

BONUS #1 - INTERVIEWS

Your name: Paulette Ensign

Your company name: Tips Products International

What is your business title: The Booklet Queen

Web Site Address: <http://www.tipsbooklets.com>

What services or products do you offer as a part of your online business?

PRODUCTS:

- Two home study courses: 'How to write and market booklets for cash', and 'How to promote your business with booklets'
- Booklet: 110 Ideas for organizing your business life
- E-booklets - over 100 titles of digital downloadable Booklets.
- Licensing agreements package

SERVICES:

- Booklet writing services
- Booklet marketing consulting
- Hourly consulting
- Manuscript review
- Teleclasses

What did you do before the age of Internet?

Taught string instruments in public elementary schools for 11 years. Also, I was a professional organizing consultant and speaker.

When and why did you decide to start your online company?

The current company was started during the time of the Previous organizing business, as an outgrowth of it, in the early '90's. It became officially its own entity in 1998. I first got online in 1994 as a way to market my business. The online and offline activities of my businesses do blend into each other. Online activities have allowed me to reach places I never could have gotten to offline, both to clients as well as promotionally.

What was your biggest worry about starting an online business?

Don't recall any worry as much as being excited about the incredible and endless possibilities. Was concerned about knowing what was available, web-design-wise.

How was your service or product unique from your competitors?

My business is *all* about booklets, and how to use them for promotional purposes. I have sold over 500,000 copies of my own booklet without spending a penny on advertising. The booklets I advocate are all information based and how-to's.

What was the most difficult part in starting your web site and how did you overcome it?

Didn't know what I needed so I couldn't ask for what it was. The web design people didn't know how to give me a menu of what was possible. The communication was and still is very often the problem. My ignorance has cost me many more dollars than I feel it needed to. I think the web design industry needs to have a better understanding of how to inform clients of what is available to suit their needs before spending thousands of dollars unnecessarily.

Would you, please, share with my readers what Web or marketing tool brought you the most response, the greatest success and the highest profit?

It is a combination of marketing methods, all related to publicity and promotion and not advertising per se. Articles in e-zines, other people's web sites, online classes, discussion boards and ListServ participation. I opened up an entire new market in the UK because of my participation on some discussion boards. I was invited to go to London to speak and have an increasing following in that country as time has gone on. I've sold booklets and home study courses and consulting to people all over the world because of involvement on discussion boards.

What actions on your part were a total waste of time because it did not bring the results you hoped for?

Distributorships/resellers so far.

Can you share with us your biggest and most costly mistake in running your online company?

Not doing more research about what goes into the creation of the different elements of the web site, particularly when my e-booklet catalog was created. The delivery methods of the e-booklets, using a shopping cart, connecting with a good merchant account provider for that kind of thing were all challenges and major expenses every step of the way.

Why do you think, someone shouldn't start a business web site?

Because they think it'll be passive income. It needs nurturing and promoting and refining all the time. There is nothing passive about it.

I noticed that there are too many companies offering Internet marketing advice. Too much hype. Who should online beginners believe?

Believe that you need to roll up your sleeves and let people know you're there. There's no magic pill. Lots of different promotional methods cause success, not any one method. It's not only about banners or search engines. It's about connecting with people, and it always will be.

What are your plans for the future?

- To develop additional products and services for my market (at least one or two new products a year).
- To continue refining the web site
- To consider developing affiliate programs
- To continue refining the e-booklet catalog

If there were only one thing to recommend to someone starting a business Web site, what would it be in your opinion?

Ask as many questions as you can of people you think know what they are talking about, until you feel you have a full picture of what they can offer and that it's a match for what you need/want.

Marty Foley ~ Victory Ventures

Internet Business Success: <http://ProfitInfo.com>

Affiliate Program Success: <http://AffiliateProfitInfo.com>

What services or products do you offer as a part of your online business?

My site at ProfitInfo.com offers a variety of resources to help entrepreneurs boost their business profits, online and off.

For example, I offer the print and electronic versions of my book, Internet Marketing Goldmine. For those who want more detailed help from me in building a successful e-business, I offer subscriptions to my members-only web site, called Insiders. For savvy web marketers who know the value of testing their marketing, I offer my creation called the Scientific Web Marketing System, which enables split-run testing on web sites.

All the above and more are available through my affiliate program, and I'm currently creating other products to be released in the future.

My other site, AffiliateProfitInfo.com, reveals winning affiliate programs and proven affiliate program marketing tools and tips.

What did you do before the age of Internet?

Before I became self-employed online, I worked as a wage-slave for others, while dabbling in a part-time mail order business.

When and why did you decide to start your online company?

Back in early 1996, I got online and started investigating how I could use the Internet as an extension of my mail order business. Just as with mail order, I was fascinated by the ability to use the net to sell products nationwide, even around the globe, right from my own home.

With all the office politics and other hassles that come from being a "wage slave" working for others, I eagerly looked forward to one day becoming fully self-employed. I steadily took action toward that goal, and now love the freedom and flexibility that working for myself offers!

What was your biggest worry about starting an online business?

Actually I don't recall any major worries I had about it. After all, despite all the dot.com failures who has sunk millions of dollars into losing online ventures, it really is possible for the little guy to start and build a successful Internet business on a shoestring.

How was your service or product unique from your competitors?

Before writing my book, Internet Marketing Goldmine, I researched other books on Internet marketing to see where they're lacking. While some are good, one common thing I noticed is that they rarely go much into successful marketing strategies.

Most tend to focus on technical aspects of the Internet and only superficially touch on marketing and underlying business success principles. What's more, they're usually written in a way that they become outdated very quickly, and not easily understood by

newbies. For proof of what I'm saying, skim through a few at any library or newsstand.

To mention just one other of my products, the Scientific Web Marketing System, a few copycat versions of my software have recently become available. But where the SWMS especially stands out is all the tips and tricks on testing I make available to my customers. They're not left in the dark about how and what to test. I greatly simplify testing and show them specifically how to maximize the benefits it offers.

Do you work out of your home or have a different office location where you conduct your business?

My home is the cozy "command center" for my global Internet business.

What was the most difficult part in starting your web site and how did you overcome it?

Not that it was that hard, but I guess the hardest things were learning how to create my own web pages and getting them to look right in the most popular browsers, namely Internet Explorer and Netscape. Persistence at learning more about web development and gaining experience, as well as a few tips from others, helped overcome those problems.

Would you, please, share with my readers what Web or marketing tool brought you the most response, the greatest success and the highest profit?

I have to say that split-run testing on my web site has been more helpful than anything else. It has revealed a number of different ways to improve response and sales, and continues to.

Most sites continually make the same response-killing errors, yet their owners aren't even aware of them because they don't test. Many times they know they should test because marketing experts are always preaching about the need for it, but either they won't follow that advice, or don't know how to go about it.

I first came out with the SWMS for my own use (and still use it constantly), and later decided to also make it available to others.

What actions on your part were a total waste of time because it did not bring the results you hoped for?

I don't consider most mistakes to be a total waste of time because valuable lessons can be learned from them, but there are a few things I found early on to be rarely worthwhile. For example, posting to classified sites and FFA link sites usually give very little payback for the time invested. I prefer marketing strategies that give much more leverage.

Do you think that creating a successful online business on a shoe-string budget is a myth?

By no means! In fact, I'm living proof that it's a myth. My book, Internet Marketing Goldmine, goes into detail on how others can use the same marketing strategies I've used to promote and market an online business, without spending a single penny on advertising.

In the future I may try using pay-per-click search engines to buy some targeted site traffic, but up to this point my advertising budget is still \$0.

Can you share with us your biggest and most costly mistake in running your online company?

There are two mistakes I can think of, and both involve not investing in them sooner. The first is a web site with its own domain name (I started out using free web space offered by my ISP), and the second is a merchant account.

Many people avoid or delay getting a merchant account because they consider the expense too high. However, as with most Internet businesses, well over 90% of my sales are by credit card. Instead of viewing a merchant account as an expense, look at it as an investment that will, in almost all cases, pay for itself many times over.

Why do you think someone should not start a business web site?

It's not wise to get a web site simply because "everyone else is doing it." Another reason to avoid getting a site is if we have the impression that we can generate money on the web without doing our homework. We'd also be better off without a web site if we're not willing to keep a lid on costs, but let very high-priced web development companies take advantage of our lack of e-commerce knowledge.

However, if we're willing to work and learn as we go, keep costs down (perhaps by doing things in-house when possible), getting a

web site can be a fun, exciting way to make money, even earn a nice living.

I noticed that there are too many companies offering Internet marketing advice. Too much hype. Who should online beginners believe?

If we keep an eye on the activities of a business we're thinking about doing business with for a while, we can get a better feel about how reliable they are, their business ethics, and so on. We can do this by subscribing to their e-zines, joining the same discussion lists and forums they may participate in, etc.

Also, as we get to know and trust others we might network with online, we can ask them for recommendations or opinions about the reputation of someone we're considering doing business with.

But as always, it's "buyer beware." We still need to be cautious about whom we do business with, and know what our rights are as consumers and what recourses are available to us, should something go wrong in a business dealing.

In fact, I'm a founding member of an organization that has been created to help cut through the hype and promote the interests of both consumers and legitimate online merchants. The International Council of Online Professionals - or iCop – has stringent guidelines for membership. Those guidelines separate those who are just trying to make a fast buck from those with a real intention to run a top notch online business. (<http://www.i-Cop.org>)

What are your plans for the future?

I plan to continue helping my clients - mainly through the Insiders site - and developing more products that save people time, money and hassle when building successful businesses, and boosting their profits.

If there were only one thing to recommend to someone starting a business web site, what would it be in your opinion?

Since many different things are important, please let me briefly mention several.

Learn from other successful web marketers instead of trying to reinvent the wheel. Don't follow all advice blindly, but keep testing to find what works best in your own situation. Keep costs to a reasonable level. Design your site from the standpoint what your visitors want, and what's convenient for them. Offer what people want. Finally, your site should look attractive, but keep it simple and fast loading (for examples, see ProfitInfo.com and AffiliateProfitInfo.com).

Company Name: Dave's Humidors, Inc.

Your Job Title: President/Owner

Web Site Address: <http://www.cheaphumidors.com>

How long has your company been in business?

3 years.

How much time a week on the average do you spend updating and promoting your site?

10-15 hours

Do you advertise your web site locally? If yes, what types of media bring you the greatest success?

No local advertising is done

Do you advertise your web site online? If yes, what types of online promotion work the best for you?

Yes, we do a lot of advertising. We are listed on TwoCigar directory, have joined goto.com and have an affiliate program.

What was the most successful marketing technique that drove your sales up?

The affiliate program and newsletter sponsorship have been the most successful so far.

What was an absolute waste of time for you?

Banner advertising just did not work at all. We got less than 1% click-throughs and no increased sales. I will never run a banner campaign again.

If you had to start from scratch online - what would you change this time?

Really, not much. I mean, I am happy with the web site, it has lots of useful information and people seem to really like it. After each redesign I notice the emails start to get less and less. I guess that means we are addressing the issues that people are having.

Do you believe that having a successful web site is possible on a shoe-string budget?

Sure is. We started 3 years ago with \$45 and have turned into a \$250,000 year business.

What piece of advice would you give to companies like yours who are trying to move to the Web?

Just do it already. Stop thinking about the costs needed to start a business. I started 1 site with \$45 and it has \$245,000 in sales/yr. Started another site, www.buylighters.com for \$70 and it pulls in \$15,000 in sales/yr. Cigarbargains.com was started for about \$70-100 and pulls in \$5-10k per year and showergames.com started for \$200-300 and pulls in \$10k per year. So all in all, for under \$1000 I have sites pulling in \$275,000/yr and that isn't even mentioning the wholesale business (qualityimporters.com). I started the wholesale company with a partner that cost barely nothing to startup and did over \$100k in the first 4 months of operations. Just do it!

Your Name: Kathy Lindberg

Company Name: Gift Basket Gallery

Web Site address: <http://www.giftbasketgallery.com>

What services or products do you offer as a part of your online business?

My business is a corporate and a personal gift service, which specializes in theme and custom designed gift baskets.

How is your product unique from your competitors?

My gift baskets are created to reflect the image of the customer. For example, if I am creating gift baskets from the ABC Company for a particular occasion, then I work very hard to design baskets that reflect the ABC Company. This may be through the use of corporate promotional items, it may be through the use of logo ribbon, and/or through a completely custom designed basket just for the customer. In addition, my company provides stellar customer service to help busy people with their gift needs.

How do you keep in touch with your customers - after all writing how-to articles would be irrelevant to your business?

I keep in touch with an free monthly e-zine and monthly direct Mailings: postcards, flyers, and thank you notes.

What do you find more effective - local or online advertising?

Actually I find word of mouth, networking and direct mailings to be most effective in my business.

Would you, please, share with my readers what marketing technique (on and offline) brought you the most response, the greatest success and the highest profit?

Word of mouth and direct mailings have been most successful. One example, a couple of years ago I sent out holiday flyers to local companies. A large corporation here in the area got my flier and called me in a panic because it was two weeks before Christmas and they could not find anyone who could fill their large holiday order. I told them I could and did. I got their order out within a week of the first call.

What was a total waste of time?

Radio ads.

Can you share with us your biggest and most costly mistake in running your online company?

When I first started my company I did not buy inventory very carefully.

I tended to buy items that would only work in one design. Thus, when that particular design did not sell I was stuck with inventory that, too, did not sell. It turned out to be very costly. Now, I use my inventory much more efficiently.

I noticed that there are too many companies offering Internet marketing advice. Too much hype. Who should online beginners believe?

This is tough. When I began, and keep in mind I am still learning, I didn't know which offers to try and which to ignore. My advice would be to network on and offline. Participate in discussion groups and message boards of communities you feel comfortable with. Ask a lot of questions, get input. This has been a very effective means of learning for me. Then when I am considering an offer, I ask my networking communities for advice. In the end, though, I go with my gut. Some of this is trial and error, you have

to try some things and then evaluate their effectiveness. If it wasn't effective, learn and move on.

If there were only one thing to recommend to someone starting a business web site, what would it be in your opinion?

Network, read, network, and read. Read everything you can get your hands on about starting a business. Ask questions. The only stupid question is the one that didn't get asked.

What are your plans for the future?

I have some gift programs I would like to incorporate in my business and I would like to increase sales within my corporate market.

Your name: Paul Austin

Your company name: Austin's Publishing Group

What is your business title: Owner/CEO

URL: <http://www.austinsgroup.com>

What services or products do you offer as a part of your online business?

We provide Online Home Business, Marketing and How To Publications.

What did you do before the age of Internet?

I worked as a network administrator, programmer and consultant.

When and why did you decide to start your online company?

The decision was made in 1997 but I didn't actually start it until 1999. I've had my own business in the past and with the Internet it gave me the perfect avenue to break out and start another one. I've always liked the idea of working from home and for myself. It gives me the freedom to carve my own career and life. Working as VP, Director of Operations for a National Sales and Marketing firm for 5 years gave me the experience I needed to get things started.

What was your biggest worry about starting an online business?

Money! Obviously your savings account can only go so far. Starting any business, online or off, can bring this worry. But unless you give it a try, you'll never know "what could have been".

How was your service or product unique from your competitors?

I try to offer things that no one has really thought about or at least if they have, I like to put a new twist on it. I also believe STRONGLY about customer service. I think that this is a downfall with a lot of online companies and I feel that I bring this to a new level. My main goal is to keep the customer happy.

Do you work out of your home or have a different office location where you conduct your business?

I work out of my home like a lot of the smaller online businesses do.

It's really nice because there's such low overhead. Bigger companies that start off with all the trimmings soon learn that you can be swallowed up quick when you're not making enough to pay the bills.

What was the most difficult part in starting your web site and how did you overcome it?

I think the hardest part for me was searching for the right web hosting service. There are literally thousands of them popping up all over the place. Finding one that not only is affordable but offers good tech support and utilities to make things easier can be a daunting task.

Would you, please, share with my readers what Web or marketing tool brought you the most response, the greatest success and the highest profit?

That's a tough one. Obviously Search Engines rate right up there, but I would have to say that e-zines or newsletters are one of the top ways to produce a response to your ad or sales letter. A well

placed ad in a targeted newsletter can double your traffic and of course profits.

What actions on your part were a total waste of time because it did not bring the results you hoped for?

Gee, let me count them.... LOL... At first all of it felt like a waste of time. I mean, everything I did was a learning curve of some sort. But as I soon realized most of it was not a waist of time at all. It all helped me learn and sharpen my marketing techniques even further.

Do you think that creating a successful online business on a shoe-string budget is a myth?

NOT AT ALL! It really takes more time than it does money. If you are willing to put in some LONG hours every day, you'll start seeing the rewards. Again, it takes time. You can't expect to see results overnight. There are tons of places to get free things in the way of advertising and marketing online. But since they're free, you need to double or triple your efforts in using them.

Can you share with us your biggest and most costly mistake in running your online company?

I would have to get back to the web hosting again. At first I started my site on a free web host. This was ok at first because it was free, but what I soon found out is that the free web hosts can be very unreliable! Time after time their service was down and obviously my site went down with it. This can cost you a lot. Not only in immediate revenue, but in potential revenue as well. People were

trying to access my web site and when they found it down, they went elsewhere.

Why do you think, someone shouldn't start a business web site?

I don't think someone should start a business online if the only reason is the lure of making money. Someone like this will lose focus on not only running the business, but they won't be able to provide the type of customer service needed to stay in business. Starting a business is a commitment. You must want to start it for the right reasons. If you stay focused, you'll make money.

I noticed that there are too many companies offering Internet marketing advice. Too much hype. Who should online beginners believe?

You're right, there are thousands of web sites dishing out marketing advice, some good, some bad. What I did (and do) is my homework. Find the people that have been online for more than a year (that's a long time in Internet years) and watch them. Keep checking their web sites and see if things are changing or being added to. Subscribe to their newsletter if they have one and read it carefully. If their advice sounds logical and sound, then I'd move to step two.

Go to some of the marketing forums and see if they post responses to people's questions regularly. Read their responses. Like the newsletter, does it sound right? The third thing I would do is e-mail them. See if, or, how long it takes to get back with you. Also, what kind of response they gave. Was it vague or did you feel

good about their answer. Most of it is common sense really. If it doesn't feel right, move on and find someone else.

What are your plans for the future?

Well I'd like to say to become the next Bill Gates, but that's not going to happen! LOL! My plans are to make my web site more enjoyable, more content rich for my visitors and of course more profitable - in that order, too.

If there were only one thing to recommend to someone starting a business web site, what would it be in your opinion? Stay focused! Time after time I see small businesses pop up and they seem to lose focus on what they are really trying to accomplish.

Sit down and ask yourself these questions:

- Why do I want to start an online business?
- Do I have the means to do so in the way of time and enthusiasm?
- Can I stay focused? If you can answer question 3 with a yes, then by all means start one up.

Company Name: State Line Nissan

Your Job Title: Internet Sales Manager

Web Site Address: www.statelinenissan.com

E-Mail Address: statelinenissan@grapevine.net

How long has your company been in business?

The dealership has been here for over 10 years but under new owners for 2 years. Online – 1 year.

How much time do you spend updating and promoting your site?

10 hours a week.

Do you advertise your web site locally?

Yes, we advertise on banners and all printed ads in local newspapers. We also advertise on a lot of CarFinder web sites such as autotrader.com and cars.com.

What was the most successful marketing technique that drove your sales up?

Well in my view, being on easy to remember web sites improves your hits. If you were on a site that had a difficult domain name the customers wouldn't ever find our product.

What was an absolute waste of time for you?

Large newspaper ads. Most people that will use the Internet will find you without printed ads if you are in enough places online.

If you had to start from scratch online - what would you change this time?

I would have done it sooner.

Do you believe that having a successful web site is possible on a shoestring budget?

Yes. It is very easy to create a web site. We spend more on one large newspaper ad than we do all month on our Internet ads.

What piece of advice would you give to companies like yours who are trying to move to the Web?

Do it. This will be the way of the marketplace in 5 years. If you get started now you can work out all the bugs before it goes to that.

Your name: Harmony Major
Your company name: iSales Power
What is your business title: Owner
URL: <http://HomeBasedHeaven.com>

What services or products do you offer as a part of your online business?

I offer three products right now. They are, in order of creation:
Simply Ebusiness (an online business startup guide)
<http://SimplyEbusiness.NET> Yahoo! Secrets (to get a #1 listing on Yahoo)
<http://YahooSecrets.com> Site Selling Power (to make more money from your website) <http://SiteSellingPower.com>

When and why did you decide to start your online company?

I was just sick and tired of working outside the home. I was getting to the point where I was always RIGHT on time for work -- or late. I'd call in "sick" more often. I was obviously NOT pleased to be there when I did finally get there. It wasn't good (or fair) for the company, and it wasn't satisfying for me.

What was your biggest worry about starting an online business?

Actually Milana, I didn't have any. Not a one. I didn't come online intending to start a full-fledged business, so I didn't have any expectations to be shot down. Something good did actually come from a lack of planning. ;-)

How was your service or product unique from your competitors?

My first product? It wasn't - and that was its problem. Sure, I was able to make steady sales from it, and at times, even continual sales "surges." But, although sales were steady, they were SLOW and steady. Why? My first product was Simply Ebusiness, (then called "Learning the Ropes"), and was an online business startup guide.

The problem with this model is that everybody and their Momma has their own guide on how newcomers can start a new business online. Too much competition, and I didn't have any edge whatsoever. The good thing about that product, though, was that it was (is) very thorough, and consequently, has gotten very good reviews from qualified customers.

The horrible thing about it, though, was its lack of a unique selling proposition, and the amount of competition. It was the only thing I knew enough about to write a book on, however, so it gave me a lot of experience in the field. In that regard, it wasn't so bad after all. ;-)

So now, all of my products are (and will be) unique from others, since I've learned from my initial "mistake", if you will.

What was the most difficult part in starting your web site and how did you overcome it?

Lack of money. When I started out, I had no dough -- which was why I was online looking for work in the first place. All I had was a few credit cards (which quickly met and exceeded their limits in the coming months!). How did I overcome it? Persistence. A simple refusal to give up until I made it. And, my idea of "making it" was to start making a lot of money. Although my perceptions of what's a lot differ from what I thought was a lot back then, I was able to do just that after I created that first product.

Would you, please, share with my readers what Web or marketing tool brought you the most response, the greatest success and the highest profit?

Difficult question. My most successful means of marketing and money-making would be joint ventures, e-zine sponsor ads,

submitting articles to e-zines/directories/web sites, AND pay-per-click search engines. Was that more than one? :-P

What actions on your part were a total waste of time because it did not bring the results you hoped for?

Running contests in my e-zine. TOTAL and complete flop. I had several thousand subscribers, yet the only people who would enter the contest each issue would usually cheat. LOL

Do you think that creating a successful online business on a >shoe-string budget is a myth?

Well of course not :-P That's what *I* had to do, which is why I wrote my first book on that subject. Simply Ebusiness, at <http://SimplyEbusiness.NET>.

Can you share with us your biggest and most costly mistake in running your online company?

Not finding my Unique Selling Proposition (USP). Like I mentioned before, when I wrote my first book (the startup guide), I really had no clue about that kind of thing. So, I had to work harder to promote it, and spend a bit more money on it (although I never spend too much money on advertising). When I created Yahoo! Secrets it was a totally different story. That thing sells like hotcakes. As long as I'm getting traffic to the site, I'm still getting a steady stream of sales. There's a HIGH demand for that info, which makes the work a lot easier.

Why do you think, someone shouldn't start a business web site?

If you're not prepared to get serious. I mean, you're not going to make \$15,000 in 30 days, no matter what any of those fool chain letters and idiotic forwarded messages claim. What's more, you're

probably not even going to make \$15,000 your first YEAR online, unless you're already familiar with how to run a business. (The first year is pretty much your learning the ropes, getting to understand how the whole thing works, and learning a few shortcuts.) So, if you're not ready for long hours, dedication, and commitment when you start your business -- don't start it. Or, be prepared to fail.

I noticed that there are too many companies offering Internet marketing advice. Too much hype. Who should online beginners believe?

It's up to them to make that decision. But I don't think there's any such thing as "too much advice." The thing is just to take all of the advice you've been getting (from reliable sources, of course!), and listen and follow what makes sense to YOU. DON'T just follow someone's advice because they give it. If you don't know WHY you're doing something, common sense says don't do it. You have your own brain, and you really need to exercise it to make the best decisions for your own business, and your unique situation.

What are your plans for the future? To create more products, double my income within the next 6 to 7 months, and work even less than I do. =)

If there was only one thing to recommend to someone starting a business web site, what would it be in your opinion?

Plan! I've revised my site design and content over two dozen times in the past 2-3 years. If you start out with a solid plan, you won't spend hours of wasted time, sleepless nights, and grainy eyes "renovating" your web site. Good luck!

Name: Kacper Postawski

Company name: Etherntech Internet Marketing Solutions

Business title: President, Chief Editor.

URL: <http://www.etherntech.com>

What services or products do you offer as a part of your online business?

Ah, I'll answer that quickly: I sell "information". The HOTTEST products out there, are information based. Information sells like CRAZY. It is after all what drives the Internet. The Internet is a *boring* medium, and as it's quickly changing, it's our job, as sales people, to fill that medium and give them what THEY want.

There are no experts on Internet Marketing, or the products you should sell, but I'll tell you a secret: if it satisfies the laziness of an average person, and it enables the couch potato to grow DEEPER roots into the sofa, it will sell like wildfire.

I sell information products on Internet Marketing, and the products that let you put that information to USE. The whole operation has a weak sense of "selling itself", irony to it

What did you do before the age of Internet?

To tell you the truth, I've never worked anywhere in my life. I started doing this when I was a kid. I've still got that KID in me and he's driving me further everyday. What did I REALLY do? I was striving for success. Don't do what I did because it will RUIN you and your esteem - let success come to you.

"In order to succeed you've got to become a powerful success magnet." - Michel Fortin (www.successdoctor.com)

The same concept applies to Michel's witty viral line.

When and why did you decide to start your online company?

Call me brainwashed (some have), or call me uneducated on the rules of social life, but I think society and the way we live like today is a real JOKE. Many men will tell you what life is, very few will ever tell you what it "could be". I'm a dreamer, always have been.

In high school (boy that was fun), I was always the distant wanderer that stood away from social crowds and analyzed the way people talked, walked, and acted. I built my analogies on that. What I came to in conclusion, is that being who I am, I had no business going on and joining all those who will spend 4+ years in college, to go live a life in a cubicle hoping to get promoted (most end up like that).

Don't get me wrong, as there are MANY people who do achieve their dreams through our current system. Many Fail. Many never find what they wanted to do.

My dreams were a *little* out of the league of the system. I took control of my life, through the help of "1 Very Helpful Book", that you probably already have, but is only collecting dust on your shelf.

The rewards of my courage, are what I see everyday, which is the first day of the rest of my life.

What was your biggest worry about starting an online business?

The worries never end! As you gain money, your mind will attract greed from the air, as you gain greed + money, you'll lose more "friends". At first, the only cold and lonely thought I had on my young mind was "will this really work". Once I made my first sale, that turned into "Ok it works, NOW LETS GET MORE!!"

It takes time to succeed, sometimes A LOT of time to succeed, but believe me! The rewards are worth it! You'll find that the most successful people out there, were the most patient.

For the people struggling to make their first Buck -- "Once you get it, it really doesn't feel as great as you thought it would."

The book does teach you "Respect what you have, value it with all your heart, and you will be given 10 times that much. DON'T respect what you have (greed), and you will lose it FASTER than you can count to 10."

How was your service or product unique from your competitors?

It wasn't!! Ha-ha-ha, yet I made money, how? There are 8 Billion people on the planet. 150 Million will be using the Internet in 4 years. Period. Everybody gets a piece of the Internet e-Commerce Pie (big or small), you just have to ask nicely for that pie, you'll get a piece eventually.

HOW you ask (your UNIQUE marketing tactic?) will make the difference from seeing the Zeros behind the Digits on your pay check, OR the zeros behind the digits on your Web Hosting Bill.

Do you work out of your home?

No,... but in 3:30 I can make a GREAT Pizza in my microwave =)

What was the most difficult part in starting your web site and how did you overcome it?

TRAFFIC! It's the Golden Honey, the Real McCoy, whatever you want to call it. YOU NEED TRAFFIC and for the first 4 months, I had ABSOLUTELY NO visitors coming to my web site.

I wanted to quit 'Right' then. THEN I got onto some BBS(Bulletin Board Services) and started to express my echoing anger. To my surprise, successful people started coming to my aid from ALL angles =). And my traffic sky-rocketed in the next few months.

What's the moral of that short story? Talk to people, it takes the inspiration of 1 to make an idea, it takes 2 to make it work.

Would you, please, share with my readers what Web or marketing tool brought you the most response, the greatest success and the highest profit?

I myself paid A LOT of money for that information (See #1 :o), information SELLS) Only a handful of marketers know this, and use it. You may have seen it in an article once or twice (I'm sure the guy who wrote it was crucified by entrepreneurs. Ever heard what REALLY happened to Bruce Lee?)

I'll give it to you in a nutshell,..."Fusion Marketing"

Here's the recipe:

1. Make or "borrow" a "GOOD" product. Which would be something that...

- **Makes life easier.**
- **Is Unique.**
- **Costs virtually nothing to reproduce, or NOTHING at all**
(software, information products(there are those 2 words again))
- **Makes someone feel BETTER about themselves =>** <-- that one is hard to do,... Cosmetics do this very well.

2. Get into guts of the existing customer base of another company. Find another company that has already served 1000+ Customers and has them all in a database (emails, names, phone numbers), anyone who's anyone won't be "stupid" enough to discard their customer contacts. (I hope YOU never do). Make sure this company DOESN'T sell a competitive product.

3. Contact the company, and tell them you've got a product that your customers WOULD be interested in. That you'd like to go into a venture with them, advertising your product to their existing customers, splitting the profits 50/50.

Boom, you're rich.

But I'd be 'damned to hell ' if I didn't tell you who invented this in the first place. Michael Enlow, www.enlow.com
Please visit his web site, as he is the person responsible for changing my life as well.

What actions on your part were a total waste of time because it did not bring the results you hoped for?

Spam/Bulk email! Don't do it. I tried it only once and it almost ruined me completely! Otherwise, do anything else to get ahead, it all works, except spam.

Do you think that creating a successful online business on a shoestring budget is a myth?

I made my business successful starting with NOTHING -- Drop me an email and I'll give you 100 Lines worth of text explaining HOW it's possible. BELEIVE IN YOURSELF. BELEIVE IN GOD.

Why do you think, someone shouldn't start a business web site?

If you're out there for some quick bucks, you have no business starting a business. Go back to your daily job, do whatever you feel you are good at. In order to succeed you've got to have the determination of a bull, and the neglectance of a 4 year old.

I noticed that there are too many companies offering Internet marketing advice. Too much hype. Who should online beginners believe?

There are also many companies selling Cereal... and many food & drug stores in every city. Internet Marketing is one of those things that everyone thinks THEY can do, because it sounds easy. A marketing genius once told me :

"Everyone thinks marketing is selling - NOT!"

Take anything that is free out there "There are Cereal samples in food & drug stores". But before you BUY something that you

think you absolutely NEED – think about the value, and the most important rule of all.

"Make everything sound BIGGER than it really is." - Mark Joyner

If you're thinking of buying something, you've obviously been infected by a BIGGER pre-conception.

If there was only one thing to recommend to someone starting a business web site, what would it be in your opinion?

Have Faith, lots of it.

If you're tempted to quit - that's just your conscience testing you.

If you loose Faith in yourself, you're hopeless.