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# Ten Steps To Internet Profits



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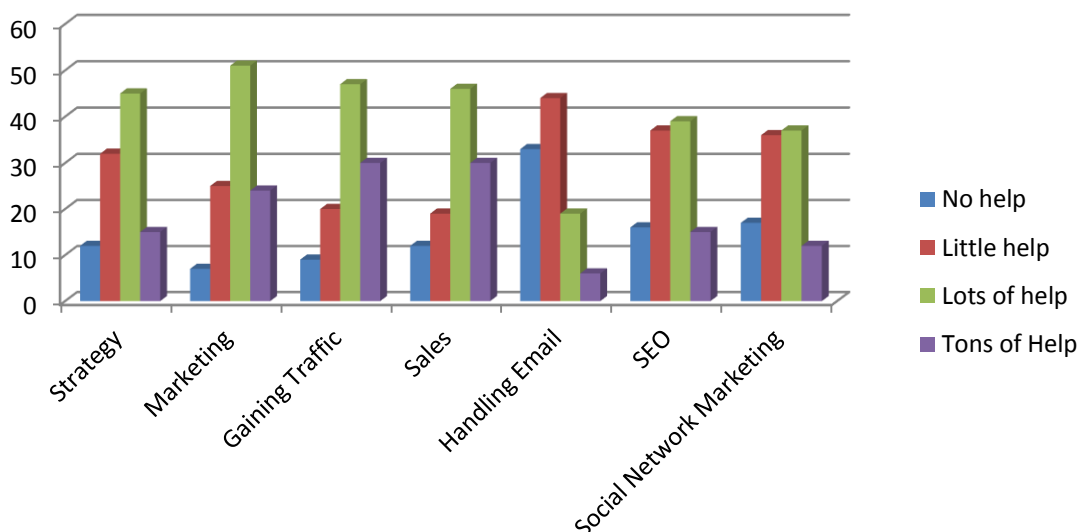
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## Introduction

Your web site is probably already bringing you in some income. But wouldn't you like more? And if your web site has yet to make any profit at all, wouldn't you like to change that? No matter how well your web site is performing, it could do better. This report will guide you through **ten steps** to help you increase your sales and your online profits.

## Why web sites fail

Few commercial web sites actually make money. In a survey of over 1,200 British small and medium sized companies, I discovered that around a third of them made no money at all from their web site. A further 30% made less than £1,000 per year from the Internet. Only a quarter of these businesses actually earned more than £10,000 a year online. Furthermore, none of the business owners were happy with their performance. The vast majority wanted "tons of help" or "lots of help" in several areas including marketing, sales and online strategy.



The help that, what these poorly performing companies need is little to do with the Internet itself, but more to do with attitude as to what a web site is for. Almost every business perceives their web site to be a brochure; but for the people visiting the sites this is the last thing they want. There is a huge mismatch between what companies provide and what customers want – get the match right and you will make money.

## What do people want from your web site?

Visitors to your web site want instant answers to the specific problem that is on their mind at that particular moment in time. So, for example, let's imagine the visitor wants "organic dog food". They are not looking for "dog food" or "pet food" or a "pet shop" or anything else, such as a dog grooming parlour that also happens to sell organic dog food. The visitor wants to see "organic dog food" and nothing else. True, one day they may want dog grooming, or some new collars and leads, but at any particular moment web site visitors are only interested in ONE thing.

This is often why they give up on so many web sites. Instead of providing the single thing that web site visitors are looking for, most web sites provide them with a plethora of items they may also be interested in. But these visitors are not interested in the "big picture"; every web site visitor has a specific need in mind. Tap into that particular need and you will win.

It means you can't have one web site that provides answers to all the possible questions your visitors may want dealing with. Instead, it means you need several web sites to deal with the varying problems that you can provide solutions for.

For instance, let's imagine that you run a pet shop that stocks "organic dog food". If that is hidden away in your online shop you are asking your web site visitors to find it. But they don't have the time or the inclination. The average time people spend on a web site is between 0.5 and 1.0 second; that's it – you have less than one second to grab your web site visitors and show them you have a solution to their problem or an answer to their question.

But our fictitious pet shop provides more than organic dog food. It also sells aquarium kits for children, cat baskets and hay for horses. If a visitor is hoping to find some organic dog food they don't give a fig that the site also sells hay, cat baskets or fish bowls. In other words, if your web site does not focus specifically on the particular needs of your customers or potential customers you stand a chance of them leaving your site within a single second. And that certainly means less business.

For the pet shop, a simple answer would be to have separate web sites – one that sells hay for horses, another that sells aquarium kits for children and another for organic dog food. That way the visitor is much more likely to linger longer on the site because it deals with their specific issue.

It is a mistake to think that your site needs to show depth; you need only to demonstrate you can answer the particular problem the visitor has at that moment in time. It's a bit like trying to unlock your front door – you only need your front door key to get in. You don't need every key for every door in the house, as well as all your suitcase keys and your office keys. Having every key available on your key ring simply makes it difficult to get your front door key in the lock quickly. And that's why most people have a key ring with their house keys on, another key ring with their office keys and another with their suitcase keys; it makes life easier.

The same is true for web sites. The easier you make it for your visitors by separating your site into separate offerings, the better – and the more likely you will profit from your efforts.

So **STEP ONE** in increasing your online profits is to work out how to split up your existing web site into several smaller sites focused on individual customer requirements.

## Finding out what customers want

The best way to find out what specific things people come to your business for is to ask them. Ask your customers what they want, why they visit you and what their specific requirements are. You may be surprised by some of their answers...!

You can also use some online tools to find out what people want. One such tool is called [Wordtracker](#) which should be considered an essential tool

for any web site owner. It helps you discover what people are really looking for online.

No.	Keyword Why quotes?	KEI Analysis (?)	Count (?)	24Hrs (?)	Competing (?)
1	<a href="#">"100% organic dry dog food"</a>	9.000	3	2	0
2	<a href="#">"organic dog food"</a>	0.156	123	89	97200
3	<a href="#">"organic dry dog food"</a>	0.061	11	8	2000
4	<a href="#">"natural organic dog food"</a>	0.026	16	12	9950
5	<a href="#">"organic dog foods"</a>	0.001	2	1	5660

Wordtracker provides useful information for our "organic dog food" supplier. It shows us that every 24 hours some 89 people search for "organic dog food" but there are over 97,000 competing sites so we'd be rather like a needle in a haystack. However, every day there are two people (that's 730 potential customers each year) who look for "100% organic dry dog food" – yet they never find what they are looking for because there are zero sites providing that.

If our example pet shop owner were to establish a web page with the title and headline "100% organic dry dog food" they'd clean up all those 700+ potential customers – and likely gain their custom as well because they would have found the specific thing they are looking for. Had our example pet store owner simply had this product listed within a shop the sales would be very low – even if the site attracted hundreds of thousands of visitors. By targeting tiny groups of people who have similar very specific needs, you can make more money rather than trying to get millions of people to visit your site (most of whom won't spend anything).

So, **STEP TWO** in making more money online is to find out the specific needs of your potential customers by some market research and by the use of tools like Wordtracker, which you can get from <http://grahamrecommends.co.uk/wordtracker>. An alternative is [Market Samurai](#).

## Managing a multiple site strategy

One of the things that puts off businesses from developing several web sites, instead of just one, is the potential cost. But it need not be expensive. All you need to do is look for a web hosting company that allows you to host multiple sites from within one account (instead of having to have a separate account for each site). A good supplier of multiple site hosting is 1&1 which you can reach via <http://grahamrecommends.co.uk/1and1>.

An alternative to multiple site hosting is a "reseller account". This allows you to set up several web sites all within one monthly payment of around £30. A good reseller account is available from [Heart Internet](#) or <http://grahamrecommends.co.uk/heart>.

Whether you choose multiple domain hosting or a reseller account, you will save money. Typically with the more traditional hosting companies you could pay anything from £8 a month to £30 a month for a single domain. Hence if you needed 25 web sites to satisfy the individual needs of your potential customers you could be facing an annual bill of £9,000 – and that's

why people get put off the multiple site strategy. However, by choosing your host carefully you could get all 25 web sites in one account for as little as £47 for the year. What a saving...!

So **STEP THREE** is changing your web site host to one that allows multiple domain hosting within a single account; you will need this.

## Getting organised for extra profits

You should now have a better hosting company, several domains and a strategy that focuses your online offerings down into highly specific "niches". But how are you going to make some extra money?

All the evidence points to the fact that you will make more money from email campaigns than you will from your web site itself. So your next profit making step should be to organise your web sites so they collect email addresses so you can build your campaign lists.

There is a psychological "rule of reciprocity" which means that if you do something kind for someone, they feel duty bound to support you and do something in return. Hence if you give people information they really need, free of charge, they will feel a "connection" to you and your web site. So, every one of your web sites must give things away that are of real value to your audience. Not just any old tat – but something of help, support and significance. You received this document, for instance, and if you are finding it useful you probably feel some positive warmth towards me...! You too can get the same connection with your customers and potential customers.

Consider our fictitious pet shop owner again. They could have sites on organic dog food, another on aquarium kits for children and so on. What if the organic dog food site had a small booklet available for download on keeping your dog healthy and choosing the right foods for dogs? What if the aquarium site had a "how to set up an aquarium with your children" booklet? By offering free booklet like this as downloadable items each of the individual web sites would be using the rule of reciprocity with potential customers. Once they download the booklet they become much more likely to spend money with the pet store. However, to get the book they have to let the shop know their email address.

This means by offering valuable items for free, you can build up a mailing list of people who already feel connected with you and who value what you provide. Plus they feel disposed towards you because of your free gift. Consequently you need to plan for every one of your web sites to have a gift you can give away (something that's valuable to the end user). By doing so you will gather a mailing list and you can then send them regular messages promoting your specific products, increasing custom as a result.

People tend not to buy on first contact. Research suggests that they need around 21 different "points of contact" with you before they really want to put their money on the line. This means you need to set up a regular series of emails, have a newsletter and various other ways you can keep in touch with your list members.

**STEP FOUR** in ensuring you increase your profits is to set up a mailing list system that provides a free gift at the outset and then keeps in regular touch with your prospects and customers.

## Setting up your contact system

There are several ways you can keep in touch with your customers and potential customers. You can use your existing email system, or you can get

software that runs email campaigns. Alternatively you can use an agency. The problem with any of these methods is the administrative overhead they cause, eating into your profits. For instance, say you run our fictional pet shop and you have a mailing list for people who want to buy organic dog food. If your emails are sent by software or an agency you will not know which people on that list have bought specific items. That means you cannot tailor your mailings so they have even more significance to the readers – and therefore make future purchases more likely.

True, you can tailor your emails, but you'd need to copy data across from your sales software in order to truly gain a better connection with your customers. That copy and paste job will take time, effort and money. Also, if someone decides to leave you as a customer (perhaps they move away) you will annoy them if you continue to send emails to them. So you have to delete them from two mailing lists – one for the regular emails you send out and a second time from your customer database in your accounts package.

Sadly, this is everyday work for most online businesses and it is a complete waste of time and money. Instead, having all your data in a single, central database is the most efficient and profitable method. You need a database that can be split automatically into customer types, product categories and so on. One of the best systems for doing all that is called [Campaign Monitor](#) which can integrate with a wide range of shopping cart systems enabling you to co-ordinate things well.

The system is incredibly sophisticated and allows you to combine your ecommerce data with your emailing data so that you can conduct meaningful campaigns, which are therefore more likely to derive extra profits for you.

So **STEP FIVE** is to get Campaign Monitor and set up all the different autoresponder emails you need and the products you are selling.

## Finding time to do all the work

As soon as I say to people you need to write several free reports and also a series of over 21 emails campaigns for each free report – on top of producing any products you want to sell – I'm told "I haven't got the time to do all that". And true, it does seem a rather daunting amount of work. But face facts; the people making the most profit online are those doing this. True enough, if you are as big as Tesco you simply manage a team of suppliers who do all the leg work for you. But if you are running your own business, if you work from home, or if you only have a handful of employees, you can't do this so easily. Or can you?

The "trick" is to outsource most of the work. If you go to [Elance.com](#) you can get writers, bloggers, email copywriters, people who'll set up 1ShoppingCart for you and a host of other freelance workers who will do the work for you. I needed a training manual written in a hurry; I went on to Elance posted the project and within a week I had a very well written manual costing me just \$200. A friend of mine had an entire book written for a mere \$400. You can check out the quality of the work of the freelancers easily and the Elance system has a number of protections in place for you the buyer.

You could use Elance workers to write your free reports, to produce the series of autoresponder emails you need, even to upload everything onto Campaign Monitor for you. There are even people on Elance who will prepare the web sites for you as well. In other words, you can carry on with your everyday work knowing that your multiple site strategy is getting going. Indeed, by using several Elance freelancers at the same time you can launch

your 50 web sites all at the same time – at a fraction of the cost of doing it all yourself. Plus you'll get it all done in a tiny amount of time, in comparison. This means your profitability will rise.

So **STEP SIX** is to outsource your writing and development work to freelancers via Elance, unless you can manage the work yourself.

## Publicising your web sites

Now that you have your web sites in place you need to let people know they exist. Otherwise it would be rather like setting up a shop down a side alley in town and not letting anyone know you are open for business.

The first thing you need to do is to "announce" your web site to the Internet world. To do this get hold of [Internet Business Promoter](#) (IBP) and use its facilities to announce your site to search engines and directories. You can also use the program to get other similar sites to link to yours, providing extra traffic. You can get IBP from <http://grahamrecommends.co.uk/ibp>.

You should also use press releases to announce your site. This may get you coverage in the media, but more importantly if you distribute your press releases online you will also get extra links to your site. The best way to distribute press releases is online is to use [Press Equalizer](#), a program that takes your press release and sends it to all the most important press services. You can get this program via <http://grahamrecommends.co.uk/press>.

Having announced your sites, make sure you promote them at every opportunity. Get business cards made for them, for instance, or postcards you can send out to people to promote the sites. You can get printed literature produced at very reasonable costs – sometimes even FREE...! – from [VistaPrint](#). Don't forget that significant numbers of people visit web sites having seen them mentioned on business cards, in leaflets etc. Don't ignore the value of print to help promote your web site. You can reach VistaPrint at <http://grahamrecommends.co.uk/vistaprint>.

People also pick up names of web sites to visit when they hear them being mentioned by other people. For that reason you need to get out and do some "networking". Go to business meetings or events that are of relevance to your particular web sites. Get your web site names mentioned, hand out your business cards and generally get talking about your site. Word of mouth is very powerful – don't ignore it. You could also volunteer to be a speaker at relevant meetings; organisations are always looking for people to speak at their events and if you volunteer you will get a chance to promote your web sites.

Speaking can also promote your web site online. You could create a short (no more than one minute) video or audio (podcast) to promote your web site and upload it to YouTube or iTunes. In fact, the more ways you can think of to promote your web sites, the better. Never lose an opportunity to get your web site mentioned. If you want more ideas to promote your web sites, get Susan Sweeney's book "[101 Ways to Promote Your Web Site](#)". This is packed with great ideas on how to get people to notice your web site.



So **STEP SEVEN** is to spend as much time and effort as you can muster on promoting your web sites. Not only should you promote them online, but also use offline promotional tools to show off your web site.



## Keep things up-dated

Very little infuriates people more online than finding a web site is "out of date". By "out of date" people mean there is either an identifiable date on the site such as "Last Updated 21<sup>st</sup> July 1999" – which is bound to make people depart rather rapidly. Or the site shows no visible signs of having changed since the last visit. If your site does not alter – at least weekly – people think you are "out of date" and they give you the cold shoulder, opting for sites that are more "current".

This means you need to have a strategy for changing at the very least your front page every week. You will make even more profit if your web site changes every day – and even more if you are updated every hour...! The easiest way to do this is with a blog. A blog is a system whereby you can add content to your web site without having to go through the kerfuffle of getting new pages designed and uploaded. If you can type into a form on a web page, you can blog – it's that easy. The simplest system to use is [Blogger.com](http://Blogger.com) which is owned by Google or by using [WordPress](http://WordPress). An alternative and much more technical system is [Joomla](http://Joomla). For the maximum impact the blog should be incorporated within your web site, rather than as a separate entity.

By having regular news items, hints, tips, ideas and so on delivered by your blog pages, your web site will be fresh and up-to-date making it seem more valuable to your visitors than a competitor's site which is "static" and does not change. Merely updating your web site each week can increase your profits.

Blogs are not the only thing you should consider. Add articles to your web site as often as you can. You can get articles on almost any subject free of charge from the following syndication services:

<http://ezinearticles.com>  
<http://goarticles.com>  
<http://articlecity.com>  
<http://articlesbase.com>  
<http://constant-content.com>

You can also use these services to add your own articles which can then also promote your web site on other web pages produced by other people.

If this all sounds like too much work, remember you can outsource your blog writing, your article writing and the updating of your web site to freelancers via Elance. Make sure to give them the keywords you discovered using Wordtracker too – this will help your site to be found via the search engines if they use the keywords in the blogs and articles.

However you do the updating, though, keeping your web site up-to-date is essential if you wish to attract regular visitors. Remember, you will make more money from regular visitors than from occasional passers-by. Hence, **STEP EIGHT** is to set in motion a system of regularly updating your web site.

## Extending your offer

Even though you will attract people to your web site and many of them will spend their hard-earned cash with you, your profits will be limited if you do not continue to expand your product portfolio. That might be difficult, for instance, if you are running an online shop selling just organic dog food. True, you can use regular promotions, announce new flavours or add to the

product range to extend what people buy from you, but often you may need to do more than this.

For instance, the buyers of organic dog food on our fictitious pet shop are clearly concerned with the health of their dogs. Hence you can offer them additional products, such as books on dog health, via the emails you send them, or through your blog or articles. Again, this all sounds like extra work, but luckily you can reduce what you need to do.

Amazon, for example, has an "Associates Program" which allows you to get a commission from products you sell to your clients but which are supplied from Amazon. Sign up for that program and review books, recommend them and add them in appropriate places on your web site. Make sure the books you choose are consistent with the narrow theme of your web site and you will make more money than having a variety of unfocused books available. For instance, in our fictitious organic dog food site it would be unprofitable to have books on living in the country – even though many of the customers may be country dwellers. Books on dog health, food for pets and so on would be valuable because when on the site people are more susceptible to offers on the subject that is already on their mind (in this case dogs that eat healthily).

You can also find a range of products on a wide variety of topics at [ClickBank](#), for example. You can reach ClickBank at <http://grahamrecommends.co.uk/clickbank>. An alternative to ClickBank is [PayDotCom](#) at <http://grahamrecommends.co.uk/paydotcom>.

You can also look for other web site owners who may be willing to do joint ventures. For instance, a bespoke dog bowl maker might tie-up with our fictitious organic dog food web site. Look for opportunities to work with people who are not direct competitors but who have products in the same niche as your site. That way you can increase each other's business. To find potential partners use the [Google Alerts](#) service to provide you with emails about web sites, blogs and news items on your specific topics.

**STEP NINE**, therefore, is to continue to develop your product and service offering so your customers are constantly provided with new and exciting items which are directly relevant to their specific requirements.

## The final step in profiting from your web site

People are gradually moving away from search engines as a way of finding things. They are important, but increasingly we get web sites from social bookmarking sites and social networking sites. It is therefore important that you engage with social networking sites such as Facebook, LinkedIn or Twitter, so that you can promote your expertise, your web site and your products and services. If you are not using social networking to promote your business you are missing out on the biggest trend on the Internet.

You should be setting up groups within LinkedIn or pages within Facebook. If you go to [Ning.com](#) you can also set up specific social networking sites for each of your niche areas. An alternative is [SocialGo](#). How about a social networking club for people who only give their pets organic foods? Encouraging specific groups of people to join together will really help you make extra money as it will lead to word of mouth marketing – the most powerful form of advertising you can get.

So, **STEP TEN** is taking an active part in social networks where you can show off your expertise and further promote your web sites.

## The Ten Steps in Summary

ONE	Change your web site into several tiny niche sites
TWO	Find out what people are really interested in
THREE	Move your web site host to a multi-domain account
FOUR	Organise your ideas for mailing lists
FIVE	Set up Campaign Monitor
SIX	Outsource your extra work via Elance
SEVEN	Promote your sites
EIGHT	Organise regular web site updates
NINE	Add more products and services
TEN	Get networking

Using these ten steps you will be able to increase your profitability, no matter what kind of business you run online.

For more information on how your business can use the Internet for increased sales see my regular updates at <http://www.grahamjones.co.uk>.

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