

**Start Making Money
From Your Website:
The Five Key Pages You Need to Add
NOW!**

By Stacey Morris

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Introduction: How Can You Make Money Online in Your Service Business?

**Online marketing and website design have become huge topics
in the field of selling professional services.**

It was not long ago that most websites were ineffective tools for selling services. For one thing, websites written by service professionals didn't speak to the needs or problems of the client; rather, the site was designed to extol the skill and experience of the service seller. So you'll see a lot of sites with pages like "About Jane Doe," and "Contact Us," and "How We Work." This information is fine and important—visitors need to know something about you and your process—however, if you're not highlighting information and solutions that clearly address what the visitor wants and needs, your site and its ability to sell will fall flat.

Another element that made service websites ineffective was that only a few people looked on the Internet to find service solutions and if they did, they would never find your site. Women interested in yoga didn't search Google™ for help. Homeowners with leaky faucets didn't check out local plumbing websites. And if you wanted to find a coach or consultant, you would do your due diligence offline, never thinking to look at websites. That's changed with the advent of search engines geared toward helping site owners to attract targeted customers.

Now, websites are seen as essential tools for any small business. Sadly, few people know how to develop an effective site. By effective, I mean a site that attracts clients and generates income. Service professionals can utilize their websites and online presence much differently than traditional hard-goods sites like Amazon.com or Gap.com.

First of all, it's very difficult to sell your services directly from your site. Services are more intimate than books or clothing, and before someone enters their credit card information, they want more assurance. Your website can provide the first level of that

reassurance and begin pre-selling your prospective client, thereby shortening your sales cycle.

That assurance is developed through building relationships. An online presence can help you not only develop relationships globally, but your website can also help build the relationship hand-in-hand with your prospective client. In other words, a dynamic website can lead potential clients to start slowly, at a level with which they're most comfortable, and then continually develop their connection with you.

For example, it's very rare for a client to find a service seller's website and sign up on the spot.

More likely, they will want to "try before they buy." How? Well, there are several free offerings you can provide potential clients to earn trust and interest and demonstrate your expertise in your field. You may offer for them to sign up to get a free report on "Home Decorating Tips for \$10 a Day." If they like the report you wrote, they may move onto signing up for your ezine *Home Decorator Monthly*. Now you have their contact information.

As you send them highly valuable content periodically, the prospective client begins to trust you, your information, and your service solutions more and more. Perhaps you've also written a book or ebook that you can offer for \$20. Or they attend a seminar you're giving or buy a tape set of a teleclass series (by the way, if any of these terms are unfamiliar to you, keep reading!). Each time they engage with you, they're buying at a higher level and trusting your services at a higher level. Eventually, they may sign you up for the primary service you offer. In the meantime, you've been making passive income while you sleep!

Does this seem like a lot of work? Initially it may be, but the payoff can be tremendous. Let's look at a realistic scenario.

If you attract one hundred people targeted people to your site a day, maybe 20 will sign up for a free report or ezine.

It's free, right? I'm being very conservative here; if your sales copy for the freebie is good, the number will likely be MUCH higher. We'll talk about your sales page later.

But for now, you've got 20 new contacts who have given you permission to sell to them. That's in ONE DAY. Through building a relationship with these targeted prospective clients, through your ezine and special reports, how many do you think will eventually buy something from you? This is where the numbers get murky because this is where the value of your information becomes essential.

But let's say two people in 20 decide to go for the \$20 product. The product can be anything of a higher perceived value than the cost. In this case, that's \$200 a week (not counting weekends) for no extra work other than the writing of your ezine or the taping of your seminar. Remember, this can all be automated.

Well, \$200 a week is no big deal. But what if out of four of those buyers, one decides to sign up for your full package?

That averages out to one new client every two weeks. That's 26 new clients a year attained through your website.

Ideally, you're also networking in the real world and marketing in a variety of other ways. But imagine getting 25-30 clients solely through a website, which takes about three hours of your time a week if that? That's the power of a service-seller's website.

What about services that only cater to the local community? Begin to rethink your concept of target market and community. In one of my seminars, a woman owned a kennel for pets in Texas, but her website's target market was pet owners nationwide. She used her website to sell books and customized lesson plans for dog owners who wanted to train their dogs. She offered books on bad behavior, housebreaking, and anxiety problems. You name it; she had a section that dealt with it. The point is that she earned money from clients all over the country and did not limit herself to attracting only a local clientele.

The power of your website is that you can stay in front of your prospective clients over a longer term by continuing to educate them and provide value consistently. An

online presence forms a piece of your marketing pie and can help tie in all of your other efforts.

The other reason to build a site is to build credibility. A business without a website seems unprofessional, and it's becoming that way for service sellers as well. If you don't have a site up, you may be perceived as being behind the curve or even not quite as professional.

The Five Most Important Website Pages

This book is the first in a series designed to help service professionals start making money from their websites while lessening the anxiety of working with designers and the technical aspects of online sales.

This book focuses on developing the five most important pages to incorporate into your site: the Home Page, the Programs Page, How We Work Page, About Us Page, and the Sales Pages. Why start this series with a discussion of content rather than the logistics of set-up? If you don't know what you want to say, no designer in the world will help you figure it out. Why be pressured by a designer before you're clear on your message?

There are five pages that are necessary for every service seller's website. Remember, these are the bare minimums—eventually you may want to develop a 50-page site.

Content Is King.

Content is king—regardless of all the hype about Google, search engines, and traffic-building strategies, your content is what helps you to establish credibility and increase your visibility.

One thing I ask of you before we begin: start thinking of yourself as an infopreneur. In selling a service, we're really marketing our information, skills, and knowledge base.

Robert Middleton said it best in his *Infoguru Manual*: “We give some of that solution-based information away to leverage our credibility as Independent Professionals. And the more we give away, the more we are perceived as partners that prospective clients want to do business with.”

So don't limit yourself to thinking you can only sell your hands-on expertise—why not make your information accessible to hundreds, if not thousands of people? Reading a report on “The Ten Best Ways to Save Money on Your Taxes” doesn't mean you won't ever hire an accountant. It does mean that you'll perceive the person who wrote that report as an expert who it may be worthwhile to contact.

1: Home Page

Making an Effective Home Page

The Home Page is designed to turn on your visitor. If they don't like what they see there, they'll leave. That means you have to attract their attention immediately and hold them.

Your home page is not the place for the “hard sell.” This page needs to be benefit-laden; if you offer value right from the start, readers will buy in much more quickly. Ultimately, your Home Page should establish your credibility, increase your visibility, and address your visitor's concerns so that the inevitable result will be a phone call to you, an ezine sign-up, or the purchase of one of your products.

To make your Home Page compelling, you need to do one of two things:

- a) Provide a solution to a problem or pain.
- b) Make a promise of health, wealth, or happiness.

One of the primary reasons people buy a product or service is to make their lives easier or solve a problem. Think of the last three things you paid for. What was your reason for buying? Most likely, your motivation was to alleviate a problem of some kind. Lunch curbs hunger. “How-to” books like this one help to guide you out of confusion. Gas keeps the car running. My best friend just called to tell me she went to the movies last night, not to have a good time, but to stop thinking about work.

The point is people are more strongly motivated by pain than by pleasure. In writing your Home Page—in fact, in writing all your marketing materials—keep this principle in mind.

People will do more to solve a problem in their lives than they will to produce a new level of success.

However, success is compelling, so don't short-change it. In fact, I entered the coaching field because I wanted to focus on success, not on pain. Pleasure may not be as compelling as pain, but it will open the door. So make sure your Home Page offers a solution, or makes a tempting promise of success.

Engaging Your Readers Immediately

The first questions your visitor asks are, “What can you do for me, and why should I care?” If you don't tell them—fast—they're gone. You won't keep them engaged by talking about yourself. And they're not going to stick around with vague promises of “creating a life of abundance,” “life balance,” “more joy,” “more money,” or my personal favorite trite expression, “greater fulfillment.” Is there anybody on earth who doesn't want these things? It takes more than vague, wide-open promises like these to sell someone on your service.

Speaking to Your Potential Clients

Another common error is using empty, non-specific lingo. A chiropractor promising “structural alignment.” A financial manager promising a fund that has “beaten the S&P for the past five years!” A decorator offering to incorporate “design elements fit to your lifestyle.” None of these promises speak to my need to solve a specific problem. Some of them I don't even understand.

Watch the language you use on your Home Page. If you see industry-specific words creeping into your copy, rework your page until someone who knows nothing about your service can read it. Show it to your friends or have a neutral party read it. It wouldn't hurt to have a 12-year old read and give you his or her impressions.

Aim to engage your reader immediately.

If they're struggling to understand your wording, you're not doing that. A confused mind always says NO. Clarity is powerful and persuasive.

Clarifying Your Most Wanted Response

The main goal of your Home Page is to provide content that is compelling enough to get your visitor to do what you want them to do—what Ken Evoy of SiteSell.com calls your Most Wanted Response (MWR).

Your MWR could be many things, but it should only be one thing. Make sure your Home Page has only one focus. Here are some examples:

It could be to excite your visitor and keep them interested.

This is a given. Every Home Page needs to do this.

It could be to establish your credibility.

If you are trying to enter the corporate arena as a service professional, having a website is a must. Without one, you look unprofessional and out-of-date.

When prospective clients visit for the first time, they won't know what to expect from you and your site. It's important that you immediately establish some level of credibility and professionalism. A well-designed website is an essential start.

I worked with Tom, a chiropractor who was bidding on a contract with Merrill-Lynch to provide on-site adjustments. Three of the initial questions on the qualification form referred to the practitioner's website. If Tom hadn't had a website, he would never have gotten past first base!

It could be used to generate leads.

Your website will become the most powerful tool you have to collect email addresses and leads. It's a great way to start an ongoing conversation with minimal cost and effort. Studies have shown that it takes, on average, seven to eight exposures to a product before a prospective client buys. Your leads will form the beginning of your relationship marketing.

It could be used to sell your ezine.

Your Home Page is the visitor's introduction to you. By providing a monthly or weekly electronic magazine, you continue to build trust with your visitors. Your ezine can also be used to promote your products, services, and special events. Subscribers could get a discount to events or a special bonus like a free ebook you've written. They may not be ready to sign up for the full course, but an ezine is a great appetizer if done well.

It's also a wonderful way to stay in touch with your database.

People who continue to see your name in their inbox will remember you when an opportunity comes up.

Coaching programs often end at a certain point—when the client accomplishes their goal or makes a life transition. However, it is said that everyone has access to 250 people.

A family coach I worked with named Veronica worked with parents of twins and triplets. Most of her referrals came from parents who had completed her program and who had friends who were expecting twins. Because she stayed on their radar through her newsletter, past clients remembered her.

Getting Your Readers Right Where You Want Them

Once you've clarified your MWR, then make sure your website architecture, starting with your home page, supports the path you want your visitor to take. Make it crystal clear to your visitor what you want them to do. Then lead them by the hand to your call to action. Make it easy, compelling, and irresistible.

If you want them to sign up for your ezine, make it easy for them to do so. Place a sign-up box and a navigation button on your Home Page. Write a sales letter that outlines the benefits of subscribing to your fantastic ezine. Have incoming links land directly on your ezine sales page.

Action Steps

- 1) Visitors need to know what to do when they visit your site. If it's confusing or doesn't immediately meet a need they have, they'll click out. So figure out your MWR—Most Wanted Response. Make sure you only have one focus for each page of your site, including your Home Page. You may want them to call you, sign up for your newsletter, purchase a product—it's up to you, but be crystal-clear about it.

- 2) Figure out one to two other options clients might want to explore as you grow your site. Notice I said "clients." If you want your website to be more than an electronic brochure, you'll want to continually update it and make it interesting for your current clients, as well as first-time visitors.

- 3) Design the content and structure of your Home Page to get the MWR, not the other options. Clients who want those will gravitate toward them. Ask friends and colleagues if they can identify your Most Wanted Response and your call to action. If test-visitors don't get what they're supposed to do, rework or reword your site. Make sure your call to action is crystal-clear to your visitors. A confused mind will click out.

2: Programs Pages

The idea here is to devote one page for each of your programs. If you don't have programs yet, develop them.

Defining the Benefits of Your Programs

If you're still calling yourself a "Life Coach" or "General Contractor" or another generic term meant to meet the needs of the whole world, develop programs that individuals can understand and that meet their specific needs clearly. The term "Life Coaching" is abstract—clients want services that speak to their personal needs.

Jane was an interior designer who offered very specialized design programs, including a new parents program, a special events program, and a home seller's service to help prepare one's home before putting it on the market. She was able to fill her practice very quickly because customers immediately related to her services. "Interior Decorating" sounds like an expensive luxury. A program that helps you design a safe, comfortable home for your family and new baby sounds essential.

Every service you provide needs to provide corresponding benefits to the visitor.

Nobody cares what you do. They want to know what's in it for them. You're not selling a service; you're selling a self-contained solution to a problem. On your Programs Pages, you briefly explain each of your services with the most pressing need of your typical client in mind. It's important that your potential clients can see the benefits they will get.

As Deborah Brown-Volkman says in *Four Steps to Building a Profitable Coaching Practice*, "Potential clients do not buy until they have a problem they need to solve and they have exhausted all possibilities of solving the problem(s) themselves."

Make sure your Programs Pages emphasize that problem, along with the program designed specifically to meet that problem.

When Bibi's Cleaning Company began offering a variety of programs, their revenues skyrocketed. One program in particular generated 80% of their income. The name of the program? "Welcome Home." Clients immediately recognized how nice it was to come home from a business trip or vacation and have everything fresh, clean, and prepared for the next week. The last thing people want to do after being away is clean, do laundry, and change the sheets.

Your programs don't have to be elaborate, but they do need to be benefit- or problem-focused. Your programs need to address a common challenge of your target market and present a wonderful potential outcome. People will take more action to avoid pain or solve their problems than they will to make themselves happy. Sad but true. So design your programs to help people relieve the stress of their daily lives.

Action Steps

- 1) List the programs you offer with corresponding benefits. For example, each year my plumber inspects my pipes for free. That's a service. The benefit is a safer home and less money spent over the long term on repairs.
- 2) If you don't already have specific programs, brainstorm with your typical or best clients in mind. What problems are they most challenged by? What would they most benefit from? What problems have they not yet identified?
- 3) Outline one program that you think would address the problems of your target market. Keep it to one page as a start. You'll develop it as you go.
- 4) Use your model program as a guideline to describe what you do. When you're at networking meetings or professional gatherings, be prepared to describe what you do in the form of a program, with one to two case examples related to the listener's situation. See how your listeners respond.

3: How We Work Page

Breaking Down Your Services

Here are the pages where you get to talk about you. The first pages have been about your client, but here the focus shifts to who you are and how you create results. The goal here is to convey to your potential client that you know what you're doing because you have a process, a system, a unique perspective, or another distinction that sets you apart from your competitors while demonstrating your credibility. Here are some points you might want to include:

Your Process.

The idea is to foresee all of your potential client's questions about your program. For instance, if you are a coach, how often will you meet with your clients? For how long? Where? Is one meeting enough or do you schedule multiple meetings? How many clients do you have at a time? Group or individual? How long is the program, and how much flexibility is there? What is the client expected to do between appointments? What type of follow up do you provide? Is there any information the client needs to know before starting? Are there materials to buy? Your How We Work Page should answer all of these types of questions about your programs.

In another example, a chiropractor and a plumber have very different processes, but both could dramatically expand their offerings by incorporating other business models. A chiropractor typically meets with clients individually, at least weekly, for 15-20 minute adjustments. Clients are not usually given homework, and there are no materials to buy. A plumber comes once to your house and brings every tool necessary. The customer is not expected to do anything besides pay the bill. Consider ways that one business could incorporate the processes of another in order to better serve the client.

Your Unique Selling Proposition (USP).

What distinguishes you from other professionals that do what you do? What makes your service or programs different? Is it your experience, training, cost, or style? Do you solve a problem nobody else attempts? Is your solution different? Is your target market unusual? Do you produce results faster? Do you have flexible hours or meeting places? Is your guarantee better than average?

You don't have to spell out your USP in detail, but do mention it. A friend of mine is a corporate attorney whose USP is, "I offer Wall Street experience at small-town prices." Setting your business apart from all others is key.

Your Philosophy.

You can also discuss what drives you. What led you to choose this area of expertise? Do you have a set of beliefs that guides your work?

For example, if you're an interior designer who incorporates Feng Shui, let your visitor know this and know what it could mean for their designs. A landscaper might specialize in organic principles of gardening or child-friendly spaces. A coach might be very directive and action-oriented with clients or more process, feeling-oriented.

Make your philosophy clear to your prospective client, so they can help determine if your personalities will mesh or clash.

Case Studies, Testimonials, and Stories.

People love success stories. Client case studies or testimonials are a wonderful way to communicate how you work and the outcomes clients can expect. A simple outline for a case study is to describe the situation prior to the client working with you, and then discuss the specific steps you took together. Finish up with a brief outline of how the client's life or business has changed. Insert a quote from the client if appropriate. You can convey your uniqueness and credibility with a good one-page case study.

A testimonial is simply a quote from a satisfied client. With permission, take quotes out of letters from your happiest clients and include them on your site. This is a great and personal way to show client success.

Although this page is about you as the professional, it's imperative to keep it benefit-focused. Whether you talk about your process, unique selling proposition, or your philosophy, bear in mind that it has to make sense to the prospective client. So what if your program is six weeks rather than two months? What does it matter that you have 15 years experience? How does the client **immediately** see the benefit of your philosophy? Always remember the principle of What's in It for Me (WIIFM).

Action Steps

- 1) Write out your typical process, using the questions as a guide.
- 2) Glance through the phone book and randomly pick two service professions. Come up with some strategies of how you could apply their business process to your company.
- 3) Develop your USP. First, write out your compelling story. Remember when you first got interested in your profession and tap into that early passion. What triggered your drive? What was your turning point? Did you hit bottom somewhere? Did you have a horrific corporate job that you had to get away from? When you've thought about your initial motivation, write out three things that make you stand out in your profession.
- 4) Think about your philosophy—what are the beliefs that help you be the best at what you do? What are your beliefs about your service? How good are you at communicating those beliefs to your audience?
- 5) Put your sketch of the How We Work Page away for a day or two. When you come back to it, draw out the most powerful pieces and fit them into one page.
- 6) Everything you write here is a rough draft and may change over time. So don't get too intimidated by this initial process. The micro-goal is to put your page up. The

macro-goal is to continue to develop your philosophy and use it to maintain your motivation when things get tough.

4: About Us Page

Getting to Know You

As service professionals, we're providing a more intimate service than if we were selling hard goods. We go into people's homes, we evaluate their needs, we touch them, we ask deeper questions, and we listen. So it's important that our visitors get to know us a little better.

You can name this page whatever you want, as long as it's clear that it's about You—not your process or your training but what really drove you to this specialty.

I work with a woman who started selling nutritional supplements in her 60s. She shared her story about how she suffered a debilitating illness and for three years had trouble getting out of bed, much less working. The traditional medical establishment could do nothing, and it wasn't until she turned to these products that she was able to heal. In fact, she recently ran the New York City Marathon—at age 70! Her story is incredibly compelling, and I know it made me start taking the vitamins.

Your compelling story can make the difference for many visitors. Fabienne Frederickson of ClientAttraction.com writes, "If you're not getting attention from prospects, your message may simply not be compelling enough, and they may just not relate to you or what you offer.

If they don't feel your story is going to help them, then they'll look somewhere else for a solution."

People buy from people they know, like, and trust. Your story will go a long way to increasing the trust factor.

Action Steps

- 1) Write a draft of a bio. Go for four to five paragraphs.

- 2) Show it to three people. It's so hard to be objective when writing about ourselves. You have a lot of wiggle room on this page—it's hard to be too intimate or too detached. But you do want to convey a sense of where you're coming from.
- 3) Write out the path that got you involved with your current profession. Were you burnt out at your last job? Did you face significant health concerns that forced you to re-evaluate your direction? Were you excited by the possibilities that your new field offered? If your story is compelling enough to your visitors, you'll build the trust essential to working together.
- 4) Rewrite your bio and compelling story again, understanding that this is not the material to spend endless hours editing. It needs to flow and sound natural. Then incorporate it into your About Us page.

5: Sales Pages

Creating the Sales Factor

To make your website profitable, you need to sell something. You're always going to be selling your services, but what else can you create as an infopreneur that can be sold on your site? I'll talk about types of products in a minute, but whatever you do create needs to have sales support in the form of another page—the sales page.

Most of your site will be devoted to selling you—your services, time, knowledge, and expertise. Far easier is creating sales copy for a product.

You don't have to limit yourself to selling your own products on your website. Thousands of sites have affiliate programs designed to help you sell their products. For doing nothing other than promoting someone else's product or service, you get a commission.

But let's stick to products you might develop yourself. Below are three great ways to start packaging your information:

Ebooks

As an infopreneur, you're expected to sell your expertise. You may do it in the form of consulting, coaching, or actual hands-on labor, but the bottom line is your clients are buying what you know—your skills, knowledge, and experience.

Ebooks are a wonderful way to package yourself.

Ebooks are organized like regular print books. They don't have to be long—nobody pays for word length, only excellent content.

The advantages of creating an ebook are that there's no publisher to dilute your message for John Q. Public. There are no printing costs and no shipping costs because they're downloadable—for instant gratification—and they're easy to update. You can add audio and video to them. You can insert hyperlinks so readers can immediately link to the

online resources or tools you're describing. You can offer free excerpts. Everything you know can be packaged and sold. I encourage service sellers to develop at least one product and use it as a cornerstone of their marketing.

For example, a carpenter could distribute an ebook on "How to Find A Trustworthy Contractor." A copywriter could write a book on "The 7 Steps to Writing the Ultimate Home Page." An image consultant could write an ebook about "How to Find, Scope, and Plunder Sample Sales in New York City!" The point is we all have valuable information that people want to get their hands on—and oftentimes they'll even pay good money for it.

Ecourses

Ecourses are time-released lessons on a specialized topic. They can be sent on a weekly basis through an autoresponder or as needed to the student. You have a lot of options here. You can bundle an ecourse with teleseminars. You can send lessons in conjunction with weekly coaching/consulting calls. You can assign homework and grade it like a real course. I've done this with some clients, and it's been great. The clients work at their own paces and don't receive the next lesson until they've completed the prior assignment. It's like a correspondence course but with a live teacher—you. You can choose to incorporate monthly live calls with your ecourse or special days reserved for clients to call in, as they need. Some coaches even offer a one-time email counseling session.

The wonderful thing about ecourses is that you can be so creative with both your material and the way you present it.

Every individual learns in a different way, and it can be fun and challenging to experiment with what works. As you're getting feedback from the lessons, you can refine your courses and repackage them. The options are really only limited by your imagination.

Ezines

Electronic magazines are everywhere. What's great about them from the service-seller's standpoint is that they are an inexpensive and very effective way to stay in touch with

your golden list. That means you're on the radar of hundreds and eventually thousands of contacts, including your past clients, at very low cost to you. Sending snail-mail postcards has been replaced with the ezine—it's cheaper, more useful to the reader, and helps you to maintain your credibility and visibility on a regular basis.

Ezines are also excellent vehicles to promote new products or services you've developed. You're sending the information to people who have chosen to receive it. Unlike ads we get in the mail from companies that bought our name from a list, ezine distribution is strictly permission-based. If they don't sign up, you risk being accused of spamming and could be removed from your list-service. So you can effortlessly send an email to all your contacts informing them of your new venture.

One of the keys to having people sign up for your ezine is to bundle it with something free, something that is perceived as valuable by your audience.

Free stuff is really easy to come by online, but valuable free stuff is another story. Some ideas are targeted reports, audio links, or a workbook on your topic.

The other key is to ensure your reader that you will under no circumstances rent or give away their address. Privacy is essential.

So put an ezine sign-up box on your site. Start collecting email addresses and send your subscribers something of value in exchange. Every page on your site should have a form for collecting email addresses, and every marketing communication you send out should give your visitor an incentive for giving you the email address.

Don't let your prospective clients leave your site without being given every imaginable incentive for becoming a member of your email list.

Your ezine will be competing with hundreds if not thousands of others, so write something of value, bundle it with something else of value, and send it out on a regular basis. If writing an article every month seems overwhelming, develop a template and plug in the information you want to share.

There are a variety of formats you can try out for your ezine. Here are just a few:

- **The How-To.** People love how-to articles, and they're easy to write. I used to get a snail mail newsletter from my auto mechanic monthly. In each issue, he would describe how to fix or maintain something in the car, like changing the oil, replacing fluids, or weatherizing. I never chose to actually try to do any of these tasks myself, but the fact he was willing to share his information helped me to trust him through four cars. Eighteen years later and two states away, he's still my mechanic, and I've referred an awful lot of business to him.
- **The Question and Answer.** If you find that your clients ask similar questions or struggle with comparable problems, use a Q&A format to address their needs. For example, about 80 percent of the questions I receive about website development can be broken down into about five topics. It would be easy to format those topics across a few months' worth of articles!
- **Interviews.** These are a lot of fun. Find someone in your industry or a related business that provides a solution to something your clients needs. For example, a contractor could interview a cabinet-maker. A house painter could interview an interior decorator. Develop questions ahead of time and edit the interview for your newsletter. This strategy positions you as an expert who has access to a variety of resources and provides greater value to your subscribers.

Once a visitor has signed up for your ezine and report, follow up with them through an autoresponder program. Prepare a follow-up letter series for new subscribers to reassure them that you appreciate their interest. Just getting something from you regularly will help subscribers keep you in mind. Make sure to insert your information at the end of each issue so readers have a way of contacting you easily.

For the advanced student: Once you have written a few articles that you're particularly proud of, start submitting them to other online publications. This is a great way to get your name out to thousands more prospective clients.

Above are the three top ways I recommend beginners think about packaging their material. There are dozens more and dozens being created as we sit here. In my own ezine, I try to keep subscribers abreast of new developments (that's a blatant plug, by the way).

The point is to start thinking about how you can package and promote the knowledge you already have.

As service sellers, we have a gift to give others. Why only offer it to them in traditional, limiting ways? What types of information can you deliver? Six popular and relatively simple formats include:

Top X Tips. You could write something like, "The Top 9 Ways to Stay Out of Debt." People love numbers and concise bits of information. This layout is clear, to the point, and easy for people to browse through and implement. It's also a pretty painless way to format your information. Coming up with the top 5-50 tips about your specialty should be fun.

How-To Articles. An article like "How to train your puppy in one week" shows the reader how to get from point A to point B, seemingly with little effort, and maybe a touch of flair. How-tos are favorites.

The Study Finding. Use a catchy headline like this for your info bits, "Did you know that indoor air is six times more polluted than outdoor air?" If you analyze a study, back it up with some tangible research, or you'll lose credibility immediately.

Interviews. “Top marketing pro shares her expertise!” As I said in the section on ezines, these are great fun. You get to interact with other like-minded professionals, and you can both get access to each other’s lists, which makes this a win-win.

Trends. “Hottest gear for the home office.” If your industry has a trend or is going through some kind of shift, use your product to address it. Change frightens people. If you can provide solid information on what’s happening and how to best deal with it, you’ll immediately make a name for yourself. It always works to be the go-to person during an innovative stage.

Resource Guide. This is a listing with links to resources you recommend to your clients and subscribers. For it to be valuable, the reader needs to trust your opinion, so this should not be your first foray into information products.

Many infopreneurs are afraid of giving away too much information. This is silly.

The more information you give away, the more your prospective client will believe you have to give for pay.

Action Steps

- 1) If you don’t have a product yet, develop an idea for something.
- 2) A great way to check on how well the market will respond to it is to ask your target market if they see value in it.
- 3) Check key words on overture.com and see how popular they rank.
- 4) Use one of the suggestions above to develop an outline for your idea.

Conclusion

Make sure your site is completed before launching it online. There's nothing more annoying to a visitor than to see a cute construction site symbol. Test your links, test your ezine sign-up box, test your navigation buttons, and then have someone else test everything.

Once all the necessary sections of your site are written and put onto the site, launch it and watch the clients roll in. There's no end to the moneymaking extras you can come up with once you have the essentials solidly in place.

Bonus Report: Promoting Your Site

Once you've developed a fabulous website, you need people to visit it. Site promotion can be done online and offline, and below are three excellent ways to start:

Search Engines

A search engine is simply a program that uses "spiders" to search the web and index your site. Each engine's algorithm is different and changes constantly, and only a handful of people in the world are able to keep up with their mutability. Mastering the search engines is almost impossible, which is fine because I'm going to show you why it's not necessary.

Your visitors will find you through a number of ways, but statistics show that at least half can come from the search engines.

As an information marketer, you've positioned yourself to convert any of those visitors to buyers of your products or services.

The problem is that surfers almost never search beyond the third page or the top 30 sites listed in the engines. By following the information about content above and by incorporating some principles we'll talk about in the following paragraphs, you should be able to generate a consistent stream of visitors to your site.

The first step is to submit your site to the search engines. Although the spiders will eventually find your site regardless, it can take months or even a couple of years. Even after you've proactively submitted, you can expect up to two months for a listing.

The two giants right now are Google and Overture. Getting ranked with these guys will cover about 90% of the market. This may change within the next year or so, and I'll continue to update my materials to reflect revisions in the industry (for example, Yahoo recently bought Overture). But for now, if you focus on these two, you'll be ahead of the

game. If you want to stay abreast of changes, a great resource is www.searchenginewatch.com.

One caveat: be patient. The drawback of having two engines dominating the market is that it can take up to two months to list your site and then more time to actually achieve a top 30 position. You can get faster results from using Pay-Per-Click (PPC) strategies, which we'll talk about below, but PPC is not free.

The main factors that affect your ranking will be:

- **Linking.** How many other sites link to yours? Relevancy plays a role here, although engine algorithms are so secretive it's hard to tell how important it is. You can look on alexa.com to see how many pages are linking to you.
- **Keywords.** Brainstorm a list of 50-100 keywords. A great resource for this is overture.com, which ranks the most popular searches in its database.
- **Page Rank.** Google has a toolbar you can download at www.google.com that updates your page ranking from 1-10 continually. It ranks whatever page you're on, so you can see how important that particular page is to Google and therefore to the Internet world.

These factors probably will change over time, as algorithms change constantly at the search engines. It's said that only about three people in the world know Google's rules. I don't know if that's true, but the point is that it's next to impossible to anticipate all the ins and outs. Rather than work exclusively on search engine "optimization," focus primarily on developing excellent content that establishes your credibility over the long term.

Pay-Per-Click/Google Ad Words

With pay-per-click (PPC), you bid on keywords to advertise your website. The great thing about PPC is that it's quick, targeted, and generally affordable. You only pay when the searcher actually clicks through to your site.

The challenge is that you need to write copy that attracts visitors, and you then need to convert them to customers.

Your ad may be posted within minutes after you've submitted it, so you can immediately check its impact. You can put up multiple ads with different angles or emphases and test which are most effective. You're paying only for actual click-throughs, not impressions, which means your ad may be shown thousands of times, but you only pay when someone clicks on it.

Sounds great, but there's a catch. If your ad doesn't generate a minimum number of clicks, Google will de-list it, and send you a "Dear John" letter. What do you do? Just try again with different wording. Keep trying until you get it. Look at other ads, do some grassroots research, or ask your coach—you'll master short ad copy in no time.

What if you get a lot of click-throughs, but your visitors aren't converting to customers or clients? This happens frequently. It's a sign that your website needs an update. Look first to make sure your call to action is crystal clear—if visitors don't know what to do, the last things they'll choose is to sign on the dotted line. A confused visitor will immediately click out. Review the above Five Most Important Pages and see if your site meets the criteria listed.

Marketing Materials

Search engines and PPC can be a great source of first-tier referrals, but you'll need more for your offline promotion.

- **Business Cards.** Your business cards should have your website address and email clearly displayed. If you are offering a report as an incentive for visitors to sign up for your list, advertise the report directly on the card: "Sign up for my free report on the Top Ten Ways to Save for Your Children's Education." This simple message makes your business card more dynamic in that the receiver will be more inclined to take action on it. I occasionally get phone calls from people I've met at networking events who ran across my card from an event months earlier and

decided to call me after downloading the report. Since most cards are eventually tossed out after a few months, make your business card stand out.

- **Executive Summary.** Your executive summary is simply a grouping of your marketing materials to show to prospective clients when needed—or more typically corporations to whom you are marketing. More than just a brochure, it consists of a basic summary of the problems you help your clients with, who you've worked with in the past, the specific services and corresponding benefits you offer, and a sheet about who you are and how to contact you. It's similar to your website pages in a hard copy format. Each page of your summary should have a resource box, where you list your name, contact information, and website address.
- **Letterhead.** Your stationery should have your website address prominently displayed as well. Along with your contact information, place a solution- or benefit- oriented tagline on your stationery. This tagline will highlight the one unique and specific solution you offer to your customers.

Very Selected Resources

- **PDFs** are the current standard for delivering information electronically. If you're not ready to spend \$400 or so on an Adobe program, you can find a free PDF creator at www.docupub.com.
- For help getting an **e-zine** developed, I have found no better resource than www.ezinequeen.com with Alexandria Brown.
- Robert Middleton has written an excellent manual for service professionals called the *InfoGuru Manual* at www.actionplan.com.

- A complimentary, and very useful ezine you may want to read (and model!) is the *Client Attraction Newsletter* by Fabienne Frederickson at www.clientattraction.com.
- A very popular software program that simplifies the process of ranking higher in the search engines is **WebPosition Gold**.