

Build Your Own Website

A Complete Guide for the Novice

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Introduction

The Internet or World Wide Web has slowly become almost as ingrained in our lives hot dogs and apple pie. It's hard to find a successful business that doesn't leverage the web, or to find anyone who has not used the web. Most people use the internet every day. Some use it in ways never before thought of such as Tweeting, or Digging, or Blogging. Words we'd never even heard of a few years ago have new meaning, and have become integral parts of many people's daily lives.

The internet has become a useful tool for millions of people, and has brought the world a lot closer together. It has also become a quiet power that offers great opportunity to many. The internet has made twenty year olds into billionaires, and has placed auctions, which were once held in barns, at the fingertips of each and every web surfer. It wasn't too long ago that many had never accessed the internet. Today, we can't live without it.

Ingenuity has driven the internet into areas few had dreamed of, and yet these new ideas are continually accepted and adopted as the evolution and power of the web grows. Despite its power, complexity and its mystical qualities, you too can be take part in the bounty that the internet has to offer.

It is estimated that over \$6 billion are spent on goods and services online each year. The complexity and veil of mystery will be removed in the following pages. Simple, step-by-step instructions will show you how to utilize the internet to build your own website, and to begin generating income almost immediately.

NOTE: This is not a get-rich-quick scheme, so don't run out and quit your day job. You can make money, but typically it is over time, and it will build in parallel with your website traffic. It is important to note that how much money you make is ultimately dependent on your efforts – this is a good thing. If you put in the time and effort necessary, you can be successful. The techniques shown can give you unlimited earning potential, depending on how you implement them.

Various techniques will be explained and detailed which will show you how to begin making money using your website. Some will produce income based

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directly on your efforts, and others will produce residual income which continues to be generated even after your initial efforts are completed. No matter which technique you choose, you will be provided step-by-step instructions on where to start, what to do, what resources you'll need, etc. Included will be URL's, or internet links to many different service providers which you can use to help begin building your website, and generating income.

Each technique contains all of the necessary documentation required to successfully implement, and are complete in and of themselves. However, it would be beneficial to review all of the techniques before you begin, as you may find ideas from one, which you could use in another. Also included at the end of the book will be a complete list of resources by category for your reference.

Building a website is easier than you might think. Don't let you lack of "programming" knowledge hold you back. If you can type an email, you can create a website. Begin the process today, and you can have a website up and running in less than a day.

For the purposes of this book, we will assume that you want to create a website that generates revenue. While the book deals with the revenue aspects of building a website, it will also provide all of the necessary details to just build a general informational website.

Planning Your Website

Before you get started, it is important to have an overview or general understanding of what makes a website successful.

If you have no idea what your website will be about, that's ok. You already have what you need, but perhaps just don't know it. The concept behind your website will be quite simple. You will build a basic website that contains information about something you love, you're an expert at, or interested in. This topic will help you generate the content (text, words, pictures, etc.). You are already an 'expert' in the area, and you have something that others want – information. You just need to organize this information and make it available to those who want it.

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Whether you love to vacation in Aruba, make wooden trains, or hike the Appalachian Trail, there are people interested in the knowledge you have to share.

Let's say you've been vacationing in Aruba since you were little, and it is your favorite place on earth. You've seen it all, and know about all of the small restaurants, back bays, and best places to stay. This is invaluable knowledge that vacationers want to know. You can organize this data and make it available to those information-hungry vacationers, and make money doing it. And the best part is you are already an 'expert', it's something you care about, and it can actually be a revenue-generating effort which you will enjoy. For example, you could create a website that reviews all of your favorite hotels, and excursions in Aruba.

There are a number of attributes that make a successful website, which will generate revenues. They are Content, Traffic, Trust, Value, Call to Action and Conversion.

Content – Information that is interesting, valuable and engaging to your visitors.

Value – Value keeps people on your site, brings them back, and makes them want to share your site with others

Trust – In order to do business with you, there needs to be a level of trust

Traffic – People viewing your site, eyeballs, eyes

Call to Action – A clear and obvious action which you want your visitor to take, i.e. purchase something, subscribe, tell a friend, etc.

Conversion – When your Call to Action gives a desired result, i.e. lead becomes customer, you obtain contact information, etc.

All of these attributes are necessary to create a site which will consistently generate revenue. Continuing our Aruba example, we'll look at these attributes, and give examples. As you review them, consider how your hobby or passion might fit.

Content and Value – Your visitors want to learn something that they feel is valuable from your content. If you can make your content unique and helpful,

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then you're ahead of the game. For example, vacationers can learn about all of the larger hotels on most any travel or Aruban Tourist site. What they won't get on those sites is information about the small restaurants, the small inns, or the excursion that also includes a private beach, or access to a special snorkeling area. This is the type of value that will attract, and entice your visitor to stay or utilize your site.

Trust – Trust is a hard attribute to gain, or measure in a website. Nevertheless, your layout, your language, and your content all play a part in moving your visitors toward a feeling of confidence that what you say is true. You should never deceive, or do anything on your site which could lose the trust of your visitor. Providing valuable information and delivering a quality product or service will build trust over time, which will contribute to your long-term success.

Traffic – Just as you would assume, your website may include the most valuable information available, but if no one visits, then the information exchange can't take place. There are many methods of generating traffic to your website. Some will be discussed later. However, as a possible creative example, you could do the following:

Contact the hotels, inns, etc. that you'd like to recommend, and tell them what you're doing with your new website. Ask them if they have an email list that they would be willing to allow you to use to help promote their business. Obviously there will be other competition on your site, but perhaps they could give your visitors an incentive – one night free? Send an email to these prior guests, highlighting this hotel, but also mentioning your site URL.

Call to Action – You want your visitors to perform an action while on your site. Your site should be designed in such a way that everything leads your visitors toward this Call to Action. For example, if

Building a list through subscribers is one of the most valuable Calls to Action your site can have. This list can be used to continue to resell, up-sell, or cross-sell to your customer base in the future.

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you provide a monthly newsletter of the latest excursions, or discounts, new restaurants, etc., then you will want to collect subscribers. Perhaps your Call to Action is to get visitors to click on a hotel, and make a reservation because you have an agreement that nets you a booking fee. Regardless of what your Call to Action is, your site's main focus should lead your visitors to this action.

Conversion – Similar to the Call to Action, the Conversion is the “Action”. Ultimately, you want your visitor to become a subscriber, a lead, or a customer. This is the final step in the sales process that finalizes the success of your website.

Hopefully, this example has shown you that you already have something which is wanted by others, and can thus be monetized. We will continue to utilize this example throughout this book to demonstrate how a simple knowledge can be leveraged and turned into a revenue source using the internet.

Define Your Website Idea

So you want to build a website, but you feel that you have no worthy website ideas. Believe it or not, you are already in a position to create a great website that others want to come to. Believe it.

Everyone has a special interest, [hobbies](#), or body of knowledge that other people are interested in. Ask yourself, “Are there already people searching for info about my idea on the internet?” If you answered yes, then your website concept is worthy.

Do you have a passion for something, or are you an expert in a specific area? Perhaps you do something every day, and know this task inside and out - like parenting, cooking or small engine repair. Chances are there is something that "you've forgotten more about than others will ever know." Ideas for your website surround you - you just need to become aware of them. If you need some help generating more website ideas, ask yourself a couple of questions:

- What do you like to talk about?
- What are your [hobbies](#)?
- Have you become good at something, and can help others with it?
- Do you know how to make a product or process better?

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- Have you created a new product that could help others?
- Is there a product or service you believe in and want to promote?
- Do you want to [find a product or products](#) to sell?

Ideally, your website should be about a topic you love, and will enjoy writing content about. Passion and genuine interest in a topic will shine through, and will help you build a credible website that others will want to visit.

What is the Purpose of Your Website?

You should decide who your audience is and what you want to offer them.

For simplistic reasons, we will divide all websites into two types:

- Informational
- Selling

While there are many subsets and variations, such as blogs, forums, hybrid sites, etc., we will assume that your idea fits into one of these two primary categories.

Your website concept is either informational, with a potentially small portion that deals with selling, or vice versa.

Obviously, if your website idea deals with selling something, then you expect to generate revenues. It is **important** however that you realize that you can [make money from your informational site](#) also.

Still Need Some Help?

If you still don't have an idea for your website, but really want to create a site, try searching the web for ideas, or ask your kids, spouse or friends. Take 15 minutes to brainstorm, look through old books, or think about old interests you had as a kid.

Is there a product that you really believe in, and would love to sell? [Affiliate Programs](#) allow you to do just that. There are thousands of companies that will pay you part of their profits for each sale you make.

Here is a quick list of some website ideas to give you a feel for what's already out there on the web.

- Insider Secrets for Stock Options
- Online interviews about living without fear
- Articles about creating podcasts
- Tips for finding cheap flights

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- DVD's about soccer
- Guide to meditation
- Articles on how to build clocks
- How to win the lottery - let me know if you create this site, I want to visit :)
- Learn to fly ultra-light airplanes
- Fishing the Yellow Breeches - My fly Selections
- The Herb Warehouse

As you can see this list is quite diverse, and includes website ideas from simple to complex, niche market to broad. There really is no limit to the number of available ideas from which you can choose.

Once you think you have a website idea that you feel there is a demand for, now you need to [validate your idea\(s\)](#).

It's time to determine if people want what you have to offer.

Validate Your Concept

It is very important that you validate your website concept before you begin building.

Validation is necessary to determine if the public has a genuine interest in your concept. Once you've determined that there is demand, then you can feel comfortable that your site has the potential to be [monetized, or profitable](#).

There are a few quick and easy processes that will help you validate your website concept by looking at keyword searches.

Determine Keyword Search Demand

A keyword is a term or group of terms associated with your website. Keywords are the terms that visitors type into search engines to help them find a relevant website.

Your goal is to have people type keywords into search engines, and ultimately end up on your website. Generally, if people are searching for your keywords, then there is demand for your website's concept or theme.

Before you jump into building your website, it is important to understand the demand associated with your website idea.

One simple way to see if there is demand, is to look at keywords, and how many people are searching for them. Again, generally speaking, the more searches, the more demand.

There are many Keyword Resources available to help you. They will not only give you search volume results, but also other keywords related to your concept, which will further validate your website concept.

We'll include some of the better ones with summaries below.

Keyword Demand Tools

[Google's Keyword Tool](#)

This free keyword tool will allow you to type in one, or many keywords, and a result set is returned with helpful information that shows demand for your keywords.

The results are based on keyword searches performed from Google, and do not take into consideration other search engines. This tool supplies a lot of information - mainly for the benefit of Google's Adwords users, but nevertheless helpful for determining demand as well:

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Keywords	Estimated Avg. CPC ?	Advertiser Competition ?	Local Search Volume: October ?	Search Volume Trends (Nov 2008 - Oct 2009) ?
Keywords related to term(s) entered - sorted by relevance ?				
aruba luxury hotels	\$2.18		2,900	
cheap aruba hotels	\$2.22		1,900	
aruba all inclusive hotels	\$1.97		2,400	
aruba hotels	\$2.37		135,000	

- Advertiser Competition - Indicates the level of competition for a given keyword
- Local Search Volume - Number of searches for given month in your country
- Avg CPC - Shows average cost per click - an indicator of demand also
- Search Volume Trends - Search trends for keyword over 1 year's time period

[Wordtracker FREE Keyword Tool](#)

Wordtracker's free keyword tool will return up to 100 keywords related to your keyword. **Wordtracker** uses its own formula to determine number of searches, which does include more search engines than just Google. Thus, your results will be different than those found on Google's Keyword Tool.

Wordtracker also has a paid service which will allow you to perform extensive keyword research. This extra service is not necessary to help you define your website, but could prove to be very valuable when you begin to build your website's content, as it will help to show “profitable” keywords which you can build pages around.

[Trellian Keyword Discovery Tool](#)

Trellian's Free Keyword Tool also collects data from numerous search engines, and thus provides a more comprehensive listing of Keyword Demand, (than just Google Searches).

Similar to Wordtracker, Trellian also offers other paid Keyword and SEO services which can assist you when you begin to build out your website content.

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Keyword Demand “Balancing Act”

If you've used some of the tools, and have found that there is demand for your keywords, then you should feel comfortable knowing that people want what you have to offer.

High demand keywords are good on one hand because it means there are lots of potential customers searching for your keywords. High demand, however, also means high competition. As a general rule, the more people who are searching the more competing websites there are related to those keywords.

What does that mean to you? It means that it could be harder to rank highly for organic searches – it might be tough to be in the top search results for Google, Yahoo, etc. Ideally you need a balance of keyword “supply and demand”.

Keyword Supply relates to how many web pages there are that relate to a given keyword. You’ve seen how to identify demand for a keyword. There is another “crude” yet effective way to get a gauge on the supply of a keyword as well.

Google’s Search Results page will tell you how many indexed pages have your keyword(s). The top right of your results page will show **“Results 1-10 of about ##### for keyword.”** See below:



In this example, there are about 31,100 web pages that have the indexed keywords “hobby income”. If you are using a keyword phrase, be sure to include your keywords in quotes.

As a general rule, you would like to find keywords that have a demand over 10,000 and supply under 100,000. These keywords will be your most “profitable” and should be used to design your website – each page should be focused on one keyword.

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If you feel there is nothing more to do to validate your website concept, then you're now ready to think about your [website layout](#).

Website Layout

As you begin to structure your website layout, it is important to remember that you have two audiences that you are trying to please -

- Your Visitors
- Search Engines

Which is more important? Hard to say, but your understanding of what you want from your site will help you decide how to answer that question.

First Impressions - "Look and Feel"

As the saying goes, "you only get one chance to make a first impression". This is also very true when talking about website layout and structure. The "look and feel" of your site primarily affects your human visitors, and has little to do with the search engines.

When your visitor arrives, they immediately form an opinion of your site based on colors, layout, flashy graphics, and your advertisements. This is referred to as your site's "look and feel". You don't want them hitting the back button before they've had a chance to get to your high-value content.

You will see there is a balance between flashy and boring, colors for emphasis vs. a kaleidoscope. You'll need to show professionalism, while not turning off your visitor.

Of course your website's theme or concept will also determine what "look and feel" should be delivered. A site about online gaming will have more flash and graphics than a site about trading stock options.

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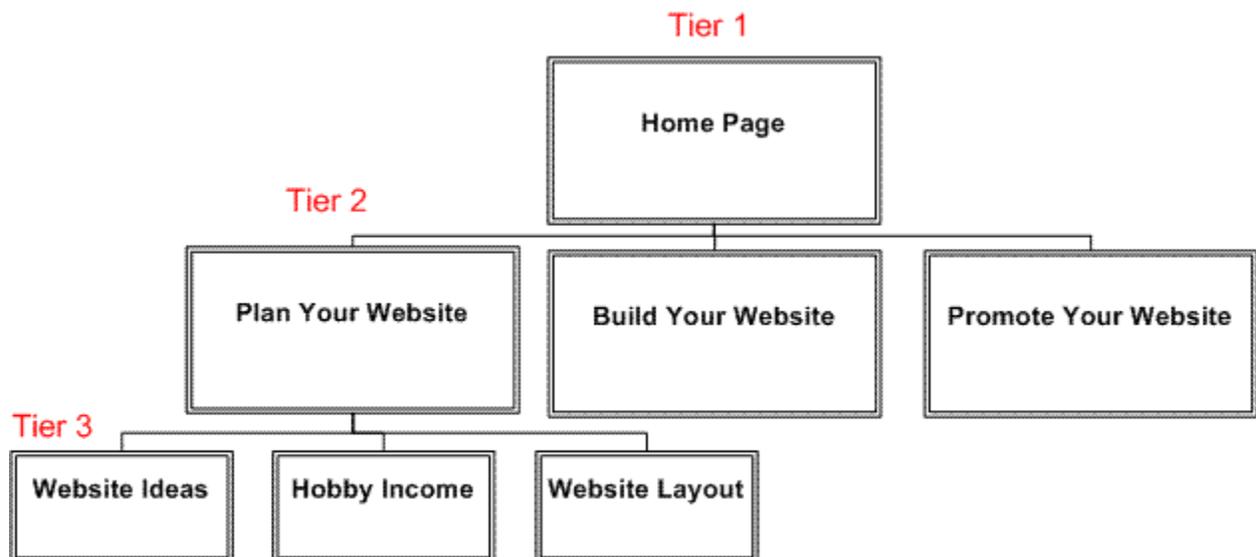
Generally speaking, your site should be:

- **Simple**
- **Well Organized** - your visitor should be able to maneuver and find things very easily
- **Clean** - not too many popups, flash elements, ad boxes, etc.
- **Professional** - don't use too many colors, font types, etc. This screams amateurism.
- **Concise** - say it in as few words as possible which still conveys your message, sales pitch, etc.

How to Structure Your Website

Structuring your website layout is important for both audiences. If you structure your site correctly, your visitor will be able find their way around, and the Search Engines will be able to index your website more easily.

Think of your website as a pyramid, with your home page being at the pinnacle. Next you have Tier 2 topics, which link from your Home Page. And lastly, you have Tier 3 topics which link from your Tier 2 web pages. See Diagram below:



Your *Home Page*, or Tier 1 should be a general introduction to your site, with links to all of your Tier 2 topics. These links should be on a menu or toolbar.

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Your Tier 2 pages all link back to the *Home Page*, and will have contextual links to your Tier 3 pages. Contextual links are text links which are embedded in your content.

Normally you don't go any deeper than Tier 3 pages. Search engines rarely drill past Tier 3 pages, and it makes it harder to keep your site pages organized.

This "Hierarchical Design" allows easy navigation for your visitor, and creates logical linking which helps SEO your website for the Search Engines.

As mentioned in the previous section, you want to create each web page around ONE focused keyword, or keyword phrase. You should remain on that keyword to help create relevancy for the search engines. This will ultimately interpret into high page ranking and more traffic.

Create a hierarchical diagram that outlines your *Home Page*, your Tier 2's and your Tier 3 pages. You could spend a great deal of time researching keywords, and laying your site "blueprint". Once you've done this task, the actual building process is easy.

Your Website Funnel

You should have a goal for each visitor to achieve something, to get to a certain page, or to get a "conversion". A conversion is when your visitor performs a desired action such as a purchase, provides their name and email, or clicks on an advertiser's link.

Your website layout should be designed with that goal in mind – every page. All things need to lead your visitor to that conversion. If they start on your Home Page, they should be led through your site ([via enticing and exciting content](#)) to your conversion points.

Think of this process as a funnel. Your visitor is presented with more and more concise information, or you create more and more desire to purchase as they "drill down" through your pages.

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SiteSell has created a great eBook that explains in detail how to pre-sell your visitor through valuable content and the funnel concept.

Download your free copy of the [Netwriter's Masters Course here.](#)

Building Your Website

Yes, the daunting and formidable task is actually upon you - it is time to build your own website.

Despite your skepticism and fear, or lack of computer knowledge, there are many great tools available now that will walk you through the creation of a website.

Generally speaking if you can type, and you've used a word processor, then you can create an amazing and functional website.

There are basically three things needed to create your site:

- Register Your Domain/URL
- Content Editing Software
- Hosting Provider

For the novice web builder, there are All-Inclusive Website Providers that incorporate everything you need in an easy-to-use software.

A "Fool Proof" Website Building Process

If you are a complete novice with respect to computers, HTML code, search engine optimization and have really no idea how to create your own website...

There is a service that exists which will walk you through every single step of the process. You will end up with a quality, functioning website that is monetized and optimized for the Search Engines.

This process encapsulates everything in this book into one proven, documented process that leads to success. While this process is all-encompassing, it also takes a great deal of time to get your website ready for launch – mainly due to the amount of due diligence you are led through to authenticate and validate your website concept.

SiteSell offers this website-building process, and you can click on the link below to learn more.

[SiteSell's C-T-P-M Process](#)

Register Your Domain (URL)

You must register your domain (or URL) so that no one else can use it. Your domain serves as your unique internet address. Most businesses use the **.com** suffix, but depending on availability of your request, you might have to settle for a different suffix.

There are many agents who will obtain your URL for you and license it to you, or register it for you.

Your first step in the process is to see if your desired URL is available.

Research Domain Availability

If possible, you want your URL to describe your offering, your hobby, etc. However, given the maturity of the internet, most 'common' names of URL's are already taken. Thus you might need to get a little creative with this step.

To see if your domain name, or URL is available for registration, you can use many different services. Some are listed below:

- [GoDaddy](#) - provides a simple search tool where you type in your requested URL, and it gives an immediate response of its availability. Godaddy's tool also provides suggestions of other related and available URL's if your request is already taken.
- [Network Solutions](#) - provides a simple search tool for URL's and also provides other suggested similar URL's.
- [NameBoy](#) - provides a unique reverse-engineering approach to determining your URL. The tool accepts two keywords, which you provide, and then suggests various combinations of available URL's which utilize those keywords.

If your website represents a physical business, consider appending your city or town to the front or back of your desired URL. – i.e. DALLASdayspas.com

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- [Host Monster](#) - is a web hosting company, but you can search for your domain name here also.

Registering Your Domain with an Agent

You can register your domain for as little as one year, or up to 5 or more years. Registration is the actual process of securing a domain from InterNic, the governing body of all domain names.

Registering is now a simple process when you utilize one of the registrar sites. Simply search on and find an available URL, and then follow the steps. Once registered, you now “own” that domain, and have complete control - you can now point a website to this unique address.

Congratulations, you've completed the first daunting step in creating your website. The next step in the process is to determine which content editor you will use to build your website.

Content Editors

In order to actually build your website, you need to create HTML, which is the programming language that delivers content through your web browser. Normally a “Content Editor” is used to create your content.

Content Editors are not what they used to be.

The simplest websites are built using a language called HTML. In the 'old days' you needed to know how to write HTML code to create a site. Now all of this conversion can be performed by the new softwares, which convert your typed-content into HTML code.

Most build-your-own website software provide this conversion as well as templates, plug and play site elements such as video, photos, blogs, etc. Typically you just drag and drop, fill out some property fields, and there you have it - a Photo Album, or Blogging section of your site.

They also have numerous ready-made templates which provide your background, layout, colors, etc.

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If you have no coding background, then you should consider using an [All-Inclusive Software](#). These softwares include every aspect of the web building process, from URL registration to hosting.

HTML Editor Links

There are many FREE HTML Editors which you can use:

- [Snippet Master](#)
- [CoffeeCup](#)
- [First Page](#)
- [Page Breeze](#)
- [HTML Kit](#)

There are also more robust HTML or Content Editing Softwares that do require purchase. The vendors listed below also offer web design services...just in case you need help with this step.

- [Dreamweaver](#)
- [FrontPage](#)
- [Blue Voda](#)

Content – The Key to SEO Success

Simply put your content is probably the most the important aspect of your site. It creates interest, credibility, and trust. It pre-sells your visitor, makes other site owners want to link to yours; and it gives search engines what they are looking for.

Content, or “the words on your web pages” drive your Search Engine Ranking.

Search Engines have evolved, and continue to evolve in the way they rank web pages. Currently, the Search Engines are relying more and more on compelling and relevant content for their ranking.

To better understand SE results, we need to look at SE's, and what their ultimate goal is. Their goal is to recognize what a page is about, how good it is, and supply **relevant** search results for the keywords searched upon.

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They want the user who searched to find **exactly** what they're looking for. In the past, search engine algorithms depended highly on Meta Tags, keyword density, length of page, and other formulaic aspects of websites to determine rank, and only the SEOers could figure out what the SE's were looking for.

As SE's mature, they realize that they really need to look at a page as a human would, or from a "reality" perspective. Relevance and Quality of content are the keys to high Page Ranking (PR). Much to the professional SEOers dismay, the real secret lies in the content – which is totally in your control.

As you begin writing your content, remember that you have two goals. First you want to please your visitor with highly-relevant and quality content. Secondly, you want to rank highly in the Search Engine (SE) results. (Some may argue these should be reversed, but either way, they are both dependent on each other).

Other keys to high page ranking include On-page criteria as well as Off-page criteria.

On-Page Criteria

On-page criteria deals with the structure of your webpage, including Content, Title, Meta Tags, Keyword Density, etc. This criteria is interpreted by humans as relevant and valuable.

A visitor searches, reads the Description under the Organic link, clicks, finds great content, and continues to click through the site. They have found great content, and are satisfied. *This human interpretation drives SEO, and has lately become the foundation of SE algorithms.*

Another way to look at this is - if a visitor likes what they see, they are more willing to perform a desired action - buy, subscribe, recommend, link to, etc. Simply put - over deliver quality, relevant SEO Content, and your On-Page criteria will be great.

Off-Page Criteria

Off-page criteria deal with inbound links and visitor behavior. For example, if a visitor searches for a keyword, clicks on an Organic link, and never returns to the

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Search Engine, this type of behavior is highly-valued. The visitor must have found what they were looking for.

If they click on an Organic Link, and return to the search engine within a couple of seconds and click on another link, this shows poor relevance, confusing content, or some other "human behavior" factor that takes away from the value of this link. Behaviors like this are measured by the Search Engines, and affect Page Ranking.

Another factor considered in SEO is the number and quality of inbound links to your site. Inbound links from sites with a high Page Ranking are more valuable. Ideally, you will want high PR sites linking to your site. You can accomplish this by providing high-value SEO content that they want to link to. Your content can help you with your back-linking or inbound links.

Your Off-Page Criteria is driven by your On-Page...or your content.

Content and Keywords for SEO

Again, each page of your site should be focused on one keyword, or keyword phrase.

Use only one keyword per page, and be sure to include it in your first 90 characters, sprinkled throughout and near the end of the page. Use your keyword in your Title, and your Meta Description.

Don't be misled, you are not writing for the search engines...you are writing for the visitor, with the search engines in mind. Although it may seem that you should be writing for the SE's, remember they are measuring "human behavior" - or how your visitors are reacting to your content!

Be very careful not to use your keyword just for the Search Engines at the expense of your visitor. Make sure your content flows naturally.

Follow the basic formula, but always focus on delivering high-value content that your visitor wants to read. Over-deliver and your visitor will have a good experience, the SE's will notice, and your pages will ultimately rank highly.

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Please Your Reader

Hook 'em - Most first-time visitors will scan your first paragraph. Be sure to use strong call-to-action verbs, adjectives, etc. to spark interest, and generate curiosity, or a desire to read on.

Simple Content - Keep your content simple, clear and relevant. Don't make an effort to impress your visitor with big, technical terms. Keep it to the point, easy to read and easy to understand.

No "Flowers" - Don't get cutesy and flowery with your writing. Good content is direct and to the point. Articulate your point in as few words as possible. Visitors aren't coming to your site for an afternoon book reading. They want information. Give it to them in a direct and organized manner.

Keep it Interesting - Don't get long-winded, or boring. Use interesting examples, references or pictures to help illustrate a point.

Content Summary

Although it may seem mystical, there is really no magic to ranking highly for Search Engine results. The key is to provide high-quality, relevant content.

Remember that you are writing to please your visitor. If you succeed in doing that, the Search Engines will notice, and reward you. Let your passion shine through your content, and keep it real. Your quality content will become more and more valuable as your page ranking improves, and as you continue to get inbound links from high PR sites that want to link to your site, because of your content.

Host Your Site

Hosting Providers have all of the hardware, and software support services to actually “run” your website. Additionally, they will provide backups of your site and its content, which could prove to be invaluable in the case of a server failure.

If you don’t understand computers, networks, etc., then it is highly recommended that you use a provider to host your website. They typically charge a nominal monthly fee to host your website, and most offer email and other services as well.

Hosting services are often bundled with your website development software. To alleviate some of the technical pitfalls that could occur with moving your HTML around, you would be wise to just utilize one of the all-inclusive providers listed in the next section.

Hosting Only Providers

There are hosting facilities and services that specialize in just that - hosting. They may offer some add-on services, but they are not in the business of building websites, but rather making sure that your site runs efficiently, is backed up, etc.

Some of the more reputable include:

- [The Planet](#)
- [Host Monster](#)
- [Host Gator](#)
- [Rackspace](#)

If you're skilled in HTML, FTP and general computer skills, one of these hosting providers may be the right fit for you.

If you're not skilled, then you should consider a provider that also offers web building services.

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All-Inclusive Hosting Providers

In addition to those vendors mentioned above, there are many others that offer complete, or start-to-finish support of your website. You can register your domain, build your website, and host it with these providers.

Additionally, if you begin your process, and decide that you really don't like building your own site, some of these vendors offer custom site building services. Lastly, and perhaps most importantly, they all have outstanding customer support. You will never be left in a quandary. They provide great FAQ sections, email support and most offer phone support as well.

The following vendors offer complete web building support and hosting services (you won't go wrong with any of these vendors):

- [SiteSell](#)
- [Network Solutions](#)
- [Homestead by Intuit](#)
- [GoDaddy](#)

Which is Right for You?

If you're new to this, it would be wise to choose one of the providers that handles everything, from URL registration to content creation to backups and email.

If you choose Homestead, GoDaddy, or Network Solutions to build your site, you should consider taking the [FREE eLearning Course](#) from SiteSell. This course goes into great detail about the thought process behind designing and building your website. SiteSell has taken the process of [Building a revenue-generating website](#) to a new level.

Their process of planning, building, optimizing and monetizing your own website is a Turnkey solution. If you want to build your site right from the start, you should consider the SiteSell suite of services.

SiteSell

While there are many all-inclusive providers, it is worth taking a minute to give some additional information regarding SiteSell and what makes them different.

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SiteSell has created a process that encompasses every aspect of planning, building, monetizing and optimizing a website. This software "Process" absolutely, positively has more features and functionality than all of the others combined...especially if you are a website NOVICE. And, yes, the word "Process" is the right word. The main difference between SiteSell and the others is that you are provided with all of the information and proprietary tools to do all of this yourself.

All of the steps, decisions, research tools, questions to ask, etc. are documented in a repeatable proven process that anyone can follow.

If you don't want to piecemeal your site together, and wonder if you picked the right URL, or don't really know what keywords to use, then you need to look into this "Process".

Be warned, however, that the steps (when followed correctly) will take some time. You can anticipate almost 1 week of time in the planning phase, before you even begin to build your website, but it's worth it.

You will NOT be disappointed with the results. When you are finished, you will have a website that:

- Has the correct URL, based on keyword research
- Is keyword focused
- Contains relevant and interesting content
- Is found and liked by the search engines
- Has multiple monetization sources
- Will generate revenues for years to come

Every piece of the website building puzzle is provided.

If you are interested in managing all aspects of your website, SiteSell's website building process is a great tool, and should be considered.

[To Learn More, and Get Started Today](#)

Monetizing Your Website

Even if you've decided to build a website that sells a product or service, there are other ways to make money from website advertising, partnerships, links, etc.

You should diversify and utilize as many monetization techniques as possible to create additional revenue streams – as long as you don't hurt your visitor's experience by doing so. While making money from your website may be your goal, you have to remember your visitor. Do NOT create monetization channels in exchange for a poor visitor experience.

For example, we've all been to those sites that have flash ads, moving banners, talking people who walk across your screen, Google Adwords on every other paragraph. Need I say more?

These monetization techniques can be classified into two high-level categories - *Active and Passive*.

Active monetization ideas include obvious efforts to generate revenue. You actively pursue a transaction, and your visitor realizes they are making a purchase.

Passive monetization ideas are subtle or almost "hidden" techniques that generate website income without your visitor's knowledge.

It is important that you diversify and utilize as many monetization ideas as possible on your site. Having multiple revenue sources is a great way to stabilize your income stream, while reducing risk.

Website Monetization Options

There are many creative ways to generate income via a website. Some are very obvious, while others blend into your pages. Some techniques could generate revenue without your visitor even being aware.

Listed below is a summary of ideas to help make money from your website. Note that there are many suggestions below, not all of which will fit your website model. The list is to make you aware of some of the possibilities that you may not have known about.

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- **Google AdSense Ads** - You define an area on your webpage for GoogleAds. Google inserts ads automatically related to your page content. You get paid when visitors click on links.
- [Google Adsearch](#) - Works in concert with AdSense, and allows users to search Google from your site.
- **Affiliate Marketing** - You sell or promote someone else's product or service and get paid a commission based on any sales, or sometimes leads that you originate.
- **Referrals** - A prearranged relationship is setup between you and another vendor. You get paid for referring customers - i.e. You refer visitors to a hotel, they book a room, you get paid a finder's fee.
- **Create an Opt In List** - Collect contact information from visitors to your site, so that you can market to them directly via email, in the future.
- **Sell Hard Goods** - Setup a storefront to sell products
- **Sell Hard Goods - Drop Shipper** - Setup a storefront that sells products from a Drop Shipper - they handle fulfillment of your visitors' orders
- **Sell eGoods** - Provide a download area for eBooks, eAudio, eVideo, etc.
- **eBay** - Create and host your own eBay storefront
- **Membership** - Charge a fee to become a member.
- **Joint Venture** - Develop an agreement with another vendor in which you share the proceeds from sales.
- **Sell Advertising** - Define area(s) on your website where you display ads from other merchants, or your own affiliate programs.
- **Donations** - If your website is purely informational, you might consider requesting donations.

Website Monetization Tips

You should resist the urge to slap every possible money-making channel on your website. While it is wise to diversify your income channels, you have to remember the importance of your "Look and Feel".

Your visitor's experience is almost as important as your income. It should go without saying that "without more visitors, you have no income."

Informational Websites

If you have an information-only website, you should not even consider ways to make money from website visitors until you have sufficient traffic.

Your visitor traffic should be established, and warranted based on what they are getting from your content. Without a good demand for your information, you run the risk of turning away customers if you adversely affect their experience with too much monetization.

When you do introduce various money-making techniques, do it slowly. Start with contextual links. Embed affiliate links as part of your content. For example let's say you have a site about natural products that promote good health, and you have a section that discusses coffee:

"Despite the conflicting reports that [coffee](#) is bad for your health, it has been proven to..."

Note the "coffee" link. This link will take the visitor to a site that offers coffees, and accessories, which could result in affiliate income for the website owner if someone purchases the product.

The *Important* note is how this technique is unobtrusive, and should not turn off your visitors. They can choose to ignore the link, or click it if they are interested.

Of course this is just one suggestion. Use your creativity to formulate other ways to make money with website content. Perhaps you can create a top 10 list of resources, or "for additional information, click here..."

Test and Measure

As with all aspects of your website, measurement is important.

After introducing various monetization aspects, you should monitor their effectiveness - for two reasons.

First, if one technique is working better than the others, see if you can incorporate it on more pages, or in more places.

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Secondly, if a revenue-channel is not performing you should either make tweaks or changes to improve its success rate, or remove it. Of course, you can consider replacing it with one that is performing better, if you don't detract from your visitor's experience.

While this may seem obvious, it is important to continue to refine your different methods to maximize your monetization channels.

Active Website Monetization Ideas

There is really only one Active Monetization technique that has many different options which can be employed. That technique is Selling.

Selling a good or service from your website is an obvious means for making money on the internet. Thousands do it, and you can too. Listed below are suggested techniques you can utilize to generate website income through sales.

- Sell Hard Goods - Your Own
- Sell Hard Goods - Drop Shipping
- Sell eGoods
- Affiliate Programs

Sell Hard Goods - Your Own

If you have a gadget you've created, or already own a brick and mortar store that sells products, then you can very easily begin to sell these hard goods online.

Most "build-your-own-website" software includes an eGoods, or storefront plug in which will allow you to define, categorize, list and sell your hard goods. Some offer transaction processing as well.

If your website software does not include the necessary plug in for your storefront, there are other providers which can help with this website function.

Create a Storefront

There are a few different paths you can choose to build a storefront on your website. If you have chosen (or will choose to use) an all-inclusive package, then chances are they offer a Shopping Cart, or Website Storefront plugin.

If you have chosen another path to build your website, then you will need to consider other options, or third-party softwares which you can plug in and utilize.

Before we look into these options, there are a few things you need to consider before you build a storefront.

- Good Quality Content
- Storefront Software - to display your products
- Payment Processing Software or Gateway
- Website Traffic

Good Quality Content

If you want to rank highly for the Search Engines, this is a prerequisite for your ecommerce site. Even though it is primarily a storefront, you still need to have good content.

You cannot just build a website, upload some product images, prices, and a transaction processor, and expect to make any money. You need traffic.

The best way to create large amounts of sustainable traffic is to create lots and lots of good content. There are many ways to create content, even for an ecommerce site:

1. Write reviews, or a "best of" list for a grouping of products.
2. Allow customers to review products - even better, because now your visitors are writing your content.
3. Write category summaries and list quality products that fall under each category.
4. Provide a description for each product.
5. Include "ALT" tags for each product image - search engines like "ALT" tags, and this also helps with their indexing of images.

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Website Storefront Software

The "All-Inclusive" Packages offer ecommerce software or plugins to build a storefront with ease.

If you've chosen this route, there are two benefits to using these storefront options. First, they integrate with ease into your website. And secondly, they also have back-end Merchant Accounts, or Transaction Processing. These also integrate with ease, thus making it even easier to get your storefront online. These have been mentioned earlier, but for reference, we'll include them again.

Some "All-Inclusive" resources include:

- [Network Solutions](#)
- [GoDaddy](#)
- [Homestead by Intuit](#)

Other Third Party Storefronts, Shopping Carts, etc. offer many additional features in addition to your basic product presentation, fulfillment processing, etc.

Some features you should consider are:

- Store Setup Wizard
- Maximum Number of Products
- Backorders/Partial Shipments
- Accounting Package Integration
- Hard Goods/eGoods
- Up-sell/Cross-sell Module
- Gift Certificates/Coupons
- Merchant Account/Gateway Integration
- Statistics and Reporting
- Shipping Interfaces (FedEx, UPS, etc.)
- Tax Calculators
- SSL - Secure Transactions
- Backups and Fraud Protection
- Help/Support

Some Build-a-Storefront software vendors that encompass most of these above-mentioned features include:

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- 1ShoppingCart.com
- www.volusion.com
- www.shopsite.com
- www.merchandizer.com
- www.sunshop.com
- www.easystorecreator.com

Payment Processor - Merchant Account

A payment processor is necessary should you wish to accept payments via your website, and you have not chosen a package which includes one. The payment processor handles the routing of the transaction from the payment gateway to the credit card company and coordinates the merchants fund settlement payment.

Also needed to accept a credit card payment is a merchant account. This is an account that is designed specifically to accept payments from credit cards, and is where the funds from each transaction will settle.

You can go to Authorize.net to view this process flow in an easy-to-understand diagram.

Again, if you have decided to build your storefront with a package that offers Payment Processing and a Merchant Account, you don't need to look further.

It is recommended, however, to open a FREE PayPal account in addition to your other payment methods, as there are visitors who prefer that payment option over Credit Cards.

Some other Payment Processing or Merchant Accounts are below:

- Merchant Warehouse - provides both Payment Processing and Merchant Account handling
- Authorize.net - offers great support, fraud protection and many other add-ons like Recurring Billing.
- PayPal - offers a very simple to install and FREE Payment Processing solution.

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This may sound like an advertisement, but depending on your needs, this vendor has everything you'll need, provides great services, and customer support; and overall, will make your Credit Card processing very easy to incorporate.

[Merchant Warehouse®](#) has maintained a distinguished reputation as one of the largest, most reputable merchant service providers in the payment card industry. [Merchant Warehouse](#) has enabled over 50,000 businesses nationwide to accept electronic card payments by offering the best deals on merchant processing solutions and by providing unrivaled service and support.

Merchant Warehouse is Your One-Stop-Shop for:

- Discounted Credit Card Processing Services & Equipment
- Customized Business Processing Solutions
- Competitive Merchant Account Pricing & Value-Added Programs
- Reliable, Accessible, & Knowledgeable Support Teams

Sell Hard Goods - Drop Shipping

Drop Shipping is a great source of website income and also very easy to setup.

While this concept reduces the effort required on your part, you do potentially earn less per sale.

The concept is this - you find a drop shipping company that handles the product you would like to sell, and you setup an account with them. Many drop shippers will have a plugin for your website, which you can use to sell their products.

You don't need to worry about inventory, or any physical aspects of the transaction. When visitors purchase an item, the drop shipper handles the fulfillment or shipping of the product, and any returns.

This monetization idea requires very little ongoing effort on your part once you've set your site up.

The use of drop ship companies (or drop ship wholesalers) as a website monetization model has become increasingly popular with the maturity of the web. The concept is simple - you promote products from your website, and send

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orders to the Drop Ship Company, they fulfill the order, and make a payment to you.

On the surface the concept is simple, but there are a number of factors you need to consider, to research and to decide on before you start a business relationship.

Before we look into these areas, we'll list some of the advantages to using the drop ship model.

1. If you're good at marketing, then this drop shipping model benefits you. You can concentrate on driving traffic, leads and sales, and let the drop shipper handle the fulfillment piece of the transaction.
2. You can use your capital for other business expenses rather than building a product inventory.
3. You have the ability to choose a product, group of products that you would love to promote.
4. The larger Drop Ship Companies buy in volume, so you should be able to purchase your products at low cost.
5. Some will offer linking software which will allow you to very easily display product lines without ever having to worry about price changes, product line changes, etc.
6. If you are in a hurry to launch an ecommerce website, the drop ship model will allow you to do so in a hurry.

How Does Drop Shipping Work - An Example

1. You open an Internet Store, with a shopping cart and the ability to accept credit cards.
2. You find a distributor who is willing to DROP SHIP the products you want to sell. There are many Drop Ship Wholesalers to choose from.
3. You establish an account as a retailer with the Drop Ship Wholesale Supplier.
4. You receive images and descriptions of the products you want to sell from the Drop Shipper and post them on your Internet Store.
5. A customer surfs into your Internet Store, and falls in love with a product that you have priced at, say, \$80. They purchase the item with their credit card. Your Store charges their credit card \$80 plus your shipping fee.

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6. You turn around and email the order to your Drop Shipper, along with the customer's name and fulfillment information.
7. The Drop Shipper sends the product directly to your customer, with YOUR Store's name on the package.
8. The Drop Shipper charges you the wholesale price of, say, \$45.00, plus their shipping costs.
9. Your customer gets a great product from your store shipped to their door, and they tell all their friends about you, and you make even more money.

There you have it. You just made a \$35.00 profit on one item. You didn't have to buy a large amount of the product and keep it in your warehouse, hoping you would sell it. You didn't have to pay to have it shipped to you, and then pay to ship it to your customer. All you did was send an email to your Drop Ship Wholesale Supplier, and collected a payment.

Drop Ship Due Diligence

As with any other aspect of business, it is wise to perform your necessary due diligence before you enter into any agreement.

Determine what product, or product line you would like to promote. Look into which Drop Ship Companies offer this product and begin your research.

Overall Agreement

Look over the drop ship wholesaler agreements of those you are considering. Pay special attention to the following areas:

- Payment Terms - do they charge for each product, or will they offer credit? When does Credit become available?
- Do you need to use a special "Shopping Cart"?
- Who is responsible for fraudulent activity?
- What are their chargeback, return and backorder policies

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There are many areas that you'll need to review before entering an agreement. Some other important factors to investigate before committing are outlined below.

Pricing

Not all drop ship companies will charge the same price for a given product. It is worth your time and effort to look into at least 2-3 companies before you decide.

Also consider volume discounts which might be available.

Fees and Charges

Be sure you identify all fees and charges that can be associated with your transactions.

One area to concentrate on is the shipping. Some Drop Ship Companies will also charge a handling fee. Make sure you understand how shipping costs are calculated (i.e. flat fee, distance, weight, etc.). You will need to incorporate the same fee structure into your transaction so that you can calculate your profit margins effectively.

You must also become familiar with **chargebacks** and any associated fees. Chargebacks are reverse transactions which accompany a returned item. Be sure to know how these fees are calculated and how they will affect you.

Some Drop Ship Wholesalers may charge you a "**participation fee**". You should avoid such companies. The more reputable will only have fees associated with a transaction.

Shipping

Shipping can be one of the trickiest pieces of the Drop Shipping "pie". Understanding it, and incorporating it effectively through your website can be critical to your bottom line - especially if you have low margin, high-volume product sales.

Shipping costs can be calculated a number ways, including Distance, Weight, Price, etc. Before you setup your site, it is crucial that you understand the shipping cost formula from your Drop Ship Company.

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This could affect which Shopping Cart you'll need to use for your website. Some Shopping Carts allow for only "ship to" and "bill to" addresses. This type of Cart often doesn't offer enough flexibility to handle the Drop Ship Companies shipping model.

Returns, Refunds and Customer Support

If you're selling a product, you can be sure that you'll need to address all of the above.

Drop Ship Companies will handle all of this for you, but you need to be sure of what their policies are, and how they are actually implemented.

If they offer a product guarantee, how is it supported? What time period is extended to a customer for 100% refund? How do they handle Customer Support questions, inquiries, etc?

Again, most of the more reputable Drop Ship Wholesalers understand the need for this, and have provided the right tools, personnel, etc. to provide outstanding customer support. You need to be aware of how you can monitor these cases, if you so choose.

Getting Started

If you do not already have a website, but would like to promote and sell drop ship products, you should do your research first, as some of the larger drop ship companies offer website services, or minimally, plugins which you can easily use.

It will help to understand what free web services are available before you've already spent time or money building the same service.

1. Look into Drop Ship Companies that will offer the product(s) you wish to promote.
2. Apply for/Open an account with them.
3. Determine what web tools/services you can use from your Drop Ship Company, and then build your website (if necessary) to provide any missing functionality and create great content

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4. Promote Your Website.

The actual implementation process is fairly simple. It is your planning, due diligence and review process that should take the most time.

If you're wondering how you can find a Drop Ship Wholesale Company, or if your product of choice is offered as a drop ship product, there are a couple of methods for doing so.

Find a Drop Ship Company

There are a couple of ways to find a drop ship company for your product(s) of interest.

Utilize the Search Engines

Go to your favorite Search Engine and type in one or a couple of the following keyword combinations:

- Drop Ship + "Your Product of Interest" - or
- Dropship + "Your Product of Interest" - or
- Drop Shipping + "Your Product of Interest" - or
- Dropshipping + "Your Product of Interest"

If there is a company that will drop ship your product, these searches should return results.

Drop Shipping Aggregators

An alternative option to searching for your product is to look into some of the larger Drop Shipping Companies, which offer large volumes of products as well as many add-on services.

Some of the larger and more well-known Drop Shipping Companies are listed below:

[Drop Ship Design](#) - Offers a full service drop shipping solution. They offer just products, to a Turnkey website with domain registration, hosting, email and a ready to go Storefront.

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[Simplx](#) Supplier only - 60,000,000 products to include in your ecommerce site or through your eBay store. Simplx is very well-known, with high customer satisfaction. You must fill out an application to be approved.

[WorldWide Brands](#) - A very professional site. Includes many training materials, with excellent research capabilities for drop ship products.

[Drop Shipping Wholesalers](#) Supplier only – Offering brand name products, some educational how-to, and a 56 day money back guarantee.

[Doba](#) USA Only - Supplier only - Connects you to 100+ wholesale distributors via one site. You have access to all of their product lines. 10 day free trial. Also offers eBay setup and training.

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eGoods

An eGood is something which can be purchased, and delivered completely online. Some examples include eBooks, software, programs for cell phones, music, digital art, manuals, forms, files, and anything else that you can think of that is stored online.

The selling concept remains the same as Hard Goods. The difference is you control the complete transaction, but with minimal effort required to deal with a physical product.

An eGood is a great website monetization idea for an informational website. You can easily collect the information from your site, and put it into an eBook, which can be sold.

[Payloadz](#) offers a great service for selling eGoods. Their automated service delivers eGoods to customers instantly after payment. Their system coordinates with [PayPal's online payment system](#), and [Google Checkout](#).

You can start using their system for free - you are just limited to the amount of \$\$ transactions per month. They will automatically upgrade you as your sales surpass the threshold. This is a great service, especially for beginners.

Affiliate Programs

Simply put, Affiliate Programs are a means of expanding your sales force while paying only for commissions on sales. Or in other words, you pay others to sell your product, but only if they actually sell it.

There are many variations on this Affiliate theme. There are programs that will pay you for leads and some that will pay for just a click. Some affiliates pay you a one-time commission, while others will pay residual commissions for leads that purchase a product or service.

If you can think of it, there are probably programs available that will pay you to promote it. Still not sure how it works?

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How Do Affiliate Programs Work?

When Affiliate Programs are utilized via the internet, there is some "tracking software" which is used. This software tracks the source of the lead (i.e. your website). Most softwares download a "cookie" which helps with their tracking, and lasts for a specified period of time (depending on Merchant).

When a visitor is directed to the Merchant Company, and becomes a lead, or purchasing customer, that "transaction" is recorded, and the source of the lead (Affiliate) gets paid.

Still confused...

The next sections will clarify any confusion that you may have. We first must explain the two main players in any Affiliate Program - Advertisers/Publishers and Merchants.

Advertisers, or Publishers

An Affiliate Advertiser or Affiliate Publisher is the "new sales force". If you wish to promote and sell goods from another company, then you are the Advertiser, Publisher, or Affiliate. We will refer to this term as "Affiliate".

To become an Affiliate, you apply with the Merchant - either directly, or through an "Affiliate Program Manager.

Once approved, you are assigned a unique id, and will receive access to a variety of resources to help you promote your new Merchant's product/service. Internet promotion resources usually are comprised of HTML links, or Banners.

You can paste this HTML Link code, or Banner code directly into your website. It will either appear as a contextual link, or banner - depending on what you want. A sample banner is listed below:



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Contextual links look like:

Like coffee? Use CFL Coupon Code at checkout to get [5% off your Coffee Order!](#)

There are many other ways that you can promote your Affiliate Partnership, such as PPC, email campaigns, etc. Be sure to read your Terms of Agreement before advertising, as some Merchants restrict methods of marketing their products.

So you're also looking for a way to boost the sales of your own product...

Merchant Affiliates

If you would like to create a virtual sales force to promote your own product or service, Affiliate Programs offer an amazing opportunity to you.

First you'll need to decide if you want to manage your Affiliate Program through an Affiliate Program Manager or if you want to manage it yourself using an Affiliate Tracking Software.

Secondly, you need to consider if using a Management Firm, if you want to use one exclusively, or use multiple. We'll leave this one up to you.

Third, you need to minimally create HTML Text links to the landing pages on your website, that you wish to promote. Banner ads are a nice complement, but can be put off until later, if you want to get started right away.

Lastly, you want to define your commission structure, Terms of Agreement, etc. Select an Affiliate Program Manager, and search for products similar to yours to get an idea of what the marketplace is paying in commissions for your product/service.

Finding an Affiliate Program

There are a couple of ways to find affiliates, or companies that offer an affiliate program.

If you want to become an affiliate or promote/sell another company's product, you can start by going to their website. Search for "Affiliate" - to search for a term within the text of a given webpage either look under the Edit Menu for find/search, or press CTRL-F at the same time.

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Many times, you can find affiliate links at the bottom of the web pages - see diagram below:



If you can't find "Affiliate" in your search, consider also the following terms:

- Referral Program
- Partner or Partner Program
- Reseller

If you are still unable to find out if your merchant offers an Affiliate Program, you can email them, call them, or look into some of the bigger Affiliate Program Management companies.

Affiliate Program Managers

There are companies that have formed to manage the Affiliate Relationship between Merchant and Publisher/Advertiser.

Such companies manage all aspects of the relationship, from the signup to the check being sent to you. They have arisen to fill a niche which provides ease of use, convenience, single source management, performance reporting, etc.

If you're still searching to see if you can become an affiliate for your favorite product, you can search for the Merchant at these Affiliate Manager sites. You will find products that you weren't even looking for that might be related to your product of choice.

There are search capabilities available that will allow you to find the product(s) you're looking for.

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Top Affiliate Program Managers - APM's

Before we jump into the APM's, beware - once you begin to look around at all of the Merchants that are represented, and just how many products and services you can promote...slow down, and remember why you came. Your mind will probably begin to race - "Wow, I can get paid for promoting products at Home Depot!?" Or, "I'm going to build a website, and put every possible banner that I can on it, and I'll be making money hand over fist."

If it were that easy, everyone would be doing it. While affiliate programs are a nice way to earn income, they really need to fit into a existing business plan, or augment your main service offering.

All offer the same basic services. The main difference among all of them is in the Merchants that they represent. If you don't find your preferred Merchant in one, check in another.

[AffiliateBot](#) - Also offers your own blog and website/public profile where you can promote whatever you want - a small but very nice added-feature.

[ClickBank](#) – Only deals with eGoods - offers a lot of niche products.

[LinkShare](#) - Offers more of the larger Merchants like Macy's, Apple, etc.

[Share a Sale](#) - Offers almost 3000 Merchants to choose from.

[Commission Junction](#) - Offers nearly 2000 Merchants from small companies to larger and well-known.

[LinkConnector](#) - Offers a rapidly growing number Top 500 Internet Retailers.

[ClickXchange](#) - Advertising tools, and "no minimum" account balance before monthly payout.

If you do not plan on utilizing an Affiliate Program for your core business, you should find a program that is related to your business as a supplementary website income source.

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For additional information on how to effectively utilize Affiliate Marketing, please take advantage of the free eBook below.

Download your FREE, no obligation Affiliate's Master Course eBook. Over 150 pages of information that will help you understand the foundation you need to launch and sustain a successful Affiliate Marketing Program. Click [HERE](#) to download.



Passive Website Monetization Ideas

Passive Website Monetization Ideas are revenue generating options that typically do not cost your visitor any money - at least not while they're on your site.

Some Passive Monetization Ideas include:

- Google AdSense
- Selling Advertising Space
- Membership Dues
- Affiliate Partners
- Donations

If possible, include as many passive techniques as possible. Remember, however you don't want to create a negative experience for your visitor. Be sure that you don't overwhelm them with ads, requests for donations, etc.

Google AdSense

Google has become a household name, and everyone who has been on a website has no doubt seen ads from Google AdSense. Allowing you to earn some revenue from AdSense, is the least Google can do. After all, they make Billions from this business model.

In case you don't understand the Google business model, we will give you the 30,000 foot view of how it works.

Adwords is where advertisers create ads, and a "Pay-per-click" campaign. You spend money.

AdSense is where publishers agree to display ads created in Adwords. You earn money.

There are advertisers who are willing to pay to have a short ad displayed, either on the Google Search Results page, or on other sites related to the context of the ad. (In addition to their Search Engine, Google has a network of sites which have chosen to show their ads).

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Advertisers pay Google every time the ad is "Clicked on". The sites who have allowed Google to show ads earn revenue from AdSense also, when the ad is "clicked" from their site.

How Does AdSense Work?

Once you've signed up for Google's AdSense, and create some space on your site to show the ads, you copy and paste a block of HTML and you're done. Google handles the rest.

Google automatically delivers text and image ads that are precisely targeted to your site (based on your site's content) so well-matched, in fact, that your readers will actually find them useful.

If your content changes, the ads change to match your new content. You also have the ability to target your ads by geographic location, even to the local level.

To learn more about how you can generate revenue from AdSense, [Click Here](#).

Getting Started

Using Google's AdSense is a very simple process, comprised of two steps - creating an AdSense account, and placing snippets of HTML on your site.

To create your account so you can begin to earn income from AdSense today, go to [Google AdSense](#) and signup for an Account.

Once you have an account, you can choose from four channels through which you can display your ads and generate revenue from AdSense:

AdSense for Content - Display ads that are targeted to your site's content or audience. This is the typical ad you see on other websites, or on the right side of the Google Search page.

AdSense for Search - Offer your users site search or web search while earning revenue from ads relevant to their search terms. This is a feature that will allow you to extend your income earning potential - You place a Google Search bar on your site, and customize it to benefit your visitors. You enhance their experience,

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while providing additional ads which could produce more income from AdSense for you.

AdSense for Feeds - If you have an RSS Feed, you can also place relevant ads in your feed, which Google manages.

AdSense for Domains - If you have a parked domain, you can also serve ads on this page.

Should You Use AdSense?

AdSense is a very simple passive income generator, which should be considered, at least in some aspect.

You always need to consider how the use of AdSense can affect your site's "Look and Feel". Again...never jeopardize your visitor's experience for potential income sources. You want them to either, come back, perform your call-to-action, or recommend your site.

Revenue from AdSense should not be considered as your primary income source. Most visitors never click on an ad, and thus, you shouldn't expect them to behave differently on your site. Depending on your traffic, you can expect some level of income, but normally it will not be substantial. Nevertheless, why not have a passive source of income, no matter how small?

Consider only placing AdSense ads on your secondary and tertiary pages, and not on your Home Page. Keep your Home Page clean and content-focused.

Find a place, or places where you can put small snippets of AdSense Ads. If they are not too prominent and distracting, then you have a chance for them to be a possible enhancement to your visitor's experience.

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AdSense Configuration and Measurement

To generate revenue from AdSense consistently and effectively, you should monitor and adjust your campaigns.

One simple but effective means of adjusting your campaigns is to set up "Channels" for each web page you create. Channels allow you to track the performance of your ads.

Once you've setup Channels for each page (and placed the correct HTML code on each corresponding page), you can then monitor the performance of each page's ads.

Find the page(s) that are performing the best, and take the Keyword from that page and go to [Google's Keyword Tool](#).

Continue to monitor your performance using AdSense reports. Enter the same keyword, and see what keyword(s) advertisers are competing over the most. Go back to your pages, and include new content for any of these highly competitive keywords...this will cause AdSense to serve new ads related to your new content, and typically the Cost-per-Click is higher – which means you make more money.

This exercise will increase your revenue from AdSense, and help to maximize your earnings potential.

Selling Advertising Space

When you build your website, you want to create a specific area(s) for advertising.

You can use this area to promote other Affiliate Programs or to sell advertising space to merchants who want to market their product or service on your website.

Sell Your Own - This is more profitable, and easily controlled by you. It might require a bit of up front work to find advertisers - visit your competition to get ideas. You should manage at least some of "your own" advertising.

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When used effectively, advertising can be a great website monetization idea, that can augment (or even drive) your website income stream.

There are a couple of ways to sell advertising. First, you can put a link that says "Advertise Here", which takes interested parties to a webpage with instructions, your rates and contact information.

Or perhaps you want to allow a third party to manage and promote your site for advertising. There are many companies which will manage your website advertising. We've listed a few below:

- [Adbrite](#) - Sell Advertising space by click, by the week/month/etc. This service is very easy to use.
- [Kontera](#) offers contextual ads - keywords are highlighted in your content which, when clicked, open an ad popup.

Membership Dues

If your site lends itself toward offering additional benefits to members, this is another means of website monetization.

Some ideas that warrant a membership fee might include:

- Newsletter with additional tips, suggestions, or information.
- Password protected access to additional web pages
- Added functionality for tools, forums, etc.

Affiliate Partners

Affiliate Programs are a great website monetization idea, especially if your affiliate relationships complement or augment your website's offering. In addition to directly selling an affiliate's product, they can also be used as a passive monetization technique.

Utilize Affiliate banners where it makes sense, and text links throughout your content. Remember your visitor when leveraging your Affiliate links and

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advertising. You want to enhance their experience, and over deliver value. You do NOT want to fill your pages with links, banner ads, and other distractions.

Use this income channel to fill voids or provide additional complementary and non-competing services that you do not offer.

Donations

You may want to consider Donations as a form of website income. Generally a Donation Button, or "Contribute to Our Cause" can be used if your site is purely informational.

You should NOT include a Donation Button if your site has any Active Monetization functions. This can be a "turn off" to your visitors, and should be avoided.

You can easily get the code for a Donation Button if you have a PayPal account.

[Click Here to Setup a FREE Paypal Account](#)

Opt In Lists

An Opt In list is typically a group of visitors that have taken the *option* to be included. Those who Opt In give their permission for you to send them emails, newsletters, or whatever else you divulged when they became a "subscriber".

Creating an Opt In list is a great way to provide value to your visitor, while increasing the visibility and profitability of your website. The future value of your list will potentially outweigh the value of your website.

Why Should You Create an Opt In List?

Your list is very likely the most valuable piece of your website.

Visitors come to your site for a purpose - to learn, to share, to buy, etc. Some visitors are more valuable than others. Those who perform your "call to action" (buy, share, refer, etc.) are more valuable than those who don't. If you can identify and keep track of these high-value visitors, then you've just created an asset which can create potential future earnings.

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Let's explore the value of your list. To become part of your Opt In list, a visitor has done the following:

- Shown interest in your site, or what you have to offer
- Provided you with contact information
- Given you permission to contact them in some way in the future.

By doing these things, your visitor has become a "warm lead". They are pre-sold, and ready for you to convert into a sale, or another future sale.

Trust and Your List

Most Opt In visitors have shown trust in you or your site, or they would not have given you their contact information. NEVER break this trust, as this is the foundation of your list.

Trust not only allows you to build your list, but it also allows you to successfully convert your leads in your future messages. If you send an email that promotes a "spammy", hyped product to your list of professionals, chances are they will be turned off, and your credibility and trust could be lost. Always consider how your message could affect your list's trust level.

As you build your list, you are creating a database of pre-sold, interested customers. As mentioned, there is huge value in such a database, when used properly, and not abused. Some specific reasons to create a list include:

- Storing and Tracking interested, pre-sold visitors - a very valuable asset
- Allowing you to keep in contact, and thus keep your leads "warm" through newsletters, special offer emails, etc.
- Providing you the ability to offer a new product or service to a very targeted audience
- If you don't, then that visitor has come and gone, and may never return to your site again
- Gives you the potential of **actively** marketing to a target audience unlike your website's passive marketing opportunity.
- Some visitors don't buy on their first visit - gives you the ability to continue the sales process
- Cross-selling and up-selling now become options

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Opt-In Summary

As you build your list, and begin to use it, remember that you are creating a **Relationship** with your list members. Every "touch" or communication with them affects this relationship.

Like other relationships, this one is fragile, and can be affected forever by one bad email. Your trust and credibility is on the line with every email you send. Proof your email for offensive comments, tones, or underlying themes which could be interpreted negatively by your readers.

Begin Building

There are many ways to build an Opt In list. It's not necessarily important which one(s) you choose, but that you begin as soon as possible.

There are many techniques, and methods to build an Opt In list. Some cost money, while others are free. Whether you choose to offer something in return for a visitor's contact information, or just have a "signup" page is also a consideration you must make.

Maybe you'll use online articles to build your list. Some websites will funnel all links and pages to a "squeeze page" where all you want is their contact information. Others will just have a small "subscribe here" box.

Regardless of how you approach your list building, just do it.

Quantity vs. Quality

You can choose to build your list quickly with lots of subscribers, or slowly with well-targeted, quality subscribers.

For example, if you want to build an Opt In list quickly, you can offer 3 free eBooks, and a \$10 Amazon coupon to anyone who signs up. This will result in lots of subscribers, but they might not be very engaged, or pre-sold on your website, and not too interested in what you may offer in the future.

***NEVER** ever mislead a subscriber. Be sure to give them whatever it is that you offer. If you tell them you won't share or sell their contact information then don't. One sure way to undermine the value of your list (and your credibility) is to lie, mislead or not deliver.*

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On the other extreme, you can just have a small "Subscribe Here" box that requests their contact information, so that they can receive your newsletter. This subscriber will tend to be more interested, engaged, and more likely to buy from your future promotions.

Your value ultimately lies with the quality of your list. Keep this in mind as you build it. There are also some additional techniques that you can incorporate to help provide some quality checks before your subscribers are added.

Validating Email Addresses

One important yet sometimes overlooked Quality-Assurance task is to verify email addresses of your subscribers. This should especially be done if you are attracting your subscribers via a "free offering".

One method of eliminating "typos" in email addresses is to ask for their email address two times, and compare them (make sure to turn the pre-fill option off for your text box). If they match, it's usually safe to assume that they typed their email correctly. This technique, however does not handle the "fake" email address validation.

Double Opt In is a term that has been given to a technique that forces the subscriber to validate their email address. The process is started with a subscriber entering their contact info. An **Autoresponder** will send them a welcome email which contains a link back for verification. Once the verification link is clicked, their subscription is validated and only then are they added to your Opt In list database.

This technique can potentially be a turn off for some subscribers, as some feel that "I already gave you permission when I filled in the information and hit Subscribe." However, this verification process will help you build a very high quality list in terms of accurate data. It also helps you avoid Spamming, which is an illegal activity.

Spamming can also be avoided by using a reputable Autoresponder, or Email Marketing company. They perform tests, and utilize techniques that help you get your emails delivered successfully.

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Autoresponders - Do I really need one?

Autoresponders send emails to your subscribers automatically.

It is hard to build an Opt In list without an Autoresponder. Your Autoresponder is linked to your subscription box. When a subscriber enters their information and then hits "submit", the information is sent to the Autoresponder to perform the first task which you have setup - usually a verification email sent to the subscriber.

Other uses for the Autoresponder include:

- Setup a series of compelling messages to encourage your subscribers to buy your products
- Create and send an eZine or newsletter emailed daily, weekly, monthly or as often as you like
- You can use your Autoresponder to periodically "stay in touch" with your Opt In list, so you keep your brand fresh in their minds.
- Send updates regarding new website content, contests, product lines, etc.

Uses are only limited by your imagination.

Autoresponders are often available with your all-inclusive website software.

There are also other reputable companies which offer Autoresponders with many additional features that will make your email marketing even more effective. Some of the more widely used Autoresponders are listed below:

- [AWeber](#) - marketing software to help small businesses automate email follow up and email newsletter delivery. Free Trial.
- [iContact](#) – email marketing software with tools, templates, tracking reports, etc. Free Trial.
- [Get Response](#) – automated email marketing with templates, surveys, analytics, etc.
- [Constant Contact](#) – email marketing, templates, surveys, tools, etc. Free Trial.

List Building Techniques

Some tips and suggestions to help you build an Opt In list:

1. Create an eBook with valuable content, and give it away free to new subscribers. Provide a link in your eBook for subscriber signup and tell your subscriber that they can email your eBook to whomever they'd like.
2. Create a landing page that is dedicated to building your list. If you're offering a newsletter for signup, provide links to prior newsletters; highlight the benefits your subscriber will receive, etc.
3. Write articles to help build your credibility and put links to your subscription landing page in your article Resource Box.
4. Join relevant Forums and contribute to the conversation. Include a link to your landing page in your signature box.
5. Put your Subscription Box on every page of your site, "above the fold."

Pick one of these strategies and begin to build an Opt In list today. You can always add other strategies later. The important thing is to start building right away.

Promoting Your Website

Promoting your website is equally as important as planning and building it. A great website without traffic is like an “oasis in the desert.” There are numerous ways to market your website so that it is found by visitors – some cost money, while others take time and good old-fashioned elbow grease.

As mentioned earlier, content is your foundation to SEO success. It is your content that will ultimately drive your organic search results. Inbound links also help contribute to your page ranking. See [Content - The Key to SEO Success](#) in an earlier section to review how content and inbound links will help promote your website.

There are other tasks which you can undertake to assist the Search Engines in finding and indexing your site.

Directory Submission

Directories are sites on the internet that organize and list other websites into categories. The Search Engines do utilize many of the more reputable Directories to help them find new websites. Some Directories allow you to submit your website for inclusion for free, while others will charge a fee.

Currently, DMOZ and Yahoo are considered two of the most reputable Directories that you can be listed in. DMOZ is free, but Yahoo charges a fee. Be careful when submitting to pay-for-inclusion Directories. Read the submission guidelines as some do NOT guarantee a listing, but only “the opportunity to be listed.” They could deny your listing, but keep your fee.

Conceptually, like inbound links, you want your website link to be listed on a directory with a high Page Ranking (PR). **PageRank Value** (PR) is an indication (ranging from 0 to 10) given by Google's toolbar on the importance of a web page,

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measured (primarily) by the number of links pointing to it. As the scale is logarithmic, it is increasingly difficult to increase the PR of a page. Thus, it is many times harder to climb from 5 to 6 than it is from 4 to 5. Obtaining a link from a high PR page can significantly boost the linked to page in the relevant search results.

To help find Directories to submit your site to, visit <http://www.strongestlinks.com/directories.php> .

They provide valuable information in addition to just a list of Directories.

Directories are sorted by PR, with the highest PR's listed first.

This site also tells you if the Directory “passes PR”. One of the most critical issues related to link popularity and directories is “passing PR”. Being listed in a directory does not mean that the Directory will link directly to you. Some will actually point to an internal routine which will then transfer the user to the final destination - your site.

Do NOT use directories that don't pass PR. They will provide no value to your site's ranking.

Sitemap and Search Engine Submission

Search Engines find your web pages from other links – either from other websites, or from your internal links. A Sitemap is an outline of your website, and its page structure. Think of it as a road map, in that it will tell you about every page on your site, and what its address is. NOTE: Submission of your Sitemap does not guarantee Search Engine indexing, higher Page Rank, or great SEO. It does, however, let the Search Engines know your site is there, and it will help them find all of your pages over time.

Your Sitemap tells the search engines about new pages or changes you've made to your site. This can be done through a Sitemap file created according to a specific protocol defined by Sitemaps.org. To start the process you need to create your Sitemap file in .XML format. You can create your file free [HERE](#).

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Once you've created your sitemap file, you need to upload it using your FTP or website software, and place it in your site's root directory (this is the highest level folder or directory you have).

Now it is time to submit your Sitemap to the major Search Engines.

Google Sitemap Submission

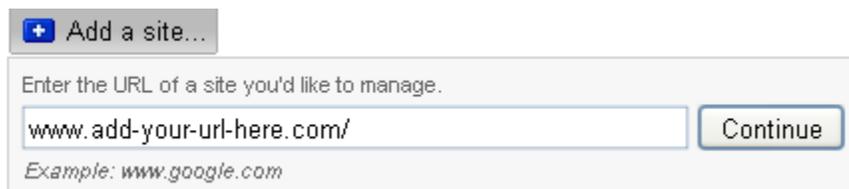
Google requires a few preliminary steps before you can actually submit your Sitemap.

Step 1 – Login to Google's Webmaster Tools (or create an account if you don't have one).

<http://www.google.com/webmasters/sitemaps/login>

Step 2 – Submit your Website's URL to Google

Click on **Add a site...** A text box will appear on the page (see the screenshot below). Use the full URL (ex., <http://www.your-domain-name.com/>), like this...



+ Add a site...

Enter the URL of a site you'd like to manage.

Continue

Example: www.google.com

Click on Continue.

Step 3 – Verification of Site Ownership

You can choose to upload an HTML file to your site, or place a Meta Tag into your site's home page. To upload an HTML file, you will first download the file to your PC, and then you need to place it in your site's directory. We've shown an example of the HTML file below:

Verify ownership

Verifying your site proves to Google that you're really the site owner.

Site URL **http://www.add-your-url-here.com/**

Verification status **Not Verified**

Verification method

1. Download [this HTML verification file](#). [google796a572a0592dd68.html]
2. Upload the file to <http://www.add-your-url-here.com/>
3. Confirm successful upload by visiting <http://www.add-your-url-here.com/google796a572a0592dd68.html> in your browser.
4. Click the verify button below.

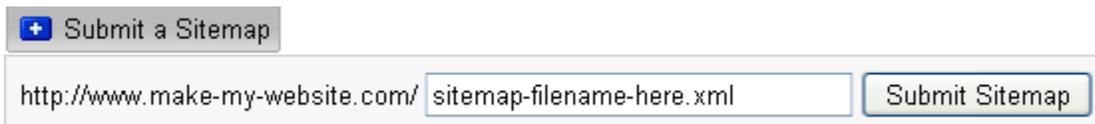
Click on Verify to submit your website's URL for verification. Once verified, you are now ready to submit your Sitemap to Google.

Step 4 – Submit your Sitemap URL

Click on your website's URL. In the bottom right of the page, select "Submit a Sitemap".



You will see a text box where you will fill in your Sitemap's Filename that you created.



Fill in your Sitemap's filename, and click on Submit Sitemap.

On the next page, Google will confirm that you submitted your sitemap successfully. Back on the Home page of the Google Webmaster's site, you will see your Sitemap's file name in the bottom right corner.

You have successfully submitted your Sitemap to Google. Resubmit after you make changes to your website to ensure that Google has your most recent Sitemap on file.

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Yahoo! Sitemap Submission

Like Google, Yahoo! requires a few preliminary steps before you can actually submit your Sitemap.

Step 1 – Submit Your Website URL

Click on link to setup or login to your Yahoo! Account –

<https://siteexplorer.search.yahoo.com/>

Enter your site URL, and click on “Add My Site”



Step 2 – Ping Yahoo! with Your Sitemap

Select and copy the following code and paste it into your browser’s address bar:

`http://search.yahooapis.com/SiteExplorerService/V1/ping?sitemap=`

Type your website URL after the ***sitemap=*** in the above address:

`http://search.yahooapis.com/SiteExplorerService/V1/ping?sitemap=http://www.yourwebsite.com/`

Type your Sitemap file name after your website URL:

`http://search.yahooapis.com/SiteExplorerService/V1/ping?sitemap=http://www.yourwebsite.com/sitemap-filename.xml`

Hit enter to submit your Sitemap to Yahoo.

Yahoo! will then confirm the success of your sitemap submission. If you see a success message, you're done at Yahoo!.

Bing Sitemap Submission

Bing's Submission is the similar to Yahoo's.

Step 1 – Ping Bing with your URL and Sitemap

Select and copy the following code and paste it into your browser's address bar:

`http://www.bing.com/webmaster/ping.aspx?siteMap=`

Type your website URL after the **siteMap=** in the above address:

`http://www.bing.com/webmaster/ping.aspx?siteMap= http://www.yourwebsite.com/`

Add your Sitemap filename to the end:

`http://www.bing.com/webmaster/ping.aspx?siteMap=http://www.yourwebsite.com/sitemap-filename.xml`

Submit above address from your browser. Bing will then confirm success with the following message...

"Thanks for submitting your sitemap."

Bing also has additional webmaster tools available. See below to setup your account.

1. Go to <http://www.bing.com>.
2. In the top right corner, click on **Extras** and then select **Webmaster Center**.
3. On the next page, click on the **Sign in to use the tools** button.
4. On the next page, click on the **Sign up** button.
5. Complete the information until your account is set up.

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Ask Sitemap Submission

Bing's Submission is the similar to Yahoo's.

Step 1 – Ping Ask with your URL and Sitemap

Select and copy the following code and paste it into your browser's address bar:

```
http://submissions.ask.com/ping?sitemap=http%3A//
```

Append your URL and Sitemap filename leaving off the "http://".

```
http://submissions.ask.com/ping?sitemap=http%3A//www.yourwebsite.com/sitemap-filename.xml
```

Ask will then confirm the success of your sitemap submission. If you see a success message, you're finished at Ask.

Articles

Writing website marketing articles is a great way to start the snowball rolling for your inbound targeted traffic. It's effective, and it's free.

If you're not familiar with website article submission, the concept is pretty simple. You write, or pay someone to write authoritative articles (300-1000 words), and you submit them to an online article website for publication. You are usually allowed to provide 1-2 "self-serving" links, which you use to create inbound links to your website.

Each article site has different rules, and most are very strict about enforcing them; especially their self-promotional rules. Nevertheless, if you abide by their guidelines, and provide a content-rich and valuable article, most will publish your works.

Publishing website marketing articles is a great way to jump start your site's traffic. Article submission should be an integral part of your website's marketing plan.

Why Should You Submit Articles?

Website promotion articles are valuable for a couple of reasons. First of all, they create inbound links to your website - from another reputable and credible site. Credible inbound links are an important factor in Search Engine Optimization - the more the better.

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Secondly, marketing articles generate traffic to your site. More specifically, they create targeted and pre-sold traffic, if you've effectively used great content, and relevant keywords. This is a key factor to the success of your site as well.

Website promotion articles also perform a more subtle benefit. They build credibility for you and they "pre-sell" your visitor. If visitors like what they read in your article, and are willing to click on your link to learn more, then they have already decided that *"they want what you have to offer."*

Most self-serving links are in your "Resource Box" at the bottom of the page. So in order to get to your link, they've made it through your article, and thus have shown interest. Generally speaking a visitor that arrives at your website, from an online article, has a great chance of being converted.

Lastly, website marketing articles have another positive effect that you might not be aware of...they get found by the Search Engines. Be sure to write your article based on a keyword. You should construct your article just like a page on your website – focused on one keyword or phrase. This interprets into even more potential targeted traffic for you.

If article submission is not part of your marketing toolkit, it should be. The return on investment of Article Marketing is infinite. Start today. Like Directories, you should try to use online article sites with high Page Rankings.

Top PR Online Article Sites

Listed below are some of the top online Article sites based on their PR score at the time of publishing.

- PR 6 [iSnare](#)
- PR 6 [eZine Articles](#)
- PR 6 [Go Articles](#)
- PR 5 [Articles Base](#)
- PR 5 [Constant Content](#)
- PR 5 [Article Dashboard](#)
- PR 5 [Buzzle](#)
- PR 5 [Article City](#)
- PR 4 [Easy Articles](#)
- PR 4 [Sooper Articles](#)

Social Media Marketing (SMM)

Social Media or Social Network Marketing according to **Wikipedia**, is "a term that describes the act of using social networks, online communities, blogs, wikis or any other collaborative Internet form of media for marketing, sales, public relations and customer service. Common social media marketing tools include Twitter, Blogs, LinkedIn, Facebook, Flickr and YouTube."

Social Media Marketing is synonymous with "Social Media Networking", and "Web 2.0 Marketing".

It is an advertising method that makes use of the Social Networks to promote your website, or business. Uses range from simple advertising, banners, etc. to leveraging the viral aspect of the social networks.

There are a few important aspects that Social Media encompasses:

- It is social, conversational, and controlled by the user community, and not a company. Thus, your marketing efforts must engage the user and consider them in every aspect of your campaign.
- Your goal is to create a "buzz" about your topic, website, etc. It is this "buzz" that feeds the viral aspect and the necessary piece that makes social media marketing so valuable.
- Users or fans are enabled to promote, collaborate and spread their favorite sites, companies or products across the network - this can be seen on Fan pages of Facebook, MySpace, Twitter, etc.

Why Use Social Media Marketing?

There are many reasons you should be marketing to at least some part of the social mediasphere. One of the most important is the fact that there are so many millions of users who have Social Media profiles already, and that number is growing at astounding rates every month.

If you are not using the advertising piece, but instead, you are creating "buzz" through Fan pages, postings, Tweets, etc., then this marketing effort is FREE! Your

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ROI is infinite for any marketing channel that has no cost. What a great opportunity.

Viral marketing would be another aspect of Social Network Marketing that makes it attractive. While most will never achieve a true viral campaign that explodes exponentially, and reaches millions, many will achieve it to a lesser degree. Creating a video, or story that the Social Fanbase adopts, and forwards in large numbers is a marketer's dream. The Social Networks at least provide this opportunity.

With minimal effort to keep one or a couple of your social sites updated, you have the potential to reach many "eyeballs". In some cases, this number of potential viewers is greater than any other marketing campaigns.

The Social Community is very tightly knit, and each smaller Social unit supports itself. In other words, if a unit really likes a site, or product, everyone in that unit will know about it. This can give you amazing exposure and instant credibility - two things which are often very hard to earn or come by.

Be careful, however, the opposite can happen as well. ALWAYS be aware of your comments, posts, etc. You don't want to offend someone, or turn them off as this can have just as amazing negative effects for you.

Resources

All-Inclusive Website Builders

- [Network Solutions](#)
 - [GoDaddy](#)
 - [Homestead by Intuit](#)
 - [SiteSell](#)
-

Affiliate Programs

[AffiliateBot](#) - Also offers your own blog and website/public profile where you can promote whatever you want. A small but very nice added feature.

[ClickBank](#) - One of the first Affiliate Management Programs - offers a lot of niche products.

[LinkShare](#) - Offers more of the larger Merchants like Macy's, Apple, etc.

[Share a Sale](#) - Offers almost 3000 Merchants to choose from.

[Commission Junction](#) - Offers nearly 2000 Merchants from small companies to larger and well-known.

[LinkConnector](#) - Offers a rapidly growing number Top 500 Internet Retailers.

[ClickXchange](#) - Advertising tools, and "no minimum" account balance before monthly payout.

Drop Shipping Companies

[Drop Ship Design](#) Offers a full service drop shipping solution. From just products, to a Turnkey website with domain registration, hosting, email and a ready to go Storefront.

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[Simplx](#) Supplier only - 60,000,000 products to include in your ecommerce site, or through your eBay store. Simplx is very well-known, with high customer satisfaction. You must fill out an application to be approved.

[WorldWide Brands](#) A very professional site. Includes many training materials, with excellent research capabilities for drop ship products.

[Drop Shipping Wholesalers](#) Supplier only – Offering brand name products, some educational how-to, and a 56 day money back guarantee.

[Doba](#) USA Only - Supplier only - Connects you to 100+ wholesale distributors via one site. You have access to all of their product lines. 10 day free trial. Also offers eBay setup and training.

Payment Processing

- [PayPal](#)
- [Authorize.net](#)

eGoods Resources

Selling eGoods can be a great way to generate "hands-off" income. Some helpful resources are listed below:

[Payloadz](#) offers digital download management. If you want to sell an eGood, you should consider opening an account with [Payloadz](#). They will provide the code to handle the download and payment processing for your site.

[ClickBank](#) is an Affiliate Program Manager which specializes in digital products. If you want to increase your sales, consider selling your eGood through their Affiliate Program.

[Autoresponders - Email Marketing](#)

There are many companies which offer Autoresponders with many additional features that will make your email marketing even more effective. Some of the more widely used Autoresponders are listed below:

[AWeber](#) - marketing software to help small businesses automate email follow up and email newsletter delivery. Free Trial.

[iContact](#) – email marketing software with tools, templates, tracking reports, etc. Free Trial.

[Get Response](#) – automated email marketing with templates, surveys, analytics, etc.

[Constant Contact](#) – email marketing, templates, surveys, tools, etc. Free Trial.
