trying to make things work that **Just.Won’t.Work!**

I’d estimate that 95 percent of all online entrepreneurs I meet or deal with are shocked and confused when they first hear the FYA concept but, after they consider the idea briefly, it makes total sense to nearly every last one of them. Once the FYA concept becomes instinctual, you’ll find yourself saying “no” to a LOT of good ideas while you wait for the far more exciting “RIGHT” ideas to come into your life.

Your entrepreneurial instincts *will not like* this FYA skill at first, so it may take you some time to develop it (and it will take some work for me to convince you I’m right). Hopefully, it’s something that you will learn quickly. It will save you so much time, heartache, and money to learn this lesson early on.

Let’s start with some bad news.

I’ll give you a few examples of what I predict will happen to you (or has already happened to you) repeatedly if you lack the FYA skill:

- You’ll operate under the false assumption that building a better website, creating a good product, or writing a book is the *first step* to success online. You’ll believe the misguided and well-intentioned “experts” and teachers who are trying to sell you system after system to help you do such crazy things. (It’s not crazy to have a dream or create a product, but it is unnecessarily risky to START out with any of those listed activities as a first step towards success.)
- You are far more likely to develop “shiny object” syndrome, where you fall for every guru launch and “step-by-step” system that promises to teach you to make money online. These systems always leave out the dirty little secrets that would have stopped you from ever considering the course had they told you the truth on the

sales page. The truth is FYA comes first—ALWAYS, or you are doomed to face an abysmal success rate.

- You'll jump from idea to idea without success all the while blaming yourself for failing. You might even wind up hating the Internet and abandoning the greatest business tool ever invented by mankind! Why? Because no one told you about "FYA"!

Does any of that sound familiar? I've got more examples of what it sounds like when I hear from those who lack the "FYA" skill.

I get emails all the time from excited newsletter readers or fans of my content that start out something like this:

"JIM! JIM! I've got a great idea and I'm wondering if you think it will work. I want to build a website (write a book, create a course, invent a product) that does _____ (fill in the blank). Jim, I'm wondering if you think it's a good idea or not? Can you help me market this? What advice can you give me to market this?"

My opinion on the matter, while probably a bit more accurate than some random guy on the street—is still just that... an opinion.

The real questions you should be asking (instead of seeking my opinion) are these:

How will you FYA (Find Your Audience) online and get them interested and engaged enough to have them help shape your idea BEFORE you launch it?

What freely distributed content can easily be created that you can use to attract your ideal partners and clients? What's your plan to win over these initial "fans" who will then eagerly give you input and partner up with you and help shape this project?

Who are the other established, online thought leaders in this niche who will possibly agree to partner with you to expose your idea to their audience? Are you seeking out their partnership with a win/win strategy? How's that going?

These are the types of questions I always fire back at eager online dreamers.

In other words...

"Where is your audience and how will you connect with them?"

For the sake of clarity, when I ask the "where's your audience?" question, *I'm not asking you to identify your target demographic.* For example, your target customer might be all single moms with older kids, or married couples with dual careers, etc., but that's NOT the answer I'm looking for and that's NOT what FYA is all about.

Instead FYA means finding out exactly WHERE online (what websites, blogs, Facebook groups, Twitter feeds, etc.) are the kind of people you want to reach already gathered? Who owns a mailing list full of eager engaged fans in that niche? I want to see you come up

with a list of LEADERS in your target niche. I want to see the names and websites of LEADERS WITH LARGE FOLLOWINGS on Twitter, YouTube, Facebook, etc. (I call these people gatekeepers.)

STOP HERE IF YOU ARE CONFUSED AT ALL. The previous paragraph is NOT one to be skipped.

Reread this entire FYA chapter over and over until it sinks in. Failure to grasp the concept I'm showing means you are looking at 1:1,000 odds of success as opposed to virtually ASSURED success.

Once the ideas I've shared so far in this chapter make sense to you, read on. The next question is this:

"How will you get the attention of your audience?"

Here's a great blog post that will really drill home these points:

www.jimcockrum.com/blog/?p=308

To get the attention of your audience, you might have to partner with the "gatekeeper" of that audience in a creative way.

If you are going to do any sort of "niche" marketing online, here's the fail-proof system I've used to succeed on ALL of the projects I've gotten into in the last eight years:

Niche Marketing 100% Success Formula

1. Identify a hot niche market and then FYA.
2. Give that audience great free content to grow your email list (by partnering with a gatekeeper and making the gatekeeper look good).
3. Systematically ask the audience what else they want (they may not know, but a discussion with them will tell you a lot). Ask open-ended questions in a survey (use surveymonkey.com).
4. CREATE A SIMPLE LOW-COST OR FREE PRODUCT OR WEBSITE that meets the needs of your audience and turns your audience into advocates of your message.
5. Monetize in any number of ways by selling outstanding affiliate offers or, more ideally, your own products to your audience (no garbage allowed) based on the feedback the audience gives you.
6. Automate your list-building and prospect follow-up efforts and continually improve your content and systems while seeking new partners (gatekeepers).

The strange thing about this model is that the “product” isn’t first or even second on the list. You aren’t building websites, writing books, or creating a product until step four at the earliest. (You may never actually create your own products! You might just sell other people’s products!)

At the beginning of Chapter 3, I told you about the best three paths to online success. I call it my “C.E.S.” model—you can use one or all three. As a reminder:

C = Consult. Help other business owners online and “off” apply the simple foundational (yet revolutionary to most) Internet Marketing truths to their business.

E = Expand. Find a profitable niche market, be a leader in that niche and give your followers fantastic content which leads to numerous monetization opportunities.

S = Sell Stuff. Sell profitable physical goods using Amazon, eBay or your own site. **MOST NEWBIES START WITH #3!**

The FYA principle applies to all three (as do the other skills I’ve shown you in this chapter).

When selling physical goods, for example, it makes sense to GO TO WHERE THE AUDIENCE IS. This is why I advise most newbies to start on eBay, or better yet, Amazon. That’s where the shoppers are!

Don’t start out by building a website to sell your widgets! Instead, go to where the widget shoppers are already hanging out. Your customers are on Amazon and eBay—and if you can’t get their attention there, you’ll have an exponentially harder time selling products from your own website.

Ignore the advice of this section at your own peril! If you ignore this information, your odds of success are about the same as a young actor spending his last \$100 for a bus ticket to Hollywood...or a young musician strapping his guitar on his back and hitchhiking to Nashville. Sure, many success stories start that way, but millions more broken-dream stories also start that way. I’m just giving you the odds—I’m not trying to destroy your dreams.

To borrow some Midwest slang, “it ain’t looking pretty for you” if you ignore me on the FYA principle—no matter how “cool” your idea, or how talented you are. Sure, you MIGHT still make it, but the odds are very much stacked against you.

Foundational Idea #3: Work With Great Partners

You might be tempted to skip reading this idea because it sounds obvious.

Don’t skip this section. It’s crucial and you’ve likely NEVER considered what I’m about to show you.

My definition of a “great partner” might surprise you. I’m typically not a fan of partnerships at all, but I make an exception when the rules of this section are followed because it’s not a typical “partnership” you’ll be seeking out. Instead, it’s an unusual, well-defined “partnership” with clear roles and easy exit points for all parties involved—and your partner isn’t a friend, family member, or random stranger, but instead they are the PERFECT person for a win/win adventure.

A word of caution about partnerships: If you set up a 50/50 partnership and go “all in” with someone to start a business (a friend, family members, next door neighbor, etc.), your odds of long-term success are abysmal. It’s a risk that’s not even worth taking. Ask any accountant who has been in business more than 15 years and they’ll tell you the same story.

“The one kind of ship that won’t sail is a partnership.”
-Dave Ramsey

There is one kind of limited partnership, however, that works very well, thanks to the Internet. It’s now very easy to do the proper research and find temporary, mutually beneficial partnerships that pay off nicely, with easy-to-understand terms defining the entire relationship. This section flows very nicely with the “FYA” (Find Your Audience) lesson of the previous section because now I’m going to show you how to find great partners that will make the FYA strategy as simple as possible and benefit everyone involved in the process.

One of the many advantages of we now have as entrepreneurs is the fact that our prospects are gathering in easy-to-access groups or communities at an ever-increasing rate. It’s as if each of us, as entrepreneurs, is a fisherman in a land where new streams and lakes full of fish just keep appearing out of thin air. The only barrier to accessing these new sources of prospects is our ability to creatively partner with those who own and manage the streams and lakes. The owners of these “lakes” are the great partners you need to track down and work with. I refer to these leaders as “gatekeepers.”

For many niche markets, the customer base is already hanging out online—on blogs, websites, and discussion forums related to that niche market.

A quick search on the major search engines for each of the best keywords associated with your niche will produce several pages of potentially great partners. Each of these sites are potential “FYA” partners for you to work with. These websites are the places where your future customers are already hanging out—waiting for you to find them.

You’ll discover several other websites to add to your targeted list of “potential partners” if you add the word “blog” or “forum” to each of your Google, Bing, or Yahoo search queries.

You can also research popular authors on Amazon to find gatekeepers.

Once you have your list, it's time to start forming relationships with the gatekeepers of each of the targeted groups. Even if you initially only end up working with one or two of the 50 sites you find, it will have been well worth the effort.

In some cases, your only option to gain exposure on these target sites will be to purchase advertising, but there are almost always other creative possibilities available to you. Paying for ad exposure is a last resort because we are all being steadily conditioned to ignore paid ads.

Your campaign to attract the attention of your target niche groups' gatekeepers will be fueled by contributing to their success, and then by expressing your desire to partner up. Here are some specific creative ideas to try (many people have done these things to me when trying to get my attention for a partnership):

- Make useful comments on blog posts or articles on their site or where you find things written about their site elsewhere online.
- Send them links to useful content that may be of interest to them (Google Alerts are great for tracking this).
- Try to identify the people behind the website. You need to know who the key players are so that you can form real relationships with the second-level support personnel who support the gatekeeper.
- Follow the website—and, more importantly, the individual key players who run the site. Follow them on Twitter, Facebook, and/or YouTube. Make supportive and relevant comments on the content they post when you find it.
- Get their physical mailing address and send a creative card or gift expressing your appreciation and admiration for what they've done. Don't have an agenda when you reach out—just form a real relationship and give honest feedback.
- Find places online where the key players or the website itself is mentioned or discussed. Pay special attention to anyone that says something negative, and make a thoughtful reply defending the key players or the site. Trust me—they'll notice this. For example, a VP of PayPal once called to thank me a couple of years ago after I spent some time defending PayPal on an open discussion forum. I had no agenda when writing my comments, but the VP went to great lengths to track me down so he could bounce some ideas off of me, and then he sent me a T-shirt. It's good to have friends like that!

Those types of strategies will help you to win over the key players and influencers at any website—even those “big, cold” sites that seem impossible to crack into. You'll slowly earn the right to partner with them in creative ways that others don't have access to.

Finding Creative Ways to Create Three-Way Wins

If I had to identify the one concept that has played the greatest role in my success online, it would be the idea of a “three-way win.” You've heard of “win/win” arrangements before, but I add in a third “winner” to my strategy when it comes to building a quality email list

fast or getting my message of any kind in front of an entirely new audience. By adding in this third “winner,” I can then actively seek out win/win/win opportunities. By doing this, I have built a virtual online empire.

What is Win/Win/Win?

The win/win/win strategy is easily grasped once you are made aware of the virtually infinite number of new communities and influential leaders which are already established online. By partnering with these online leaders you can do big things fast. Many businesses are even starting to hire “affiliate managers” just to manage their relationships with powerful online influencers because they recognize that these influential leaders hold the keys to rapid exposure online.

The three parties that ALL must “win” are:

- A. The community (otherwise known as the readers, the subscribers, the members, etc.).
- B. The community leader (the gatekeeper). For this example, let’s assume it’s a guy with a large targeted email list.
- C. YOU (the guy with great information to share who wants more visitors, traffic, and eyeballs on his stuff).

The rules of the win/win/win game:

- As long as the community (A) is getting timely, relevant information from their trusted leader (B), they will remain loyal to that source and they will tell others about it in a viral fashion.
- Very few community leaders (B) are so convinced of their own importance as to think that ONLY their ideas are good enough to share with their community (A). This opens the door for other “experts” and “content contributors” (C) to get in front of the community with the blessing of the leader (B). Most forward-looking community leaders (B) actively SEEK OUT top-notch contributors (C) to help keep their community happy and their own reputation intact.
- A good win/win/win makes the community leader (B) look great and helps him grow his audience. It also makes the community (A) very happy and gives them something they want, and gets YOU (C) the exposure you are seeking. If you can accomplish this sequence successfully, even a handful of times, you’ll have tremendous success online.
- A good community leader (B) always acts as a filter to keep bad content out. This is the invisible part of the job—it’s a lot of work and no one knows it’s happening. They only allow the best content in so that the experience of their loyal community members (A) is protected and strengthened. I’ve heard this role described as being a “curator of content.”

- As a content contributor, YOU (C) you should *only* work with trusted community managers (B) who have the best interest of their community (A) in mind. Don't engage in a partnership with anyone who treats their community abusively. Your reputation will be tarnished as they eventually go down in flames for abusing their influential position. I've seen it happen many times.
- The best content contributors come from a place of experience, success, motivation, originality, and credibility. A lack of any of those characteristics will make it harder for you to succeed. If you have all or even some of those character qualities, you'll quickly move from a contributor to a trusted and respected leader (B). Once you are an influential leader to some degree on your own, you will then find it easier to initiate win/win/win arrangements.
- The better the community leader (B) is at managing his community (A), and the larger the community is, the harder it is for you (C) to get your foot in as a contributor. But it's always worth it in the end. I've had potential partners pursue me for months attempting to get some exposure to my 100,000+ email followers. Most of the time, I turn these people away.

You can see the win/win/win strategy played out just by following my free newsletter or blog. While I do write most of the content, I will occasionally offer up content from guest writers who have contacted me, or those with a fantastic relevant product to offer. The guest writers or product owners get exposure and sales. I get commissions and kudos from readers and the readers get the content they want. As long as I make sure that I filter the content diligently, the win/win/win continues.

A great recent example is the website ProvenSelfPublishing.com. My partner on that project was Jason Miles. He did nearly all of the content, while I did about 15 percent of it. We share in the sales that are made, and he gets the additional benefit of exposure to my audience. As he promotes the site to his ever-growing audience, I get additional exposure to new readers as well.

Joint Ventures—A Powerful Form of Partnership

The first simple eBook I wrote earned me \$600 and about 150 subscribers to my email list on the *first day* I launched it. This was well *before* I had any audience of my own. I simply found an email list owner who had an audience made up of people who I thought might be interested in my book. I offered a 50 percent cut (an affiliate commission) on all sales made and asked the list owner to send an informational promotion of my book to her email list. This resulted in several sales and also helped launch my online eBook career. I repeated this multiple more times with other influential leaders in my niche until I had a well-established following of my own.

The foundation of much of my early success online came as a result of doing joint ventures with other marketers and websites that were servicing my same customer demographic.

These partners agreed to promote my products, articles and services to their customer base if I would do the same thing for them in return. Over time, I've become much more discretionary about who I will enter into such arrangements with. Just because someone is willing to promote my product does not mean I'll be willing to promote theirs. This is

because I've learned to protect my audience from any products or information that doesn't resonate with my core principles and message.

If I can find other experts who have a good reputation and high-quality products, I'm very willing to enter into a joint venture partnership with them. If it isn't obvious already, the best way to position yourself for success with joint ventures is to have a large loyal audience. A common phrase in Internet marketing circles is, "He who has the list, wins."

In my opinion, one of the greatest indicators of marketing prowess is a large loyal email list of followers who are eager to hear from the owner of that list. There is no stronger position to be in. Find creative ways to partner with these "leaders" and prosper from it!

CAUTION: ONLY choose partners with integrity.

Some of the best advice that I received early on in my business career was to be very careful about who I associated myself with. This advice is still very true, but in the Internet age, there are multiple kinds of partnerships that simply didn't exist before. These new kinds of partnerships present a whole new level of risk and opportunity.

In the 1990s and earlier, entering into a business partnership implied a much stronger and legally binding arrangement that was full of risks and involved a great deal of planning, lawyers, paperwork, financial considerations, etc.

When I talk about partnerships in this chapter, however, I'm referring to a much less structured type of arrangement. For example, I previously talked about joint venture partners and "three-way win" partners.

Some of these partnerships are entered into with only a few minutes of research and negotiation involved, and the partnership activity lasts only a few days. In other cases, longer-term partnerships are formed. But in nearly all cases, there is a casual and speedy process of compatibility evaluation and agreement on the terms. Nothing is signed, reputations are the handshake, and business moves forward rapidly.

Those who abuse this simple "unwritten" system go down in flames quickly. That is a built-in incentive to carefully guard your reputation. Even these "simple" partnerships can lead to trouble, though, if your name becomes tied to someone who doesn't put their character and customers first.

A creative partnership success story:

Would you partner closely on a project with someone you've never met and probably never will?

I have a partner who shares a 50/50 arrangement on the 12,000- member-strong membership site OfflineBiz.com. Andrew Cavanagh is my partner yet, as of this writing, I have never actually met or spoken to him because we live on opposite sides of the planet.

We've worked together for nearly eight years so far—with no contact except email (not even Skype!).

We manage hundreds of thousands of dollars in membership fees and other income annually from our partnership efforts, yet the entire arrangement for our partnership happened in a series of short emails exchanged over the course of a couple days a few years ago.

How is such an arrangement possible?

When I approached Andrew initially, he and I both quickly researched each other's online reputation and accomplishments. It became quickly obvious that the combined skill sets and assets that we brought to the table would produce a great deal of synergy and success. In other words, we knew we'd be successful before we even started. It was just a matter of putting the pieces into place.

Those of us that recognize the power of a strong online reputation now have an advantage over everyone else. A bad reputation stands out online easily. Having no reputation stands out almost as glaringly. Having a great reputation, however, is impossible to fake. By establishing your own strong reputation and then seeking out simple, complementary partnerships with others that also have built up a positive online presence and reputation, you can find amazing partners very quickly. Starting your search can be as simple as spending a few minutes searching online using your industry keywords and Google.

Unfortunately, the English language is sorely lacking when it comes to the word "partnership." We call everything from a marriage to a one-day project with a stranger a "partnership." Overall, partnerships in business are nearly always a TERRIBLE idea, unless roles are very clearly defined, and a mutually understood and agreed-to "exit strategy" is clearly marked for both parties. Please don't mistake the previous section of my book as an endorsement of all possible partnership arrangements! Instead, I want you to understand the power that is within your grasp if you are willing to reach out to leaders with mutually beneficial (and, most often, temporary) terms and arrangements that benefit all parties involved.

Foundational Idea #4: Email Marketing

Email marketing provides the highest ROI (Return On Investment) from “one-to-many” communication (i.e. you create one pitch and send it to many recipients at once) ever created by man.

Example of my email success:

Just in case you are thinking that “email is dead,” here’s proof that it’s alive and well! In 2013, I held my first-ever live conference. I announced it to my email list and it sold out quickly—so much so that we had to turn people away. That’s the picture of the crowd that you saw at the start of this book.

In 2014 and 2015, we also sold out the event in one day when we sent out an email announcement. As I write this update, we’ve sold out all three of our annual events—each time in one day! How? We sent an email to our fan base.

Another example of the power of email:

When I launched my first “real book” into bookstores around the world, it shot to the #1 position on Amazon in the “Marketing” and “Internet Marketing” categories using ONLY email marketing. I didn’t spend a DIME on ANY other marketing efforts. Here’s a short video with detailed proof of the success of that book launch:

<https://vimeo.com/user31749852/review/128814490/a43a364248>

Don’t worry about email for now if...

...you intend to start out selling physical products on Amazon or eBay. Building a mailing list may not be high on your to-do list right now, however, as you start to settle into a niche, you’ll find email marketing to be the most powerful form of marketing available to you.

Typically, growing an email list of customers on Amazon can be challenging because of the strictly enforced regulations that Amazon has in place for all who use their platform. I’ll never encourage you to violate those policies because it will put your account at risk.

But Jim, another course is teaching me to grow an email list selling physical products on Amazon—who's right?

You will encounter other courses (many which are priced much higher than mine) that claim to teach you "safe ways" to grow an email list using your buyers on Amazon.com. It's a BAD IDEA to toy with these strategies. Amazon can and will pull the trigger quickly if they suspect you are trying to "game the system" by turning the customers they send you into leads for your own purposes. It's not worth it!

Remember—all it takes is one customer complaint about "spam" and your account is at risk with Amazon!

Growing an email list on eBay by inviting your buyers to become subscribers is possible, but still tricky because of rules that are in place that discourage it. But, when done correctly, you CAN pull it off with virtually no risk. Here's a free video that shows you one way to grow an email list of your eBay buyers using a service called Zapier:

<https://vimeo.com/user31749852/review/130131866/c1434baa63>

Always pay attention to the CURRENT rules of interacting with your buyers and visitors on eBay or Amazon. Don't use my advice, or the advice of any other expert or guru. Read the rules and proceed with caution!

Keep in mind, regardless of what businesses you launch online, the strongest asset you can have in your online marketing venture is a large list of people who want to hear from you and who want to work with you. A large and growing email list is ideal because of how powerful and automated it can be to build genuine relationships with a massive audience—without the risks associated with social media.

It's clearly better to have a large email list than it is to have a large Facebook group, a large Twitter following or a popular YouTube channel. Why is this so? Because you can lose an account on Facebook, YouTube, or Twitter easily, and your reputation and audience simply vanish with it!

Are you thinking this could never happen to you? It could.

In fact, my large, popular, YouTube channel simple vanished one day, seemingly inexplicably with a note from YouTube that simply said, "You've been banned, don't ever open another YouTube account."

I was getting a dozen or so new subscribers per day and numerous new customers and leads from my YouTube account when this happened to me.

Fortunately for me, I was able to get my account back, thanks to an overwhelming response from my community. But many good people lose their accounts or get inexplicably

shut down all the time by the “big boy” sites of online business (Google, Amazon, eBay, Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, etc.). Get the full story on my YouTube incident here:

www.jimcockrum.com/blog/2015/04/10/open-letter-to-youtube-about-my-suspended-account/

It’s this sort of uncertainty that makes me such a big fan of establishing multiple streams of income.

A final note about email marketing:

Email marketing is widely considered to be the most powerful form of marketing in use today. When done correctly, the ROI is 50:1 or more. Most months, my own personal ROI is FAR HIGHER than that.

Rather than take up numerous pages in this book giving you all the information I have about email marketing, I’m going to GIVE YOU my all-time bestselling course (purchased by thousands) absolutely free as a reader of this book! Make no mistake—this isn’t “throw away” training I’m giving you. This course is widely considered to be THE authoritative course on the topic. Time and time again, my somewhat controversial and unusual approaches to growing an audience and gaining their loyalty have been tested and proven to work.

I have clients pay me thousands to help them implement the strategies I’ll be teaching you in this course.

This course has been called superior to courses costing thousands on the same topic. In other words, it’s worth your time to go through this material!

Get the details here—it’s my \$97 course and it’s all yours without any opt-in or upsell. It’s my “thank you” for being a reader of my book:

www.listbuildingclass.com/free

(Feel free to share that link if you know of someone who could benefit from training on the topic of email marketing.)

Foundational Idea #5: Embrace Simple Video Now

YouTube has now firmly established itself as far more than just an entertaining video-hosting site. It is now a viable search engine for an unimaginable amount of topical video-based content and it’s one of the most popular destinations on the Internet. The best part of all is that it’s 100% free to use and anyone can upload content. Get yourself established on YouTube now.

If you aren't putting yourself on YouTube, you aren't in the game as much as you should be at this point and you are only falling further behind. No matter what business you are in, if you need more customers than you have now, YouTube is a good place to start making your presence known.

Since my middle son was 10, he's been posting simple videos on YouTube.com. Within a short time he was able to gather hundreds of thousands of views and thousands of followers on his YouTube account without any help from me. He didn't set out to accomplish these things—he just turned on a video camera and recorded himself doing things like tinkering on his guitar, playing video games, or riding his skateboard. His spelling was atrocious, he didn't try to use the right "keywords," and he has no idea why all of it is getting so big so fast. My point is if a 10-year-old with a borrowed \$100 video camera can create a virtual empire online, why aren't you getting your message out on YouTube?

My advice is typically the same for all high-traffic sites. Be authentic, be creative, and generate leads into your sales funnel by providing valuable content and advice. YouTube is no exception.

In most of the videos that I put on YouTube, I will have a very gentle call to action at some point in the video. This call to action typically invites the viewer to join my email mailing list. Sometimes I give away free downloadable information products as part of the video presentation as well. I don't always have a business purpose in mind when putting content on YouTube, however. One of my most watched videos is one that shows about how to get a high score on a fun online paper airplane game. I'm sure some of the tens of thousands of viewers 'who enjoyed my paper airplane video' have noticed my other videos as well.

From a marketing perspective, I find that the most powerful videos are the ones that let you into the "real world" of the person making the video. I'm talking about being authentic. Some of the most popular content on YouTube is the simple stuff. These are the videos that make it easy for the viewer to connect and relate with the maker of the video. Using too many slick graphics, intros, great backgrounds, etc., can actually work against you. This should be encouraging to those who are nervous about creating video content. Spend some time on YouTube checking out popular videos on topics related to your niche interest. You'll quickly see what I mean about the "authentic videos" rising to the top.

How Can I Go Viral with My Videos?

By now you've likely heard the term "viral video." When a video begins to get a lot of attention and traction and is being passed around social networks, it is said to have gone "viral."

Of the tens of thousands of videos that are uploaded to YouTube.com daily, what is it about a handful of them that makes them go "viral"?

Several people have attempted to identify a formula, or they have claimed to be able to make it happen repeatedly, but few have achieved any sort of predictable consistency. There are some common elements, though. These elements include videos that:

- Make people laugh
- Are cutting edge with their content or delivery
- Surprise the audience
- Feature an uplifting message
- Are cute (kids, animals)
- Tell a compelling story
- Are short (less than a 2-3 minutes)
- Establish you as ENTERTAINING or as an EXPERT—ideally, BOTH!

While many of these factors can be fairly hard to achieve intentionally, you should constantly be alert and aware of events and circumstances around you that may lend themselves to becoming content in a viral video.

A more predictable strategy for gaining attention on YouTube.com is to focus on creating a consistent stream of useful content that includes a clear call to action (e.g. "join our mailing list"). Even if only a handful of people ever see your video in the first year, there could easily come a time in the future where the subject matter of your video becomes fodder for a larger conversation and, at that point, it could get passed around virally. As long as the content of the video you create has some useful value, or is entertaining, then it is worth having been made.

A Simple video success story:

One of my newsletter readers, Tracy Hanes, harnessed the power of online video as a marketing tool when he founded his consulting company a couple years ago.

Within a short time, he had several major clients approaching him, and landed hundreds of thousands of dollars in business training within months.

His only strategy?

He posted simple videos on YouTube using keywords related to his niche market in the description. These videos quickly showed up on Google for the desirable keywords that he had used in his descriptions.

He produced all the videos himself with no editing except the basic editing features of his inexpensive handheld Flip and Kodak video cameras. The video content is as simple as a guy sitting at his desk talking to an inexpensive video camera.

I asked Tracy what his secrets were in gaining so much attention from the "right people" with his videos, and he told me, "I target keywords and do some research. I could literally pick a Google page and place a video there to get a first-page listing thanks to the power of

video.”

It’s worth noting that none of Tracy’s videos have “gone viral,” attracting thousands or millions of viewers but, nonetheless, they have been highly effective. The several sample videos he sent me had been viewed only a few dozen times each on YouTube, but they were working for him very well as they were bringing him the exact kinds of viewers he needed!

The results?

Tracy’s business has grown in two years to include three key officers. Their business in the most recent year is 1200% larger than their first successful year.

Tracy’s “Zero Injury Institute” was established in order to provide “Safety Leadership Concepts” and services to companies in the Industrial Safety niche.

Make Video Even If You Have a Face for Radio

You don’t have to spend very much time on YouTube to discover that it’s not just the “pretty and articulate people with nice editing skills” who are making videos. If you are going to achieve expert status online, then you’ll need to get over whatever fears you have of making and using online video. Remember, it actually works against you to try to be too slick and too polished when presenting your ideas using online video. More than ever before, prospects appreciate online experts who are real and who deliver useful content, regardless of how slick the presentation is. This isn’t to say that you should ignore quality altogether when producing video, but you should never be discouraged from putting up content that you are worried is less than perfect.

I realize that some people are very shy about appearing on camera. If that’s you, I have some good news. It doesn’t have to be *your* face or *your* voice featured in the video content that you create. Your viewers are much more interested in the content of the video than in the details of whose face and whose voice is appearing. Many of my most effective videos contain no “face time” at all, but instead show the viewer screenshots of different websites and online tools that I’m demonstrating. When creating online tutorial types of videos, I use Camtasia (a bit pricey), or SnagIt (almost as good, and far less pricey) software to capture and record both the contents of the website that I’m viewing, as well as my own voiceover commentary.

A great example of the power of online video can be found in the story of Ted Williams. Ted was a homeless man in early 2011, until a caring passerby took the time to record Ted’s incredible voice and posted the video to YouTube. Within 2 days, the video had 5 million views and Ted had multiple high-profile job offers. By Ted’s own admission, he has only a “face for radio,” but the power of viral video gave him a new lease on life.

Another success story thanks to simple video and some basic Internet Marketing skills:

We brought online marketing to the stone age.

We launched a website selling "barefoot" sandals. It's a modern take on a 10,000-year-old idea.

Currently, we are selling over 400 pairs of Invisible Shoes every month, grossing over \$15,000, and still growing. We're about to launch four new products (that our customers have been begging for), so we expect those numbers will increase dramatically in the next couple months, even though we'll be selling sandals in the winter.

We've also had 50 retailers sign up to carry our products (and our plan is to get over 500 in our first year with a retail product).

We made our first sale 16 hours after we launched the site.

My wife and I quit our day jobs three months later.

Now we're working with a group of consultants who helped build Reebok from <\$1,000,000 to an 8-figure business.

A lot of the promotional tactics we learned at OfflineBiz.com have been relevant for our non-local business. Hearing Jim Cockrum extol the value of submitting to video sites was an inspiration to make a lot of videos and we are gearing up to make even more.

The two biggest things we did to promote the site were:

- 1.** Participating on forums where people were already talking about barefoot running. We didn't pitch our product. We just joined in on the conversation and had a simple signature file at the end of each post that let people know we had free DIY videos on our website.
- 2.** Sharing how-to videos on YouTube and other video sites... where I showed how to make our product without ever buying our product! I gave complete plans to do it yourself with items you might have around the house.

The lessons:

One of the things that I've found is: people respond to people. That is, the more you (and your employees) can be visible, accessible, and available online, the more your potential customers can relate to you. And the more they relate to you (or, again, the people in your company), the more connected to you and your products they feel. And the more connected they feel, the more they want to do business with you. You can't make this a

strategy... you simply have to do it honestly.

Don't be afraid to give away a lot of free information—I've had dozens of runners come up to me at races and show me the shoes they've made following my instructions. While they didn't buy anything from me, they've referred others who have. And, maybe, someday, I'll offer something they can't make on their own and they'll become customers (actually, it's guaranteed that I'll have that product to offer them).

Steven Sashen
Invisible Shoe

There is so much good, free content online regarding making videos to get your message out. One of the best places to pick up the skills you need is by watching "how to do video" videos RIGHT on YouTube. We've learned so many skills quickly by seeking out true professionals on the YouTube platform.

A Challenge For You: Do whatever it takes to get a video posted on YouTube. No excuses, no delays. This chapter has given you all the confidence, tools, and advice you need—go make it happen now if you've never done it before.

Concluding Thoughts for Chapter 3:

I've just given you some essential skills that will be of great benefit to you no matter what direction you go online. Studying and perfecting these skills (with virtually NO OTHER SKILLS required) will mean you are equipped for unlimited opportunities online.

Let me re-emphasize the point that you can easily get sucked into a "skill cycle" on the Internet and never escape! You could waste time for years learning how to:

- **build websites**
- **use WordPress**
- **build a blog**
- **find profitable products to sell**
- **do "social marketing" all yourself**
- **return every customer phone call or email**
- **program php**
- **build a membership website**
- **update old content**
- **edit your writing and repurpose your content**
- **ship product**

- **post content to various sites**
- **edit and design video/audio/pictures**
- **transcribe your video/audio**
- **create Amazon and eBay listings**

All of these are TIME WASTERS, in my opinion! They are all a vital part of my various businesses, but I don't do ANY of these activities myself NOR do I pay a lot of money to have these things done! I partner with great people and have them do the work while we share in the benefits of the results.

Show me someone with a skill (ANY skill) and in ten minutes I'll find someone who is FASTER, CHEAPER, BETTER (better looking and more fun to work with too). If you pursue skills beyond the ones I've listed in this chapter, please do so with extreme caution because you could be wasting your time!

One more time...

People with SKILLS work for people with IDEAS.

—Jim Cockrum

Chapter 4: Some "Silent Sales Machine" Business Ideas

Now that I've shown you some of the basic tools that have helped me (and thousands of others) establish solid income streams, let's talk about some specific income models.

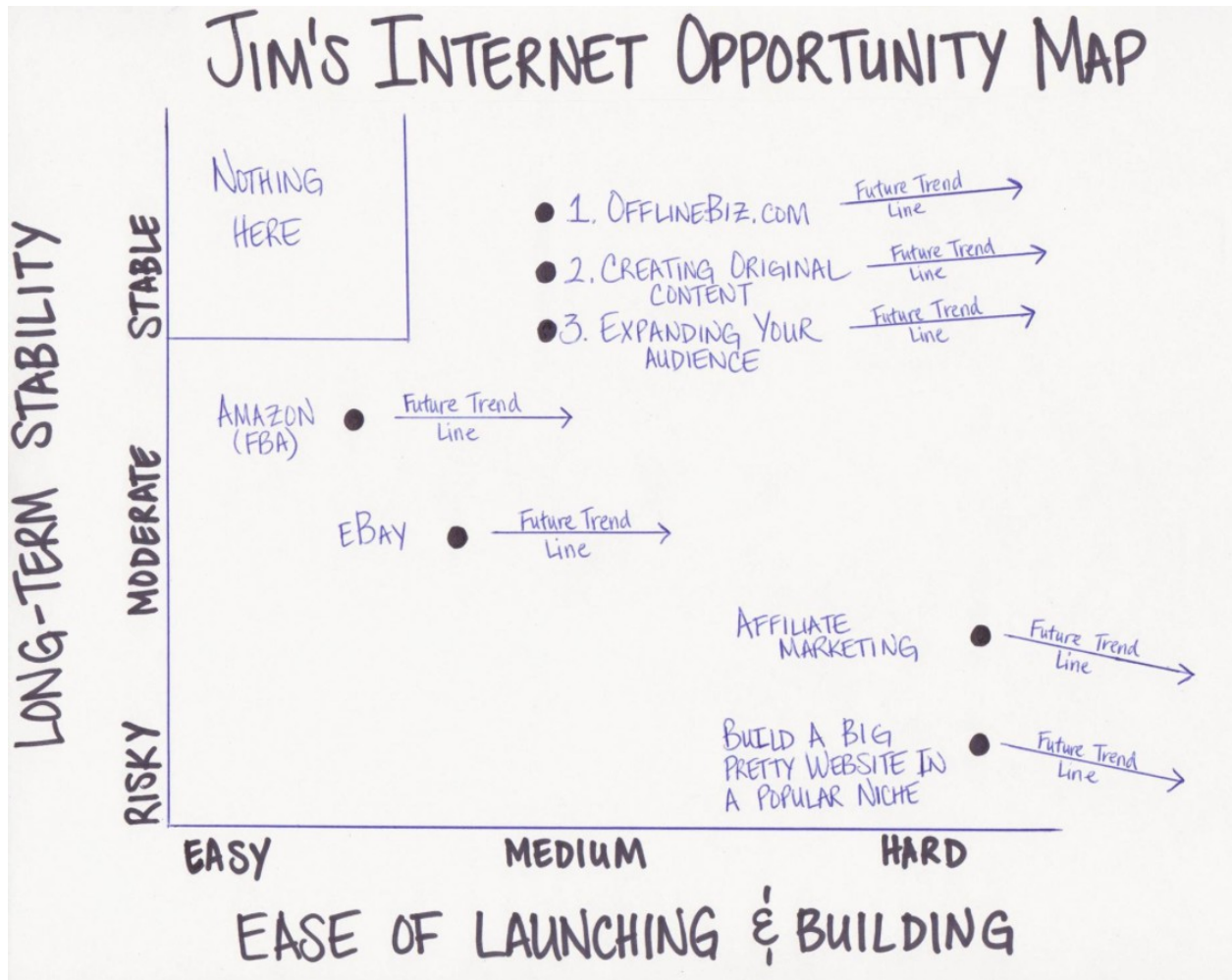


Illustration by Thea Woods. Thank you!

To join the discussion about this "map" and see a bigger picture of it, please visit:

www.jimcockrum.com/blog/?p=1426

The above graph was something I first drew on a napkin to help illustrate where I thought the real business opportunities are online. As of this updated version of "Silent Sales Machine," not much has changed in the past several years.

Each dot on the graph represents a business opportunity that is worth familiarizing yourself with. If the Internet-based biz-op you are considering isn't on this map, there's almost certainly a reason for it. My team and I have "been there and done that."

These observations come from the experiences we've had since 1999 trying to build and establish successful online businesses. I stand by the placement of these "dots" after careful consideration of where each opportunity should fall on the map. There is, however, an interesting debate among my readers on my blog about all of this.

As a reminder—all of the above topics fall into one of the three categories I've mentioned previously:

C = Consult. Help other business owners online (and offline) apply the simple foundational (yet revolutionary to most) Internet Marketing truths to their business.

E = Expand. Find a profitable niche market, be a leader in that niche and give your followers fantastic content which leads to numerous monetization opportunities.

S = Sell Stuff. Sell profitable physical goods using Amazon, eBay, or your own site. **MOST NEWBIES START WITH THIS!**

To discuss any of these business models with my coaching team, please call us at 1 (800) 994-1792, or jump over to my blog and talk it over with other readers and me:

www.jimcockrum.com/blog/?p=1426

"I just completed six sessions of coaching with one of Jim's coaches who has helped me jump start my new business venture. The coach's in-depth knowledge of the business was instrumental in helping me go from zero to over several thousand in monthly sales within just three months. His ability to listen to my needs and his friendly, clear, and affable communication style made the coaching experience fun as well as educational. I highly recommend coaching to anyone who is serious about learning the online business."

— Dr. C. Wolf"

To read many other success stories, visit JimCockrum.com and click on "testimonials."

Content is Cash

I've sold literally millions of dollars of information online. I've sold my own information as well as information put together by others (I get an affiliate commission in those cases). It's all "virtual content." To me, virtual content includes video, articles, eBooks, audios, Kindle books, etc.

These items can be given away, sold, or hidden behind membership sites so that only paid customers can gain access.

The beauty of “virtual content” online is that it has VERY high utility for paying customers when created and delivered correctly—but it costs the content creator virtually nothing to deliver. You create it once, and it lives on and on.

If you aren’t in the business of creating content that consumers want and need, then I’m about to talk you into this business model. As long as you pick a niche where there are passionate prospects, it’s hard to go wrong.

If you are going to attract loyal followers and prospects online, it all starts with creating good content for them to consume.

What is a “passionate prospect”?

I tell people all the time to pursue their dream and do what they love but, if they want to increase their odds of success 1,000 times over, they need to seek out a niche with “passionate prospects.” You’ll know you have passionate prospects when you get into a niche market where people can’t sleep at night or they wake up each day thinking about your niche. The emotionally charged, polarizing, passionate niche markets are well documented in many cases, but there are many of them. You see the “how to make money,” “relationships,” and “beauty/fitness” niche markets everywhere for a reason. These are some of the most common and emotionally-charged niche markets.

There are, of course, thousands of other niche markets to get into. I’ve coached successful businesses in countless niche markets including real estate, paint-ball accessories, guitar pedals, hand-made wreaths, alternate running shoes, and various pet niche markets, just to name a few.

In all cases, your success starts out with choosing a niche where there are enough qualified prospects already eager for more, and already assembling together in groups (at least loosely) somewhere online.

Content is whatever information your prospects want.

It’s getting harder and harder to force your message into the lives of busy people who are already focused on other things that they care more about. It has become increasingly simple for all of us to surround ourselves with *only* the content and messages that we wish to receive. We are all annoyed by anything that forces its way into our attention.

This means that great content is not a slick online brochure or fancy video touting all of the features of your latest and greatest products. Instead, great content is simply defined by your prospects as, “exactly the right information I want or need at exactly the right time I need or want it.” Ideally, it’s also free to consume (until you’ve proven the value of your content and your prospects are BEGGING for more and willing to pay a fair price to get it).

If you can find a way to position yourself as an expert who frequently delivers great content (you'll likely start with "free" content), you won't be able to contain the number of leads and prospects who will beat a path to your door. Your best customers will also become your best salespeople as they spread the word about how great you are.

I've already listed several types of content at the start of this chapter, but let me stress that the **FORMAT** of your content (audio, video, eBook, Kindle, blog article, etc.) is not nearly as important as the **QUALITY** of your ideas. If you are engaging, helpful, and "shareable" (meaning people want to spread the word once they hear or see your content), then you are all set and the media format becomes irrelevant. All forms of content delivery are open to those that have a message that is desirable.

With that being said, let's focus on one of my favorite forms of content.

Books Are One of My Favorite Kinds of Content

I believe everyone has a good book or two, or 50 in them. Very few people ever get it written and finished though. That's probably part of the reason why the title of "author" is held in such high esteem.

If the idea of having a "real book" is a bit intimidating, or if you don't feel quite ready for it, consider the option of writing an eBook. When I say eBook, I mean any type of electronic or digitally delivered book. It could be a Kindle book, a PDF file, or some other future popular format for the written word that's not yet common.

The eBooks that I've written are simple PDF files that can be sent as an email attachment, or downloaded and easily distributed instantly anywhere in the world where there is an Internet connection. I've sold, or given away, over 500,000 eBooks, so I'm well versed on the subject.

Writing your first eBook could be as simple as creating a 20-page document and then saving it as a PDF file. A PDF formatted file is preferred because it can be opened by anyone on any computer (Mac or PC). My favorite way to create a PDF is by using the free OpenOffice.org writer software. It's as easy to use as any other word processor, but when you are done creating your document, you just click the PDF button and you are done. If you later have edits or additions for the book, you edit the original file, click the PDF button again, and you have a completely updated PDF file. You have the same option if you use Microsoft Word. A PDF cannot be changed either, so you know that if your name is attached to it, it is exactly what you wrote.

My experience with eBooks has been life-changing. I wrote my first 20 page eBook over a decade ago and, within just a few weeks, my life began to change forever. Having eBooks floating around the Internet has made me a lot of money.

For over 10 years now, I've had the privilege of waking up each day, logging on to my computer, and checking the statistics of how many books I sold while I was sleeping. It's a feeling that never gets old. These books are delivered electronically as downloadable files to customers who purchase them from my various websites.

One of the best ways to establish yourself as a credible “thought leader” in any niche market is to create an eBook product. Even if you simply record an interview with other experts in the niche, you will still be perceived as an expert for having completed a book project, and the marketing potential is limitless.

An eBook should be a lead-generating tool that gives away great content, while establishing your expertise. Don’t make it a big sales pitch, and don’t fill it with “fluff” content. Customers who buy, or even download something for free, are expecting a great first impression, so put great information inside. When I sell information it’s the starting line for a lifelong relationship (hopefully) with a new customer. It’s not the finish line where I finally made some money. The customer needs to feel like they got 10 times the value from the purchase or I’ve failed them.

Success Story: I had 10 years of experience running a martial arts school. I had started the school from scratch with no credit, no education, and no money—and then I grew it successfully to roughly 200 students. I felt I had a lot to say about the martial arts industry that just wasn’t being said in the mainstream publications.

So I wrote a book.

I wasn’t willing to settle for getting a few dollars off of each book sale, so I aimed higher.

That’s when I started seriously studying how to market products and information online. I encountered a pretty steep learning curve at first, but within a few short years I had overcome any initial challenges and my book had garnered a die-hard underground cult following. I managed this with little if any mainstream press coverage, and well before social media had become a factor in viral marketing. Mostly, I relied on organic search engine traffic and word-of-mouth as well as some PPC.

It’s encouraging to know that countless martial arts instructors who followed my book to success are now running successful schools. Without a doubt, that’s the most rewarding thing about marketing my ideas as an expert.

And honestly, without folks like Jim Cockrum freely sharing their knowledge and experience about Internet marketing online, I’d never have been able to learn the ins and outs of online marketing. Thanks Jim, and thanks to all the other Internet marketing coaches who helped me along the way who are too numerous to mention here.

Mike Massie

small-dojos-big-profits.com

Some Thoughts from an eBook Veteran:

1. You can’t have a “protect my ideas” mindset with eBooks because it will work against you.

There is a mentality you'll have to adopt if you're going to be successful as an eBook author. The reality is, your product *will be* passed around to people who haven't paid for it (if it's any good at all). Just plan on that happening and use it to your advantage. Whenever I create content that I know will be going into an eBook (or anywhere online for that matter), I intentionally include multiple links, references, and stories that all lead the reader back to my websites, blog, mailing lists, etc. By doing this, I'm actually ensuring that even the most blatant of copyright violations against my material will actually be a huge marketing boost for my overall business. This is one of the most common concerns that I hear when working with new eBook authors. But, once you have the correct mindset, you'll quickly realize that it's a non-issue. I actually enjoy seeing my eBook products being "secretly" distributed on piracy download websites. It's all free marketing, from my vantage point. If you want to try and track where your content might be showing up online, I suggest you use free Google Alerts (alerts.google.com) to track your content. By setting up an alert for key phrases from your work, you can instantly see if someone posts your content to a website.

2. There are many ways to distribute your work. Use them all!

Over a decade ago, I set up a simple website to sell the earlier versions of the book you are now reading. The book has been updated nine times and the website has been updated as well, but the simple website where it all started is still the primary place where my book sells every day. You'll find my books as well on Amazon in various formats, and on audible.com in audio format. The format and location doesn't matter really—why not use ALL available options when it is so easy to do? If you have to pick just ONE place to start though, start with Amazon. More on that topic at the end of this chapter.

3. A book can live much longer now. It doesn't have to expire.

Another great benefit of writing eBooks is that you can easily update the product at any point, and if you so choose, you can reward your past readers with a brand-new copy for free. When's the last time that happened to you as a reader? I've done it numerous times with my eBooks. I collect the email addresses of my readers when they buy, and then send them free updates for life. There are readers of this very book who have devoured all previous versions of it, but they paid only once.

4. Very often, an eBook is better than a "real book."

Some are surprised to hear that I'd rather sell an inexpensive eBook to someone than an expensive "real book" in nearly all cases. There are several reasons for this, not the least of which is the amount of money that I earn in the long run! With a print book, there are a lot of people touching it before it actually gets to the reader. Everyone gets their piece of the pie including the paper company, the ink company, the glue in the binding company, the printing press business, the marketers, the publishers, the guy who sweeps the publisher's floor at two in the morning, etc. What does that leave me with in the end? Not much. Worse than that, I don't get an email address, and I can't send updates to my new fan/reader!

With an eBook, however, the delivery is instantaneous and free, and my profit margins are huge in comparison. That's not the best part of the story, though. The best part is when

someone buys an eBook from me, I get their email address. Buying an eBook means that they are already online while reading it and they can easily jump into my online community. This means I can follow-up with them and give them current updates, other products and services of interest. I can begin to build a lifelong relationship with that customer instantly.

Another benefit of an eBook is that I can interact more with the customer. I can include clickable links inside the book that take the readers to related blog posts, articles, or other supporting content online. I can even sell something from inside the book, and a click or two later, the customer has the product ordered and I have been paid.

You can see why I'm such a huge fan of eBooks. It probably also makes sense now why I decided to write eBooks for 10 years before I ever had a "real book" published.

If you'd like a comprehensive course on writing a great book and promoting it correctly, you should check out this course:

ProvenSelfPublishing.com

Choose Good Titles for Your Content

One of the great lessons that I learned a little late in my business career is the importance of the titles that I choose to use for my information products and content.

For any information or content that you create, take great care when giving it a name. The name or title of your content is the first impression, and you will gain or lose many readers or viewers based upon what you decide to call it.

For example, most professional copywriters will tell you that they spend as much if not more time on the title or header of a sales letter than they do on the rest of the document. You can assign a lot of value to your content and information if you use powerful words to title and describe it.

As you begin creating a steady flow of content, keep in mind that the titles you choose are a significant factor in how much impact your efforts will have.

Great titles give the content a feel of "exclusivity" and "simplicity" at the same time. Creating top-10 lists or step-by-step lists makes for great content.

Examples:

- Seven things every puppy owner must know about housebreaking.
- Five back pain secrets your doctor won't tell you.
- Special report: Getting out of debt step-by-step.
- Eight steps to landing your dream job fast.

You'll notice that I failed to follow my own advice in choosing a title for this book! The simple explanation is that I wrote this book very early in my career and it took off, in spite of my poor choice of title. Now that the term "Silent Sales Machine" has been branded and associated with being a great book, I'd be crazy to abandon the title.

If I had it to do all over again, however, I probably would have chosen a much more descriptive title such as, "The three online strategies that have earned me millions online."

As a reminder—I talked a lot in Chapter 3 about other content creation strategies (email, video, etc.).

Start creating content!

If You Aren't an Expert, Interview One!

Everyone enjoys being considered an expert by their peers. Use this universal truth to your advantage. Most experts in any field will readily agree to being interviewed by an engaging fellow expert with a win-win proposition.

Some of the easiest and most powerful content that you can ever deliver to your audience will simply be interviews with relevant experts.

If you find yourself having trouble getting the attention of the higher-level experts in your field, then I suggest you use what I call "the bottom-up" approach. When using "the bottom-up" approach to securing experts, you start out by contacting the least influential and most eager experts in your field of interest. For example, these are the authors who appear well beyond page one on Amazon or Google. These experts aren't hard to find, and typically they are more than willing to volunteer the information they know in a telephone interview, regardless of your marketing power or intentions. Once you've approached and interviewed several of the lesser-known experts, you can begin to approach the more influential experts with a bit more credibility and experience. You'll find that most of them will be far more likely to agree to an interview if you've already interviewed people whom they consider to be their peers. Of course, you will have gotten testimonials from each of them as well!

HARO, www.helpareporter.com, is a great resource for finding experts to interview and also for gaining publicity yourself as an expert once you are known in your field. You post what you're looking for, and experts contact you in hopes of free PR. It's win/win.

More influential experts may be interested in knowing what your marketing plans are in exchange for their valuable ideas and time. The best answer you can give them is that you'll be exposing them to your large following. Ideally, this is a large email list, popular blog, or other popular forum.

What if you don't have an audience yourself yet to help convince the "big fish" that you are worth the effort?

The bottom-up strategy still works. It may take slightly more effort but, when approaching experts who are lower on the totem pole, you can offer to provide them with a copy of your interview as well as a full transcript for their use in whatever way they see fit for their own audience. Inside the transcript that you create, you can include links back to your blog—or better yet your email list. As your list grows, so does your ability to attract the influential leaders in your niche.

As you work your way up the totem pole of influential people in your niche, you will find it easier and easier to get the time and attention of both the experts and the audiences that they are reaching. With each interview that you conduct, be sure to deliver the content of the interview in an attractive, professional format that the expert can easily share with their own audience. If you conduct a high-energy, exciting, personal, and engaging interview, the expert will be more than delighted to share it with their audience. Most people will have no problem with you conservatively sprinkling in your contact information, your website, or details on joining your email list.

There are several free tools that you can use to accommodate such interviews. I've frequently used the services of freeconferencecall.com to conduct interviews by phone and then easily generate an MP3 or WAV file for easy distribution to my audience.

Transcription services can be used to turn any spoken recording into a written transcript. The services I use also are able to correct the grammar as they create the document because few of us speak in full sentences.

An attractive e-cover can easily be created as well using any number of eBook or e-cover services online.

Give the file, the transcript, and the attractive cover to every expert you interview and request that they give the product away as a download to their followers (or they can sell the product and keep the proceeds). Of course, inside of the product will be a handful of conservative references to you and instructions for joining your email list and/or getting more information from you.

Using Tele-seminar Services to Record Experts or Train Your Audience

Tele-seminars are one of my favorite ways to capture amazing content and to communicate with an audience either live or with the recording of a call. A tele-seminar is nothing more than a recorded telephone or Skype conversation among two or more people. As soon as the call is over, you have an MP3 recording that can be edited or used as is. It can be transcribed and turned into a book if you so desire. It's instant, easy content. Many of the most successful podcasts use this simple model.

Typically, the tele-seminar is a presentation conducted by one (or, at most, three or four) *hosts*, while a large number of audience *participants* can listen in and, in some cases, interact with the hosts. The only thing that distinguishes a host from a participant is control of the recording and mute features of the call.

The only thing you need is a free account with freeconferencecall.com, skype.com or any other similar service. If you're using Skype, just do a Google search for a reputable call recorder. Don't use a free version or you'll be limited to short calls.

You could host a tele-seminar five minutes from now, if you wanted to. They don't have to be scheduled—all you need is two or more people on the phone and then press the record button.

On many occasions, I've arranged to interview or discuss interesting topics with an expert in my industry by way of a simple tele-seminar call. Sometimes I'll invite a live audience to listen in as well by sharing a specific date and time with my audience so they can join in and listen.

If I have a live audience, I can mute and unmute them for a question-and-answer session while recording the entire event. With more than a handful of people on the line at a time, the background noise can easily get out of hand, so the primary host needs to be ready to mute out all participants whenever necessary. Individual participants can also mute themselves so that only those with questions can be heard and recorded. With more than 10 or so people on the line, the odds of background noise goes up dramatically unless you have control of the mute features of the service you are using.

I've conducted training courses where students paid thousands of dollars to receive the training and coaching I delivered, and the entire content of the course consisted of recorded tele-seminar sessions that were later transcribed into printable documents.

Some tips from a tele-seminar veteran:

- Always start out the call by introducing yourself briefly and then the expert/guest thoroughly. Give any guest expert recognition for whatever accomplishments or websites that they've told you (prior to the call) that they would like to have mentioned. Halfway through and at the end of the call, remind your listeners who it is that they've been listening to, and also remind them briefly again of the book or website that your expert is hoping to "pitch."
- At the start of the call, briefly summarize the topics that you'll be covering in the order that you'll be covering them. Your listeners will appreciate that they can fast-forward to the points most interesting to them.
- Keep the energy level up by being excited about the topic and content. Your audience won't be more "into it" than you are.
- Try not to breathe into the headset and remind your other hosts of the same rule.
- Make sure your other hosts make liberal use of the mute feature. It is the hosts' job to mute out if a barking dog, or other interruption, enters the scene.
- If any of the hosts seem to have a bad connection, have them immediately hang up and dial back in.
- Use a land line whenever possible—never a cell phone unless entirely unavoidable. A good Skype connection is best.

- Don't stick too closely to a script. Let the call flow freely.
- Two or more hosts are better than one. Each host should say something every few minutes. Don't let one person ramble on too long or it quickly becomes boring.
- Give participants a warning when you are about to ask questions so that they are ready for it—otherwise, you'll have dead air when you "flip the mute switch" and invite them to join in.
- All hosts give each other permission to gently interrupt and occasionally talk over each other so that it sounds less scripted and more like a real conversation (picture the news commentary shows with guests...don't worry about "polite"). This type of banter is easy to listen to, but polite pauses between each speaker will make the audio seem to drag on.
- Make sure that you share these tips with the other call "hosts" well ahead of time.
- Shorter calls that "leave them wanting more" are always better than "longer" calls that end awkwardly and slowly.
- Tell everyone how to get more help if they need more detailed instructions or explanations.
- At more than one place in the call, announce who you are interviewing and what the content of the call is.
- Educate. Don't pitch.
- Consider having a "silent assistant" join you on the line as a host so that they can control the mute/unmute features of the participants as well as the recording start-and-stop feature. On a large call with many participants, it's nice to have someone greet people as they show up on the call (unmuted), and ask their names and where they are from as well as introduce the main hosts when you are ready to begin. Another responsibility that this silent assistant can perform is to monitor an email account where questions can be submitted in real time for the presenters to answer as they come in. The assistant can pass the "good" questions to the presenters, and answer the less "broadcast worthy" questions individually.
- Don't let the call go longer than 45 minutes to an hour. Schedule a second call if necessary.
- Provide the expert with a handful of questions before the interview begins and allow the expert to add in their own questions as well. Don't spend too much time scripting the interview, though—instead, let it flow naturally as a conversation.
- For added value, create a list of time marks and topics covered in the audio and add that information near the download link for your interview. This makes the audio far more usable when posted on your blog or other website. See the chapter on podcasting for ideas on posting and sharing audio content.

While the above rules generally apply to recorded phone calls or Skype calls, most of the above rules also apply to "on camera" virtual meetings as well (for example, Google hangouts).

It takes some practice to use these services effectively. But with them, you can learn to build incredible relationships with your audience and fellow experts as you meet online virtually.

Impromptu Recordings:

Have you ever been on the phone with someone and had such an interesting conversation that the two of you wound up wishing you had recorded the whole thing? Don't let this happen to you. You can sign up for a free account with any number of free conference call services in a matter of seconds.

Frequently, when I have the opportunity to connect on the phone with someone interesting or passionate about any subject, I will ask them to dial into my freeconferencecall.com phone number or Skype so that we can easily record the conversation for future use. This is just one more creative way to capture quick content. I do this type of thing all the time and it costs me nothing to capture this amazing content.

Get Your Content Out There... Even If It's Free!

This book is full of ideas and my goal is that it will inspire you to be a content creator, no matter what direction you go from here.

Here's an inspirational story from a friend of mine that will hopefully encourage you to take the simplest of ideas and share them for free with the world. Great things WILL happen when you take this step.

Success Story:

"From garage tinkering to celebrity status in the music industry!"

For several years my guitar-playing buddy Brian and I worked on houses together fixing up junkers—using loans and investment money from our parents. He had serious construction skills. I mainly did "grunt" work.

Neither of us enjoyed this type of work, but we were trying to supplement our income so that we could each work on our true passions online. Luckily for us we stopped buying houses and started focusing online!

His true passion was guitars and more specifically, the tiny niche market of "guitar pedal mods." (If you've never heard of "guitar pedal mods" don't worry—it will all make sense in a minute.) Working together on houses gave us time to talk...and those talks helped each of us establish what can now easily be considered "online empires."

The theme in many of our talks was the power of the word "free"—and it wound up working out great for both of us!

For years, bands in the Indianapolis, Indiana area all knew that there was a guy locally who

was “the man” when it came to making a guitar pedal produce sounds way cooler than they were supposed to produce. Musicians call this guitar pedal “mods” and Brian was “the man.”

Brian would tediously work weekends and evenings on one guitar pedal at a time for band buddies and local musician friends. He made a decent side income charging for his services, but he was “trading a few dollars for a few hours” and neither of us would ever settle for that.

As my Internet career began to take off slightly ahead of his, Brian and I had several conversations about how he could use his unique skill to grow a real business around his passion driven niche. I was sold on the “free content” concept as his best approach.

The “free content” concept:

Brian began taking digital pictures and documenting the process he used to modify various guitar pedals and turn them into the valuable “mods” that his local fans were enjoying. He turned these “digital courses” into PDF files that could be easily downloaded or printed and mailed to his increasingly eager fan base. Inevitably, each course that he produced and distributed would lead to more questions, more followers, and more fans of what he was trying to do. The more he distributed this free and inexpensive content online, the more his fan base grew. The demand for his guitar pedal “mods” and manuals and other related instructional material began to steadily increase to the point where he had to hire help to meet demand.

Although I’m sure Brian isn’t the only guy in the world that can crack open a guitar pedal and modify it with a soldering iron, I AM sure he’s the only one who took the time to document the process and then give the information away in order to grow a raving fan base of people who “get it.”

His reward?

Dozens of the top musicians in the world now use and rave about “Wampler Pedals.” He has his own brand on store shelves around the world, and has worked with some of the most talented musicians on the planet that rave about his custom equipment. At music equipment conventions, he spends the entire weekend signing autographs for eager fans.

You can get the full story at WamplerPedals.com and see where Brian’s passion and the word “free” have taken him lately. The last time I checked, Brad Paisley, Keith Urban, Brent Mason, Skillet, and dozens of other world-recognized artists were using Brian’s stuff.

Using eBay as a Silent Sales Machine

In previous versions of this book, I spent a good deal of time teaching readers how to see eBay not merely as a place to “sell stuff,” but also as a place to establish yourself as an expert and to grow an audience.

The below story sums up how one couple took my advice to heart and built an empire.

Here's a success story from a couple that started out with a simple eBay business model over seven years ago. For version 9 of this book, I requested an update to their story...

"We started Liberty Jane clothing in February of 2008 by selling on eBay. My wife, Cinnamon, was truly great at making 18 inch doll clothes, so we quickly found a following. I helped her with the marketing and our revenue goal was \$1,000 a month. We would regularly sell her outfits for \$30 to \$50.

We ran our business that way for two years and made \$12,000 each year. Although the extra money was nice, we had reached the limit of our business model and by the summer of 2009 Cinnamon was getting burned out, stressed out, and frequently sewing till midnight. Our operation just wasn't sustainable, or scalable.

We needed to figure out how to leverage her unique skill, while freeing up her time. We felt stuck and she was ready to walk away from the whole thing. We wanted an online business so bad, but we didn't know how to make it happen.

That summer, as I searched for new ideas, I found "The Silent Sales Machine" eBook. The message was clear—build an email list, and offer digital products to your existing customers.

It sounded good, but at the time we had no digital products and our eBay newsletter list only had 125 people signed-up.

That summer we debated publishing Cinnamon's doll clothes designs as PDF patterns. Was Jim right? We wondered...

Would we be creating an army of competitors all using her patterns to undermine her auction prices?

Would other people take her work and go further with it than we'd been able to?

Finally that Fall we decided to trust Jim's advice, and go digital. In September of 2009 we published our first four patterns. We sold 11 and gave away several hundred more as our "ethical bribe" to begin building our newsletter list.

Within six months, our patterns were making as much as our eBay auctions ever had, and the decision to offer digital products had proven to be a no-brainer. None of our fears materialized, and we've discovered more benefits than we could have imagined.

Other indie doll clothes designers started asking us if we would publish their patterns too. A marketplace was born—you can see it at www.pixiefaire.com.

But the benefits of Jim's advice didn't stop there.

Seamstresses started asking if they could use the patterns as the basis of their sew-from-home work, and if we would help them understand how to successfully sell doll clothes via auctions and other marketing strategies.

Because of these changes, in 2010, our sales tripled to \$36,000. In 2011, they tripled again to just over \$100,000. In 2012, they doubled to just over \$200,000.

As of this writing, we are on-track to end 2015 with sales over \$600,000 and we are optimistic that sales will top \$1,000,000 in 2016. We see no end to this type of growth trajectory.

In 2015, we delivered our millionth digitally downloaded pattern, and in the first half of the year we have received over 300,000 unique visitors to our site.

We have over 1,100 patterns on the site now from more than 60 indie pattern designers.

Over 50,000 people receive our newsletter three times a week and we still sell Cinnamon's doll outfits on eBay. The latest auction ended for over \$500.

I was able to "retire" from my 9-to-5 career and join the company full-time on January 1st, 2014. It took six years, and I was the 8th employee to join Liberty Jane Clothing, but it was worth every minute of the wait.

We are financially free, with a brand that leads our category, surrounded by a marketplace that turns our competitors into collaborators and ensures our long-term market leadership into the long future.

We've also started working hard to integrate generosity into all we do both personally and professionally. We've done that by establishing a U.S. based 501(c)3 charity we named Sew Powerful. Through it we combat extreme poverty with sewing programs for poor women in Lusaka Zambia. They provide clothing to thousands of needy children.

All of this stems from the summer of 2009 when we hit the wall, then we got the "Silent Sales Machine."

Jim, thanks for publishing it and for being our friend, mentor, and coach."

Because of the great success that Jason and Cinnamon Miles (they are the ones who sent me the above letter) have now had in the "self-publishing" arena, I've also partnered with them to create a comprehensive "self-publishing" course available only at:

www.ProvenSelfPublishing.com

As eBay has matured as a marketplace, it has become more difficult to attract a niche audience there—but it can still be done! To stay up to date on the latest trends in using

eBay and Amazon as a creative tool for expanding your audience, visit this blog post and contribute your ideas and observations:

www.jimcockrum.com/blog/2014/01/31/using-ebay-and-amazon-to-generate-leads-grow-your-audience/

Hot tip: Grow email lists in multiple niche markets using ONE eBay account.

I created a video that shows you step by step how to grow multiple mailings lists automatically on eBay by inviting each of your eBay buyers to get on an email mailing list based on the product they purchased. Watch the video here:

<https://vimeo.com/user31749852/review/130131866/c1434baa63>

Examples of how this could work for you:

- If you sell guitar picks on eBay, you can quickly grow an email list of people who play guitar.
- If you sell dog treats on eBay, you can grow an audience of dog lovers.
- If you sell any in-demand item that is purchased by enthusiasts of any niche, you can grow a great email list in any, or all of, those niche markets using the simple strategy in the above video.

Depending on the niche you are in, you could actually LOSE money on each eBay sale, but build an incredible list of customers for repeat and future purchases!

General eBay Tips to Maximize Exposure and Profits Regardless of Your Business Approach to eBay

When it comes to maximizing eBay profits, the basic principles are that the more TARGETED visitors who see your item for sale, and the better deal you are able to get on your inventory when sourcing it, the more likely you are to make a nice profit on the item.

Here are some facts to keep in mind to maximize your profits on eBay:

1. HARDLY ANY EBAY VISITORS SEARCH USING AUCTION DESCRIPTIONS!

Some eBay visitors do advanced searches on eBay and look at the detailed descriptions, of course—but the vast majority still use TITLE SEARCH ONLY.

(One exception: The more obscure the item you're selling, the more likely it is people will search in titles AND descriptions.)

Knowing this, it is very important that you spend the time to write a GREAT title. It must contain the keywords that your buyers are most likely to search for. Any other “fluff” words are entirely optional. Fill it up with words that shoppers are likely to use to find your listing. Save the descriptive words for the listing body, but don’t take up space in your title with them.

If you absolutely must have non-keyword words, try to abbreviate them. Superlatives are a waste of space. Sure, you think the item you’re selling is “beautiful” or “great” or “amazing” or “stunning” or “excellent” or whatever. But people NEVER search for those words, and they don’t seem to be that much of an enticement anyway. If you can’t resist calling your product “Excellent,” at least abbreviate it to “Exc.” to make room for more keywords.

2. SHOPPERS TEND TO SEARCH “ALL OF EBAY,” NOT CATEGORIES

Although not as overwhelmingly lopsided as the “titles only” vs. “titles and descriptions” comparison mentioned in point one above, the majority of eBay users who search for items (as opposed to browsing) do so from eBay’s home page or eBay’s main Search box.

But don’t assume it’s profitable or that it makes sense to be listed in extra categories if you’re going to be lumped in a category with thousands of other sellers.

3. AUCTIONS ARE GOING OUT OF STYLE, FIXED PRICE RULES!

When eBay first came on the scene, auctions were COOL and FUN. Several years later, eBay shoppers are spoiled by the Amazon 2-day shipping option, and they want to buy stuff NOW, and get it soon. Unless you have a truly unique item that is highly sought after by many potential bidders who are all ready for a bidding “war,” I suggest you ALWAYS assign a fixed price to your listings.

A success story that started on eBay but didn’t stay there!

Back in 2002, when I was pregnant with my second child, I was looking for ways to supplement our income without doing freelance web development and graphic design. I picked up a double stroller at a yard sale and realized it wasn’t what I was looking for—so I listed it on eBay and made over \$100 on it. I was hooked.

In my research, I came across Jim Cockrum’s book—the “Silent Sales Machine.” It completely changed my thinking and I realized that my vision was too small. I reached out to a small group of successful women who had also been inspired by Jim’s book and I was invited to join their group.

This entire way of thinking has opened unlimited opportunities.

Recently, my husband lost his job and we became completely dependent on my income. I had dropped back a bit—but because of the tools Jim had given me in the “Silent Sales Machine” book, I was able to quadruple my sales (not including physical product sales)

without quadrupling my hours.

Jenni Hunt

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If you join our free Facebook group, you can easily find other online entrepreneurs and fans of this book that live near you! Join the group here:

www.facebook.com/groups/mysilentteam

Once you are in, use this link:

www.mysilentteam.com/worldmap.html

...and put yourself on the map!

Our global "stick-a-pin-in-the-map" program gives all our members an optional, private, and secure way to locate other members who live nearby!

Amazon.com and FBA (Fulfillment by Amazon)

You are probably aware that eBay and Amazon are the online giants of online commerce.

In the previous section, I wrote about eBay. But there's an even bigger player in the game now and it's truly an international opportunity (no matter where you live in the world, you can do this business).

You can learn the basics of how to sell on Amazon by visiting Amazon.com and checking out the information on the "Sell on Amazon" page. The link to that page is located on the homepage of Amazon.com as of this writing. (Note: I'm not talking about AFFILIATE marketing with Amazon in this chapter. I'm talking about selling physical products. This business model CAN be hands-free, as you'll soon see!)

The bestselling course in the world on the topic of getting started on Amazon as a seller and doing it RIGHT is this course:

www.ProvenAmazonCourse.com

Here are a couple of the several hundred success stories about our Amazon selling course:

How Brett won \$5,000 on my blog, and then went on to build a team of 30 people...all

starting with a few hundred dollars:

www.mysilentteam.com/public/Brett_won_a_5000_bet_thanks_to_MySilentTeam.cfm

Here's another story—the sort we've seen hundreds of times now:

I jumped in head first in October (with Jim's Amazon course). My sales grew gradually and last month (8 months later), I had over 16K in sales. I had replaced my JOB salary. Here I am today. I spend all day with my kids and don't miss them growing up. I have a business I LOVE and I'm so very proud of. I could not be happier and I have you to thank. My family is the most important thing in my life and I am able to be there to take my kids to school every single day. I really appreciate everything you do and the way you help people. You have helped me become a successful entrepreneur and an even better father.

Regards,

—Matt

See many hundreds more success stories at ProvenAmazonCourse.com—you'll also see our student survey, where we asked our entire student base what type of results they are getting with our course.

A Brief Overview of eBay vs. Amazon, and Amazon FBA

In case you are unfamiliar with FBA, Amazon's FBA (Fulfillment by Amazon) is just what it sounds like. It's the shipping and order fulfillment side of Amazon. You can send any inventory you'd like to Amazon (even large items) and they will store and ship them to your customers when these items sell.

Let's start out with some basic observations:

Advantages of selling on Amazon:

- Virtually any barcoded item can be easily sold on Amazon, even if you put your own barcode on it.
- Amazon has by far the biggest online shopping audience.
- If you don't want to box and ship every item yourself, you can send all of your inventory to Amazon using their FBA program (advantages and disadvantages of FBA discussed below).

Disadvantages of Amazon:

- It's virtually impossible to capture customer email addresses and Amazon is VERY protective of this. They consider your buyer to be THEIR customers...not yours.
- Some categories on Amazon require approval or are restricted to experienced sellers only.
- Keeping track of your fees and total expenses can be tricky. Watch the numbers!
- Everything is a commodity on Amazon. It's hard sometimes to set yourself apart.

When to use eBay instead of Amazon:

- When selling any unique, old, collectible, or other unusual item, it's best to use eBay.
- If you are trying to grow a list of customers using creative marketing, it's only likely to happen on eBay.
- If you are making a profit on Amazon, it will likely work on eBay too! (Why not test it out?)
- For exposure of your idea, or brand, or information.

Disadvantages of eBay (compared to Amazon):

- Seemingly conflicting and constantly shifting rules.
- A fraction of the shopping traffic as on Amazon.com.
- You ship every item yourself (unless you use Amazon's FBA as your fulfillment for eBay, as some sellers do).
- You typically can't take a vacation without shutting down your business without having someone in charge of fulfillment.

FBA is simply Amazon's fulfillment service. This means they offer to do the storage and shipping for you if you choose to let them. There are numerous advantages to going this route and a few disadvantages as well. Here's my list:

Advantages of adding Amazon FBA service to your business:

- Grow as large as you'd like without having to hire much (or any) help to ship your various products to customers worldwide. You can go virtually hands-free and create a "Silent Sales Machine" this way.
- Sell ANYTHING. Be as diverse as you'd like in your inventory selections without worrying about all the headaches that go with being "diversified." We advise our students when starting out to go "an inch deep and a mile wide" meaning they shouldn't go too deep into any one product because it's too risky until you are more familiar with the risks and rewards of Amazon.
- Take a vacation anytime you'd like and your business continues to function—unlike eBay where each box is shipped by you. We have several Amazon selling students

who travel full-time while growing their business! They source products from wherever they are in the world and send their finds to Amazon!

- Purge old inventory with the click of a button (they will destroy/donate it for you).
- Cheap storage.
- Simplify your business model. You are in the business of doing ONE THING—finding profitable inventory. (No more customers to deal with!)
- Fast, reliable, and VERY cheap shipping for your customers.
- If you choose to list your items in the Amazon marketplace (you don't have to), your products are listed as "Fulfilled by Amazon," giving you a huge advantage—especially to those millions of shoppers with "Amazon Prime" memberships (they get free shipping on all FBA items they order). Millions of Amazon shoppers ONLY buy "Amazon Prime" items—meaning you can charge more for your items than the sellers who are fulfilling their Amazon items themselves.
- If you choose to sell items yourself using eBay, your own website, or any other method, Amazon FBA can still be your fulfillment agent (but you'd be crazy not to ALSO list your items on Amazon.com to see what happens).
- Your listings are more likely to appear at the top of the Amazon search. This is because Amazon would rather ship from their own warehouse and ensure their own shipping time frame than rely on shippers that are sending their goods from home or various businesses.
- Amazon handles all return issues for you. Like I said before—no customer hassles. NO emails at 2 A.M. about measurements. No Best Offers to review. No waiting for late payments. Did I mention, no customer hassles?

Disadvantages of FBA:

- Storage fees can sneak up on you if you don't purge your inventory (Amazon offers a free inventory report to show you what products they suggest you purge to avoid higher fees.) Overall, the fees are VERY CHEAP.
- Loss of physical control of your inventory.
- Difficulty tracking fees.
- Only works for barcoded items. Doesn't work for collectibles, unique one-of-a-kind items, etc. You CAN however add your "commodity-like" items into the Amazon inventory as long as you first secure a bar code for the item. The Proven Amazon Course mentioned above can help with that.

We get many great success stories about our Amazon FBA training. Here are some recent examples:

Hi Jim—I'm KILLING it on Amazon thanks to YOUR provenamazoncourse.com advice... (My 'Units Sold' and 'profit per unit' have SKYROCKETED. My ROI is upwards of 300% net of commission/shipping/FBA fees/pro merchant subscriptions, etc. My 5 STAR 100% perfect CUSTOMER RATING ALONG WITH A "1.00" PERFECT INTERNAL ACCOUNT SCORE have given me the ability to work from home FULL TIME (I have a part time weekend-only job too). To scale my biz, EVERY SINGLE CENT earned on Amazon using the FBA platform gets reinvested into more/more/more inventory. Positioned beautifully for the upcoming holiday season.

—S. Friedman

My monthly average the last few months was \$38,000. Don't know my GP yet, waiting on my accountant, but the bills are paid. I have four staff and the total weekly hours are about 180. I plan on exceeding \$600,000 this year. Jim, your course was the first step I took when I decided to do Amazon, and I definitely benefited greatly, as I have told countless people over the last year (I started exactly one year ago). Just this morning, I made a comment when someone asked if the ProvenAmazonCourse.com course was of value on a Yahoo discussion forum. If you want to know how I went from nothing but the PAC to \$40,000+/month, I would be happy to speak with you.

— R. Prince

Let me start by saying I sincerely wish I had known about this amazing program when I started researching work-at-home options a few years ago. The Proven Amazon Course and the JimCockrumCoaching.com program are nothing short of outstanding! There is absolutely no limit to how far you can grow this business if you are willing to put forth the effort and take massive action on what you learn. The business model is simply brilliant! It's not a difficult business to learn and operate, and it actually becomes quite addictive when you really get it going! My advice for anyone looking to start a business from home is to purchase the Proven Amazon Course TODAY and get involved with the wonderful people over at Jim Cockrum Coaching! Do what they say, work consistently, and you will succeed with this wonderful program!

— Tommy L.

Hundreds more success stories can be found at: ProvenAmazonCourse.com.

What Will Sell Well on Amazon?

Spend some time browsing Amazon.com. You'll discover millions of products are being sold there—everything from diapers to pool tables. Amazon relies on third-party sellers like us to stock their warehouses and their website with millions of products, but the best part is we have the option of letting Amazon warehouse and ship the product for us (this option is called FBA or Fulfillment By Amazon). This means no matter where you live in the world, you can sell just about anything on Amazon to any country where they have warehouses.

Some Tips on What to Sell On Amazon No Matter Where You Live in the World

Learn to sell on Amazon FBA in eight minutes from anywhere in the world! Here's a popular video I posted on YouTube that I think you'll enjoy:

www.youtube.com/watch?v=Wvo_HGOHs70

Sell on Amazon.com from anywhere outside the U.S.—how to get started:

www.youtube.com/watch?v=z3aHz1gNZrI

If you live outside the U.S., scroll to the end of this section for a U.S.-based business that will label and ship your inventory to Amazon for you!

Bulk Wholesale

If you are willing to do a bit of research there are unlimited opportunities to buy bulk and flip the inventory over to Amazon. This is our most current course on that topic:

www.provenwholesalesourcing.com*

* Note: all courses we create related to growing a business on Amazon are included in the ProvenAmazonCourse.com course, including this one!

Trade Show Inventory (Without Leaving Home)

Attending trade shows is a great way to find eager manufacturers ready to sell you inventory at great prices. This simple book will teach you all you need to know about tapping into this fantastic inventory strategy: TradeShowNoShow.com.

Buy Anything Seasonal Once It Goes on Sale and Hold It for 9-10 months and Sell It for HUGE Profits

Seasonally hot items that are purchased off season are a great bet! Buying any seasonal-specific items right when they go on sale after a major holiday is almost always a sure fire profitable item to sell on Amazon 10 months later.

Last year (before attending Jim's CES conference), I didn't think people bought Valentine's Day items online. But, this year, we sold \$10,535 in Valentine's Day sales in just last 30 days!

—Lance Wolf

Retail Arbitrage

You can easily scan the barcode of any item in a store with a smartphone and see what it is selling for on Amazon. We have hundreds of students who make a full-time living after taking our course and this is the ONLY strategy they use to earn tens of thousands monthly on Amazon.

How Can I Make Good Inventory-Buying Decisions?

Learning the proper strategy for making good inventory-buying decisions is very important. We have a saying that we use all the time around here: *"You make your money when you BUY your inventory, not when you sell it."* This means you should do your hard work and research BEFORE you buy inventory. Once you buy into your inventory, it's really hard to "push it" if the market doesn't want it. In other words, only buy stuff that you have a great deal of certainty about.

While just about anyone can see an obviously good inventory deal, it takes a trained eye to spot a good lower-margin deal that is worth pursuing. For example, if you see a popular widget being sold locally "off the shelf" of a local retailer for \$20 and it's selling consistently for \$100 on Amazon, then common sense tells you it's worth scooping up as many as you can get. However, if you are considering buying 500 "widgets" for \$20 that are currently selling on Amazon for \$45, but that same product has a history of going up and down in price with multiple other sellers competing with you, then you'll need to be well aware of the potential risks when making your decision.

Some Tools That Can Be Helpful When Making Inventory-Buying Decisions:

Sales Rank

On Amazon, the product sales rank is easily accessed by looking up any product. This info is useful, but keep in mind that a "low" sales rank is not a guarantee of sales results, nor is a "high" sales rank an indication that you shouldn't pursue a particular item. Sales rank is subject to major fluctuation from day to day for many lower-ranked products as well. Use the helpful graph below to help gauge what the sales rank might mean for any given product:

www.mysilentteam.com/public/Amazon-Categories-Decision-Helper.cfm

Recent eBay Results

If a product is selling well on eBay, it's quite likely to sell well on Amazon too. Use the recent pricing levels on eBay to get an idea of what the online value of an item is currently. To search recent sales on eBay, use the "advanced" search feature and search "completed" listings.

Do you have limited space for inventory?

Do you live outside the U.S., but desire to sell on Amazon.com?

Do you want help labeling/prepping your product for FBA?

Consider using a "prep" service that can receive and "flip" your inventory to Amazon! Get details here:

<http://forms.AWeber.com/form/72/642801472.htm>

This video will be helpful as well in answering some of your questions:

<https://vimeo.com/user31749852/review/128815431/496268a8f5>

More Ideas for Finding Profitable Inventory to Sell on eBay (or Amazon):

If you are out shopping and encounter an item that you think might sell well online, it's pretty easy to do a quick check on eBay or Amazon with any smart phone.

There are also several great online sites and services to use to find hot inventory.

If any item has a significantly higher price on Amazon as compared to the store you are visiting, and IF it is likely to sell within a few months (a decent sales rank), then you've found a winner. I shoot for 2-3 times Amazon selling price as a minimum so that all fees and other expenses are easily covered.

Virtually every time I visit a retail store, I come across winning items to add to my FBA inventory. The closeout aisle of any major chain or overstock discount store will have great finds on it almost all of the time. Take along a smartphone for easy Amazon price checks with a quick barcode scanner (there are multiple free and fee based barcode scanners that can be added as an app to any smartphone). One of the favorites in our community is the free Amazon Seller app. It's available in most countries.

Here are over 30 great product sourcing ideas! Check out this video:

<https://vimeo.com/user31749852/review/128814486/526649d8df>

If you are new to the idea of selling on Amazon FBA, here's a short video showing you how to make good inventory-buying decisions. It's just for newbies:

<https://vimeo.com/user31749852/review/128815430/742e9405bd>

Can You Automate Your Inventory Search?

I pay workers locally to help run my entire eBay and Amazon business. As of this writing, one of the hired workers is my mom! I share profits with them as incentive to help grow my business. When we hire anyone, we ask them to sign a non-compete agreement. This means they are barred from selling on eBay or Amazon themselves so that I can freely share tips and ideas with them without risk of creating well-armed local competitors. Once you are ramped up and ready to pursue other income options, this is a great way to automate your business so you can set about creating multiple income streams.

Concluding Thoughts for Chapter 4:

Most of our students start right here!

If the ONLY chapter of this book that you read is this one, and IF you take action based on what you've just read, you'll be in great shape launching your first successful income stream online. This chapter could easily be a book all by itself—which is why we created the most comprehensive, up-to-date course in the world on the topic of selling physical products on Amazon.

We have over 30 people helping update, moderate, and expand the ProvenAmazonCourse.com course. There is nothing like it online.

We also have a large active Facebook group to support our community. If you are ready to do the work, this is an incredible opportunity.

Now that I've given you one great business model to consider, in the next chapter I'll reveal some of the bad ideas you might have had pushed at you as you've been searching for business ideas online. I'll do my best to share my years of experience with you, then it's up to you to take action.

Chapter 5: Where You Should NOT Start

"The difference between successful people and very successful people is that very successful people say 'no' to almost everything."

—Warren Buffett

It can easily become overwhelming trying to decide what direction to go when researching business ideas online. This chapter will help you avoid all of the most common traps that ensnare so many new and even experienced entrepreneurs when they begin their search. I want to give you ideas about legitimate options while helping you discard the distractions that look great on paper, but are actually dead ends for nearly all "victims" who go down that road.

Have you noticed that nearly all of the experts who are selling "how to make money online" courses seem to like flashing big checks and big results in an effort to impress you?

Do you ever feel like you are only getting part of the story? Do you keep seeing the same people endorsing each other's stuff over and over again?

Do you ever ask yourself questions like this:

"If guru X has tens of thousands of followers, and hundreds or thousands of them are taking his courses, then where are the piles of success stories?"

The truth is, you ARE only getting part of the story and you SHOULD be asking questions like that!

Allow me to illustrate.

Check out the picture to the right of me with one of my sons. It's an unedited picture, and a very REAL picture. It makes me look like a champ doesn't it? Sure it's "true," but you aren't getting the whole story as you'll soon see. I put this picture in here to make a very important point and the lesson will become clear to you toward the end of this chapter.

I'll reveal the lesson of this picture at the end of this chapter.

If you feel "new" to the idea of having an online business I have some proven advice from my decade of success (and over 15 years of "trying" to succeed).



I'll be revealing some pretty popular business models that are all bad ideas! These are the places you **SHOULD NOT START** no matter how big and flashy the pitch that tries to convince you otherwise.

This is my "SUCKER LIST." It's the stuff newbies almost always fall for, thinking they can pay someone to make them a success story. I'll explain my sucker list in more detail below, but here are some things to entirely avoid when you are first starting out (in my opinion):

- Pay-Per-Click Advertising (Google AdWords, Facebook ads, etc.).
- Search Engine Optimization (SEO).
- Affiliate Marketing (Selling other people's stuff for a commission).
- Building any kind of website (including simple blogs).
- Driving Traffic Gimmicks.
- Virtually EVERYTHING and ANYTHING "step-by-step" or "push-button simple."
- Eagerly following a celebrity "guru."
- Big launches (heavy on the hype, small percentage of success stories).
- Going "all in" on a single product line and then "marketing your way out" of the hole you dug.
- The "anyone can turn their hobby into income!" lie.

Millions of very smart and well-intentioned people have spent (wasted) billions of dollars on the above activities because they were fooled into thinking that it was far easier than it really is. Typically, they read a few success stories (or even several success stories) and thought to themselves, "that sounds easy enough," and jumped in.

Online business is BUSINESS...and business is never "easy."

It can be fun, rewarding, challenging, entertaining, energizing, rewarding, and fulfilling—but never "easy."

Until you feel very grounded, confident, and CREATIVE (I'll explain that later), then you should avoid all of the above "opportunities" and pursuits. Your odds of success **even with training** are abysmal.

I'm probably the ONLY guy you'll ever hear this from, so call me crazy if you want to, but the fact is—THE STATISTICS BACK ME UP.

The facts are clear on this point.

Follow the herd and you'll get slaughtered

If you buy into ANY popular “step-by-step” or “big launch” course of any kind, you’ll wind up completing a bunch of steps that make you feel good (and yes, you might pick up some new useless skills or even have a shiny new website to show for it), but unless you are in the lucky 2 percent, you won’t make any money. I’m sorry, but it’s a sad truth that I’ve seen played out for over a decade online.

There are some very popular personalities online with large followings, but nearly all of them lack one thing, in my opinion. This glaringly obvious flaw in their “fame,” of course, is a significant percentage of true success stories (a raving FAN is NOT the same thing as a success story). Among their supposed tens of thousands of raving fans and followers, are there REALLY only a handful making money?! They show only a handful of success stories on their website (and, sure, there are loads of people who “love” them and write great reviews because they think their guy is “cool” or “helpful” or “kind,” or maybe they are trying to gain brownie points). But, in the end, you just don’t see a large percentage of students making any money.

These experts (well intentioned, in many cases, perhaps) are simply good at making people feel good, for the most part. Often times, it’s all masked in “step-by-step” courses that teach you to make money online while building your confidence that you are “doing something.” They preach the “just do it” and “take action” religion.

They are masters of getting you to “invest in yourself” (a.k.a. give them a lot of money).

It’s true in life and it’s true online. Whatever the most popular leaders are teaching to the biggest crowds at any given time is probably total garbage or it most certainly WILL BE very soon. It’s been true forever in business.

Business success has always (and always will) belong to the creative mavericks willing to do just a few things better and differently from the crowd.

Am I saying there are no systems to learn and apply? Of course not.

I AM saying that the truly successful people who I’m working with (as well as the fortunate few from my above example, who are actually making some decent money) all have at least a few things in common. They possess some or all of the following characteristics and abilities:

- They watch what leaders do instead of just following leaders blindly.
- They don’t “buy course after course”—they also watch how courses are sold and learn to sell and lead and take calculated risks.
- They don’t follow the crowd; they find ways to build a crowd, and then they sell their own ideas to the crowd.
- They apply successful concepts from two seemingly unrelated fields and combine them creatively.
- They are sought out for their knowledge and they form creative partnerships.

- They know how to leverage and build REAL relationships online with other influential people.
- They know that success takes TIME. It never comes overnight because of a course you bought yesterday.
- They say no to “good ideas” and ONLY pursue those rare gems called “RIGHT IDEAS.”

For example, a true online pro might take a course from “Expert A,” then read a book by “Expert B,” and then combine ideas from both experts into a brand new idea that they pursue with another online creative project partner—and, in the end, it’s unlike anything anyone else is doing. Then, they teach this new strategy to others after they’ve succeeded themselves.

Confession time...

I’m in the business of teaching people how to make money online.

{GASP!}

That puts me in the company of some pretty slick scam artists. I’ve managed to keep my integrity and NOT “sell out,” though. Sadly, I cannot say the same for many (most?) of my colleagues in this business.

What do I mean by “sell out”? In this business, you “sell out” when you start promoting products (your own, or those from someone else) that bring you a nice profit without any regard to the actual usefulness of the product or success rate that your audience can expect. You jump from “hot concept” to “hot concept.” As an expert, when you begin selling “widgets” with no value to the customer, you lower your own self-worth.

The most offensive (and hardest to detect) scam courses are those that make people feel good initially, because they are so “step-by-step” helpful, full of great video, engaging and entertaining. They always have believable success stories by the advantaged few that are very convincing and appeal to your emotions. But, in the end, all you have built for yourself is a pretty website with links all over it and you start racing down the road of “driving traffic,” or trying to find visitors for your new pretty site in a niche you couldn’t care less about. Worse yet, you invest a pile of cash in inventory that you now have to try to get rid of using “creative marketing.”

These and other “scam” approaches have been done a thousand times—and, surprisingly, nearly every time a new “guru” comes on the scene and tries it, they get rich (while actually helping very few people).

It works because YOU (as the student) will most likely blame yourself for the time-sucking failure because it all seemed so simple in the step-by-step list! As long as enough time has passed between “purchase point” and “frustration point” so that you don’t ask for a refund—the “guru” that sold you the course wins and you’ll wind up thinking that you are at fault.

In my office, we talk to people nearly every day that have been down one of the roads I'm describing here—in some cases, multiple times.

Success online is not a matter of step-by-step formulas or buying the right training courses from the right guru. I could make a BUNCH of money putting together such videos and courses if I wanted to, because most people want to sit, watch, and wait for the money to walk in through the door. Don't be a sheep.

To further illustrate, here's a sarcastic article I wrote on this topic that shows how to be a rich Internet Marketing Guru in four simple steps:

www.jimcockrum.com/blog/?p=944

If that doesn't set you straight, nothing will. Please put this book down, go find a popular, even likeable "expert," and go try their system out for six months. Come back to this book (put it on your calendar) after you've failed to make any money (because you will in all likelihood fail, just like the other 98 percent of those who followed the herd to slaughter).

What About That Sucker List I Talked About Earlier?

I told you to avoid these activities if you are new to online business. That means **UNTIL YOU ARE MAKING MONEY OR GROWING A FOLLOWING ONLINE, YOU SHOULD KEEP AWAY FROM ALL OF THE FOLLOWING ACTIVITIES:**

- Pay Per Click Advertising.
- Search Engine Optimization (SEO).
- Affiliate Marketing (it's just the "gravy on the top"—it's not an online income strategy all by itself).
- Building any kind of website (including simple blogs).
- Driving Traffic Strategies.
- Virtually EVERYTHING "step-by-step" or "push-button simple."
- Eagerly following a celebrity "guru."
- Big Launch hype.
- Going "all in" on a single product line and then "marketing your way out" of the hole you dug.
- The "anyone can turn their hobby into income!" lie.

I'll go through this list one at a time in a moment, but your level of success and frustration both rely heavily on you trusting me here.

If you are considering buying a course, taking coaching, joining a membership site, or attending a conference that promises to help you in any of the above areas, odds are that you are NOT READY to get into any of those topics unless and until you are ACTIVELY ALREADY MAKING MONEY OR GROWING A LOYAL FOLLOWING ONLINE.

In other words, newbies beware of that list!

Let's go through each point on the list:

Pay Per Click (PPC)

Pay Per Click is cutthroat for all popular niche markets. I'm talking about Facebook ads, Google AdWords, etc. It's a game being won by mathematics, big budgets, and geeks who are experienced and committed to testing. There are also MILLIONS of "stupid dollars" being thrown in the mix constantly by newbies, throwing off the numbers. This only drives up prices, making it more difficult for anyone who isn't SUPER SERIOUS about studying the process deeply. PPC and paid ads are NOT for newbies.

Search Engine Optimization (SEO)

Search Engine Optimization is an entire industry that many people become mesmerized by, and then are lured into a wild goose chase that nearly always ends badly.

If you want to skip this section and instead read my thoughts on "SEO" expressed in about 20 seconds, check out one of my shortest blog posts ever here:

www.jimcockrum.com/blog/2011/08/30/how-to-rank-high-on-google-long-term/

While there are several search engines that arguably could be included in this discussion, I'll only be referring to Google because all other search engines wish they were Google and are doing their best to emulate them. If anyone ever does surpass Google, these same ideas will apply to them as well, I assure you.

While there is an entire industry set up to provide Search Engine Optimization (SEO) services to help businesses and websites get ranked on online search engines like Google, there are precious few honest experts who will tell you that there is absolutely *no way* you can ever be assured of a good ranking online. If anyone PROMISES results in the short or long term, you should RUN AWAY. Even if you are fortunate enough to "get ranked" well on Google in the short term, the odds are against you being there long term unless you are both **fortunate and focused** in your efforts to maintain your rank using **legitimate** strategies. which I'll explain in a moment.

I've encountered countless website owners who could have sworn they had cracked the Google code but, inevitably, they've all realized a harsh reality (or soon likely will). Google

is too smart to be fooled long term. Only quality sites that meet the Google standards will be rewarded. Anyone can go from page 1 on Google to page 431 overnight. Pretending that this could never happen to you is simply inviting disaster. **I've chosen not to rely on my Google rankings as a result**, and neither should you, in my opinion.

All of that being said, you should still pay attention to doing your best to generate the greatest amount of free traffic from Google that you possibly can.

What should you focus on in order to be rewarded by Google?

There are only two proven ways to get more "Google love":

- A. Have a great site with current, user-friendly, keyword-relevant information, and, more importantly...
- B. Increase the number of quality pages that link to you by creating such great content that they have no choice.

In Google's own words: *"pages that we believe are important pages receive a higher rank and are more likely to appear at the top of the search results. Webmasters can improve the rank of their sites by increasing the number of high-quality sites that link to their pages."*

What's the difference between "organic results" and "paid results"?

Keep in mind that this entire section is referring to Google's "organic results." These are the websites that Google likes and rewards with a good search engine rank at no expense whatsoever to the site owner. You'll notice when using the Google search engine that they always list the paid results or "pay per click" ads down the right-hand side of the screen, as well as a handful of them at the top of the screen. All of these ads appear as a result of someone paying (in some cases, paying a lot) to appear in those positions. There are entire books written about the expensive prospect of effectively using these ads for advertising. I don't rely on "pay per click" ads, and this book won't be discussing them very much at all because the learning curve is typically expensive when using them. In my opinion it's getting more and more difficult all the time to have success with PPC ads long term.

How does Google's ranking algorithm really work?

To truly understand what you are up against when trying to "win the affections" of Google, you'll need to start to grasp how seriously they take the business of ranking websites. One of their core missions is to automate, as much as possible, the process of providing easy access to the best content on the Internet for all users of Google.com. Once you understand that core service as their goal, consider the fact that they've spent countless hours and millions of dollars hiring the most brilliant statisticians, mathematicians, genius-level data analysts, etc., all chartered with the mission of creating a top-secret algorithm that automatically tracks and assigns page rank scores to every website online. They do all this to decide which sites will appear on which pages of the organic search results.

Yes—it's that complicated.

Want It All Broken Down In Simple Terms?

One of the best explanations I've ever heard of the Google ranking algorithm was as follows:

Imagine a large wall covered with light switches. There are rows and rows, each with hundreds of light switches. Several top-secret, genius-level engineers are assigned the task of continually adjusting those light switches in such a way that the Google search engine performs at an optimum level. It is an ongoing process that never stabilizes. The process never stabilizes because Google does not want anyone to know the exact nature of their algorithm. They don't want anyone to be able to manipulate their "machine." I even have a theory (it's just my opinion, but I've met many other industry experts that wholeheartedly agree) that there are several random elements in this process that make it impossible to fully map it out by anyone...ever (even their own engineers).

The next time someone tells you that they can guarantee you results on Google, imagine that person matching wits with the multimillion-dollar, genius-level process I've just described. While there is a chance that they might be able to accomplish some results, some of the time, short term, the only strategy that might work long term is to "play by the rules." **This means creating unique quality content that multiple other quality websites will willingly (and voluntarily) link to.** The process of having other sites link to yours is called creating "back links." If anyone tells you that they can automate the process of creating great back links, you should know that they are participating in a process that Google is actively spending millions of dollars and many genius-level man hours trying to punish and eliminate. Again, it's worth repeating: **Google cannot be fooled long term. They will find the best websites and reward them, and they will find the sites that have automated the manipulation of their system and they will punish them. Google's own success hinges on their ability to do this task better than anyone else in the world, and they have the resources to do so!**

I have several sites that rank very well on Google for top keywords, but I've never (not even for 10 minutes) focused on SEO strategies. That's right, I've never hired an SEO firm, and I don't read "driving traffic" books and tips. All I do is create great content that others want to get. The most work I do is finding potential partners who already have an audience that might want what I have to offer. This is the winning strategy that can't be stopped by Google, or anyone else for that matter.

To stay up to date on my thoughts regarding SEO, visit my blog at jimcockrum.com and look for the SEO department.

I've helped thousands of readers wake up to the realities of SEO. Here's one such letter we got:

Jim—I now lean toward your thinking on the topic of SEO. It may be because SEO is still a mystery to me—"smoke and mirrors," maybe? So, I adopted two key strategies to build my online business:

- 1. Email strategy and*
- 2. Build my subscriber base to ensure recurring revenues.*

These two approaches have allowed me to jack my job, so I now work fulltime on my online business. The journey started when I picked up this book (SilentSalesMachine) when it became more obvious to me that if I viewed eBay as one of the best marketing tools out there, I could attract more customers to my online shops (not just my eBay shop). The model seems to work great, and without having to get involved in the SEO games.

—Gareth

Affiliate Marketing

Affiliate marketing is a nice "gravy-on-top" income model, but it is not a steady income business model for anyone except the most advanced experts. Even with over a decade of experience, I'm still not one of them!

—Jim Cockrum

Affiliate marketing IS NOT a viable business model.

There—I said it.

Rather than retype out my thoughts on affiliate marketing, I think I'll refer you to my blog to educate you on what is possibly my most controversial (but, nonetheless, statistically VERY TRUE) stance I take in this book. The sucker list DEFINITELY needs this topic on it!

Until you are GROWING AN AUDIENCE or CREATING YOUR OWN PRODUCTS and making money in other creative ways, you should NEVER get into "affiliate marketing." Your odds of success used to be decent, but now they are simply abysmal.

Here are some articles that will give you several reasons why a "newbie" should NEVER get into affiliate marketing, and some good conversation from my readers about other options (be sure to join the conversation on any of these topics):

www.jimcockrum.com/blog/?p=1073

www.jimcockrum.com/blog/category/categories/grow-your-business/affiliate-marketing/

www.jimcockrum.com/blog/?p=1101

www.jimcockrum.com/blog/?p=1200

The “experts” love to teach affiliate marketing strategies because it’s really not all that hard to get people excited about it. Flash some big checks, get *some* tiny results for a few people, and then supply a steady stream of “tips” to keep the crowd listening...but the dirty little secret is this: **The VAST MAJORITY (I’m talking 95 percent or so) of the people trying to make affiliate income aren’t making more than a few bucks per week, even after months or years of trying.** By the time someone becomes that invested in the game, they tend to feel good about the “skills” that they’ve picked up along the way, and fail to see that they are on a path to nowhere without some creative intervention.

I’ve attended conferences specifically aimed at affiliate marketers and they are depressing to me. These events are aimed at allowing the “best-of-the-best” affiliate marketers to get together and share ideas, etc. Inevitably though, these conferences are FULL of people who have been trying for years to get that supposed “low-hanging fruit” that is affiliate marketing income. It lures so many in—but the vast majority never achieve any significant results. When I’ve attended these events, my estimation is that 95 percent of the crowd is either selling something or struggling to find a way to finally make some money. It’s not a place for “newbies!”

If you are someone who has been trying to generate affiliate income for a long time without success, I suggest you check out the “Offline” chapter. You are more than ready to start helping real-world businesses with the skills you’ve developed!

Building ANY Website

Building any kind of website as your starting point in online business is a HUGE mistake.

I’m going against the grain of what you’ll hear from most other “experts,” but, then again, I’m not just any other “expert.” I’m a guy that’s been at this longer than most of the other leaders in this game, and I’ve seen experts and students alike rise and fall (very quickly, in some cases, and very slowly in others).

If you start out by building a website, the next logical “trap” for you to fall into is the “must-drive-traffic” trap.

Building a website is probably step 4 or 5 at best if you are going to succeed online.

The first step is ALWAYS finding your traffic source. That means finding where your target audience is ALREADY hanging out online, and then strategically approaching the process of getting your ideas in front of that audience. This is why I love helping “newbies” start out

with low-hanging-fruit opportunities like selling on eBay or Amazon. I know I can get you going in a successful direction on those platforms. The audience is there. A little training and a bit of creativity and you've got a \$100K business AND you are ready to expand into a website that makes money DAY ONE.

An example of building the website last...not first:

When I first met Nancy, she was selling her handmade wreaths one at a time on eBay for a decent price. But, after some coaching from me and my team, she grew her business to include informational materials teaching others how to build wreaths the way she did. She sold those on eBay successfully as well.

She also collected the email addresses of her prospects and buying customers on eBay and started to grow her mailing list. Once her loyal list was big enough, she launched a website where her "fan base" could go to get more of what Nancy had to offer (ladybugwreaths.com).

Her loyal following of "crafty" women now rely on her for the latest decorating and craft-making tips and strategies. They even pay her for coaching and devour the content she produces.

She has the email addresses of hundreds of buying customers, many times more fans, and a very nice income as a result of her ongoing efforts.

Here's a great article with some fantastic feedback from my blog readers. We talk about building your audience before you build a website.

www.jimcockrum.com/blog/?p=308

The comments and "ah-ha!" moments among the readers make it a priceless "must-read" article.

Driving Traffic

This is a term I'm liking less and less all the time.

Most of the "how-to" courses for Internet success will tell you to first "build a website" and then "drive traffic" (or visitors) to that website using any number of opportunistic strategies that will be entirely irrelevant within a few days, weeks or, at best, months after the "herd" starts using the same ideas.

Do you like the idea of being "driven" somewhere on the Internet? Would you like an invisible hand "driving" you where that invisible hand wants to push you? Do you like when your peaceful browsing experience is interrupted by someone "driving" you somewhere else?

Of course you don't like it.

Here's some insight: **No one else likes to be "herded" or driven anywhere either.**

Contrast the term "driving traffic" with the idea of "attracting eager fans." Which sounds nicer? Which do you think is more effective? Which kind of business do you want? Which activity sounds like it has the potential for long-term success?

The bottom line in "getting traffic" online is to create quality content that eager fans and partners are willing to share. Any other tactic or strategy or trick will be short lived if it ever works at all. I'll talk more about finding audiences and distributing your content in other places in the book. To be clear, you DO NOT need a website to start this journey.

Virtually EVERYTHING Step by Step or Push-Button Simple

If I've not made myself clear enough yet, let me emphasize one more time that anyone endorsing a "big launch," a "step-by-step" system, or anything "push-button simple" deserves your HIGHEST level of scrutiny. Here's a popular blog post I wrote on the topic of "mega-launches" and Internet income products:

www.jimcockrum.com/blog/?p=259

In that article, I set the bar VERY HIGH for the experts who claim to be able to teach you something about making money online. Hold me, or anyone else, to those lofty standards. Demand to see that there are numerous success stories. Demand to see that their customers all get to hang out together and discuss the ideas in depth. Demand to be allowed to wait a few weeks to get in on the "super deal." If the information is so incredible, it will still be incredible (and available) a couple months after "launch" even though the guru claims it will be gone forever.

Eagerly Following Any Celebrity Guru

In the game of Internet business, big egos come with the territory.

Although I've met several very genuine and helpful people at the top of my industry, I can confidently report that they are all human. They are all susceptible to classic human flaws, and none of them are 100 percent creative, innovative, and helpful 100 percent of time.

All leaders are flawed. When it comes to teaching "how-to-make-money" strategies, you'll run into even more flaws among the leaders.

I think this is because it takes a special kind of humility to remain genuine and other-oriented once you are in the spotlight. Most "experts" fail miserably at this challenge.

Never become so enamored by a “big dog” that you check your brains at the door. This advice fully applies to me just as much as it does anyone else.

For example, I get emails occasionally from subscribers to my newsletter letting me know that they’ve dropped all other email subscriptions and will only be reading my Internet marketing email from now on.

That’s just silliness.

There is no “one” guru or expert worthy of that sort of loyalty—I don’t care who they are. Creativity demands that you be exposed to all sorts of ideas so that you can improve your filter and come up with great ideas of your own.

I rarely unsubscribe from anyone’s email list. I read several every day and, often times, I learn something even from the bloodsuckers in my industry.

But I’ll NEVER blindly follow anyone.

If you missed this blog post the first time I mentioned it, please go check it out now:

www.jimcockrum.com/blog/?p=944

Big Launch Hype

If you don’t know what a launch is, I’ll sum it up for you. The same list of 15-20 “Internet business gurus” all cooperate to launch high price tag product after product to hopeful online entrepreneurs. The “gurus” take turns propping up each other’s big launches while giving away massive prizes to each other for the most affiliate sales. Endorsements flow like water from one “guru” to the next for each big launch without even so much as reading a summary of what the product contains.

Your inbox will fill up with offers from numerous “experts” all supporting the same big launch—and the email sales copy is often simply “copy/pasted.” There’s a lot of “bonuses” and “BUY NOW before it’s all over” thrown into the marketing.

Many “suckers” become big-launch “shiny-object” chasers and spend all their money falling for the slick packages.

There’s even a formula that’s used typically. They’ll show you a handful of free videos with convincing content, and then they’ll drop the price tag on you with a deadline. Look for manipulated “social proof” and herds of “suckers” joining in the fun.

I’ve seen firsthand how rare it truly is for the support system behind such launches to live more than a few weeks. The initial wave of new clients (suckers) typically kills the support system. Refund rates are VERY high, but still, millions are made by the happy gurus, who quickly move on to planning their next strike.

The fact is there's no such thing as a "mass-market" business opportunity that will lead to your long-term success. Sure, you'll hear some success stories come out of these launches, because when 10,000 people try an idea it's bound to work out for a few of them. But keep in mind, there are thousands regretting the decision just a few weeks later EVERY TIME.

Am I saying you shouldn't invest in courses and training? Of course not—I sell some great stuff at a great price (no big launches). I know of many other great leaders who do as well. But, when a big launch comes along, just keep in mind that 50 percent or more of the pricetag is going to the sales contest behind the product. The endorsements are bought and paid for. Proceed with caution.

Read more here:

www.jimcockrum.com/blog/2013/04/01/marketing-while-still-being-able-to-look-at-yourself-in-the-mirror-its-not-too-late/

Going All In On a Single Product Line

With the popularity of selling on eBay, and now on Amazon as well, there's a common misconception that's established itself online.

That dangerous logic goes like this:

"The fast path to making big bucks online is to go all in on your own 'private label' product and promote it on Amazon. Sure it's a big investment, but you can market yourself out of the investment hole you dig if you buy our creative marketing system!"

Let me be clear—"private labeling" is fantastic, but it can be very RISKY BUSINESS if not done correctly. We spend a lot of time on this topic in the ProvenAmazonCourse.com. While our course costs a fraction of what other popular "big launch" competing courses charge, the experience, results, and cautious/proven approach we take to establishing your business makes our course the best in the business.

Rather than going "all in" with your own product line on Amazon, nearly all newbies should go an "inch deep and a mile wide" when they start selling on Amazon. This means you don't go after one product and put all your eggs in one basket. Instead, you should diversify and sell many types of profitable items. Get your experience slowly in a low-risk fashion. You can be safe and smart.

We hear from disillusioned "big launch" buying students all the time. They fell for the great videos and celebrity-endorsed courses, only to learn later that they were following the herd—and got slaughtered. In many cases, they now have a garage full of a single product they just can't sell, or they've sent in hundreds of "widgets" to Amazon and their inventory isn't moving the way they'd hoped.

The Turn-Your-Hobby-into-a-Business Lie

The same logic that convinces people to play the lottery is often at play in our culture when it comes to choosing a life path (or buying a “how-to-make-money-online” course).

It’s the same tainted logic that convinces young musicians to strap a guitar to their back and move to Nashville... or take a few fashion photos and move to Hollywood... because they want to be a film or music star. The same dangerous message convinces 5’ 8” high-school basketball players that their only life choice is the NBA and they are “all in” on that goal with no room for failure.

The logic goes like this: Person X did it, so I can too!

We are taught the very dangerous (and I say selfish) mantra of “pursue your dreams and only do what you love to do because you can do anything.”

The good news?

That does work...sometimes.

The bad news?

For nearly all of us, the odds are abysmal. I’m talking “one-in-millions” abysmal (sort of like the lottery). Yet, each time we see the success story of a winner who did beat the odds, we are somehow tempted to ignore the obviously overwhelming odds and “dream a little.” Just like the lottery (which I call a tax on people who are really bad at math), the “suckers” who fall for the lie need a heavy dose of reality. If that’s you, please hang with me here—I have good news—the “voice of reason” is not as bad as you might be thinking.

I’m all for turning a hobby into a business, and I’m all for pursuing hobbies and dreams with passion. My bigger point, though, is this:

“Why not go after the low-hanging fruit at the same time?”

We live in the greatest era for entrepreneurs in the history of the world! A few hours of focused effort aimed at SERVING and CREATING VALUE can pay off in a huge way and lead to a lifestyle that opens up countless exciting doors and multiple income streams!

Predictable success in business almost never starts out with YOU doing what YOU love because YOU feel like YOU deserve it. Doesn’t that sound selfish? There’s a reason that sentence sounds selfish...because it is!

Instead, predictable “low-hanging-fruit” success is all about putting the needs of your customers and prospects ahead of your own needs and setting about filling a gap in the marketplace—even if you don’t “love the work.”

Building a business is work, and I think it's a BLAST earning a profit while WORKING in my own business! I've learned to love many aspects of successfully running my own businesses. Success in business ALWAYS involves serving and creating value for your clients. Learn to SERVE and CREATE VALUE and you'll see opportunity all around you. Once you are earning a great living from that, you'll have plenty of time to tinker with your hobby and try to turn it into a living.

Don't be lured in by courses or teachers who tickle your ears with the "you-deserve-to-be-famous" lies. For every YouTube "star" online, there are millions who tried to get famous and failed. Instead, why not serve and create value? Fame and success will follow if you get really good at just those two things.

Your unique skills, talents, location, connections, experiences, and motivations give you an advantage that none of the rest of us have. Find a way to serve the world and you'll soon find out that you LOVE the work you do. The Internet makes so much possible that we never even dreamed of just a few short years ago!

Now I'd like to reveal the secret behind the picture at the start of this chapter!

The picture of my son and I was taken by my wife a couple of seconds before the picture that appears at the start of this chapter. It's "the rest of the story."

The lesson: Don't be enamored by the results the experts and their handful of top students are getting—make sure you know the full story of how they got there to begin with and know your odds of success before jumping in!



Concluding Thoughts for Chapter 5:

This chapter has been a reality check. It's been a slap in the face of some of your misconceptions. But, ultimately, I'm saving you a lot of HEARTACHE, MONEY, TIME, and PAIN. Trust me... I'm right on these things and have had no challengers ever prove me wrong or even attempt to.

If you feel like you've proven me wrong, or if you think I'm missing a valid point somewhere, PLEASE visit my blog and post your thoughts! You'll notice that I publish comments from both those who love me and those who don't. Agree or disagree—it's all a matter of public record and I love to kick around great ideas with thinking people!

Of course, there are countless other potential scams that can be entirely avoided by doing some simple Google research before spending any of your hard-earned money on any "slick" products. If the sales letter includes a yacht and pricey cars in the presentation, if it guarantees results, or features someone trying to look or be "cool" as part of the sales pitch, then odds are it's going to have a 2-percent success rate or worse for the victims... I

mean suckers... I mean customers... who buy in. Many would-be online entrepreneurs actually buy system after system like this in search of the one idea that will work. I call this "shiny-object syndrome." That's a condition that will destroy you before you even begin. In this chapter, I've gone after the "not-so-obvious" dead ends. But, there are plenty out there that common sense should tell you to avoid. You've been warned.

A Challenge For You: The next time you see a slick launch or big pitch for a training course or product that includes impressive statistics and "user results," be VERY critical, patient, and determined in researching the offer. Don't fall for the scarcity tactics (i.e. "only a few left at this price," etc.) Get the whole story and wait out the "big launch." If the program is good, it will almost always be back again soon at a lower price anyway, or someone else will teach the same thing for a lower price. Nearly all big launches are for chumps.

Chapter 6: Going Offline

Businesses around the world (online and offline) need your help!

“Going offline” is one of the biggest business opportunities in the world for creative Internet entrepreneurs. Right now, as you are reading this chapter, there is a rapidly increasing demand for people who understand even the most basic, effective, Internet marketing tools and strategies and who can creatively apply those tools and strategies to bricks-and-mortar (non-Internet based) businesses.

The supply of experts who understand the possibilities of the Internet is lagging far behind the demand. This is creating a HUGE opportunity for those of us who “get it.”

YOU can do this business model!

If I can drive one point home quickly in this chapter, it’s this:

Your success with the “offline” business model DOES NOT rely on your technical, graphical, sales, or marketing skills. Success instead is a simple matter of connecting some of those millions of businesses that KNOW they need a stronger online presence with some of the most basic services and tools that could revolutionize that business, virtually overnight.

Here’s a simple example. I have a partner who has helped dozens of businesses begin selling their inventory on Amazon. When he started approaching traditional businesses with the offer to help them get set up on Amazon, he wasn’t an Amazon selling expert himself. He didn’t have to be. The idea sold itself and he knew that there are plenty of “experts” that can do the “dirty work” once he had a client.

He now has dozens of clients and finds them relatively easily. He sets up their Amazon selling account for them, helps them get their inventory onto Amazon (a job you can easily hire out to someone else), and then gets paid a percentage of the resulting volume. He’s a highly paid “commission-only” sales rep for the businesses who hire him.

Considering that Amazon is the most-shopped website online, he’s doing VERY well without ever having to track down inventory of his own.

Here's a screen shot from one month of Amazon sales from one of his dozens of clients:



Notice the consistent daily sales volume? This is a far easier model than constantly chasing down new inventory to sell!

In this case, each of the clients he sets up on Amazon has their own Amazon account created for them. This entire business model is just one of several "offline" business strategies we teach. In this case, the course is sold at ProvenProductPartnering.com.

Another beautiful part of the "Proven Product Partnering" model is that it creates true multiple-income streams with minimal risk of ever losing your business due to an account shutdown or accidental policy violation with Amazon. This is true because, as previously mentioned, each client has their OWN independent Amazon account.

The above is just one example of how Amazon can be used to establish relationships with businesses that need help. There are hundreds of other "low-hanging-fruit" opportunities as well that have nothing to do with Amazon!

In general the "OfflineBiz" opportunity, as we call it, is huge. I see it every day in my own business. I've had clients happily pay me \$750 per hour or far more merely for advice. I've spent half a day with businesses that pay me very well, buy me lunch, and surround me with VIPs to help them make the most basic of Internet marketing decisions. I turn down clients constantly because they can't afford me...but if you are willing to take less than \$750 per hour, you can find plenty of work (and you WON'T be the one doing the "work" if you read this entire chapter).

This one trend is creating numerous success stories among online entrepreneurs.

On OfflineBiz.com, we have over 12,000 active members all hanging out in our forums and discussing how to best assist each other and profit from this mega-trend!

Here are the trends that are leading us towards this “offline bonanza”:

- Traditional advertising methods are failing to get the results they once did for traditional businesses (TV, radio, newspaper, direct mail, billboards, Yellow Pages, etc., are all failing).
- More and more “offline businesses” (like restaurants, lawyers, tattoo artists, pet groomers, etc.) are waking up to the realization that “marketing” is no longer a matter of applying traditional strategies like I just listed above. They know they need to go online if they want to survive and grow.
- In most cases, websites that were built to help these businesses aren’t generating any new business.
- Traditional businesses feel stuck, overwhelmed, and a bit confused by it all. They need help.

Enter the “offline marketer”:

- You are the guy (or gal, of course) who gets the phone ringing again.
- You are the guy who gets the leads coming in again for pennies instead of dollars per lead.
- You are the guy who makes marketing understandable to traditional businesses.

Even if you don’t feel technically capable of what I’ve just described, you should still spend a few minutes and check out the free report we have for you at OfflineBiz.com.

Keep this in mind:

Successfully helping “traditional offline businesses” IS NOT a matter of applying your technical skills. It’s as simple as KNOWING what ideas might work, and then having a community in place (like OfflineBiz.com) that supports your efforts when you have questions.

If you ever feel in “over your head,” there’s an easy way out—bring in a partner, or give the client to someone with experience and keep a finder’s fee.

The “hard work” can always be done by someone else in all cases. You don’t have to build websites, do any programming, or design any graphics. At OfflineBiz.com, we show you the simple online marketing strategies that work. Next, we show you how to provide these services (worth thousands of dollars to businesses) while getting the work done by “outsourcers” or other low-cost partners for a fraction of the value you charge to your happy clients.

Read some of the success stories we've posted at OfflineBiz.com. You'll be blown away, I promise!

This business model (like every business model I ever expose my readers to) CAN be fully automated and outsourced so that it is nearly 100 percent hands-free.

The OfflineBiz.com concept is the longest-term most-stable model you can possibly get into because of the ongoing demand and wide-open possibilities.

I've had websites since 1999, tried everything, never made a whole lot of money—\$1000/month in profit was a good month.

Since I started THIS business (offlinebiz.com) about two years ago—I'm getting money and recognition and clients. I could support myself if anything ever happened to my husband (and that's very reassuring to me). I am getting a nice ego boost (and client boost) from a weekly newspaper column I've had for more than a year. I may have a new consulting client at hundreds of dollars per hour.

And THIS is in a "down" economy. I wonder sometimes what my business would be like if clients had more money to spend? I can think of few businesses I could have STARTED in the last few years that would have paid off like this offline business model.

I also trust few people online as I do Andrew, Jim, and some of the other folks I've met and worked with in the forums of OfflineBiz. This has been a life-changing resource for me. THANK YOU!

—Diana
OfflineBiz.com member

I have found great guidance from OfflineBiz.com and really enjoy helping offline businesses get online. Offering marketing, websites, email campaign management, and other services has been a great income stream for our family. I want to thank you for being there with this information, membership site, and resources.

A client I picked up early on in my offline biz stream was our local Coldwell Banker Real Estate franchise. That one client turned into many as the broker is also the founding member of the largest law firm in our county and we picked up that side of the business too, along with several realtors.

What happened today takes the cake. I met with the Broker today to discuss some new marketing ideas I had and he stopped me in the middle of my speech to ask me a question.

He asked, "Instead of continuing this contract deal with you for marketing, how do you feel about coming onboard with our company as a partner in the business and handling the online marketing just as you are doing now? The only difference, you will be earning 6 percent of overall income in the company as opposed to contracted income." This

attorney/broker and I have found a real kinship in our business philosophies and values. He has grown to like me and wants my influence in the company weekly on a more consistent basis.

I didn't have to think long. This company, a new franchise in our area, projects \$1.5 million in commission revenue this year, and that's a pretty payday at 6 percent, even after company expenses. I am already earning about \$1,100 per month from this one client contact, but now will be earning significantly more with little extra effort than I give now. Although, I imagine after signing partnership agreements next week, I will certainly have a greater interest and likely spend more energy there.

I wanted to share this with you personally first, before posting, to see if I can offer any testimonial for you on this as well. Liquidation, Offline Biz, and my small membership mailing list are all helping to make our dreams come true. You lit a fire under this frustrated entrepreneur and I am grateful.

I realize this income may not be a fortune, or even compelling to some, but, for us, it is a significant blessing and it's money being made in the real world with no hype or gimmicks. And from only one stream of income and only one client.

Thanks so much again, your provided resources have given us the tools we need to change our future. We won't forget it!

—B. Hamrick
OfflineBiz.com member

I have been a member of OfflineBiz.com for over five years. I have been dabbling. This year, I got serious and, on my first sales call with an offline biz client, I closed a \$6,000 deal to help him upload videos (video marketing) to YouTube and help him launch an eBay store. I am closing another client this week. Why did I wait!? If you can talk reasonably intelligently with people, you can close deals.

—K. Bunnell
OfflineBiz.com member

Read many more success stories at OfflineBiz.com.

Chapter 7: Where to Start

So, What Do I Do Now?

Before I tell you what I think you should do, I want you to think about an amazing fact with me for a moment.

You and I are entrepreneurs (“treps”). Do you agree? Just in case you doubt it, consider this.

If you’ve read this book, and if you are excited about the prospect of improving your life and the lives of your family members and the people in your community, your city, and more by creating income streams that benefit you and others as you build legitimate income streams, then, **yes, it’s true, you are an entrepreneur.**

Imagine...

Imagine that all of our fellow entrepreneurs since the beginning of time are represented by a pyramid. Most of them, by design, are at the bottom... and only a few are at the top.

I’ll explain...

At the bottom of our pyramid (the widest part of the base), you’ll find hundreds of millions of entrepreneurs who lived in the IMPOSSIBLE times or in impossible situations in history. Maybe they were spending their days planting and harvesting or hunting for food just to survive and feed their families. Making a better life wasn’t even an option. Still, though—they had that unquenchable inner drive to create and improve processes and their own lives and the lives of people nearest to them. Sadly, for most treps in history, it never was even a possibility. It could have been because of the heavy hand of their government, or the circumstances they lived under, the greedy king they served, or the “lower-class people group” they were born into, but they realistically never had a chance.

As we move up a level on our pyramid, we’ll find slightly more fortunate treps, but still millions of FRUSTRATED entrepreneurs who suffer under even modern versions of anti-free market dictators and anti-business governments around the world. The red tape, risks, expenses, and barriers to success in business frustrate nearly all efforts of these poor entrepreneurs. They have little chance. A few succeed and “escape” their circumstances, but the vast majority never do.

Just above the suffering FRUSTRATED entrepreneurs are the entrepreneurs stuck in the HARD TIMES of history. The hard times to me would be times like the Great Depression in the United States or the 15 years after communism fell in Russia. Wars have created windows of “hard times” around the world. During these “hard times,” it was possible to succeed in business, but you didn’t have very good odds on your side. The common sense thing to do was to beg for a job or travel to somewhere else in the world to escape.

As we work our way up the pyramid, we could add several other layers. At points in world history—and, still, in the most backwards parts of our world today—being a woman, or having the wrong skin tone, or wrong religious faith, presented huge barriers to any type of business success .

So, Where Are We Now on the Pyramid?

For the vast majority of entrepreneurs reading this book right now, none of the above-mentioned challenges exist AT ALL thanks to the freedoms we now enjoy. The Internet has created huge opportunities for all of us worldwide. We have a truly level playing field for the first time in human history with the most powerful tools ever made for treps at our disposal...for free or virtually free.

Pause for a moment and truly take that in.

There can be no argument that we live in the greatest time in the history of the world to be an entrepreneur. If you doubt that this is true, it's probably because you spent way too much money on a college education where they tried to convince you that we are worse off now than we were in the Stone Age.

Can skin color or religious faith keep you from selling on Amazon, building a mailing list, or creating a membership website? Can your gender prevent you from putting up an item for sale on eBay? Does your government prevent people like you from recording interesting thoughts on your video camera and posting it online?

Seriously—what excuse do we have as entrepreneurs compared to our kindred spirits from virtually all of world history up until now?

The worst complaint I can come up with is HIGH TAXES. I overcome that by MAKING MORE MONEY and raising my prices!

So, what's next then?

The one asset you will have to develop if you are going to succeed is a good attitude.

- Complainers don't succeed.
- Quitters don't succeed.
- Victims don't succeed.
- Habitual tire kickers / refund seekers don't succeed.
- Magic button chasers don't succeed.
- Gossips don't succeed.
- Feeling "entitled" will prevent your success as well. The entitled do not succeed.

I'm not saying it takes an enormous commitment or even a great deal of focus to make many of the ideas from this book work. I've seen some flat-out LAZY people do very well online.

We are at the top of the pyramid. Take advantage of it!

You actually have to DO SOMETHING, though, to get the ball rolling.

The freedom of the "Internet Lifestyle":

Hi Jim,

I love your vision and what you've done to help so many people, including me! My wife and I have four young daughters, we homeschool, and my goal is to free my time to spend much more time raising my daughters, being involved in their schooling, and serving others together as a family.

As a family, we spent seven years living in southern Mexico doing volunteer work, being supported by the donations of others, before returning to the U.S. almost two years ago. Since returning, I have been working to build businesses and we have really struggled to make ends meet, but, thanks to you, that is turning around.

At a breaking point about nine months ago, I had the choice of getting a job (and watching a lot of my vision die), or immediately adding a significant new income stream. I chose the latter by investing in your jimcockrumcoaching.com program, and it was one of the best decisions I've made. It was worth every penny, as that training is now making me several thousand each month and allowing me to pay the bills.

Sincerely,

—C. Leake

That's one reason why Amazon and eBay have stayed so consistently at the top of my list of ways to get started online. Once you grasp the basics of either site, it's easy to move on to other bigger ideas. With eBay, you can have a global business OVERNIGHT. When else in human history was that possible?

Just in case you are mistakenly thinking that I'm one of those "gifted" or talented exceptions to the rule, check this out:

Here's what my excuse list would look like—if I wanted to build one:

- I have no idea how to build a website.
- I'm not a good writer (thank you, editors).

- I got Bs and Cs in high school.
- I had a C+ average in college and use virtually none of what I learned there in my business today.
- I hated marketing class in high school and college and got bad grades in it.
- My parents are both alcoholics (clean and sober since I was 10, but still...it's a rough start!).
- I got fired from my last real job.
- I have five kids to feed and my wife doesn't make any income.
- I'm not well-connected in my local community.
- I hate getting up early.
- I don't like to learn new skills (nothing technical, please!).
- I really don't like to work at night or early in the morning.
- I'm quickly bored by anything routine.
- I don't consider myself a creative or interesting writer—it doesn't come easily.
- I'm an introvert.
- I don't like being on camera.
- I'm easily distracted and move onto new projects...

...are you getting bored with my excuses yet? I could go on if you want me to! Those are all 100% TRUE, but they aren't COMPLAINTS. Those are the parameters I work within and still succeed with relative ease. I pull in high six figures online only working 15-20 hours per week with no employees. I have various partners around the world working for me, and with me, and I treat them very well.

Better yet, I've been a part of teaching literally thousands of other people to overcome their excuses and succeed online as well.

Are you next? I truly hope so!

Where Do You Start? What Are the Steps to Success Online?

There's not "one path" that you can take to succeed online. Your gifts, skills, attention span, personality, drive, experiences, location, connections, interests, availability, creativity, and, yes—having a bit of cash to invest—are all factors in which opportunities are available to you.

All that being said...**I do teach people to succeed online, no matter where they are starting out!** I have fantastic coaching, courses, free newsletters, best-selling books,

thousands of successful students willing to help you out, free blog posts, YouTube videos to share with you, and over a decade of success with all of it.

A couple of important factors are TIME and MONEY.

Do you have TIME or MONEY? Most people have one or the other.

If you have both, you can take your time and soak in the ideas of this book or my free newsletter or membership sites slowly.

If you have neither time nor money, I'm SURE that the section of this book about Amazon.com and eBay.com are the best bet for you as a starting point.

If you have a little money to invest in your business, I suggest you try the ProvenAmazonCourse.com course, or if you are a bit more serious of a student who is ready for coaching and ready to invest in what I KNOW is the best coaching team on the planet, then call us at the number below. Our success rate is off the charts. We'll work with you until you succeed.

1 (800) 994-1792

All of our coaches started out just like you right now. They read this book (probably an earlier version of it). Next, they tried one of the business models I teach. After that, they succeeded and sent us a testimonial. The best of the best students are approached and asked if they'd like to become a coach with us. That's the sort of people you'll be working with if you want to be coached by my team.

The chart that I showed at the start of Chapter 4 is a great place to start as well.

There are numerous fantastic business possibilities online, but following the crowd **WILL NOT** get you there. Following one "celebrity" expert **WILL NOT** get you there. Following ANY high-priced-big-launch, "step-by-step" programs **WILL NOT** get you there. Read Chapter 5 again before choosing a path.

Rest assured, though—I meet and hang out with people EVERY DAY that have made great things happen online, and there's no reason you can't join us.

Chapter 8: How I Earned \$112,500 in 3 Minutes

Do the math. $\$7500 \times 15 = ?$

How did it happen? It's a simple story that took a bit of time to develop, but I think you'll like the story. If by chance you skipped ahead to this chapter, I'm hoping this chapter will convince you to back up and read the rest of this book!

If you recall, I showed you this picture earlier in the book back in Chapter 1:



That's a picture of the first live event I ever hosted. We had planned on around 50 people showing up to this spur of the moment hastily planned event, but we wound up filling the room and turning off registration at 350.

There weren't any professional speakers or big-ticket items sold from stage. We broke all the rules of "holding a successful Internet business conference."

What we did worked, though, and it illustrates nicely how differently I do things in my organization.

The feedback we got from the attendees was incredible. The event was 100 percent content and success-story driven. The ideas presented on stage all weekend were based entirely on the ideas you've just read in this book.

We brought every day "real people" to the stage all weekend long and shared creative "Silent Sales Machine" stories with the audience...one after the other after another...all weekend. You could have heard a pin drop much of the time. Tears were shed, lifetime friendships were established, multimillion-dollar ideas were uncovered and acted on...it was incredible. It wasn't about me one bit—it was about IDEAS and REAL PEOPLE with great stories of success.

To find out more about our live events, use this link:

JimCockrumEvents.com

We also add the professionally recorded videos from our live conferences to our membership site at MySilentTeam.com—if you join, look for the department titled “live events” for those recordings.

So where does the \$112,500 come into the story?

After a weekend of sharing my best ideas and various success stories from guests, I made a simple three-minute offer to the audience.

I told them, “I’m taking 15 attendees (only 15) and for \$7,500, you will be a part of a small group that meets with me twice in the coming year. We’ll get together, have some fun, and help grow each other’s businesses.”

That’s it. It took less than three minutes actually (you can hear the entire sales pitch in the video of the event).

We got over 20 applications. I picked my favorite 15, and we ran with it.

I’ll bet you are expecting a sales pitch at this point, right?

Sorry—no sales pitch. I don’t work that closely with strangers. You ARE NOT being invited to join my small group.

The fact is, all 15 of the people we accepted into the group were people I not only KNEW, but KNEW WELL. They were all having a degree of significant success, and had long ago read this book and taken action based on the ideas in this book.

In other words, I knew each of the 15 were serious, trustworthy, dedicated, and positioned for success. Building that kind of relationship takes time, energy, commitment, and integrity. Those are the sort of people I work with.

I send the “fast dollar” seekers elsewhere...I have nothing to offer them.

You might be asking why I wrote this final chapter.

There are a few reasons. I hope...

- CREDIBILITY. You are more likely to believe that the ideas I’m teaching in this book really do work.
- REALISTIC ENTHUSIASM. This chapter makes you understand that there’s nothing EASY about success online, but if you follow a proven system, the sky is the limit.

- COMMUNITY. You feel encouraged by the audience of fellow readers who you can see are taking this book very seriously as the foundation for their online adventure. We hang out online together and spur each other on. Join us!
- STRATEGY. You buy into my “slow-and-steady-wins-the-race” philosophy of online success.

“Wealth gained hastily will dwindle, but whoever gathers little by little will increase it.”
Proverbs 13:11

Thank you for taking the time to read my book. I hope the lessons I’ve shared help you to take action and become your own definition of success.

Jim Cockrum

jimcockrum.com

Parting Thoughts:

Can I ask a favor?

If you loved this book, please drop us a line or post a note on Amazon.com and share your thoughts (search for “Silent Sales Machine” by me—Jim Cockrum on Amazon).

If you didn’t love it and want to let me know, I want to hear about it! My current contact info is on JimCockrum.com.

Use Facebook?

We have a large community of online entrepreneurs and fans of this book who hang out online together—I hope you’ll join us! Here’s the link:

www.Facebook.com/groups/mysilentteam/

Once you are in the group, be sure to use our “worldmap” feature to find out who else in our community lives near you—we have readers all over the world. Read the group description of our Facebook group to get details on our world map.

Want some one-on-one help?

Are you interested in working with one of our coaches one-on-one? ALL of our coaches are students and readers who started out reading the book you are now reading and went on to succeed online. Once we noticed their success, they were invited to coach with us. I fully believe we offer the best business coaching experience that the Internet has to offer. Get more details here:

JimCockrumCoaching.com