

The Bare Naked Profit Model

A Step-by-Step Guide to Building a Profitable Combination Site

by Rebecca Hagel

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Here's the LOW DOWN...

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Intro: Which Profit Model is Right for You?

Navigating the Internet marketing terrain can be a bit bewildering at times. In this corner you have Guru A telling that large, content-rich sites are the way to go. In the other corner you have Guru B declaring that mini sites are the only way to go. And then you have a whole host of opinions in between.

It's no wonder that everyone is so confused. That's because different people have different areas of expertise and markedly different background experiences. For example, if you ask Sean Burns, author of "[Rankings Revealed](#)" whether to use a mini site or content site, he'd probably choose a large, content-rich site because that really allows him to work his search engine optimization magic.

Now on the other hand, if you ask [Phil Wiley](#) the same question, he'd probably point you to a couple page mini site, because that's how he's created his wealth on the Internet.

So who's right? In the words of J.F. "Jim" Straw, "all the gurus are right and all the gurus are wrong."

You see, the experts tell you how to make money on the Internet based on their own experiences and what has worked for them. But this doesn't mean it will work for you. It doesn't mean that the information is "bad" in any way—it just means that it's not suitable for your situation.

When it comes to making money online, there really is no "one size fits all" blueprint. Each individual person who reads the material introduces a thousand variables that could render the info darn near useless to that particular person.

For example, let's suppose that you hear that [mini sites](#) are the way to go. Everyone is raving and [making money like crazy](#) building a couple mini sites a week and promoting them via pay per click search engines (PPC SE's) like Google Adwords.

So you jump on board, do the work and then...you give up. You can't make

money.

What happened? Did the books, newsletters and other info on mini sites fail you? Did they give you bad advice? Are they just bogus ways to put money in the pocket of the authors?

Nope.

You see, the authors can't tailor the info to every individual out there. They can't predict how you will apply or even interpret their information. They can lay it out step by step, but as humans we all mix our own perceptions and biases into anything we read or do.

So maybe the mini-site information didn't work for you because you just aren't cut out to do that kind of work. You see, the premise of a mini site is to research great keywords, find hungry markets who want specific products, and build a couple page site around these products with the #1 goal being to make a sale. You build it, run a campaign using the PPC SE's, and when you tweak and test to where it's profitable, you start building your next mini site.

But maybe you just can't switch gears that fast. One day you could be working on a dog site, the next day fishing site, and maybe the day after that a laptop computer site. This is great for someone who has a short attention span, or likes the challenge of exploring different markets and such.

But if you're the type of person who works best by concentrating on one thing for months at a time, then maybe you should build large, content-rich sites dealing with one particular subject.

And now you see that "making money online" with the help of an expert is really a two-person effort. If the expert lays the info out in an easy-to-understand manner, then it's up to you to take the ball and run with it. You've heard a gazillion times that many wannabe marketers "fail" because they fail to take action. They read, absorb, daydream, etc., but they don't get up off their duffs and work.

That's part of the problem. The other part is that many people read and absorb, but they jump in without taking into account what sort of profit model will actually be best for them.

This is the sort of person who chases the money. When Joe Schmoe the money chaser hears that MLM can make him a millionaire, Joe jumps on board, but quits six months down the line because he's not a "face to face" sales kind of guy. When Joe reads that Guru Extraordinaire is making a killing authoring ebooks, Joe decides to devote his life to writing. Too bad Joe hates writing.

Do you see where I'm going here? Part of the equation is figuring out what you are capable of doing. I mean if you abhor leftovers in the fridge and the missionary position in the bedroom, then perhaps building a large content site won't work for you since it requires focusing on one topic.

The next part of the equation is your ability to take what you learned (which was written from the expert's experiences) and apply it to your unique situation.

If you've ever done a little experimenting in the kitchen, you know what I mean. For example, you may stumble on a fabulous chicken recipe, but it's up to you to modify it as needed. Perhaps it serves four but you have a family of six. Perhaps it contains butter, but you prefer to substitute margarine. And maybe it calls for a heap of cilantro, but you'd rather rip your fingernails off than eat anything with cilantro in it, so you take it out and substitute oregano (oops, my disdain for cilantro just became apparent, eh?).

So just like a recipe, info products are more like guidelines to get you off in the right direction rather than exact blueprints that will produce the same results for each person without fail. That would be too easy, no?

Now having considered all of this information, you should already be thinking about what sort of profit model is right for you. You should also be ready to modify any marketing info you read. That includes the piece you are reading right now.

Without further ado, it's time to jump into a profit plan that worked for me. It's a combination of a content site and mini site, and it contains profit centers such as newsletters, a blog, and an ebook. Will this profit model work for you? Only you know for sure, and you won't know until you try, but it's definitely worked for me.

Note: This info first appeared in an extremely abbreviated form in my "The Missing Link" newsletter. If you aren't a subscriber, [please click here and take a moment to sign up.](#)

How to Build a Profitable Combination Site

A word about how this is going to work...

I am going to take you step-by-step through the process I used to arrive at a site that was a combination of a mini site and content site that included several profit centers. It will be almost like you are looking inside my head at the time I developed these concepts. I will tell you what mistakes I made along the way and what I would do differently. Hopefully you can learn from my mistakes.

Since you will be privy to the entire process including the mistakes, you really are getting a "[Bare Naked Profit Model](#)." In the next few pages you'll see it in all it's glory...but you'll also see the flaws.

As you read this, the many steps may look complicated. But don't let that fool you. At the end of this book I've provided a summarized guide that outlines each step, so that once you've read the main body of this report, you can simply refer to the outline. It's definitely not as complicated as it may appear, and once you read the outline you'll realize that it's probably even easier than you think.

And now here's how it all began...

Choosing the First Market

In the spring of 2003, I decided it was high time to add another stream of income to my growing portfolio of profitable websites and info products (i.e., ebooks).

The first step was to choose a profitable market who had specific wants and needs. Some folks get this backwards, and create a product first and then go searching for a market. Although not impossible to make a profit doing this, it can be difficult.

Years ago I made this mistake—I created a book that I know certain people needed. The problem is, they didn't think they needed it. The sales process is an uphill battle when you have to not only convince people to buy your product, but convince them they have a problem that needs solving!

So the easiest way is to find an existing market, find out what they want, and give it to them. It's a lot less hassle, you have a better chance of success, and it's not such a drain on your pocketbook.

The second thing I had to take into consideration while searching for a market are my own interests. Sure, some people can deal with focusing on creating websites and writing books on subjects that they have absolutely no interest in, but I'm not one of those people.

So which market did I choose? Gamblers.

You see, I have quite an extensive background with this market, and being a bit of a gambler myself, I enjoy the topic. So I knew this market was profitable—they have a proven track record of spending money on everything from gambling itself to information about how to make them better gamblers.

This group is also rather passionate when it comes to their hobby.

You always hear about people turning their hobby into a business, and that's the reason why—because a passionate market often means a profitable market. Hobbyists are passionate about whatever they do, whether it's gambling, collecting old Barbie dolls, making origami figures, or building and flying kites. Think about it—any market of passionate hobbyists is willing to not only spend a great deal of time on their hobby, they often are willing to spend a great deal of money, whether its for supplies or just simply information to make their hobby even more enjoyable.

Now "gamblers" is a rather broad market, so just jumping in would mean disaster since it's also a very competitive field. For example, run a search for "online casino" and you'll see a couple million results. Paid advertisers on Overture and other pay per click search engines will pay upwards of \$20 PER click just to be at the top of the results. In order to compete with other online casino affiliates, you would really need to carve out a unique, well defined niche. But I wasn't interested in that anyway.

Since I love writing ebooks, I wanted to provide information to this market. Indeed, there is a subset of the larger market of gamblers that buy and read every piece of "how to" gambling info they can get their hands on. In essence, they want to learn how to make more money every time they walk into a casino.

Bam. THAT'S my market...and man, are they ever hungry! I know these people are buying "how to" info, because I've seen several well-ranked sites peddling gambling information. Clickbank's marketplace includes several pages of gambling products. Gambling magazines include ads selling how to info. Frequently asked questions on gambling forums is "where can I get info to increase my chances of winning?" Some folks sell "gambling systems" via mail order, in newspapers, on TV, at seminars, and more.

The market is there, it's hungry, and it has money to burn.

Choosing the First Product

I already knew I wanted to sell a "how to gamble better" type ebook. But there was a problem—I'm not an expert. I don't know the first thing about many casino games, and my knowledge about others is good enough to whip out a few tips on, but not an entire book. And especially not an entire book that may very well cater to people who already buy all the gambling info on the market. I needed to make it different, unique, and...good.

Now for years many ebook and marketing experts have suggested compiling expert articles if you are unwilling or unable to write your own ebook on a particular topic. In my case I was willing, but unable because my market may very well know more about gambling for profit than I do. So the natural solution was to turn to the real experts.

Right around this time a kid by the name of Joe Kumar had already launched a successful book in the Internet marketing niche. This book was not written by Joe. Instead, Joe approached dozens of marketing experts, proposed an outstanding joint venture (JV) deal, and asked them to write an article answering a question that the target market wanted to know the answer to.

The book became an instant hit. Sure, the book itself did include some great 30 day marketing plans you can use if you get in a pinch. But I found the real value of the book was in studying the way Joe executed the entire process from conception to marketing.

Indeed, I was already planning out my gambling book when I alluded to it in my newsletter. I told subscribers that they too could make money online not only by following the included 30 day marketing plans, but by molding their own projects after Joe's.

So that's exactly what I did.

The very first step was to develop a question to ask the experts. During my research, I noticed that some gamblers complained that they didn't have enough money for the suggested \$500 or so bankroll that many gambling experts suggested. So I decided to appeal to "small time" gamblers who didn't have big bankrolls, didn't believe in "systems," and were really just looking for ways to increase their chances of winning.

Just like Joe's book, I forced the experts to come down to the "real" player's level.

Tip: one great place to do research on info products is anywhere you can find customer reviews of products, like on Amazon.com. If you read enough reviews, you'll see what customers really think. You'll discover what other products are lacking, and you can fill in these gaps for your target market.

The question I decide to ask the gambling experts was this:

"You have \$100 to bet at a casino. Your challenge is to double your money. How would you tackle this challenge? Where would you go (online or offline, which casino)? What games would you play, what size bets would you place? Lead us step-by-step through your proposed plan!"

Now as you can see, this question appeals to a market that doesn't have a huge bankroll. It also appeals to a market who wants to increase their chances of

winning, not one who wants to quit their jobs and become professional gamblers.

This question not only appealed to my market (as evidenced by my research), I was also starting to form a unique selling position (USP)—this was to be a book that would appeal to a "regular guy/girl"—a "real" gamblers who enjoyed excursions to the casino, but didn't spend his/her life inside of one.

Attracting JV Partners for the Book

With the book all planned out, now it was time to find joint venture (JV) partners to contribute to the book. In other words, I needed to find gambling experts, and I needed to convince them to write an article for me.

Although I had dealt with gambling markets before, I had never dealt with this particular subset. So honestly, I didn't really know who was considered an expert in the field. That meant I had to do lots of extra research to make sure I didn't attract any "losers" or "scammers" to contribute the book. This meant a little extra time spent Googling up names I ran across to ensure these folks were on the "up and up" and indeed considered experts in their field.

-->> My first stop to find experts was at Clickbank.com. They have a section of "how to" gambling information, so I knew that anyone who was listed in the directory not only knew how to write about gambling, they also knew how to market (which was important as well, because I wanted my experts to help me market this book...more about that later).

-->> Stop number two was Amazon.com, where I found several authors of print books. I took their names to Google to see if I could find their websites and contact information. Surprisingly, some of these folks don't exist online. Others exist, but you have to do an incredible amount of legwork. For example, I found one university professor, but he didn't have a web page. So I had to find out which University he worked for, and then go to the University's online phonebook to get his contact info.

-->> My next stop was to flip through gambling magazines I receive to see who writes the articles. Again, it was back to Google to enter many of these names to see if I could find their contact info since it wasn't listed with the articles.

-->> Final stop was to head to Google itself and start looking for relevant websites which might have gambling experts running them. I entered key phrases such as: gambling books, gambling ebooks, gambling strategies, gambling systems, etc. I also looked for gambling newsletters to see who was writing and contributing to them (you could use ezine directories to find newsletters rather than searching in Google).

Now that I had a whole list of potential joint venture (JV) partners, it was time to convince them to join me on this project. That required a kick-a\$\$ joint venture "sales" letter--indeed, I needed to sell them on writing an article for the book.

I'm not a copywriter extraordinaire by any means. So what I did was go to my subscription at [Instant Sales Letters](#) to get a little inspiration. Once you've read a few of those letters, you can't help but write lots of benefit statements packed with enthusiasm.

I was inspired, so I eeked out a letter. I wasn't completely happy with it, but sent it out anyway to the first few people on my list. I intended to send out a few just to get the ball rolling, see if I get a response, tweak it, try it again, etc.

Then something extraordinary happened...ten minutes after sending out the letter, I received a positive response. And then another. And another.

To my utter amazement, my jv letter was pulling like crazy. I believe that it included two key ingredients: I appealed to my JV partner's ego and greed. Indeed, one of my partners wrote back and said, "my ego is much to big to say no to you."

Bingo. Success. Here's the letter...

===== ***Begin JV Letter***

Good Afternoon, [Name]

I have an unusual proposition for you. If you'd like to drive more gamblers to your site, make more money, and position yourself as a leading casino expert alongside [expert's name, expert's name and expert's name], then read on.

I've visited your site, and I like what I see. I'm very much impressed that [fill in the blank with something completely awesome about their site, that shows you have spent time at their site and that you are genuinely impressed]. You are EXACTLY the sort of person I'm looking for...

Since it's clear to me that you're a casino and gambling expert, I'd like to feature you in an upcoming ebook. In order to cash-in on the many benefits, all you have to do is answer the following question:

"You have \$100 to bet at a casino. Your challenge is to double your money. How would you tackle this challenge? [i.e., Where would you go (online or offline, which casino)? What games would you play, what size bets would you place? Lead us step-by-step through your proposed plan!]"

Since other experts are joining you in answering this question, you can see what an impact this book will make on the industry! This powerful book is destined to become the "gambler's bible." Not only do you get the recognition as being a featured contributor for this prestigious book, you'll also get the following benefits:

***You'll make money effortlessly on the backend! How? Your bio and link appear in the book, which automatically drives proven buyers to your site!*

***You get the completed book for free--you'll get to see your fellow gamblers spill their guts about how THEY make money in a casino!*

***You'll rake in a huge 75% commission when you recommend the book to others during the launch week, and a generous 50% commission thereafter!*

***You make money on the backend by including affiliate links in your answer (for example, feel free to include an affiliate link to an online casino)!*

***You can effortlessly position yourself as "THE" leading casino expert!*

***Your credibility will be taken to the next level as your name appears alongside other experts.*

Maybe I'm giving you too much for so little work! This is probably one of the easiest things you'll do for so much in return.

To lock in your reserved spot in the book, email me right now and let me know you're interested. Then just send your article to me any time between now and [two weeks away]. The release date is the end of this month...I sincerely hope to see your name featured alongside our other experts!

Cheers,

Rebecca Hagel

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P.S. Take 30 seconds right now to hit reply...let me know whether I should hang on to your spot, or let someone else take it. (You'll kick yourself later if you miss out being featured in this notable book!)

===== End JV Letter

OK, let's rip that letter apart a bit to see why it worked...

The first important thing you MUST do to make an impact is use the person's name. A title like "webmaster" or "author" just won't cut it for something as important as this.

The first paragraph does two things. First, it "name drops" to increase interest by showing that some other well known experts in the field are already on board. Of course in order to name drop, you need to have already secured those experts as JV partners. If you haven't done that part yet, just leave the name dropping out.

The first paragraph also quickly lists off some of the biggest benefits the reader will receive. This is to entice him/her to keep reading to find out how to get those benefits.

The second and third paragraphs are where you appeal to the reader's ego. My best advice here is to stroke, stroke, stroke that ego...but be genuine. Afterall, if you aren't truly impressed by this person, then you shouldn't be asking them to work on this project with you.

From there on out, the letter focuses on the benefits the reader will receive if he/she participates. While some of these benefits appeal to the reader's greed, others appeal to their ego. It seems to be an effective combination.

Finally, at the end you'll see I've created a sense of urgency in the P.S. I tell them to hit reply so I know whether to hang on to their spot in the book or give it away to someone else. Indeed, I did send out batches of letters, wait, and send out more to "fill up the spots."

Now you'll see that I used a deadline that was two weeks away from the reader's receipt of the letter. Generally, two weeks is ample time for someone to write an article. If it's not, they will often tell you.

But here's the "secret"—my actual deadline for article submission was THREE weeks away. After working with Joe on his project, I knew that lots of people just wouldn't get those articles in on time. So what I did was send out a reminder about three or four days prior to the two week deadline, letting people know they need to get their articles in to me at the end of the week.

Of course the deadline approached, and articles didn't get turned in. I wrote to the people who didn't turn them in and told them the deadline had passed. I reminded them of the benefits they'd receive if they contributed to the book. And then I told them I'll make an exception since they have so much to offer and I was really looking forward to reading their article (appealing to their ego again). Then I told them they had one more week to get their article in to me.

That was just enough to spur a few people to get those articles to me. Since I had planned for this delay, it didn't phase me at all.

Note: still not everyone turned their articles in, so I stopped "chasing" them. Since I had already planned on this, I would still have two dozen articles (which was my goal). Just like an airline that overbooks because they know some passengers won't show up, go ahead and "overbook" your ebook, because not all of your contributors are going to step up to the plate. In my case, about 7% of my partners disappeared into thin air.

Your mileage may vary. To be safe, try shooting for 15% more contributors than your goal. For example, if you want 100 partners and you already have 100 folks who said "yes," get a "yes" from at least 15 extra people. Better to have extra than too few.

What to do While Waiting for the Articles...

Once you've secured your JV partners with your fantastic offer and JV letter, you now have about three weeks to get some stuff done before the last of the articles roll in. Once those articles come in, you need to edit if needed, proofread, compile into an ebook format, and write an intro for your ebook.

Tip: Fortunately, some people are "on the ball" and send their articles in early. It will make your workload a lot lighter in three weeks if you start working on formatting the articles as they come in.

So what needs to be done on this project that you can accomplish before you get all the articles? In my case, I also wrote an article for the book, so I whipped that up. But in addition, I knew that my other main tasks included writing a sales letter and getting set up to take orders online.

I decided to tackle the sales letter first.

First stop: I went back to Yanik Silver's Instant Sales Letters for a bit of inspiration. I highly recommend this resource. I actually purchase my lifetime membership to the site a few years back, and it's one of the few tools I return to on a regular basis. Not only does Yanik give you a copywriting ebook to help you improve your sales letters, he also give you dozens of sales letters templates. All you have to do is plug in the relevant info and you're done. Or if you're like me, use those templates as an inspiration and a guide. Give it a try by clicking here—it comes back with a money-back guarantee, so you have nothing to lose.

Now obviously I couldn't write the entire sales letter, since I wasn't sure what my authors were going to talk about in their articles. But still, I was able to map out my customer's greatest frustrations and answer them in the sales letters. I outlined the benefits of this book over other gambling books. I created interest, desire, urgency, and action. In fact, without reading the book I was still able to complete most of the sales letter, and I knew I only needed to add specific tidbits and benefits directly from the articles later.

The next step was to get this puppy online. That involved buying a domain name, snagging some webhosting, and designing a two page site (one page is the sales letter, one page is for affiliates). This step may take you longer, depending on your level of web design expertise. If you've never designed a web page before, grab a template and plug in your info. This page should NOT be complicated or fancy anyway—it's purpose is two fold...

The number one purpose of your sales letter is to make the sale. Now since people don't tend to buy on their first visit, that brings us to the second purpose of the site: capturing email addresses. You don't want people to leave your site

without leaving their email address. You want to be able to follow up with them, gain their trust, and perhaps close the sale at another time. You need to offer them something in exchange for their email address, like a newsletter or an excerpt to the book. An exit pop up tends to work well for this purpose.

Word of Caution: do NOT go overboard trying to get people to leave their email addresses! You need to entice people, but not give away everything you own just to get their email address. Think about it—if you give away TOO much stuff, people will sign up to the goodies and probably leave you a "throw away" email address. This means they will NEVER see your newsletter, which lowers your conversion rate.

I write about this concept in great detail in my book "[The Missing Link](#)." You'll learn how to build a list of responsive subscribers. Afterall, the size of your mailing list doesn't matter if you can't make money from it. On the other hand, if you're making a killing with a hungry list, then who cares if other marketers ridicule the size of your list? You'll get there...but yours will not only be big, it will be responsive and profitable.

Personally, I usually use the enticement of signing up for a newsletter, and I list the benefits of receiving the newsletter. Many of my newsletters also use "double opt in," meaning the subscriber must confirm their subscription. You won't get as many subscriptions this way because not everyone will go through the five second "trouble" of confirming their subscription by clicking on a link. But if they won't do that, they don't *really* want your stuff anyway. Double opt in tends to make a cleaner, more responsive list.

To learn more about how you can build a profitable list, take a moment now to [download my ebook "The Missing Link" by clicking here](#).

OK, now where were we? Oh yes, we were talking about getting ready to get this sales letter online. Now typically I would buy a domain name and get this two page mini site up. BUT, an idea had started churning around in my head a few weeks back, right around the time I first started brainstorming what to sell and to

who.

My idea? Appeal to another very specific group of gamblers, and launch the "mini site" and it's ebook on the pages of a large content site.

So if I had this idea to launch a content site before that appealed to a specific niche, why hadn't I already started on it? The reason is because I'm not the most patient person in the world, and I wanted to make money ASAP. You see, a content site takes a while to build. Then you have to start driving traffic. Then...well you get the idea.

I decided instead to whip out an info product, get a team of JV partners and affiliates promoting the ebook for me, and work on the content site whenever I had downtime or when the mini site was already making me money by "running on autopilot."

This three weeks while I waited for the articles to come in definitely qualified as downtime, so I started working on the content site.

Let's go through the initial steps of that process, and then we'll return to the story of the mini-site and ebook when three weeks have passed, the articles are all in, and the gambling ebook is ready to be compiled...

Choosing the Second Market

While I researched my first market and product, I virtually stumbled into my second market that would eventually make up the content site. I threw the word "casino" into Overture's search term suggestion tool to see what sorts of things people wanted to know about casinos. Oddly enough, I saw that over 5000 people had searched for the term "Minnesota casino" in the last month. And that's just on Overture, which has far fewer search results than Google.

A little deeper research showed that people were looking for a variety of terms related to Minnesota casinos, even down to specific info about Minnesota's 18 casinos.

Hey, I'm from Minnesota! And I go to Minnesota casinos! I'm getting excited now. More research...

Ok, let's have a look see at what sort of competition I'm up against. I slapped a few of the most-searched, relevant phrases into Google to see what popped out. One look at the top ten results and I knew I could do tons better than these folks. Their sites mainly consisted of phone numbers and addresses to casinos, maybe a paragraph about them, and a link to the casino's website.

Blech, boring...and not sticky nor interactive. Heck, it didn't even look like these sites had newsletters.

A thought flashed by—maybe the competition stinks because there isn't much money involved in this niche. Nah, I knew better than that. These are gamblers—some of them might want to play online, some of them might want information about gambling (like my soon to be released gambling ebook), some of them might want very specific guide books about Minnesota casinos, etc.

I mean there are plenty of profitable avenues to take—from selling products, to being an affiliate, to selling advertising space online, to selling advertising space in printed guidebooks.

Then upon a closer look, I realized that I really did have an existing market with specific wants and needs, but my competition just wasn't doing a very good job filling those needs. I decided to step up to the plate.

I decided to start out making this site an interactive, sticky community to entice lots of visitors and repeat visitors. I would make money offering them the ebook I was in the midst of working on, as well as other affiliate products and services of interest. (Then perhaps in the future I would look at selling ad space...maybe.)

Time to get cracking to create a website my visitors will enjoy...

Designing the Content Site

Now since I am a Minnesotan gambler as well as a marketer, I had some idea of what this market wanted to see on a website. I also had an idea based on my research of what sort of keywords and phrases were being searched for on Overture.

But admittedly, mainly I just went from the gut and designed a site that I would like. Fortunately it worked out. However, in general I suggest researching, asking your market, etc. One cool tool that includes a free trial: wordtracker.com. Try it out for free to see what I mean about it's usefulness.

Anyway...

I wanted this site to be informative (more than just a paragraph about the casino and phone number), I wanted the site to be interactive, I wanted visitors to come back, and I wanted the search engines to love this site and send me lots of traffic.

So let's start with the interactive portion of the site...

Typically my first thought would be to add a forum. Maybe I will do that some time in the future when I really get the traffic numbers up (as I am still working on this project as I write this to you), but not yet. No, I wanted something different.

At this time I ran into a cheap ratings script that allowed visitors to rate casinos with one to five stars as well as write a review (think of Amazon's customer rating system). This would allow visitors to not only be interactive by encouraging them to rate and review Minnesota casinos, in the future I suspect it will become a very valuable resource for anyone wondering about a specific casino. As you can imagine, this not only makes the site interactive, it makes it sticky as well (meaning people will return to the site repeatedly and spend some time there).

At the time of writing this article (and without any promotion), there are several dozen ratings and reviews already on the site. If people are enjoying this feature now despite the fact I haven't promoted it, I'm sure to see an spike in number of ratings when I do start encouraging this interactivity.

It's sort of like a forum—the more people that participate, the more likely "lurkers" will start participating.

Side note: I haven't done it yet, but I'm considering writing to the listed casinos and asking them to put a "rate us at [Gamble Minnesota](#)" or "We're Rated at Gamble Minnesota" text ad or banner on their site, with a link to the ratings page. That would be one way to boost link popularity (the more links you have pointing to your site, the more it helps with higher rankings in search engines) as well as hopefully drive some traffic in from the casinos web pages to my portal.

The next interactivity tool is my [gambling blog](#) (web log or journal).

Now when I first started designing this site, I didn't put a blog in right away. In fact, I didn't know much about blogs or how they could help my site. Then I ran into Jason Cain's "[Goldblogging System](#)" book. This book convinced me that I needed to start blogging, and I haven't regretted it for a moment. I'm telling you about it now because if you're designing a content site, it's a good idea to get blogging asap.

So what is a blog? Basically it's a platform for you to write thoughts, short articles, observations, etc that's of interest to your target market. A formal name would be a "content management system." It's sort of a cross between a forum and an ezine.

Yes, it makes the site interactive because visitors can comment on your journal (blog) entries. And of course it makes the site sticky, because if you make your blog informative and entertaining and relevant, people will return to see what you have to say.

Another bonus—search engines like Google LOVE blogs. That means that each time you make an entry, the search engine is picking it up and indexing it. That's why I like to think of keywords before I write an entry, and use those generously throughout the article.

If you aren't convinced yet, listen to this—when you blog, other people will start spontaneously linking to your blog. Cool, eh?

Now just like your ezine (i.e., newsletter) or articles, your blog can also make you money. One way is to write articles recommending products and drop your affiliate link. You inform, you tell, and you sell.

But that's just one way to do it. To discover how to get up and running with your blog as well as how to make money with it, I highly recommend you [pick up a copy of Jason's "GoldBlogging System" book by clicking here](#). My gambling blog is profitable thanks to that book, and I've yet to tap into even a fraction of the techniques you'll learn in Jason's guide.

Onward.

Speaking of features that make a site sticky and also appeal to search engines, I knew my site wouldn't be complete without "regular" articles on my site. These range from gambling tips to "trip reports" about Minnesota casinos. These tend to be longer and more well thought out than my blog entries.

In addition, I really pay close attention to optimizing these pages for search engines (aka SEO, or search engine optimization).

Let me be honest here. Less than a year ago I was scared of optimizing for the search engines. When I heard people talking about it, I would cringe. They talked in lingo I didn't understand, almost as if they lived to confuse the non-techies like myself. If I asked a question, they would roll their geek eyes and give me a flippant answer accompanied by a sigh.

The articles online were pretty complicated too. Or if they weren't complicated, they contradicted one another. I was confused.

Ok, in short: I was a search engine idiot, and I was becoming more and more afraid to learn how to do it, even though I knew it was important. I knew that if I could just get a few optimized pages, I could get hundreds of free visitors per month. Optimize a few more, and I'd be getting thousands.

But heck if that was going to happen since I balked at the thought of learning. That's past tense. Because then I met Sean Burn's and was introduced to his

book "Rankings Revealed." I was immediately impressed with Sean's book because I completely understood what he was talking about. And even better, he outlined the steps to getting top search engine rankings in such a way that I was no longer overwhelmed.

After reading his book, I started dabbling. Success. More dabbling. More success.

Now let's zip up to the present day...MOST of the traffic that I get currently on Gamble Minnesota is from the search engines! That's right, I went from being a search engine idiot to someone who's able to pull in top rankings and get measurable results on Google. The bottom line is if I can do it, anyone can do it. Sean will show you how to do it, and get good results.

Bottom line: don't be afraid of search engine optimization. It's a very powerful source of free traffic. Indeed, my SEO is paying off with these gambling articles (and the blog), and the site is really just in its infancy right now, with just a fraction of the content it will eventually have. I've targeted several keywords with my articles as it is, but in the future I will pretty much be nailing all the major key phrases relevant to this site.

Although I haven't done it yet, there are a few other things I plan to do with these articles. This includes adding resource boxes to the end of the articles so that people may reprint them (and the resource box is really just a little advertisement enticing people to click through to my site). Additionally, I will start writing and submitting articles directly to article databases so they might get picked up (in some cases, I may approach ezine publishers directly if I see they have guest articles in their newsletters).

And finally, the last main feature of the site (and an extremely important marketing tool) is my newsletter for Minnesotan gamblers. (Please note, this newsletter is completely separate from the newsletter for those visiting the ebook sales page. The MN newsletter does offer gambling tips, but also mentions events and news of interest only to Minnesotan gamblers.)

Again, this feature is so important because people will come to a site, and then forget about it and never return. Maybe they will even bookmark it, but if they bookmark every site they run across, there's a good chance they don't visit their bookmarks all that often.

As a marketer, you need to jump into your prospect's mailbox and say, "hey, remember me?" You follow up. You build trust and develop relationships. You wow your subscribers with all sorts of useful information. And THEN you offer solutions to your subscribers problems, some of which may require money to solve (such as an ebook). If you have a targeted list of trusting subscribers, they will buy.

But the problem as mentioned before is that lots of people simply don't know how to build a list of responsive subscribers. Sometimes they can build a list, but the subscribers seemed to be half-dead.

To learn more about how to build a responsive list of subscribers, [please download my book "The Missing Link" by clicking here.](#)

So those are the main features of the site: ratings and review page, blog, article, and newsletter. They make the site interactive, sticky, pleasing to the search engine spiders, and profitable.

Now that I had planned it all out, I started building it during my waiting period of three weeks. I bought the domain name "[GambleMinnesota.com](#)," purchased hosting, and started designing the look of the site as well as installing scripts. I also started creating some of the content, such as the articles.

Now that I had at least the design and a little content ready, I decided to open the site's doors. My first goal was to get the site indexed by the search engines so people could start finding me when they searched for my key phrases.

Now here's where some people make a (costly) mistake. You see, there are "submission services" that promise to submit your site to thousands of search engines. Some even promise to get you top rankings. That's bogus.

First off, you don't need a submission service. You can do it yourself if you're so inclined. Heck, you don't even need to submit your site to tons of search engines

(SE's). There are only a few SE's that are worth the trouble, and Google is the biggest. You can visit their site and hit "submit an url."

However, an easier and often faster way to get into the search engines is to visit forums, participate in the conversations, and leave a link to your site at the end of your post (if leaving a signature line and link is allowed—check forum rules first). This works if the search engines regularly visit that particular forum and are able to crawl the pages.

Another way to do it is to somehow get linked to a site that is already in Google. You may do a "link exchange" or perhaps offer them an article with a link pointing back to your site. Or if you have your own sites that are already crawled by Google, simply place your new website's link on your existing website. That's how I get into the search engines fast—by using my existing, regularly crawled sites to introduce search engines to my new sites.

Bottom line: Google will find you soon enough. You don't need to submit your site, and for heaven's sakes don't pay anyone else to submit your site.

Getting your site ranked high in the search engines for relevant keywords is another story. However, I again recommend you do this yourself (it's easier than you think), because then you don't forever have to be a slave to another person, throwing tons of money at them to constantly tweak. Instead, just download "Rankings Revealed" by clicking here. It's much cheaper, plus you'll get awesome results.

Onward...

My three week waiting period was up, my expert authors had turned in their articles, and it was time to turn my attention back to the gambling ebook and it's accompanying sales letter and mini site. After all the book was going to make me money immediately after it's release, so I put it number one on the priority list, and moved the content site to the back burner temporarily...

Launching the Ebook with a Bang

The articles were back, and now I could feel the excitement since I was so near the expected release date. I spent a few days reading through the articles (about 25 of them), editing as needed, requesting intros and author bios from authors who neglected to provide them, and finally compiling the ebook into a PDF format.

(Note: one of the benefits of co-authoring a book like this is that the authors could plug their own products. Some authors went overboard and essentially said nothing of any use...their articles were sales letters without gambling tips. I sent these back to the authors for rewriting. In order to not make the authors feel bad, I told them that more readers will click through to their site if they can demonstrate that they have a lot of knowledge to share. In other words, they need to impress the reader by offering up some juicy tips in their article, and tone down the sales pitch. When you compile this sort of book, be on the lookout for this same problem.)

The next step was to send the completed book to all JV partners and ask them to proof their own article within the book. I gave them a deadline of three days, and let them know that approximately 48 hours after that deadline (after I had made the last minute changes), the book would go live. I assured them that they would receive complete instructions at that time regarding how to sell the book.

Now I had three days (technically five) to finish everything up while I waited on the author's changes. Ideally it would have been best to have my Clickbank account already created and approved by this time, so that the JV partners could have prepared by creating their newsletters complete with links. Regardless, I took a moment to create a vendor account at Clickbank, and asked them to review my sales page and activate my account.

Meanwhile, I completed the sales letter since I was now able to list even more of the benefits the reader would receive.

Finally, I installed Adrian Ling's Easy Clickmate sales tool. This is a tool that I highly recommend if you use Clickbank. Essentially it allows you to manage your affiliates, track your sales and conversion rates, as well as offer discounts and other special pricing to your joint venture partners.

For example, one of my joint venture partners asked me if he could offer an exclusive 10% discount to his subscribers. To do this via Clickbank, I would have needed two different Clickbank accounts. However, it only took me a few minutes to set this same discount page up via Easy Clickmate.

Another benefit of Easy Clickmate is that you can house multiple products on the same Clickbank vendor account. While Clickbank allows you to house multiple products, it requires that you only have one landing page for all of them. That means your affiliates would send customers to a page that have all your products listed. In some cases you might want this, but in my experience you want one and only one product on a page...otherwise you risk losing your customers when they are distracted by irrelevant choices.

With Easy Clickmate, all your products are given their own unique landing page. If your affiliate wants to promote Product A, she can send her list directly to Product A's sales page. Or, she can even write her own sales page and send her subscribers directly to your order link. In summary, there are many very powerful ways you can use the combination of Clickbank and Easy Clickmate.

Onward.

Within 36 hours, Clickbank approved my vendor account, I paid the mandatory \$49.99 fee, made the necessary changes to Easy Clickmate, and everything was set. Then the edits came back and I made the changes. The brand new ebook "Double or Nothing" was ready to go.

Finally the moment arrived. I mailed my two dozen joint venture partners, reminded them of the generous 75% commission they would receive when they promoted the book to their lists, and told them exactly how to create their affiliate links.

Tip: I also emailed the "partners" who originally said yes but then didn't get their articles in to me for whatever reason. I told them that I understood "life happens," and that I would still be happy to extend the special "JV status" to them complete with a 75% rate. A few partners took me up on this offer and signed up as affiliates.

Word of Caution: I use the strategy of offering a 75% commission to my joint venture partners and affiliates for the first few weeks after launch as a way to "jump start" sales on the book. However, this strategy is not for everyone. If you give your affiliates a large percentage of your profits, then you **MUST** be prepared to "make it up" in back end sales.

Read the appendix to discover whether this technique is right for you, and how you can get the most out of your back end sales to existing customers.

And then I waited.

Suddenly a sale came in. Then another. And then another. First one JV partner made a sale, then a different JV partner, then yet a different JV partner. Apparently a few partners started promoting within hours after the official release.

Why? Again, I had played on their greed and ego. Their ego motivated them to tell their list about the book simply because they were a co-author. Think about it—if you were in a book, wouldn't you tell people? Of course. Especially if you were paid a 75% commission for telling people! Also, the authors' greed gave them the kick they needed to sell ASAP, because they knew the other JV partners would start selling soon too.

Note: Remember, the sales page did not include distracting outside links.

Customers either ordered, or if they left the page they were asked to sign up for a newsletter. The email capture into an autoresponder sequence is VERY important. You can write five, ten or more emails in advance and have them delivered automatically to potential customers, which builds trust and helps to close the sale. It's automatic, so you don't need to lift a finger once you have this system set up.

To learn more about autoresponders and how to use them for maximum benefit, pick up your free copy of "Autoresponder Profits" [here](#).

The launch was a success. Orders were pouring in. As they did, I wrote thank you notes to customers, while simultaneously putting them in an autoresponder sequence to follow up with them. This is where the money is to be made—on the back end. So even though I was giving away 75% of the profits to my partners, these were now my customers. It's easier to get them to buy from you a second time, because you've developed a relationship.

To build trust, I provided them with free surprise bonuses such as a gambling report they weren't expecting to receive. I also take opportunities to tell them about complimentary products that I'm affiliated with. In the future (for maximum profit), I will be selling my own products on the backend. But I have to create those products first.

So let's recap: the orders are coming in since my JV partners are promoting to their lists. Keep in mind, I selected well-known experts (many of whom were also marketers), so sales were brisk. But since I only had two dozen partners, I knew it wouldn't last but a week or so before things started tapering off. I had to keep the ball rolling...

How to Keep the Sales Momentum Going...

Other than sending more traffic to your sales page, how do you make more sales? By improving your conversion ratio (number of people who visit your sales page to number of people who buy).

Now there are a lot of factors that play into the conversion ratio. The quality of your traffic is a big one. In my case, my joint venture partners were sending highly targeted traffic, so I couldn't ask for more qualified prospects.

However, the sales letter can always use improvement. And ideally, you should get your conversion ratio up to an acceptable level before you start taking on affiliates. You see, if your affiliates have a hard time selling your product, they'll get discouraged and quit. Indeed, you may lose some very good affiliates in this manner.

So what is a good conversion? It depends on what you're selling, the price, the quality of traffic, etc. In general, many marketing products convert around 2%. If your product converts below 1% (meaning that for every one hundred visitors, you made one sale), your affiliates will probably get discouraged.

But just because average marketing products convert around 2% doesn't mean that you should shoot for a 2% conversion...shoot higher! Sure, 2% just might be enough to keep affiliates happy while you tweak your sales letter, but your job is to get that percentage as high as you can.

So how do you do this? By systematically changing one and only one element of your sales letter at a time. This is VERY important, because if you change more than one element, you won't know what caused the difference in conversions. Maybe it was the headline. Maybe it was the P.S. in your letter. Maybe it was your page's background color.

Let's take Internet expert John Reese for a moment. He tested two sales letters—one with a header graphic, and one without. He found that his sales letter without a header graphic outperformed the letter with a header.

This announcement spurred other marketers to test their sales letters as well. Even though the marketers probably regularly tested other elements of their letters, not many had tested the header graphic. A few other marketers were happy to report their sales increased as well.

Now what if John removed the header, changed his headline, and his P.S. all at the same time? That's right, he wouldn't have been able to nail down what caused his increase in sales (removing the header graphic). In fact, he may not have even seen a difference in sales at all. Imagine if his headline was WORSE than his original headline. That negative effect would balance out any positive effect of removing the header graphic.

A marketer who doesn't test one element at a time could be shooting him/herself in the foot. The key to making more sales is understanding why your customers are buying—or not buying—from you.

Side note: in order to test your sales letter, you can use special software to do this A/B split test. That means that when traffic lands on your website, half of them will be randomly directed to sales letter A, and half of them will be shown sales letter B. Your job is to make sure you can track where the sales are coming from, so you know if there is a significant difference between your sales letters.

Moving on...

At this point in this project, my sales letter was pulling a decent conversion rate (and yes, I was working constantly to improve it to the level of "excellence"). Now it was time to actively seek out more affiliates.

My first step was to return to Clickbank.com, email them, and ask them to list my new ebook in their marketplace. This not only gives you a slight chance of making a sale, it allows potential affiliates to find you. But truthfully, I didn't have time to sit around waiting for anyone to find me—so I went looking for them.

Next stop was back to the [Instant Sales Letter member's area](#). Again, I used the templates for inspiration, and as sort of a guide as to how to write a letter to potential affiliates.

Next I hit up Google and started looking for complimentary websites and newsletters. Again, in this letter I appealed to the list owner's greed, but I was also sincerely complimentary (because if I was not genuinely impressed by their website, I simply did not ask them to be an affiliate).

Essentially, the letter started out complimenting the webmaster on specific aspects of their website, which showed that I had indeed visited the site and was sincerely impressed. Then I went on to introduce myself and my offer...an affiliate partnership where they could earn 75% of the profits.

Next, I told them how this book would benefit their subscribers. You see, a *good* list owner isn't just interested in her own personal gains, she also wants her subscribers to be happy campers. To that end, she would never recommend junk to her list (since reputation is everything)...so my letter also included a download link where list owners could download their complimentary copy of the book.

In short: like any sales letter, this letter was all about the benefits the potential affiliate would receive. When I wrote to affiliates who were potentially "super affiliates" (those with large mailing lists), I made some very exclusive offers. For example, I gave these list owners special affiliate links so that their subscribers would be sent to a special page—a page that said identified them as "Ms. Listowner's Subscribers." In other words, those subscribers felt special, because they were being recognized and in some cases, given a discount or other special deal such as unique bonuses.

Within a few days I had several good affiliates on board. Even though there was now yet another surge in sales due to the increase in affiliates, I continued to spend a few minutes each day sending out JV letters. Indeed, it's a good idea to seek out new affiliates on a continuous basis.

Note: a two-tier affiliate program may be good for this purpose, since affiliates would refer each other (because they can make money when their referrals make a sale). If you choose to use a two-tier affiliate program, make sure that the first tier receives a large majority of the commission. For example, if you wanted to

pay out 50% total, then give 45% on the first tier and 5% on the second (or 40% and 10%). This would motivate affiliates to sell as well as recruit, because selling is obviously more lucrative (and recruiting other affiliates is more like a bonus).

Between affiliates sales and joint venture partners (these are the partners who receive preferential treatment), sales were coming in steadily. I was itching to get back to working on my Minnesota gambling portal...

Finishing up the Minnesota Gambling Portal

So where was I with respect to the portal at this time? I had finished the design, added a form to the site so I could collect email addresses, started blogging a bit, and had a few articles done. Also, I had dropped the links to the site on a few websites that I knew get crawled by search engines, so this site would be in the search engines in no time.

And that's exactly what happened.

One day I was working on the portal, rearranging things and adding content, when I noticed that a visitor had come along to rate and review the casinos. Then I checked my mailing list, and noticed that a couple people had signed up for the newsletter that day. And all of this was happening without me doing any blatant promotion...what was going on?

Search engine traffic. FREE search engine traffic.

I checked my traffic stats. Sure enough, my home page and a couple of my articles had landed me at the #1 and #2 spots on Google for two of my keyword phrases! I was stoked! And once again, I had Sean Burns to thank for my success.

Of course this surge in traffic pretty much happened over night, since the moment those keyword phrases were indexed the site ended up at the top of the results.

This put me in a bit of a panic. Now I wanted to add more content, make the site even better, further encourage visitors to sign up for the newsletter so I didn't "lose" any traffic, etc.

Note: *don't worry about getting everything "perfect" before you launch your site. If you do that, you will probably never launch it. Just get it out there and work on it as you go.*

So that was my first goal—to make the ad copy for the newsletter more compelling, to ensure that I was capturing as many newsletter subscribers as possible. You see, even though capturing your visitor's email address is so important, many people overlook it. You need to sell your visitor on giving up their email address to you. Indeed, writing a sales letter complete with benefits...testimonials...the works is a good idea. You can't just ask for your visitor's email—you need to tell them why they should subscribe to your newsletter.

For more information about how to build a responsive mailing list, [pick up a copy of my book "The Missing Link."](#)

Note: I set up an [autoresponder sequence of emails](#) for both this list as well as the mailing list I was building of potential customers to the "Double or Nothing" list. This means that my mailing program (autoresponder) automatically follows up with the prospects and subscribers, which enables me to build a relationship, build trust, and make sales...automatically. To find out how to put an autoresponder to work for you 24/7, [download your free copy of the ebook "Autoresponder Profits."](#)

At this point my main goal for the portal site was to capture visitor emails and make the site a place they wanted to return to repeatedly. The newsletter was sufficiently enticing enough to get visitors to leave their emails. Now to get visitors to return, I needed to update the content frequently. So this means not only regular entries in my gambling blog, but I also needed to create a post new articles as well.

And that's where I'm at right now with the Minnesota gambling site...essentially I am still building it and making it the best it can be. I've sold several copies of "Double or Nothing" to people who came in via the search engines looking for info about Minnesota casinos, so I know this audience is interested in "how to" gambling information. As I get to know this market better, I will be even better able to serve them—perhaps by selling products such as Minnesota gambling guide books and other products of specific interest to this market.

In addition, I may be able to sell advertising (for the local casinos) when the traffic reaches an acceptable level. This is a profit model I've never tested. If it doesn't work, I already know the profit will be profitable through product and affiliate sales, so I don't have to worry about "bombing out."

I haven't talked much about promotions for the Minnesota gambling site itself, other than the search engine traffic and any spillover I may get from visitors who found the "Double or Nothing" ebook. That's because I am still in midst of this project, and really haven't officially launched the portal yet.

I've already started developing relationships with the casinos, both via email and on the phone. I figure it's important to get my foot in the door or have a contact person, since we are sure to be arranging some mutually beneficial activities in the future. For example, perhaps I can secure coupons for five bucks worth of free casino chips as an exclusive offer to my subscribers. That's just one of many ideas.

And as for the near future?

I plan to promote via press releases, flyers and business card, newspaper ads, etc. In other words, I will be integrating an offline campaign with an online campaign. As I build the site, I'm sure the search engines will continue to serve

me well. I plan to find Minnesota gambling type related sites and offer lucrative affiliate partnerships to sell "Double or Nothing." However, once I develop a product that is specifically targeted to MN gamblers (such as a guidebook), I will no doubt have an easier time partnering up with highly targeted sites.

I have many ideas. If you're interested in hearing about this project as it continues to develop, please sign up for my newsletter "the Missing Link." It's free, it generally comes about once a week, and it always includes "real world" marketing techniques—generally stuff I've tried or am working on at the moment. To sign up, visit MarketingAuction.com.

And what about the "mini site" on the portal that houses the ebook...?

The Future of "Double or Nothing"

At the time of writing this, I am right in the middle of a new Google Adwords campaign (a pay per click form of advertising). I targeted a very narrow list of keywords. Some fail, some do well. I cut the deadweight, which brings my click through rate (CTR) to around 2%. I tweak the headline and copy of my ad to bring it to a 3% CTR. I continue to tweak to raise the CTR. My goal is to get at least a 5% CTR minimum.

I am by no means a Google Adwords expert, but I'm learning. Keywords that are too broad (like "gambling") drag down the click through rate. When it drops too low (below 1%), Google will suspend your campaign until you tweak it. Keywords that are very specific and targeted may not bring in as much traffic during any given week, but when they do they tend to produce sales (like "Gambling ebook").

Making sales from an Adwords campaign is the result of several factors: the keywords you select (which drives the quality of your traffic), how compelling your ad is (which helps drive your CTR), and the copy on your actual website (does it match the ad you wrote as well as the information your visitors were looking for when they first entered a few words into the search engine?). All of these elements must be constantly monitored, tested, tracked, and tweaked for

maximum results.

Side note: when you run multiple campaigns when you're testing, be SURE to use different order links so you can see if you are making sales from these click throughs. This is yet another area where Easy Clickmate came in handy—it allowed me create unique order links to add into my various Google Adwords campaigns.

If you're unfamiliar with Google Adwords, check out the ebook Google Cash. I personally haven't read it, though from what I hear it would have saved me a lot of time and money. Maybe it can save you some time and money.

So other than the current promotional methods (affiliates, joint ventures, spillover from the portal, pay per click campaigns, etc), what does the future hold for the ebook "Double or Nothing?"

I plan to write a few articles specifically to draw in traffic through the search engines (meaning I would liberally use key phrases through out the article, and other wise optimize it for Google). I also plan to write "viral" articles—gambling articles that other webmasters and list owners use on their sites and in their newsletters. I plan to submit these articles to article databases like IdeaLibrary. If I see newsletters that accept guest articles, I'll submit directly to the editor.

The same goes for offline publications. Indeed, one of the contributors for my ebook is the editor of a major gambling magazine, so I already have my foot in the door at that place. I know writers for other offline gambling mags, who possibly could introduce me to the editor. And for those I don't know, I'll send personalized letters.

Press releases will also work for this book. For example, since it mentions online gambling in places, I can tie that in to the current debate in the U.S. Government regarding how to handle online gaming.

I have a viral ebook in the works (viral meaning my sales message tends to get passed on automatically). This book is an example of a viral ebook—it's free to download, and I encourage you to freely give it away to your friends, colleagues, and subscribers as a gift.

I also have offline promos planned such as newspaper classified ads, a gambling "tips booklet" which not only provides info but sells the ebook as well, and more. And of course I continue to follow up with my newsletter subscribers as well as my customers, since the money really is in the list.

I've listed the affiliate program itself in a few affiliate directories, and plan to list them in several others for maximum exposure. I've found it just as profitable to spend my time getting good affiliates as it is to go out looking for customers.

In the future I'll be working on getting exposure on gambling forums. I've just started posting, but mainly I am working on building up my reputation in these gambling communities. As you build trust and credibility on a forum with thoughtful posts, your signature link becomes an extremely powerful tool. I already use this powerful marketing tool in the marketing community, and am just starting to dabble in the gambling community.

Note: if you'd like more information about how to put forums to work for you, pick up Rebekah Nahai's excellent ebook ["Forum Profits"](#) by [clicking here](#).

Again, if you'd like to hear from me about what works and doesn't work marketing wise, then please sign up for my free marketing "Missing Link" newsletter by visiting MarketingAuction.com

Summary, and How This Can Work for You

Time to recap the order that I unveiled this project, as well as some of the marketing lessons learned...

Start with a market, not a product.
Find a niche (smaller subset of the market) to cater to.
Find out what the market wants.
Give it to them.

OK, and now more specifically, here's how my project unfolded...

- Selected a market (gamblers) and two niches (Minnesota gamblers and gamblers looking for "how to" info).
- Discovered that gamblers wanting "how to" info wanted gambling strategy that didn't involve big bankrolls.
- Created a question which, when answered, would solve this market's needs...without them needing a big bankroll to invest in gambling.
- Found two dozen gambling experts willing to answer this question.
- While experts wrote their articles, I concentrated on my second niche (MN gamblers), and began creating a large content site.
- Articles came back, got a web page ready to take orders, and launched the book with great success.
- Started seeking out other good affiliates to keep the ball rolling.
- Collected email addresses of affiliates, customers, and prospects (all groups opted in to receive info from me via email).
- Sales rolled in from affiliates and joint venture partners: continue tweaking conversion rate.
- Returned to working on content site: collecting email addresses, making site interactive and sticky, getting it into search engines.
- Once in search engines and starting to receive traffic, focused on ebook for a while--launched Google Adwords campaign.

-->> SUMMARY: the trick is to work on whatever task produces revenue fairly immediately, and then during any "downtime" you can work on tasks that need to be done, but don't produce immediate results.

Example 1: I will put launching an Adwords Campaign as a priority, because it can start making money immediately. After I've done that, I will work on creating an article optimized for the search engines.

Example 2: A top priority task involves emailing my customer list to sell more products to them on the back end. A secondary task is to create a graphic for the site.

--->> GOOD NEWS: you can do the SAME thing. You don't have to lose sleep wondering if you should create a content site or a mini site. The trick is to build a portal catering to a small niche (in my case, MN gamblers) with links pointing in to isolated sales pages for a product you've created (the gambling ebook). Concentrate on finishing the product and attracting affiliates first, and then worry about creating the content for the larger site.

If you've read this entire book, hopefully this doesn't sound so overwhelming any more. If you just get started, you'll find that it's not hard at all since it's really just a series of small steps.

When I first started I wasn't sure what to do either, but below are a few resources that helped me immensely. I highly recommend this reading list to get your next venture off the ground in no time...

--->> First, if this entire discussion has you scratching your head, then you'll want to pick up my ebook "The Beginner's Guide to Marketing and Making Love." You'll learn how to make more money by differentiating yourself from the competition, how to avoid wasting time and money by choosing only the best and most effective marketing activities, and much more. You can pick up your copy of the book by going to...

http://www.thebeginnersguide.net/beginners_guide.html

--->> OK, you know how I told you that the sales letter for Double or Nothing is really just a mini site sitting on a portal? Yep, you can actually make money just

with mini sites. You'll learn how when you read Phil Wiley's "Mini Site Profits" book. This book will show you how to pick keywords and build mini-sites in record time. You can follow Phil's advice about how to get cheap hosting and launch a series of two or so page mini-sites. OR, you can use my model of isolated sales pages on a portal site.

The biggest bonus of this book? You'll learn how to bring in multiple streams of income, and you'll find out it's not as hard as you think. Check out Phil's book here:

<http://www.marketingauction.com/phil.html>

-->> Next, make sure you get off on the right foot with your site. Any content (i.e., articles, blog snippets, etc) you provide should not only inform the reader, it should be sucked up by search engines and rocket your site to the top of the rankings. To find out how to achieve this balance, and to *finally* discover how to get top rankings, read Sean Burn's "Rankings Revealed" book.

I was scared to optimize before reading his book (sounded too technical and like a lot of hassle to me), but Sean explains it in "laymen's" terms. AND he makes optimizing easy...and addictive! Pick up his book here:

<http://www.marketingauction.com/seo.html>

-->> OK, shameless plug here. Newsletter subscribers are completely worthless if they aren't profitable to you. I'd rather have 100 responsive subscribers than 10,000 zombie-like subscribers who haven't blinked since Regan was in office.

I used to get the "dead wood" subscribers, until I got fed up with the lack of response. Then I started testing, losing money, and testing some more. Finally I figured out how to attract rabid subscribers who are willing and able to spend

money to solve their problems. The result? My book "The Missing Link." This best selling book has been endorsed by top marketers like Willie Crawford, Phil Wiley, J.F. "Jim" Straw and more. Download your business-changing copy at the link below:

http://www.marketingauction.com/missing_link.html

-->> Does the concept of blogging bewilder you? Are you wondering how it can benefit you? Then check out Jason Cain's "Goldblogging System" book, which I've mentioned before (and with good reason!):

<http://www.thebeginnersguide.net/blog.html>

Ideas to Spark an Idea

In this special report I revealed just about everything I've done so far in one of my projects. You've seen a little bit of my thought processes, a mistake or two, as well as my future plans.

Now the problem with this info is that it is VERY specific. Since I've talked so much about gambling, you're probably having a hard time getting it completely out of your head. So let's take a few minutes to brainstorm what sort of project you could work on. Specifically, let's take a look a few ideas for ebooks you could write or compile.

The most obvious choice would be to write about something you know about and are interested in. If you're interested in it, someone else is probably interested in it too—that's your market. With a little research, you can find out pretty quick what this market wants, and give it to them.

The second idea is to have the experts write the book for you (this is a good idea, because then they'll help with your launch effort). So what sort of questions could

you have your experts answer? Well it depends on what your market wants. But here are a few ideas that will hopefully spark a profitable idea in you:

--Ask bankers and investment specialists: 1) the best way to invest your money during economic hardship, 2) the best way to save for retirement, 3) how to ensure your child has a college account, etc.

--Ask sex experts to write an article outlining their opinion of the best sexual activity that gives both partners maximum pleasure.

--Ask golf experts the best way to improve your swing.

--Ask dog experts the best way to choose a puppy that will become a good family pet.

--Ask child experts the best way to potty train a child.

--Ask telecommuting experts the best way to find a telecommuting job.

--Ask auction experts for their best tips to improve eBay sales.

--Ask stock experts how to select a stock for short term profits (or long term growth).

--Ask fishing experts for their best tips to landing big walleyes.

--Ask car experts to recommend their top choice of all around best used car. Ask other experts to review some other popular used cars. Include money saving tips for car shopping from still other experts. Bingo, you have used-car manual.

...and the list goes on.

Of Lists and Back End Sales

When I wrote the words above ("*and the list goes on*") I thought this report was

done. Indeed, I converted the report into a PDF file, uploaded it on my server, turned off my computer, and went to play with my dogs.

A few hours later when I came back, I found an email from a friend waiting for me. "Good report," he says. But he pointed out that in order to truly make this report profitable for you, I needed to explain a few concepts in a bit more depth...

Whaddya Mean, "Back End Sales?"

Do you remember how I mentioned that I set the affiliate commission at 75% as a way to jump start sales during the launch? My intention is to lower the commission to 50% after a few weeks...or I might not.

But there's a reason why I do this, and a reason this might NOT work for you...

You see, when I use a high commission to attract joint venture partners and super affiliates, I am really losing a lot of upfront profit. Even though I make more sales since I have more affiliates selling the book, that's still a lot of potential profit slipping from my fingers, right?

Not exactly. There's a method to this madness.

The reason I use high commissions and sometimes even price my introductory products low is to get people off the "prospects" list and onto my "customers list." My list of customers is a goldmine. You see, it's easier to get an existing customer to buy than it is find a new customer to make a first time purchase.

It can be expensive and time-consuming to find new customers. So I pay high commissions to affiliates who are willing to find these customers. Often, the people they are sending me gladly buy because they are the AFFILIATE'S EXISTING CUSTOMERS! The affiliate doesn't mind sending me customers because these same people are already on their lists. Hence they make a commission and retain the customer on their list...it's a win-win situation for the affiliate.

Note: I can always tell when I have an affiliate on board who's developed a relationship with her list--the conversion rate will jump to something like 12% or more because the affiliate personally recommended the product to her list. Think about it--this is the sort of relationship you want to develop with YOUR lists!

TIP: the very best affiliates I have not only personally read and endorse products to their trusting list of subscribers, they also "add value" to the product. For example, they offer their subscribers a bonus (such as one of their own products) if the subscriber buys my ebook from the list owner's affiliate link.

So now that I have this customer list (people who have bought my gambling book), how do I monetize this list? In other words, how do I KEEP making money from this same list of people?

Well first off, let me back up a bit. When I have a "hot" customer with their credit card in their hand, they're obviously in a buying mood. What I haven't had time to do (since I'm still working on this project), but what I need to do is suggest an upgrade right there after they click "order." This upgrade could be something like getting a discount if they buy another one of my ebooks at the same time, or perhaps I could throw consulting in there. In other words, anything that puts a little more cash into my (and my affiliate's) pocket.

Need an example? Think of the classic fast food upsell, "you want fries with that?"

Now while I'm not upselling yet for this product on the order page (but I **should** be--remember, this "Bare Naked" report reveals my mistakes too, as well as future plans since I'm in the midst of this project as I write this report for you), I DO upsell on the "thank you for purchasing" download page. That means that the customer has completed their order for the ebook, and since their credit card is

still out, I ask them to place a complimentary order while they are downloading the ebook.

It's extremely effective. You'd be surprised by the number of people who take you up on this purchase.

So you see, you can secure what are called "back end" sales before the customer has even put away her credit card.

But it doesn't stop there.

The next step is to write a thank you note to the customer, while putting them into an autoresponder sequence that will continue to do the back end selling for you. First you assure the customer they've made a wise purchase decision and remind them of the benefits of the product (this reduces refunds due to buyer's remorse). And then again you suggest a product that they might enjoy, that will compliment the product they just bought from you.

In the coming weeks, you surprise the customer with bonus reports and other goodies. You continue to develop a relationship with the customer, and really "over deliver" on your product. They grow to trust you more and more. And you continue to sell products and services to them that will enhance their lives.

Now ideally these will be YOUR products and services that you sell, since that way you will earn maximum profit from each customer. Also, you can sell increasingly expensive products to these customers. You see, a product that is \$50 or less is a way to get people onto your customer list. On the back end, you can begin selling more expensive items since the customer trusts you—maybe a \$100 book, or a seat at a \$499 seminar, or a \$1500 private consultation with you, or...??

YES! Your customer will spend \$1500. And over the lifetime of the customer, she may spend tens of thousands of dollars with you. All of this can start with a \$50 ebook...provided you create a positive buying experience for the customer, overdeliver, and develop a good, trusting relationship with the customer.

Now if you haven't yet created a second product, then it's ok to use affiliate products. But my suggestion is to use affiliate products on the back end only until you finish creating back end products to sell.

I'll say it again--the back end is where the money is, because it's easier to sell to an existing customer than it is to find a new customer. You will not become rich selling one product and then leaving the customers in the dust. You need to create a line of related products and services to sell to your existing customers continuously. You don't have to create this line of products over night, but you should have a plan when you first get started.

WARNING: Now if for some reason you can't or won't create a way to make "back end sales" to existing customers, then creating inexpensive products and giving affiliates high commissions is NOT the route to take. As my friend Terry Gibbs pointed out when he read this report, don't do this if you aren't prepared to monetize your customer list.

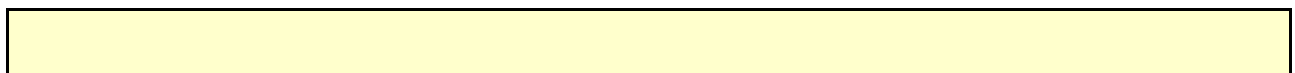
And Finally...A Word About "Lists"

The money is in the list. Build a list. Monetize your list.

Whaaaaaat? What's everyone talking about? What lists?

The most obvious list is the most talked about list--your mailing list of newsletter subscribers. These are prospects that visit your website, and you entice them to leave their email address with you before they leave. Most commonly the email address is exchanged for a subscription to a free newsletter.

Sometimes people give away free ebooks in exchange for email addresses.



NOTE: if you use this method of building a list, be extremely careful. Not only do you open yourself up to spam complaints, you might end up with a list of unresponsive zombies. In other words, you might be building a completely worthless list. To avoid this common trap, [click here to read "The Missing Link!"](#)

Building this list of prospects is extremely important. You've been given permission to follow up with these people. Now you start providing solutions to their problems (free solutions whenever you can), you build a relationship with them, you earn their trust, and you put your name in front of them repeatedly so they know who you are.

As time goes by you work to sell them your products. Chances are they were first introduced to your newsletter list when they visited your site to read about one of your products. Now it's your job to close that sale.

If you sell an info product, close the sale by giving them excerpts. Entice them by giving away lots of good, solid info in your newsletter. Don't hold back. Give them your best stuff in your newsletter. The prospects will wonder what sort of info you sell when your free stuff is so dang good.

With luck you can move people from your prospects list to your customer list. This list (as mentioned in the previous section) is the easiest list of people to sell to, and your most profitable. Treat it with care and respect.

Yet another list you should maintain is your affiliate list. These are people who signed up to sell your products for a share of the commission. You owe a lot to this list, so treat this one with care as well. Give your affiliates the tools they need to make sales, such as banner ads, solo ads, articles, headlines, and more. You can also encourage your affiliates to buy your product, since that will help them make more money (how can you really sell something you've never used?).

So is that it? Is that enough lists?

It's a start, but you can better serve your lists by "siphoning them off" into very targeted groups.

For example: about two years ago I ran a list of people who were interested in making money. As it turned out, they were learning to do it in the gambling industry. Now part of this main list wanted to learn how to make money by actually gambling, and part of this list wanted to learn how to make money as an affiliate for online casinos. So I asked people to join other lists depending on their interest. These smaller lists were HIGHLY targeted and more responsive.

For best results, you should do the same thing. You can't make everyone on your list happy, but you can ask them to join another list you have that will be more suitable for their needs.

Here's the bottom line: the more targeted your list is, and the more you understand what they want, the more profitable the list will be.

Here's to your success!

Would you like more great information like this, as well as announcements of more upcoming free special reports? Then sign up for Rebecca Hagel's (that's me) "The Missing Link" newsletter at MarketingAuction.com. And drop me a line any time at: report@marketingauction.com!