

Secrets to Selling Information Online

For Big, Big Profits

By Jim Edwards and Yanik Silver

You could sell almost anything from the “real” world over the Web.

You’ve no doubt heard of Amazon.com (books) and CDNow.com (CDs) as big Internet success stories. Well, I think they’ve got it wrong. I think information is the absolute best product to sell over the web. People are always searching for information on the Internet. And there are so many advantages to selling information that make it the perfect business:

Operate from Anywhere

First of all, you can operate from anywhere. If you have a computer hook-up you can literally be on some beach in the Caribbean, in the country, or even traveling around the world.

You’ve Got No Real Competition

Think about this — once you create your information product (I’ll show you ways to get these information products done even without doing this yourself later) you own the copyright on it. A copyright means that nobody can come along and rip off your material. It’s not like a physical product where someone can knock you off.

Incredible Margins

Remember, people are not paying for bits and bytes - they’re paying for the information or the utility you can provide.

So what’s my profit margin?

Very close to 100%.

You take out the merchant account fees and it’s maybe about 95%? Pretty high, right? It’s awesome!

Global Marketplace

We’re living in the information age.

And today, more than ever, with the invention of the World Wide Web, people from all over the world are seeking your unique information. I’ve made sales to people on every continent except Antarctica.

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Plus, with a digital product it doesn't cost you any more to deliver your product to someone who orders from Japan or someone who lives down the street.

Simple to Set-up, Create and Deliver

It's incredibly easy to deliver your digital information product. You can have someone download your product off the Web (after they gave you a credit card number of course) get it in their email box, or any number of ways.

Leverage

The last point is you get tremendous leverage with information products. You get paid over and over again for work that you do one time. So for instance, writing this manual once I can hopefully sell it for years and years to come.

Everything On The Internet is Free So Why Would Anyone Pay?

Everything is free on the Internet, right?

Not really.

If people look hard enough they may be able to find what they were looking for – but the big problem is that everyone is experiencing information overload.

So if you've got some specialized information, people are definitely willing to pay for it. In today's society, time is more valuable than money, so if you've got a way for people to save time searching through thousands of search engine listings they would rather pay you and get their answers instantly.

Trust me, people will pay for information that's even readily available to them. I know of one marketer who sold information to people about how to collect from Social Security at any age. This information was hidden away in some government publication that most people didn't know about. So he simply showed them how to find out this information and they bought it – even though anyone could have done the research and found out for free.

And check this out. www.Consumerreports.com has over half a million paying subscribers to their private site. Not too shabby! To get you thinking – here are a few examples....

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10 easy to develop, “hot” digital products that are selling like crazy on the Net right now:

1. **Ebooks** – Electronic books downloaded on your computer either created using an ebook compiler or as a PDF (portable document format) file.

[How to Write and Publish Your Own eBook in 7 days](#)

[Ebook Marketing Explained](#)

[Amazing Formula](#)

2. **Membership Sites** – access to a private membership site protected by passwords.

www.thewarriorgroup.com/

[Mike Enlow’s Inner Circle](#)

www.cashflowmarketing.com/

3. **Templates/Tools** – these are pre-made tools and templates for people to use right away.

[Instant Sales Letters](#)

www.webplatestogo.com

4. **Research information** – researched information of hard-to-find sources resources, directories, etc.

www.fashionforrealwomen.com

5. **Newsletter** – Deliver your newsletter content online to a subscriber-only area of your web site.

[Online Marketing Letter](#)

6. **Review of Resources and Tools** – provide opinions and help people separate the good from bad.

www.goldbar.com

7. **Directories** – Useful directories people are looking for

[Life Styles Pub](#)

[Top Ezine Ads](#)

8. **Content** – delivering content for other sites to use

[Master Syndicator](#)

http://www.healthcareserve.com/html/health_content.htm

9. **Audio files/MP3s – deliver audio content to paying customers over the web.**
[Sex Secrets Revealed](#)
10. **Online Learning – provide valuable learning advice to students, anytime, anywhere.**
www.knowhowzone.com

And please don't think only moneymaking sites are doing well – check these out:

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

<http://www.success123.com/>

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

and my own, [Get Fit While You Sit](#)

6 Quick and Easy Ways To Create Your Digital Information Product

1. You Write It

The first way is to create it yourself. You know, you're gonna sit down and stick your butt on the seat, put your hands on the keyboard and write it yourself. That's one way to do it. For some people this is pretty easy – for others they can't stand the thought of sitting at their computer and typing for hours and hours.

When you create non-fiction you don't need to worry that much about style – just deliver tons of content and real useful information. Write just like you talk. People won't mind – in fact, they'll probably like it better.

Your Outline is the Key

If you spend some time creating your outline first, you'll find writing the product is a breeze. Using this outline I simply go in and just add a little “meat” to the skeleton I created. If you can write a 500-700 word article (that's less than 2 pages) you can create a manual. Just think of your information product as a series of interrelated articles.

Creating your outline first makes you clearly think about each of the topics you'll cover and it helps put them in a logical order.

Believe me this really helps!

Also, with a complete outline it doesn't matter where you start writing because everything is modular. (I'm referring to non-fiction products here. Fiction isn't something I'm familiar with so I can't give you much advice.)

2. Ghostwriter

Did you realize there are tons of starving writers out there, who are more than happy to write for you so they can pay their bills? Really. You can find ghostwriters in a publication called *Literary Marketplace* at your library. Check the category called “freelance writers”. These will usually be professional ghostwriters who will work from your notes or research. The most common arrangement is a payment per completed page. Or you can hire someone from [ELance](#) to do it for you. I paid someone from there to help create a bonus report for another information product I created.

3. License Material

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You can purchase a license from the author or copyright owner to sell the product. This is known as a resale license. There are different types of licenses. There are ones where you would pay a royalty to the author and there are others when you own the resale rights fully and you keep 100% of the selling price.

Nearly every successful marketer I know will license some kind of product.

However, before you go rushing off to purchase licenses it's important to think about the market first.

Many times the product your are licensing has seen better days and the market is completely saturated. You've probably seen the CD-Rom filled with 750 reports you can sell or something similar. It would be pretty tough to sell that by itself from your site and make money.

4. Public Domain Information

This is really cool. There is lots of information that has fallen into the public domain or is publicly available with no copyright. You have to double check, but a lot of government publications are free and available to be reprinted.

Not only can you use most government publications but also certain books, depending on how old they are, may have lost their copyright. So that means it's fallen back into public domain for everyone's use (and profit).

There's an interesting web site based around a book from 1910 that is public domain information:

www.scienceofgettingrich.net

The woman behind this site took a long forgotten book from 1910 and she turned it into an ebook. She doesn't sell that ebook – she gives it away and there's other backend stuff related to this guy's teachings that she sells but the whole concept is based on timeless principles from a public domain book.

Another widely spread book that has fallen into public domain is “Scientific Advertising” by Claude Hopkins. If you've never read this book I suggest you read it several times. I've read it about 5 or 6 times and I find the information just as pertinent and important today as when Hopkins first wrote it.

There's a site run by a savvy marketer named Terry Dean that took “Scientific Advertising” (public domain) and fused it together with his own writing (copyrighted) to create a product that he sells for \$29.97 (plus a few of his own bonus reports). Very smart and quick to create.

You can see that example at: www.mrmarketer.com

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Or you can get a free copy of Hopkins original work at: www.claudehopkins.com

5. Interview Experts

Let's say you don't think that you know enough information about a certain topic you're writing on. No problem! You just get 5 or 6 experts, interview them, transcribe that audio tape and compile that information. Simple.

Or if you're using audio interviews as your project you simply have it edited and turned into digital audio and you're done!

When I do telephone interviews I use a simple tape recorder from Radio Shack. It works really well and the sound quality is very good. It's called a TCR-200 Telephone Cassette Recorder. I believe it ran about \$99.

There was a recent best selling offline book called "Striking It Rich.Com". The author wasn't an Internet success story himself but he interviewed successful Internet entrepreneurs and it gave him an expert authority by default.

It's pretty easy to get a half hour or hour interview with most experts in your field (or on whatever subject you want to create a product for). Most experts would be willing as long as they get some kind of plug or added publicity for themselves.

And the final quick and easy way to get your informational product done is to let other people do it for you...

6. Let Others Submit Their Content

Have people submit content like at [Life Styles Pub](http://LifeStylesPub).

This model is great!

People submit their Ezines to her directory. She doesn't have to do any of the work because it's automatically added to her database. Publishers will go there themselves and list their Ezines because they want additional advertisers or content. Nice and easy.