

Obstacles in Building Your Information Products Business

by Dan C. Rinnert

These days, more and more people like yourself are being drawn into the information products business. The lure of low costs and big profits in a seemingly effortless business are hard to resist. But building any kind of successful business is never easy, even when creating info products, and it's even harder when you have to overcome the obstacles you toss in your own path to success.

Here are a couple of the stumbling blocks you may be facing.

Why Would Anyone Pay for Information You Can Find Free on the Internet?

This may seem like a rather large obstacle, but it really isn't. There is a lot of free information available on the Internet, yet websites selling books continue to survive and even grow! Why is that?

That free information may not always be easy to find. Sometimes, the free information may be spread out across many websites, and it may not be easy to find in the search engines. So, while the monetary cost may be free, there is a

cost in terms of time. Some people would rather spend the money on an eBook that has the information they are looking for compiled in a single resource.

Or, even if the free information is easy to find, it may not be easy to understand. It may be written in too technical a manner, making it difficult for some people to figure out. If you can explain things in an easy to follow way, there are people that would gladly pay you for it! Information is useless if it cannot be understood and used! If you make it understandable, you are making it useful!

And, even if the free information is both easy to find and understand, it may not be as easy to work with. If the information is on the web, the reader may have to print out dozens of pages on a website if they wish to work with it offline. Or, they may not know how to save the website pages to their hard drive for later use. Or, the webpages may not print well. In any of these cases, if you can put the information together in an eBook, in a PDF format that makes it easy for them to print and read, or even read onscreen or transfer to a portable device, you

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have created something of value for them!

Any combination of these may be true for the information you want to offer as an info product. If so, you may win customers by being able to put that information together in an easy to read, easy to understand, easy to access format.

I'm Not an Expert in Anything. What Could I Possibly Offer?

It is rare to be in a field where there isn't someone that knows more than you do. Unless you're in one of those fields, it's likely that there are many people that are more knowledgeable about your subject matter. Fortunately, not all of them are in the information products business writing eBooks! In fact, most of them probably aren't.

Not only that, but, even though there may be dozens or hundreds or even thousands of people that know more than you, there are most likely many more that know less than you do. It's both possible and probable that the things you think that everyone in your field knows are things that many may not know. You don't need to try to sell an eBook to the people that know more than you do; you need to sell them to the people that know less than you do. And, they are out there!

No matter how basic the knowledge, *even if it's something taught in schools*, there are people that will need to know it and be willing to pay to learn it! If they did learn it in school, they may have forgotten it. Or, they may have been taught incorrectly or insufficiently.

As an example, I took an art class in high school. I had been drawing and doodling since I was a kid, so art was something that interest-

ed me. One of the lessons was drawing people in pencils using shading techniques and using different grades of pencils to achieve varying degrees of darkness to a realistic image. Of course, no matter how much we were taught, our drawings never looked as nice and smooth as those of professional artists. And, not knowing any better, you figure that is simply because they have more experience and practice. It never dawns on you that the reason you can't create those nice looking drawings is because the art teacher failed to teach some very basic techniques!

It wasn't until many years later that I learned those techniques, thanks to the Internet! And, they were very simple techniques that were easy to learn and would have been easy to teach. I have to wonder how many students lost interest in art because they became disillusioned because their results weren't as good as what they hoped to create. Only, it wasn't because they didn't have the talent, but because they hadn't been taught the proper techniques!

Don't for a minute believe that you don't have something to offer people. The simple technique I learned would have greatly improved my drawings if I had known it years earlier. Perhaps I might have even taken a stronger interest in pursuing a career in art had I known such results weren't difficult to achieve!

If you know a technique like that, or a series of techniques, or anything else that other people may not know, you have something to offer. You don't need to be an expert; you just need to know something your customer doesn't!

But, don't fret if you don't think you know a technique or special tip or secret for your subject matter. A basic understanding, and the abil-

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ity to convey that knowledge, is the bare minimum you need, as there are people that don't have the knowledge that you do and will pay to obtain that information from you.

But I Still Don't Know Enough!

If you're still not convinced you know enough about a subject to provide useful information to even a beginner, find someone who does!

As mentioned, there are plenty of experts out there who aren't writing information products and selling them. If you can get in touch with them, you may be able to get information from them that you can pass along. You may be able to get an interview, or a series of interviews, with an expert, or a number of experts, that you can offer to your potential customers. You can do this as an add-on to your own information product, to flesh out those areas where you feel your knowledge is not up to par. Or, the interviews themselves might be the product.

You may also be able to do a joint venture with the experts, where they provide you the information and you package it together and sell it online, with a mutually agreeable split of the proceeds.

Never let a lack of knowledge hold you back. Take a look at talk show hosts, for example. Do you think they are experts at everything? Of course not! They have guests on who are. They interview experts. They bring in people to demonstrate how tasks may be done.

With the Internet, you don't need the backing of a television network or a big media company, you can get started at home or in an extra office at work. If you don't have a video camera or a way to record audio with your computer, you can always start with a text-based information product. You can expand into audio and video projects and products as your business grows and you can afford to purchase or rent the equipment you need.

The bottom line is...

Don't Focus on the Obstacles!

Instead, focus on solutions to the obstacles in your way, especially if they are roadblocks that you have put up to block your own path to success!

If you get stuck, learn all you can about how others overcame obstacles in their way. You may find a solution to your own problem.

Even though the focus in this article has been on creating information products, much of this information also applies to any type of business you might run or be operating. No business is a cakewalk, no matter how some media stories may suggest that they are. Running a successful business often takes a lot of preparation and hard work. Don't let your own self-made obstacles keep you from being successful. You'll face enough challenges in running a business without creating more of your own!

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