

How To Break Into The 'How To Make Money Online' Niche

By

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I've started many newsletters and reports with the following line:

'I get a lot of emails from....'

But it's true so here's another one ☺

I get a lot of emails from people who are struggling to get into online marketing. The main problem that most people seem to have is breaking in to the 'how to make money' niche of Internet Marketing.

There are a couple of things I need to say about this niche (and it IS a niche).

Firstly despite what people say, it's NOT saturated, over subscribed or full of scams.

BUT there is a lot of competition, there are scams and it is probably the first niche that most new marketers try to get into, hence there's a lot of bad information around.

Secondly, it's an incredibly lucrative market if you get it right. There's a lot of money to be made from supplying genuine, workable information to people who are looking to start their own online business.

So here's how to get into the 'How To Make Money' Niche of Internet Marketing.

The gurus and established marketers who tell you not to bother because it's too competitive are scared of the competition.

They don't want their nice little cash cows taken to the slaughterhouse by some newbie who *just* might have the personality and flair to attract subscribers and buyers away from the big guys.

There is plenty of room in the HTMMN ('How to make money niche' – so I don't have to type it every time) for **anyone**.

I'll repeat that – **ANYONE** - who is honest and forthright about their own online experiences. I'll tell you how I started in a little while but for now here are a couple of notions that I'd advise taking into consideration.

Don't BS people – most of them are much more intelligent than you are. Among my subscribers are Doctors, lawyers, teachers, clergy, scientists and a hundred other different types of people whom I'd be embarrassed to sit next to during a quiz show.

The fact that I'm making more money online than most of them, doesn't matter one iota. I have the maximum respect for my subscribers, and that includes the single Moms, the unemployed dads, the students, the senior citizens and everyone else.

Sure I get it wrong from time to time and people aren't shy about emailing me to tell me about it! But on the whole I can say hand on heart that I try to be as straight talking and honest about Internet Marketing as possible.

Because if I'm not – people will spot it a mile away and my rep will hit the dirt faster than I can blink.

That's where most people trying to get into HTMMN get it soooooo wrong.

Every time I browse the IM forums I see posts from supposed experts who ask questions like 'How can I make \$100 a month from Internet Marketing?'

A fair question that deserves a fair answer, but then below the post, on the poster's signature file is an ad (that he's selling) that reads

**Want to earn \$10,000 a week like I do?
Click here**

It always makes me smile that someone can be stony broke but pretending to make \$10,000 a week in order to sell an ebook or software or whatever.

In reality though it's not funny because some person who's genuinely trying to get into IM and who perhaps can't afford the money could end up spending \$50 on something written by a pretend marketer who has less of a clue about how to profit online than they do.

So don't even try to sell 'how to make money books until you can prove that you're doing it'

So how DO you get into this niche?

It's actually not that hard. You need to do two things to start with.

Firstly you need to make some genuine online profits so you can tell others how to do it, and secondly you need to realise that the people who are already involved in this niche and are successful ALSO need products and services, and they're willing to pay for them.

I'm sure you've heard the story of how the richest people to come out the Gold Rush era weren't the miners looking for gold, they were the people who sold the shovels.

And the one about not setting up your new hamburger joint in the same street where there are already 50 up and running. But if you open a stall selling indigestion remedies you might just be onto a winner!

So you need to find some making money that doesn't involve telling other people how to make money (yet).

Here's one of the ways I did it, and STILL DO in other niches.

Quite a few years ago, newsletters were very popular (as they are now) but back then the majority weren't online, they were paper based, printed newsletters. The Internet was pretty much a baby but the gurus of the time were still selling HTMM products as they are today. They had newsletters too.

Except they were printed one. They were composed with early word processing packages. I used Lotus back then, as did a lot of people.

The guru-types were too busy writing their newsletters to bother about much else and the people trying to break into the HTMM niche were trying to emulate them and do the same by creating their own newsletters.

I was still working my 9-5 at this point but was earning extra money on top of my job as a leaflet distributor, and selling the occasional resell rights booklet (by mail order) using free advertising methods which I'd had to develop because I couldn't afford paid advertising.

More money started to kick in when I realised that I'd become perhaps not an expert, but an experienced marketer at both the above methods. So I sat down and wrote the following booklets:

'How to set up your own leaflet distribution business';

'Let me show you how I earn half my salary AGAIN with just a word processor and an old printer' - How to profit from resell rights.

Put simply, I wrote booklets about how I set up the above businesses and sold them using free advertising techniques, through direct mail.

They did quite well, so I decided to start a newsletter to run alongside them. At the time newsletters were the 'in thing' – sort of like memberships sites are today.

Then a second light bulb went off in my head. This is where the REAL money came from:

In the process of writing my booklets I found that I needed to learn how to put together newsletters, booklets and ads using my 'word processor and old printer'.

So while I did this I wrote down exactly how, in a step-by-step way, I used the software, made a template, formatted paragraphs, fonts, headings etc and made sure the whole lot printed out correctly.

If I was doing this today I'd use a Camtasia presentation which would be a whole lot simpler but back then, I had to write it down step by step.

I wondered – just *wondered* – if anyone would be interested in my guide, so I placed a few ads and was blown off my feet.

The response was overwhelming.

I quickly compiled the whole thing into a package which included a booklet (twenty pages or so I think) about how to build your own newsletter using my techniques and a simple word processor, and included (this was the real selling point) a template that they could load up into their own word processor that laid out various newsletter formats. It was a 'newsletter in a box' (LONGGGG before 'blog in a box' or anything similar came out)

It sold like crazy. Newsletters were the craze at the time and everyone trying to enter the HTMM niche was setting one up. So what had I done?

I'd stopped looking for gold and started selling shovels.

In doing so of course I found a lot of gold.

I even offered a printing service whereby I they would send me a floppy disk (remember those?) and I'd print and mail their newsletters for them. This didn't work out because I badly got the costings wrong and ended up out of pocket on this part of the business so ended it. (Stick to what you know!)

So from having a little success with my initial attempts I now had the following:

1. A leaflet distribution business
2. I knew how to advertise for free (I had to learn because I had no advertising budget)
3. I knew about resell rights and direct mail

And this developed into

4. I sold a booklet about how to advertise for free

5. I sold a booklet about how to set up your own leaflet distribution service
6. I sold a booklet about how to profit from simple resell rights

And from this came:

7. I was forced to learn how to word process to write and print the above booklets

And then

8. I started selling a 'newsletter in a box' package.
9. I started a newsletter for online entrepreneurs (I thought I could pretty much call myself one by now) and made it clear I was still part-time (although not for long when all this took off) and was basically honest about my whole set-up.

And it went from there. Of course like always, business and technology changes and soon my products weren't in demand any more so I moved into other things, created many income streams (read my newsletters at <http://www.sara-brown.com> for more info about these) and the rest, as they say, is history. I had quite a few failures too – they're in the newsletters as well.

This long-winded example is to demonstrate how I realised that I didn't have to BS (Bullsh*t) to develop products to sell to other people. I already had skills that plenty of other people wanted to learn, and that was my way in.

So you need to find, learn or develop skills and knowledge that other people will pay you to impart. This is your first step. After this, and only when you've earned money from it, can you *legitimately* sell a product with a title such as

'I earn \$200 a week from Internet marketing'

Because the above book will be about how you **genuinely make \$200 a week** from a Camtasia product on how to set up a Clickbank account, or how to use Xsite Pro or how to use Aweber or whatever it is that you know how to do (or have had to learn), and now sell on the Internet.

It's about selling shovels then writing a book telling other people how to sell shovels. DO BOTH.

At this stage of course you're not selling a 'how to make money' product, you're selling a 'how to set up your first website' (the example I always give of this is my own product at <http://www.earnbyexample.com/web101>) Or a 'how to import email addresses into Aweber' type product.

Once you've made money from doing this you can write and sell a second product about how you made money from the first.

You always have at least two products from a single skill –

1. The thing you know how to do
2. Selling a product telling others how to do it.

It makes me angry when I read blogs, newsletters or sales pages from some gurus or experts telling you how it's almost impossible to get into the HTMM niche. This is pure and utter rubbish.

They're doing it for two reasons. Firstly because they don't want the competition and secondly because you can bet your bottom dollar they're about to launch a product about how to make money in other niche markets instead.

They're saying 'you'll never make any money in HTMM niche but if you buy my book you can make a lot in the health or tropical fish niche'

And to be fair you *can* make money in other niches, but please don't discount the HTMM part of Internet Marketing because it's a great one to get into.

I'd better defend myself here – I have a product called at <http://www.nakedniches.com> that is all about (surprise surprise) niche marketing. But it's not because I want to warn you away from the How To Make Money niche – I don't, I welcome competition – more people to JV with – but rather because I operate in niche markets too, **and I'm selling a product about how I do it.** I'm doing it myself, and selling a book telling other people how to do it too.

This is another example of how a product developed from writing about methods that I actually use.. I have a significant number of niche sites, and once I learned how to do it I wrote a 'how to' book to sell in the HTMM niche. I use real examples in they book and show you my actual niche sites.

There's a lot of crossover in Internet Marketing which is great. If you're into Battlestar Galactica or Mr Ed and put up a successful website that gets a lot of visitors then you have a product to sell in the HTMM niche.

What is it?

Well - If you attract 10000 visitors a day to your Mr Ed site, that makes you an expert in traffic generation in my book, so write it up and make money by telling others how you do it.

Don't be put off by the big guys telling you what you can and can't do. There is only one tiny opinion out of billions that are spouted every day throughout the world.

I'll say now if there's a Star Trek fan out there who gets 500 opt-in subscribers a day for his site drop me a line now and we'll co-author a book about how you do it and make a lot of money telling other people how to do the same, because Mr Trekkie man, that makes you an expert in my book.

See what I mean?

YOU are the expert – YOU are the guru. It just needs a little coaxing out of you and then the world's your cliché.

Here's another example using one of my products. I'm a bum marketer. It all stems from the early days I discussed a few pages back when I learned how to advertise for free.

I'm a bum marketer because it costs me nothing and more importantly because I am forced to learn new skills while I do it, and even better, it GIVES ME A PRODUCT!

I launched a book (it was written with Tony Shepherd who has a very good free newsletter at <http://www.anthony-shepherd.com>) about viral marketing.

It's not quite the usual book on viral marketing because it's an all-in-one system that shows how viral marketing is a money-making thing in itself if you do it correctly – an all-in-one system.

<http://www.viralsneakiness.com>

It's been bought by gurus and we've had emails from gurus who won't promote it because it completely moves the goal posts and blows out of the water the old thinking that you need a product BEFORE you can start using viral marketing.

Guess where the idea from the book came from?

From techniques we use ourselves to virally promote other things.

We realised immediately that this was a remarkable method so wrote it up for others to use.

One product leads to another. Use the techniques – tell others how to use them.

And this is the easy way in to the 'How To Make Money' niche that everyone tells you it's impossible for newbies to get into.

You don't need to be a guru or even an expert for that matter (although you'll become one without realising it), you just need to be able to DO something that is profitable and you can tell other how to do. People – aspiring Internet Marketers will happily pay for this information, because actually learning how to do something is usually worth much more than the price of a product. You're selling people a skill for life.

It's the old 'teach a man to fish' idea.

I'll tell you right now you're going to hit a lot of walls when you ask most other marketers for their opinion on this report. They're going to tell it's not right to try to sell information on something when you haven't made millions from it.

This is BS too.

You don't have to make millions from a technique be able to sell it with confidence and pride.

Here's another example.

I sometimes use Photoshop to create headers, buttons etc for my websites.

I'm really bad at it. (My websites look famously awful, but I've written in the past about how I make more in a month than many people with fabulous looking websites).

So if I want a nice looking website I'll pay one of a number of web designers that I use to put it together for me. Now I know some of these guys quite well and I know that while some are making a living out of it, some are not, and with every respect to them I know they won't mind when I say that **none** of them are rich.

But they ARE talented and gifted designers.

I keep saying they should put together a short ebook called *'professional web design tricks for broke entrepreneurs'* or something similar.

They have a skill which they are paid for but if they *sell* the tricks of their trade as well, they'll at least double their income.

They won't lose any business from it because there will still be lazy people (like me) who'd rather pay for it doing that do it myself.

However a lot of newcomers to Internet Marketing will have to learn to do it for themselves, as I did in the early days.

So learn as you go.

Don't be scared of learning new things. Once you know how to do a certain thing, it becomes a valuable commodity, and something that others will pay to know.

You don't have to know everything about a subject.

The pretty stewardess on the airplane disaster movies of the 1970's had no interest in becoming a pilot, but when the crew were all ill with food poisoning, and the plane was plummeting toward the ground there's no doubt she would have paid \$10,000 for a book called

'How to land a 747 even if you've never flown before'

You don't have to be a millionaire to sell your skills in the HTTM niche. I'll say again that the big marketers don't want you involved in it because it's a HUGELY profitable niche. Otherwise why would they be selling you products on how to make money themselves?

This isn't guruscam.com – I'm not firing all barrels at some big marketers – I have the most respect for these guys – but don't

believe all that you're told without at least having a go at this niche yourself.

Here's (yet another) example.

One of Tony Shepherd's top affiliates started out selling his books without a penny. The book was *The One Month Magnate*

She was working 9-5 at the time and was honest enough not to come from a '*this ebook is making me \$10,000 a week*' angle.

Instead she bought the book, signed up for the affiliate programme and started following the methods in the book.

She documented, in a blog, the ups and downs she had as she followed the method, along with any profits made, on a day-by-day basis.

She sold more copies than some marketers who had lists of 5,000 purely because she wrote from an honest, down to earth point of view and didn't try to manipulate the figures in any way.

When she made \$3,000 or so the first month she wrote about it and her affiliate sales went through the roof. Strangely enough when she made just \$900 the second month her sales actually *increased* because her honesty impressed people so much.

She's now a successful affiliate for a number of products (I don't know if she's a full-time marketer yet) and if she ever gets around to writing her own product she'll make a lot of money.

So start looking at the skills you already have or looking at where to develop new ones. Make sure they help you in your business as well as give you a product to write about.

It requires a bit of work, but it's a WAY IN.

It's like getting access to the VIP area at the Oscars (except there's more ego involved with Internet Marketing ☺), once you're in, you're IN.

The thing is, you don't need an expensive ticket – you have the ability to just *stroll* in yourself.

And it's a wonderfully profitable niche if you're honest with people and provide good quality, useable information at a good price.

Always keep in mind that you'll make more money from genuinely trying to help people than you will from trying to force sales down their throats. It's a nicer feeling too and you build up a long-term business doing it.

I started this off as a reply to an email, but it's grown into a report!

I hope it's been helpful to you. Turn your music system up, plug in your headphones and listen to something loud as you start work.

Could be classical or rock – it doesn't matter as long as you block out those voices that tell you that the How To Make Money Online niche is saturated, dead, impossible to get into, full of scammers etc because in my opinion they don't know what they're talking about.

Look at your skills – learn some new ones – make some money – write about how you did it.

Repeat.

Six months ago I would have paid any money for an ebook that told me (from a techie point of view) how to set up a simple forum. I could have paid someone to do it for me but I wanted to know how to do it myself. I eventually learned how to do it through tutorials, websites, phone calls and generally bugging people. It took forever.

I didn't want to know about any high-level stuff – just how to put a forum on my server.

In the past I would have paid for the following information:

1. How to set up a wordpress blog – simple step by step instructions
2. How to ftp files

3. Basic Google Adwords techniques
4. How to use Clickbank recurring billing
5. How to create a website header in Photoshop
6. How to convert a word doc to pdf for free
7. How to use RSS feeds (in SIMPLE terms written by a marketer)
8. How to type one-handed because my desk is too crowded to find a space to put my wine down.

And the rest.

These are all examples of things I've needed in the past. There are many more things I could jot down here.

You get the picture. Sure, all the information is available for free on the Internet but so is everything. Many people:

- a. Can't find it
- b. Can't be bothered looking
- c. Would rather pay for a ready-made, step-by-step guide.

You'd think that everyone and his faithful hound could build a simple website by now?

If that's true WHY is my basic 'build a website' ebook still a best-seller?

Don't assume – TRY IT AND SEE.

I know how many emails I get asking for answers about things I could do with my eyes shut. Does this make me any more intelligent than the people who ask for help?

You KNOW it doesn't.

And only a real fool would laugh and scoff at them. What I try to do is help people. Sometimes pointing them towards a website or offering advice. Sometimes by producing a cheap ebook that hopefully solves all their problems.

I'm a marketer after all, and if someone presents me with a market.....

So ask yourself what you need or once needed to know. Research it – provide it – either for free as an opt-in reward to build a list or to create an income stream.

Remember if you put together a small book on

'How to find FREE software that will let you operate your own mailing list and set it up in 6 simple steps'

You'll have a crowd of newbies rushing to buy it from you even if you're little more than a newbie yourself.

If you've done the research and taken the time to write the book then you're no longer a newbie – you're becoming an expert on free autoresponder techniques and don't let anyone tell you that you're NOT.

If I needed information about free autoresponders I would buy your book.

Five years ago I would certainly have bought the book from you – before I know how to do it.

I've been called an 'Internet Marketing expert' but does that mean I'm an expert on all aspects of Internet Marketing?

Of course not – I could knock the spots of many other experts when it comes to viral marketing or info products, but I'm also the silly sod who can lose \$200 in 15 minutes by getting an Adwords campaign wrong.

Yet the senior citizen who writes about how to get cat hair off antique lace and runs a successful Adwords campaign to attract traffic would leave me looking like a fool.

NOW who's the Internet Marketing expert?

So listen to **your own** inner voices. Don't let anyone pigeonhole you.

If you don't like too much criticism (and who does?) just stop reading the forums and instead write for your audience – your subscribers – your customers - and genuinely try to help them.

Sure you want to make some money as you go, and you will, but build your skills first and then tell others how to do it – spread the word and charge a few dollars as you go.

Most of all stop taking any notice of 'experts' – me included. Read what they have to say, and draw your own conclusions. If it's info you like the sound of then stick with them, if they make you feel bad about yourself or what you're doing online then drop them like a hot brick.

'Internet Marketing experts', should be treated like insurance salesmen. Be nice to them, if they're nice to you, but as soon as they start scaring you to try to make you buy, or giving you the hard sell, or telling you how YOU should operate, open the door and get rid.

Time to go.

Thanks for reading.

I wish you success and happiness.

Sara Brown

A quick thanks - for additional info from Tony Shepherd, and not just about his websites ☺

If you liked this report, and think you might relate to more of Sara Brown's opinions on Internet Marketing, check out her free newsletter at

<http://www.sara-brown.com>