

Beyond the newbie stage of online marketing

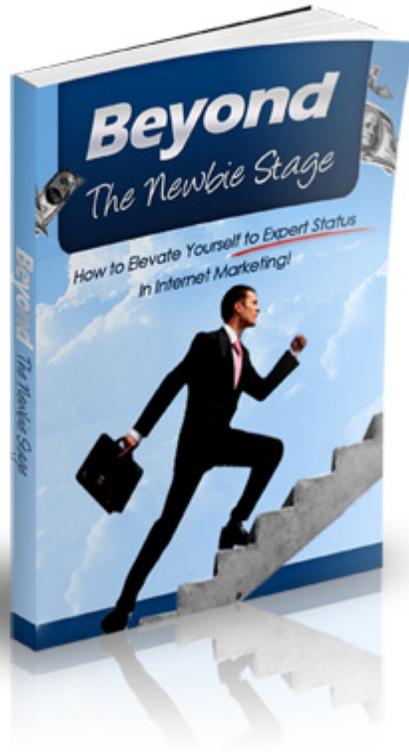


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Introduction

One of the great things about making money on the net is that generating cash from online marketing is something that is available to everyone. It doesn't matter whether you have a college degree or not, and unlike most occupations, past experience is not necessary either.

Another thing that makes online marketing such an attractive option if you are looking for a way to make money is that unlike most offline business options you could name, you don't need a big chunk of cash to launch an online business either.

This does not mean that money doesn't help, or that there is no cost associated with online marketing. On the contrary, if you have some money to invest in your business, it can accelerate your journey towards success by a significant margin but if there is no money available, you can still achieve success as long as you are willing to put the time and effort in.

When an individual first gets started in online marketing, they are by definition a beginner, someone who has just started their online marketing career. In net marketing parlance, they are a 'newbie', someone who is just learning the ropes.

When you are still at the online marketing newbie stage, it can be tough as there are many distractions and pitfalls that can get in your way. In fact, there are so many potential mistakes and things that can go wrong that it is generally agreed that of the people who decide to make money online, more than 95% will never get anywhere whereas less than 5% will make money and achieve some degree of success.

Consequently, it is fair to suggest that it is in no way a given that if you decide you want to earn money from the net that you will do so. Indeed, the bare stats suggest very much the opposite as highlighted above.

So, the focus of this book is very firmly fixed on how you move past the newbie stage of online marketing without falling foul of the many pitfalls

and hurdles that can easily derail your nascent net-based money marketing career.

Here you are going to learn about the mistakes that so many newbies fall foul of to prevent them achieving success and how you can avoid doing the same.

Will this guarantee your success?

Sadly, probably not because there are so many variables that ultimately decide whether you are successful or not, and not all of them are controllable. For example, as with every situation in life, being in the right place at the right time can have a huge impact on how successful you are and this is not really something that you have any control over.

But here's the thing.

If you know what the mistakes to avoid are, you can avoid making them. If you are aware of how you take your business to the next level, you can do so.

Both of these factors increase your chances of achieving success by a huge margin, and after reading this book, you will have a clear understanding of what these mistakes are and how you can avoid them.

The number one mistake

In my experience, probably the biggest single problem that online marketing newbies have when they decide to try marketing or making money on the net is that they come at this business from completely the wrong angle or perspective.

Whilst a few people who have previous business experience approach the concept of working on the net in the same way as they approached their previous business ventures, the vast majority don't. It is therefore no coincidence that these people are generally the ones who are most likely to fail.

Allow me to 'paint' a fairly common scenario so that you can see why this happens.

People who start trying to earn money online for the first time do so because they need extra cash. Whether this is because they need to replace the income that they have lost as a result of a job loss or whether it is to generate a supplemental income to pay for holidays, better Christmas presents for the kids or whatever, the fact is, they need money.

Now, let me say straight away that if you find yourself in the same situation, there is nothing intrinsically wrong with turning to the net to generate the extra cash that you need. Indeed, as pointed out in the introduction, there are so many advantages to running a net-based business that if you don't have any other more obvious moneymaking opportunities available, using the net to generate additional cash makes a lot of sense.

But, coming at the notion of making money from the net with no other parameters, guidelines or controls than a vague notion that you'd like to make some extra money is an almost certain recipe for disaster for one simple reason.

The moneymaking side of the net is a veritable jungle populated by thousands of different products all vying for your attention and your money.

Every one of these products will brazenly proclaim that they are the key that you need if you are to unlock your online fortune. In addition, many of them will make ridiculous, outlandish claims about the amount of money you can make that will inevitably turn the head of an online marketing newbie who sees these claims for the first time.

The fact is, there are hundreds of online marketing products which range in quality and effectiveness from being outstanding to appalling. And of course, as an online marketing beginner, it is impossible to sort the wheat from the chaff without spending money on products like these. It is therefore all too easy to make expensive mistakes that mean that you end up spending money on the net, rather than earning it.

Wasting money in this way (unavoidable as it may be) is a mistake that will derail your marketing career before it has even got properly started.

You therefore need to think long and hard before you start spending money, because once you have got the mental side of online marketing sorted out, the rest becomes relatively straightforward.

The first thing that you need to do is to identify exactly what it is that motivates you, or what it is that is driving you to run your own online business. As suggested earlier in this chapter, it may be because your job has gone so you have no choice or it might be to put extra cash in the bank for the luxuries of life such as foreign holidays, a new car or even a new home.

Whatever it is, you need to identify this 'driver' because each and every day when you are actively involved in running your business, you need to keep this motivational factor in the forefront of your mind because this enables you to stay motivated and focused.

In fact, what I would recommend is that if the motivation behind your business activities is something that can be pictured, then why not add a picture of whatever it is that is driving you to the wall behind your monitor or on the whiteboard that you use for business planning (more of which later)?

For example, if it's better holidays that you're working towards, why not put up exotic beach scene pictures in a place where you cannot avoid seeing them every morning or evening when you start work? If it is toys for the children's Christmas, use family pictures of Christmases past for exactly the same purpose.

This helps because no matter how thorough your business plan is, you cannot anticipate or foresee every possible eventuality. The unexpected will happen (e.g. you're half way through creating a video and your PC crashes) and when it does, it is often extremely frustrating and annoying.

Having the motivation in your clear line of vision will help you get over those times when it might be a little difficult to keep going as it will not allow you to forget what got you started in the first place.

Online marketing is a real business

Why this concept is absolutely critical

Most marketers decide that they need extra money and that the net is as good a place as any to generate the additional income that they need.

So far, so good and nothing wrong with this at all.

But just having a vague notion that earning some extra money from the net might be nice idea is not the basis for starting a business. And, whether you have realized it or not, if you're going to market on the net in an effort to generate additional income, then what you are doing is running a business, nothing more and nothing less.

Now, understanding that marketing online is a real business may not seem very important but it is in fact a critical notion to take on board. If you don't accept and understand this and approach your online marketing activities as a hobby or interest, you have immediately made it infinitely harder to achieve success.

According to Dictionary.com, a hobby can be defined as 'an activity or interest pursued for pleasure or relaxation and *not as a main occupation*' (my emphasis). You can maybe see the problem as suggested by this definition?

Attempting to make money from the net is a serious business and should be treated as such. It is not a hobby or pastime, because if you treat it as a hobby, then what you want get in return for your efforts is a hobby level income.

Even if you are running your online marketing business on a part-time basis, it makes no difference. It is a business and has to be treated as such from the very beginning.

It is absolutely critical that you understand and follow this seemingly simple guideline because if you do so, you will set yourself apart from the majority of would-be online marketing millionaires who simply don't get it.

If however you treat your online marketing activities as a hobby or pastime, then the chances of achieving success are almost zero for lots of different reasons.

Think of it this way.

If you were setting up a business in your local shopping mall or High Street, you wouldn't treat that as a hobby or interest, nor would you go into it with nothing more than some vague idea about 'making money'. After all, setting up a business of this type is going to cost you many thousands of dollars, so of course you would take the whole thing very, very seriously.

Okay, so when you set up an online marketing business, you do not need to spend thousands of dollars on getting started. Nevertheless, that doesn't change the fact that it is still a genuine business in exactly the same way that it would be if you open a store in the mall.

Once you accept that what you're doing when you start generating an online income is running a business, then an awful lot of other factors should fall into place pretty much straight away.

Why planning is crucial but can be difficult

Once you understand that your net marketing activities constitute a real business, the next step should be obvious. There is no successful business on the face of planet Earth that has ever achieved success without having a business plan in place, and there is no reason to expect that you can buck the trend by attempting to run your online business without having such a plan in place.

Now, the thing here is that before you can put such a business plan in place, the first thing that you need to know is how you're going to make money.

And deciding how you're going to make money on the net is another hurdle or pitfall that will often cause problems for a newbie who is not yet really sure of what they're doing.

The problem here is that there is simply too much choice. There are dozens (if not hundreds) of different ways of making money from the net, and thousands of products that at least in theory teach you how to do so.

The problem is that many of these products are contradictory, as they often relate the authors or creators own personal methods of making money on the net. Whilst this means that assuming that the product creator is telling the truth (which fortunately, the majority do), you can follow their methods and make money, this is not always the case.

Furthermore, because there are so many different products available many of which tell a different story, it can become incredibly confusing if you are trying to find a way of making money that suits you.

Take as an example the idea of making money by selling 'stuff' on eBay. Given that this is the world's number-one auction site, you would think that making money by selling something on eBay would be relatively straightforward and that there would be a fairly widely agreed, standardized process for making money doing so.

If however you search Google for something like 'make money from eBay', you will see that there is an awful lot of information available with over seven and a half million results indexed:

Results 1 - 10 of about 7,580,000 for "[make money from eBay](#)".

Take a look at any of the eBay results returned and you will find the huge amount of information and advice, but a lot of this advice will

appear to be contradictory. Consequently, it is very difficult to know to do for the best.

Because there is so much information available, many new online marketers suffer what is known as 'analysis paralysis', or an overabundance of information in other words. As they have too much information available, they become confused as to what works and what doesn't, with the result that they do nothing because they are scared of making the wrong choices.

This problem is exacerbated by the fact that most newbie marketers are sometimes a little gullible when it comes to online marketing products.

As a result, many people who have just started marketing on the net seem to have complete faith that the next 'latest and greatest' product is the one that they have been waiting for, the one that is finally going to shoot them to online marketing superstardom.

As an example, they might see an information product that promises to show them how they can make \$10,000 a day using Google AdSense, so they buy it.

They read it and maybe they start to put into action the plan about which they have just read. If so, the chances are that they will not stick with it very long because they want to start making money quickly and this particular way of doing so doesn't seem to be working for them.

And of course, they have already signed up for the mailing lists of all of the big names in the industry, so a couple of days later, information about the next wonder product, the one that is absolutely guaranteed to make their fortune, arrives in their e-mail inbox. And of course they buy it and try it, only to find that they make no more money with this product than they were with the previous one, hence they cast it aside and buy something else that is a 'guaranteed winner'.

It is incredibly common for online marketing newbies to jump from one product to another in this way. Because they get sucked in by the hype, it is all too easy for them to believe that the latest product on the

market is the one that they must have, so they buy product after product in a never-ending search for something that really doesn't exist, and of course they waste a huge amount of money in their fruitless search.

And equally obviously, whilst they are jumping from product to product, they are not focusing their efforts and attention on just one business plan or strategy, which further compounds the tragedy.

So, having painted a fairly dispiriting picture of what you shouldn't be doing, now let me give you an idea of what you should do.

The first thing is to do some research so that you can make an informed decision about the kind of online business that you are going to run with. Whether this is making money from eBay, affiliate marketing, creating niche targeted blogs that you monetize with AdSense or whatever, you have to pick one business model and stick with it.

What you are looking for is a step-by-step guide to doing one thing well, because if you can find a business strategy that is proven to work and stick with it, you will make money.

Once you have a strategy that you are going to use, you are almost ready to start creating your business plan, but not quite because there is still one crucial factor that you have to sort out before pushing ahead.

Decide what you want, but stay real

If you have an idea of what kind of business you want to start with, you must also set objectives or targets for that business. Without having an objective or a target, your business activities are inevitably going to be unfocused and random because if you don't know where you're going with your business, you have no chance of arriving at a satisfactory destination.

You wouldn't set off on a trip in your car tomorrow without knowing where you're going and either knowing how you get there or at least

having a map or a navigation system to help you do so. Well, trying to run a business without having any idea of what you want to achieve is exactly the same as setting off with no idea where you're going and no clue about how to get there.

Now of course, you want to as much money as possible from the net as quickly as you can, but this is not an objective or target. You have to define how much money you want to earn and set a time scale in which you want to achieve that ambition or hit that target.

On the other hand, what you must avoid is setting unrealistic or overambitious targets that you have no realistic chance of achieving. Irrespective of whether the sales page for the 'how to' product that you have just bought tells you that you can make thousands of dollars every day utilizing this particular moneymaking business model, you can't, or at least, you shouldn't expect to start earning a fortune straightaway.

Be realistic with your target, and read around the net about the particular business strategy that you are thinking of following to get an idea of how much money you are likely to make. This is important because it helps you to have a realistic idea of what you can expect to earn, which in turn helps you to establish achievable objectives.

As an example, if you are going to create a niche targeted blog site that will be monetized with AdSense, this is a site that you can realistically expect to generate \$50-200 a month as long as you set it up correctly. Thus, if you can set up one a week (which should not be too difficult), then after six months, you would have 26 niche targeted sites generating \$1300 a month or more.

This might not seem a great deal of money, but remember that this is money you are generating without having to sell anything and of course, some of your niche blogs are likely to generate considerably more than \$50, so the real figure is likely to be higher.

Nevertheless, it gives you a realistic ball-park figure to start with as an objective or minimum target.

Pulling the plan together

To continue with this example, if you know that your objective is to build 26 niche targeted blog sites over the first six months of your online marketing career, then you can start formulating your business plan by working backwards from this to establish exactly what you need to do to hit the target.

To create your business plan, I would firstly recommend that you use either a whiteboard, a very large piece of paper or mind-mapping software like [Freemind](#) to create your plan.

The reason that you should use one of these resources to create a business plan is that by doing so, you can add different business ideas to the 'plan' in a relatively random manner rather than in a sequential way as you would if you were writing things down line by line on a piece of paper. This allows you to 'group' things together as necessary once you are satisfied that you have everything noted on your plan which makes the whole planning process more logical.

Once you're ready to start planning, you need to brainstorm the questions that you need to address.

For instance, if you are going to create 26 niche targeted blogs, are they all going to be in the same market or in different markets? If for example you had a series of blogs that were all focused on the weight loss market, this might be advantageous in terms of linking each blog to the others and it could make things easier if you were to become an expert on one topic rather than being someone who tries to get by with 26 blogs that focus on completely different markets.

How are you going to find enough niche ideas to create your blogs? Using resources such as [eBay Pulse](#), [Amazon.com](#), [Yahoo! Answers](#) and [43 Things](#) will help you to come up with a list of things that people are searching for on the net, but what particular aspect of these interests should you create blogs for?

You have already decided that you want to monetize your site with [AdSense](#) but how are you going to drive targeted visitors to your blogs? Without targeted visitors, you're not going to make any money, so this is a crucial question to address.

One way that you can publicize your blogs is by publishing articles on major article directory sites like [EzineArticles](#) or [GoArticles](#) but if you are going to do so, are you going to write the articles yourself or will you get someone else to do it for you?

What about the articles that you publish on your blogs? Where are those going to come from because each of your sites will need at least half a dozen unique articles, so do you have the time and the aptitude to write them or not (hint: take a look at [Mechanical Turk](#) for a place where you can get content created very cheaply)?

Videos are a great way of publicizing your activities, with millions of people visiting leading video networking sites like [YouTube](#), [Google video](#), [Daily Motion](#) and [MetaCafe](#) every day. Consequently, if you can publish video content that is focused on the same niche as your blogs, you can get a ton of free visitors, so it is definitely something you should do (use [Tube Mogul](#) to mass upload your video to more than 20 of the top video networking sites for free).

To do so, you need video ideas and the equipment and/or resources necessary to make these videos.

Do the ideas you have necessitate using a digital camcorder, and if so, do you have such equipment or can you afford to buy it? If on the other hand your videos are going to feature 'action' that can be recorded from your computer screen, you don't need to buy anything as you can use free recoding software like [CamStudio](#) and editing software such as [Tab ZS4](#).

As you will discover if you have not already, there are literally hundreds of different ways you can drive targeted visitors to your site, and every time you come across a new traffic generation strategy, you should add it to your business plan 'chart' or mind map.

This is why you should use a resource like a whiteboard or mind mapping software where you can add new information in a seemingly random manner as all of your new traffic ideas need to be grouped together into an overall traffic generation sub-plan.

You should also have a content creation sub-plan and so on until you have all necessary parts of your business plan pulled together.

Don't overcomplicate things

If you search the net, you can find lots of places where there are [free business plan samples](#) available. Often times, these business plans are complex and very wordy, mainly because most are business plans that are primarily designed for handing out to potential business investors.

If you are in a position where you're trying to invite outside investment into your online business, creating an equally detailed business plan of this type might have some value. However, assuming that the business plan you are creating is only for your own use, it makes far more sense to keep it simple and straightforward rather than making it overly complex and lengthy.

To continue with an earlier analogy, what you need is a roadmap that gets you from point 'A' to point 'B', not a high-definition atlas of every country on the face of the planet.

The simpler and more straightforward you can keep your plan, the more effective your plan is likely to be as simplicity makes it far easier to focus on the most important aspects of what you are doing as there is little or no clutter to distract you from your main targets.

A plan is not always enough

Having a well thought out and comprehensive business plan is something that you absolutely must have if you do not intend to stay at the bottom of the online business pecking order for ever. However, having a plan is not enough on its own because it is not the plan that runs your business or takes action, it is you.

Consequently, once you have identified exactly what your motivation for attempting to make money online is, established objectives that will define success for you and created a business plan that will allow you to achieve those objectives, you must introduce certain personal qualities to the mix to make the whole thing happen.

The first thing that you need is determination, because without this characteristic, it is all too easy to give up at the first sign of difficulty or frustration. Unfortunately however, it is a lack of determination and a willingness to do whatever is necessary to make things work that leads so many marketers to jump from one product to another without ever giving any one idea enough time and effort to achieve success.

Once you have decided upon the particular business model that you want to follow, it is determination or willpower that will to a large extent dictate how successful you are going to be.

You need to accept from the beginning that there will undoubtedly be times when things do not go the way you want because this is what happens in everything you ever do in your life.

But if at the very first sign of difficulties, you simply give up and decide to try something else because this particular idea obviously doesn't work, you are never going to give any single business strategy enough time to be successful.

On top of determination, you need perseverance plus both the ability and willingness to put in the necessary hard work.

Despite what you might read elsewhere, running an online business is no easier or more difficult than running any other kind of business, and you wouldn't expect to start your own haulage business, Law practice or butchers shop and be able to get away without putting in some time and effort.

Exactly the same requirement for work and effort applies to running a net-based business as well.

It is extremely important to have the ability to remain focused and to ignore distractions. And in the same vein, it is also vital that you understand the importance of prioritised what needs to be done so that you can identify what are the real essentials of running your business and what are distractions.

For example, many marketers leave online chat utilities like [MSN](#) or [Yahoo! Messenger](#) permanently enabled so that people can contact them instantly. Do not be tempted to do this, but it serves no purpose. The truth of the matter is, 99.9% of the time it is not necessary to have instant chat utilities open as all they do most of the time is distract you from the main tasks on which you should be focused.

In a similar manner, whilst it can sometimes serve a purpose, you should avoid spending all your time on forum sites and in chat rooms even if these sites are based on the niche in which you are marketing.

Whilst there are some situations where forums are useful (as you will discover later), participating for the sake of doing so is a distraction, one that can eat up many hours every day.

Posting a constant stream of updated Tweets on [Twitter](#) is another fun activity that can eat up inordinate amounts of time without you ever even realizing it.

Focus is absolutely essential because assuming that you have only a certain number of hours every day to dedicate to your online business activities, you have to use that time as profitably as possible.

For this reason, I would suggest that at the beginning of every week, you list down everything that needs to be achieved during that week.

Then, group everything on your list together as logically as possible before allocating a specific day where everything in a particular group has to be dealt with.

I would recommend that you then finesse your timetabling still further by shifting the two most difficult, unpleasant or obdurate tasks to the top of your list so that they are the first two (or three) jobs that have to be done. If you get the most difficult or unpleasant jobs out of the way first, then everything else that you have to do becomes relatively easy and straightforward, hence the reason for organizing your daily calendar in this way.

At the end of every work session, you should hopefully have checked off every job on the daily list as being completed. However, because the only thing that you can ever rely on 100% is the unexpected, there will be times when you don't get everything on your list finished on the day you intend.

In this situation, I would still recommend that you deal with the most unpleasant tasks on the next daily worksheet first before going back to the unfinished jobs from yesterday.

And of course, on those days when everything goes perfectly and you are in fact ahead of schedule, it makes sense to start dealing with the next day's work a day early.

However, in this situation, leave the task table topping difficult jobs until tomorrow and instead focus on some relatively straightforward tasks, as you have already dealt with today's 'toughies' and two or three difficult jobs is enough for anyone in one day.

The last thing that you should bring to the online marketing table is a sense of fun and adventure. Whilst I have stressed on many occasions that marketing online is a serious business, it does not necessarily follow that it has to be a business which is not fun or enjoyable.

In fact, once you really know what you're doing, you should find that the whole thing is fun, something that feels more like a hobby or pastime than it feels like work.

This is great because if something is fun and perhaps a bit exciting, it is far easier to remain enthusiastic about what you are doing. In turn, enthusiasm means that you will do whatever needs to be done far more effectively and efficiently than you would if it was a hard slog for you. Hence, you should try not to forget how important it is to make the whole online marketing adventure as much fun and as exciting as possible.

Of course, for most of us who market online, the real excitement comes when you start seeing money land in your PayPal or Clickbank account, and there is no doubt that once the money starts rolling in, it is far easier to keep your motivation levels high.

But as long as you remember that all of these personal qualities or characteristics are required if you are to achieve the success you want to achieve, you will not go very far wrong.

Ask for help if necessary

I have already suggested that there is a huge amount of information about making money on the net out there in the market and that this oversupply of information can often be more harmful than it is helpful.

And the fact is that if you are like most people who have just started or are about to start their own online marketing business, you're probably doing so on your own, so faced with this massive information mountain, it is very easy to become confused, distracted or waylaid.

For this reason, it may make sense to try to find someone with whom you can work and from whom you can learn. There are a couple of different ways you can do this, with the best option for you probably being dependent upon how much experience you have and where you are in your online marketing career at the moment.

If you are someone who has already mastered certain basic online marketing skills, your knowledge allied to any previous experience that you have already acquired means you have an asset, albeit an intangible one. In online marketing, possibly more than in any other business environment, knowledge and experience represent real assets and if you have an asset, you have something that other marketers will place a value on.

What this means is, if you have something of value to bring to the table, you can look for [joint-venture partners](#) with whom you can work.

When online marketers set up joint-venture partnerships, the basic idea is that every member of that partnership (it could be two people or more) bring something of value to the table which the other partners cannot bring, and has suggested, with experience and knowledge under your belt, you have an asset to offer potential partners.

For instance, say you want to build a great looking website using JavaScript, but you have absolutely no JavaScript skills whatsoever. What you do have however are traffic generation skills, so an ideal

scenario would be for you to find someone who has the necessary ability with JavaScript with whom you can work.

To find people with whom you can 'team up' in this way should not be particularly difficult either. For instance, the first place I would look for suitable partners would be the main forum sites in the niche in which I am operating.

As an example, if I want to find someone who can build a site for me and hopefully teach me some JavaScript at the same time, I would look to the number one online marketing forum, the [Warrior Forum](#).

Here you would find exactly the right kind of people to do the job that you need doing:

Warrior Support Forums	
	Programming Talk (13 Viewing) All things programming - PHP, CGI, ASP...etc
	Website Design (23 Viewing) HTML, CSS, DHTML - All things about Website Design
	TEST FORUM (3 Viewing) Make test posts here. Try things out...etc.

If you had a project in mind (and you do, because why would you be looking for a JavaScript expert otherwise?), you can find someone to help you and offer them a share of the proceeds of the project that you're working on.

In a joint-venture operation of this nature, you and your partner (or partners) would all be equals in the project, but for this to happen, you must have some skill or ability to bring to the partnership table.

If you do not as yet have these skills or abilities, your situation is slightly different.

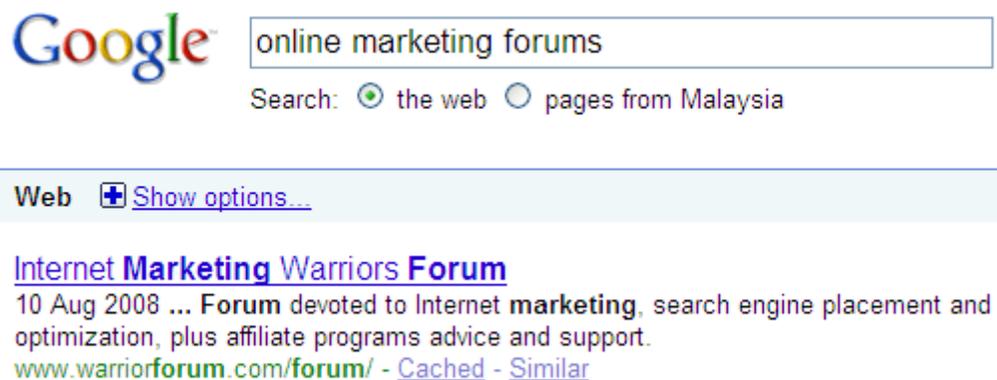
In this case, what you should be looking for is a teacher or mentor rather than a partner. What you really need is someone from whom you can learn, someone who will train you from the ground up so that you learn everything that you need to know from an expert.

There are several ways that you can find people who would be willing to and capable of mentoring or teaching you everything you need to know about online marketing. But remember, you need to learn from someone who really knows what they are doing so you can learn the stuff that really matters whilst avoiding the distractions.

Consequently, finding a mentor is in essence a two-stage process, as you firstly need to find someone, and secondly you need to verify that they have the ability or experience to give you what you need.

The first strategy for finding someone who can genuinely teach you what you need to know is to do so is through the leading forum sites in your market sector. Running a straightforward Google search for forums in your niche will show you which are the most popular, as they will be the ones at the top of the search results page.

For example, a search for 'online marketing forums' does indeed show the Warrior Forum in the number one Google position:



More often than not, if you can find a forum site that is obviously the leader in your market sector or niche, you will find that most of the 'big names' in your industry will participate in this forum.

These people are unlikely to be regular contributors, primarily because they follow the advice that I gave you earlier about avoiding spending too much of your time on forum sites.

After all (and continuing to use the Warrior Forum and online marketing as our example), the 'big guns' of internet marketing are too busy earning millions of dollars every year through their net-based business activities to spend hours every day on a forum.

Nevertheless, it is a fact that even the top boys in the industry will contribute to the leading forum sites in your market sector every now and then, and all you need to do is to spot who they are.

Luckily, this is not particularly difficult as other members of the forum will generally point you in the right direction if you watch what is going on closely enough.

What tends to happen when one of the 'big players' gets involved is that lots of other members will jump into the forum thread that the expert has started or contributed to. However, because these people are doing nothing more than jumping on the bandwagon, there will be a surfeit of 'Way to go' John' or 'That's exactly right, Mike' kind of comments from people who are trying to associate themselves with this more 'famous' individual.

Consequently, when you see a thread that runs and runs which is packed with fairly asinine comments such as those highlighted in the previous paragraph, you can be almost certain that the individual who has started that thread is an expert with whom other less well-known members want to associate themselves. All you then need to do is go back through that individual's posting history and you should be able to establish whether they are a recognized expert or not pretty quickly.

This method is of course not fool-proof, so you may get some 'false leads' but as a general rule, I have found that this works a surprising amount of the time.

To take this concept a step further, imagine that by using this method, you have found someone who is obviously an expert in your market, a well-known authority in your niche.

Quite clearly, you cannot just come straight out to ask this person to help you. After all, they do not know you from Adam and until you have done a lot more background research on them, you don't know whether the business idea that you're thinking of adopting will place you in direct competition with them or not.

Hence, once you have found someone (or even better, several potential candidates), you need to do your background research to find out as much as you can about them. In addition to establishing whether you are going to be in direct competition with them or not, this research can help to uncover a few more highly cogent factors.

Firstly, it will allow you to build up a broad picture of their business interests, experience and skills. This should help to clarify whether they are the kind of person you should be approaching for assistance or not. Having this background knowledge will also make a difference when you first approach them for their help as you will discover a little later.

The second thing that you may discover is that they might already have some kind of mentoring or training materials available, meaning that instead of having to approach them directly to ask for help, you can sign up for their program or product instead. This is particularly common in online marketing circles because one of the ways that many of the top guys in net marketing made their money is by selling training and mentoring products and services.

If you find something like this is available, you already have the answer to how you can get them to train you, so it is just a question of signing up or buying the product or service on offer.

If however there is no recognized training or teaching product available, you have to be a little more creative about how you approach them.

The point to remember here is that the people who have reached the top of the tree in your industry have done so for a reason. Basically, they had a well thought out, professionally formulated business plan which they followed with determination and absolute focus so that they achieved what they set out to achieve.

This means two things as far as you are concerned.

Firstly, these people are incredibly busy, and it therefore may be that they simply don't have the time to help you achieve your objectives. Secondly, even if they do have the time available, they do not want to work with lazy no-hopers, so you have to give a great deal of thought and consideration to how you can prove that you are worthy of their attention and help.

The first thing to do is to start getting involved with them through your favorite forum site where you originally 'found' them. However, bearing in mind that the objective of participating is to make this individual take notice of you in a positive way, there are several things that you need to do when contributing to the forum.

You need to watch out for when they start a new thread and get involved as quickly as possible. The sooner you can add your comments to this thread, the more powerful doing so will be as a tactic for getting noticed, simply because you'll be closer to the top of the page and their thread-starting post.

You must contribute something of value to the conversation or discussion as a 'Way to go, John' type comment is a complete waste of time. You do not necessarily have to agree with them or support their position as long as you can present a reasonable argument for why you are taking a contrary view.

In fact, if you can do this properly, being contrarian is often the most effective strategy because as often as not, they are not used to people disagreeing with them – the normal 'yes men' who almost certainly bore them to death are far more the norm.

The bottom line is, it doesn't matter whether you agree or disagree as long as you add something of value to the discussion and that you do so as soon as possible after they start the discussion in question.

Use your knowledge of them and their business to make sure that your contribution stands out. As an example, if an online marketing expert who has created many AdSense focused products starts a thread about AdSense, you know from your research that if you contribute to that thread by suggesting that this is not a great way of making money, you are sure to get a response. You would of course have to justify your stance with reasoned arguments, but as long as you could do so, this is the kind of thing that would certainly get their attention.

Do this over a period of time and you will inevitably start to be noticed for all the right reasons.

Wait for them to react to one or two of your postings before starting to engage in a conversation with them. This is incidentally why disagreeing is often such a powerful tactic as it is far more likely that they will react when you disagree than if you agree.

Once you start to engage in this conversation, you have started the ball rolling and gradually, over time, you will come to a point where you can begin to ask for guidance or assistance. Exactly when you reach this point is something only you can decide, but once the first conversation is started, it shouldn't be too long afterwards.

But even having done all of the preparatory work, it is not a given that this person is going to be either willing to help you or to be in a position to do so.

So, there must be a second option because if 'plan A' doesn't work, you must have an alternative 'plan B'.

In this case, the second option is to look at sites that are focused on finding mentors for people who need them. [This Canadian site](#) lists dozens of sites where you should be able to find a suitable mentor with

whom you can work and from whom you can learn, so I would definitely recommend that you take a look.

At the top of the page, you will also find several useful article links too:

To help you find a mentor, we have provided the following four options:

[Tips to Find and Gain a Mentor](#)

[A List of Potential Mentors](#)

[Find a Mentor Services](#)

[Complete a Profile to Find a Mentor](#)

Consequently, if you think that having a mentor will help you and you cannot find anyone suitable through your own efforts on the leading forum sites in your niche, this is a great site to start your search for a valid 'plan B' option.

Keep your money in your pocket

As I suggested earlier, there are literally thousands of products out there that purport to teach you how to generate cash from the net. There are a handful that are very good but the vast majority are not worth wasting the paper to print them out.

Unfortunately, I know this because over the years, I have managed to spend money on a very small number of products that actually justified the price and lots that were garbage. But here's the thing.

If you are an online marketing newbie and you want to move beyond this stage, there really is no need to get your credit card out of your wallet because everything that you really need is available for free!

Furthermore, you have already seen the resource where all of this top quality marketing information is available at no cost because I am talking about the Warrior Forum again here.

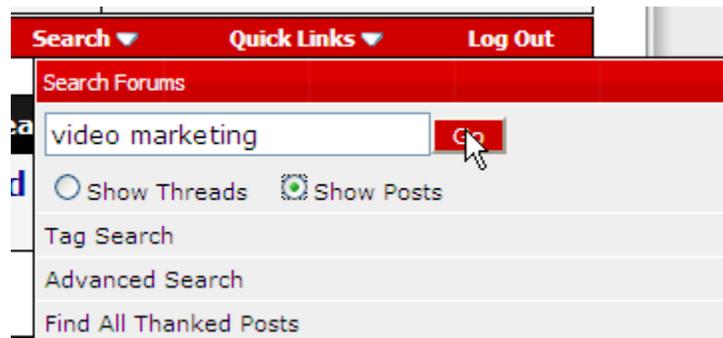
There are of course many forums that focus on online marketing but although I have visited and used others from time to time, the only forum where I can honestly say that the information available is always top notch is the Warrior Forum.

Consequently, even if you cannot find a suitable mentor through the site, what you can find is lots of top quality information from some of the best known names in the online marketing business, people like Mike Filsaime, John Reese, Willie Crawford and many, many others.

The point about these guys is not so much that they are well-known names but that they are recognized experts, authority figures who can always be trusted to present accurate information whenever they post on the forum. And because this is a forum that has been around a long time, a place where many less well known but equally competent marketers gather, it is a literal goldmine of the kind of information that you need to take your online marketing career to the next level.

For example, say that you have heard about marketing using videos, that you are aware that it is supposed to be extremely effective but that's about as far as it goes and you want to know more. So, you head over to the Warrior Forum and sign-in to see what you can find.

Click the 'Search' link at the top right of the main page immediately after signing in, and then input your primary search term as shown here with 'video marketing'. Change the default 'Show Threads' setting by clicking the 'Show Post's radio button and click the 'Go' button:



When you do this, you will see a list of all of the posts that feature your search term. If you scroll down this list, you will find plenty of extremely relevant and highly useful information, everything you need to know about 'video marketing' (in this particular example):



The highlighted links are both extremely relevant to the search term being used and by following them, you will pick up a huge amount of information without needing to spend any money at all.

For example, the first of these links is to a thread on the forum where a marketer who has already had 200,000 views of his video is looking for ideas about how to take that up to 1,000,000.

Here is one response:

Here's a couple of things you can do, if you have not done so already:

- 1) Post a **video** response to the most popular **video** in your pizza niche;
- 2) Choose the best still from 3 pictures given by youtube;
- 3) Make more related **video**'s in the pizza niche and post them, the more people viewing your channel the greater your chance is to get this particular **video** viewed. Your **video** will also show up on the related **video**'s tab of your other **video**'s if you create alot and they are related;
- 4) Create backlinks for your keywords, (youtube has a blog 😊)
- 5) Contact blog owners and ask them to share your **video**

Also, views is nothing without a good ctr to your site - Add annotations at the end of the **video** pointing them to your site. Good luck! 😊

This is top quality information and advice, pretty advanced stuff that you can access simply by joining this particular forum site.

And no matter what kind of information you're looking for, the chances are that with a little patience, you will find everything that you need on the Warrior Forum site.

There is one other thought about spending money that you might want to take into account as well.

Many of the 'how to make money online' products that you can eventually buy through sites like [Clickbank](#) are 'test marketed' through the Warrior Special Offers (WSO) sub-forum of the main site.

When this happens, you always get a special deal on the product being offered so it pays to keep your eyes open for new product offers of this type.

Not only do you know that most people who sell through the Warrior are generally pretty good at what they do (they have a reputation to protect on the best-known online marketing site), you will get their products for a fraction of the real value.

As I suggested, it really isn't that necessary to spend money but if you're going to do so, take a look at the WSO page before putting your hand in your pocket.

Where the Warrior Forum really comes into its own is if you already have a business set up and you want to move to the next level.

Say for example that you already have a few blog sites set up that are monetized with AdSense but that you are not especially impressed with your earnings, so you want to have a go at affiliate marketing.

All of the basics that you need to know can be found on the Warrior Forum site so there is no reason whatsoever to spend money on the information that you can find for free here. And because everything on the site is based on real experiences of people who are making a living online, you get a lot of 'do this' advice but an equal amount of 'don't do this' advice too which is the stuff that is never mentioned in any product that you can buy.

Here's an example by way of demonstration:

10-05-2009, 08:51 AM	Forum: Main Internet Marketing Discussion Forum
Analysis Paralysis	Replies: 1
Posted By davidmerrick	Views: 23
<i>Analysis Paralysis</i>	
<i>Hey I'm David and I've spent the last 6 months learning internet marketing and doing nothing with that knowledge besides a little bit of consulting. I'd like to promote my first affiliate product...</i>	

10-05-2009, 08:30 AM	Forum: Main Internet Marketing Discussion Forum
New Unique idea for Content Delivery! Advice Needed.	Replies: 16
Posted By JamesRad	Views: 126
<i>Re: Here's how this type of thing works in the real world.</i>	
<i>The problem isn't theft, it is control. IF you go with outside capital, and it is unsecured, as it appears in your case, you'll be hard pressed finding OUTside investors who would take a small piece...</i>	

10-05-2009, 08:23 AM	Forum: Make Money Online
What is the best Affiliate Marketing Book that you've ever read?	Replies: 4
Posted By Zane Shikara	Views: 11
<i>Re: What is the best Affiliate Marketing Book that you've ever read?</i>	
<i>I'm new to affiliate marketing and I'm trying to find a step by step method that can pretty much walk me through the entire process without all the "my method is best" type speeches.</i>	
<i>Anyone read...</i>	

And [here is an excellent 'how to do' affiliate marketing](#) site that I found through the Warrior Forum as an example of what you can do with just a couple of minutes research.

Taking it further

You need your own 'ratchet it up' idea

In a similar manner to the business mentor idea, you can use a site like the Warrior Forum to find a business model that works, one that genuinely has the potential to earn thousands of dollars a month.

But the thing to understand here is, don't ignore the age old adage about not attempting to run before you are adept at walking! In other words, there are dozens of different business ideas available for free all over the net but you must pick something that you can realistically do.

Don't allow yourself to be blinded by the money angle here either. There are lots of business ideas that have the realistic potential of generating a lot of money but you must consider your own skill set and abilities before diving into something that is completely unknown to you.

For example, if you have spent your net marketing career to this point making money from niche targeted blogs that feature AdSense, you have already learned that the key to making money with a site like this is your ability to generate targeted traffic.

Consequently, assuming that you have already enjoyed a degree of success, you have learned how to generate targeted visitors for a website. Hence, the question now is, how can you apply that knowledge or ability to make more money than you are currently generating?

As an example, in the same way that generating money from an AdSense monetized blog is all about your ability to send targeted visitors to the site, successful affiliate marketing is also predicated on the same ability or skill. It may therefore be that you can transplant your traffic generation skills and strategies by switching them to affiliate marketing to make more money than you are currently earning.

To continue with this example, if this is the way to go, you should be searching all over the net for an affiliate marketing model that is making money which appeals to you.

And as highlighted previously, you do not necessarily need to spend money to find a business system that works to you, because sites like the Warrior Forum provide everything you need for free. In 99% of cases, a site like this will provide everything you need at no cost, so it is only if you cannot find what you need that you should consider spending your hard earned cash.

The bottom line with the net is, no matter what kind of information you are trying to dig up, it is available somewhere for free if you know how to look for it. This is just as true of online marketing information as it is of anything else so take your time to look around for the information you need before you consider paying for it.

To take your online marketing career to the next level, you need to find a system that works which will make more money than you are currently earning.

To do this, you have a choice of paying for a product where the creator has a vested interest in convincing you that it works or you can find something free where the creator or inventor of the idea has absolutely no financial interest in convincing you one way or the other. Quite obviously, in the latter scenario, you are far more likely to get the truth or the real picture, so wherever possible, this is the way to go.

What makes you different?

It is a fact that no matter what market you decide to operate in or the business model you choose to follow, there are already thousands of people in that market doing pretty much what you are planning to do.

To continue the previous analogy, if you decide that you are going to become an affiliate marketer, you are probably number 5 billion on the roster of people who have made the same decision. Furthermore, it is a fact that of those people, 4.9 billion have already quit the business

because they didn't make it and whilst you may be completely confident that you are different, the fact that so many people have failed before should provide food for thought.

Now, in a perfect world, you would be able to analyze what they did wrong so that you could avoid making the same mistakes yourself. Unfortunately, it is not a perfect world and you do not have the capacity to discover exactly why most people didn't make it whereas a relatively small handful of marketers did, so you need to adopt a different approach.

What you have to do is come up with an 'angle' or a unique selling point that makes your business different to those operated by other people who are doing a similar thing to you on the net.

For instance, if you are acting as an affiliate for a Clickbank product and it is a popular product, you already know that there are hundreds if not thousands of other affiliates promoting the same product, many of whom will be doing so in exactly the same way if you don't have your own unique approach.

What you therefore need to do is come up with an angle or something that you can 'brag' about because it makes you stand out from the crowd.

As an example, most affiliate marketers are lazy so they promote the product they are supporting by linking directly to the original product creators sales page in all of their promotional materials.

This approach has its attractions because direct linking will generate maximum sales as it puts the minimum number of hurdles all barriers between the prospect becoming aware of the offer and the point where they put their hand in their pocket to find their wallet.

Nevertheless, if every affiliate marketer is doing the same, then it is impossible for each of those individuals to differentiate themselves, meaning that the choice of affiliate link to follow effectively becomes a lottery.

If however you offer some kind of added value to the offer, you increase the chances that you are going to be the one who lands the sale. For example, instead of sending the interested prospect directly to the sales page, you might send them to your own 'bonus offer' landing page where they are presented with a superb bonus package simply for signing up through your link rather than through someone else's.

For the customer, this represents a tremendous deal because they were going to buy the product anyway but now they get a truckload of additional bonuses as well.

And for you, this strategy represents a double winner, because not only does it add a new customer to your business, it also enables you to collect e-mail information from that new customer in a way which you would never normally do as an affiliate. This happens because in order to get their bonuses, you should make it clear on your bonus offer landing page that they need to send proof of purchase through your link by e-mail to claim.

The bottom line here is, you have to do something that is different enough to stand out. If you can be unique and memorable at the same time, you establish your uniqueness and an ability to think differently which automatically makes you stand out from the herd.

Without a unique angle or selling point, you are just one very small fish swimming in exactly the same direction as every other occupied of a very big pond.

If however you have your unique angle or selling point, you immediately become someone who stands out from the crowd, someone whose approach is different enough to merit attention. Do this and you are already well on your way to leaving behind your beginner 'tag' or status.

Spend money when it is justified

In this report, I have emphasized time and again that you should not waste money on products that are not going to take your business forward.

This does not however mean that you should not invest in your business when the time is right to do so because investing in yourself is one the most effective and quickest ways of taking your business to the next level.

For example, if you have previously used article marketing to promote your business, you probably realize that writing and publishing articles on the major directory sites like EzineArticles is an extremely effective marketing strategy. Nevertheless, although using articles to market your business is highly effective, you probably also know that sitting down to write articles is a relatively time-consuming activity as well.

Consequently, when you have enough money coming through the door to justify it, you should spend some money on hiring other people to create your article marketing content for you.

After all, a 500 word article that is perfect for external publication will cost you somewhere between \$5 and \$10 but that investment will save you half an hour or perhaps even an hour which is time that you can utilize far more effectively and profitably in other ways.

For instance, if instead of sitting down to write an article that takes half an hour, you might use that 30 minute period to generate half a dozen additional sales. In this scenario, you are spending \$10 to earn \$200 or \$300, which obviously makes perfect sense.

In a similar manner, whenever you hit a barrier that can most effectively and efficiently be overcome using a paid tool or resource, you should give very serious consideration to spending the money necessary to take advantage of that resource.

As a simple example, if you want to build a mailing list, then you need an auto responder system, and the most efficient [and profitable autoresponder systems cost money](#).

Don't look at money spent on a resource such as a top quality autoresponder as an expense, viewing the outlay instead as an investment in your business and future profitability.

Once again, try looking outside the immediate parameters of what you are doing at the moment by adopting a 'big picture' view of where your business is at the moment to have a clear idea of how you should allocate capital in the future to develop your business still further.

Whilst it should be clear that I don't advocate wasting money on products or services you cannot use in your business immediately, there are definitely times when you have to invest in your own business and future. And if for example it is something that you are 'definitely going to need in the future', forget it because by the time your future becomes a reality, the system will already have been 'upgraded', so ignore it.

The point to understand is that once you are ready to take your business to the next level, it is going to be necessary to put some investment into what you are doing.

Whilst I am not necessarily talking about thousands of dollars, if you want to move from being an online business novice to being someone who is considered an intermediate level marketer, you have to have all of the tools and resources in place to justify this 'upgrade', and that necessitates spending some money.

A clear example is the one used early because whilst you can use a [free autoresponder system](#), using a high quality system for which you have to pay immediately elevates your business to a far more professional and expert level. It also professionalizes your image for your prospects and customers as well, because a lot of them will know the difference between a paid autoresponder service and a free one.

It doesn't really matter if you are still running your business on your own from your back bedroom, it is in many ways far more important that your image is right, and to a large extent, you achieve this by investing money in your business.

Conclusion

As you should hopefully understand by now, getting beyond the newbie stage of online marketing is not anywhere near as difficult as some people might imagine it would be.

All that is really necessary to step up to the next level is to adopt a more professional, businesslike attitude to your online marketing activities, and everything else will fall into place almost automatically.

Many online marketers seem to believe that marketing on the net is somehow a new kind of business, one where you can afford to be far more casual and laid-back than you can in traditional 'real world' business. And whilst there is a degree of truth in this – you do not need to commute or wear a collar and tie for example – to believe that online marketing is a completely different kind of business is a mistake.

Marketing and selling on the net is exactly the same as marketing and selling in your local High Street or shopping mall, and the disciplines that you would need to apply if you are running that kind of business are exactly the same as well.

For example, it is essential that you are organized and that know what you are going to do every time you fire up your computer in advance of doing so. You need to stick to both your 'big picture' business plan and your daily schedule as closely as possible, and when a job needs to be done, you must make sure that it gets done either through your own efforts or because you arrange for someone else to handle the task.

Above all, if you don't want to be a newbie forever (and unless you enjoy small paychecks, it is reasonable to assume that you don't), you probably need to rethink how you are operating your business on a daily basis.

If you are not already adopting a thoroughly businesslike, professional attitude as highlighted in this book, you need to start doing so and even if you are already relatively businesslike, you need to 'up the ante' by

becoming a little bit more of the ultimate online marketing professional with every passing day.

It's not difficult and it can be done, but the only person who can take you from being a newbie to being someone who is enjoying a great deal of online marketing success (and the rewards that such success brings) is you.

Now you know how to do it, it is time to start making whatever changes are necessary to take your business and your online earnings to the next level.