

7 Barriers To Web Success (and how to overcome them!).

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By Les Sheppard

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COULD THIS BE YOU!!

Many would be internet entrepreneurs have an idea for an online business, then spend weeks, months, or even years of frustration (not to mention expense) in trying to get things up and running. There is almost too much expert advice, too many helpful hints, and just one more whizzy piece of software that must be had to guarantee success! Let me tell you, there are some serious traps for the well intentioned, thoughtful individual who wants to create their own, online, dream business that can ultimately become massive barriers to their success. If you want to avoid these pitfalls, then read on.

1. Lack of a clear plan

It's all too easy to fire up your computer without clear intentions, and find that after two or three hours of effort you have achieved nothing. Anyone serious about building an online business would be well served to hatch their business plan with the PC switched off. The same basics of business found in the offline world are just as relevant to the internet, a fact often forgotten it seems. Try focusing on these common sense factors:

What am I trying to achieve here, and what are my business goals?

Specifically, what are the returns I desire from the effort I will put in?

Who are the people that can help me to achieve this?

What have I got that they want, and how can it be provided?

Where can I find these people, online or offline?

How will I communicate with them?

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Can I appear to be both knowledgeable and passionate about this?

This is really common sense, you'll agree. But you would be amazed at the number of people seeking my help who cannot express their plans in detail, and, through this neglect, cannot focus themselves on the key business building activities required. Your time online may well be limited by other commitments in the early days, so use it well!

2. Confusion over the target market

This is a problem I regularly come across in the offline world, when consulting with clients from the leisure and restaurant industries. It is very tempting, but completely impractical, to offer something for everyone. Any business needs to identify its core customers, and invest time in satisfying their needs. Your infant business will grow to maturity through finding hungry groups of customers, and satisfying them by solving their problems in a timely and cost effective way. The more you refine your understanding of your target (core) customers, the better you will become at solving, and sometimes anticipating these needs. So.....

Where do they gather?

What do they read / listen to / talk about?

What are their common problems?

Do you have / can you develop a solution?

What might their future needs be?

Take time to think this through – because the devil is in the detail. Your aim should be to become the dominant force in a well defined niche, the respected expert in a topic that you should also find passion in. Get this right and you'll soon have people beating a path to your door, get it wrong and you'll wander in the wilderness for a long time!

3. Lack of specialist skills:

Most people hide a small inner fear that others may be better equipped, more knowledgeable, more confident than themselves – especially when they are starting out with something new. It's a natural response, an insecurity, that can become another barrier to success if not conquered at an early stage of your business career. It can also be said that every individual comes with their own, unique set of skills and experience that can be readily applied to any arena. So, what do you know?.....what can you do?

Your hobbies & interests could provide a rich source of specialist knowledge.

Your offline work life, and relationships, are a priceless experience.

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You may have a particular skill to teach, or inform others.

Could something from previous academic study be turned into a business opportunity?

Are you involved in charitable works that merit wider publicity?

Do you hold strong beliefs, on any topic, that others may want to share?

Really, there is a market or audience for virtually any topic you can think of, the more specialised the better, (and you have the whole world to shoot at with an internet business!). Find your passion, and the rewards will follow. Especially if you don't yet know what the focus of your business will be (but you

know you're going to do something!), make a list of all the things that get you excited. Somewhere in there will be the unexpected topic that could be your real winner, the one thing you would do for free every day through sheer enjoyment. How many other people in the world would share your passion!

4. Analysis Paralysis

I confess.....I'm a sucker for information. I like to have the full detail on a product, service or opportunity before I'll act. I've also lost count of the number of internet "gurus" I listened to in the early days of my online business, as I tried to get things started. But there comes a point when you just have to do something, or stagnate. Take the broad, general, themes of the information available to you – then get yourself into motion!

If you're passionate about your topic, and understand a few business & communication basics, you can learn the rest as you go along. Take bite-sized chunks, learn one new principle or concept a week and you will soon be "an expert" in most people's eyes. Remember, every day that you delay someone else is serving your customers, taking your share of the revenue, building relationships that you could have influenced. Get going.....Just do something!

5. But I don't have the right product, service, info etc.

The beauty of the internet is that it is full of opportunities to joint venture. If you have clients that need a particular product or service that you don't currently offer you can go search, find it and cut a deal to supply. You may see a product or service that is ideal for your existing customer base. Again, strike a deal to put the supplier in touch with them (through you, of course!). If you are eventually successful online, you'll probably be approached with offers of this kind yourself.

My advice...get really good at searching for what you want on the web. Go to Google, Yahoo! & Overture and practice using their search tools until you can find anything you need in the shortest time. And don't forget the offline world either. There are thousands of companies out there who are not fully net savvy, and haven't developed an online presence for their product range yet. Keep an eye on trade journals, magazines etc for opportunities to bring clients and products together to your business benefit.

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6. Just one more...and I'll be there!

The final step.....uploading your first web site to the host server, ready and open for business! But wait a minute...wouldn't it be better if I just added a popup box there, or changed the headline over here.

Fact – some of the most effective web sites in online business history have consisted of ONE PAGE only. And some of those one pagers have not even looked attractive! Many of the best marketers on the internet have the most simple web sites – that carry their information in an easy to understand format, and that's it!

It's your message that's important, having a fantastic website is secondary...by some way. If you've done your homework well, researched your target market, have an offer that solves their most pressing problem (or the one they haven't even thought of yet!) you are in business. Get the shop open and start marketing!

7. Poor time management

Have you ever sat at your PC screen, with the full intention of investing some serious time in getting your ideas off the ground, only to fritter away your limited efforts on any of these?

Reading pointless emails.

Surfing the web in an aimless fashion.

Checking out speculative ideas from others / competitors.

Spending money on unrelated stuff from catalogue sites.

Or.....do you just give up, and return to watching the TV instead?

If you make any cursory study of time management techniques you will find most of the above listed as time stealers. As already said, you may well find that your budding business empire has to compete with family, day–job and other commitments making the 10, 15 or 20 hours a week you can commit to business building critically important. I can tell you that many people I have consulted with never overcome this barrier, and don't take the necessary action to produce results. A further study of time management would reveal that the following are regarded as "high leverage" activities (ie: for a small initial commitment they pay back handsomely!):

Setting up / monitoring systems.

Learning a new skill, to be applied in the short–term.

Reading / studying relevant business material.

Meeting colleagues, suppliers, mentors, customers.

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Attending seminars, coaching sessions, conferences with like minded people.

You simply must focus your efforts. Tell yourself "If I've got 2 hours / \$10 to spend on my budding business, what will give me the biggest bang". Structure your time so that you are uninterrupted when you're online. Choose a (preferably one) good mentor and start to build relationships with like minded people, surrounding yourself with success, and the good habits will rub off.

If you want more help with pushing down "The Barriers to Net Success" you can find common sense advice from Les Sheppard at www.netblueprint101.com

<http://www.netblueprint101.com/>

Creating Unlimited Belief for Success!

By Richard Gorham

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What's holding your team back from experiencing "breakout performance"?

It may be those Old beliefs and Personal Insecurities (aka: conceptual barriers)?

Conceptual barriers are the barriers that are right behind the eyes, DEEP within the brain. "Beliefs" which were planted at a very young age and re-enforced over a long period of time – which is why they are so hard to "dislodge".

Use the following exercise to help your team members identify their limiting beliefs and feelings. Then explain how those beliefs and feelings directly impact (positively and negatively) their bottom-line results.

Before we proceed, keep the following quote in mind – it's a powerful reminder of why it is so important to complete sales management activities.

"Successful people DO, what unsuccessful people are not willing to do."
– Unknown

Here are the Four Steps to Overcome Conceptual Barriers:

Step One – Uncover Negative Self-Talk

Ask the employee to tell you what he or she "least" enjoys about each step of the sales management process. Follow up by asking how that particular aspect of the process makes the employee feel.

For example:

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- Prospecting/Cold Calling – (feels like I am intruding)
- Asking for the Business – (feels like I am being pushy)
- Cross-Selling/Up-Selling – (feels like I am taking advantage)
- Assumptive Closing – (feels like I am being presumptuous)

Step Two – Identify Beliefs that are the root source of negative feelings toward sales management practices.

Go back to our prior examples of Old Beliefs that get in the way of our progress in the sales management process:

- Don't talk to strangers
- It is impolite to talk about money
- Never interrupt important people

- Wait to be asked

Help the employee understand and be aware of why it is that they may feel the way they do.

Employees should understand that they feel the way they do for a reason. Once they understand this it can be much easier for them to make a decision to overcome their old belief(s).

Step Three – Turn Limiting Beliefs into Unlimited Possibility!

Illustrate the following to your employee so they can clearly see how their beliefs and feelings ultimately "pre-determine" their outcome.

On one hand:

Positive Beliefs » Positive Feelings » Actions » Positive Results

And on the other hand:

Limiting Beliefs » Negative Feelings » Inaction » Negative Results

So based on the preceding, it's obvious which hand offers the most value – correct?

Step Four – CHOOSE a path together!

Obviously, if an employee is unwilling to work to overcome conceptual barriers, then you should agree that a sales position is not the right fit.

You should either find a more suitable role for the person, or part ways so he/she may pursue a more rewarding opportunity somewhere else.

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Let's assume however that the employee seeks to overcome their conceptual barriers and is willing to take ownership of their plan for improvement.

As the leader, you have an important role to play in your employee overcoming their limiting beliefs. You are responsible for supporting the employee in three key areas. Once again, they are:

- TEACH – lead by example, reinforce positive actions and behaviors
- COACH – help to improve technique, debrief progress, track results, ensure employee stays on task
- EXPECT – inspect what you expect, hold yourself and your employee accountable for continued improvement and increased results.

In conclusion, ask yourself the following question.

Can you name one person who is a top performer that:

- believed he wouldn't be successful?
- feels she shouldn't be successful?
- does not take the actions necessary for her to become successful?

The answer to each question? "Of course not!" Right?

So by default we must agree that in order for anyone to be successful, he/she must understand what is holding him or her back.

Then, she must be willing to work to overcome obstacles, and choose to proactively follow a corrective action plan.

Finally, he must "execute" the plan.

Through this process he will build new beliefs that will enable him to discard that old and tired, limiting belief.

Richard Gorham is the founder and President of Leadership–Tools, Inc. His web site, <http://www.leadership–tools.com> is dedicated to providing free tools and resources for today's aspiring leaders. Offering high–quality tools in the areas of Business Planning, Leadership Development, Customer Service, Sales Management and Team Building.



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