



Building Results

By Joseph Lyman

“Take the construction of a home, for example. You create it in every detail before you ever hammer the first nail into place...” - Stephen R. Covey

The Excitement

As your alarm clock sounds, you open your eyes and look at the ceiling: today is the day you take your business online. You have a product that sells itself, a sales team that can handle anything, and enough capital tucked away to buy a small country. You are ready.

Or so you think.

You shut the door to your office, set down your briefcase and power-up your computer. An excitement that comes with exploring new territory animates your fingers as you begin to search for service providers. With Google as your best friend, and a few recommendations from your golfing buddies, you come up with a short list of the best providers. In just a few short days, you are online and poised for success!

At least, it would seem that way.

The Realization

Three, six, even twelve months after you've launched your website, you find yourself sitting in front of your computer screen, waiting for an order to come in. Why aren't people finding your site? Why aren't they buying?

The truth is that most businesses don't get in touch with a web marketing specialist until after they've launched their website, and failed to make it profitable. There is a moment of “realization”, when the complexities and subtleties of internet business start to become clear.

Taking your business online is not only a matter of building a website, just as selling your product is not only a matter of taking your customer's money. Visibility, brand identity, perception and trust are all critical in the online world. Find, trust, buy; it sounds easy, but it takes as much hard work online as it does anywhere else.

The Better Way

When you're building a website for business, you must approach it as you would approach any other aspect of your business: strategically. In his book, "The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People," Stephen Covey called it "beginning with the end in mind." Stephen makes an important observation that can be applied to taking a business online (p. 99, bold emphasis added):

'Begin with the end in mind' is based on the principle that *all things are created twice*. There's a mental or first creation, and a physical or second creation to all things.

Take the construction of a home, for example. You create it in every detail before you ever hammer the first nail into place ...

Then you reduce it to blueprint and develop construction plans. All of this is done before the earth is touched. **If not, then in the second creation, the physical creation, you will have to make expensive changes that may double the cost of your home.**

The carpenter's rule is 'measure twice, cut once.'

Stephen also notes that (p. 99, bold emphasis added):

If you want to have a successful enterprise, you clearly define what you're trying to accomplish... **The extent to which you begin with the end in mind often determines whether or not you are able to create a successful enterprise.**

The application of these simple planning principles can mean the difference between success and failure in your online venture. In essence, "beginning with the end in mind" is the first secret to building a successful website.

But wait, there's more.

Secret Number Two

Before looking at the second secret to building a successful website, consider the following logic:

- To start a successful online business, you must first plan
- To plan, you must first understand how an online business works
- To understand, you must have experience in online business
- Therefore, to start a successful online business, you must have experience in online business

Logical fallacies aside, the idea that prior experience improves results is almost universal. While it may not be an absolutely required ingredient (success can be accidental), prior experience with successful online ventures, when understood, distilled and applied properly, always makes future success more probable.

So, secret number two is experience. Not much of a secret on its own, but step back and consider if the experience is:

- Solid and meaningful
- Well documented
- Matured through success and failure
- Distilled into a reproducible method

In short, there is “experience”, and then there is “valuable experience”. Consider:

“Any fool can experience life, but only the wise can benefit from that experience.” - Anonymous

The Results

As you close your briefcase and turn off your monitor at the end of a long day, you make yourself a promise. Tomorrow, things will change. You will accept the fact that there are professionals in every field. You happen to be a professional in business, not the internet. You will find a web marketing expert, and that person, under your direction, will make all the difference.

Tomorrow you will hire a professional.

Tomorrow, you will call me.

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