Ebook Marketing Master Course
(Marketing Master Course Update)

By: Jose L. Gonzalez
http://www.marketing-master-course.com
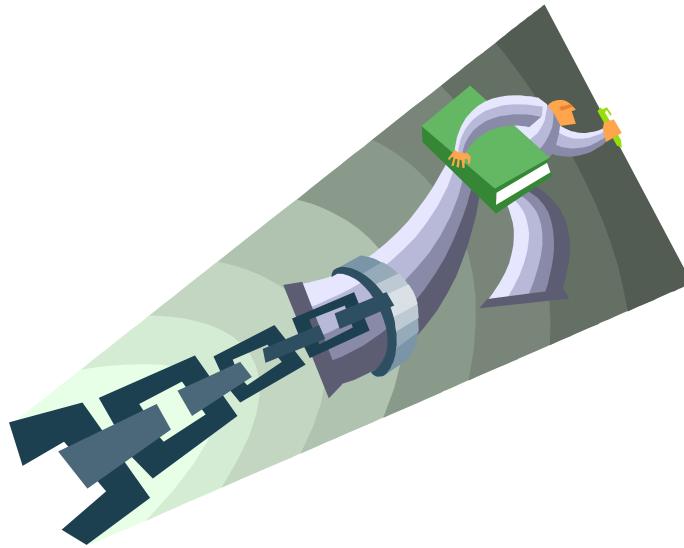
Foreword

Thanks for turs in the Marketing Master Course. As promised here is another full update. In the main course we covered how to create your own product and how to efficiently market it using the Internet... Now here is a detailed, step by step course on the topic.

If you are still doubting about if you are able to create your very own ebook and profit from it, you should make up your mind right away. Read through these 169 pages a discover in full detail how you can be a super ebook marketer the right way. From A to Z. From writing that first line to selling it upfront to your customer. Use the power of Ezines and articles, search engines, PPC and other techniques to make it big with your own Ebook.

Watch out! All the hype has been censored!

To your success,
Jose L. Gonzalez
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Ebook Marketing Master Course

1. Turning your ideas into steady streams of cash flow

1.1 What is an eBook?

eBooks or Electronic books are self-contained "executable" files of HTML. This HTML may be a web site you've created or HTML you've specifically prepared to be compiled into a downloadable .exe file for distribution. When downloaded, this file will self install on your client's desktop.

eBooks are very similar to normal physical books in the sense that they are rich in content. They are a huge resource for information. Anything you can put in a physical book, you can put in an eBook. If your site is about tropical birds, why not write a tropical bird guide. If your site is about web design, you could write a beginner's web tutorial.

An eBook basically is a packaged offline web site that allows authors a great deal of flexibility in presentation of content. eBooks can be downloaded from your website and stored and read offline at any time. eBooks come with user friendly navigation tools that lets the reader skip to any page or search for any keyword in the eBook.

eBooks can be completely interactive with the Internet and can contain live links, graphics, forms, JavaScript, embedded video, audio, animation and more. Hyperlinks and internal search engines enhance navigation, allowing the reader to find items of interest

quickly and easily. eBooks combine the functionality and purpose of physical books along with complex software.

eBooks will play a very important role in Internet Marketing over the next few years, no matter what the product or service offered by a company is. How can your business benefit from the eBook direction especially in terms of Internet Marketing? Read on to find out.

1.1.1 Benefits of publishing your own eBook

eBooks offer myriad advantages to the Internet Marketer. A good idea for an eBook can explode your income. The best thing about publishing your own eBook is that not only can you earn a steady income by selling the eBook but you can also market all of your other products through the same eBook.

The primary reason why anyone would create and publish their own eBook is to make money. eBooks that are informative and focused sell very well. If the eBook's subject has a market, people would be willing to buy it.

One of the major benefits of selling eBooks is that anyone without any sort of prior experience could create a book and with proper marketing strategies, build a huge customer base. The key is building credibility with your eBooks. Once this is done, it would be very easy to make new as well as follow up sales. eBooks can lead to a variety

of other opportunities for your business. eBooks also serve as great marketing tools. They can be used to attract customers for your other products or services.

Listed below are some of the other benefits of publishing your own eBook.

Getting published is easier

The costs involved in traditional publishing are high and publishers are extremely selective. Therefore, the percentage of authors that eventually succeed in getting their works published is extremely low.

Electronic publishing has removed much of the risk and costs attached to print publishing. The result being a far greater percentage of would be authors are now getting published.

Low Cost … High Margin

Once again, because the costs of electronic publishing are significantly low, an author can expect to receive a higher percentage of the income derived from the sale of an ebook. In fact, should authors decide to pay for the creation of their ebook up front and distribute the work themselves, they get to keep all the profits.

eBooks have a profit margin of almost 100%. This is enormous. This is aided by the fact that eBooks eliminate shipping and inventory costs. You can update the sell the same eBook for years and derive income out of it. The cost for revising an eBook is minimal. Besides, creating an eBook does not require any technical knowledge. Anyone can create and market it.

Third party publishers are more author-friendly

Authors who opt for third part publishing and creation are granted far greater room for discussion regarding the contract between the third party and themselves. Aspects such as electronic publishing and print rights, duration of contract, royalties, design input, advertising, marketing and distribution etc. are negotiated to the mutual benefit of both parties.

Authors are encouraged to be involved with the creation of their ebook to ensure that the final product meets their expectations.

An eBook can be completed and published fast

It can take anything up to two years for an accepted manuscript to go to print and reach the bookstores with a conventional publisher. eBooks can be published and up for sale within a few weeks. Self-publishers can be selling their ebook within weeks.

eBooks can be enhanced with Multimedia

eBooks have a decisive edge because it can include a variety of multimedia elements that will enhance the reading experience. Multimedia enhancements, such as animation, graphics, expandable photos, audio, short video clips, music, magnify font size and interactive navigational links are bonus features that elevate the electronic publication into a class on its own.

Authors can use these elements to illustrate the textual content more effectively

Varied packaging and distribution formats

The eBook can be packaged and distributed in more than one format. It can be packaged on 1.44MB disks, and CD-ROMs. eBooks are easily duplicated on either format and can be produced on demand

Most eBooks do not require any sort of packaging. There are two other methods of packaging and distribution that are most popular. The physical packaging and distribution costs are next to zero.

The first method is via e-mail. Your electronic book, which is saved on your computer, is forwarded to the purchaser as an attachment to an e-mail addressed to him, after payment has been secured. Cost to you is one local telephone call to send the e-mail. The second

method is achieved by uploading the ebook to your website from where it can be downloaded by anyone who has made the appropriate payment arrangements.

Besides, there is no cost for reproducing eBooks.

Marketing and advertising

There are many opportunities available to advertise and market your e-book. The Internet has opened hundreds of doors to previously unpublished authors. You can now tap into the enormous world-wide market via the Internet.

Best of all, is that you will have the exclusive rights to market your e-book and people can only buy it from you. Alternatively, you could also enter into an agreement with another publisher regarding distribution of your ebook.

1.2 Creating an eBook without any writing experience

eBooks have been selling like hot cakes. Interestingly, if you study the eBook market, you would realize that a majority of websites or even individuals who sell eBooks may not be great writers themselves. Professional Writers can be hired at very reasonable costs to write the book. There are writing mentors or coaches out there that will assist you in that part of the process if need be. What's important is for you to bring in a knowledge, passion, or belief in your subject. That's what makes writing sell in the first place.

Anyone can be taught how to put the words down; it's what is being said that is important.

Alternatively, writing the book yourself, even without prior experience is certainly an option. We would discuss several guidelines and tips for writing an eBook in the next section.

1.2.1 Getting Started – The first few steps

eBooks deliver complete, instantly available, expert knowledge in a single, easily handled package. Creating an eBook may not require prior experience, but it certainly requires careful planning and considerable groundwork. You create eBooks wanting ongoing, lifelong multiple streams of income. eBooks should be created with the aim of raising your credibility and trust ratings with clients or customers.

Selling eBooks comprises of three phases. The first phase involves researching and developing an idea for the book, the second phase involves writing the eBook, and the third phase involves marketing the eBook. Let us try to understand each of these phases in detail.

1.2.2 What Works and What Doesn't – Researching Topics

The Internet is primarily used to communicate, entertain, educate and research. It is thus no wonder that information-intensive eBooks are the most popular online products at present. How do you decide on a subject for your eBook? The simple answer is research, research, and more research.

Your main objective is to write on a subject that has long term appeal. After all, you would like to derive as much profit out of your eBook as possible. It is thus necessary that your subject does not get outdated in a couple of months. The best way to choose a topic is to figure out what people look for. This can be done by analyzing top searches at Search Engines. Many search engines as well as other popular portals such as Search Terms keep a track of the most popular searches over a period. Besides, there are many other tools such the Keyword Live Software from Analog X that monitors top search terms at major Search Engines. You could use these lists to figure out the most popular subjects.

The next step is to carefully analyze some of the most popular subjects. You can use popular keyword search tools such as WordTracker or Overture's Search Term Tool to determine popular search terms similar or relevant to the one's you have listed. This will give you a much more specific and focused list to work from. However, deciding to write an eBook based on a popular search term may not be a very smart idea. The key is to establish the exact need of people. There may be many eBooks that target the same subject. However, most of them would probably be devoid of some aspect of the subject. Unless your eBook fills this void, it would not be a success.

Creating the eBook without any writing experience is not difficult. With a little bit of research and learning you can create an eBook that is workable. The toughest part is to get hold of a killer idea. After all, eBooks are all about ideas – the better your idea, the higher your sales.

Let us now look at some of the other strategies to generate ideas.

1.3 Best Selling Books to write and sell

Print books can be written into eBooks. This certainly does not mean that you copy the print book and write it into an eBook. However, popular print books can often provide good ideas for an eBook. Browsing through your local book store or library may help. It may also be a good idea to check out the best-selling non fiction books every week.

Go to Amazon.com and see what books are available on various topics. See how they rank - the higher the rank, the more demand there is for that type of information. Then go to Google.com and see how many web sites there are with free information about that topic. Don't get discouraged if there are a great many -- oftentimes people would prefer an eBook they can read off-line, even if it costs a few dollars, rather then spending hours reading on-line.

1.4 Cashing in on other people's ideas

We touched this issue in the earlier section. You should always research the Internet to determine what eBooks sell the most. A particular topic may cater to a huge audience. There may be instances when you stumble upon an eBook that seems to be very interesting but has not sold enough due to poor marketing. Cashing in on such eBooks can skyrocket your income.

1.5 Message Boards and Discussion Forums

Online Message Boards and Discussion Forums are places people generally visit when they have a problem and need solutions. This is exactly what you want your eBook to address. Join public discussion forums and message boards and note various kinds of issues people have. This would give you a better idea of what kind of information people want. List out all the problems and try to develop a broad idea that addresses most of the concerns. Also, newsgroups as well as ezines may be a good source for ideas.

1.6 Brainstorm

Take your general topic and brainstorm around it. Turn off the critical part of you mind for a moment, and just note down everything that comes to mind in association with that topic. Don't judge these initial ideas yet, but let them flow freely. No one will see these but you; they are fodder for further research, not refined search proposals. Take this list of general ideas and go through them one by one with a critical eye. Evaluate their merit

as possible subjects for your book. Consider related ideas or concepts. Develop three or four ideas that hold potential as eBook topics.

Brainstorming is the activity that's going to yank that eBook idea right out of you so respect this step and do it right. A good brainstorming session can literally produce hundreds of good ideas.

1.7 Writing Instructional eBooks

One of the most popular formats for eBooks are instructional formats. These are eBooks that give readers a step-by-step logical approach to accomplish a task. With so much information available on the Internet, organizing this information to solve a problem has become a major issue. People have started paying for books that tell them exactly how to go about achieving a certain task. For instance, an eBook that lists a logical roadmap on how to buy or rent a home would sell much more than an eBook that simply lists a few tips for buying a home.

People look for a quick solution. Instructional eBooks provide just that!

1.8 List all your ideas

You do not need a long list of ideas to start writing eBooks. A simple list of around 5 to 10 ideas would suffice. Mark out each of the topics that you feel passionate about or have

some knowledge in. Shortlist a few ideas and research the web for any resources you may find on these subjects. Weigh the competition you may have for each of these ideas. Combine all of the above mentioned factors and single out ideas that you feel are most likely to succeed.

A few ideas to start with

Here are some ideas that can serve as good eBook topics

- Internet Marketing
- Successful Search Engine Tactics
- How to become a successful Real Estate Investor
- Raising healthy children
- Crafts for kids
- Lifestyles for a healthy heart
- Complete guide to setting up a home office
- Mastering the Stock Market
- Landscaping made easy
- How to write a Novel
- Building your own home fitness gym

1.9 Hiring professional Writers to write your eBook

eBooks are hot sellers because they deliver complete, instantly available, expert knowledge in a single, easily handled package. These can be downloaded and saved on an individual's computer and can be read offline, or can be printed.

You can write an eBook on virtually anything that fancies you. Just think it through and put words to your thoughts. Not everyone thinks just the way you do, you are bound to impart at least some knowledge to others, and share your insight with others. It's absolutely impossible for everyone to become an expert on everything. However, by purchasing the ideas of others, in eBook, we can all gain markedly. As well, the writer of the eBook can gain financially.

Don't panic, as you don't necessarily have to be a great writer to write a great eBook. There are writing mentors or coaches out there that will assist you in that part of the process if need be. The only important thing is that you need to have the solid basic idea and feel passionately about the subject you have in mind. Putting together and selling the eBook is the next hardest step. However, there are services that can help with that, too. The key point is that don't sway from your goal and don't sink in debts or evade from profits if you find the project too daunting. Use an expert from another field, writing and publishing, to help you sell to others the expertise you have in your field. Make sure that you take care of the copyright aspect of the book, so that once your eBook is created; it is yours to sell forever.

There are plenty of advantages if you publish an eBook. It boosts traffic on your website and also brings more credibility to your existing business. You are put on a higher pedestal because you have put your beliefs in print for others to read and judge. EBook are selling, and even free eBook are great marketing tools if they refer readers back to your web site or product. The Internet is about information. If you've got it, make it available.

If you're not confident about your writing skills, you can always hire a writer to write the contents of your eBook. Obviously, you will need to pay the writer for his services. It is advisable that you somehow convince the writer to take a percentage of your sales, just like the royalties that authors get when they get a book published by print publishers, however he'll still want some up front money. There are books out there on how to hire freelance writers -- including standard contracts so that you won't get ripped off. If you decide that you want to use a professional writer to do the writing (and that may be an excellent idea), then go to your local library and research the details on hiring freelance writers. Don't forget to thoroughly research before making any sort of commitment.

However, you may not have to go through all of that hassle. There are hundreds of ebook sellers who are offering commissions of 50% or more if you refer a buyer to their websites. No, you don't have to go hunting throughout the web to look for them. Many of them have signed up with one particular company to handle their signups and commissions.

You are likely to get phenomenal results if you hire a pro to do it right.

Many business owners and marketing professionals have legitimate apprehension about letting an outsider develop their content. After all - it's your business, you know it best, and your image is critical. However, you're wrapped up in your business every day. A good writer can see your business in a new light, draw out the key benefits of your products and services, and communicate that excitement to your clients and prospects.

Working with a writer isn't a complex ordeal; however it will benefit you greatly to become familiar with how the relationship typically works and ways to help the process move along smoothly. The following are some of the tips on how to choose and work with a writer:

1. Understand your project.

A crucial factor in streamlining the writing process is determining the principal points you need to communicate - before you bring in a writer. Who is your target audience? What is your message? What is unique about your company? In what type of tone do you want to speak to your reader? What type of response do you ideally want the reader to make? Having this information agreed upon before you get a writer involved will save you unnecessary copy revisions and keep your costs down.

2. Work out a rational agenda.

Yes, you've heard this all your life, but haste makes waste. Avoid hastily hiring a writer and dumping a rush job on her. Not only will you not have time to thoroughly check her experience and references, but, no matter how wonderfully talented she is, her first drafts will not be "fully cooked." This is because most writers need time to let words and ideas simmer.

Most writers will request a few weeks to develop your copy, so set a realistic schedule to give the creative process ample time. Count on going through one or two revisions as your writer refines the piece's angle and conveys the key benefits of what you're promoting.

3. Don't look for only 'experienced' writers-expand your choices.

"So you've never written for a _____ company before?" I've heard many prospects say. Don't worry. A writer's ability to write well for the medium is more important than her having prior experience in your industry.

Make sure that your writer is fully aware of what you expect, don't expect that the writer will read your mind and deliver just what you need. Also, don't underestimate them, just because they don't have any experience in the kind of field you require, that does not

mean that they will not be able to write on it. As a side point, a lot of writers are true generalists and write just as well for an edgy new media start-up as they do for a giant hospital network. They're very skillful at diving into your business, learning it inside and out, and churning out great prose to entice your target market. Now of course, if you're creating a technically oriented business-to-business EBook or marketing piece, you may want to hire a writer with experience in both your project's medium and your industry.

4. Ask for references, and contact them.

All writers can show you samples of well-written material, but how do you know if they'll work to understand your communication needs, meet deadlines, and act professionally in front of clients? If the person you are about to hire claims to be an accomplished writer or produces a well-studded resume, she should have an ample list of references that she can share with you. Be sure to contact at least two of them, and ask them about the writer's weaknesses as well as her strengths.

5. Do it legal, chalk up contracts and agreements.

Don't just have an oral agreement or contract. True writing pros will give you an agreement they've drawn up for you. However, you'll occasionally find yourself having to draft an agreement for the project. This doesn't have to be complex - a simple letter of agreement that you both sign should do fine. Be sure to include the project size, number of revisions included (if applicable), timetable, and agreed fee (this can be a flat fee or

hourly rate). Also, the contract should include all the rules and regulations which you expect the writer to follow. Again, do not assume that the writer will be aware of all the rules related to plagiarism, etc. It is your duty to explicitly mention the rules in the contract if you want to enforce those rules.

And don't forget to ask what's not included. For example, many writers charge extra for in-person meetings, research time, and weekend or rush work. You should also expect to pay an upfront retainer. Serious writers charge one-third to one-half of the total project fee upfront, and many won't begin your project until they have the signed agreement and check in hand. And if you have sensitive or proprietary information, don't hesitate to have your writer sign a non-disclosure agreement.

6. Give your writer background info at the start.

Give the writer as much background information as you can. Share background information that a staff writer would have access to. Let her/him know about the publication, website, business or product; about the angle you are trying to write from, the style you prefer, and about the subject of the piece and potential contacts. He should have all the data handy so that he can properly co-ordinate and synchronize the topics and the content therein. At the beginning of your project, pass on any and all previous brochures or sales kits, direct mail, Web site URLs, annual reports, research results, or business or marketing plans.

7. Give constructive criticism.

"This paragraph just doesn't work" isn't nearly as effective as "Maybe you can add a bit more information here" or "Could you possibly change the language here so that it looks a bit more technical". Also, tell her what parts you do like so she can emulate them elsewhere. And of course, everyone loves to know when they've done a good job. If you like your writer's work, be sure to share that with your writer.

Freelance Writers

Many companies are turning to freelance writers to get their projects completed. There are innumerable advantages when you deal with freelancers: no salaries, vacation time, sick days, health insurance or benefits. An outside writer will be free of bias and will offer a fresher outlook. Here are some tips for working with freelance writers to build relationships and ensure a successful project.

Negotiating Fees

Writing is a super-special skill and you get what you pay. You must understand that busy, reputable writers must earn enough money for their time in order to maintain a profitable business. If you only offer less, you may have to settle for beginners who will

likely require more editing and double-checking on your part. Until a writer gets used to your style, you may have to put in more time with them.

Always discuss payment terms before starting a project. Some writers will expect at least a part of the payment on acceptance of the project. For major projects, they may require one-third to one-half upon accepting the project with the balance paid upon completion. When you are negotiating payment to the freelancer, estimate the value of the product he or she is delivering. That way you will be able to get a fair picture of the actual worth of the freelancer's time and effort on your project.

More Ways to Save

You can also avoid hiring a freelancer to create an entirely new project for you by buying previously written or published articles. You can buy second rights to articles that have appeared in other publications in your field or on other web sites. Any freelancer can modify a generic article according to your taste and business requirement. The freelancer will often try to sell a version to different editors, and this will usually cost less than articles written specifically for your publication.

Constant feedback and updates

Communication is very important in any relationship, especially a business relationship. Specifically ask for periodic reports from your freelancer, so that you can ascertain

you're your project is going on smoothly and is on the right track. It should follow the right tone and touch the precise subject matters that you expect in your project. This is especially true while working with a new freelancer as he or she is not fully aware of your expectations and requirements. If this is the case, you can also assign a less important project. That way you are mutually benefited. You can also scrape the project and start if from the scratch if you are not totally happy with the results. Once you find a suitable writer for you project, try to use his/her services regularly so that your writer gets the required incentive from you and you can develop your business relationship with him/her.

2. Writing and Publishing your own profitable eBook

2.1 Getting Started

You have the topic for the eBook. You now need to get started writing the eBook. This can be an extremely frustrating process. For most people, getting started seems to be the most difficult aspect of writing an eBook. The very first thing you need to do is gather all your thoughts about the topic you have chosen. Doing research on the subject would definitely help.

The best approach for writing an eBook should be to start with the outline. Creating an outline would give you a good idea of what the eBook would be about. You should list out all the sections and topics of the eBook. Note that this would only be a draft outline. You can always keep on adding new topics as you progress. You can also review other books that are similar to get a better idea of what the outline should be like.

Bear in mind that you would be editing this outline numerous times during the course of the eBook. Once you have a draft outline, you would be in a much better position to start writing. However, before you do that you need to work out the title and research the Internet as well as print books for reference material pertaining to each section.

2.2 Title of the eBook

A clever title is great if it is clear, but a clear title is always preferable. A shorter title is better than a longer one. Your reader will spend only four seconds on the cover. While some long titles have succeeded, usually the shorter, the better.

A title is part of your eBook's front cover. Most buyers buy mainly because of the front cover.

Start with a working title before you write your chapters. Include your topic, your subject and use the book's benefits in your sub title if possible. Here are a few tips for titles that sell:

- Create impact for your title - Check out other authors' titles by researching on the Internet as well as local bookstores. Your title must compel the reader to buy now.

- Include your solution in your title. Does your title sell your solution? Make sure it answers the question rather than asks one.

- Use positive language instead of negative.

- Make it easy for readers to buy. Readers want a magic pill. They want to follow directions and enjoy the benefits the title promises. For example, 101 Ways to Market your eBook can act as an instructional book for your readers.

- Expand your title to other books, products, seminars, and services. Make sure that your title will work well with the title of your presentations, articles and press releases you'll need to promote the book

- Use original expressions — a way of expressing one idea for your book — yours alone.

- Include benefits in your subtitle if your title doesn't have any. Specific benefits invite sales. For instance, Google AdWords: A Money-Making Guide for Internet Marketers, Business owners, and Individuals.

- Choose others' eBook titles in your field as models. Choose five eBook titles and covers that attract you.

- Be outrageous with your book title. People do judge a book by its title. It must be so outstanding and catchy it compels the reader to either buy on the spot or look further to the description of the eBook. Take a risk.

- Be your strongest salesperson self. Choose the strongest words, benefits, and metaphors to move your audience to buy.

- Titles do sell books. Include your audience in your title. When your title isn't targeted other famous authors' general titles get the buyer. Always make your title clear and make it easy for your audience to recognize they need your eBook.

- Short titles are best, say three to six words. Titles should spell out at least the main benefit of the eBook. This would make it appealing to your target audience.

- Experiment with your ideas. Use combinations of all sorts of ideas pertaining to the eBook to create an appealing title. Including a popular search term may also help.

- Use power words to compel someone to buy your eBook. This strategy is used very effectively in advertisements. Words such as "Free", "How to" and a number of ways such as "101", or "1001" are attention grabbing words.

- The title should generate curiosity amongst targeted audience. It should in no way mislead your reader.

2.3 Writing Tips for your eBook – Making your eBook user friendly

- The very first rule of writing an eBook is to enjoy what you write. It is very easy to be frustrated or have something known as the "Writer's Block". Do not write at

a stretch. Bear in mind that you are bound to make numerous mistakes while writing. These mistakes would reduce as you keep on revising and editing the eBook. There are going to be several rewrites before you actually have the final version of the eBook.

- While writing an eBook, it is very crucial that you know and understand your target audience very well. The book should address all the concerns of your target audience. The language and style of the book should also focus on your target audience. For instance, a book for lawyers would consist of numerous law terms, whereas if the book is targeted for housewives, the language should be very casual and informal.

- Refer to other popular eBooks to gain a better idea of the writing styles and language used. Bookmark good websites that have how-to information for writers about style, marketing, and different approaches to writing books. Good writers never stop learning – and the better you get, the more books you'll sell.

- Always read every section after you write it. You may feel the need to restructure a few sentences or include new ones when you read a whole section at a stretch.

- Always use casual language that makes for simple reading, unless you are writing a very formal business book. Most readers understand casual language. Besides, you do not want your eBook to be taxing on your readers.

- Personalize your eBook. Write it as if you are conversing with someone one to one. For instance, use words such as "you" and "we" instead of third person language.

- Shorten sentences. Do not write long sentences with a considerable number of commas and other punctuations. A reader often loses continuity if he/she comes across long sentences. Also, reduce the size of your paragraphs. A paragraph consisting of 6 to 7 lines is ideal.

- Use bullets whenever possible. Listing various points using bullets reduces the visual mess. Avoid using numbers, unless your topic is something like 10 tips for buying a home. Also, leave out a line between each point, as is done here. This again reduces visual clutter.

- Use plenty of white space. Some readers will want to print your eBook out to read it. However, others will leave your eBook on their computer, and read it on-screen. That means that you need to be generous with white space. White space is good in any book, but it is especially important in an eBook. A long slab of dense black text on the screen is going to turn off readers - and a mouse-click will take them away from you.

- Avoid duplicate sentences both in meaning as well as wording. Do not repeat a particular sentence over and over again. It makes sense to remove any unnecessary words. For instance, if you have a sentence which goes as "So how does one achieve this?" remove the unnecessary word "So". "How does one achieve this?" seems more polished and professional.

- Do not write in extremely short breaks. Spend at least an hour or two at a stretch while writing. Mind you, as suggested earlier, writing for many hours at a stretch could compromise the quality of your work as well. Take some time off at regular intervals, ideally after every 2 hours.

- Change color (but not too often). Occasional headings or sentences can be highlighted in red, for example. Use bold or italics for emphasis rather than underlining, though – internet users are used to thinking of underlined words as hyperlinks.

- The first impression of your book is very crucial. Try to make your introductory pages as interesting as possible. Not that all the remaining pages should be boring, but often a good first impression can get a reader through some of the not so interesting but indispensable sections later on in the eBook.

- Always ask friends and family to review sections you have written. Many a times they may be able to provide valuable insights for the betterment of your eBook.

Besides, they may also be able to point out some mistakes you might have overlooked.

- There is nothing wrong in adopting the writing style of a famous author. In fact this may very well improve your writing skills. Your skills will only be honed with practice – keep at it. Remember perseverance is the key!

- Finally, bear in mind that you should employ whatever method that works the best for you. Others may advise against it but at the end of the day if you are not comfortable with your writing method, you are not going to be successful.

2.3.1 The Writer's Block

All writers have experienced it at one time or another - the dreaded writer's block! Writer's block is that terrible menacing mental block that prevents you from writing. There you sit in front of the computer, gazing at the screen. You are unable to focus, unable to write. It has happened to the best of writers, whether it's a letter, an essay, a book report or an eBook that they are trying to write. When writer's block gets a hold of you, you can fight back. The first thing you must figure out is why you are having writer's block and then decide what you can do to sneak around it.

Why can't you write?

Writer's block is caused by many different things. Here is a list of reasons that could be causing you to be unable to write.

- No interest in the topic. If you are so uninterested in the topic that you can't even write about it, why would anyone want to read it? Try changing the idea or the slant to something that you can become more interested in.

- Not having enough information on the topic. If you are trying to write about something that you know nothing (or very little) about, chances are you will have little success. Try to do some additional research or talk to others who are knowledgeable on the topic. The more you learn on the topic, the easier it will be for you to write about it.

- To tired to concentrate. If you are like many freelance writers, you go to work at your day job and are so drained that you are too tired to write. Writing takes time and concentration. If you have too many responsibilities set aside a scheduled time that is only for writing. No interruptions, no phone calls.

- Your idea is under-developed. Sometimes writers get so excited about an idea that they want to start writing it at once. However, if you haven't thoroughly researched your idea, you may find that you aren't able to develop the idea as you had planned. This goes hand in hand with the other reason we discussed above -

Not having enough information on the topic. Do more research so that you are able to better develop the story.

What can you do to get around writer's block, or stop it altogether?

You may not be able to stop it altogether. From time to time, everyone experiences circumstances that preoccupy their minds or cause them to lose their focus and concentration. But, there are some things that you can do to get around writer's block when it tries to grab a hold of you.

- Create an Outline. We discussed the importance of outlines earlier. These are great to use when you are going through writer's block. Instead of composing long sentences or ideas, jot down two or three major ideas. Label the major ideas Idea 1, Idea 2, and Idea 3. Place Idea 1 at the top of the page, Idea 2 in the center and Idea 3 toward the bottom. Next, list two or three things that come to mind about each idea. Use these ideas to develop your sentences and paragraphs.

- Write every day! Writers need a schedule for writing. Just as a star athlete has to practice to stay adept at his craft, so must a writer. Try to write something everyday, even if it is not for the eBook.

- Work on several different topics within the book simultaneously. Sometimes, writers will get burned out while working on a single section. If you find that you

can't focus on the topic, try switching to another topic. Often it is helpful to put the idea aside for a while, when you come back to it, you may have a different perspective.

- Practice Freewriting. Freewriting is writing about whatever comes to mind; anything at all. Start writing about your topic and continue to write ideas for five or ten minutes, or until you can't think of anything else to say about your topic.

- Freewriting is sort of like talking to yourself, but doing it in writing. Just keep the ideas flowing, even if you can't think of anything to write about. Pick an object on your desk and write about it.

- The worst thing you can do is to give into the writer's block. Finding out what your obstacles are and how to work around them will keep you writing. And when all else fails, you can always resort to writing a to-do list of some sort.

2.4 Key aspects of designing an eBook

2.4.1 Using Graphics and Clip Art

A dilemma most people face while writing an eBook is whether to insert graphics in the eBook. Graphics can be illustrative and visually appealing to readers. Thus, many are tempted to include as many graphics and clip art in their eBooks as possible. However,

such a move can completely backfire. Graphics increase the size of the eBook. The more graphics you use the larger the file size. This implies that it will take longer to download the eBook. Clip Art images may take less space as compared to pictures.

You may feel the need to use graphics and clip art to enhance your eBook, however, these should be used sparingly. You should also familiarize yourself with graphic types. BMP (bitmap) graphic files are popular Microsoft Windows type files. They are larger in size that GIF or JPG (or JPEG) files. So the preference is to use GIF or JPG when possible. There are also animated files called Animated GIF. You can simulate motion with this type of file. Most paint programs can convert between file types. BMP and JPG cannot be converted to Animated GIFs only regular GIF files.

Another method to reduce file size is to decrease the number of colors contained in the graphics file. You may find a palette of millions of colors available for use when 256 colors are enough to keep the image clear enough for presentation.

2.4.2 eBook formatting solutions

Ebooks can be created in different formats (.PDF, .doc and so on). I have given a brief description along with the pros and cons for each format. This should help you in selecting the right format for your Ebook.

Adobe Acrobat (PDF)

Advantages

A major advantage of the Adobe Acrobat PDF format is that files can be read on many different computer operating systems, and will generally look about the same on each. The file can include images, and there is even some limited support for audio or video clips. Links can be included both within the document and from the document to the World Wide Web. Text can be searched for words of interest. You can add your own bookmarks. You can also disable security settings related to links and bookmarks so that other users cannot edit or delete these links and bookmarks. Page views are scalable, so you make the view as large as you need to have legible text. The pages can be printed if that capacity hasn't been disabled by security settings. You need the Free Acrobat Reader software from Adobe to read these files -- versions are available for Windows, Macintosh and Linux/Unix systems. Many systems come with this reader already loaded and ready to run. It also works as a browser 'plug-in' running within your web browser.

Disadvantages

If the file is poorly formatted, it may require a large amount of horizontal scrolling to read text that has been greatly enlarged. Attempting to read these files using the Adobe eBook reader software can cause similar problems. The existence of two PDF formats, one for Acrobat Reader and one for Adobe eBook has lead to confusion. Files tend to be larger than with simpler formats, especially if images were not properly optimized

beforehand. The largest drawback to this format for authors is the high cost of the Acrobat software from Adobe, though there are cheaper, less versatile options for creating PDF files available from other sources.

Adobe eBook (PDF)

Advantages

These files are similar to Adobe Acrobat files, but are formatted for a smaller screen and use CoolType fonts that are more easily read on LCD screens. Software versions are available for Windows and Macintosh systems. Adobe also has a delivery system called 'Adobe Content Server' that allows publishers and libraries to securely distribute EBooks over the web.

Disadvantages

It requires Internet Explorer 4 or higher on a PC, Internet Explorer 4.5 or higher on Macintosh. No version is yet available for Macintosh OS X operating system. It requires expensive software to create EBooks, and even more expensive 'Content Server' for those who want a distribution system.

HTML

Advantages

Due to the World Wide Web, this has become a universal format, with many formatting options, though not the detailed control one finds in word processing documents. Depending on the browser used to view the files, HTML supports graphics, animation, sound, JavaScript, flash and other multi-media features. Linking, both within the document and to other files on the Internet, is a strong point. Basically, HTML EBooks are like web sites on a floppy disk, CD or your hard drive.

Disadvantages

There are no security features built into HTML, so a user can copy and modify your eBook and pass it off as the original. (Web site security is built-in from the server side, and should not be confused with HTML documents, which are inherently un-secured.)

Instant eBook (and other proprietary executables)

Advantages

These EBooks are executable files that mimic many of the features of HTML, but are secure from tampering by the average user. They may contain all the graphics, links and other features of HTML, including web links. It is very easy to navigate. Most of these can support printing if the author chooses to allow that.

Disadvantages

Being executable files, these can harbor viruses. Many require you to have Internet Explorer 4.0 or higher on your computer. Most will only run on Windows computers.

Microsoft Reader

Advantages

Can be read on Windows PC, Windows Tablet and Pocket PC devices Simple to use, this format supports Clear Type fonts which make on-screen reading easier. Supports searching, highlighting, bookmarks, notes, changing font size, and text-to-speech - The reader program is free.

Disadvantages

Does not support printing - Works on Windows operating systems only

Microsoft Word

Advantages

All of the features of a powerful word processor document are available in this format. Due to its ubiquity it has become a defacto standard for documents. Using it for EBooks allows all of the detailed control over formatting you expect from a word processor, including graphics.

Disadvantages

This is another insecure format that anyone with Microsoft Word can alter. It will not work on Unix/Linux systems, and only on those Macintosh systems that have Microsoft

Word installed. The other disadvantage is that if images are inserted by copy paste in a word document, the file size can become very large.

Plain Text

Advantages

The most universally used format, plain text EBooks can be imported into word processors on all computers. The file size is small.

Disadvantages

There is no security built into this system, so books can be copied or changed without the author's knowledge or permission. There are few formatting controls, and those vary from one system to another and so are not universal, such as line breaks. There are no provisions for bold fonts, varied font sizes or colors, images or sound support, etc.

2.4.3 Using an ISBN for your eBook

After creating your eBook, you should order a unique ISBN (International Standard Book Number). This is a 10 digit number that uniquely identifies your product. ISBN is especially useful when selling your eBook online or even to bookstores.

ISBN is a unique number. It cannot be reused again, even if it for an edited version of the same eBook. This implies that once you update your eBook, before marketing the

updated version you need to get another unique ISBN. Besides, if your eBook has different formats such as HTML and PDF, you would need a separate ISBN for each of the formats.

Having an ISBN is not mandatory. However, it can greatly simplify your selling process and thus, is highly recommended.

ISBN can be ordered online at http://www.isbn.org. One caveat though, you need to buy a minimum of 10 ISBNs. More information on ISBN is available on the site mentioned above.

2.5 Compiling your eBook

There are several software packages available online to assist you in compiling your eBook. These generators assist you in creating eBooks is different formats. Virtually any type of document can be turned into an eBook that can be downloaded from the Internet.

Choosing an eBook compiler should not only depend on how easy it is for you to use and create the kind of product you want, but keeping your proposed users as the central factor in your decision should be paramount. Your product should always be about your target audience. A few key points you must consider before you decide on a compiler are who your audience is, what kind of computer system they use, and their level of computer literacy.

The Prices of different eBook compilers range from $20 to $149.

2.6 A few guidelines for HTML eBooks

Easy Navigation

One of the advantages of eBooks, especially eBooks created in HTML format is that a reader can easily navigate through the pages. User friendly navigational links are essential for any eBook. You should at least include a link for the previous as well as the next page. For instance, page number 10 should have a link to page number 9 and page number 11. I would also recommend having a link to the table of contents on each page. This would make it easy for any reader to refer to the outline as and when required.

A caveat of having eBooks in MS Word form is that they may not include such navigational links.

Naming your files

Following a convention for naming files is important if the format of your eBook is HTML. In case of HTML files, each page would have a different name. It is crucial that you name each page logically. As a thumb rule always name your starting page as index.htm. The rest of the pages can be named according to their topic or section. For instance, the first page of a topic called "Key aspects of design" could be named as design1.htm. The second page of this topic as design2.htm and so on.

Moreover, ensure that you store all files in the same folder. In case of other formats such as PDF or Word, your eBook would only be a single file.

Creating hyperlinks

While creating hyperlinks to other pages or images in your eBook, ensure you use proper code. A simple mistake in the code would lead to a broken link, which is not what you want. All images that are inserted into the eBook should be saved in a directory. These images must be included in the compilation process. If images are not compiled during the creation of the .exe file, they would not show up in the final product.

Another point to remember is that while including external links such as links to other web pages in your eBook, make sure that you write the complete path of the web page.

The Visual Appeal

We discussed earlier that graphics should be used sparingly in eBooks to avoid increasing their size and download time. However, it may be a good idea to use smaller graphics that go well with certain sections of the eBook. Ensure that you use small gif or jpg images instead of bitmaps (bmp) that are considerably bigger in size. Images in headers and topic dividers would greatly augment to the visual appeal of your eBook without making a huge difference to the size.

The key is to not go overboard with graphics. Besides, animation (Flash, all kinds of Video files) along with sound files should be completely avoided. These not only increase the size of the eBook but also slow the loading process considerably. Another disadvantage of using animation is that most formats require a special plug-in. All readers may not have these plug-ins installed on their computer. Hence, such practices generally would be futile.

Desktop Icon

A feature that most HTML compilers offer these days is the ability to create your own desktop icon for your eBook. While compiling the eBook you can design your own icon that will be placed on your customer's desktop. He/She could open the eBook by clicking on the icon. This is a very handy feature. While choosing your compiler you should ascertain whether the compiler offers such functionality.

Fortunately, though, there are many tools available that let you create a desktop icon for your eBook. However, you should ensure that these tools are compatible with your compiler.

2.7 Protecting your eBook

One of the key advantages of Internet is that content can be instantly published without any hassle. No wonder eBooks have become a great way to earn revenue and market your products. However, there is a downside to Internet. In recent times there has been a surge

in the number of hackers as well as plagiarists who use someone else's material for their gain. Protecting an eBook has thus become a major issue.

In this section, we would look at three ways – disabling content, password protection, and copyrights to protect the content of your eBook. It would be advisable to employ all these three to ensure that no hacker or plagiarist could gain from your work.

Disabling content

One of the techniques to protect content of your eBook is to limit readers from copying, editing, or even printing it. This way the reader can view the content but cannot copy it to another file. Most compilers offer such functionality. While creating an eBook you can disable copy, edit, and print features.

Another technique of disabling certain functionality is by installing a JavaScript that disables the reader's ability to right click. This can stop him/her from copying your content. However, these techniques have considerable flaws. Anyone can still view the content and write it out in another file. Moreover, in some cases it may be possible to view the source code and copy the content.

The latter issue can be resolved if the eBook is in PDF form. Adobe, which is used to create and view PDF files offers a system, Adobe Content Server, that not only allows

you to distribute files or eBooks (PDFs) directly from any web site, but also to then track and control the "unauthorized mass distribution and potential copyright infringements" of your file. With systems like Adobe, you can limit the user's ability to print pages, copy text, and even disallow automatic audio interpretation.

Other eBook generators also offer similar functionality. That said there are still many ways to get around these security features and copy content. All three methods discussed (disabling content, password protection, and copyrights) must be applied in conjunction to minimize the threat of hacking and plagiarism.

Password Protection

You can set a password for your eBook. Any reader would be asked for the password before he/she can view the eBook. eBook compilers provide password protection for your eBook. For instance, Adobe provides password protection that requires any reader to enter a password before opening the eBook. However, the reader would have to enter a password every time he/she wishes to read the book. This is not desirable.

You need to look at certain aspects of password protection while choosing a compiler. Check the types of passwords that are supported. Most eBook compilers offer some type of password protection so your user can only unlock the content they purchased from you. A good eBook compiler should offer different ways to generate different types of passwords, ranging from the most secure to the most user-friendly and open.

Another important point to consider is how you generate the passwords. Some eBook compilers offer self-contained password protection mechanisms right inside the software itself. Other eBook compilers are tied to live Internet based password control systems. Which type of password protection is right for you is entirely dependent on, relatively speaking, how paranoid you are about your content being stolen or plagiarized.

On another note, you need to take certain precautions if you use PayPal or ClickBank to sell your eBook. Do not put your downloadable file on the "Thank You" page the way they tell you to. All the thieves know that if they find a site selling a product using PayPal or ClickBank, the chances are pretty good they can get the product for free. All they have to do is visit your sales page and look at the source code. PayPal and ClickBank make it easy for them by plainly listing the location of your "thank you" page.

You'd be amazed how many people are losing sales every day to these thieves. It's getting more difficult for them, though, since there are now scripts and programs available to encrypt the source code. The best way to combat this flaw is to use a combination of a password-protected directory and encryption of PayPal links on the sales pages. This would work well.

Again, there are ways to get around password protection. There are many sophisticated tools that can easily hack into the eBook. Besides, one of your readers, after receiving the

password may distribute the eBook freely. This brings us to the third and probably the most important technique of protection your eBook – copyrights.

Copyrights

US Copyright Laws (Title 17, U.S. Code) provide protection to all authors of "original work of authorship". This includes literary and other forms of intellectual work such as eBooks, articles, and other content.

Any work published after 1989 is automatically protected under the US Copyright Law. You need not even display a copyright notice. However, it is crucial that you register your work with the US Copyright Office for fully enjoy all benefits of copyrights. Without registering, you may not have any remedy if you find your work was illegally copied. Registration is voluntary but highly recommended.

One of the key advantages of registering your eBook is that you cannot sue anyone for infringement, unless the eBook is registered. Besides, you are awarded statutory damages only if you are registered within 3 months of your first publication. Registering your work is proof that your work is copyrighted.

As stated earlier, you may not need to display a notice if your work is published and registered after 1989. However, to be on the safer side it is always advisable to put on

view a small notice stating that all content is copyrighted under the US laws. The format of the notice is as shown:

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MediaRegister – http://www.mediaregister.com
Click and Copyright – http://www.clickandcopyright.com

Infringement of copyright can have many repercussions. A court of law can seize any material that violates copyrights. It can also restrict the infringer from doing any more business. Monetary damages are also provided. The injured party can choose to receive either his/her actual damages and profits made by the infringer or statutory damages.

However, most people weigh their options before suing a party for violation of copyrights. It is advisable to sue as a last option. If you can ensure that the infringer would stop being dishonest, you may not have to sue. This would save you your lawyer fees, which in many cases is higher than the damages claimed.

Copyright laws have some limitations. In some cases, these limitations are specified exemptions from copyright liability. Besides, there is a limit as to what can be copyrighted and what cant. Usually, all literary works, which includes eBooks is copyrighted. However, works that are not in a tangible form such as speeches that have not been recorded or written cannot be copyrighted. Thus, if your book concerns Internet Marketing, a speech or an interview by an expert that has not been written anywhere cannot be copyrighted.

Other works that cannot be copyrighted include:

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2.8 The Importance of eBook covers

Although eBooks are not physical books, eBook cover is an essential selling tool. eBook covers and their graphics have to unique and give an accurate representation of your eBook. They must also make use of the right colors and images in order to be effective. Make no mistake, designing an eBook cover is as crucial a phase as any other phase of the eBook.

Here are some tips that might help.

The Cover should be Unique

For effective branding purposes, your eBook cover graphic needs to be one-of-a-kind. With so many free-for-all graphics available on the Web, it's tempting to fall into the freebie trap when creating your eBook cover. However, this is one area where it will cost you sales if you opt for penny-pinching.

Using the same pictures and colors that other eBooks are using doesn't allow you to uniquely brand your eBook. Viewers may associate your "copycat" cover with someone else's eBook and quickly disregard it - or else find it uninteresting. Although the basic book shape can be similar, or even the same as other eBook covers, the images and graphics must be original.

Make effective use of colors

Colors can make us feel different emotions, and they can even trigger a physical reaction. Therefore, the color you use for your eBook cover is a strong factor in how the potential buyer will react to it.

Here are some guidelines to help you choose colors for your eBook cover graphic.

Red is an action color, therefore it is a good color to use if your eBook is about taking action. "How To" titles urge the reader to take action, and would do well with a red cover.

Blue is a confidence color. If your eBook is about job hunting, sales strategies, getting a raise, and other similar subjects, consider using a blue cover.

Green reminds us of money and prosperity. Green would work well for eBooks about investment strategies, starting a new business, or saving money.

Orange has been known to stimulate the appetite and represents health and vitality. An eBook about cooking or recipes would do well with an orange cover.

Pictures represent your eBook

Be sure to use pictures or graphics that represent the subject of your eBook. The potential buyer should be able to get at least a general idea of what your eBook is about by simply glancing at the cover.

You could create 2D eBook covers yourself using tools such as Photoshop. Once you create a graphic for your eBook cover you can have the graphic converted to a 3 dimensional image by any one of the various eBook cover creation services.

Finally, be sure that your eBook cover looks professional. It should have smooth - not jagged - edges, the title and words should be easy to read, and the graphics should be crisp and clear.

As with traditional, paper books, the cover is just as important as the content. Following these guidelines will result in an eBook cover that stands out in the crowd and gets noticed.

2.9 Customizing and personalizing your eBook

This may be an expensive strategy; however, it your budget permits more often than not it pays rich dividends. If your eBook covers a broad topic that targets many industries or professions, you may wish to customize your eBook content for specific industries. For instance, if your eBook is about Internet Marketing you could customize the book for

various sectors such as marketing for online dating websites, marketing for real estate investment sites, marketing for IT related websites and so on.

You can also target various publishers and provide them with a customized version of your eBook. In the case of publishers it may be a good idea to even include their logo and a link to their website in your eBook. This can immensely increase the response for your eBooks amongst the subscribers of a particular publisher. Besides, the publisher might themselves offer your eBook to an audience you may not have reached earlier.

While customizing you may also personalize your eBook to cater to a specific audience. For instance, one version of your eBook may contain facts and figures specifically targeted towards teens. A broad subject may be applicable to teens as well as senior citizens. However, by personalizing the eBook and having separate versions for each of the target group can do wonders for your eBook distribution.

2.10 Updating your eBook Dynamically

eBooks are all about information. Information changes every day and with it the content of your eBook. If you have an eBook that covers a subject that renews frequently, your eBook might be out dated in no time unless it incorporates these changes. Constantly updating your eBook is a great way to retain existing customers and earn additional income out of the same product. It even acts a viral marketing tool for your business.

The best known success story of this strategy is Microsoft. Microsoft comes up with new products every day. However, it actually makes money by bringing out updated versions of the same product. Users are required to buy these updated versions as they cannot risk their system from becoming obsolete. The same strategy can be employed in the case of eBooks. You could sell updated versions of the same eBook to your existing customers at a reasonable cost.

One of the safest and most effective ways of updating your eBook is doing it dynamically. This way your customers would not have to download the latest version of the eBook. All they have to do is get connected to the Internet and open their eBook. The new contents would be automatically updated to your existing eBook.

eBooks can be dynamically updated using simple JavaScript. However, there is one caveat here. Only HTML or .exe eBooks can be dynamically updated. This is not possible for PDF or Word format eBooks.

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Once this is done, the customer has to connect to your server and using an eBook compiler the new content can be automatically updated into the existing eBook. Note that dynamic updating does not work with all compilers. However, it does work with popular compilers such as Editor Pro and WebCompiler.

The javascript and the HTML code that needs to be written into your eBook is available from the Internet. However, you could also avoid writing the code yourself by using existing javascripts. Once such script is known as the Master Syndicator and is available at www.willmaster.com/master

2.11 Delivering your eBook

A very important aspect of eBooks sales is the method of delivery of the final product. Without a doubt the best manner of delivering an eBook is instant download. Once a payment by the customer he/she should be given a link for the download. This can be easily done by placing the eBook on your server. Instant download is the quickest and the most popular way of delivering an eBook.

Instant automated download is not only beneficial to your customers but to you as a business owner as well. It eliminates the hassles and costs associated with shipping a product. Moreover, the whole process of downloading an eBook can be automated which gives you all the more time to concentrate of other important facets of selling an eBook - promotion and marketing.

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Lastly, eBooks can also be delivered on CD-ROMs. This is a pretty useful method if your eBook size is very large. Moreover, CD-ROMs can easily house a hefty number of eBooks. Another major advantage of having eBooks on a CD-ROM is that you could sell these eBooks to major companies such as Amazon.com and Barnes&Noble. These companies buy CD-ROM eBooks and sell them on their websites. Furthermore, you could also sell CD-ROM books yourself on these sites.

CD-ROMs offer many other advantages to your business. They can act as extremely effective marketing tools. Along with the eBooks, you could provide company and product brochures, promotional offers, as well as sample eBooks to induce more sales from existing customers. You could also have your whole website on a CD-ROM listing out all your eBooks as well as other products.

2.12 A list of places to submit your eBook

The biggest advantage of the Internet is that it offers various avenues for promoting a product. This holds true for eBooks as well. Apart from your website, there are many other places where you can list your eBooks. These are mostly publications, both online as well as offline. However, before you submit your eBook to a particular website browse through the website and ensure that it is respectable. Also, read all terms and conditions before submitting your eBook.

Some sites offer to list your eBook for free, whereas some might charge a fee for every eBook sale that you make. The fee generally is very nominal. Explore all the options you may have before you. It might make sense to sell your eBooks to paid as well as free websites. The key is to find a perfect balance of both categories.

Many of these sites also offer additional resources, such as their own mailing lists they send new release announcements to, press release services, links to other useful websites where you may list your eBook, compiler software reviews, and other eBook publisher

resources. Besides, some sites allow you to submit sample chapters and excerpts from your eBook. You could include the link to the complete book within the sample.

Let's look at some of the websites where you could submit your eBook.

- **Adobe eBooks Central**
- **eWriter**
- **CNET**
- **Download Safari**
- **eBook Broadcast**
- **e-book Directory**
- **eBook News**
- **eBooks N' Bytes**
- **eBooks Portal**

3. Creating a Killer Mini-Site Designed to Sell

3.1 What you need to sell eBooks from your website

To promote a service or a product through a website is to promote mood, color, and feeling. This must occur quickly and repeatedly. Selling eBooks is no exception. Your website must take a very unique approach. Although, you may not design a very elaborate site for selling eBooks, it still has to be designed for success. First and foremost, it has to be functional.

Every time a reader succeeds in executing a task on the web site, your reputation is enhanced. Every time a reader is frustrated by the site, your reputation is diminished.

Tools and approaches that make marketers and advertisers succeed offline are often drawbacks on the web. The compelling image is slow to download and frustrates the impatient scan reader. The catch phrase is of little use to a reader hungry for information, which is especially true in the case of eBooks.

The conception about flashy homepages has changed. When you arrive on a home page and are met with a fancy Flash intro, you are no longer impressed. Waiting for a large image to download, your frustration would grow. Your potential customers visit your website looking for something unique and important. Anything that slows them down is an annoyance. You should portray your eBooks with accurate, well-written, up-to-date

content. Many marketers and advertisers still don't understand the web. The key is to make your website as content rich as possible. Make it as simple as possible.

In this chapter, we would be discussing some of the important aspects of designing a killer website for your eBooks. If I were to list out 3 things that are an absolute requirement for your website, they would be

- Simple, clean, a very user-friendly design
- Reliable host and domain name
- Secure and dependable payment processing system

Let us first look at some of the aspects of designing a website.

3.2 Designing a money making website

Build It for Speed

It's a fact of modern life - people are in a hurry. This means that you have between 10 and 30 seconds to capture your potential customer's attention. To minimize your load time, keep graphics small. Compress them where possible. Use flashy technology (JavaScript, Flash, Streaming Audio/Video, animation) sparingly and only if it is important to your presentation.

Target Your Market

Know who your market is and make certain that your site caters to their needs. It is critical that your site reflect the values of your potential customers. You could have a separate page for each eBook if the subject varies. Is your market for a particular eBook mostly business professionals? If so, the page must be clean and professional. Is your eBook aimed mostly at teenagers and young adults? Then your page could be more informal and relaxed. The key here is to know your market and build the site to their preferences.

Credibility Is Crucial

The most professionally designed site won't sell if your customers don't believe in you. A clear privacy statement is one way to build your credibility. Provide a prominent link to your privacy statement from every page on the site as well as from any location where you are asking your visitors for personal information. Provide legitimate contact information online. Testimonials, expert reviews, customer comments can increase the credibility of your eBooks. Use them well.

Content is King

Good content sells any product. Ask yourself the following questions. Does your copy convey the message you wish to get across to your visitors? Is it compelling? Does it lead your visitor through the sales process? Have others review, critique and edit your copy to

ensure it is delivering the intended message. Always double-check your spelling and grammar.

Website Layout and Site Map

When starting to design the layout of a site, it is often a good plan to step away from the computer and sketch a layout using good old paper and pencil.

Pages should be based on a grid, with space allocated for navigation, headers and footers, body text and whatever other elements that will be repeated throughout the site. This sketch will serve as a pattern for the site's appearance and should not change very much, if at all, from page to page.

Taking this approach means you can essentially have your site designed by creating a single page that can be reused, with perhaps minor modifications, as a template for all the other pages in your site. You need to consider how the various content types of different parts of the site will be accommodated within the design and be sure that it meets the needs of all sections.

Consistency is at the heart of good web site design and this applies not just to layout but also to every aspect of a site. If there are major shifts in the appearance or color of any part of a site it will be assumed by the user to have a meaning. This is fine if you are

using it to highlight information or to indicate that the user is in a different part of the site; it can be very confusing otherwise.

Besides consistency in color, positional consistency is important. Navigation bars, navigation text, location indicators, logos, footer information and so on should be in the same place on each page. The width of margins, the positioning of images, the amount of space around text and images, the positioning and style of captions for images and so on should also be consistent. All pages should be well connected and navigation should be quick and simple.

The best websites today use a single template for all the pages of a section on the website or for the entire website, if the number of pages is few. The use of 'Frames', however, is passé. Using a template offers the consistency to your site and helps to build a brand image of your site. The template includes the graphic design and header of your page including the main menu bars. Content is thus positioned separately from the template.

Use of a cascading style-sheet for displaying the content is another useful mechanism to ensure consistency on all pages. The style-sheet stipulates the content layout, use of font and spaces, presentation of paragraph titles, margins on the page and other parameters. These strategies that ensure consistency are important particularly in the case of eBooks. If you allot a single page for every eBook you sell, each page should be visually similar.

Increase Response Rates

In the majority of cases your visitors want information and they want it now. How beautiful your site is will not be as relevant to them as long as it loads fast, has consistent layout and makes it easy to the user to evaluate its usefulness to them. Besides, the site should contain relevant information and a clear and well defined action plan. For instance, instructions on how to buy eBooks instantly should be clearly mentioned on each page. This will improve response rates. If a visitor decides to buy an eBook, a reliable payment processing system should come into play instantly.

Design for Search Engine Optimization

When you are designing the layout always ask yourself what impact anything you plan to add to your site will have on the experience of your visitors and the capacity of search engines to efficiently index your pages. Add pages in order so that navigation through the website is consistent and progressive. Make your pages easily visible to Search Engines.

Always add a Site Map

A site map is just a simple list of web pages on your site. It gives your visitors a quick guide to what can be found there plus it's very useful to the search engine spiders. You can also use it to keep track of all eBooks on your site and see its structure and content all in one place. If your website is without a Site Map, there is every possibility that some of

your visitors might leave your website within 10 seconds failing to find what they were looking for. A Site Map also improves your chances of selling more eBooks to the same visitor. Every visitor can get an idea of what kind of books you are selling. He/She may be interested in buying more than one eBooks.

3.3 Navigation Structure

The aim of a web site's navigation is simply to allow users to get to the eBook they require. For sites that have a large number of eBooks and web pages the navigation plan has to be properly researched and designed. You have to consider different types of visitors and simulate the most common steps they would take to find what they want on your site and the navigation plan has to optimize this movement. For example the steps required from searching a catalog of eBooks, selecting from the catalog, adding them to a shopping cart, proceeding to check out, to entering the payment particulars is a specific sequence that should be facilitated by the navigation system. If the sequence is haphazard, it could lead to frustration or the user may miss an important step and you would have an aborted sale.

3.4 Site Usability and Convenience

There is no mystery to usability. It simply involves creating a site, which is accessible to the majority of people, is easy to use and get around and delivers on its promises. You can have a site that meets the most important standards of usability by planning it well

and always keeping the end user in mind. Remember that web sites should not be designed for their owners - they should be designed for their users.

Problems with usability could be said to stem from just two sources: the site itself and the user. In fact the site is always at fault; if a user, however experienced or inexperienced, has problems navigating, getting information or understanding the site.

While websites have become far more complex, web users have become less rather than more experienced as more and more people go online. It is a mistake to think that the majority of users will be web or even computer savvy and will understand subtle clues about content. Most will not.

A usable site will:

- Help users achieve a goal, usually to find the eBook they are looking for
- Make it easy for them to achieve that goal
- Make it possible to achieve the goal quickly
- Make achieving that goal a pleasant experience

3.5 Building Interactivity and Personalization

Make your website interactive. Add feedback forms as well as email forms that allow your prospective customers to ask you any questions they might have pertaining to an

eBook. Personalization of your website is another key element that can lead to customer delight and can increase your sales. Personalization technology provides you the analytic tools to facilitate cross selling and up selling when the customer is buying online. More on this is discussed in the section on Marketing.

It tries to restore to the online business the magic of personalized attention that is one of the chief reasons why most people still prefer in-store purchase. People still prefer to go to libraries or stores like Barnes and Noble for books. You can use personalization to match your customer with the right eBooks through either rules-based or customer analytics based processing. Thus as your software stores customer information and preferences, it can help categorize them into groups. At the same time, observations over time can suggest eBooks to cross-sell and up-sell. Thus when a person buys an eBook on Internet Marketing, a book on Ezines or Search Engines can be recommended. Amazon pioneered personalization on the net – when you a buy a book, it shows you other books in the similar genre saying "people who bought this book also bought these", inducing you to buy more.

A consumer survey from the Personalization Consortium found that 56 percent of respondents say they are more likely to purchase from a site that allows personalization, and 63 percent are more likely to register at a site that allows it.

Personalization can lead to customer delight and can increase your sales

3.6 Security and Firewall

Every company on the Internet today, regardless of size, requires some measure of perimeter access control (firewall). Even Microsoft, with all its in-house expertise and intricate security measures has been susceptible to outside intrusion. With the emergence of more insidious and sophisticated viruses/worms, security measures are more urgent than ever, more so for your website, which would involve a lot of transactions. Besides, proper security can also put an end to someone illegally downloading and distributing your eBooks.

There are several different options available, all of which depend on the size of your website, how much money you are willing to spend, and how important it is to your website to ensure that your information is secure. It is important to bear in mind, that there is no "silver bullet"; no absolute guarantee when it comes to Internet security that your website will be foolproof. However, there are a number of measures that can at least ensure a maximum level of security.

All firewalls act as a gateway between two networks. Generally this gateway exists between a corporate network and the Internet. The firewall is set up to let a pre-determined group of people onto the network while keeping others out.

There are 3 basic types of firewall designs. Moreover, firewalls differ greatly in terms of functionality and feature requirements. There are firewalls that are extremely flexible and configurable operating on dedicated computer systems. This type of firewall is often used by those organizations that require the ability to configure it to suit their own needs, and have the resources and personnel necessary to do so.

At the other end of the spectrum is the type of firewalls that come as part of an appliance or some other system, and that have limited configurability and flexibility. Finally there are those firewalls that are built into routers and VPNs.

One important factor in determining security requirements is the structure of your website. Obviously, very large websites with huge Internet transactions will require more sophisticated firewall solutions than the smaller websites.

3.7 Domain Name registration

In the physical world, you can distinguish a business because of its structure, window displays, or signs. You can tell that a bank is a bank, or a book store is indeed a book store.

On the Internet, however, it is an entirely different story altogether. Your domain name is the only clue to your online business. You do not have visual clues: no location, no look, and no store design. Instead, users have to type in a word or a set of words to reach your site. Your prospective visitor has no way of knowing what your site is all about until

he/she finds it and reads its contents. Who can ever tell that Amazon.com sells books? Or that Excite is a search engine?

Your domain name can spell your success on the Internet. A good domain name is the best asset you can ever have. It can make your business stand out in the crowd, or just float aimlessly in space.

The need to provide immediate clues to an online business led to the prevalence of generic domain names. Generic names instantly provide the user with an idea of what a business is all about, what to expect and look for in a site. For instance, Etoys.com is a toy store.

The temptation of the generic name has been so powerful; that some companies even paid ridiculously high prices to get the name they want. The domains Loans.com and Wines.com were both bought for $3 million each. Telephone.com was acquired for $1.75 million, while Bingo.com sold for $1.1 million.

However, generic names do not necessarily create the "buzz" that you'd like surrounding your website. Branding has always been about proper names: McDonald's did not name their store Hamburger. Hertz is not called Car Rental. FedEx is not Mail Carrier. Kodak is not Photographs. Microsoft is not Computer Software.

For better branding results, your domain name should be memorable and easy to remember. Remember the following tips when creating a domain name.

- The domain name should be short

- The domain name should be simple

- It should be suggestive of your business category

- It should be unique

- It should be easy to interpret and pronounce

- It should be personalized

- It should not be difficult to spell

- It should not be difficult to remember

Domain names can be registered through many different companies (known as "registrars") - a listing of these companies is available at ICANN: http://www.icann.org. You can register for 1 to 10 years - prices can vary anywhere from $10 to $20 per year. Most web hosting companies, will handle the registration process for you, but make sure that you are properly listed as the owner of the domain when it is registered. If you have registered a domain name for a specific period, make sure you renew it in time. You can be surprised at the number of cases, where site owners have let a domain name slip by if they have not renewed in time.

Finally, whatever you do, do not go for cheap or free domain names. There are many sites that offer free domain names. These are generally long domain names. Besides, a

surfer would instantly know whether you have your own domain name or a free one, and this can spell doom for your eBook business. Some investment is always essential for any business, even if your website is only about selling eBooks. Most people would not trust your website if you have a free domain name.

3.8 Web Hosting

There are thousands of web hosting companies that claim to be the best. Choosing a web host for your website requires a lot of research. Your aim should be to select a host that offers you good value for your money – a host that is secure, reliable, and provides a range of tools for managing and maintaining your website.

The Web Hosting industry is incredibly competitive today, and they know that users are becoming increasingly sophisticated, so they have no choice but to provide their clients with better and better service, or else risk losing them to any one of the waiting pack of others.

The best way to proceed, then, is to make a list of what you require. This will most likely include the following: platform, speed, accessibility, reliability, support and service, and of course, price. Before you approach any web hosting company, you need to decide on what kind of services would you require.

Basic Requirements

A site which primarily focuses on selling eBooks would first and foremost require a very secure and safe web host as there would be a number of transactions taking place each day. Apart from this, you would also require enough space on the host server to place all your eBooks. You should also try and predict what would happen to your website in the future. How much would it grow, and how many more tools would you require?

The value of quality support may be worth more to you, or in the case of eBooks whether or not your host will provide you with a free shopping cart. I would strongly recommend a host that provides a shopping cart integrated with a reliable payment processing system. Most hosts would also help you set up a Merchant account for credit card payments. Moreover, chose a web host that offers a valid SSL security for your website. No one is going to buy from your site if it doesn't have an SSL certificate.

It is important to get your requirements clear so that when you compare hosts you are comparing like with like.

Free Hosts

Many businesses, especially if these deal with eBooks opt for free web hosting services. This is probably the greatest mistake you would make. Although, your sole purpose is only to sell eBooks, it is still imperative that you do not pick a free hosting service. Like free domain names, this would give a bad impression to your customers. Besides, free

hosts are not reliable. This can cost you dearly later. Free accounts are not for anyone even half serious about doing business on the Web. Not when you can get a perfectly acceptable commercial host for as little as $10 / month.

Cost of Hosting

The cost of Web Hosting ranges anywhere from free to thousands of dollars a month for a dedicated server. However, the vast majority of people fall into the category of needing an account that will run in the ballpark of $10 to $50 per month, depending on the features you need and the options available on the particular package you choose.

Many perfectly fine packages for small businesses now run between $15 - $25 per month. Whatever the cost, check if there is a money back guarantee and what their refund policies are; whether there is a requirement to sign up for a minimum period; and if your package is scalable, meaning that upgrades will not be a problem or burden for you when the time comes.

Web Space

Space and traffic are often the basis for many Web Hosts rates, whether or not this has any basis in reality. If you have a basic site that is not several hundred pages in size, and is not going to be visited by thousands of people a day, these would not be a major worry. However, be aware of the Web Hosts' fees and penalties for exceeding basic allocations.

Also, you may need more space than what most people require depending on the number of eBooks you sell. Check out all packages offered by various hosts and figure out which provides you with maximum benefit.

Email Accounts

This is an often underrated feature of Web Hosting Packages, since emails are essentially the lifeblood of an online business. Be sure that your package contains enough emails and aliases for your business, preferably an unlimited number of both. This is one way hosts make their money, that is, by charging a few dollars for each additional account once you realize you need more than say 5 accounts.

Customer Support

One of the most frequent, and justified, complaints that many people have with their Web Host is lack of customer and technical support.

Many Web Hosts offer both email and phone support while others are available only via email. In most cases, email support is fine, but you should be wary if a potential Web Host has no telephone number available in case of an emergency, or in the event you need to speak with someone directly.

Response times to support questions vary widely from Host to Host. Some may take only a few minutes to get back to you while others take days or longer. It is important to find out what type of support any potential Web Host offers. Ask around. References are always a good way to judge a host's performance. And send a test email asking them unresolved questions you may still have.

If at all possible, only choose a host that provides prompt and knowledgeable customer service. A competent host should offer 24/7 toll-free technical support provided by experienced, professionally trained technicians.

Unlimited FTP access

File Transfer Protocol (FTP) is a method of transferring files to your server. It is highly recommended that you shop for unlimited, 24 hour FTP access. Access to your control panel to enable management of your site is important.

Statistics and Tracking

Several hosts offer some type of statistics package. It is much easier to use the package they provide rather than trying to install one yourself - not to mention it's usually less expensive as well. Statistics show you the number of visitors that have accessed your site, showing where they came from (IP address), when, what pages they visited, duration of their stay at any page and so on. These are extremely important in analyzing the success

of your marketing campaigns. It is highly recommended that you chose a host that offers a comprehensive statistics package.

Set aside a good block of time to invest in choosing the right Web Host for your site. It will be time well-spent. In the end, choosing the right Web Host really depends on your individual needs. We have discussed all the recommended needs for a website that sells eBooks. If you follow the guidelines given above you should have no problems with your web host.

3.9 Payment Processing Options

Transaction is the most important aspect of any website that sells a product. What payment options do you provide to your customer on your website? Are these options secure and reliable? Payments with credit card are the fastest and the most efficient form of a transaction on a website. You should incorporate a payment system that accepts all major credit cards. After all, you wouldn't want to lose a sale just because you do not accept a certain credit card.

There are certain key aspects of allowing payments with credit cards. However, the most vital aspect of the complete transaction process is security and authentication of the transactions on your website.

Let us first understand the whole process that takes place during an online payment transaction. Key participants of an online payment transaction are:

- The Customer

- The Issuer – the Bank that issues a credit card to your customer

- The Merchant – you in this case

- The Acquirer – the financial institution that provides authorization to the merchant (you) that a given card account is active and that the proposed purchase does not exceed the customer's credit limit

- The Payment Gateway – the system that processes merchant payments by providing an interface between the merchant and the acquirer's financial processing system

The basic steps of an online payment transaction should include the following:

- The customer places an order online by selecting eBook(s) from your web site and stores it in a Shopping cart. These shopping carts are provided by payment gateway systems, which are discussed later. Once the order is complete, he/she proceeds to checkout and make payment for the eBook(s). The customer order is then sent to you, including payment data. The payment information is encrypted by an SSL pipeline set up between the customer's web browser and your web server, using an SSL certificate. Security certificates and encryption is discussed in more detail later.

- You would then request payment authorization from the payment gateway, which routes the request to banks and payment processors. Authorization is a request to

charge a cardholder, and must be settled for the cardholder's account to be charged. This ensures that the payment is approved by the issuer, and guarantees that you will be paid for your service or product. This process first requires that you set up a merchant account for accepting credit cards online. Your third party payment service would take care of this.

- Once you are guaranteed that the payment is approved, you should confirm the order and supply the eBook through your preferred method of delivery (Instant download, Email, CD-ROM).

- Transactions are settled, or routed by the acquiring bank to your acquiring bank for deposit.

3.9.1 Merchant account for credit cards

For Merchant account set up you should always look for an e-commerce service and payment processing company that can integrate your merchant account needs with your payment processing, hosting, and shopping cart requirements. Integrated solutions mean you keep your infrastructure tight and your customer service centralized.

A merchant account enables you to begin accepting credit card payments over the Internet. It's a 'liaison' account linking your customer's credit card account with your own business account, functioning as a clearinghouse for credit card transactions. Sounds simple right? So what's the first critical error many online businesspeople make? They assume that all merchant accounts are alike.

Of course, this faulty assumption has led to much frustration - and more than one website crisis. Building a sound business foundation means finding the best merchant account for your business model and for the types of goods you sell. Though the rates of some service providers can be quite high, many of the cheaper solutions will end up costing you more in terms of poor service, inflexible limits, technical difficulties, or inept customer care. The key is finding the right balance.

First, competitive rates and reasonable fees are important, so make sure you do some rate comparison. Look at the transaction fees charged for every transaction performed online. Many services provide discount rates for every online sale you transact. This is something you should consider while choosing the right payment processing and merchant account setup service.

Some merchant account providers will charge you a fee for every charge back you incur. If your business typically receives a disproportionately high amount of charge backs, then charge back fees can hit you hard.

Another important aspect while selecting your service provider is the kind of Customer Service it provides. Communication is critical. Make sure your merchant account provider has the customer care platform to swiftly and reliably answer questions and resolve problems.

Remember, rates and fees are simply a part of the big picture. Getting a wider perspective on initially intangible items like sensible policies and superior customer service is essential in choosing the best provider for your unique business needs. Look for the details that distinguish one provider from the next.

Payment Gateways

There are many third party payment services that completely automate the whole process of online payment transaction. The most popular and trusted services are listed below.

ClickBank (http://www.clickbank.com)

ClickBank is one of the most popular and easiest services to use for payment processing online. Sign-up is quick and you get approved and running in one day.

The ClickBank Control Panel is easy to use. You can get familiar with the whole system in no time. It costs $49 to open a ClickBank account. This is pretty cheap when compared with other payment processing systems.

Also, ClickBank has a built-in affiliate program. No need to install any expensive scripts on your website. You can start signing up affiliates right away as soon as you open your account.

Once you open an account, all your transaction money gets deposited into your account. You are paid the full balance every two weeks.

VeriSign – (http://www.verisign.com)

VeriSign Payment Services provide payment connectivity over the Internet between online customers, merchants, buyers, sellers, and the financial networks that move money between them. VeriSign is easy-to-use, secure and cost-effective.

VeriSign offers a host of solutions for online payment processing. These are:

Payflow Pro – This is the most basic form of online payment system that allows you to accept payments on the Internet. Payflow Pro gives you immediate connectivity to all major payment processors and is integrated with all major shopping cart software. Payflow Pro has a set up fee of $249 and a monthly fee of $59.95.

Payflow Link – This service also allows you to accept payment in the form of credit card and debit card on the Internet. Payflow Link works with all major shopping cart software. Payflow Link has a set up fee of $179 and a monthly fee of $19.95

Payflow Recurring Billing – This solution allows you to automatically bill your customers on a regularly scheduled basis through this convenient service. Payflow Recurring Billing is integrated with Payflow Pro and Payflow Link. Payflow Link with

Recurring Bill has a set up fee of $193.95 and a monthly fee of $29.90 whereas Payflow Pro with Recurring Bill has a set up fee of $288.95 and a monthly fee of $89.90

Commerce Site Services – This package includes authenticating your online business, encrypting sensitive data with an SSL Certificate, and securely processing payments with any of the above online payment solutions. This package costs around $900.

PayPal – (http://www.paypal.com)

PayPal is an account-based system that lets anyone with an email address securely send and receive online payments using their credit card or bank account. There are two types of accounts.

Personal Account (Buyer Account) - Personal accounts are for individual use only

Premier/Business Account (Customer Account) - Premier and Business accounts include premium features, such as the ability to accept credit card payments and use the PayPal Shopping Cart.

PayPal charges Premier and Business accounts to receive payments. Personal accounts are free, but may not receive credit card payments. There is no set up fee and monthly fee for receiving payments with Premier and Business accounts. However, you are charged a certain percentage for every transaction.

Apart from credit cards, you may also allow customers to mail a check for payment. However, such forms of payment consume a lot of time to process and are not as reliable as online payments. You may have to wait for ages before getting your check in the mail.

iBill

iBill (http://www.ibill.com) has a wide range of services, including check processing and support for service-based billing, which makes it a very good solution for businesses, big and small, who want to add billing and credit-card authorization services to their websites.

iBill offers a wide range of plans. These plans range from an authorization service for companies with existing e-commerce sites (the Basic TP plan) to a catalog-sales plan for companies that have no back-end billing or shopping-cart mechanisms in place (the Catalog TP Plan). For the Basic TP plan, the fee is 25 cents per transaction, with a one-time setup fee of $149 and a minimum monthly maintenance fee of $50. The fee for the Catalog TP plan is $1 per transaction, with a one-time fee of $149 and a minimum monthly fee of $50.

Apart from these, iBill also has a reseller subscription service, which is targeted at subscription websites with recurring billing. The Subscription Sales TP service sets up iBill to handle back-end transactions for the purchase of content or services on a one-time

or recurring basis, where a user is sent directly to an iBill secure Web page for payment processing. The user is then given a username and password for future transactions. The fee for this service is based on a sliding scale as a percentage of your billable.

In addition, there are two billing options that are unrelated to credit cards. The Web900 program charges customers via their phone bill; the charge appears as a 900-number charge, without the use of a credit card. The other service allows you to accept checks online, where the customer passes along his/her account information and iBill electronically transfers the funds from the account. However, the transaction fee for these services is quite high ranging from 15% to 35% per transaction.

3.10 Security Certification and Encryption

As discussed earlier, the most vital aspect of a sound payment processing system is security and authentication of all transactions on your website. A customer needs to have complete faith in the security infrastructure of your payment processing system.

The most trusted technology for ensuring a highly secure transaction is by implementing Digital signatures via web server certificates that enable authentication and SSL (Secure Sockets Layer) encryption. SSL web server certificates lead to a secure online payment management system, to allow your e-commerce web site to securely and automatically accept, process, and manage payments online. SSL comes in two strengths, 40-bit and 128-bit. 128-bit SSL encryption is the world's strongest form of commercial encryption,

and hence the safest. Your customers should be very comfortable with a 128-bit SSL encryption. The 128-bit SSL encryption is what all payment processing companies make use of these days.

SSL server certificates fulfill two necessary functions to establish trust for online payment:

SSL server authentication -- Server certificates allow customers to confirm a web server's identity.

SSL encryption -- SSL server certificates establish a secure channel that encrypts all information sent between a customer's web browser and your web server, protecting private information from interception over the Internet.

Only after you have built a web site and implemented SSL certificates to authenticate your business to customers and encrypt communications and transactions, you can address other crucial components of the payment processing system.

3.11 Setting up your download page

We saw earlier various methods of delivery in case of eBooks. The most popular method by far is allowing your customers to instantly download the eBook. However, many websites lose out on creating an effective download page. There should be clear

download instructions. In case of information download, it is crucial that you show a download bar and the download status. Many websites offer huge eBooks for download but while the user is downloading he/she has no idea of the status of the download or the speed of the download. This is very frustrating especially in the case of larger eBooks. Your website should also state the size of the file in kilobytes and the estimated time of download for a user having a 56K modem, DSL, Cable and so on.

The download page is often a soft target for hackers. This page holds confidential information about your customer's credit card. Thus, it becomes essential that you take every step to protect your downloads.

As a general rule of thumb, here are the different elements you should include:

- A 'thank you' message to the customer for buying your eBook.

- Display the e-mail address that customers can use to contact you if they have questions or problems. Make sure to display the address fully (as opposed to using a clickable image or 'click here' link).

- Remind the customer how the transaction will appear on their credit-card statement. For example, if you're using ClickBank, the credit-card statement will show a charge by "CLICKBANK / KEYNETICS"

- Explain how to download and begin using the eBook. If there are special software requirements like WinZip, Internet Explorer 4.0 or Acrobat Reader, be sure to point this out and include links to the appropriate websites.

- Give customers a link to go elsewhere after they've downloaded. This is a good place to promote other eBooks or encourage customers to sign up to your newsletter.

- Keep the download page free of too many distractions. You've won a new customer. Treat that customer well by showing him/her how to immediately download their eBook.

3.11.1 A few other pointers

Offer compressed as well as uncompressed eBooks

You can compress your eBook file to make it smaller (in memory terms) using compression software like WinZip. You should offer both a compressed and an uncompressed version of your eBook on the download page. This will enable a quicker download for those customers who have WinZip and are familiar with it. By the same token, those who don't know about using WinZip have the option of downloading the larger file.

If you're offering both compressed and uncompressed versions, then you should link your customers to the WinZip website, and explain how to use WinZip to unzip (uncompress) your eBook file.

Scan for a virus

Don't risk spreading a virus to your customers through your eBook. Before you send it online for others to download, it's imperative that you run a virus-scan on it. Make sure that you use an up-to-date virus scanning software. If you don't have one, then send a copy of your book to a friend who does.

Upload the files using FTP

It is always best to upload all your files to your website server with an FTP tool. This is an efficient and quicker process as compared to other traditional approaches. For better management create sub-directories on your website using the FTP tool. Upload related eBooks in each sub-directory.

Once you do this, simply place the complete link for these eBooks on your website for your customers. Make sure that you place two links for compressed and uncompressed files.

Downloading PDF files

The download process for PDF files works differently compared to other formats. If your customer directly clicks on the link provided for the PDF file, the book will open inside the customer's browser. From here, the customer can click the save button and save the file to his/her PC.

However, this approach is not recommended as there is no indication of how big the file is and how long it would take to download the file. Besides, it can take a long time for the eBook to open in the browser.

To get around this problem, you should always instruct your customers to right click on the link and then click on "Save Target as". This makes downloading a PDF file similar to all other files in the sense that a window would open on the customer's screen asking him/her to save the file at a specific location. This would indicate the file size and the time for download.

Be sure to remind your customers that they'll need a copy of Adobe's Acrobat reader to view the eBook and let them know that they can download a free copy from the Adobe website.

Test your links

Always test the download link to ensure that everything works as it should. Get some of your friends to try it out on their PCs. If nothing happens when you click on the link, check out the code for the link as well as the directory where you have saved the eBooks. Testing is a very important phase of setting up the download page.

3.11.2 Protect your downloads – Protect your Income

Digital theft is very prevalent these days. The main reason for this is that it is extremely easy to download a product illegally, unless it is protected well. The good news is that it only requires a few simple steps to ensure protection of your downloads. These are listed below.

Zip your PDF eBooks

The biggest problem arises when sellers store their downloads as PDF documents, as is the case for eBooks. You would know that Google, Altavista and many other search engines can read and list PDF files.

Besides, Google also converts your PDF files into HTML documents. So ordinary browsers not only have access to your PDF file, but they can download your Source File as well. The next logical step is for them to customize it with their own links, compile it and sell it or give it away.

A simple way of keeping your files out of the reach of spiders is to upload them as a zip file. Search engines cannot look inside zip files and list their contents.

Create an Index.html file

You must have an index.html file in EVERY folder. It acts like a curtain that keeps your eBooks away from prying eyes. A folder without an index file is like a house without walls. Everyone can enter and help themselves to the valuables.

The 'index.htm' file is the default file that opens when you click on a link for the eBook. If you don't create an index.htm or index.html file, you'd be allowing everyone to directly access the root directory of the folder where you store your downloads. All eBooks stored in a folder without an Index.html file may be visible and ready to download without authorization.

Use Simple Scripts

You can use a simple script to redirect prying eyes back to your home page. Here's the easiest way to do it using what it called a "meta refresh tag." Add it between the Header tags like this.

<head>
<META HTTP-EQUIV="refresh" content="0;URL=http://yoururl.com">

</head>

Just paste this code into the head of your document (before your text).

Spider-proof your download page

To prevent search engine spiders from reading and listing the download pages that link to your eBooks add the tag below in the head of the document.

This "Robot" tag tells the spider that this page is not to be spidered or indexed. As a result it should never show up on a search.

<head>
<META NAME="ROBOTS" CONTENT="NOINDEX, NOFOLLOW">
</head>

Frequently change your download links

To prevent unscrupulous people from posting your download links on forums or message boards, change the folder or file name where you store them from time to time, even if it means having to change the download links in your merchant account.

Using these methods will give you a good degree of satisfaction, knowing that you have taken the most basic steps to protect your eBooks - and at absolutely no cost to you.

3.12 Setting up Customer Support and Services

In order to develop a good relationship with your customers, you must provide them with quality customer service. Let them know that, should they have any questions or problems, they are free to contact you. Provide them with all of your contact information to make the process simple. Even if you can't personally assist them, make sure that you have a good customer support group ready to help. Reply to their support requests as quickly as possible and assist them until the problem is resolved.

Customer service is one of the most important factors in determining your customer's satisfaction. Even if you have great eBooks, if your customer support isn't good, your sales will suffer. Good customer service is perhaps the most important way to build your credibility with the customer. When you are doing your entire business online, building trust and credibility is the most important factor. Prompt customer service can make the difference.

For every dissatisfied customer, you can expect to lose one hundred new customers. Why? When one customer has a bad experience with your company, you can be certain that they'll tell everyone they know about their bad experience. It will travel through the grapevine and ultimately cost you sales.

Follow-up with your customers and ask them how they like your eBooks or if they have any questions. This is a great way to not only provide good customer service, but to also obtain feedback about your eBooks. By listening to your customers, you will know exactly what they want, what they're having problems with and how you can develop a better eBook. This would help immensely in updating your eBooks for better sales.

By following up with your customers and providing great customer service, you are creating a life-long relationship. Satisfied customers are more apt to purchase your new eBooks in the future. Treat them with the utmost respect and go above and beyond the expected.

Your customer and support service should include:

- Email support that is quick and efficient
- Online chat support
- If you have a large website with a high number of eBooks, it might be a good idea to have a 24 hour toll free number.

Before the clients purchase anything from you they will probably ask a few questions regarding any concerns they have about your eBooks.

During the first few weeks of business you will experience similar questions constantly resurfacing. You would be fairly well advised to put this regularly asked for information on your website in the form of an FAQ to reduce your administrative workload. Your interested parties will be happy to get the answers to their questions answered immediately; and you didn't even need to lift a finger.

3.13 Running your website on "Auto Pilot"

As with any online venture, credibility is vital to the success of your eBook business. It doesn't matter whether you're selling your own original titles or titles with resale rights, if you don't give off an aura of credibility and reliability, your business will suffer.

The most important aspect that establishes credibility is your payment processing system. Not only does it have to be reliable and very secure, it has to be easy and quick for your customers as well. In recent times, many businesses have been completely automating their eBooks sales and delivery process. This not only saves a lot of time, effort, and money but it also maintains the credibility of your business.

We saw earlier the whole process and components of payment systems right from setting up a merchant account to establishing a secure payment gateway to installing a credit card authorization service. There are many services and tools available that incorporate all these processes into a single mechanism.

Until recently, no matter what type of e-commerce setup you opted to put in place, the one thing you were required to have was your own merchant account.

Setting up a merchant account can be tricky business. And if you're not careful it can also be expensive. Now, however, you can start selling online without the need for a merchant account.

In fact, not only can you begin selling without needing a merchant account, but also without needing shopping cart software, a secure payment gateway or a credit-card authorization service. This can be done thanks to the advent of order fulfillment services known as third-party processors. Verisign, Paypal, Clickbank, which we discussed earlier are a few examples of such third-party processors.

With these services, just about anybody can start selling online in no time at all, with a minimum of fuss and with no technical know-how whatsoever.

3.14 Third party processors

The principle of third-party processors is quite simple. The processor becomes the merchant (i.e. the business that is selling the product) and you become a supplier to the processor. Your customer pays the processor for the product and the processor in turn pays you for supplying the product. The processor charges you a percentage of the sales value for each transaction.

Because you're not selling the product directly to the customer you don't need a merchant account, credit-card authorization or a secure payment gateway. The processor takes care of all of this, because it's they who are making the sale.

In fact, all that you need to do to get set up, is place a simple hyperlink on your web page that the visitor clicks to order the eBook. This link will have your product information 'built into it' and will lead the customer to the secure payment gateway on the processor's server.

In the secure payment gateway the customer enters his/her credit-card details as usual. Once the payment has been authorized the customer is taken to your 'Thank You' page where he/she can download your eBook. Most processors will send you a confirmation e-mail every time you make a sale, and you can also go online and view sales reports for your eBook.

These services will also take care of refunding your customers if they're not happy with your product or if they dispute the purchase. In fact, they'll take care of just about every aspect of the selling process, leaving you time to get on with the altogether more satisfying job of promoting your business.

The processor takes a percentage of every sale made, and sends you pay-checks for your eBooks on a regular basis (usually every week, every two weeks or every month).

Thanks to this payment structure you can be sure that your e-commerce system is only costing you money when you make a sale and, instead of having hundreds or thousands of customers, you have just one -- your payment processor.

Such a service can completely automate your selling process. It is cost effective, safe, and can help immensely in improving your ROI. There is another aspect to putting your website on "Auto Pilot". Once a payment is made, you can also automate the delivery process.

Automating the delivery process

On completion of the payment procedure through a third party service, you can automatically redirect the customer to the download or the "Thank You" page, where the link for the download is provided.

Once your customer clicks this link, the download process will begin. The customer's browser will open up a "save as" window which will allow them to save your file onto their computers. After the file is saved, you can either redirect the customer to the home page or any or promotional page.

It may be a good idea to send a thank you note as well a confirmation of download through email with other account details to each customer. This process can also be

automated with the use of autoresponders, which are discussed in the section on marketing the eBook.

4. Marketing and distributing your eBooks

Creating a marketing plan is the most important phase in eBook publishing. Marketing is about communicating your eBook's value and ensuring its visibility in the marketplace.

Even with a strong marketing plan, you need one other thing to achieve success: Persistence. Count on seeing your first sales only after 60 to 90 days of persistent marketing. There are no shortcuts and no easy ways through this step. Devote yourself to executing your eBook marketing plan and you'll succeed. This section focuses entirely on this very aspect of eBook publishing. It lists out some of the most effective and proven techniques for achieving maximum sales with minimum resources.

4.1 The Marketing Budget

There is no precise answer as to what amount should you set aside as your marketing budget. There have been instances where people have succeeded with a shoe string budget, whereas some others have failed even with a budget running into thousands of dollars. Your marketing budget depends on a variety of factors ranging from your eBook subject to your eBook target audience to your own aspirations and expectations.

If you wish to target your eBook to a large audience, obviously you need to spend more. If you are satisfied with targeting your eBook to a very focused and specific audience, you may not have to spend much. Your budget would depend on three considerations –

your intended target audience, marketing techniques you opt for, and how much can you afford to spend.

Your target audience would depend on the subject of your eBook. Given the nature of the topic, you should be able to figure out a target audience. For instance, an eBook on Internet Marketing can have a huge audience as every online business must employ standard internet marketing techniques. Conversely, an eBook on Real Estate Investment would cater only to real estate investors and brokers.

There are numerous marketing techniques for an eBook, most of which are discussed in depth in this section. There are certain basic strategies that have to be exploited for any kind of eBook. Additional tactics would prompt faster results however, these would also increase costs. The key is to figure out a balance of the right tools for your marketing plan without compromising your intended budget.

Thus, the right budget depends on a combination of factors. The beauty of selling eBooks is that you could start with a nominal budget and slowly build up your sales. The important thing is to make the best use of the resources at hand and attain maximum ROI.

4.2 Intelligent ways to Market your eBook

4.2.1 Pricing your eBook competitively

What's the best price for your eBook? The one that makes people buy it without a second thought. Finding that magic number, though, takes some doing.

You do not want to price your book too high or even too less. You want it to be priced competitively. How do you know that the right price is? You need to do a lot of research and testing. Look for other similar books. If possible, try to figure out how popular these books are and how much do they sell. These would give you a very good idea of what would be a competitive price to set. You obviously have to also factor in your own costs in creating and distributing the eBook. Fortunately, these are generally pretty low.

 The second aspect of this process is testing, which is equally important. You need to regularly track your advertising and other marketing strategies, watch responses, and adjust your pricing until people start buying.

It is crucial that your price your eBook competitively – not over priced and not even under priced. Some suggest that under pricing the eBook may induce more sales. However, this is not true. Potential customers always compare similar books before buying one. If your price to significantly lower than your competitor's price, customers may perceive your eBook to be not as good as your competitor's, even if this is not the case. There have been instances when publishers have sold more books by actually increasing the price.

One strategy to determine a competitive price is offering your eBook to two distinct groups of audiences at different prices. By tracking the audience response, you may be

able to close in on the right price. There is more to eBook sales than just the number of sales. You are more interested in knowing what pricing offers you a higher profit. For instance, you may sell one version of your eBook at $25 to a target audience of 1000 people and make 20 sales. Your gross in this case is $500. Now let's say, you sell another version of the same eBook at $15 to a target audience of 1000 people and you make a higher number of sales – 30. However, your gross in this case comes to $450. Thus, you make more profit selling your eBook at a higher price. This equation may change if you price the eBook at $25 and $40. In this case you may find out that you make more profit selling the eBook at a lower price of $25.

Some other factors to consider while pricing your eBook:

- Is there a strong market for your product?
- Are there lots of competitive products?
- How do the competitors measure up to your product?
- Are you trying to make money with backend products? If this is the case then you could price your eBook much lower or in some cases even offer it for free.
- Are you trying to build awareness? Again, in this case you could offer the eBook at a much lower price. This applies when you have other products to sell and you use your eBook as a mechanism to build awareness.
- If you are trying to make money on the front end, then price your eBook very competitively. Ask your peers what they would pay for such a book.
- If you offer truly exclusive information, you can charge a premium price.

As a thumb rule, high pricing works when your eBook is perceived to be of very high quality by your readers, or if there is high demand for your eBook, or if your eBook explores a niche market with very few competitors. Conversely, low pricing works when the market is highly price sensitive, or the competitor's eBook is priced slightly higher.

Thus, the key is testing and experimenting with your prices. You could have surveys and polls on your website and receive inputs from your visitors about the pricing of your eBooks. You may not be able to figure out the right price at the outset. However, with a little time and perseverance you would be able to price your book competitively for maximum profit.

4.2.2 Boosting your eBook sales

The most crucial aspect of any business is developing strategies to enhance sale of the final product. You may have a great eBook but without a comprehensive marketing plan you would end up selling it to your friends and family only. With a little bit of creativeness you can explode the sales of your eBook in quick time. Here are sale boosting tips and strategies.

Offer incentives

The first rule of any marketing plan is to offer attractive incentives to induce response from prospective customers. This is an age old strategy which works very well even

today. Offer free bonus products to you customers if they sign up immediately –
something like "Sign up now and receive free …".

Offer promotional books for a limited period

A sales strategy that has worked well for many businesses, especially for eBooks is to
offer a rebate to customers for a limited time. Note that the stress should be on limited
time. You would not want to offer rebates after the offer expires. This certainly increases
the number of sales, especially during holiday seasons. Interestingly, in spite of the rebate
offer only few customers actually end up sending the eBook back for a rebate, provided
the content of the eBook is highly informative and useful.

You should allow customers to send back the eBook up to a month after the offer ends.
Prolonging the offer may only negate any advantage gained in terms of sales. Besides,
you wouldn't want to wait forever to determine how many books were returned and how
successful your strategy was.

Create ways to "earn" the eBook for free

This gimmick would work if you have other products or affiliate programs. Instead of
buying the eBook, you could run a promotional offer that anyone who signs up for your
affiliate program and brings in a certain number of affiliates would be given the eBook
for free. This is a win-win situation for both you and your customer.

Offer a guarantee to increase your credibility

I mentioned earlier that customers weigh in the risks involved with buying a new product. By offering strong guarantees you alleviate this risk to a great extent. Guarantee encourages more people to buy a product without putting in much thought. You would also reduce returns and refunds.

Payment in installments

If your eBooks are highly priced – anything above $50, you may contemplate introducing installment payments for your customers. For instance, you could offer a three installment plan, each installment to be made every 10 days. This would encourage more people to buy your eBooks.

Many also suggest that you may offer your eBook in parts. However, this tactic may not always work to your advantage. It is often seen that people lose interest in books if they wait to long to complete it. Thus, you may end up selling only two parts of your eBook instead of all three.

Trial Period

You could offer a trial period for your eBooks. This implies that you can have your customers pay you for the eBook a few days after purchasing the eBook. For instance, you may offer delayed payment periods of either 15 or 30 days. This gimmick would do wonders for your credibility. The downside to this is some people might take advantage of such an offering and return the eBook after the trial period. However, you would induce many more sales compared to the number of returns.

Start your own newsletter

Newsletters are a great way to build email lists and target potential customers. They also act as a great advertising medium for your eBooks. However, you need to develop interesting and unique content regularly in order to distribute newsletters. Newsletters should be distributed once every fortnight or month. The key is to have it published regularly. As long as you offer quality content you would not do any harm to your selling prospects.

Offer upgrades and variations

Many marketers use this strategy successfully. You may offer a basic version of your eBook at a very reasonable cost. Once you sell your basic version to customers you could offer them with updated versions of the same eBook that have more detailed information. If your basic version is interesting, customers would definitely not be averse to buying an upgrade.

Have a members section

Customers look for a sense of belonging and association with a company or website. This can be achieved by having a members section on your website. You would have to offer additional products free of cost of your members. These could be anything from sample eBooks to newsletters to articles. When you think about it, this strategy is similar to offering freebies and incentives – the only difference is that you are offering it to your members. Besides, anyone could become a member for free. All they need to do is sign up for membership.

You could run contests, quizzes, promos, message boards and forums on your members section. This enhances interactivity and in turn sales.

Have a discounted products area

A very unique strategy to increase sales is to have a page on your website that sells only discounted products. These could be eBooks or any other products. The discount page could be updated frequently to include new products and exclude older ones. This tactic is very effectively employed by department stores. If you notice a good department store would always have something or the other on discount. Deals are what people look be it in physical stores or online stores.

Respond quickly to all queries

Ensure that you respond quickly to any queries your customers may have. Timely response instills a feeling of trustworthiness amongst customers and will surely improve your sales. It may be worth it to have good customer representatives in charge of the customer service aspect of your business.

Feedback

One of the most important aspects of analyzing and improving sales for any product is by obtaining feedback from existing customers. You could request your customers to fill up surveys and questionnaires pertaining to the eBooks they bought from your website. Questions in the survey should be aimed at obtaining useful pointers from customers on how to improve your eBooks and other services.

Ask your customers what do they think of your eBooks and what sections have scope for improvement. Feedback from customers is precious and can help you immensely in improving future sales. Besides, you could also be able to attain testimonials from existing customers, with written permission from them.

If you find that your customers are reluctant to fill up surveys and questionnaires, offer incentives such as a free article or newsletter of their choice. Of course what works best are cash incentives or even discount coupons for other products on your website.

Study your potential customers

Analyze what kind of people are buying or interested in your eBooks. This way you can have a more targeted and focused marketing effort thus maximizing gains from minimum resources.

Surveys and feedback forms facilitate this process. You may request your visitors as well as customers to provide personal information such as age, sex, email address, and interests. Provide a guarantee that such information would be kept confidential and never given out. The survey could be made anonymous so that they know that their personal information would not be used in ways they do not approve of. Moreover collecting email addresses would allow you to send them special offers, sale notifications and promotions in the future.

Testing with Ad Tracking programs

There are two main factors that make an Ad effective – Content of the Ad and the sites where it is advertised. Most experts would agree that constant testing and experimenting is the only way to ensure that you get the right combination. However, the question arises – How do you test your Ads? An integral part of any advertising campaign is, knowing which ads bring you the most visitors. After all, you may have banner ads, newsgroups

ads, ads in newsletters and articles, ads in autoresponders, or a simple classified ad on a website.

Every marketer can only benefit by knowing:

- which of the ads received the best response
- whether free classified sites are worth the effort
- which newsletters are the most profitable
- how a sponsored newsletter ad compares to the standard one
- whether animated banners are better than static ones
- how effective are your email ads
- does the ad at the start of an newsletter or article outperform the one at the end

Ad Tracking programs would answer all of these questions. They can help you analyze the effectiveness of every single ad and hence they should be an integral part of every marketing campaign.

4.2.3 Do not "Sell"; Provide a "Solution"

Advertising plays a vital role in inducing sales for your eBooks. We discussed earlier that customers look for solutions to their problems in different products. This holds true for eBooks as well. Your website or any other advertising medium that you use should

portray a feeling that your eBook provides a solution. You are not there just to sell your product to customer but to solve their problems.

The most effective advertising pieces don't sell; they fulfill. They don't talk about the company; they talk about the customer. They don't push price; they provide solutions. Here are some guidelines that portray just this.

- Many marketers make the common mistake of describing the benefits of using their company more than talking about how the product would be useful to the customer. We have seen various ads that say that our company is the best; we provide the maximum number of information oriented eBooks; we have been providing eBooks for many months and have acquired a huge customer database. This is not the right tactic. Your ad should speak directly to the customer about his or her needs rather than talking about your own company and its range of products.

- Always personalize your advertisements. Your ads should talk to a single person and not a whole group of people. Make use of terms such as "you".

- Use real life examples of how your eBook can benefit your customers. Identify with your audience and infuse statements that reach them on a personal level. For instance, instead of saying "This eBook can help build your business" say "With this book you can increase your sales by 200%".

- List as many benefits as you can. Customers always look for reasons to buy a product – give them plenty.

- Tell your customers what life will be like after your eBook solves all their problems. By showing them that they will get their desired end result, you make a very persuasive argument for your product.

4.2.4 eBook Viral Marketing Strategies and Techniques

Viral Marketing is one of the most effective forms of Marketing. Viral Marketing is defined as "Any advertising that propagates itself the way viruses do"; E.g. When Hotmail users send e-mails, they "infect" the recipients with the tagline at the bottom of their messages. Viral marketing denotes any strategy that encourages individuals to pass on a marketing message to others, creating the potential for exponential growth in the message's exposure and influence.

eBooks can be used as great viral marketing tools. Here's how viral marketing with eBooks works.

The eBook familiarizes readers with your brand. In order for the eBook to act as a viral tool and induce sales of your other eBooks it should have a message promoting your website and a link to it. This will bring back the reader to your website and create an

opportunity for more business. Thus, eBooks can contain advertisements or links to your website that would persuade the reader to come back to your website. For example, a footer on every alternate page can have some message about your business and a link to your website that would interest the reader and encourage him to visit your website by clicking on that link.

How does Viral Marketing come into the picture here? How do you ensure that eBooks can be given to more and more readers and in turn generate traffic? A very simple way of doing this is to allow other visitors to your website to download your eBook and then allow them to sell the eBook to their customers. In plain words, instead of creating just "paid" eBooks you could also empower your customers with "Resale" rights to your eBook. You may charge a bit extra for resale rights.

You would argue that by doing so you would be reducing your profit by letting your customers also sell your eBook. However, if done correctly this might not be the case. Be sure to include hyperlinks to your web site all over - at least one in every two pages. Also, you can include brief advertisements and all kinds of other eBooks. Have the condition that your customers should contain a link to your website and even an advertisement of your eBooks on every other page if they wish to have resell the eBook to their own customers. This way you can reach a much bigger audience and in turn induce higher sales.

To make the eBook more appealing to your customers you can offer them incentives. For example you can offer your customer a commission every time a person visits your website through your eBook on your customer's website. Tracking software can be integrated with your website that would give you a detailed analysis of all your visitors and track the website from where they were directed to your website.

This will allow not only your direct customers but also customers of other people selling your eBook on their websites to come back to the source of the eBook, which is your website. This will benefit not only you but also your customers in two ways. First of all he/she can sell your book at his/her own price. The second benefit is that every time your customer brings in traffic to your website through your eBook, he/she would get a commission. Your customers can again employ the same strategy and allow their own customers to market the eBook, thus, making the eBook viral.

To further benefit from eBooks, allow your customers to copy, change, and co-brand the eBook, which would contain a few ads and links about their own sites in addition to your own links. This will also help your customers to generate traffic for their websites. This is a proven strategy and should be employed.

eBooks can themselves act as one of the best marketing tools online. With its vast variety of uses, just one quality eBook development and distribution can produce an on going viral marketing tool that will work 24 hours a day, seven days a week and multiply itself by leaps and bounds.

4.2.5 Using Autoresponders to sell your eBooks

The auto-responder is a program that automatically sends a message or a reply with a pre-designed response to any email address. It is also often called infobot, autobot, auto-mailer, or responder. Auto-responders are great for introduction or confirmation messages, much like your answering machine on the telephone. .

The auto-responder allows you to capture the email addresses of your visitors; so you can build your own opt-in targeted mailing list. The auto-responder will automatically extract the prospects name and use this information in your follow-up messages. With this marketing tool you can send personalized follow-up messages. If you personalize an email message, your prospect is twice as likely to buy from you.

You can sell your eBooks 24 hours a day, 7 days a week with the help of an auto-responder. You can send your sales letter as a part of any automated response to anyone, anywhere in a matter of seconds with no work on your part.

Following up with your prospects could mean a 50% increase in your sales. Your potential customers may simply forget about your initial message or they simply may have a bad day; for that reason, it is important to follow up with your prospects at preset time intervals after sending your initial message. This is achieved with auto-responders and reminders.

A reminder informs your customers about new eBooks or leads them to new content that the customer might be interested in. You can configure your auto responders with business rules to select from incoming mails or your address book, choose appropriate messages based on specific conditions or filters, and also set the time interval when such reminders have to be sent.

Auto-responders should be personalized and designed in such a way that they include the following information:

- They introduce your business to the prospective customer
- List out special offers
- List out benefits of buying your eBooks
- List of information on how each eBook can help a prospective customer
- Compare your eBooks with your competitors
- Give testimonials of existing customers
- Welcome letters for new members
- Thank you messages for new orders
- Order confirmation
- Acknowledgement of a query or a receipt of payment from your customer

4.2.6 Back-end Selling and Cross-Selling

Considerable effort is required to get customers for your products. You may employ all marketing tactics but still do not manage to sell enough. This is where the concept of back-end sales is useful.

Most marketers are successful because they apply back-end selling into their marketing efforts. Back-end selling is when you sell other eBooks to your existing customers after they have purchased at least one eBook.

It is always easier to sell products to your existing customers because you have developed a relationship with them when you sold your first eBook to them. You will find it less expensive to sell to old customers as compared to selling to new customers.

Your conversion ratio will be dramatically higher with existing customers. Every time you continue selling back-end products to existing customers, you will be building a life-long relationship. You should continually bring out new back-end eBooks to sell to existing customers. These could be eBooks that compliment other eBooks already sold or could be updated versions of the same eBook.

Many businesses sell their front-end products (initial products) at almost zero profit in order to generate back-end profits. These businesses do not care even if they lose money on the front-end products or services; they want the back-end profits.

How do you make backend sales? There are several ways. When you order a product from a mail-order company, they'll send you a catalog along with your order, or put you on a mailing list and send you new catalogs from time to time. They might also send you a sales letter for another product. This may be related to the first product in some way. Many companies implement such a strategy.

To implement this technique, you can put the sales pitch for your backend item in the email to the customer to confirm their order. If you have an online catalog of eBooks, you could include a link to it, or even include a coupon or special offer "for all valued customers".

For a faster response, you should put the backend offer on the "Thank You" page that is generated by a credit-card sale. The customer just bought something from you and has a credit card in his or her hot little hand! Why not ask for another purchase while they are in the mood to buy. In case you do not sell more than one eBook, affiliate programs might come in handy. This way you can back sell products promoted by your affiliate programs as well.

Back-end selling can also be integrated with "Up-Selling" wherein you introduce more expensive eBooks to your existing customers in similar ways as those mentioned above. This will almost instantly raise your sales and profits.

Cross Selling

Another successful strategy similar to the ones discussed above is Cross Selling. One of the best examples of cross selling via the web is on Amazon.com. If you search for a book on the Amazon site, a message will appear on the same page, saying 'Customers who bought this book also bought…' and will list half a dozen other books for your consideration. This is an excellent way to cross sell additional eBooks to your customers.

You can also direct visitors to other parts of the site, to consider eBooks or other products you offer that they hadn't previously considered. Successful cross selling is the result of recognizing a customer need and meeting that need with a useful product. Customers benefit from needs-based cross selling efforts because they receive the services they need and want.

Cross selling can help your business realize its objectives: providing useful products in the form of eBooks, retaining customers, attracting new customers, and staying competitive with other websites.

4.2.7 Writing Google AdWords to generate sales

Google AdWords is one of the most popular Pay-per-click programs. It has earned rave reviews from experts ever since it was established. Ads are displayed to the side of the regular listings on Google. There are more than 200 million searches every day, so your Google AdWords advertisements reach a vast audience.

Setting up a Google AdWords ad for your website and the eBooks can help a great deal in generating sales. Google is one of the most trusted names on the Internet and the AdWords is fast living up to expectations.

There is no minimum monthly charge to run an AdWords campaign. However, Google does charge you a $5 activation fee. Google AdWords also provides tools for tracking the performance of your Ad.

Creating an ad with Google AdWords is simple and quick. However, running a successful campaign to attain maximum ROI through these ads requires meticulous planning and management. Let us look at some of the guidelines that might help you in making the most out of the AdWords campaign.

Sometimes advertisers forget that Internet Advertising, especially search engine ad display, is hardly a visual medium. It is not like a television commercial where catchy phrases, celebrities or flashy and even shocking images are shown to benefit the USP. Most people come to Google because they are tired of irrelevant information and unnecessary loudness as far as ads are concerned.

Google is extremely result oriented and its users know that very well. And they expect consistent and non-pretentious service from Google. For that reason, showy ads are a NO-NO. Do not under-estimate your customers. They will not tolerate nonsense and superfluous information which simply wastes their time. If you do attempt to write something just for the sake of shock value, you might waste your money as your target

customers will bypass your ads and those who might click on your ad are probably random surfers who out there just to kill some time.

Don't attempt to use 'hot' words or jargons which come across as a sales pitch and do not appeal to your customers. Simplicity is the key, don't try to be unnecessarily cute or cool, it probably won't work. Also, do not insult your customer's intelligence and reasoning ability by shouting loudly at them and using profanity. Don't use clichés and overly familiar phrases that ruin the uniqueness of your website and your eBooks.

All the don'ts aside, there are also some do's to follow.   Be precise, and to the point. Target your customers and focus on what kind of information they are searching for. Use ideal and targeted keywords in your ads and sure, it's not possible to say everything about your eBooks in a few words, so don't try to put too much into the one ad, but be result-oriented.

Understand your clients; if there is something that appeals to their self-interest, they are more likely to click on that. If your eBook helps your clients in relieving them of any of their problems, repairing their computer, making profitable investments, making them clear their or their kids' SATs with ease, staying fit and healthy, and what you have; then cash it in!

Focus on what your eBook will do to make your customer's life better and easier and they are more likely to click on it. Also, there is competition which should not be under-

estimated and one of the key things to make sure is that they don't outrun you. Test-drive your ad and if it works, go ahead with the format. Don't change it if it works is the rule of thumb to follow here.

Another important aspect of AdWords is the keywords. Research your keywords well. Ideally you should place one keyword in every line of your ad. Most importantly, the keywords you select should be relevant to the subject of your eBooks. You do not want to provide broad keywords that give a wrong impression to your visitors. This will only add to their repulsion and you would end up paying for wasted clicks.

As with any advertising campaign, list out all the unique features and benefits of your eBooks. As stated earlier, your ad should tell the potential customer how his/her problem can be solved with your eBook and not talk about your company.

Finally, it is imperative that you track your ad results and performance. There are a lot of tools available to track your results. These sales conversion tracking tools can be employed to get an idea of how your ad is performing. These tools range from the most basic ones to the highly advanced software.

This information can be used to determine the quality and effectiveness of your ad. You can find out if your ad is powerful enough to deliver the required results. You can also find out if you are reaching your target customers or are piling up unnecessary

advertising costs. You can eliminate entire ad-groups and re-structure your ad campaign based on these results.

A few other tips:

- Study ads from your competitors, if they have any. Look for unique features in these ads and employ them in your ad.

- Space is at a premium. Do not waste characters by using duplicates or other words that may be unnecessary. Some words that should be avoided are "the", "a", and "an". Use very common abbreviations where possible.

- Use eye-catching phrases such as "Sale", "Limited Time" etc.

- Do not ridicule your competitor. Depict how your eBooks are superior from others.

- Your aim is to have a maximum conversion ratio of successful customers. After all, you wouldn't want to pay for visitors who are unwilling to invest in your eBooks. A very specific ad would target only those surfers who are actually interested in your product.

- Use language that is personalized and motivational. The purpose of the ad is to elicit desire in people.

- Use strong call to action words and phrases. These will generate a response from potential customers. Examples include "Buy today and Save", "Buy Now and Win", and so on.

4.2.8 Creating Sales letters that attract customers

A Sales letter is all about making a powerful offer to your visitors they can't refuse. The sole purpose of a sales letter is to attract more customers and induce higher sales. Sales letters can be used with autoresponders to introduce new eBooks to existing as well and potential customers. You can also put up a sales letter page on your website convincing your visitors that they have come to the right place.

How do you create an effective letter that draws customers in? What are the keys to turning a list of eBooks into a menu of enticing delights your customer has to have? Read on.

Personalize your sales letter

I must have stressed on the importance of this aspect of advertising hundreds of times in this eBook. Nevertheless, let me say it once again. Always write a sales letter with a real person in mind. Write your sales letter just like you are writing it to them personally.

When your potential customer reads it, it will seem personal, almost like you wrote it with them in mind. Too often, sales letters are written as if they were going to be read to an audience rather than one person.

Use Real world stories and examples

Your sales letter should identify with your prospective customers. This can be done by providing them with real life examples or stories on how your eBooks can benefit them. The key here is "benefit". Do not simply list out the features of your eBook – list out benefits and show examples of how each benefit can help a customer. By emphasizing a benefit using a real world example, you establish your point effectively and create interest in the customers.

Use the Heading and Introduction well

The sales letter headline is very crucial. Most people only look at the headline of the letter. Your headline should be attractive enough to make a potential customer read through the letter and eventually click on the link provided. Similarly, the introduction paragraph should be eye catching as well. Most people only go through the heading and

the introduction paragraph and get convinced to either check out a product or forget about it.

Bulleted lists

Instead of writing out benefits in form of paragraphs, use bulleted lists. These are visually appealing and appear less cluttered. People generally have a tendency to read lists rather than long paragraphs, especially in ads. It also makes sense to separate each list by an additional space.

A reader always looks for benefits in an ad, and benefits are what you should list out early in the sales letter. After an introductory line, immediately give your readers a list of some of the most important benefits of your eBooks. By offering a killer list early in your sales letter, you will automatically create a desire in the reader to continue through your sales letter.

This would entice your reader to visit your website and find out more about your eBooks.

Keep refining your letter

Write down everything that enters your mind as you are writing your sales letter. You can edit it later. If you just sit and start writing everything you know about your eBooks and how it will benefit your customer, you will be amazed at how much information floods

your mind. Write it all down. Then read through it - you'll be able to add a lot more detail to many of the points. Edit it after you have exhausted all of your ideas.

Use casual language

Forget all of those rules that your grammar teacher taught you. Write your sales letters in everyday language, just like you would talk in person. Don't be afraid to begin sentences with "And" or "Because." Don't worry about ending a sentence with a preposition. Write like you speak.

Use Shorter Paragraphs

Long copy works but long paragraphs do not. Use short paragraphs that lead into the next paragraph. Don't be afraid to use short sentences. Shorter paragraphs keep the interest of the reader. Longer paragraphs cause eye strain and often force the reader to get distracted.

Simple Language

Some sales letters read like they are a manual. They are filled with words and phrases that may require a dictionary to understand. Unless you are writing to a much targeted audience, avoid using technical language that many readers might not understand. Keep it simple, using words, language and information that are easy to understand and follow.

Target your sales letter

When you are finished with your final draft of the sales letter, target it to a specific audience. For example: If you are selling an eBook that introduces many "work at home" opportunities, then rewrite the sales letter by adding words in the headlines and ad copy that are targeted towards women who are homemakers. Then, rewrite the same sales letter and target it to college students. Write another letter targeting senior citizens. Still another could be written to high school teachers wanting to earn extra income during summer vacation. The possibilities are endless.

All you need to do is add a few words here and there in your ad copy to make it appear that your eBook is specifically designed for a target audience. Upload all of the sales letters to separate pages on your website.

By creating these targeted sales letters, you can literally open up dozens of new groups to sell your eBook to. And, in their eyes, it looks like the book was a match made for them.

Structure your sales letter

Break up the sales letter with attention grabbing headlines that lead into the next paragraph. One thing that works very well

...is to use a pause like this.

Start the sentence on one line, leaving the reader wanting to know more, and then finishing up on the next line. Also, if you are going to use a sales letter that continues on several different pages of your website, use a catchy hook line at the end of each page to keep them clicking.

4.3 Offline Marketing Strategies

Just because you are an online business doesn't mean you shouldn't use traditional marketing techniques. Here are some proven ideas for offline marketing:

- Submit an article to newspapers and trade magazines. You could purchase paid advertisements in radio, TV, magazine ads, newspaper advertising, postcards, and your license plate if your budget permits

- Get stationary with your product name on it for snail mail correspondence

- Create coupons to place in sales letters

- Mail postcards to local businesses

- Offer it as a value added gift to customers.

- Offer it as a bonus for an upsale

- Create a joint marketing venture. Team up with someone with a complementary product and agree to cross promote each other's products. You'll get great exposure. And the customers will enjoy the winning combination of products.

- Get business cards with the product name.

- Offer to speak at an industry event as an authority in your field of expertise. Be sure to have them list you as the author of a new eBook in your credentials.

- Send it out on disk to prospects as a virtual brochure.

4.4 Getting your eBook reviewed

Selling eBooks is all about establishing credibility. If your eBook is credible it will sell for sure. One way to do this is by getting your eBook reviewed by experts in the industry as well as various review sites.

It is not easy getting an expert to review your eBook. Besides, there are some procedures that you should follow if you wish to attract attention from an expert. Here are some tips.

When you send your eBook for review, send a whole load of other information along with it. This could be a collection of information and articles about your eBook put together to create a good impression. For instance you could include the following

- A Sales Letter

- A Pitch Letter

- Any product testimonials that you may have

- eBook information sheet, which includes Title, Author, URL, ISBN number, Publication date, Short description, and your biography.

- A letter formally requesting review of the eBook

- Any Press Releases that you may have pertaining to the eBook

Apart from these, there are certain guidelines that you could follow to maximize your chances of getting a review from an expert.

- Send out lots of review copies.

- Be politely persistent.

- Follow up with phone call, email or handwritten note.

- Send to newsletter editors from your industry.

- Send to key opinion makers.

- Send to editors of related trade magazines.

- Check for theme issues of magazines by looking at their editorial calendars.

- Write a personal letter along with the copy of your eBook.

- Write thank you notes to those who do review your eBook.

- Quote good reviews in continuing marketing efforts.

- Use good reviews as part of new press releases.

- Advertise in a newsletter in the issue after your review was run

A final thought – keep persisting with a number of experts to get your eBooks reviewed. However, you should in no way force yourself on them. Remember, following up is crucial. After all, they would be doing you a big favor. A follow up opens up various other opportunities to network with the experts. You could also ask additional questions while you follow up.

4.5 Leveraging the benefits of testimonials

Testimonials improve credibility of your eBooks. They reduce the feeling of risk amongst prospective customers. In fact, testimonials have been known to increase sales by 250% or more! The Internet is a very impersonal medium. People trust people! The more you can do to "humanize" your web site the more likely potential customers will want to do business with you. Testimonials "speak" to potential customers in an honest, believable way.

Write a personalized email to every existing customer and request them to provide a review of your eBooks. Ask them what they liked best about your eBook. Most customers would be happy to assist you. Here are some tips on how to approach customers for testimonials.

- Give a free sample of the eBook to a group of users in your target market. Ask them: - if they found it useful - what they would pay for an eBook like that and how they would improve the product.

- Give a sample to an industry expert - Someone with a complete knowledge of your field is well suited to judge how your eBook works.

- Always get permission to use the testimonial. Have them sign a release form granting their permission to publish their testimonial in the eBook as well as the website.

- Fully identify the person while quoting the testimonial. This includes the full name, occupation, and company name. You could also include city and age if you have permission from the person to do so.

- Testimonials can be used on a testimonials page on your website; they could be scattered throughout your website; they could be used in marketing and sales letters; in autoresponder messages; in newsletters and in brochures.

The words of a satisfied customer are powerful tools for building trust, promoting your reputation, and increasing sales and profitability.

4.6 Using Press Releases to advertise your eBooks

A press release is a fantastic way to let the world know about your new eBook. A well-written press release can get eBook seen by hundreds of potential customers and important media. Here are the basics on how to write an effective press release for your eBook.

Attention grabbing header

The opener is crucial. You must grab the reporter's attention so that you can draw them into the meat of the release. A good way to do this is to tie your eBook into a recent event, public appearance, or other newsworthy cause.

Focus – write for your audience

Start with a newsworthy happening. Write simply and correctly checking for proper grammar, spelling, and punctuation. Write for your target audience, not for your business interests.

Resist using hype

Stick to the facts. If you write your press release like an advertisement, it won't be taken seriously. Instead focus on the unique benefits and information that a reader can gain exclusively from your eBook.

Include a quote or testimonial from someone who has read your eBook. Finally proofread it numerous times.

Distribute the PR

With changing technologies come a whole array of methods for distributing press releases such as wire, broadcast fax, and email. Be sure to pick the method best suited to potential audience. And be sure to post your press release on your eBook web site.

Sending out a press release using paid services can cost anywhere from $99 to $700 for a national release depending on the number of media outlets it reaches.

Once you distribute your press release always follow up to ensure that your target audience did receive the release.

5. Setting up Affiliate Programs

5.1 Affiliate Programs – What are they?

Affiliate programs (also called Referral Programs or Partnership Programs) are essentially commission-based sales schemes. You recommend a site to your users and pick up a percentage of any sales those users generate. You benefit from the commission and the site benefits from sales it wouldn't otherwise have made. If you've ever gone to a website and seen links to Amazon, those were affiliate links.

You can link to an affiliate program from a site you've already set up, or create a site specially to promote a product. As long as it brings in more cash than you spend on building it and buying traffic, you're laughing.

5.2 Using eBooks for Affiliate Marketing

eBooks can generate huge income for you when exposed to a bigger audience. This can be achieved very well with affiliate programs. Here's how!

If you've been delving into affiliate marketing at all, you're no doubt aware of the potential for eBooks, first of all *as* affiliate products. It's the affiliates who would market your eBook, after all, passing the word about the product to their website visitors, e-zine subscribers, and clients, in hopes of earning a commission from a sale.

Then, reseller licensing of the eBook product, or allowing those who buy the books to give them away, adds another layer to the promotion. In either case, there's now even more incentive for the book to be pushed along.

The possibility of re-branding the eBook (that is, customizing certain portions of it, or changing the affiliate link coding so that the current host of the download can gain from the affiliate commissions) also adds pass-along momentum. Re-branding might be offered for a low cost or even for a free eBook.

Let me explain the concept of re-branding further. If you've created a useful eBook which also promotes your products or services and where affiliates can change the links in your book to point to their affiliate links, you can let your affiliates give this book away to their visitors and subscribers, so that they are giving their visitors something useful and they have the chance of selling your other eBooks and products to them as well.

A merchant's affiliates, or an affiliate's sub-affiliates, could use their own links instead of the author's. If there's another goal that overrides the affiliate commission, or perhaps if only some of the affiliate links will be re-brandable, or the downloader who re-brands a link will have to purchase the product first in order to use or evaluate it, then the loss of immediate affiliate commissions can be amply made up for by the spread of the book.

Your eBooks might be used by affiliate merchants to promote their offerings. An e-book can be a report, a catalog, a sales presentation, a detailed list of features, and so much more – the possibilities are endless. It could be whatever that is helpful to your visitor and your customer. It can contain graphics, hyperlinks and, with some compilers, even animated graphics and multimedia stuff.

You might create eBooks around a subject that pertains to the your affiliate program/s. Your affiliates can then create "adjunct" e-books around your program offerings. For instance, a businessperson whose core is consulting of some kind might produce a book that elucidates the importance of his service in achieving clients' greater success. Another could write a book on how to use her product to its fullest advantage. Or an in-

depth discussion of an interesting issue could lead into a mention of the product or service "in the background".

Either an affiliate or a merchant can use downloadable eBooks to enhance the attractiveness of his/her website or e-zine, of course, as an incentive, or to engender a feeling of trust in his/her visitors/readers, by providing good information and advice therein.

Using eBooks as a source of affiliate marketing can only increase traffic and in turn profits for your website. The strategies mentioned above can successfully double your business through referrals.

You can either choose to promote your eBooks by joining other affiliate programs, or you could create your own affiliate program and have your affiliates market your eBook. Creating your own affiliate program is not at all difficult. There are many tools available that allow you to set up your own program. The key is to maintain your program and get a higher number of affiliates to promote your eBook. In this guide we take a look at how exactly one can achieve this.

5.3 Creating a successful affiliate program – Guaranteeing higher income through your affiliate program

The internet is full of affiliate programs promising you anything from a simple regular income to millionaire status! How do you create your own successful affiliate program? If you're going to put a lot of time, effort and probably money into creating your affiliate program you've got to be sure that it can guarantee a high income otherwise it'll all be wasted. This section tells you what features you should incorporate into your affiliate program.

The product must be desirable

Obviously, if you want to make any money from an affiliate program you have to sell the product to a lot of people. Therefore the product, more specifically eBook, you are trying to sell has to be desirable. People must want it! If the product is good then it will almost sell itself, all you have to do is present it to the consumer. A bad product won't sell no matter how hard you push it.

The website must have an online presence

Make sure the your affiliate program has a presence online. People wouldn't want to sign up to untrustworthy programs.

There's nothing more frustrating for your customers than investing a lot of time and money in promoting a program only to find that your company has gone to the wall and you have to start all over again. Of course there are good new businesses with sustainable programs, but as a rule it's safer to put across a message to your customers that you know what you are doing.

Create a multi-tier program

Your customers would want to make as much income as possible from fewer products. One strategy that has been extremely successful in attracting a large number of visitors is by offering them multi-tier affiliate programs.

You're probably familiar with a simple single-tier affiliate program and how it works. Your customers get paid a percentage for every product that they sell. A multi-tier program works in the same way but they also get paid a percentage for sales made by other people that they recruit to the affiliate program. This means that if they want they can simply concentrate on recruiting new affiliates to the program and simply earn from the sales that they make.

The benefits of a multi-tier (3-tier) program for your customers are illustrated below:

Their own earnings = $50

Level one (5 referrals) = $20 x 5 = $100 (Assuming $20 commission for each referral)

Level two (25 referrals) = $10 x 25 = $250 (Assuming $10 commission for each referral)

Total earnings $450. Earning effort $50

Thus, reward both the affiliate responsible for bringing visitors to your website as well as the other person who had originally referred this affiliate. Let me illustrate this strategy further. Let us say John referred Max to your website and your affiliate program. Max liked your affiliate program and joined it and eventually bought your product or service

offered on your website. In this case, John would get a percentage of the profit. Now let's say, Max referred your website to a friend of his – Harry. Harry visits your website – likes your product – and buys it.

A single tier incentive program would reward Max by giving him a percentage of the profit generated. A two tier incentive program would offer Max a percentage of the profit as well as John a percentage of the profit because John referred Max in the first place. This strategy is expansive but very fruitful.

The above point can be explained in simple terms as "Make it as easy and as natural for affiliates to promote your product or service as possible, by letting your affiliates benefit those whom they refer". This will encourage your affiliates to convince more people to join your affiliate program.

Offer a higher number of incentives

The most important aspect of any affiliate program is the incentive. You should offer better incentives than your competitor sites. Money is the biggest and best form of incentive you could offer your customers. Offering a percentage of your sales revenue resulting out of each successful hit can be a great incentive.

Apart from the normal incentives offer something unique such as cash awards and bonuses for three customers who are responsible for bringing in the highest traffic or highest business to your website. This would provide greater motivation for prospective

customers to not only join your affiliate program but also refer your website to more people.

You need real-time online stats

If you're serious about an affiliate program and you're going to put a lot of time and effort into attracting more affiliates then you need to provide your customers with real-time online stats. If they have to wait a month for their stats to come by email then they are more than likely going to lose interest in the program.

There are many different affiliate software packages from which you can choose. Furthermore, you can either choose to manage the software yourself or pay a company such as Clickbank or Clicktrade to manage your affiliate software for you. You software package for tracking all kinds of statistics for not only your affiliates but for you as well should be comprehensive. It should have the ability to support a huge affiliate database.

Create an affiliate program which provides real-time, instantly updated stats that your affiliates can access online at any time. It's amazing the morale boost they get when they see how the sales (and their commissions) are stacking up. It will give them the determination to promote the program further.

Have a reasonably priced eBook

It's a popular misconception with affiliate programs that the more expensive the product is the greater your monthly income will be. Sure, you'll be making a greater amount from

each affiliate but you'll find that your affiliates would be making only a few sales a month. Not exactly the regular income you were after is it?

Have an eBook with a lower price. Your affiliates won't make as much from each sale but you will find that they make sales more regularly and will generate a much steadier income from it for themselves as well as you. You will also build up a greater number of customers who can then be approached for those all-important follow-up sales.

Provide affiliates with an opportunity to earn residual incomes

Most affiliate programs are structured in such a way to benefit the merchants more than the affiliates. An affiliate will only earn commissions on sales transacted by people who follow his link to the merchant's site. He will not earn any commissions if the same person goes to the merchant's site directly on subsequent purchases. This is unfair to the affiliates who may have spent considerable time and money to drive visitors to the merchant's site.

To maintain a large affiliate base and earn higher income, you should create programs that offer affiliates an opportunity to earn residual incomes from the same customers. In other words, they will earn commissions on the monthly subscription fees for as long as the person they referred remains a customer with the merchant.

Do you pull your weight?

Affiliates always look for an affiliate program where owner puts as much effort into your success as they do. No one would like to go for a program where the owner just sits back and lets affiliates do all the work.

The least you can do is provide your affiliates with quality text links and banners for them to use to promote your program. A selection of promotional emails and sales letters for affiliates to use is also nice.

You should also operate a follow-up email system to convince people to buy and also use a 'back-end' system to sell further products to existing customers. Such a system would immensely help your affiliates in promoting your product.

At the end of the day, the more successful they are the more successful you are so you should make every effort to help your affiliates.

Is your program 'foreigner friendly'?

At some point in time you may target affiliates from other countries. Many affiliate programs do not accept people from other countries. However, with a little more investment you can gain access to a huge base of affiliates from different countries. If you decide to make your program foreigner friendly, you need to set up payment systems so that you could pay your affiliates in their currency.

There have been cases where foreign affiliates received payment in US dollars and it took them weeks to get it converted. This would only frustrate affiliates. To eliminate such problems have a reliable payout system for your overseas affiliates. An online payment

system like PayPal is always good as your affiliates get their money immediately and are then free to do what they wish with it.

Is your program reliable?

Imagine the scenario, you spend some money for a big promotional push, attract a huge number of affiliates, then just as your blitz is about to start the program server falls over for 48 hours and your money is wasted. You eventually loose your affiliates and your credibility. Ensure you have back up systems in place. Have a reliable host server. You should always make certain that you do not have any technical difficulties.

The program should have a clear pay structure

Any legitimate affiliate program should spell out exactly what affiliates will receive for their effort. This seems basic enough, yet there are many programs that present very nebulous pay rates. Unless you spell out exactly what your affiliates will receive for their efforts, you may not be able to attract them.

Offer marketing support

Amazingly, many affiliate programs have little or no marketing support. This is counterintuitive considering it is in the merchant's interest to help the affiliate succeed. Fortunately, some programs do offer marketing support. Create a program that gives affiliates the most tools to succeed. Your success lies in your affiliates' success.

Have community support

Again, it is in your interest to foster support for your affiliates, yet many affiliate programs offer no community support. Community bulletin boards tend to foster information exchange between affiliates and usually offer news and expert advice. Following these guidelines will dramatically improve the quality of your affiliate program. The more favorably a program stacks up against the criterion above, the more chances for success you have.

Have a reliable support area

You should have tested and proven endorsements, testimonials, ezine ads, and other unique tools and techniques to help motivate your affiliates. You must also make yourself available, either through email or the phone, to help your affiliates implement these tools and to answer any questions they may have.

Test your campaigns

You may have employed a number of marketing strategies for your affiliate program. However, these strategies would mean nothing unless they are effective. It is crucial that you test each and every strategy for effectiveness. You should know which banner ad is fetching you the highest number of affiliates, and which is useless. The key is to eliminate all campaigns that do not justify the investment you put into them.

Testing will allow you to differentiate the effective campaigns from the not so effective ones.

Update content of your eBook regularly

Keep updating the content of your affiliate program. Make sure that you update the topics and content of the eBook constantly. The content should always be informative and unique.

5.4 Getting affiliates to sell your product

One of the biggest fears new Affiliate managers have is in finding new affiliates. This fear is a stumbling block that stops many site owners from getting started with affiliate marketing. Interestingly, with a proper marketing strategy, getting affiliates may not be very difficult. Given below are some tips that may help in attracting new affiliates.

- Find complimentary sites - "Complementary" sites are a sites that sell products or services that compliment your offerings. If you sell "gardening tools", a site that sells books on "gardening tips" would be a perfect affiliate. If you sell software, try looking for sites that sell computers or computer parts. Finding sites that already attract your target market, and can benefit from recommending your product or service to their visitors, is the goal.

- Find content sites – There are many sites that do not sell any kind of product or service but are mainly content-oriented sites. Such sites promote an idea, concept, study or belief. Content sites that are used as a resource for your target market are ideal affiliates.

- Finally, there are several sites on the Internet dedicated to listing affiliate Programs. Get your program listed in these directories.

5.5 Affiliate Management Services

Managing your own Affiliate program may take up a lot of effort and time on your part. Besides, wouldn't you want to focus your energy on doing something more productive such as marketing your eBooks? If this is the case, Affiliate Management Services would surely be a good investment. For a reasonable cost, such services handle all the details of managing affiliate programs such as assigning affiliate codes, who earned what, sending out letters to new affiliates and more.

Given here is a list of some popular affiliate management services

- Assoctrac – www.assoctrac.com
- Affiliate Shop – www.affiliateshop.com
- Shop Cart – www.shopcart.com
- Click X Change – www.clickxchange.com

- ClickBank – www.clickbank.com

- Click Trade – www.clicktrade.com

- Commission Junction – www.commissionjunction.com

- Affiliate Zone – www.affiliatezone.com

- The Commish – www.solutionscripts.com

5.6 Promoting your eBook by joining other affiliate programs

You could also promote your eBooks through other affiliate programs. However, when you join other affiliate programs you need to promote their own products as well. The good news is that you obviously get to earn commission for every sale you make. Thus, promoting other programs have a two-fold benefit – you get to promote your own eBooks, and you get to earn additional income for your website by promoting other products on your website.

The key is to select the right affiliate program. Primarily you would like to select and promote an affiliate program that offers products that are similar to your eBooks. These could be other eBooks with similar subjects as well as other products that may compliment your eBook. Choosing the latter would be far more beneficial to you. For instance, if your eBook is about gardening, you could promote a program that offers various gardening tools, plant seeds, and so on and so forth. If your book is about dating, you could join a program that offers flowers, or even something like tickets to romantic cruises.

Apart from these there are various other factors that you need to consider before choosing an affiliate program. After all you would like to make money from promoting other products.

Here are a few tips:

- Firstly, can you add your own eBook to the product list so that other affiliates can promote your eBook. Without this option, the affiliate program would be useless to you, unless the purpose of promoting the program is only to earn additional income.

- What commission would you have to offer other affiliates/merchant account for each sale of your eBook?

- What commission would you get for promoting other products? Don't accept less than 25% commission. You can find affiliate programs with great payment structures and high percentages of the purchase price in just about every field.

- Look for comprehensive statistics pages that list the number of click-throughs, sales and earnings so you can see how you're doing. The information should be broken down by month.

- Find out how often you will be paid and make sure that the payment schedule meets your expectations. Some programs pay monthly, others quarterly; which is best for you?

- Look for examples of marketing methods that successful affiliates are using to get the best results.

- Make sure that top level support is given. If they can't answer your questions promptly and intelligently, you don't want to work with them.

- Think about the future. This takes some serious contemplation, sometimes with no result. But there can be great dividends for being first, possibly pioneering a niche. Study what differences do you see from six months or a year ago? What trends do you see?

- Does the affiliate program offer you a free way to join without buying the product or service?

- Contact other affiliates already in the program to see if they have had any problems.

- Can they notify you by e-mail when a sale is made?

- Do they offer backend products so you can get repeat sales from the same person?

- How often will you receive a commission check?

- Can you get around-the-clock help online or offline?

- Do you get a large percentage of each sale as commission?

- Do they provide you with proven sales material? (links, banners, classified ads, sales letters etc)

- Will they give you the leeway to create promotional ads?

- Do they offer you access to an online sales stats page?

- Do they use a reputable system to track your sales?

- Does the affiliate program pay commission for sales of people who sign up under you?

- Can they offer customers a lot of different ordering options, so in return you won't lose sales?

- Will they keep in contact with you on a regular basis by e-mail?

5.7 Avoidable mistakes

- Many affiliate marketers make a huge mistake of posting their ads on forums. Forums can be used to promote your affiliate programs and your website but in a proper manner. Posting banners is very similar to spamming and may easily upset forum administrators.

- Always do your research before promoting your affiliate program to a potential customer. Do not offer affiliate programs to visitors who are not at all interested in the products associated with the program. This is a futile endeavor.

- If you promote affiliate programs offered by other merchants, ensure that you develop your own advertising copy. Many websites commit a common mistake of using the same advertising copy as used by the merchant themselves.

- Avoid Copyright infringement in all cases. Always use original content or ask permission to use graphic images or text found on other websites.

- Do not submit your programs to free websites. These may be free but your programs would hardly ever be noticed, especially by Search Engines. Moreover,

your own ranking would get lowered if you submit your affiliate programs to such websites.

- Avoid using caps on your web page or email ad. Using caps is symbolic to shouting, which never goes well with potential customers. A few words may be written in capital text to give them additional emphasis. However, such practice should be limited.

- Always respond to all queries sent by visitors as soon as possible. A slight delay in your response could easily result in loss of a potential client.

- Do not use pop-up ads along with your webpage. Most surfers are likely to close their browser if they come across pop-ups.

- Do not host your website on a free server or use free email accounts. This gives a negative impression to visitors. Using free hosts and email accounts looks cheesy and loses sales.

- Many websites do not have an opt-in list. Create an opt-in and opt-out list for your visitors. Without these, there is no way of tracking potential customers. Visitors should be allowed to opt-in at any time as well as opt-out at any time.

- Most sites have a poor tracking mechanism. It is essential that you track all business activities. Accurate record keeping is crucial. There are many software tools, discussed earlier in this chapter, than can automate your record keeping process with minimal error.

- A 'mall' site is best used as a central hub to send visitors to your other domains. As a main or only site, unfocused mall sites don't get traffic from the engines, and they don't convert well to sales. Highly focused theme sites attract traffic and sales.

- Offline advertising may not be effective. A lot of money and effort should not be wasted on offline advertising. Most people rarely check websites that are advertised in local magazines or newspapers.

- Avoid focus on animated banner ads. These simply use up bandwidth, thus making web pages load slower.

- While advertising do not degrade other competitors. It is recommended that you highlight your products' uniqueness and superiority but never mortify other products.

- Banners or text links that expire are guaranteed to eventually send your visitor to a broken link or show a broken graphic on your page. Time sensitive advertising is best used only in email advertising campaigns.

- Never put affiliate links on your homepage. This is similar to asking your visitors to leave immediately. Give them a chance to browse, sign up for your newsletter and decide that they'd like to come back to your place before introducing them to your affiliates.

- Technology changes with amazing speed. To keep up with this rapidly evolving industry, you must invest time and money in research. The investment is a tax write-off, and will pay you back many times over in additional revenue.

- Finally, persist with your plan. It might take you time to get established even if you have a solid marketing plan. Persistence is the single most important factor in determining success online or off.

5.8 Getting affiliate directories and networks to promote your eBook

Affiliate Networks act as brokers or mediators between affiliate merchants and affiliates. One of the major benefits of affiliate networks is that affiliates have access to a variety of affiliate programs at a single source. These can be good places to either submit your eBook for promotion (if possible), or join such affiliate networks and promote your eBooks and other products.

Given below is a list of popular affiliate networks:

- Affiliate Fuel
- Affiliate Traders
- ClickBank
- ClickxChange
- clixGalore
- Linkshare
- ReferBack

Similarly, affiliate directories are websites that list various affiliate programs. The programs are listed by category of product. Mostly, affiliate directories would list programs that are not associated with any affiliate network. These sites or directories may be a good source for promoting your eBooks. You should find directories which advertise similar affiliate programs and approach them to promote your own eBook as most of these are generally high traffic sites. A list of directories is given below:

- Affiliate-Options.com
- ClickQuick.com
- Refer-It.com
- Associate Programs.com
- Affiliates Directory

- 10-Best-Affiliate-Programs.com

- PetAffiliatePrograms.com

- Gr1innovations.com

6. Final Thoughts

6.1 Avoiding the most common marketing mistakes

eBooks offer great potential as an online business. Yet, the eBook industry has by no means blossomed completely. You see many people failing to sell eBooks even if they have a great product. Often this is a result of marketers not following the basics right. Here are some common marketing pitfalls to avoid.

Do not expect to earn much with a single eBook

eBooks are great but they aren't so great that a single eBook could be enough to make a living on. Unless you stumble across one of those rare eBooks, you will need to offer a line of related eBooks and/or other products to really extract gold from information.

This does not imply that you have to create all eBooks or related products yourself. We have discussed various tactics in this eBook wherein you could sell eBooks and products created by others.

Concentrate your product line

Many marketers make the mistake of diversifying too much in order to target all kinds of audiences. This might not help at least initially. Whatever eBooks you create should be related or at least not completely dissimilar. Besides, any complimentary products should be associated with your eBooks. Do not sell a disconnected mixture of unrelated products.

Ineffective Marketing

Like I stated earlier, most marketers make a mistake of highlighting their company services and products instead of highlighting the benefits of each of the product of eBook. Always focus on how each eBook of yours would benefit customers. Sell your eBook not your company.

Perseverance is the key

Do not expect to make riches overnight. eBooks like any other legitimate product require a persistent marketing effort. It may take days before you sell your first eBook.   A

sizable number of prospects won't respond to marketing communications the first time, for various reasons. But presenting the message repeatedly - perhaps a second, third, fourth, fifth time, or more - will eventually convince a percentage of them to act on the offer.

Keep your information updated

There is no use selling eBooks that have outdated content. Information has to be constantly updated. Updating can inject new life into an eBook, and its newness can be used as a 'hook' to gain valuable free publicity. Besides, focus on subjects that are new and interesting. Age old topics would not attract many customers.

Do not price your eBooks too low

You may think that pricing an eBook would bring in more sales. This is not true as we discussed earlier. eBooks are all about how the customers perceive them to be. If you price your eBook very low compared to your competitor, a prospective customer might think that the eBook is not of good quality. Price your book competitively. Besides, your profit margin would be almost zilch with a low price.

Test your product

Testing frequently is crucial for succeeding in the eBook business. You do not want a situation where you have invested too much time, money and effort into your eBook only to find out that the topic of the eBook is outdated. The only way of avoiding this is to start with a simple eBook and gathering frequent feedback from your customers. This way you would find mistakes and areas for improvement until you have a proven seller in your kitty.

Test your marketing campaign

Like the product itself, your marketing campaign also needs to be tested frequently. You need to be extra cautious with the way you use your limited capital. You can lose a lot of money quickly, if not careful. Testing your marketing campaign would help you to figure out which strategies work well and which don't. This will certainly maximize your ROI.

6.2 Conclusion – The Future of eBooks

eBooks are great information products that sell extremely well if marketed properly. However, the transition from physical books to eBooks is a very slow one. Publishers have operated a very successful and orderly economic model for about 500 years now. You need a compelling commercial story to woo them into a different model.

The adoption of eBooks has been slower than expected. Nevertheless, the future for eBooks is very bright. More and more publishers are turning to eBooks. We find that

eBooks now sell much more compared to a year or two ago. Many websites have come up that list innumerable eBooks. Publishers are fast accepting digital distribution.

eBooks have various advantages of the traditional physical book. However, there is a big room for improvement in the way eBooks are created and distributed. The downloading process needs to be simplified. The reading platforms have to be stable. Oddly, consumers don't voluntarily repeat disappointing shopping experiences. And it's repeat customers that the industry needs, in order to grow and be real.

As the eBook range grows and the process of creating, publishing, buying and selling eBooks improves this low cost channel will certainly come into its own.