THE PERFECT SITE GUIDE

by Lisa Irby of

2 Create A WebSite.com

BUILD SITE. BUILD SUCCESS.

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Always check ThePerfectSiteGuide.com for updates.

Want to create a website, but have no clue how to begin? Well, you are in the right place! This tutorial will walk you through all the steps to creating and marketing a website from scratch.

If you are in a hurry and want to skip over all my tips, warnings and suggestions (not recommended), then you can skip down to the Quick Start Guide to creating your site.

If you decide to go this route and bypass all my juicy tips, don't say I didn't warn you! ;)

Enjoy the book and feel free to share it with your friends and family by either sending them to the website address below...

http://www.ThePerfectSiteGuide.com

OR...

You can save this book to your computer (if you haven't already, go to "File", "Save Page As" in your browser now) and e-mail it to people, or offer it as a free download from your own website or blog.

Table of Contents
Click the titles to jump to the desired sections of the book.

What Skills Do I Need?

If you're thinking about creating a website (especially if it's for business/money making), you may be curious or even intimidated by what you have to learn. Here are some skills and attributes that will come in handy.

A Basic Understanding of Web Programming

As I will emphasize several times throughout this book, you **do not** need to become an expert programmer to have a successful website, but you should learn the basics of HTML and CSS (more advice on that later.)

Creativity

People underestimate the importance of this attribute. Anyone can throw up content and call it a website or a blog, but when it comes to effective marketing and building traffic, you have to dig deep and get in touch with your creative side.

Some will argue creativeness cannot be learned because it is a talent. That's true to an extent, but I believe you can improve your creativity, especially if you study other successful Webmasters and Bloggers.

Thinking outside the box will take you far, and is often the difference between success and failure. There is going to be competition no matter what topic you choose, so you have to fine tune your approach and develop a fresh perspective on your topic.

Dare to be different.

Good Writing Skills

This skill is especially important if you want to make money the way I do (affiliate marketing). My writing has improved tremendously over the years. Let's take writing headlines, for example. Ten years ago I may have titled a blog post about Twitter mistakes something simple like, *Top Twitter Mistakes*. (Yawn)

Today, I would take more time with that title and maybe craft something more attention-grabbing like, *12 Twitter Crimes Almost Every Newbie Commits*.

See how the 2nd title is much more interesting and eye-catching? This is something I learned over time by studying other successful Webmasters whose writing I admired. One headline can be the difference between hundreds and thousands of visits.

I highly recommend downloading Ken Evoy's free e-book called [Make Your Words Sell]. It's a great read and provides very useful tips to improve your writing.

Patience

I would love to be able to tell you exactly how long it will take to make X amount of dollars. But due to the many variables involved (your topic, your speed of learning, traffic, conversion rates, etc.), it's absolutely impossible to estimate how long it will take to make a profit or how much money you will make.

You will need a great deal of patience and realistic expectations. Just like I could never estimate how long it would take a local music store owner to earn a profit from his offline store, I could never estimate such a thing for someone looking to make money online.

And if you are desperate to make money now, I have some very Monopoly-like advice for you.

STOP! **Do not pass go. Do not collect your $200**. ☺

This book is definitely *not* for you. If making a lot of money in a short time was realistic and common, you'd hear stories every night on the evening news and read countless articles in newspapers and magazines everyday. People would be leaving their 9 to 5 jobs left and right because they struck it rich online.

Of course you may read stories about online success every now and then. But I bet most of you don't know anyone personally who is making a full-time living online. That's largely because it's hard work just like any offline business and it takes time. And unfortunately, a lot of people are impatient.

We live in a digital world where we are used to getting everything now. And because the Internet is so accessible, it often gives people false assurance that making money online is easy and fast.

Don't get me wrong. It's much more **convenient** to make money online than offline, but it is not easy for most people and it takes time.

I've even had friends and family tell me… "Lisa, I had no idea how much I had to learn about marketing and building my site. You make it look so easy."

Sure, I may make it *look* easy because I love what I do and it's never felt like a job. Nevertheless, I still didn't become successful overnight. It's unlikely that you will either.

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So there you have it. If you are not willing to learn basic programming to manage/maintain your site, tap into your creative side, perfect your writing skills and have patience then you might as well close this book now. Making money online is probably not for you.

Domains & Hosting (First Step)

Before we get started, you should understand that **EVERY** website must have two things...

   1) A domain name
   2) A web host

Domain Names

The **domain name** is the address of your website (yoursite.com) and the **web host** is the company that allows you to publish your pages to the Internet, create e-mail addresses (name@yoursite.com) and develop additional features like chat rooms, forums, shopping carts, feedback forms etc.

I recommend getting your domain name and web hosting from WebsitePalace.com. This is my reseller store. I offer free tutorials, free e-book creation software and videos to help you get started with your site. (**The links to the freebies are on the THANK YOU page after you order so don't miss them!**)

However, if you have a company in mind, feel free to use whatever registrar you wish for registering your domain and getting a web host. Registrars typically provide the same services.

Web Hosting

A web host is the company that provides the server space for your web pages and whatever files you need for your website. You will be uploading your website files to your host. This is how a website becomes visible on the Internet.

They also provide you with e-mail addresses (name@yourdomain.com), scripts for forums, blogs, chat rooms, feedback forms, etc. **A website cannot exist without a host**.

When you go to WebsitePalace.com you will see two kinds of hosting plans...

Option 1: Regular Hosting

The first one is located under the Hosting tab. This is the most common type of host that most people use for their static websites and blogs. It's the most economical and you can do whatever you want with your site in terms of adding forums, chat rooms, user uploads, video, etc.

Most people (especially beginners) who use this type of host opt to buy website building software (see below). You don't have to, but if you don't, you'll have to code your web pages by hand.

If this interests you, there are some great tutorials at W3Schools.com and HTMLDog.com. If you take this route, no software is needed. You can just use Notepad or any text editor to create your pages. Then you can upload your pages to the Web via your web host's control panel or an FTP program.   Watch my video that shows you how to use FTP software.

The other option with this host is to buy your own web editing software like Dreamweaver or CoffeeCup. You can create and manage your site in the program, and then upload your pages directly to the web via your hosting account.

Option 2: Website Tonight

The other hosting option is called Website Tonight. It is a template-builder and **you do not need any software** to create your pages. In fact, you can build your pages right from the Web and use any computer as long as it has Internet access.

All you do is select your design template (choose from hundreds), add your text and pictures and your site is live in minutes. This is a great option for **very simple sites** that will only involve text and pictures. Vacation, resume and "about me" sites are great for this kind of host.

I would **NOT** suggest using Website Tonight for any websites that will involve user uploads, networking, blogs, interactivity, etc. **Choose option 1 for this kind of site**.

Coupon for WebsitePalace.com

Surprise!! Because I appreciate you supporting my site and downloading my book, here is a coupon you can use if you choose WebsitePalace.com as your domain registrar **or** host for your site.

In case you didn't know, you **do not** have to host your site at the same company you buy your domains from (unless you choose Site Build It! See below.) So if you were planning to register (or host) your domain somewhere else, you can still host (or register your domain) at WebsitePalace.com and take advantage of the discount.

As long as you purchase *something* from Website Palace, you'll get the discount.

All products on the site are eligible for the promotion. You just have to meet the spending requirements outlined in the coupon below. Simply enter the appropriate coupon code during the checkout process to take advantage of the savings.

15% off orders $100 or more CODE: 100CN15

THE PERFECT SITE GUIDE

COUPON FOR WebsitePalace.com

NOT VALID FOR CUSTOMERS ON THE DISCOUNT LIST

10% off orders $50 or more CODE: 50CN10

ENTER THE COUPON CODE DURING CHECKOUT!

Site Build It! – Another Option (instead of Website Palace)

This option is best for people who want to make money online. If you buy Site Build It! (SBI!) then you **do not** need to register a domain name or select a hosting company as I mentioned above.

SBI! has all the tools you need in one place, including your domain, hosting, a website builder, template designs, brainstorming tools (to help you choose a profitable topic), a newsletter manager, tracking tools, site statistics and most importantly -- **help with marketing and making money from your website**.

You will also have access to their forums where you can chat and get help from other SBI! customers and the SiteSell staff.

If you'd like to learn more about how it works, you can watch their video tour. I would also encourage you to check out some successful sites created with SBI!. Nothing like seeing examples of successful customers to give you an idea of what's possible.

What Type of Site is SBI! Best For?

Site Build It! is really best for static sites (not blogs) that will focus on affiliate marketing and ecommerce. What do I mean by affiliate marketing?

An affiliate site is one that provides content/information on a specific topic and makes money by recommending related products. The companies that own the products pay you a commission for any sale your site generates.

You are the middleman. You don't actually take the orders yourself. The companies you affiliate with provide you with special tracking links so when you send people to their site, they can track any orders your site generates. As a result, you earn a commission of the sale.

Most affiliate programs are completely free to join and the companies pay you by either check or direct deposit. To find out if a website has an affiliate program you simply visit their homepage and look near the header or footer for something like "Affiliate Program" or "Partner Program."

For example, I used Site Build It! to create Flat-Stomach-Exercises.com and I make most of my money from displaying Google ads (will discuss this later) and recommending books and videos on fitness through various affiliate programs related to the site's topic.

What SBI! is NOT For

Site Build It! is **NOT** best for interactive or social networking sites. So if you are trying to create a social networking site or a site that will involve visitor feedback, uploads, downloads, etc. then SBI! is not the best solution because they do not support the languages that you need to create these kinds of sites.

If you want to create a site that involves any kind of user interactivity then you should consider Website Palace or another regular host of your choice.

Why I Bought Site Build It!

A lot of people wonder why I use and recommend Site Build It! when I created 2 Create a Website without it.

To be honest, I bought SBI! in 2005 because I kept hearing people rave about it. For a long time, I was promoting their product on my site as an affiliate but didn't own it (shame!) so I started feeling a little hypocritical and decided to buy the product to see if it was all everyone made it out to be.

Turns out, it was. Flat-Stomach-Exercises.com started receiving quite a bit of search engine traffic after my 3rd month and I began making money from various affiliations and Google ads.

Now that I actually use SBI!, I am very proud and confidently recommend this product to people who are new to all this and need some extra guidance when it comes to making money online.

I promise you. You will **NOT** get the kind of help with marketing if you go with a regular web host. So you have to decide if you'd rather save the money and go with a regular $3/month host at Website Palace (or a company of your choice), and receive **less** guidance, or invest the $299/year in SBI! and have access to a complete training system equipped with all the tools.

Don't get me wrong, though. Making money with SBI! or the regular way is no cakewalk. It took a **lot of work and time**. I worked on my site continuously for the first three to six months. It wasn't magic.

I'd love to sit and tell you that all I did was buy SBI! and I started making money immediately. No, SBI! provides outstanding tools and guidance, but **you still have to add your own brains, motivation and hard work to make your site successful**. And if you're new to all this, expect it to take some time.

So if you are looking for some get-rich-quick program, this is not the product for you.

I Don't Endorse FREE Domains or Hosting

I know what you may be thinking. *Do I have to pay for my website?* The answer to that is simple. **No, you don't**. But I highly recommend it due to some bad experiences I've had with free hosts. I am not going to recommend any free hosts here so you're on your own if that's what you're looking for.

Here's the bottom line. You get what you pay for (or ***don't*** pay for) and I will not spend any time endorsing any free web hosting companies here because I believe if you want people to take your site seriously, you will invest the money. (**Especially if your goal is to make money online**.)

You wouldn't believe all the people who email me and tell me they wish they had found my advice about free hosting before starting their free website. The horror stories regarding sites getting shutdown, no guarantees, etc. are endless. Trust me, I've been there!

Watch my video where I discuss the problems with using a free host.

Videos Related to Hosting

The Price of Free Web Hosting
Site Build It! – Dispelling The Myths!!!

Blog or Static Website?

A blog is a different kind of website. By default, the content on blogs is organized by category, date, tags, etc. so your visitors can sort through your blog using their method of choice.

Blogs also have RSS feeds. RSS stands for Really Simple Syndication. This allows people to stay updated with your content by simply subscribing to your blog's feed using an online RSS reader. The Firefox browser has a built-in reader. Google Reader is also a popular tool people use to get "fed."

The RSS feed is usually symbolized by a small, orange icon. So if you want to know if a blog has a feed, look for a similar icon.

** Please make sure you absorb the info in this section **

Blogs are typically best for sites that are news-oriented and/or will be updated often. Meaning there is no specific order to the content, and you will be publishing the "thought of the day" in regards to your blog's topic or theme.

So let's say your blog is about New York fashion and you have categories on your blog such as Casual, Cosmopolitan, After 5, Formal, etc. Every time you have something new to write, you will publish a new post and the latest will appear at the top of your blog, while the older posts move down (off) the page and into your archives.

Notice my blog, http://blog.2createawebsite.com. The content is usually pretty current (see the date) and there really is no methodical order to the content. It's a much more "newsy" format. The newest post is always at the top of the page, and you can search my posts by category.

Conversely, look at my static website, http://www.2CreateAWebSite.com. Static websites are published exactly as they are created. Notice the content is not dynamically published by date, category, etc and there are no comments. With a website, you have more control over the organization of your content (in general). They are typically better if you don't plan to update your site very often.

If you are creating a tutorial-based site, where the steps/information need to be presented in a certain order then a website is often the better choice.

Now, this is not to say you cannot create static pages on a blog. You absolutely can. However, with websites, it's easier to organize your pages and place them where you want within the site navigation.

So depending on how you want to present your content, you should think carefully about which method is best for your needs.

I had a friend tell me that she was reading a blog and found it very confusing because she couldn't find the information she was looking for. The blog owner didn't do a very good job of organizing her "important posts". Many of them were buried in the archives since blogs typically display newer content first.

The author could remedy this by creating a website instead of a blog or use more "static" pages on her blog that never get buried (yes, this is possible). But many bloggers don't take the time to learn how to do this so often their blogs become difficult to navigate.

Be sure you think **about how you want your content organized** before jumping into creating a blog. You may find that a website is better for your needs.

Don't just create a blog because it's faster and everyone else is doing it. If you don't plan to update your content very often and don't care about comments and interaction, a static website is fine.

My biggest complaint about blogging is that so many people jump on the blogging bandwagon these days because of the ease and popularity of blogging. But that doesn't mean that format is appropriate for the kind of site you are going to create. Not everyone needs to publish content organized by date and category. In fact, you could confuse/lose your readers as the older content gets buried.**

Can you imagine if my content on 2CreateAWebSite.com was published in a blog format with all the content and posts organized by date? I prefer that site to be static because the steps need to be followed in a certain order.

My blog is just a place for me to talk about random topics related to website creation and Internet Marketing so the order of the content doesn't matter as much.

I have always made more money from my static websites. I believe it's because the layout and site organization. My site is tutorial-based so because of the static layout, it's easier to find/reference information.

Now, let's talk about building blogs and static websites...

WordPress

WordPress is my favorite blogging platform.

I was once a Blogger user, but switched to WordPress in January of 2008. I haven't looked back since. WordPress is much more robust and you can do so much more with your content thanks to the plug-ins available (which are free, by the way).

A plug-in is simply a script that gives your blog additional functionality and WordPress has a directory full of plug-ins you can use.

Let's say you want to display a listing of the top commenters on your blog (people who leave the most comments). You can install a plug-in that will publish a real-time listing of your blog's top commenters.

So there are tons of different plug-ins in categories that can make your blog do many different things. WordPress is **EXTREMELY** powerful.

My blog, http://blog.2CreateAWebSite.com is a WordPress blog.

Creating a WordPress Blog

There are two ways to create a WordPress blog.

1) You can use a free one at WordPress.com (no domain or hosting account needed) or

2) You can create a self-hosted blog on your own domain.

I **HIGHLY**, **HIGHLY** recommend doing the self-hosted blog on your own domain. If you do not and host it for free on WordPress.com, then you **cannot** add affiliate links or Google ads. A **huge** disadvantage if you plan to make money with your blog.

My blog is self-hosted, meaning it sits on my own domain at http://blog.2CreateAWebSite.com. If you go this route, you need a domain name and a web hosting account.

So again, you can choose one of the regular hosting plans at Website Palace and install the WordPress software with the click of a button from your account and begin blogging immediately! No techy knowledge needed to setup your blog.

Unlike websites, you **DO NOT** need web software to create a blog. WordPress and Blogger both have built-in editors so you can create your blog posts right from the blogging admin area.

However, if you want to customize your blog's template design, it really does help to learn a bit about CSS and web design. My fundamental knowledge of CSS has helped me **GREATLY** when it comes customizing my blog's design.

Watch an instructional video to learn how to setup a WordPress blog.

Blogger

Blogger is owned by Google and probably the easiest platform to use. It's completely free and you do not need to buy a hosting account to use it.

To create a Blogger blog, you simply go to Blogger.com and sign up.

Note: Even though you don't need a hosting account with Blogger, I would **HIGHLY** recommend you buy your own domain for your blog so your address is **http://www.yourblog.com** instead of **http://yourblog.blogspot.com**.

Once you buy your domain, Blogger has instructions for pointing your domain name to your blog.

Any Disadvantages to Using Blogger?

Even though Blogger is easy to setup and use, it's not as robust as WordPress. Some people find it tricky to setup static pages with Blogger and organize their posts outside of the standard blog format (newest to oldest). Plus there aren't plug-ins you can use like WordPress.

My advice is simple...

Choose WordPress! ☺

Note: There are other blogging platforms such as TypePad, Moveable Type, etc. I tried TypePad and didn't like it, and I've never tried Moveable Type. WordPress and Blogger are the most widely used blogging platforms.

Can Blogs Really Make a Lot of Money?

The short answer is "yes." However, the revealing answer is that most people make very little from their blogs. It's a documented fact.

But the good news is, there's a professional Blogger out there named Yaro Starak who makes a 6-figure salary blogging and wants to help you! What's even better is he has a free report that teaches you everything he knows.

It's called Blog Profits Blueprint. I downloaded it some months ago and was quite impressed. Prior to reading this free report, I heard a little about Yaro, but didn't really know his story. At the time I wasn't much into blogging so his name sort of went in one ear and out the other.

Now that I spend more time blogging, I have a great appreciation for his teachings and I really like that he shows what so many people do wrong. I think you can learn a lot from other's mistakes. Not only is Yaro very respected online, he's a real nice guy with superb advice.

Videos Related to Blogging

Blog or Website? Which is Better?
Creating and Editing a WordPress Blog
Why Your Blog Makes $0
Switching From Blogger to WordPress
How to Install WordPress on Your Local PC for Testing
Hey Bloggers! I'm in Love With Thesis!

Creating Static Websites

In order to build a static website you need to either…

1) Download and edit a web template,

2) Learn HTML / CSS, or

3) Buy / Download Software

Web Templates

I learned how to create websites by downloading existing templates and making my own edits. Some may argue that's not the best way to learn the fundamentals, but it worked for me. ☺ Looking at the existing code and making small edits really taught me a lot.

In fact, that's what inspired me to create the Easy Starter Templates. I taught myself HTML, CSS and Photoshop over the years and decided to create and sell starter templates to teach people how to build and edit their own websites. They come with an instructional video and tips on how to enhance the templates.

Watch a promo video about the templates here.

The good news is, if you buy your domain name or host your website at WebsitePalace.com you will get these templates absolutely FREE! (They retail for $47.) This offer is valid for purchases made on and after June 29, 2011.

The download link to the templates is on the "Thank You" page immediately after you order, so please don't miss it!!

Learn HTML and CSS

If you are feeling adventurous, you can go to sites like HTMLDog.com or HTMLGoodies.com to soak up all the fundamentals and proper syntax for coding a website.

The cool thing about static websites (unlike blogs) is you can create and test right on your computer using Notepad/TextEdit and then preview right from any web browser. That's another reason downloading and editing templates is so convenient.

Web Software

If you're going to buy web software, I recommend Dreamweaver. This is probably the industry standard for web editors. It's quite pricey, but if you want to really learn how to code a website the proper way, this is a very good editor.

It took me awhile to warm up to this software because it's quite intimidating when you first open it. It assumes you want to learn and understand HTML and CSS so everything is based off those principles. <u>I created a video on how to get started with it</u>. It really takes the intimidation out of using it for the first time.

If you want something a bit less intimidating, you may want to look into <u>Artisteer</u>. It's a template generator for both blogs and static websites. So you can use this for WordPress or Blogger as well.

It's actually very fun to use because it's so user-friendly. It assumes you know **NOTHING** about HTML or CSS and it gives you quite a bit of control. They even offer a free trial. <u>Watch my video on Artisteer here</u>.

Making Money Online

Many of you downloaded this book because you have one goal, and that is to make money with a website or blog.

It is entirely possible to make a full-time living online. I do and hope to never return to a 9 to 5 again.

I can work when I want, travel when I want, wake up when I want and I have no one to answer to but **MEEEEEEE**.

The freedom that this "job" provides is beyond measure. If you are prepared to work hard, set realistic goals and enjoy yourself, you too can have this lifestyle.

But...

As I said earlier, this all came with a price. **I have spent an enormous amount of time in front of my PC over the years**.

I had to learn how to create my own websites (yes, that includes learning some HTML/CSS programming) and learn how to use different tools and software programs. I didn't have the luxury of a book like this or a personal mentor to give me any kind of guidance.

So let me set the record straight. If you are going into this expecting to make a lot of money in a few short months without having to learn, make mistakes and possibly spend some money (at least for your website), then you might as well stop reading now.

Also, I cannot protect you from failure. Many people let the fear of failure paralyze them and they become afraid to "just do it." But did you know that sometimes the best way to learn is to fail?

Do you think I did everything right the first time? Of course I didn't. But I didn't let that stop me. I learned valuable lessons from my mistakes. And fortunately for you, you have this book (something I didn't have) that can nudge you in the right direction.

While there's no way for me to protect you from failing (too much of your success depends on your own hard work, creativity and effort), but I **can** help minimize potential mistakes by giving you advice based on my own experiences.

OK, I'm done preaching (at least for now). But I really want to emphasize the fact that you cannot put a time-limit on your success. I cannot **and will not** tell you how long it's going to take you to make money. There are too many variables involved to make such a prediction.

But I can tell you that if you are a hard worker, enjoy the learning, and understand that success is not going to happen instantly, then you are already starting on the right foot.

I am going to make an important statement here so make sure you remember this…

How much money you make online solely depends on how much TARGETED traffic you can drive to your site and how well you build credibility.

OK, now that you understand that, let's talk about the different kinds of sites and ways you can make money online with a website or a blog.

Videos Related to Making Money Online

Not Another "How to Make Money" Website
Desperate to Make Money With a Website
"Help! I Got Scammed Online"
Making Money With ClickBank
Earning a Residual Income Online

Google AdSense

Google AdSense is probably one of the most convenient ways to monetize your static website or blog. This program is free and you partner with Google by promoting their sponsored ads on your site.

Every time an ad is clicked on your site, Google pays you a percentage (undisclosed) of what the advertiser is paying them for the click.

Google's technology can read your pages. So they will determine what your page is about. And when you paste the AdSense code on your pages, their technology will generate ads **relevant to your content** – thus increasing the chances that your visitors will click.

So if your site is about baseball, you will see sports-related ads on your pages. Google is in complete control over what ads display. However, you *are* allowed to filter competitive or inappropriate ads if you wish.

When your earnings reach $100, Google will send you a check (or pay with direct deposit).

Applying For AdSense

Once your website or blog has several pages of useful, unique and organized content, you can go to http://adsense.google.com and apply.

Recently, Google tightened their acceptance policies. I've heard conflicting information on this, but some have been told that in order to get accepted with AdSense, your site must meet the following requirements...

1) **Must be hosted on a true domain name (yourdomain.com) So that means you cannot use a Blogger blog without pointing it to your own domain**
2) **Your domain must be at least 6 months old**
3) **Content must be original and unique**

Rule #3 is not new, but 1 and 2 were not requirements when I joined.   Although I will say I've heard from some people who have gotten accepted without meeting all those requirements.

I guess it depends on the quality of your site or blog. If your site is very well organized and provides a lot of useful content, then Google may accept you even if you don't meet all the requirements.

Lisa's advice: *Don't worry about applying to Google AdSense in the first six months. You are not going to make much anyway if you don't have the traffic. So you might as well focus on building and marketing your site and apply for AdSense (or any affiliate program) later.*

Too many people focus on making money right away and they can't wait to join AdSense. Then they join and wonder why they aren't making any money with their ads. Of course, if you haven't learned how to build traffic to your site then you aren't going to make anything with AdSense or **any** program.

How much targeted traffic you have is a big factor with how much you will make with AdSense. Actually, it's a big factor for how much you will make no matter how you attempt to make money online.

Don't ever underestimate the importance of learning how to market your site. Traffic does not just appear because you create a website. Marketing is everything.

Alternatives to AdSense?

There are some alternative programs to AdSense. The only one I've really tried is [AdBrite](#). The ads don't pay as much as AdSense, but it's worth a try if you were either banned or not accepted into AdSense.

You are allowed to use both programs together on your site. I e-mailed Google to make sure it didn't violate their terms. I use AdBrite, but not in the same way I use AdSense. AdBrite also has a 3rd party ad management program that I use to sell flat-rate ad space on my site.

[Kontera](#) and [Infolinks](#) are two other AdSense alternatives. Both are in-text advertising services, so the actual keywords on your pages will turn into underlined ads. I am not a fan of these kinds of ads, personally. I think they are too intrusive, and I don't like the fact you can't control which words on your pages will become ads.

At least with AdSense and AdBrite you can designate a space for the ads. With Kontera and Infolinks you have much less control over where the ads will show up on your pages.

Videos Related to Google AdSense

[How to Make Money With Google AdSense](#)
[Is Google AdSense Dead?](#)

Affiliate Marketing

Affiliate Marketing is how I make a full-time living online. As an affiliate, I build websites on topics that interest me and make money by earning commissions when I refer people to products and services that relate to the content of my sites.

I market my websites in places like Google (and other free search engines), Twitter, YouTube, forums, I comment on related blogs, etc. As my traffic grows, the more money I earn from the affiliate programs I join and programs like AdSense.

Once again, almost all affiliate programs are free to join. You simply go to the company's website and check to see if they have one. If so, you sign up and within minutes you can begin promoting their products.

Here's an Example...

Let's say you love the sport of bowling and you want to create a website that teaches people how to perfect their game.

You could register the domain name **bowling-tips-for-newbies.com** and build a website with tons of information and instructional videos on how to become a great bowler.

After you create your site, you begin marketing it by learning about SEO (search engine optimization). This is the process of getting your pages ranked high in Google, Yahoo and all the other free engines. Your goal is to get found for popular bowling searches.

There are many more ways to market a website (forums, Twitter, FaceBook, paid marketing, writing guest articles, PPC (pay per click), article submissions, etc.) You can even create YouTube videos teaching your audience how to walk and throw the ball down the lane. YouTube will provide another way for people to find you online.

There's more specific traffic advice here.

I'll say it again. Success online is all about marketing. No matter what kind of site you create, you must learn how to get in front of your targeted audience and give them VALUE. This is not an easy or overnight task.

Monetizing Your Bowling Website

To make money from this site you could display Google ads on your site (via the AdSense program that I mentioned above). You could also visit your favorite bowling supplies website and see if they have an affiliate program.

As an affiliate, you can refer your site visitors to bowling-related products and supplies. This means every time someone buys a product as a result of your referral, you'll earn a commission from that company.

Almost all affiliate programs provide tracking details so you can login to your account and see how much traffic and sales you've generated. The company will provide you with the links and banners you need to promote their products from your site.

Where to Find Affiliate Programs

One way to find affiliate programs that match your niche is to join networks like LinkShare, ShareASale and CJ.com. These companies house a multitude of affiliate programs under one roof.

You can scour their directories for the perfect program, get affiliate links for your site and check your traffic and earning reports. Instead of getting a separate check from each company, the network sends you a lump sum check for all your earnings from the programs you've joined.

AssociatePrograms.com is another great site to visit to find affiliate programs. Allan Gardyne has compiled a directory of programs and they are sorted by category. You will also find some outstanding affiliate success tips.

Payments and Taxes

Most affiliate programs pay by check, PayPal and some even pay by direct deposit. If you live outside of the United States and have questions about payments, you should e-mail the individual companies and ask about their payment options.

If you earn over $400 for the year, the company will treat your earnings like an independent contractor, and everything you earned will be reported to the IRS. **So yes, you are responsible for keeping track and reporting everything you earn**.

You do not have to setup an official business name/corporation as an affiliate, but if you start making enough money, you will be able to file a Schedule C form with your regular 1040 and claim expenses for your affiliate business. So that means you can write-off things like your domain name, hosting fees and any other expenses associated with your affiliate business.

Keep in mind that in order to write these things off, you must be making a certain amount.

I highly recommend you seek advice from a local tax professional so you can get advice specific to your situation. Be careful about getting advice from the web as it may be incorrect and/or outdated. If you are going to get info from the Internet, make sure you go to www.irs.gov – the official IRS website.

I purposely did not disclose specific numbers about taxes here. I want you to do your own research and make sure you get the answers you need from a local tax professional.

Videos Related to Affiliate Marketing

Which Affiliate Programs Generate The Most Money?
Is Affiliate Marketing Oversaturated?
MLM vs. Affiliate Marketing
Why Many Affiliate Websites Fail

Ecommerce Website / Selling Hard Goods

If you want to create a website that sells actual products then you will need some kind of shopping cart system in addition to your domain and web host.

There are several ways to go about setting up a shopping cart but I am going to discuss the most popular...

1) Installing a shopping cart system through your hosting account
2) Using PayPal

Shopping Cart Systems

Most domain registrars / web hosting companies have shopping cart solutions you can purchase as add-ons for your website.

For example, Website Palace has one here. If you choose this option, there will be some setup required, so you'll have to get the instructions from the web host.

Collecting Online Payments

To handle credit card transactions you will either setup a merchant account or use a 3rd party solution like PayPal.

PayPal is probably the easiest payment system to setup and does not cost as much as the merchant account solutions provided by most web hosts. Signing up with PayPal is free and the only cost to use their shopping cart/checkout system is the fee you pay per transaction.*

If you do decide to go with PayPal, you can integrate it with the shopping cart solution found on Website Palace.

Using PayPal By Itself

You can use PayPal without setting up a shopping cart. If your website is only going to sell a few items then you may be able to get away with just setting up a few "Buy Now" buttons and directing your customers to PayPal to purchase. But if you plan on selling multiple items then you should consider setting up some kind of shopping cart system.

Make sure you check out PayPal's site for specifics on all the fees and options.

* PayPal offers multiple merchant account options and there may be additional fees associated with the premiere accounts.

What You Should Know About Ecommerce Websites

I will be the first to admit that I've never run an ecommerce website. I have absolutely **no experience** with managing this type of site. Quite honestly, I've never had an interest. However, I do know that there are some common pitfalls people run into so I want to mention a few things here...

1) As a general rule, ecommerce sites are more difficult to get listed in the search engines. So marketing these sites will be a lot different than marketing a site full of content (an affiliate site, for example). Be prepared to spend some money on advertising.

2) One way to help draw organic (free) search engine traffic to an ecommerce site is to create content around your store. Let's say you are selling computer memory from your online store. To help draw in organic traffic from Google, you could also build information content that targets keywords people are searching for related to computers.

   You could create a section on how to troubleshoot a computer or how to install memory. That will give your site a chance to draw in some free, organic search engine traffic because search engines like content.

   This is what Jim Nelson of JuggleNow.com did to promote his juggling store. [Click here to read his story](#). **In my opinion, this is one of the best examples of how to market an online store if you have no brand awareness or notoriety online**.

   To get an idea for what people are searching for, you can use the [Google AdWords Keyword Tool](#).

3) You do not have to register a business name if you setup an ecommerce store, but it is highly recommended if you will be collecting credit card payments. Plus, some merchant account providers may require you to have a business name.

4) Remember, you will be responsible for integrating your shopping cart/payment systems into your website. Please do not expect your web host to set everything up for you. If you buy a shopping cart, there will likely be basic instructions, but you will have to learn how to do the customizations yourself.

[Watch my video that addresses common mistakes people make with online stores](#).

Digital or e-Goods

A digital or e-good is a product that your customers can access instantly (via download, e-mail, etc.) The main advantage to selling an e-good is you don't have to deal with shipping and handling.

Running out of inventory is also never a problem. Since your product is in a digital format, it never runs out of stock. You always have unlimited copies on your computer.

This e-book you're reading now is an e-good. I created it with Microsoft Word and used Adobe Professional (not the free Adobe Acrobat Reader) to convert it into an electronic (PDF) book.

Adobe allows you to protect the book from theft (copy and paste) and you can even restrict printing if you want.

One advantage to using a PDF format like this is that it's compatible with both Macs and PCs so you don't have to worry about people having trouble opening your book.
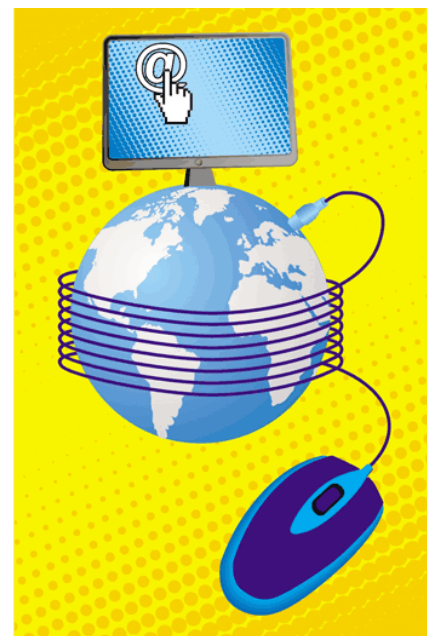
Selling Your e-Goods

Many people who sell e-goods, opt to use PayPal to collect the orders because they can setup PayPal to automatically e-mail the customer the download link to the product immediately after the order is placed. What a convenient setup! You can literally make sales and fulfill orders for your e-good while you sleep!

Offer Your e-Goods for Free

Another option is to give away your e-goods for free (or at least a sample). First of all, it's a great viral marketing technique because many people will pass it on to others.

Second, if you are an affiliate, you can add affiliate links in the book to earn money that way. That's what I'm doing with this book. Even though I make no money from direct sales, I earn commissions when people purchase some of the products and services I recommend here.

You can also earn revenue by adding sponsor ads inside your book and offer advertising spots to people looking to promote their sites.

No Ideas for Your e-Book?

Don't feel you know enough about anything to write a fabulous e-book? Jim Edwards and Joe Vitale will make you think otherwise in their e-book, "How to Write and Publish an e-Book in as Little as 7 Days."

It's 180+ pages of advice on how to write your own e-book and interviews from other successful e-book authors. The book is quite lengthy, but it's a quick read. I enjoyed it!

Social Networking Sites

The amount of questions I receive about creating a
social networking site has skyrocketed in the past two
years.

So many people want to create sites like MySpace,
FaceBook, Twitter or perhaps a smaller version of
these popular cyber hits.

If you plan to make money from a site like this, you
will likely do so from advertising and sponsors. That's how the large networking sites make
most of their money.

First of all, let me keep it real. If your goal is to compete with FaceBook or MySpace, you
have to be very realistic. I admire your drive and goals, but you should know that these large
social networking sites are managed by multiple programmers, their hosting fees are hundreds
thousands of dollars per month (because of traffic and bandwidth), and to compete with them
would probably cost you thousands of dollars in marketing.

So I would never suggest that a newbie attempt to create a site that will compete with some
of these major social networking giants. However, if that is your goal, who am I to tell you
not to pursue it? I just want to give you a heads up about what you will be up against.

Good luck! ☺

Setting Up a Social Networking Site

Let's say you want to setup a social networking site, but on a smaller scale than FaceBook,
MySpace, etc. Maybe there's a church group you belong to and you want to setup a social
network for the members. Or perhaps you have a site that targets stay-at-home moms and
you want to build a section on your site where the moms can connect, chat, etc.

Just like the other sites above, you still need a domain name and a web host. I would **NOT**
use Site Build It! for a social networking site due to the technical limitations I mentioned
earlier. But you can use one of the basic hosting plans on [Website Palace](#) (or a host of your
choice.)

Once you have your hosting plan, you will need to either...

1) Find a social networking script you can install on your hosting account
2) Hire a programmer to create one for you.

Finding a Social Networking Script

There are tons of social networking scripts out here you can install on your own domain. The key is you have to follow the instructions and learn a thing or two about uploading files and configuring scripts. Not a very hard task if you have a little patience.

Sites like PHPFox and Elgg are just two sites that provide social networking scripts for you to setup on your own hosting account. Just remember, it is up to you to read the documentation and instructions for installing/setting up this software on your host. **Your web hosting company is not going to provide much help when it comes to setting this up**.

An Alternate Option

If you do not want to spend time installing a script on your host, there is an easier option. You can use a remotely-hosted script. This means you don't need a hosting account. You host your social networking site on a third party's servers and instead of your social networking site sitting on your own domain (yoursite.com), it will be located at yoursite.socialnetworkingsite.com.

In other words, you don't officially own the content since it's sitting on someone else's domain/server. Two examples of 3rd party social networking sites are Ning.com and SocialGo.com.

Hiring a Programmer

Another option for setting up a social networking site is hiring someone to do it for you. Even though this will probably be the most expensive option, it's the best way to get what you want.

A programmer who is well-versed in AJAX, PHP, etc. can customize the script to your liking. Just be prepared to pay some pretty big bucks (especially if your site will have a lot of customizations and features.)

If you're looking for a programmer, one place to start is vWorker.com. You can request a quote for your project and coders from all over will send you bids. You can converse with the potential coders until you find one you want to hire.

Once you've agreed on a price, requirements, etc. then you can put the money in escrow with vWorker and the person is not paid until the project is complete and you release the funds.

I've actually used vWorker for small projects on my site and I love their system. You are not obligated to accept any of the bid requests so if you just want to get an idea of what something is going to cost you, simply submit a bid request and the coders will start sending you quotes.

Elance is another popular site where people outsource Web and design work.

Notes About Social Networking Sites

Just like online stores/ecommerce sites, social networking sites are not as easy to get ranked in the search engines due to the fact there is very little content for the engines to read. So it's important for you to have realistic expectations for how you are going to drive traffic to it.

A lot of people assume that if they build, people will come. It doesn't work like that and you are going to need a solid plan for marketing. Don't be surprised if you find yourself paying for advertising.

I would never suggest creating a social networking site before you have a site or blog with traffic. It's much easier to promote your social networking site if you already have a traffic base.

For example, I could see a stay-at-home mom website with an existing traffic base creating a social networking site for the existing visitors to use. Since the site is already trafficked, it won't be as difficult for the Webmaster to encourage participation.

However, starting a social networking site from the ground up is not a good idea for most people, especially if you have no Internet marketing experience.

Forums / Message Boards

A forum is a site that allows people to have threaded conversations. Forums are usually divided up into smaller sub forums based on topic. You can see my forum by going to WebsiteBabble.com.

Most forums make money with advertising. Forum owners display Google (AdSense ads), allow paid advertising, sponsors, etc.

Just like everything else, there are multiple ways to build a forum. It depends on how much work you want to do and how much control you want to have. I highly recommend self-hosting your own forum like I'm doing with WebsiteBabble.com.

That means the forum is hosted on my own domain name and I have full control over everything from the address of the forum to hosting ads, etc. If you want to go this route, you need a domain name and regular web host. My forum is hosted at Website Palace and the forum script/software that I'm using is vBulletin.

So to create my forum, I had to buy the vBulletin script and then install it on my hosting account at Website Palace. Yes, this will require you to learn a bit about uploading files to your web hosting account.

Don't Want to Buy a Script?

In my opinion, vBulletin is the best forum script out there. The customization options are great and you get customer support. However, if you do not want to pay for your forum there is another option.

If you choose the regular hosting option with Website Palace, there are some free forum scripts that come with your plan.

You can install the forum in just a few clicks without having to manually upload files, edit the scripts, etc. The forum scripts are not as powerful as vBulletin, but they may suit your needs. You can always upgrade to a paid script at a later time.

Watch this video and learn how to setup a forum with Website Palace.

Getting Traffic to Your Forum

Just like social networking sites, forums are not as easy to draw in traffic as content-themed websites. One big mistake I made with my first few forums is that I tried to launch before I had enough traffic to my website.

It takes a **LOT** of traffic to get a forum active because most people who are exposed to your forum will not become active members.

So to give your forum a chance to succeed, you **NEED** an existing traffic base that you can promote your forum to. Just like social networking sites, I would not suggest creating a forum if you don't already have a well-trafficked site or blog first. Take it from someone who's had three failed forums.

Video Related to Forums

How to Create a Forum/Message Board

Selling Ad Space

Once you start getting traffic to your site, you may want to think about selling flat-rate ads to other advertisers.

This is different from contextual ad programs like AdSense because you will be charging a flat fee and the ad may run for a week, month, or whatever you decide.

I do not recommend trying to sell ad spots if you don't have much traffic. Think about it. Would you pay for an ad on a store window if you knew that store was on a street with no traffic?

You should definitely wait until you have a few hundred visitors per day before you think of selling ad space. Not to mention, it makes your site look very smallish if you have a "Your Ad Here" message up for months and no takers.

Using Ad Management Software

OpenX

If you want to keep all the profits yourself, the best thing to do is use your own ad management software. OpenX is probably one of the most popular, free scripts out here. You can integrate it with PayPal, and the setup is fairly easy if you are familiar with configuring and uploading scripts to your web host.

OpenX supports image and text ads.

AdPeeps

I use AdPeeps to manage the banner ads on 2CreateAWebSite.com. I installed the script on my domain and I can now manage the advertisers right from the AdPeeps control panel.

Customers can setup their ads for your approval before going live and the ads automatically go offline when they expire. The advertisers can also view their click stats and renew their ads with ease. AdPeeps also comes with PayPal integration (and other checkout solutions). That means customers are automatically prompted to pay after buying their ad.

You can sell ads by impression, clicks or on a monthly basis.

OIO Publisher

OIO Publisher is the perfect, hassle-free solution for bloggers who want to host sponsor ads, but don't want to deal with setting up and installing complicated scripts. If you use WordPress, OIO Publisher installs just like a plug-in, so setting this ad management system up is a breeze.

OIO only works on PHP sites (sites like WordPress blogs and most forums), so if your site is static (HTML) then you'll have to convert your pages to PHP in order to use it.

I bought this script for my forum, WebsiteBabble.com and it worked like a charm.

OIO Publisher supports image and text ads.

AdBrite

AdBrite provides another solution for ad management. AdBrite is not just a contextual ad program like AdSense. They will also host your flat-rate ads. The advantage to using AdBrite over a program like OpenX is the setup is much simpler.

All you do is create your account, set your prices, paste the AdBrite code into your pages and let AdBrite do the rest. Any time there's a new advertiser, they will notify you and you can approve or reject the ad. As soon as you approve the ad, it will appear on your site and will be removed automatically when the ad expires.

Also, if you don't have any advertisers yet, AdBrite will show network ads that you can earn revenue from in the meantime.

The downside to using AdBrite is you have to share your profits. AdBrite takes a percentage of the revenue you earn from every ad. However, if setting up an ad management script is not your cup of tea then you may want to consider the service.

Unfortunately I had to discontinue my partnership with AdBrite. There was a technical glitch that we just couldn't solve so I now sell ad space directly.

The Manual Method

If you don't want to deal with any scripts or 3rd parties, of course you can manually manage the ads on your site and collect the money through a site like PayPal. I would not recommend this method because it's not automated.

You have to keep track of when the ads expire and remember to take them down. Not too difficult if you have one or two ads, but if business starts picking up, you may regret this decision.

Determining Your Ad Price

So how do you know how much to charge for your ads? One way you can do this is by checking your eCPM statistic from any ad program you may use.

If you are a Google AdSense member, you can login to your reports and check your eCPM for the day or the current month. The eCPM stands for *earnings cost per thousand*. So let's say your eCPM for this month is $5.00. That means you earn $5.00 for every 1,000 ad impressions.

So if your site gets 5,000 page views per month, then you would charge $25/month for an ad ($5.00 for every 1,000 page views).

Now this is just one way of doing it. And of course, you can adjust the price based on other factors. For example, if I used that formula on 2 Create a Website, my ad prices would be much higher than they are. But I also took into account the history of my sponsor ads click through rates, placement of the ads, competitor prices, etc.

So you can use that formula to get a base price, and then adjust as needed.

Building Traffic to Your Site or Blog

Building targeted traffic is the most challenging task of owning a website. I get more e-mails about this than any other subject.

Your ability to drive targeted traffic to your site will probably be the determining factor for whether you succeed or fail.

Many people assume that if they have a great idea for a site, the traffic will just come.

People don't just stumble upon websites like they do stores on a street. You have to drive traffic to your site through either paid advertising or other online methods that I will discuss below.

This is where you need your creative cap because marketing your site effectively is the key to success. I will show you some of the most common ways people promote their websites, but it's up to you to execute, execute, execute!

Let's get started...

Search Engine Optimization (SEO)

I put this method first because it's always been my #1 traffic source. There's nothing like search engine traffic because it's free and very targeted.

Notice I keep using the word "targeted". I do so because there is a **BIG** difference between any traffic and targeted traffic.

I would much rather have 50 people come to 2CreateAWebSite.com who searched for "how to create a website" in Google than to have 500 random people on MySpace find my site because of a bulletin or e-mail I sent out.

Why? Because the people in Google were actually **SEARCHING** for how to build a website. So I know that my content fits their needs and it is more likely they will buy and become regular visitors. These are **targeted** visitors.

A lot of people think that sending out a blast e-mail to their MySpace or FaceBook friends is marketing. Sure, some of your buddies will check your site out of courtesy, but most will not become customers because this is not **TARGETED** traffic.

Google and Yahoo are the most popular engines out there and make up for over 80% of the Web's searches today. Don't waste your time paying any submission services to submit to (50,000 sites). They're rip-offs. Most of the sites they will submit to are rarely used.

Also, when you do a web search on other sites, most of them use Google's results anyway. So as long as you're listed there, you'll also be listed on other sites that use their results.

Search Engine Rankings are a Popularity Contest

Back in the day, getting a good ranking in the popular engines was all about adding meta tags and keyword stuffing.

Meta tags are descriptors that go into the top of your pages and they tell the engines what title and description to display in their results. Even though the search engines rely less on meta tags for rankings, you should still add them on every page.

I have a video on creating meta tags here.

Keyword stuffing is when you load up your paragraphs with the phrases you want to rank high for. So if you were trying to rank on the first page of Google for "home employment", your paragraph may have looked something like this back in the day...

Looking for home employment? This site has the best home employment opportunities available today! Don't look for another home employment site because you won't find better employment opportunities than you will find here!

Notice how many times I used the phrase "home employment"? Doing this used to help you increase your ranking for that phrase.

Now, as you can imagine, this method got abused because any nonsense site could rank high for anything they wanted by simply keyword stuffing. So the engines had to quickly adjust.

Nowadays it's all about link popularity. In other words, how many related, popular sites link to you using the keywords you target. These are often called **backlinks**. And a one-way backlink is much better than a two-way link exchange.

A one-way link is when someone links to you, but you do not link back to them. A link **exchange** is a two-way link swap between two sites. The engines pretty much ignore excessive link exchanges because people have abused them and would exchange links in an attempt to boost their "link popularity".

Here's how one-way links work...

Let's say your site is about playing poker and you want to rank high for various poker playing keywords. Of course you'd use meta tags like I described above and write your content normally (do not keyword stuff like I did in the "home employment" example).

If you do a great job of building a useful site and market it appropriately, you will find that other poker or gaming sites will begin voluntarily linking to your site for free. Google will begin to see this and the more relevant and popular these sites are, the more it will help your ranking for the keywords your site targets.

Now, this will take time. It doesn't happen overnight. For most people, it takes 6 months to a year (or more) before Google starts sending **an ample amount** of traffic your way. And that's assuming you are marketing your site and getting relevant links from other sites.

Can't you see why one-way links are better barometers for how popular a site is? Anyone can get someone to link to them via a link exchange. But if Google sees that you have a lot of one-way links (meaning people voluntarily linked to you for free), it shows them that your site must be popular and of good quality to people. Therefore, they will reward you with a higher ranking over time.

To learn more about getting ranked in Google, Yahoo and Live (formerly MSN) go here.

Forums

Forums are another way to drive traffic to your site but this also takes time. I would **never** suggest you go to any forum and just blast ads for your site. First of all, that's spamming. Second of all, it's worthless.

The best way to promote your site with forums is to find ones that are related to your niche and develop a likeable profile. If your site is about tennis, find forums related to tennis by googling "tennis forums".

Join the forum and begin interacting with other members by asking questions and helping others. Develop a trusted personality on the forum by being helpful and kind.   Most forums will allow you to add a signature to your posts. This is where the promotion comes in.

As you continue to build your reputation, it will increase the chances that people will visit your site that is listed in your signature file.

This takes time. Just make a habit of posting 5-10 posts per day in the forums of your choice and you will be amazed at how this can help get more traffic to your site in the long-run.

If you emerge as a helpful, likeable member, you gain credibility and the more likely other members will visit your website.

Forums and Backlinks

Many people believe posting to related forums will improve their search engine rankings because of the backlink in the sig file. Remember, backlinks are inbound links to your site and the search engines keep track of how many relevant ones you have.

I do believe that posting to forums may help your link popularity some, but they aren't as effective as they used to be because the engines know people use forums in an attempt to increase their number of backlinks. So don't expect miracles from this.

The best benefit you'll get from forums is the traffic you'll receive from members who manually click on your signature. That's why it's important to post to relevant forums in your niche and build up a positive, credible profile with the other members.

Social Networking Sites

Sites like FaceBook and Twitter can be great places to promote your site. You can create groups centered on your topic, and network with other users who have an interest in the topic of your site.

FaceBook even allows you to create a fan page, so you can use that to promote your site as well.

Even though the founders of Twitter don't classify it as a social networking site, I would still say it falls in that category.

A lot of people think Twitter is a waste of time, but if you learn how to use it, I think it can be a great traffic generator/networking tool.

Here's an example. I did a video explaining how to use the WordPress theme called Thesis. Right after I published the video, I noticed the developers of the product also had a Twitter account. So I sent them a tweet to let them know about my video.

They were so impressed that they began featuring my video on their site which not only helped me land more affiliate sales for the product, but it also brought traffic to my blog.

Social networking sites can be great promotion tools, but just like anything else, you have to use them effectively to get results. That may mean you have to test and experiment for a while to see what works best for you.

I don't spend a great deal of time marketing on social networking sites. It's just a personal preference. However, I know people who use them and are ecstatic with the results. You have to find the formula that works best for you.

Social networking is not for everyone, and you can still have a successful website or blog without using them to promote your site.

YouTube

YouTube has been one of my favorite places to market lately. It's fun and I get to build credibility by creating videos that teach and help build my brand and credibility.

People love video because it gives them a break from reading. It also gives you a chance to show off your personality and let your audience see the real you!

What's even better is once your channel becomes popular, you can become a partner and earn money from ads displayed on and near your videos. (YouTube does not disclose how much traffic or how many subscribers you need, but I would wait until you have at least 500 subscribers before applying).

To get the best video results you should use a camera with HD capability since YouTube will let you upload video in HD. I use a Sony HD Handycam, although you really don't need a video camera. You can use a regular digital camera that has video capability. The higher the megapixels, the better.

I also highly recommend getting a good video editing program so your videos have a more polished, professional look. I use Pinnacle Studio. It's pretty easy to learn and it has a ton of bells and whistles to make your video look more polished and professional.

YouTube and SEO

One cool aspect about creating YouTube videos is if your videos become popular and get "favorited" a lot, you might find them showing up in Google's search results for relevant keywords. Google owns YouTube so if you can create a popular channel with great videos, that can only mean good things for you as far as SEO goes.

I honestly can't see many reasons why you *wouldn't* want to add YouTube videos to your promotion portfolio. Check my blog to read my post titled "10 Reasons You Should Be YouTubing".

Pay Per Click Marketing (PPC)

PPC allows you to bid on keywords you want to rank high for. Above, I wrote about SEO, which is the process of getting ranked in the free/natural results. PPC is the opposite of that. You will actually be paying for your rank.

Every time someone clicks on your ad/site link, you pay a predetermined amount. The most popular PPC programs are AdWords (Google), Yahoo Search Marketing (Yahoo) and Microsoft Ad Center (Live).

This is a great way to bring targeted traffic to your site, **BUT** you can also lose a lot of money quickly if you don't track your conversions and money spent.

Here's how it works...

Let's say you want to rank in Google for the phrase "blue hats". You would create an account with Google AdWords if you want your site to show up on Google.com. AdWords will walk you through creating your ad campaign and will help you determine the price you will pay per click. So let's say your price ends up being $.89. That means every time someone does a search for "blue hats" and clicks your ad/site, that is the amount you will pay.

In Google, the AdWords ads appear in a shaded box right below the search box on the search results page *and* on the right hand column under the heading "Sponsored Links".   Try it now. Do a search for "perfume" in Google. You will see the ads in both places. These are PPC ads.

Most people use PPC to promote specific products because it's easier to track your ROI (return on investment). As I said earlier, you can lose a lot of money quickly if you do not track how much you are spending. Some even do PPC full-time.

But you can also use it to draw traffic to your site. You can bid on very inexpensive keywords and set a monthly budget.

So let's say you bid on the phrases "blue hats", "red hats" and "gold hats" and set a daily budget for $30. Google will automatically freeze your ad campaign when you reach your daily limit. This is a good way to keep your spending in check, especially if you are just starting out.

I don't have much experience with PPC. When I *do* use it, I bid on very inexpensive keywords to drive additional traffic to my site. I don't use it to promote specific products and track the conversion.

But I will tell you this. If you can learn how to master PPC as a business, you can make a boatload of money. Some people make 6 and 7 figures per year just working the PPC market alone by setting up campaigns to promote specific products for which they earn commissions.

The money sounds exciting, but it's hard work because you have to constantly monitor and perfect your campaigns while keeping track of your (ROI) to ensure you are making a profit.

If you are interested in learning more about PPC **as a business** (not just for driving traffic to your site like I use it), check out PerryMarshall.com.

Article Marketing

Article Marketing is where you submit original articles (that you've written) to a directory that allows other Webmasters and Bloggers to re-print your article on their sites.

If someone uses your article, they must also print your info box that contains your bio and link to your site. This is how this technique can bring a viral traffic flow to your site.

Another way to use article marketing is to create keyword-focuses articles on particular phrases that are commonly searched for. Some people believe that submitting articles to popular submission sites will get these pages listed/ranked faster in the major search engines. Then they can use that article to drive traffic back to their site.

Some popular article submission sites are EzineArticles, GoArticles and iSnare.

I would **NOT** recommend submitting the same articles you have on your site. **The search engines may ignore the article**. Make sure the articles you submit to these directories are unique to anything you've written or submitted elsewhere.

I used to use article marketing all the time when I first started marketing my sites. In fact, I credit this technique for helping me get traffic back in the early days. Although, as the Net evolved, the results weren't as sweet so I moved on to other things.

However, there are still a lot of people who use and believe in article. I think a lot of your success chances have to do with your niche. Some niches are more saturated than others. For the record, I'm not a big fan of this technique anymore.

Writing Guest Articles & Blog Posts

Guest writing is a very effective way to get exposure for your site. Imagine the traffic potential available if a heavily trafficked site features your article.

Guest writing is very common in the blogging world. Many successful bloggers will tell you they got their break by writing guest posts for other popular blogs.

Now, before you start submitting articles to any and every popular site you know, there are guidelines you should follow if you want to maximize the benefits from guest article writing…

1) Check to see if the site owner has submission guidelines. If so, make sure you follow them. If they ask you to submit a Word doc, don't submit an HTML file. The fastest way to get your e-mail deleted is to ignore their submission instructions.

2) Only choose sites that have an audience relevant to your topic. There's no point in submitting an article to an electronics site if your article is about beauty supplies. I know it sounds like common sense, but you'd be surprised at the lengths people will go through for traffic.

3) Submit *original* articles. As I mentioned in the section above, the search engines ignore duplicate content, so don't submit an article that you've already published elsewhere. Not to mention, the owner of the site will not want to publish the duplicate content on their site.

Ramit of IWillTeachYouToBeRich.com wrote a very solid article with outstanding guidelines for writing guest posts for other blogs. You can read the article here.

Squidoo and Hubpages

Squidoo is a free site that allows you to create a one-page site (or a "lens") on any topic of your choice. So if your main site or blog is about fishing, you might want to create a Squidoo lens on this topic and link it to your website.

One advantage of creating a Squidoo lens is that Google loves Squidoo. Why? Because it's updated frequently with fresh content. (In case you haven't figured it out yet, Google *loves* fresh content. That's why blogs tend to get listed and ranked faster than websites.)

Another advantage is that Squidoo shares its ad revenue with their lensmasters (Squidoo users.)

Click here to learn more about Squidoo.

Hubpages are much like Squidoo pages, with a few minor differences. One major difference is the ad sharing/revenue piece. With Squidoo, you share the earnings. With Hubpages, you place your own AdSense code on your pages and keep the revenue.

However, the important thing to know is they can both help you generate extra traffic to your site if used effectively.

Here's an article that explains the difference between Squidoo and Hubpages.

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This is not by any means an exhaustive list of ways to market a website. I just wanted to give you an idea of some common ways people promote their sites and blogs.

Videos Related to Building Traffic

Lisa's Website Traffic "Secret"
Does Your Traffic Suck?
Stop The Alexa and PageRank Obsession
Stop the SEO Madness
Creating Fabulous YouTube Videos

Topic Choice is Everything

Now that you understand a lot more about how to build and market a website, I want to spend some time emphasizing the importance of topic choice if you want to make money online.

This section is especially for those who want to make money the way I do – build an information site on a topic and make money through affiliate programs, Google ads, etc.

Many people get the topic part wrong because they either copy other people's successful ideas or they aren't passionate enough about the topic to stick with it.

Remember, it could take you months before you start making decent money, so you have to enjoy this enough to hang in there.

The Problem With Copying Someone Else's Idea

People aren't successful online because of the topic. They are successful because they have fresh, quality information and they present their content in a way that informs, entertains, builds trust and educates their audience.

When people hear that I make 6 figures online, they often assume it's only because of my topic, so many try to build a site similar to mine.

The problem is many of these people don't have the kind of experience I have with this topic so their content is often uninspiring and unoriginal. There's no point in building a site like someone else if you don't have anything fresh and unique to bring to the table.

Affiliate websites that do well online are authored by people who have a great passion for the topic and develop interesting perspectives that engage people from the very beginning. Think different. Be innovative. Research potential competition and find gaps and opportunities they missed.

While demand for your topic is still important, your knowledge, passion and innovation is even more crucial when it comes to building a successful website.

Keyword Tools

Speaking of demand, there are many tools out there you can use to see what people are searching for. One of my favorites is the Google AdWords Keyword Tool.

It shows you how many times a particular phrase was searched for in Google last month. It's a great tool to use while you're brainstorming for a topic.

Also be sure to [watch my brainstorming video](#) where I walk you through the process of selecting a topic for your affiliate website.

"There Are Too Many Sites on My Topic"

Be careful not to fall into the trap of believing there are too many sites on your topic. Even though there may be a handful of sites out there, you should also check the *quality*.

What are they missing? Do most of the sites just say the same thing? How good is the writing? Think you can present your ideas more clearly? Do they use video? Does the site have personality?

The truth is, even though there are billions of sites on the Web, the majority of them are low quality. Most people don't want to invest the time into building a long-term, quality website so they throw up something quick and abandon it shortly after.

That's good news for people who are dedicated, motivated and willing to take the time and energy to making it work.

A lazy man's approach is a hard-working man's opportunity to compete and conquer the market!

More Videos Related To Brainstorming

[Major Brainstorming Mistake](#)
[Why I Won't Suggest a Topic for You](#)

Quick Start Guide to Setting Up a Website

Now that you've read over all the tips and suggestions for starting a website, here is a quick guide you can reference to make sure you have what you need for your site.

Note: I sure hope you didn't skip all the valuable information above. One of the biggest mistakes people make with creating their websites is that they rush and don't take the time to do the research. This often leads to failure and frustration.

Step 1 – Register Your Domain Name

You can use my reseller store, Website Palace or domain registrar of your choice. All domain registrars provide the same service for the most part.

The advantage to choosing Website Palace is you get the free video and e-book tutorials I provide to help you setup your site. I don't know of **any** host that offers this.

Remember, your freebies are on the THANK YOU page so don't miss them!

Step 2 - Choose a Web Host

a) You can choose the hosting plans on Website Palace or a hosting plan of your choice. The regular hosting plans are best for large, complex or money making sites. This is the most common type of hosting plan used by Webmasters. You can't go wrong if you choose this plan.

If you need more space, you might want to look into Hostgator or Powweb. Both of these hosting companies provide "unlimited" space. **You can still register your domain at Website Palace to get your freebies and then host your site at Powweb or Hostgator**.

b) Website Tonight is best for simple websites with just text and pictures. I wouldn't recommend this host for ecommerce, affiliate or social networking sites.

Remember, no software is needed to create your site. WST provides templates and point-and-click tools that are all browser-based. That means you can update your site from any computer.

If You Want a Blog...

It's best to choose the regular web hosting plan from Website Palace (or any web host that has cPanel) and you can instantly setup your blog by signing into your hosting account and going to the "Applications" area to install the blog platform of your choice. No manual uploading involved. Again, I highly recommend WordPress.

DO NOT Choose Website Tonight hosting if you want a blog.

Step 3 – Create Your Site

If you chose a regular hosting plan then you need to decide how you will build your site. You can code your site from scratch in Notepad (or any text editor) by learning HTML/CSS.

Or you can buy software like Dreamweaver or CoffeeCup to create and manage your site. The advantage of using one of these two software programs is you can publish your pages right to the web from the software.

All you have to do is login to your web hosting account and setup an FTP username/password. You will use this same user/pass combo to save your pages to the Internet using the software. I use Dreamweaver and I think it's one of the best editors out there. It's simple enough for beginners, but advanced enough for more experienced users.

Download My Free 3 Column Template

On my programming YouTube channel, 2CreateAWebSite, I have a 4-part CSS tutorial and provide a free template that you can download, edit, and follow along so you can learn more about HTML and CSS. Click here to view the tutorial.

You can use this free template with any web software program or you can open it up in a text editor like Notepad.

Note: Here is the link to download the template. Be sure to watch the 4-part video series that goes along with the template.

Adding Forums, Shopping Carts & Additional Features

Some web hosts like Website Palace have built-in applications that you can add to your site with one click. For example, if you want a chat room or a forum, all you have to do is login to your hosting account, select the "Applications" tab and choose the applications you want to install.

If you want to create a shopping cart to sell products then you might want to look into purchasing some of the shopping cart add-ons that Website Palace and other hosts provide. As far as collecting payments, you can either use a merchant account or PayPal.

Social Networking Sites

If you want to create a social networking site, you'll need to find a script that you want to use. As I mentioned earlier, you can either use PHPFox or Elgg. (There are many more but these are two that I have read about). Just remember, you are responsible for setting these scripts up on your own hosting account.

No web host is going to help you install a custom script that they did not provide. Make sure you get the help you need from the site you get the script from.

Social Networking Site -- No Domain or Hosting Needed

If you do not want to install and customize a script on your own domain, you can always use Ning or SocialGo.com. It's much easier to setup and you do not need to buy a domain or hosting package. The downside is your site sits on a 3rd party server and you do not technically own the content. There will also be design limitations.

If you are going to use a 3rd party solution like this, you should at least register a domain and redirect/mask the name to your Ning or SocialGo site so the address is yourdomain.com instead of yoursite.ning.com.

Website Palace offers **free** domain redirection and masking with every domain purchase. That means you can buy a domain and set it to automatically forward to any site you choose. Masking allows you to hide the forwarded address in the browser address bar.

So if you setup a social networking site at Ning.com, you can buy your own domain and have it redirect to your Ning site so your address of your site is sitename.com instead of sitename.ning.com. Keep in mind, your site is still sitting on the 3rd party server, even if you are using a domain redirect.

Hire a Programmer

If you cannot find a script for the kind of site you want, you can always outsource a programmer. I use a site called vWorker.com when I need technical tasks completed that I cannot do myself.

The advantage of hiring someone to create your script is you can get exactly what you want and you don't have to worry about editing much of the code. Just make sure that you get a clear understanding of how to maintain/update your site going forward. Many scripts are very complex and complicated to update if you do not have a programming background.

You don't want to be left at the mercy of someone else's knowledge when it comes to maintaining or troubleshooting your site. So be sure you understand what you're getting into if you want to manage a social networking website.

Lisa's Favorite Tools, Sites and Resources

I thought I'd add this section to list some of my favorite web tools. Below you'll find a listing of resources that have made my life easier when it comes to managing and promoting my websites.

Some of these tools may seem a bit foreign to you now, so don't worry about trying to figure them all out. You will appreciate them once you begin building your site.

Mozilla Firefox Web Browser

I can't think of any reason why anyone would still want to use Internet Explorer today. Compared to Firefox, it's slower, not as safe and doesn't have the cool, free plug-ins.

Also, when you start learning how to create websites, you'll develop a strong appreciation for how Firefox handles Web code over Internet Explorer. And don't worry, you can easily import your IE bookmarks over.

FireFTP

This is a plug-in you can add to the Firefox browser and it allows you to safely FTP (upload) your files from your computer to your web host. If you use a regular web host, this little tool will come in handy.

ColorZilla

Another Firefox plug-in that gives you the HTML hex color codes for any color you need. (Don't worry if this means absolutely nothing to you now. It will when you start creating your site.)

Firebug

You guessed it. *Another* Firefox plug-in. See, I've already given you 3 reasons to use this browser, so why not download it now. Firebug allows you to edit, inspect and test your HTML and CSS code right from your browser. You can also use this plug-in to view someone else's CSS code if you find yourself wondering "How'd they do that??"

Dreamweaver Web Editing Software

Dreamweaver is a fabulous tool for beginner and advanced Web designers. One key aspect of creating attractive, functional sites is learning CSS (Cascading Style Sheets). This software really helped me grasp the basics of this language. I use Dreamweaver to manage all my sites. Now I'm able to code a lot of CSS from scratch.

FreeCSSTemplates.org

This is a great site to get free Web design templates. If you don't want to code a website from scratch, you can download a template from this site and edit to your liking.

Google Alerts

Want to stay in touch with hot topics in your niche? Create a Google Alert for any keyword or phrase and Google will e-mail current articles that mention the phrases you're interested in.

Google Webmaster Tools (GWT)

Once you build your site, you'll want to become familiar with GWT because it can help you improve your site's visibility in Google's search by creating a sitemap, staying on top of broken URLs, etc.

AWeber

If you need to create a mailing list, segment your list by demographic info and send out targeted mailings, AWeber is the service for you. For only $20/month you can't beat having access to this incredible system that allows you to setup mass e-mail campaigns and create auto responders.

I use AWeber on flat-stomach-exercises.com to send out my (automated) weekly Tummy Tips.

Thesis WordPress Theme

This is the design theme I am using for my blog. If you decide to use WordPress then you will need to pick a theme. Thesis is not free like a lot of themes, but it's one of the best investments I've made recently.

After going through at least 7 different WordPress themes, I finally found one I can stick with. Watch my video on how it works.

Google Analytics

This is the only Website statistic program you'll ever need, and best of all, it's **FREE!** Just install a few lines of code on your site and receive a plethora of visitor reports such as unique visitors, referring sites, most popular pages and more.

vWorker.com

Need a customized script or have a complex design project that is too big for you to tackle? vWorker is the place to go. I've used this service at least 8 times for various medium-sized web dev projects on my site.

You simply submit a bid request so that programmers can bid on your project. Choose the bid you like best and the money is held in escrow until the project is completed. It's a safe and fast way to get your project done.

Google Webmaster Central (YouTube)

I love this YouTube channel. It's run by Matt Cutts (Google's software engineer) and he answers a lot of commonly asked questions regarding getting your site indexed/ranked in Google and other SEO related topics. You should definitely subscribe!!

Feeling Overwhelmed?

OK, you've made it this far and may be feeling overwhelmed by all you've just learned.

Don't feel you have to absorb and do everything today. Honestly, the only thing you need to decide now is the topic of your site and the method you are going to use to create it.

Do you think I learned all this overnight? Heck no! I've been out here since 1998 so I've learned a little at a time.

...And I'm still learning. **;)**

The best gift you can give yourself as an online entrepreneur is the knowledge to build and manage your own website or blog. I know it may be tempting to hire/outsource someone, but that's not always the best scenario for you in the long-run. I have nothing against outsourcing certain parts of your site (custom, complex scripts that involve hard-core programming, etc.).

However, I believe you should **learn the basics** yourself so you are not dependent upon a 3rd party to make basic updates for you. You need to be in control of your site and there's nothing more empowering than that.

So if you do nothing else today, just learn how to create a basic page on your computer. HTMLDog.com has a wonderful page for people who know absolutely nothing about creating a website.

Open up a blank text file on your computer in Notepad or your favorite text editor. Save the file as **FILENAME.html** (*not* FILENAME.txt.html.) When you've created a simple page, open up your web browser and go to "File, Open" and then look for the .html file you just created. It will open this web page locally on your computer.

You can download templates from FreeCSSTemplates.org and test them in this same way. Remember, you don't have to have an editor like Dreamweaver to build a website. You can use basic text editors if you want. Yes, you will have to get involved with more coding, but you will have a better foundation for how to build a website.

Also, don't forget to watch my CSS Tutorial on YouTube and download the free template.

Empower yourself. Learn how to build and manage your site yourself. Even if you buy Site Build It! (the all-in-one site building and marketing system), you should still learn the basics. You'll appreciate that knowledge when you're ready to take your site to the next level.

About Lisa

My name is Lisa Irby and I started making money online my senior year in college. Like most college students I was financially strapped for cash and wanted to find a way to make some extra money.

My very first website was hosted on a free web host (never again!) and it promoted a bunch of offers where I earned a commission for everything that was sold.

I learned how to get my site ranked near the top of the popular search engines and began to make money. Once I made my first dollar you could say that I was officially hooked on the concept of making money online.

I knew that if I could make one dollar, I could turn that into two dollars and so on.

Since that time I have been making money online using these same principles. I build websites on topics that interest me and earn commissions when I refer my site visitors to products and services I recommend.

2 Create a Website is by far my most successful site. It was created in 2002 and by 2005, the earnings from this site nearly quadrupled my 9 to 5 salary. I make the majority of my income by reselling domain names and hosting.

Bye, Bye 9 to 5!

In 2006, I quit my full-time job and started working on my Internet business full-time. This was the best career and personal life decision I've ever made.

Since then I've continued to build my affiliate empire by adding additional sites to my portfolio such as 2 Plan a Website, WebsiteBabble.com and my blog.

I also have a fitness website called Flat-Stomach-Exercises.com. As I stated earlier, this was just an experimental website that I created to test out the Site Build It! product. I honestly did not set out to make much money from it. I really just wanted to see how SBI! worked since I was an affiliate and recommended it from my site.

The success of this small site amazes me. At the time I'm writing this book (May, 2009), the site receives about 7,000 visitors per day and makes enough to pay all my bills and mortgage. Not bad for a site I rarely update now.

However, I want to emphasize that **you have to do the work first**. I spent the first few months really putting a lot of time and energy into building that site, developing my content and perfecting my approach to the topic.

I also had a **huge** advantage because I had created successful websites before and was familiar with the formula for success.

Not all my sites have been successful. I had a lot of failed sites back in the day, but I'm grateful for those failures because they taught me what works, and now I can publish books like this to keep you from making the same mistakes I made.

Don't Forget to Plan

My most recent website, 2 Plan a Website, answers a lot of the preliminary questions people often have (costs to start a website, taxes, etc.). So make sure you stop by for a visit. It's a much smaller site and a pretty quick read. It's laced with additional getting-started facts and answers to frequently asked questions.

One of the biggest mistakes people make with starting an online business is they don't arm themselves with the facts. They rush, make assumptions, choose inappropriate topics and harbor misconceptions about success.

Taking the time to read over my sites will prevent you from making those common mistakes. Trust me. It's worth taking the time to educate yourself before you jump into this.

Lisa's Last Words of Wisdom

No matter how you attempt to make money online, remember that you get out of it what you put into it.

Realize you may have to learn a little bit of programming to manage your website, but you don't have to become a certified programmer to succeed. I am far from that, yet I make a 6-figure salary and know enough programming to accomplish my goals.

Understand the commitment that is involved here. It's not about just throwing up a blog or site and expecting the money to just appear in the next month. You have to learn to market and build traffic to your site. This is going to take time, but you must be resourceful and learn the appropriate marketing methods for *your individual site*.
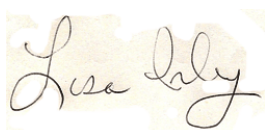
What works for one Webmaster may not work for someone else. You have to find what works for you and perfect your skills.

Being creative and innovative will also help. It's not enough to just put up a bunch of content. You have to have a direction, find your own voice and learn how to build a brand of one (if you plan to make money as an affiliate like me.)

I can give you all the guidance in the world, but I cannot give you motivation and a good work ethic. That has to come from within. This is not a lazy man's world. So if you aren't prepared to work hard and spend hours in front of your computer, you may want to think twice about this.

You can do it. You just have to **belieeeeeve** you can. Remember, I had no formal training, prior education or mentor when I started this. The only experience I had online was checking e-mail. I'm serious! So if I can do it, so can you.

Wishing you all the success going forward and thanks for reading! Be sure to check the next page for ways to keep in contact with me online.

Lisa Caly

Stay Connected With Lisa Online

My Websites

http://www.2CreateAWebSite.com
http://www.2PlanAWebSite.com
http://www.WebsiteBabble.com (Webmaster Forum)

My Blog

http://blog.2CreateAWebSite.com

Twitter

http://www.twitter.com/2createawebsite

Facebook

http://www.facebook.com/2createawebsitefan

YouTube

http://www.youtube.com/lisa3876 (marketing and making money online)
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