

How To Build A Successful Web Site

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Introduction

This ebook has been put together in such a way that it guides you through step by step, from choosing your domain name, through to making money with your web site. Its a step by step guide, which I wish I'd had when I was first starting out, I've made plenty of mistakes over the years and I want you to be aware of some of the pitfalls.

The ebook is split down into five main topics:-

- 1. Why its important to choose a good domain name & web hosting**
- 2. Web design - top tips you need to know, find out the software that pro designers use**
- 3. Getting Visitors using Pay Per Click search engine adverts**
- 4. Getting Visitors using Search Engine Optimization - find out what it is and how you do it. Discover the secret techniques of getting thousands of visitors to your site for free.**
- 5. How to make money with your web site. I reveal the ways in which people are making a full time income by just creating web sites**

This ebook is a great introduction but you're still going to need some more help.....

The information that I've referred to in the book has been taken from the very best sources. All the books and resources that I refer to in the ebook I use myself on a daily basis and are the ones that I've found to be the best after trying many others. If you're serious about building a successful web site, have a look at some of books or services I have recommended, they will save you a lot of time and money in the long run. There is so much information out there about building a web site that its overwhelming - let me help you find the information worth knowing.

Step 1 - Web Hosting and Domain Names - The Most Important Part of A Successful Web Site

This step focuses on why its so important to pay for web hosting. Don't make the same terrible mistakes I did....

Why do you want to create a website?

- To promote your business?
- To create a personal web site for family or friends?
- For hobby or personal interests?
- To promote a charity or good cause?

Whatever reason you have for building your own web site, its an exciting and rewarding experience that I'm sure you will enjoy doing, its certainly something that I've enjoyed doing over the last couple of years (I may even be addicted to it!). Its very important though,that you put all your hard work in a safe pair of hands.

Now for my sorry tale.....

When it comes to web hosting let me give you the benefit of my experience. When I began creating web sites, I used free web hosting, because it cost nothing (I like a bargain!). However, I didn't anticipate the problems I was going to have:-

- 1. There was advertising banners all over my lovingly created website.**
- 2. The domain I was given looked like a maths equation** - www.124?a45geofree34.com - you can imagine what is was like when friends asked for my web address.
- 3. My site was frequently down or not working**, due to the load on the servers of the hosting companies - there were so many people using the service that they couldn't keep up with demand.
- 4. The support they offered was either non-existent or awful.** I don't know about you, but when I was setting up my first web site I didn't know a lot about html or ftp and needed a bit of technical help - which I certainly didn't get with a free web host.
- 5. If I wanted similar benefits to paid hosting**, such as a proper domain name I had to **pay big** - one host was going to charge me \$40 for a domain name - I could have found a good web host with a free domain name for the same price (see 1&1).
- 6. One of my web sites disappeared.** This happened when the free host I was using, couldn't afford to offer the free hosting anymore and shut its servers. The only way I could have kept my web site was to pay a huge sum to move it to their new paid hosting.

The best decision I ever made....

I switched from one free host to another hoping to find one that offered me all the benefits of paid hosting without the financial outlay. I wasted six months of my life before I realized that "nothing in this life, is completely free", there's always a catch. So I finally gave in and purchased some paid hosting for the price of a Starbucks coffee; and I've never looked back. Here are the benefits I got from paying for my hosting:-

1. **My websites look better according to my family and friends** because there are no advertising banners or other rubbish such as spyware that free hosting companies put on my web site.
2. **Piece of mind.** My web site works all the time - my favourite hosting companies (see below), have the technology and quality people to ensure my site is always working - I know I'm in safe hands.
3. **More visitors** to my web site. Most people find web sites through search engines. You've got a better chance of getting into Google or Yahoo!'s search index if you have your own hosting and domain name.
4. **A helping hand.** Most paid hosting companies make it easy to set up your web site, even going as far as giving you web design or site builder software to help build your first web site. Its also nice to know that there is normally 24/7 technical support with paid hosting, should you encounter any problems.

If you are looking for a decent web hosting company, then you might want to check out the following three. After much comparison of different hosting companies I have found these three to be the most reliable and best value for money. I use all three as each one offers slightly different features. Have a look at each one and see which one is most suitable for your web site, they all come highly recommended.

[Yahoo! Web Hosting](#)

[IX Web Hosting](#)

[1and1 Web Hosting](#)

Step 2 - How To Design Your Web Site

In the last step we discussed the importance of finding a good web hosting company. This step will focus on creating and designing your own web site.

HTML - the language of web sites

HyperText Markup Language (html), is a language in which web pages are written. In the early days of the internet, people created web sites from raw html code in a text editor such as notepad. The only problem with this was it was very time consuming and you could not see what you had created until you put the code on a web server and looked at in a web browser. This problem allowed for the creation of the WYSIWYG (what you see, is what you get) interface. WYSIWYG is used to describe applications that let you see how a finished HTML document will look whilst still letting you edit it. Dreamweaver and FrontPage are the two most popular WYSIWYG HTML editors.

If you are serious about building web sites and will be building dynamic or more complex sites, then [Dreamweaver](#) is certainly a good investment. It is the web site creating software that web professionals use and the industry standard. I have been using it for about 18 months and highly recommend it. However, it is very expensive and is probably only worth the investment if you are serious about creating a lot of web sites. If you are looking to buy it, the cheapest place I found online - was direct from the manufacturer - [Macromedia](#) .

Web Sites Made Easy...

If Dreamweaver looks a bit much for what you are wanting to do then the best way to go is to use a WYSIWYG program that comes complete with your web hosting. These provide a quick and easy way of getting your web site up in minutes. The web hosting companies I recommended last week all come with site building software and they all have demos which you can try, here's a summary of what each one offers:-

1. [Yahoo! has SiteBuilder](#) which offers:-

- Design web pages from scratch with easy-to-use drag-and-drop tools.
- Customize one of their 380+ web site designs.
- Choose from more than 3,400 royalty-free images or add your own.
- Get step-by-step help building web pages from their simple wizard.
- Add spice to your web pages with exciting add-ons like forms, site search, Yahoo! Maps, and more.

2. [IX Web Hosting has Site Studio](#) which offers:-

- **Hundreds of pre-designed templates**
- **Update your web site's content** in real-time
- Enhance your website with "**feature-rich**" **content pages**, like:
 - + Splash Screens
 - + "About Us" page with company description
 - + Flash Splashes
 - + Interactive FAQs
 - + Driving Directions with online map functionality
 - + ICQ Contact Center
 - + News and Events

3. [1and1 Web Hosting has 1and1 Websitebuilder](#) with the following features:-

- **Easy to use, impressive results**
- The handy wizard guides you through the site-building process from start to publish, with easy-to-follow instructions and simple point-and-click prompts. Choose your template and customize it with fonts, colors, and graphics, then add your content using the built-in text editor.
- **Add extras**
- Easily add exciting elements to your site, like feedback forms, a visitor counter, guest book, forums, a flash-animated start page, and more. Plus, you can add META tag keywords and descriptions within the WebsiteBuilder interface so search engines can find your site.
- **Choose your template**
- Select your favorite professionally designed template. Then customize it to match your exact needs

Another option is to buy a professional web site template from a company such as [Monster Templates](#) and all you have to do then is just add your own text and upload it to your hosting.

Which ever way you decide to create your web site you will need to get an idea of how html works. The best site I found that teaches html in an easy and fun way is [W3Schools](#). They show examples of how code is written and what it looks like when it is shown in a browser. Its a brilliant learning resource and worth 5 minutes of your time.

Step 3 - Getting Visitors To Your Site - Part I - Pay Per Click

This step focuses on ways of getting traffic to your newly created web site. With literally billions of web pages out there, how can you get noticed? Read on and find out how....

Build it and they will come.....No they won't!

Unfortunately, even though you've created the best web site the world has ever known, it is unlikely that you will receive any visitors without some sort of site promotion or marketing. There are now more web pages on the internet than ever before, with millions more being created every day. The chances of your site being found without some sort of help are remote.

So what's the solution?

Search marketing. People find web sites through search engines - Google, Yahoo!, MSN, Ask. It is probably how you found the link to this e-course. The quickest way to get traffic to your site is by appearing in the search engines when someone types in a keyword related to your web site, for example - someone types the word "mp3 player into Google" and your site appears in the results because your site is all about mp3 players.

There are two ways to appear in the search results:-

1. **Organic Listings** - These are the main list of results that appear either on the left hand side in Google or beneath the top results in Yahoo! or MSN. To appear in these listings costs nothing, but to appear in these listings on the first page, is quite difficult without some specialized knowledge (see next weeks lesson!).
2. **Sponsored Listings** - These listings appear on the right hand side on Google, and at the top of Yahoo! and MSN. These listings cost money, but it is the quickest way to get good traffic to your web site.

Why Pay For Traffic?

PPC or pay per click marketing is the easiest and fastest way to get traffic to your web site. It works by bidding on keywords such as 'mp3 player', the higher you bid, the higher you appear at the top of the page in the search results. This means that anyone can appear on the first page of the search engines. You only pay for the advertising when your ad is clicked on.

Paying for traffic is always a good idea when you are starting a web site. I waited almost 3 months for a visitor that wasn't a friend or family. Then I decided to give pay per click a go, and I started receiving visitors the very first day I set up my account. The two main players in paid search are Google Adwords and Yahoo! Search Marketing (MSN is busy developing its paid search as I write this).

- [Yahoo! Search Marketing](#) - is the easiest to learn of the two. Basically, whatever you bid on a keyword determines your place on the page, Google's version is a lot more complicated (see below). Currently, when you bid on a keyword, an advert for your site appears on Yahoo!, MSN, Altavista and many other search engines. I recommend using Yahoo! when starting out, because of its ease of use. Another good reason is that they are giving away \$25 worth of advertising at the moment as an incentive to sign up. [Find out more here](#) .
- **Google Adwords** - is more complicated, but offers more options. Google works out your bid price according to how much you bid and also how often your ad gets clicked on. If your ad does not get clicked on as often, it costs you more money per click. Google's strong point is that you have a lot of control over your ads and keywords and you can have your ads showing in minutes, whereas Yahoo! has to approve your ads and keywords first.

Paying for traffic is good, but be careful.....

When I first started using PPC to get traffic, I didn't read any books, help files or guides. I just blundered in and tried to suss it out on my own. Now certain things in life allow you to do this, PPC isn't one of them. I wasted 100s if not 1000s of dollars on useless traffic because I didn't know what I was doing. My best advice to you would be to get a book on PPC and read it thoroughly before you dip your toe into the world of paid traffic. The book I ended up buying was [The Definitive Guide To Google Adwords](#) by Perry Marshall. This is the best selling and most informative book ever written about Google Adwords. The money I paid for the book I made back in savings within 2 days of reading Perry's book. If only I had read it sooner, I would have saved myself an awful lot of money. Don't make the same mistake I did, if you're venturing into the world of Google Adwords, you'd be a fool not to buy this book. You can [find out more details here](#) .

Step 4 - Getting Visitors To Your Site - Part II - Search Engine Optimization (SEO)

This step focuses on how to get visitors to your web site for free, through using search engine optimization.

What is Search Engine Optimization (SEO)?

Search engine optimization is a fancy way of describing the process that helps your web site appear in the search engines. If you remember from the last lesson, the best way to get visitors to your site is through the search engines such as Google, Yahoo and MSN. By using SEO techniques it is much more likely your site will show for certain keywords related to your site eg. if your site was about dogs, and you have chosen the word "poodle", your site should show on the first page if someone types "poodle" into Google. If 1000 people a day type "poodle" into Google and your site is at the top of the results, you can see how you might end up with thousands of visitors a month. The best thing is though, you would have got all these thousands of visitors for nothing, no advertising spend whatsoever!

That sounds great, how do I do this SEO stuff?

What I will try and do now is give you a brief summary of the most important techniques in SEO. I spent many months researching the topic as it can be quite involved, with a lot of conflicting advice. The best thing I did was buy a book by Aaron Wall, imaginatively called "[Seobook](#)". It has loads of solid information and gives you a kind of road map of how to get thousands of visitors to your site through search engine optimization.

Basically, the goal of SEO is to make your site as search engine friendly as possible. What Google does is send out automated robots called "spiders", which crawl your web site and extract all the words and phrases on your pages and puts them in their index. In order to help the Google spiders you need to make sure you build your web site with these things in mind:-

- 1. Pick a topic for your site.** Try and pick a topic for your web site that is not too broad - for example, instead of doing a site about dogs, do a site about poodles or spaniels, instead of a site about mp3 players, do one about iPods. This helps your site to be more focused and will make it more relevant in the search engines. It will also mean you will have less competition, currently there are 38.5 million web pages about dogs in Google's index, compared to only 0.5 million poodle web pages.
- 2. Choose your keywords wisely.** Before you start writing the content for your web site, make sure you do some keyword research. Keyword research allows you to find out what words people are typing into search engines such as Google and how many times that word is searched for

each day. Most people use a tool called [Wordtracker](#) as it is the most accurate and useful of the keyword tools. This will give you some idea of what keywords are popular. What you want to do is use the keywords or phrases that [Wordtracker](#) suggests in your content, so that when people type those phrases into Google, your site comes up as an exact match. This part of SEO is really important and could be the difference from getting a few hundred visitors a month to a few thousand - ***make sure you use the keywords that people search for in your content.***

- 3. Choose a good domain name.** This goes back to making sure you have your own hosting and domain. IX web hosting give you a free domain name when you sign up for their hosting. Having your site hosted properly will allow Google to crawl your site better. When deciding on a domain name try and include one of your keywords that you found in Wordtracker - it will give your site a boost in the search engine rankings.
- 4. Page Titles** - Make sure you put the important keywords you got from [Wordtracker](#) in your page title. Search engines put a lot of importance on the page title, in determining how relevant the page is for a search term.
- 5. Use your keywords elsewhere on the page.** Try and incorporate your keywords into your text, but not too often or the search engines will think you are trying to spam them. Try and use different versions of your keywords - as well using poodle parlours in your text, mix it up with say beauty shops for poodles, or parlours that cater for poodles. Use your keyword in a heading, perhaps put one in bold - just don't go crazy, try and make it look natural to anyone reading the page.
- 6. Links, links and more links.** Links are the most important part of SEO. A link is like a vote for your site. The more links you have, the more votes you have for your web site, which means you will rank higher for your keywords and consequently get more visitors. The best way to get links is naturally - people linking to your web site because it has unique content. These sort of links are the best kind of links as they will look natural to the search engines. You can also get links from such things as directories or putting an article on an article site with a link back to your site. An excellent list of directories and article sites you can submit to, is included in the "[Seobook](#)". Try and avoid link exchanges with dodgy sites (porn, gambling etc) as they might harm your search engine ranking and may even get you banned. If you are going to swap links with a site make sure it has a similar theme to yours and has quality content that a visitor from your site may be interested in. Also if you can try and include your keywords in the anchor text, for example, if one of my keywords was apple ipod reviews I would make the link look like this - [apple ipod reviews](#) NB. make sure you don't use the same anchor text in every link back to your site, or again the search engines may think you are trying to spam them.
- 7. General Tips** - Make sure you have your own hosting and domain. Don't use frames on your site, otherwise search engines won't be able to find your content. Don't use javascript navigation on your site - again search engines can't read it, the same goes for using Flash - it may look pretty but its bad for SEO.

If you are serious about getting visitors through SEO and want a quick and easy way to learn from an expert, then I thoroughly recommend "[Seobook](#)" by Aaron Wall who is the master of SEO. He makes a promise that if you follow his advice he will triple your number of visitors in 90 days or he will give you your money back. After having read his book I can certify I won't be asking for my money back - the amount of thought and knowledge that has gone into the book is amazing. The best thing about the book though is that its constantly being updated as things change in the search engine world, which means the information is always current. If you buy the book you get the updates for free, as well as free SEO tools that Aaron has developed. If you are looking for a no 'bs' book about SEO then this one is it.

Step 5 - How To Monetize Your Web Site

Hopefully, if you've been following the previous steps you will be well on your way to creating a successful web site. This step will show you ways to make money from your site....

Monetizing Web sites - an introduction

Once you've lovingly designed your website, put it on a decent web host, got visitors through pay per click or search engine optimization, its time to start earning revenue from your labours.

Unless you plan on selling an item on your site that you either manufacture or act as an agent for, the best method of earning revenue from your site is through selling advertising. Just like television, newspapers and magazines you are now in the publishing business and publishers earn the majority of their revenue through selling advertising. The content that you create on your site attracts visitors, who will then hopefully click on the adverts on your site, which then provides you revenue.

There has been a huge increase in online spending over the last few years, because advertisers are able to measure and target their advertising. This means that their advertising budget is moving over from newspapers and television and onto the internet, which is very good news for you - more online advertising spending = more money for you.

The Top 2 Ways To Earn Revenue From Your Site

1. Google Adsense - Google Adsense is a fantastic way of generating revenue from your site. Basically, all you do is add a little bit of code onto your web pages and Google then sends out something called a "media bot", that scans your web page to see what it is about. It then puts text adverts on your site, which are highly relevant to the content on your page. The result of this is that your web visitors see highly relevant ads that match the content they are reading, so are highly likely to click on one of your ads, now this is the best bit.....whenever someone clicks on those ads you get paid! The person doesn't have to buy anything or do anything apart from click on your ad and you earn revenue - how easy is that?

Now unfortunately, not every click is created equal, sometimes you may only earn 2 cents a click, sometimes it can be 20 dollars or more per click. What determines the commission for each click is the advertiser. If the advertiser is in a highly competitive or lucrative market they will be willing to pay more per click. So if your site's content is related to these lucrative markets, you can expect to earn some very good commission from Adsense. So your next question is....What are the lucrative markets? To find the answer to this you can either find out yourself by searching the web and guessing or buy specialized software and information that will let you in on these secret revenue generating markets. Apparently, the best software to unlock those secrets is Adsense Gold. [Adsense Gold](#) is a mixture of software and information that helps you to easily create profitable Adsense web sites. I haven't received my copy yet to review it, but those people that have invested in it - mostly web professionals have been very complimentary about it - [more info](#)

2. Affiliate Programs - Affiliate (or associate) programs have been around for a number of years. Amazon was probably the first online company to create a successful affiliate program. This is by far the best way of earning revenue on the web and is probably the most popular. It works like this:-

You sign up as an affiliate to a company such as Amazon, Apple Store etc, you tell them how you want to be paid (direct bank transfer, cheque or PayPal). They then give you a special tracking code. You then put a banner or text link with the special tracking code on your site that links to the online merchant you are promoting. When one of your visitors clicks on the banner or link, it puts something called a 'cookie' (**A cookie is a packet of information sent by a server to a web browser and then sent back by the browser each time it accesses that server. Cookies are used for user authentication and maintaining user-specific information - preferences, electronic shopping cart, etc.**) on their computer, which lets the company you're promoting know that you referred that customer. If the customer then buys something on that site - you receive a commission - its that simple!

The best place to start with affiliate programs is with [Commission Junction](#). They are the largest affiliate network in the world. Once you sign up with them, which is free, you are able to advertise and get commissions from top companies such as ebay, Yahoo!, Citibank, Verizon and many others. Top Tip - make sure you have finished your web site before applying, as they will only approve you if its finished. [More info here....](#)

Why Affiliate Marketing is Win-Win

One of the big reasons why affiliate marketing is so popular is that it benefits not only the webmaster (you), but also the merchant eg. Amazon. Amazon only have to pay you a commission when someone you referred actually buys something, so its a very cheap way for Amazon to get new visitors to its site and a great way for you to earn money through referring people. The advantages to you are:-

- You don't need to manufacture or store inventory - the merchant takes care of that.
- You don't have to get involved with customer service issues - refunds, faulty items, complaints etc.
- No handling or shipping of products.
- The start-up costs are non-existent - affiliate programs cost nothing to join.

If you are serious about making a living online through affiliate programs you might want to check out Rosalind Gardner's "[Super Affiliate Handbook](#)". Rosalind is considered to be the expert on affiliate marketing and is very successful - she earns \$435,000+ per year online through affiliate programs. In the book she reveals the secret tips and tricks that will help you become successful promoting affiliate programs. You can find [more information here!](#) .

Related Articles & Resources:

[Super Affiliate Handbook](#) - Rosalind Gardner's superb affiliate book

[Adsense Gold](#) - Making big money through Google Adsense

[Commission Junction](#) - The world's biggest affiliate network.

[Amazon Associates](#) - Amazon's affiliate program

Step 6 - Creating a Successful Web site - Bringing it all together

This final step gives you a summary of all that you've learned and gives you a useful list of all the resources that you should check out, that will help you become successful quicker and easier.

Step 1 - The importance of having a good domain name and web hosting.

Make sure you get yourself some decent web hosting. Its a "no-brainer" - for the price of a Starbucks coffee, you get peace of mind, technical support, web site building software and much more. The three web hosts I recommend also come with a free domain name of your choice. My three recommended web hosts are:-

1. [Yahoo! Web Hosting](#)
2. [IX Web Hosting](#)
3. [1&1 Web Hosting](#) or [1&1UK](#) for the UK

Step 2 - Web Design.

This lesson talked about the importance of good design and ways of creating your web site - by using professional web designing software or using online site building software:-

- [Dreamweaver](#) - Professional web design software. Buy it cheaply in the [USA Here!](#) or in the [UK Here!](#)
- [Yahoo! Site Builder](#) - Free with their web hosting packages.
- [IX Web Hosting Site Studio](#) - Allows a quick and easy way to create a web site
- [1&1 Website Builder](#) or [1&1UK](#) - Again this software comes free with their hosting but allows you to put together a web site in minutes.

If you're looking for a professionally designed web site that you just have to add your content to, check out [monster templates](#), who have brilliant designs for little or no money.

Step 3 - Getting Traffic - Pay Per Click

This lesson focused on how to get visitors to your site, by paying for traffic. There are two main providers of pay per click traffic:-

1. [Yahoo! Search Marketing](#) - Get your site advertised on Yahoo!, Altavista & CNN. [Sign up today and they'll give you \\$25 of free advertising](#) .
2. Google Adwords

As I previously mentioned in this lesson, I lost a lot of money using Google Adwords because I didn't know what I was doing. Don't make the same mistake - get Perry Marshall's [Definitive Guide to Google Adwords](#) and save yourself a lot of time, money and headaches. [Get it Here](#) .

Step 4 - Getting Traffic Part 2 - Search Engine Optimization

This lesson gave you tips on how to get visitors to your site for free using a technique called search engine optimization.

The most important part of SEO is finding the right keywords that people put into search engines to find your site. The best way of finding these keywords is to use [Wordtracker](#) . Wordtracker is the best keyword finding tool, because of its accuracy and excellent tools which help you find related keywords for your site. You can get [more info on Wordtracker here](#) .

The book that has helped me most with search engine optimization and one which I highly recommend is Aaron Wall's '[Seobook](#) ' . It gives you all the information you need to attract 1000s of visitors to your site. Its written in such a way that it explains the process of search engine optimization in an easy to understand and interesting way. [Check it out here!](#)

Step 5 - Making Money From Your Web Site

This lesson explained to you the top two ways of making money from your web site - Google AdSense & Affiliate Programs.

- Google AdSense allows you to make money every time someone clicks on the adverts on your site. More information here. I also explained that some keywords will earn more money than others and the best way to find high paying keywords was to use specialized software such as [AdSense Gold](#) - which has helped people make thousands of dollars by using it. More details on [AdSense Gold here](#) .
- Affiliate Programs - These pay you a commission when people you refer to a web site make a purchase of a product eg. you send someone to the Amazon.com web site, they buy a book and you receive a commission on that sale. The best place to find affiliate programs is [Commission Junction](#) . If you are looking to earn big money from affiliate programs you will need some advice from an expert. Rosalind Gardner earns \$435,000+ per year online through affiliate programs and has revealed how she does it in her "[Super Affiliate Handbook](#) " - its a fascinating book and provides you with all the tips and tricks that you need to become a successful affiliate marketer. [More info here](#).

Final Word

That pretty much sums up this short ebook on building a successful web site. I hope you have found it useful and informative. I would appreciate any feedback you have about the ebook - you can email me [here!](#) .

Best of luck with your web site,

Kind regards,

Simon