



THE INTERNET MARKETING SPEED GUIDE SERIES:

How to Develop Your Own Hot Selling Product

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Section One: Do you have what it takes to create Your Own Product?

One profitable way of succeeding as an Internet marketer is to create your own basic information products and then couple them with existing goods or services that help to enhance the reputation and effectiveness of your own brain child. This, of course, means that you will need to create your own basic product that will serve as the foundation for your efforts.

This is not something that just anyone can do, and do well. In order to create your own products, there are several characteristics that will prove to be absolutely essential, if you really want to make an impact on a public that by and large are already jaded by all the products and services that are found online today.

One of the first things you have to ask yourself is just how creative are you? People may exhibit creativity in a number of different ways. For some people, creativity comes about by taking elements that are already in hand and finding new and exciting ways to employ those elements.

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For example, a growing trend in decorating these days is the redesign. Rather than scrapping existing furnishings, interior re-designers come into the space and reorganize the items that are already owned by the occupants.

Persons with the ability to look at existing elements and see new and exciting ways to make use of those same elements definitely have what it takes to create a product that may contain a lot of the usual stuff, but is put together in a way that brings a whole new dimension to the concept.

Other people are much better at starting with nothing and creating something brand new. This ground up approach is usually the province of people who love the blank canvass, seeing it as a space that can be molded and shifted in any way they choose. There are no boundaries, no preconceived expectations, and nothing to prevent making anything that they want. People who have exhibited the ability to take nothing and turn it into something certainly have what it takes to create a successful online product.

Then, there are people who express creativity by taking something that are tried and true and giving it a fresh and new looks. People with this type of ability often see all the good points of a product or service that has a proven track record.

Still, they feel it can be enhanced or improved in a number of small ways that will not only help to retain the interest of long term users, but also attract others who may have overlooked the product in the past, because it was such a common thing.

People with the ability to take a good thing and make it a little better, a little more user friendly, a little easier to understand, definitely have what it takes to come up with a product or service that can be effectively marketed online.

So where does your creativity level exhibit itself to best advantage? Let that direction lead you into the next step of the process, which is learning how to create products that will be marketable online.

Section Two: How to Create Your Own Information Products and Sell Them

One of the first tasks you will face when it comes to creating informational products for sale on the Internet is deciding what the subject matter for the product will involve. There are actually several ways that you can come up with ideas that will allow you to form the basis for your product.

As is true with any type of informational writing, it is a good idea to start with that you know. The basis for your informational product may be the result of just about any type of experience that has been part of your life.

For example, you may find that some of the formal educational experiences of years past have given you some particular insights that can form the basis for an informational product. Work experience is another fertile field for coming up with numerous topics and approaches for constructing products that convey a great deal of information.

Religious backgrounds are another example of mining past experiences that may help to produce marketable information products that will have an appeal to one or more niche markets. In like manner, hobbies can also yield a wealth of ideas for information products that would attract the interest of a credible section of consumers.

Along with mining your own past experiences, there is also the need to determine the direction of your pitch in the informational products. Do you want to adopt an approach that helps to inform people of how to perform a task associated with a specific subject? Perhaps your emphasis is not going to be so much on how to do something, but what not to do.

With this approach, your direction is more along the lines of presenting information that will help people avoid pitfalls associated with particular actions or tasks. The idea is to create a credible and thought provoking information product that prevents people from

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wasting time and resources by pursuing ideas or procedures that have proven all too often to be nothing more than dead ends.

Cautionary information products are certainly a viable option, since they often attract the attention of people who do not want to be slowed down on the road to success.

If for some reason you do not want to mine your own past life experience, there are still other ways to come up with ideas that are likely to be ideal for creating information products to market and sell.

One method is to take a long hard look at the people around you. What types of interests do they have? Are there life experiences of theirs that you can learn from and thus utilize to create a product that would be attractive to a wider public? Spending some time with family and friends and just allowing them to talk about whatever comes to mind may yield some interesting topics that you can explore as subject matter for your information product or products.

Regional or national issues may also be a source of ideas. Events that seem to have a significant impact on the ideas and attitudes of a large group of people can often provide the seed of an idea for an information product.

For example, persons who work in industries that are going through a period of downsizing may be very interested in an informational product that has to do with making lateral moves into new industries, as well as products that have to do with starting a whole new career.

Natural disasters may be the impetus behind the creation of informational products that speak to the development of skills and practices that help to keep people going when waters rise, the power is off, and weather conditions are not comfortable. Looking around you and connecting with what is going on in the world right now can often lead to several intriguing ideas for information products.

Once you have your basic idea for your information product, start putting it together. If your mind is a jumble of ideas and thoughts, sort them out by making a simple outline.

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This will provide a basis for how you want to present the information and will help you organize the data in a flow that is logical and easy to grasp. The outline will also help you to not forget a point of interest that strikes you as being particularly relevant to the subject matter.

As helpful as the outline will be to the process of drafting the content of your information product, don't feel as if you are a slave to the outline. As you progress with the work, you will no doubt encounter other ideas or thoughts that you want to include. Feel free to see the outline as a work in progress, and add, revise, and delete as you see fit.

One of the truly great attributes of the computer age is the fact that a word processing program is a lot easier to use than a typewriter. It is very easy to go back and insert additional text when a burst of inspiration strikes.

No doubt, as you go along, there will be details that come to you that may be relevant to a section of the product that you have already completed. Simply go back and find a way to insert the new thought in the right place, so the integrity of the product is maintained.

Along with finding the inspiration for your information products, there is also the need to find ways to market and sell the products. One thing to understand is that there is no one mode of advertising that is going to be the only solid avenue to generating sales. One of the quickest ways to kill the chances for making money with a product is to assume that engaging in one mode of advertising will take care of everything. Before you ever begin the first stages of working on your information product, make up your mind to be open to multiple options for marketing your work.

This will often include establishing your own web site, which will provide a connection to your product. You may also look for ways to establish ads on other web sites, providing links back to advertising copy and ordering instructions for your product.

Don't forget to look into print media options as well. You may be planning on going after a big audience via the Internet, but the fact is that many people still look for information in magazines, newspapers, and community publications. You may be surprised how

much attention you can get from a simple well-placed ad in a well regarded print publication that caters to your target audience.

Section Three: Where and How to Find Physical Products to Sell Online

If you are interested in pairing your informational product with one or more physical products, chances are you will need to find products that can be easily ordered over the Internet, and also have a clear and concise connection to your information product. For example, if your information product has to do with conducting business meetings, you would want to partner with vendors who provided services that had something to do with the meeting process.

For example, you may want to consider becoming an independent agent for an audio conference call bureau. Along with marketing your own informational product, you could also pick up teleconferencing clients who visit your site, like your product and find they would like to try holding meetings via an audio conference. Many conference call bureaus offer agents a customized URL that will take prospects to a sign up page that is associated with the agent. Thus, the client gets to set up their own account with the conference bureau, but you as the agent get credit for the sale and any resulting commissions from their activity.

At the same time, you may also find that an alliance with a vendor who supplies conference room tables and supplies might be a good fit. Once again, creating a branded link from your advertising web site over to the vendor's online store will help generate traffic for them, and you will get credit for the sale.

Another potential vendor alliance would be with companies that produce conference room audio equipment. Many of these vendors also make good use of vendors and can easily create customized links that can be dropped on your web site.

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People read your information, order it, and then notice that they can also be redirected to a site to look at speakerphones for a conference room. You may money with the sale of your information product, and also realize a return off the sale of a speakerphone via the branded link.

Finding all these wonderful vendors who want to set up a marketing strategy with you will take some careful investigation. First, you need to be able to establish the legitimacy of the vendor. What type of track record does the vendor have with processing orders in a timely manner? Does the vendor sell quality products? What can you find out about delivery methods? How does the vendor provide quality customer support to people who purchase products from them?

Keep in mind that your reputation and your credibility will be tied back to that of any link that is found on your web site and associated in some manner with your information product. Shoddy products, poor customer service, and limited shipping options will all reflect not only on the vendor, but also on you. For this reason, you want to find out everything you can about the vendor before you ever begin to promote any type of relationship between you and the supplier.

Of course, there are also a number of private branding opportunities to be found on the Internet as well. You may find that you want to gear your information products toward a particular sector of the retail consumer market, such as in the case of health foods or herbal supplements. Along with your written products, you may want to offer the convenience of a privately branded online health food store.

There are actually several vendors who offer this type of arrangement. With most of them, you are able to take a generic store front that is already stocked with products, use the owner control features that are granted to you as part of the total package, and set your own retail rates for the items included in the store. Orders placed online are routed to a central fulfillment house, which handles the preparation and shipment of the order, as well as processing the payment.

In return for marketing the online store through your web site and other means, you get the difference between the retail price you set for the item and the wholesale price that is

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charged by your vendor. Generally, companies who offer this type of private branded online store also provide the reseller with online access, so it is easy to monitor the number of orders and get an idea of what items are selling well.

One of the easiest ways to begin your search for these types of opportunities is to conduct a keyword search using phrases such as "online store," "agent," "reseller," and a keyword that is closely associated with the subject matter of your information product. This can help you find opportunities that will be worth investigating.

As part of the process of your evaluation, make sure to look for online consumer reports about the parent company that handles the order fulfillment and stocks the shelves of your online store. Just as with agent opportunities, you need to be concerned about how the standard operating practices of your retail vendor partner will reflect on you and your efforts to build a viable business.

Look for companies that appear to have a high level of customer satisfaction, are not the frequent subjects of complaints, and appear to provide features that will allow you to easily develop a marketing campaign to promote the store.

It is important that you take your time in researching these opportunities. Don't be lured in by gimmicks that offer you some extra incentive if you sign up today. In the long run, that can be costly to both your reputation and your finances. Instead, do your homework and create a list of potential vendor partners whose products you can represent and offer with full confidence.

Then, do some market testing. Begin with a simple effort, such as having friends or family check over the product offerings and get their opinions about the pricing, sizes, and range of products that are offered. What you are looking for is not only positive feedback, but also constructive criticism. Chances are that if your friends spot some liabilities associated with the product offerings, others will feel the same way.

This may be enough to convince you to look for other opportunities. However, if you feel strongly about the chances of succeeding with that vendor product line, you at least will

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have the chance to address those concerns in any information products you create that speak directly or indirectly to the product line.

Before launching an official and public relationship, you may also want to place a few orders yourself and see how things go. This will help you get familiar with the ordering process, so that in the event you are contacted by someone who is interested in how to place an order, you can respond based on your experience.

Second, this will allow you to inspect a few of the products first hand, and thus be assured of the general quality of the goods that are sold. Last, you will have the opportunity to test drive the vendor partner online tools, make sure you understand how they work, and can interact with their customer support team on any questions you have.

If you find that the responses you get are either both canned and ineffectual, or that there seems to be an unacceptable lag in how long it takes to get a response to any of your queries, this is a sure sign that you need to sever the relationship and look elsewhere. You can rest assured that if the vendor takes a casual approach to communicating with a partner, there is not much chance of them being in a big hurry to interact with anyone who purchased goods from the online store.

The main rule of thumb about locating potential vendor partners for online sales to support your information product is to keep your focus. Make sure that whatever arrangements you make with a vendor; their offerings have a clear and supportive connection to your product.

Also, make sure you select a vendor partner that knows how to deliver both the goods and high quality customer care. If you manage to find all these qualities, then there is an excellent chance of consistent and continual success for both you and your partner.

Section Four: Defining the Essential Steps in the Product Creation Process

Getting back to your own product, it is a cinch that you will need to follow some important guidelines in order to come up with a product that will be enticing, informative, and affordable to your target audience. Here are some tips to help you get into the swing of developing the idea for such a product, actually following through with the creation of the product, and getting everything in order so you can effectively market the product.

It is important to always start at the beginning. When it comes to product development, there is really no other place to get your start. Assuming that you have performed due diligence and settled on the subject matter for your product, it is time to get into the design aspect of the product.

For the purposes of this section, we will focus on the creation of a line of informational E-books that will anchor a web site that also includes access to an online store that sells products related to the subject matter of the electronic books.

The thing to remember about informational E-books is that they have one main purpose or function. That function is to educate and promote further investigation into a specific subject. For example, if you plan on combining electronic books with an online herbal supplement business, then you will want to make sure the subject matter of the E-books is accurate, timely, and relevant to the products that are sold in the store. This will mean doing a great deal of research before you begin to write the first word.

You will want to explore the origins of the use of herbs in various schools of medicine and healing. Find what you can about the effectiveness of herbal remedies at various times and places. Locate research into the claims made for various herbs regarding the treatment of bodily ailments, and provide solid information about your source documents. In short, before you can hope to educate anyone else, you will need to spend some time educating yourself.

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Once you have amassed sufficient knowledge and documentation to write effectively on the subject matter, you will need to begin the process of organizing your data. Hopefully, your research will have provided you with plenty of information that can serve as the basis for several E-books. Carefully divide your information into sub-categories, and organize the information in any format that will make it easy for you to retrieve the data. This may mean resorting to traditional methods, such as the use of index cards. You may be able to create a series of electronic files and save them to your hard drive or on a CDR. The form of the organizational method is not as important as making sure that however you choose to organize the data, it will make it easy for you to locate what you need when you need it. It does not matter if you use a system that makes no sense to anyone else. The system only has to work for you.

Next, use the collected data as the inspiration for an outline of your E-book. Not only will this help to lay the groundwork for your table of contents, but the task will also create a resource that will help prevent you from wandering too far off the main topic. The purpose of an outline is to help create a logical and cohesive flow to the information that is being presented in the document.

Just as with any type of book, you want the thought processes presented in the material to follow a sensible chain of presentation, with each section or chapter logically leading into the following section. Thinking through this process in advance, rather than arbitrarily creating a collection of disjointed sections, will mean a lot less editing on the back end.

At the same time, it is important to not be so married to your first draft of the outline that you fail to include vital information or don't provide enough attention to any one point within the document. Keep in mind that the outline is a guide, not a sacred document that once handed down --- it can never be changed. Treat it with respect, but do not revere the outline to the point that you refuse to change it in any way. Feel free to revise, improve, rework, and in general adapt the outline as you move forward with the project.

One other thing you need to understand about the writing process as it relates to the production of an effective E-book. At some point, the text will begin to take on a life all its own. Do not be surprised if you find that the flow of the book demands that you state

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information in ways that would not normally occur to you. In fact, you may find that some of the themes of the E-book are so important to the integrity of the contents that you find yourself repeating those themes in several chapters. There is absolutely nothing wrong with that approach, as long as there is a valid reason for doing so.

To keep the content fresh, make sure that even if you are presenting a point for the third time, keep the verbiage you use different from the other instances. This will help the flow of the document in two ways.

First, it helps to reinforce key concepts when you present them in slightly different settings throughout the work. Second, it provides the reader with the chance to evaluate the theme or concept in a different light each time that you bring up the point. If the first attempt to educate with the theme did not quite click with the reader, there is every chance that by the third attempt, a connection will have taken place.

When creating the text for the E-book it is important to apply a certain amount of self-discipline. The fact is that you may not feel much like writing on a given day. However one of the secrets of writing is that you engage in the task even if you are not in the mood.

All the fairy tales about muses who come to sit on your shoulder and provide you with pearls of wisdom that appear as if by magic are just that - fairy tales. Writing is work, and often happens to be hard work.

If you are having a little trouble getting started, stop thinking about the five thousand words you planned on writing today. Instead, focus on creating one good paragraph. Once that is done, it will be a little easier to convince yourself to write just one more. In a short time, you will find that the entire page is filled and you just got some great ideas on how to expand on the subject matter on hand.

Don't make the mistake of thinking that creativity comes and goes. It is always present. But sometimes it is necessary to drag creativity to the surface, kick and screaming. Don't be afraid to do just that.

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Once you have the first draft of the content for your E-book, set it aside for a day or two. This will allow you to refresh your mind and be able to go back and edit the draft with eyes that are fresh and capable of being balanced in the way you read the document. There is an excellent chance that you will find sections you want to rework slightly, or perhaps change a word here or there to make the section a little more cohesive or clear in its meaning.

By all means feel free to do so. Just as the outline was not to be considered above reproach and change, your manuscript, though a work of art, is also subject to revision and improvement. Make one round of edits and put the manuscript away for another day or two. Then try a second round of edits. You may find very little to correct the second time, which is a sound clue that you are just about ready to begin the formatting process.

After the text for your E-book has gone through editing, the time has come to begin formatting the material from a manuscript into a workable E-book format. Fortunately, there are plenty of excellent software packages that can take a basic word processing document and easily format it for use in an electronic book format. Most will allow you to set the page sizes, arrange major headings, create a Table of Contents, and then import the text of the manuscript into the program.

You can also use the tools included with the software to create a cover, just as if you were publishing a hard copy of the work. In fact, that is the look and feel you want to set as your goal. The only difference between your electronic book and a "real" book should be that one is a collection of images on a screen, and the other is a tangible paper document.

Don't hesitate to experiment with different formats for your E-book. There is nothing that says you have to pick the first format and stick with it. If you find have images that are original and belong to you will enhance the text, then include them. Should flow charts or diagrams that you have created be helpful in illustrating points, then by all means work them into the body of the E-book.

Keep in mind that at the end of the process, you want to have a product that is high quality, and everything that you wanted it to be. If you are not proud of what you have created, it will make it much harder to interest anyone else in purchasing your product.

Before you actually place the E-book for sale online, you may want to provide one or two trusted individuals with an electronic copy, and get their feedback. You are looking for not only comments about the text. You also want to get their impressions about the organization of the material, the effectiveness of any images or charts you chose to include in the information, and the general look of the E-book.

This type of feedback may be very helpful in getting some idea of the reaction you can expect from your target audience. Little things, such as noting that the cover or images take too long to load on a dial-up connection may be important, if you plan on marketing the E-book to an audience that is more likely to still be using that technology.

This will give you one last chance to make some changes in format that will make the E-book more user friendly, and increase the chances that people who actually buy the book will recommend it to their friends and acquaintances.

Conclusion

Developing your own information product can be an exciting challenge. There is a lot of ground to cover before you ever begin the actual process of creating the product.

During those early stages, it may seem as if there is simply too much to do. Don't let yourself get overwhelmed with the details and don't set up some sort of deadline for completion that is not reasonable.

If you are creating the product in your spare time, realize that chances are you will need to devote the equivalent of several days or a week to the effort at the very least. Unless you are working with information that you have a strong relationship with, you will not be able to research and write content for an informational product over the weekend. This

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means you will need to focus on turning out quality work, and realize that it will take as long as it takes.

At the same time, do not use the process as a reason to put off until tomorrow what you can do today. While you may reach a point where you feel frustrated or intimidated, don't let a day go by that some sort of progress is not made with the project. Even if it means only doing a little work, get that much done. You may be surprised how easy it makes the task of picking up and continuing on easier to face.

Above all, be realistic and don't expect to create a finished product in one simple round. Edits are your friend, and will only serve to make the informational product all the more useful. By exercising patience, an ample amount of discipline, and being open to correction and improvement, you will soon have an information product that you can market with full confidence.