

You Must Treat These Recommendations Carefully Otherwise You'll Never Get Started!

What Every Budding Online Business Entrepreneur Needs To Be Aware Of

We're going to be a little controversial and "tongue-in-cheek" here when it comes to setting out a business plan for your online business because we see so many so-called business experts giving advice on the 10 steps (or whatever number it is that they choose) to put together a business plan etc. etc. that by the time you've followed what they say, you will have had the stuffing knocked out of you and you won't do anything, let alone get started!

And the reason we give you this warning is because those so-called experts are not experts at all. They're following the stuff they learned at business school – not from business – in a bygone age!

Let us explain.

The Golden Rule: determine if there is a market for your product or service. Whether it is a digital product or a physical product or a service you want to offer, the rules are the same – always determine if there is a hungry i.e. a starving crowd to feed.

Here are a few typical questions the so-called experts will suggest you take into consideration. And then followed by what we suggest you need to ask yourself:-

a) ***What business are you in?***

Well, you already know what business you're in – you're in the people business. You're here to help get people what they want.

b) ***How will the business make money?***

This is straight forward – you provide people with what they want by offering them information that answers their problem and concerns, and then you show them how they can pay you to provide them with solutions to those problems.

c) ***What does your business need to get off the ground?***

Learning how to drive traffic i.e. people, to where the provider of the information that can help them solves their problems, resides (on the internet i.e. their website).

d) ***What is the operating budget?***

Now, why is this question relevant to the online business entrepreneur? Listen, you structure your business so that money flows in before money flows out as quickly as possible.

Now, there will be money flowing out of your bank account initially, but not on the grand scale implied by these so-called experts. People download a digital product from you by paying you first; people pay a monthly membership fee at the start of each month before they can access online information from you.

This question is typical of the so-called experts, and the reason why is because their thinking is still in the industrial age of making a product, stocking it, paying salaries and wages to produce and stock the product, and then hoping someone, someday will buy it at a later date for a profit. That thinking eats your cash big time, and that's why they talk in terms of an operating budget.

If you've structured your business to pay you before you pay anyone else, you don't need an industrial-age operating budget. Don't get overly hung up on the operating budget.

Yes, have a budget to manage your money on a simple spreadsheet, but not something that takes up hours of your time.

e) ***Who are your customers?***

Well, we've already answered this question in the Golden Rule, above. So why ask it again in another guise?

f) ***How will you reach your customers?***

Again, we've answered this question in c) above. See what we mean by industrial-age mentality?

This question might be relevant to motorway traffic, canal traffic, horse-drawn traffic and flight traffic, but we use the super-highway now.

g) ***What sets you apart from the competition?***

Look in the mirror – that's your competition! Listen, concentrate on getting the marketing right; concentrate on the copywriting, the traffic, the value-added content and solutions you will provide your customers.

And because you can produce digital products and provide services that are unique to you, they will always be....unique! So how can you have competition if what you are offering is unique?

Oh, and let's not forget physical products because they do have their roots in the industrial age. We have an answer for that, too. You do realise you can sell physical products with your own branding, don't you?

These are called white label products. They are called white-label because you can then put your own stamp or mark on them and sell them as your own product.

We call this branding, and because it's your own brand you'll be marketing it means that no one else will have those goods to sell (unless you licence them – that's another strategy, but let's keep it nice and simple for now).

Therefore, you have no competition.

There might be some businesses selling products very similar to yours, but because your focus is on marketing, so you differentiate yourself from the herd, there is only one of your kind.

So Mr. Expert, where is the competition?

h) ***What are your strengths and weaknesses?***

We wondered when this old chestnut was going to be rolled out. The academics love this question.

If you're studying for a degree or for the Chartered Institute of Marketing exams so you can get a job (!) then by all means spend hours and hours learning about strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and trumpets.

i) ***What are the biggest challenges you face?***

What planet are these people on? The biggest challenges are:

- (i) Finding a starving crowd;
- (ii) How best to satisfy the wants of that starving crowd with a product or information or service (or a mixture of all 3);
- (iii) How to marry up (i) and (ii).

Now, the so-called experts want you to think about the time you'll be working on your own, how much television you should allow yourself to watch each day, why it's so important that you get to mix with other human beings.

Absolute clap-trap, if you ask us. If you're serious about building an on-line business you will do whatever it takes. In fact, this applies to any business do they really think you'll turn into some type of extra-terrestrial monster for NOT watching television? It's more likely to happen if you do!

j) ***How will you measure success?***

Excuse us? Serving a starving crowd of course, and then providing them with more of what they require.

We know what they really mean, though. They're asking if we are going to be bold enough to say that naughty word called money.

What's wrong with making money being regarded as a measure of success? And what business is it of theirs as to what you do with it?

As you can see, it's a totally irrelevant question. Listen – you build a successful online business (and success means different things to different people) and you go and enjoy the fruits of your labour, whether that's just you and your family or helping loads of other people. The choice is yours.

Here's another load of questions we've garnered from a trawl of the internet:

1) What is the need that your business exists to satisfy?

- *Every business exists because of some noticeable opportunity that you have discovered within the market. So you must clearly define the need and/or problem you are solving with this business.*

Wow! This is called Feed A Starving Crowd. There's a great book of this name by Robert Coorey.

2) How will your business satisfy the need?

- *Introduce and describe the business itself. Consider including a mission or vision statement with objectives detailing how the business satisfies the need in the market.*

If you're raising funding this question might be relevant to explain to potential investors how you find a starving crowd.

As for a mission/vision statement, well, if you're like us we have a checklist in front of our computer that we can see each day to continually remind us of what we're striving to achieve. We even change our thought patterns to ensure we wake up in the morning and go to bed at night thinking and reminding ourselves of what we are striving to achieve.

Bet you the so-called experts don't teach that at business school.

3) How does your company differentiate itself?

- *Describe your business model and competitive advantage. This will help you to outline how the business will sustain its position within the market.*

By marketing. The business model is to generate loads of cash.

Competitive advantage?

Well, we've already explained that by marketing your online business in a particular way so that you don't have any competition, so why ask this question in the first place?

4) Who will be the key players in the business?

- *Name the management team, board and advisers to the business. Highlight their expertise and experiences.*

Another industrial-age question. The key players are The Starving Crowd and You.

The management team is You, Yourself, your business partner(s) and any pet dog or cat that keeps you company in those terribly lonely moments that the so-called experts are worried about for you.

Why would you want to highlight the expertise and experience of any advisers? You learn from people who have gone before you, the one's who show you the way.

The one's who have achieved what you are striving to achieve. You do not follow people who work for banks or any other institution that have not done what you are doing.

5) How big is the market you are entering?

- *Only after understanding the industry you are entering – its size, attractiveness and profit potential – can you truly justify the opportunity.*

Hang on, give us a half hour or so after we've done our research on Google, and then applied some specialist software like Market Samurai, and we'll let you know the size.

Size, attractiveness and profit potential – er, do you mean The Starving Crowd? If our research tells us we have a starving crowd and we can find/source the information, products and services that satisfy the wants of that crowd/market, then, yes, we'll probably go for it!

6) Who will you be targeting as customers?

- *Narrowing down your target customer will help enhance and define your marketing strategy.*

You mean niching – finding our niche market, finding a starving crowd that represents a niche market. Why didn't you say, if that's what you meant.

We've already been through this!

7) What will be your most effective marketing and promotional strategies?

- *Once you've identified your target client, you'll need to develop and implement a strategy on how best to reach them (e.g. PPC, television, radio, social, etc). And this in large part will be influenced by where your target client consumes information.*

We will test, and test and test, and then we'll test and test some more until we find what works best. We won't spend hours and days or even weeks deliberating on what our strategy is.

We'll just get on and see what works best.

8) What are the economics of your business?

- *Define your revenue streams including pricing structure, costs, margins and expenses.*

Que? This sounds complicated. Typical so-called expert and academia speak to scare the living daylight out of you. Ignore the “*What are the economics of your business?*” question.

Haven’t a ***ing clue what they’re on about. Revenue streams? The only revenue streams we’re interested in are those you can generate from digital products, DVDs, e-books, membership sites, webinars, seminars, retreats and so on.

Pricing structure? We use a concept called the sales funnel or the step system – start off selling a low price product (\$7 - \$97), followed by a medium priced product (\$197 - \$997), and end with a high-priced product (\$1,000+). Costs – minimal. We’re talking extremely high profit margins.

More to the point, we’re talking massive cash inflows and minimal cash outflows. How does that compare with the so-called experts’ industrial age business model?

9) How much money is required to get your business started and generating revenue?

- *Identify needed capital requirements by determining where your business stands today, and what is needed in order to move forward. Also, if you are in need of outside funding, what will be the sources and uses of funds requested.*

It depends, because we don’t have physical premises to rent and pay business rates; we don’t have a payroll to finance; and we don’t have loads of stock to buy and store.

On top of that, we aim to start generating cash as quickly as possible. So, the upshot of all this is that the question is aimed at an industrial age business.

10) What needs to happen to break-even?

- *Play around with financial projections and forecasts to determine the volume of sales needed to cover your expenses and to become profitable. Include monthly breakdowns for the first two years.*

This could be a trick question, because a lot of accountants, believe it or not, struggle with this concept. All it means is that at what stage does your outgoings get covered by your incomings. In other words, how much do you have to sell to cover your expenses and overheads?

Play around with financial projections? Strewth! Just get on with selling your products and services. The only reliable indicator on whether you're progressing is by watching your bank account increase on a regular basis.

And finally, we'll leave you with this little gem:

Whether your objective is to find an investor, get a business loan or just improve the way you run your business, your business plan must answer these key questions.

Remember, there is no right or wrong answer, but addressing these questions will help you build a roadmap for your business. And, of course, the better the map, the greater the likelihood that you'll reach your destination!

Here then, in our humble opinion, is the conclusive proof that the so-called "experts" live in the industrial age, whilst espousing their so-called expert advice to budding internet entrepreneurs.

Summing Up

Our objective is to find a starving crowd and service that starving crowd by providing them with the information, the products and the services they require i.e. the solutions to the wants, desires, needs and problems.

Our objective is not to provide useless and time-wasting information to banks or other financial institutions. Any financial data should be handed to a competent accountant to ensure you keep tax bills to a minimum and to meet any accounting and legal/regulatory requirements.

Other than that, we should all focus our time on building our business, feeding starving crowds and generating very high margin revenue streams.

So, when you get presented with someone asking for a load of irrelevant information designed to scare the living daylights out of you, just remember the Golden Rule of your main objectives (i.e. this *is* your business plan):-

1. Find A starving crowd;
2. Find the information, or product, or service, or a mixture of all 3; and
3. Package, present and deliver 2. to 1. in a timely and efficient manner so that 1. gets (massive) value for money and you get handsomely paid.

We hope this article has put into context what you need to be focusing on when you start on your journey.

You will hear people talk about various humps and hurdles to encounter as you make your way on your online business journey. Well, when you read articles providing questions and information similar to what we've found, it's almost as if the so-called experts have locked the garage doors to stop you getting out onto the highway from the very start!

A Bare-Faced Plug!

If you found this article helpful to the point that you'd like to find out more what Internet Marketing For Us can do to encourage you to get a successful business off the ground, then please visit our website at:

www.internetmarketingforum.com .

...and our Facebook page at:

<https://www.facebook.com/internetmarketingforum/>

We'd love to hear from you. There's bound to be a couple of things with the website that don't quite look right, so our apologies in advance. We expect to make some mistakes, and that's because we're doing what you will be doing (or are currently doing).

We're not expecting to get things right first time round. In fact, the more mistakes we make the better!

That way we know we're making progress, and the more people like you who want to get off their back-side and start taking action, and who want to join us on a journey that can take us....well, who know's where, then we should all be in for a lot of rewarding fun!

Disclaimer: this article was prepared using information already in the public domain. Under no circumstances was the use of animals harmed in the production of this article.

Thank you for reading, and here's to the start of a very rewarding, fun-packed successful journey to you. Enjoy!

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