

# How to Get Started Online

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# Introduction

Fundamental concept #1 - Find something to talk about

Fundamental concept #2 - Find something to talk to

I like to use illustrations, so let's imagine you want to be a horse rancher. You are new to horse ranching, so you don't have any horses yet. What is the first thing you need to do? **You need to build a herd!**

Now here is where a lot of people mess up.

- They start planning all the products they want to create...
- They worry about the "look and feel" of the web site they want to build...
- They worry about the tax ramifications and laws for owning a small business...
- They worry about incorporating for limited liability...

But that is getting the cart before the horse! (No pun intended! 😊)

**Start building the herd first**, then all of these other things will take care of themselves!

You really need to see yourself as a good herdsman (or shepherd, if you prefer that analogy). Your job is to build a herd and then take very good care of that herd! Feed them. Make sure they have all they need. Protect them from predators (unscrupulous people who would take advantage of your herd). Always remember this principle...

**Take care of your herd, and they will take care of you!**

So here is a startup checklist to keep you on track...

### **Startup Checklist: The Four Pillars of a Successful Online Business**

There are four "*pillars*" of a successful online business: Preparation, Presentation, Production and Promotion. Each of these are necessary components in starting your site... They are, in essence, your foundation.

- 1. Preparation:** In the "*preparation*" stage you will make important decisions regarding your site: market selection, choosing a theme or topic, determining a delivery schedule.
- 2. Presentation.** In the "*presentation*" stage you will structure the visual appearance of your sales process: setting up a blog, domain registration, web site hosting, writing a sales letter, providing access to your autoresponder, setting up a download page.
- 3. Production.** In the "*production*" stage you will create content for your herd and share useful tips and tricks that will enrich their lives and/or businesses.
- 4. Promotion.** In the "*promotion*" stage you will begin getting the word out about your new blog and web site. You will begin attracting new subscribers, as well as develop an ongoing marketing presence to continually funnel in new subscribers.

Each of these really need to be covered in-depth, and we can't do that today. For now, let's identify some core action steps to complete in order to have a successful online business...

## Five Steps to Getting Started Online

- ❑ DECIDE upon a market and topic. (Activity Time: 60 Minutes)  
A “market” consists of a broad group of people with a specific related interest that you’d like to help. Examples include: Internet marketing, health and fitness, homeschooling, self help, relationships, parenting, etc.  
A “topic” would be a subject to which the market is passionate, concerned or attracted. Examples include: affiliate marketing, losing weight, managing time, growing an organic garden, raising Godly children, etc.
- ❑ CREATE A WEBSITE (Activity Time: 60 Minutes) - This will be the hitching post where everyone in your herd wants to hang out, listen to what you have to say, and offer their opinions. This is where you will offer your herd good content and valuable tips and tricks to enrich their lives and/or businesses. This is where you will attract potential herd members, and this is also where you will do the “care-and-feeding” part of raising a herd.
  - ❑ GET A DOMAIN NAME (Activity Time: 60 Minutes) - Choose a domain name for your web site and then register a domain with the same name. Remember to keep it as short and memorable as possible, and, of course, related to the topic of your site.
  - ❑ CHOOSE A HOSTING COMPANY (Activity Time: 60 Minutes) There are many, many options available for your hosting.
  - ❑ CREATE A WEB SITE (Activity Time: 60 Minutes) – For more help, visit my friend, Amy Lynn Andrews, at <https://websitehowto.com>.
- ❑ CAPTURE EMAILS (Activity Time: 60 Minutes) - This is the first step in building your herd. You will offer something people want in exchange for their first name and an email. Once you have their first name and email, they become part of your herd, and you have a responsibility to care, feed and protect your herd. This is also the way you tell them about products they may be interested in. I personally use [Aweber](#) as my autoresponder. After your autoresponder account is activated, load a “welcome email” to your account to be sent to subscribers when they join your site.

- ❑ PROMOTE YOUR SITE (Activity Time: 60 Minutes) - There are many, many ways to promote your blog including social media, search engine optimization, posting comments on other people's blogs, yahoo groups and forums, etc. One of the best ways is to form reciprocal partnerships with other blog owners in your niche.
  
- ❑ SELL SOMETHING ON YOUR SITE (Activity Time: 60 Minutes) - If you already have a product, by all means, recommend it on your blog. But I am guessing that most of you do not have a product to recommend to your herd. There are many great ways to earn money, so you will need to pray about this! One way to "sell" without appearing "salesy" is to review a product on your blog, and then provide your affiliate link at the end of the review.

## **Sample Weekly Schedule of Activities (Things you could be doing every week)**

### *1. Write a new blog post and reuse the content to promote your site.*

Every week you'll want to continue adding content to your site. Then...

- Turn the blog post into an article to post elsewhere online.
- Add the blog post to your Facebook fan page.
- Do a quick YouTube video about your blog post.
- Announce your new blog post on your Facebook wall.

### *2. Visit other important blogs, forums and groups in your niche.*

Find out what people in your niche are talking about. What are their problems? Where do they need help? Then answer their questions and leave your signature, which leads them back to your blog and web site. Your email capture box will do its job, and you will start building your herd!

### *3. Find new products and tools to offer to your list.*

Review products and tools that will benefit your list. Create some of your own. Always be on the lookout for what can help them. Be their bird dog!

**Remember, take care of your herd and they will take care of you!**

### *4. Find new affiliates to help promote your site and your products*

You can go out on the bald prairie and lasso wild horses... or you find someone who has already corralled a herd and is feeding them by hand! It is much easier to partner with someone who has already built a herd and give them a financial incentive to promote your products and services to their herd. And you will have better results as well, since their herd already trusts them and will probably buy as a result of their recommendation. Always be on the lookout for potential affiliates and joint-venture partners!

# The Big Picture

Before you create your first blog post or video, let me share a formula that will show you the big picture of what we are trying to do. Remember our "herd" illustration?

If you are trying to build a large and profitable ranch, you need to:

- #1 - Determine **what kind of herd** you're going after.
- #2 - **Build a corral** to feed your herd and capture their name and email (your blog).
- #3 - **Listen to your herd** at the "watering holes" (places where your target market hangs out on the Internet - blogs, forums, web sites, etc.) to find out what they need and what their problems are.
- #4 - **Build the herd** by attracting them from the "watering holes" to your blog. And by getting other herd owners to recommend you to their herd.
- #5 - **Feed your herd** with good content (tips, tricks, articles, videos, etc.).
- #6 - **Protect your herd** from predators (scams, inferior products, unscrupulous gurus, information overload, etc.).
- #7 - **Profit from your herd** (take care of the herd and they will take care of you).

This is a simple 7-step formula for building a herd and making a really good living from your herd.

So let's start building that corral..

## **Choose a niche according to something you are good at or have an interest in.**

The best thing about this philosophy is that it is easier. You already know the topic or niche very well because you have been interested in it for some time now. This isn't just a niche that is "hot" or super popular. You actually know something about the niche because it is something you do every day. It's one of your hobbies. It's something you are passionate about.

Choosing a niche according to your interests or skills makes everything so much easier because...

- You already know the big players in your niche. You already know the famous people in your niche... the bestselling authors, the people with the most popular blogs, the magazines in this niche – and the people who are already selling stuff in this niche.
- You already know where the "watering holes" are. People in your target market have a common interest and hang out in the same places on the Internet (blogs, forums, Yahoo groups and web sites). They also read the same magazines and industry publications. They may even read the same books about this topic.
- You already know what their problems are. Since you have an interest in this niche, you already know what their struggles are **because you are one of them!** You have the same questions, the same issues, the same needs and the same problems!
- You already speak the language. Every niche has its own buzz words and lingo. You would reveal yourself as a total newbie if you didn't know what acronyms and jargon meant. But since this is a niche that you already have an interest in or some skill in, you already know a lot of the jargon that will help communicate to your herd that you "belong."
- You might already have a name in this niche. Depending on your degrees and such, you may already be known in this niche. Even if you aren't known now (you soon will be!), you at least can speak with authority because you have been involved in this niche for a while.

Having listed all of the advantages of choosing a niche that you know well as a place to build your herd, here are a few things you need to watch out for...



## **Warning #1**

### **Beware teaching what YOU know instead of what THEY need.**

This is so important! We all have a natural desire to teach what is most comfortable to us. **But the whole point of building a herd is to give them what THEY NEED, NOT what you know the most about!**

Read that sentence again:

**The whole point of building a herd is to give them what THEY NEED, NOT what you know the most about!**

This is something you must drill into your head. Building a herd and taking care of it is all about what THEY need... what THEY want... what they are most likely to spend hard-earned dollars for! Not what you feel most comfortable with... or how you think the world should spin.

## **Warning #2**

### **Beware teaching topics that are too advanced.**

Again, I know you have been involved in this niche for a while. You have an intense interest in it and have some advanced knowledge in the subject matter. But resist the temptation to dismiss topics because they are too elementary or "everyone should already know that!"

You are not your customer. You know more than they do. You have been doing this longer than they have. They are looking to you for help and guidance. So start with the basics and spend a lot of time there. It takes a while for new things to settle into our brains... and your herd is no different.

And while I'm on the subject, let's talk about the most desirable people in your niche... the beginner!

***The ultimate "sub-group" in your niche is BEGINNERS.***

I would strongly recommend that you consider targeting "newbies" (aka "beginners") within the market that you choose. While beginners may need a bit more hand-holding at times, there are a number of benefits to building a herd starting with them.

Here is the deal: Beginners are relatively **easy to please** because they know little or nothing about the subject matter. One of the problems in working with a mature audience is the fact that they are well educated and know a lot about the topic you're

teaching. That means you'll have to **work extra hard** to "wow" them with some original, unheard-of information or they'll likely quit following you.

As a general rule,

- *Beginners know little or nothing about the subject, and thus are easier to please with basic, common knowledge information because it is new to them.*
- *Experienced people know a lot about the subject (maybe even more than you), and thus are more difficult to please unless you continually deliver advanced, unique information they don't already know.*

Plus, with beginners there is the **added benefit** that you can "graduate" them to advanced studies upon their completion of your initial products or affiliate products.

All of this adds up to the inexperienced, beginning, first-timer crowd being a nice option for market selection in the majority of cases.

Of course, we are talking about choosing the niche first and then targeting members within the niche to build our herd.

**So here's my BEST advice for choosing your niche:**

- ❑ Start with a niche that you know well and have an interest in.  
We've already covered this in detail.
  
- ❑ Choose a niche where the people in that niche are accustomed to spending money.  
Marketing to "starving artists" is a bad idea because... well, they're starving and don't have any money to spend with you!
  
- ❑ Choose a niche where there is a constant need for more information.  
Targeting people who are buying a cemetery plot may not be a good idea because they only do it ONCE! And what are you going to sell them after that? Choosing a niche where there is an on-going need for more information is always a good idea! Health, homeschooling, making money, crafts, computer-related stuff, energy-saving information, social media, sports, etc.
  
- ❑ Choose a niche that has people that you are personally attracted to.  
If you have very refined tastes and don't like mixing it up with rednecks, then don't start a hunting site! Choose a niche according to the people you want to serve and interact with on a daily basis.

## Brainstorming for a Niche

### YOUR PASSIONS AND INTERESTS

Write down ten things or topics in which you have an intense interest.  
For example: flying, scrapbooking, parenting, fishing, etc.

The more specific the better. If your interest is fishing, what kind of fishing? Deep-sea fishing or fresh-water fishing? What kind of fish? Catfish or Bass? You get the idea.

Now is NOT the time for feasibility assessment or profitability analysis. Just let the ideas flow.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.

### YOUR SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE

Of the ten things listed above, choose the ones in which you have **specialized skills or knowledge**. You may also want to make sure that others have told you that you have skills or knowledge in those things as well. Meaning, you may think you have a great singing voice, but have others confirmed that?!? 😊

Also, list a few examples of that skill or knowledge under the items you circled.

Example:

- 1) Shooting
  - a) I have won several competitive shooting matches.
  - b) I have coached my daughter who is a three-time state champion in skeet.
  - c) I have taken advanced combat shooting courses.

1) A passion that you have specialized skill or knowledge in:

a) Your experiences:

2) Another passion that you have specialized skill or knowledge in:

a) Your experiences:

3) Another passion that you have specialized skill or knowledge in:

a) Your experiences:

4) Another passion that you have specialized skill or knowledge in:

a) Your experiences:

5) Another passion that you have specialized skill or knowledge in:

a) Your experiences:

### **YOUR CAREERS AND JOBS**

List the careers or jobs you have had. You do not need to write a complete resume or job description - just a brief description what you have done for a living.

Example:

Remodeling Contractor - I owned a remodeling company for 20 years. Specialized in kitchens, bathroom and additions. Was responsible for sales, production and office work. Mostly high-end clients.

### **YOUR EXPERTISE**

List any expertise that you have.

Example:

I am fairly proficient at making web pages.

I know a fair amount about making recordings and putting them on the web.

## **HOW YOUR IDEAS CAN BENEFIT OTHERS**

Choose 5 topics from your work above, and list at least 5 things you can do to make money with that idea. Make sure some of your ideas are feasible on the Internet. Ask a friend or spouse to help you come up with these ideas.

This is not the time to analyze each business idea – that will come later. Be creative, then worry about the nuts and bolts later.

Even though you may have an idea firmly entrenched in your mind and may even have a website up and running, there may be additional ways to make money.

### **Also, think in terms of these guidelines:**

- Can this idea help people make money?
- Can this idea help people save money?
- Can this idea help people save time?
- Can this idea help people save pain? (emotional, physical or financial)
- Can this idea help people feel better about themselves? (related to above)

Example:

Shooting

- 1) Coach kids in skeet and trap
  - a) Feel better about themselves
  - b) Save time
- 2) Sell videos about competitive shooting
  - a) Feel better about themselves
  - b) Save time
- 3) How to organize shooting events for your organization (fund raising)
  - a) Make money
- 4) Create an information product about competitive shooting
  - a) Save money
  - b) Save time
- 5) Create home/self-defense workshops
  - a) Save pain - emotional, physical and financial
- 6) Sell reloading supplies
  - a) Save money
- 7) How to create a reloading supply business
  - a) Make money
  - b) Save money - you get a discount when you buy wholesale
  - c) Save time - I shorten the learning curve for you

List your items here: