

TRENDING WEB BUSINESS MODELS

Cash In By Staying Ahead Of The Curve



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Foreword

Have you ever dreamed of dumping your full-time job and joining the ranks of web based entrepreneurs?

But you have a mortgage, perhaps a dependent or two, and a taste for lattes from Starbucks? You can't just throw away a regular paycheck.

But you may be able to phase out your job slowly, by getting involved in some of the newest ways to earn money online. Who knows where it might lead you...



Chapter 1:

Freelance

Synopsis

Did you know there are many new ways to offer your professional expertise in the online marketplace. This is a viable way to slowly replace your job, if you have a skill that is in demand online. And there's only one way to find that out.

There is fresh strain of freelancing and project-oriented sites that let people needing help, find the right people to help them with their projects.

They post their needs at these sites and then freelancers and small businesses provide bids, ideas and proposals. You get paid by the job, and if you're good at what you do, you could make a lot of money at these sites.



Use Your Talents

To get started as a freelancer you must first identify your skills and write down everything you have to offer. Make a list of your skill-set and different type of projects you can complete based on your work experience, your hobbies and your interests.

Then head off to each of the following websites and perform some searches:

- ⌚ ScriptLance (<http://www.freelancer.com>)
- ⌚ Guru (<http://www.guru.com/>)
- ⌚ ELance (<http://www.elance.com/>)
- ⌚ oDesk (<http://www.odesk.com/>)

As you search through the sites, keep three things in mind...

1. Look at the possible earnings each job would bring you.
2. Look for gaps in your skill-set that you could fill with further training or research.
3. Watch how other freelancers operate and take notes.

Becoming a successful freelancer takes some time, but it can let you live a much more independent lifestyle, working when and where you want. Of course it all depends on building up a portfolio of work and a solid reputation.

Your power to put out quality work and fulfill deadlines is what makes your reputation. And as a freelancer, your reputation is really

all you have. If you overlook deadlines too often, you'll soon see your customers going elsewhere.

Therefore it is crucial to make deadlines among your top 2 priorities (along with doing great work). A secret many freelancers use to meet deadlines consistently is to overestimate how long something will take, break the project into small steps, and stay in touch and accountable each step of the way.

Also, don't be afraid to quote jobs on what your time is worth. New freelancers, particularly, undervalue themselves and charge less than they deserve. That's all right if you're just getting into the business, and don't have a portfolio or reputation to point out.

However once you've got some amazing work under your belt, don't always try to be the low bidder, as you'll be bidding against many other less experienced freelancers. Go too low and you're selling yourself short. And you'll be working too many hours simply to pay the bills.

Do some research on what the market average is for each job, and charge a bit more. This tells customers that you're good. A great way to do the math is to work out how much you need to make per hour, and how many hours you need for each job. Then bill based on those numbers.

Before making your bid, get all the details you can about the job. Frequently a freelancer will contact a possible customer and make a pitch, without truly understanding the customer or his needs, and without understanding how this project will add value to the customer. This plan of attack will get you very little business.

You can and should research the customer by visiting their website and getting to know what the customer does, the customer's market, and customer's goals (in general). Then you'll be able to best figure out how you may help the customer meet those goals. This will make for a much stronger pitch.

The client-freelancer relationship is a crucial one, and there are a lot of issues that may make a client the incorrect client, or the correct client, for you.

Those include the market they're in, they're working manner, how difficult they are, how likely they are to ante up your rate, how much work they need, their ability to pay promptly without trouble, and more. If you pick incorrect clients, you'll make less revenue, be stressed, and work more.

Again, research them before bidding. Talk to additional freelancers who've worked for them. When initially contacting a potential customer, consider it as a two-party interview — they're trying to determine if you're correct for them, but you ought to likewise be trying to determine if they're correct for you.

Carry out your first assignment on a test basis, to see how things work out. Occasionally, evaluate your customers to see if they're worth the hassle.

It's great to be friendly with a customer, however keep it professional. Don't be best friends but don't be too formal, either. Either one is bad for business.

Begin any correspondence on a conventional basis, and then get friendlier depending upon how the customer handles communication. Don't be afraid to be friendly, but don't go beyond business.

If there's an issue with a customer, some freelancers make the mistake of venting their frustration — at the customer. This is risky. It will hurt your professional reputation, both with this customer and with later customers. And it will lead to diminished business, if you continue this error.

If there's an issue with a customer, and you're angry or frustrated, don't communicate immediately. Let your steam off another way.

But don't do it at your customer, or anybody else in your professional world. Then, once you've chilled out, communicate with your customer in a non-emotional, professional manner — in a favorable way, but clearly, so that future issues may be quashed.

Stay In Touch With Clients

Frequently a freelancer will finish an assignment, and then move onto another assignment with a different client. Maybe the freelancer trusts that the assignment that he finished was so good, the customer will be banging his down his door the following day. That is usually not the way it works. If you don't offer your services for future business, you may not see it.

That's why it is important once you finish an assignment, to suggest a follow-up theme for future work. If you don't hear back, follow through.

Do this with each client you work for. That will help you grow a core of steady work. Even if it looks like a lot of work will come from one client, keep putting bids in for other work. Trusting in one or two clients is usually a bad idea. If your primary client drops you, or cuts back his freelancer budget, or goes out of business, you're left without work. And now you can't afford your bills.

Having several income streams can give you financial security. You may begin with one freelance customer, but don't trust in freelancing as your chief source of revenue till you've added more customers. More clients will make your revenue much more stable and dependable.

Take Days Off

Let's face it, sometimes we don't feel like working. And that's all right, if we design for that flexibility, and make up for it on other days. However too many days of goldbricking, and soon you aren't acquiring any revenue. And you're dropping deadlines. Not good.

How to prevent: It's all right to provide yourself flexibility, so that you may work when you feel productive, but if you've got deadlines to meet, don't let yourself slack. Press yourself to meet the deadline.

Freelancing is a great way to slowly replace your job, as you can start your freelancing career on nights or weekends, while still pulling a regular paycheck.

Once your freelancing income surpasses your regular job income, and you feel you have steady core of regular clients, then it may be time to have that fun little chat with your boss.

Chapter 2:

Life Coaching

Synopsis

Who has time to go see a personal coach at a business office? And don't the fresh generation of net workers have to be met by their coaches in the same way that they work: thru e-mail, IM, and VoIP?

Life coaching and business coaching services are a blossoming business model online, and you may be surprised at how easy it is to earn from this market.



Coach Others To Success

If you are an energetic individual who truly enjoys helping others, life coaching may be the perfect career choice for you. It is a blossoming business trend that is a multimillion dollar industry. And thanks to the Internet, you never even have to see anyone in person if that's not your thing.

A life coach helps their customers in accomplishing their full potential. Becoming a life coach is an easy procedure and the field is growing as a lot of individuals seek out personal and professional advice.

Make up your mind on which area of life coaching that you ought to specialize in. There are coaches that provide individuals advice on money matters, relationships, time management, career counseling and perfecting leadership abilities. Pick out the field that you believe you will be best fitted and set out to acquire some training in that area.

Go to a life coaching seminar to get an idea on how life coaching works. Many seminars will provide its attendees advice on how to accomplish their goals and succeed in life. Pay close attention to how the life coach interacts with the crowd.

Talk to the life coach following the seminar or course. Ask them for advice on how to get into the field and additional tips for delivering the goods in the career.

Register for a life coaching class online or at a local college. These courses will provide you the tools you require to get to be a certified life coach.

Become accredited when you finish a life coaching class. This step is important as several customers and businesses won't hire a life coach without any credentials.

Once you have all the skills in place, get set up on the web. A great way to offer your life coaching services online is through a blog and a membership website.

Share life lessons regularly at your blog, and invite people who need more personalized help, to join your member area. You can take monthly payments and offer help via email, a forum, and even by telephone if you want.

Chapter 3:

Virtual Assistant

Synopsis

Freelancers and small businesses urgently require help running their businesses, however they're not about to employ a secretary to come sit in the living room and answer calls.

As a virtual assistant, you may do anything from creating travel reservations to managing expense reimbursements to paying bills to setting up a dog sitter.

And you accomplish it all from your own home base, interacting with your customers online and by telephone. You may make \$20 and up an hour executing this type of work, depending upon your expertise and level of availability.

Assist Others

Prior to packing up the office cubicle and terminating your employment with your boss, understand that becoming a virtual assistant isn't a simple job that merely anybody can do. To get successful, you require a “get-it-done” attitude, great people skills and a great marketing strategy.

A lot of virtual assistants work between fourteen and sixteen hours a day during the start phase. As many as one-third of these business owners also work nontraditional hours, admitting to working weekends and holidays on a regular basis. So this is not for everyone.

Virtual assistants are freelance entrepreneurs who work remotely and utilize technology to present services to customers globally. Many work from their home base and get their project directions by telephone, fax, e-mail or even by text message.

While a lot of virtual assistants provide secretarial services, as more individuals with various backgrounds and skills move into the ranks, virtual assistants who specialize in such areas as promotion, graphic and internet design, IT support or even translations are getting common.

Customers are most probable to employ virtual assistants to save money over hiring a regular employee. After all, virtual assistants pay for their own gear, taxes, training, health care and insurance.

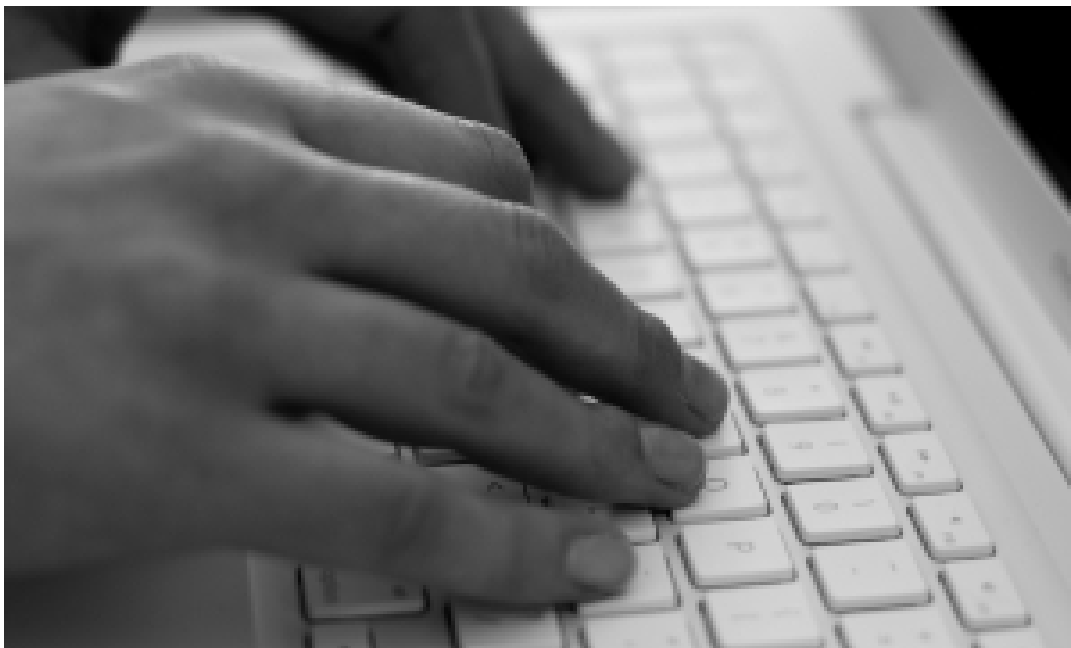
Therefore it makes more sense, especially when a businessperson is in need of assistance with a temporary project, to hire a VA. Industries most frequently employing virtual assistants include the realty, coaching, financial services, accounting and law.

If you're questioning how to begin a business as a virtual assistant, here are a few hints:

- ⌚ Determine just what sort of services you wish to provide, and examine your background to see to it you have enough experience.
- ⌚ Determine your business niche- think about specializing in simply 2 to 3 services.
- ⌚ Ascertain how much time and energy you have to dedicate to your business. Do you wish to work part or full time?
- ⌚ Do some industry research to make sure there is a need for your services in your area.
- ⌚ Draft who your customers are, where they are and how to get at them.
- ⌚ Carry out a market analysis. Ascertain the needs for your niche and center on how you'll implement that in your business.
- ⌚ Understand your budgetary constraints-, anticipated income and how long you are able to "float" till your business is executing successfully.
- ⌚ Organize a business plan and critique it frequently to handle growth and change.

- ⌚ Analyze your equipment, software and work space to see to it they meet customer needs.
- ⌚ Get through all legal and financial facets of startup prior to securing your first customer.
- ⌚ Promote your services 24/7. Simply because you've built a site doesn't mean customers will come knocking on your door. You'll need to advertise in places such as Google Adwords.

You may need to think about joining a professional organization or networking group. This will provide you the chance to network, establish camaraderie and have access to a knowledge bank for resolving technical issues.



Chapter 4:

Curation Blogging

Synopsis

So what does it really take to develop a blog to the point where you can make money? It's not as easy as most gurus tell you, unless you love to write – a lot.

Here are some facts that will present a more truthful picture to those thinking about getting into blogging as a way to make a living. You'll also learn about a faster and easier way to profits called curation.



A Streamline Blogging Strategy

Blogging requires a dedicated, long term attempt if you wish to generate an income from your efforts.

I've been blogging for several years, building my blogging up from a spare-time activity, to part time job to a full time business.

I'm frequently asked things like - "I have to make some cash really quick - how can I do it with my new blog?"

The answer: You probably can't. It usually takes some time to get established.

The median age of blogs in the Technorati Top 100 is upwards of three years. While the occasional blogger has a quick rise to fame they're the exception.

Establishing a successful blog takes a while (it requires time to establish readership, to solve how to monetize it and so forth) so take a long term plan of attack and pace yourself.

Blogging requires a consistent effort. There's been much talk of late about how blogging less may mean more from your blog. While I concur with this - that doesn't imply you are able to simply muster up a couple of posts on a notion every week and expect the hits (and cash) to come rolling in.

Over the years I've constantly worked many hours a week on my blogging. Most bloggers that attain a full time living from blogging work comparable hours on it.

However there is one burgeoning way to save time with your blog, and still monetize it effectively. It's called **curation**.

Curation blogging is a rapidly growing industry, perhaps because it removes much of the hard work – that is, the writing of posts and articles from scratch.

Curation blogging involves sharing news, tips and other pieces of information for a particular niche, without having to create the content yourself.

You basically use your blog to share information from a variety of sources, including links to those sources along with your descriptions of the content.

You then add your own commentary and your opinion if you have one, then publish the content as a post at your blog. Contrary to other content sharing systems online such as syndication which is an automated content sharing process, curation requires human intervention as well as interpretation in most cases.

Instead of writing your blog content from scratch, you simply locate content from a variety of sources every day or two. Then you collect links to the best content that you think your audience would like.

You then create a post for you blog by sharing a snippet of each interesting piece of content, whether it's an article or a video, add your commentary, and post it.

Naturally, you're required to cite the source to keep things on the up and up. But all in all, this new trend may be the easiest way to become a pro blogger, and lots of folks are doing it.

There are even courses available nowadays tht teach the strategy and offer curation themes and plugins. If this interests you, I suggest you do further research into the strategy online.

Monetizing Your Blog

Whether you're writing all your blog content or curating, there are many ways to make money from you blog. In fact, in my experience it is not wise to rely only on one monetizing method. Instead, you should mix in an assortment of monetizing strategies such as the ones I use, listed below.

AdSense can bring instant income to your blog if you do it correctly. Set the ads to show image and text based ads, and I find that 250×300 pixel ads work best. Of course it all depends on your market, so experiment a little with ad sizes and positioning.

Affiliate programs can certainly bring reliable profits. Just make sure that you get involved in promoting only quality products that go with the content of your blog. The beauty of a lot of these programs is that they're of such high quality that they sell themselves!

You should also write and promote **your own e-books** or other products. Make sure you have a quality product and learn how to get affiliates involved in selling your product for you.

Use a **continuity program**. A continuity program brings in recurring income from individuals who subscribe to a service you provide. A membership site is a good example, and these return reliable monthly income from the members that are a part of it.

Private ad sales directly to advertisers is another solid way to earn money at your blog, depending on what niche you are operating in and how many potential advertisers are in that market. Of course the better search rankings your blog has, the easier it is to get advertisers.

Chitka ad network continues to be a great performer for blogs. They traditionally work better on product related blogs though their Premium ad units seem to convert well on a bigger array of blogs.

Amazon's affiliate program is a big mover. Christmas (and the lead up to it) is an especially great time for Amazon affiliates.

All in all, blogging delivers a great lifestyle for many people. Bloggers share their ideas and perspectives. They help people get and stay informed, and enlightened on the leading edge of a market that both they and their followers are passionate about.

And in the process, the cleverest of bloggers earn money for their efforts.

Chapter 5:

Crowd Funding

Synopsis

Okay, so you have an idea for making money either online or offline. You want to follow your passion, but your idea requires money, and you don't have it.

Fear not. Many before you have been in similar straights, and rose up with the help of complete strangers willing to fund their dream.

People Helping People

Wikipedia describes crowdfunding as...

The collective effort of individuals who network and pool their money, usually via the Internet, to support efforts initiated by other people or organizations.

And man, is it powerful. I know people who've used it to change their lives.

For example, my wife has a friend who is a great singer and guitarist. As you probably know, this is a crowded profession with lots of super-talented people. Unfortunately, most of the people in this industry are simply unable to make a living at it. Her friend was one of those people.

Crowdfunding to the rescue!

She ran a 3 week campaign at a popular crowdfunding site in an effort to raise enough money to produce a professional, studio recording. She needed \$6,000 which was far more than she could afford on her own.

She put up video samples of her talent, shared her dream and her vision and let the crowd go to work.

She did her part to spread the word by posting links to the crowdfunding campaign on her facebook account, and asked her friends and family to share.

It was a success, and she is in studio as I write this, following her dream. Who knows where it may lead her, but one thing is for sure – it would not have been possible without crowdfunding.

In fact, there are lots of successful businesses online today that got started with crowdfunding. Just do a search at Google and you'll find many surprising examples. You'll also find lots of crowdfunding sites where you can add your project, with kickstarter.com being the most popular and well known.

If you have a project idea and want to try financing it with crowdfunding, here are some tips to making it happen:

1. First, decide how much money you'll need to raise and how you want to raise the funds. You can choose to only collect funds if you meet your goal, or to keep all funds you collect.
2. Get Personal! Tell people your story and why they should consider funding your campaign. Introduce yourself and talk about your background. People are more likely to fund projects when they get to know someone and feel they can trust them. Make them feel as though they're a part of your dream and goals. Include a video so they can get to know you little.
3. Go go a step further by offering incentives to contribute. For example, my wife's friend offered a ticket to the launch party for a certain contribution level. She offered private guitar lessons for the next level, and so on.

Crowd-sourced funding is one of the newest and most exciting things to come to entrepreneurs in a long time. Get onboard and you may be surprised at how willing others are to help you make your dreams come true.

Chapter 6:

Webinars

Synopsis

Webinars are now popping up in every niche imaginable.

And the webinar creators are connecting people all across the globe, while earning big paydays in the process.



The Webinar Model

If you've ever attended a webinar, you know what it's all about. It is basically a “web-based seminar” that is presented via video and audio and attended by multiple people at once.

There are free webinars and there are paid webinars, now in just about every niche imaginable online. Webinar software has simplified the process so that just about anyone can now use this lucrative business model.

Many of the free webinars are actually sales pitches in disguise, and when done cleverly, they can double or even triple the conversion rate of a typical written sales letter.

And paid webinars? Well, people are signing up left and right for webinars from a few dollars, to hundreds of dollars.

So what does it take to get into this lucrative business model.

Two things...

1. Information for a passionate market
2. Webinar software

The first item is the most obvious. You need to present information that a group of people are passionate about. Something that is going to help them in an area of life that they care deeply about.

People who are passionate about a topic will pay more than you might imagine to attend a webinar. After all, it's much easier than attending a live seminar since they can do it in their pajamas from the comfort of their living room.

Here's an example of a subject that might surprise you. My wife is interested in Angel readings. I'm not sure if you're familiar with what this is or not, but let me tell you that it is a passionate group. In fact, it's so passionate that she forked over \$222 for a weekend webinar on the subject. Signed right up using paypal the day she found it.

If you'd have asked me if someone would pay that kind of money to attend a seminar online a few years ago, I probably would have balked at the idea. But it is happening now in every niche.

So no matter what niche interests you, there may be big money waiting for you with webinars in that niche, especially if you are one of the first movers to bring webinars to the niche.

So, let's talk a little about item two above. How to get a webinar setup. It's easier than you might think. In fact, there are software solutions that handle everything for you. All you do is choose the day and time and have your material ready.

In fact, some of the webinar software on the market is quite clever. It takes signups for you, letting attendees pick their own time and date, then plays a recording of your webinar that actually looks to be a live event.

Yes, I realize this is a bit deceptive and in the wrong hands it can be used to trick people into buying things, but it's out there and being used heavily.

I even know of one such software package that displays pre-written chat comments and questions and answers, to address any objections attendees may have before purchasing the product being marketed in the webinar.

Again, I'm only the messenger, and tell you this so you can beware of what is going on in some of these webinar sales pitches. Whether or not you use features like that is up to you.

Of course there are many much more ethical uses of webinar software and that is where you should focus your efforts.

Find a cost-effective webinar solution that will let you deliver a professional presentation to a passionate audience and you can build an entire business around this flourishing trend.

Wrapping Up

Where you bring in cash is a personal decision only you can make.

Some people prefer to earn an hourly wage offline. Others like to do work for clients online. Some people prefer the independence of selling their own stuff online.

Some people construct labors of love, indulging their passions and incidentally, utilizing the sites to pay the bills.

Remember that you are free to earn any way you want online.

If you build a portfolio of sites that earn in a variety of ways, including some of the trending business models you read about in this ebook, you can gain some financial independence, and time freedom.

Take a hard look at yourself and decide what you want to do. Where do your interests lie? That will supply you with the first answer in deciding what's right for you.