

!  
**FREE  
REPORT**

*LotCon Biz Solutions Small Business Marketing Training*

# **Business Report**

**TRENDS 2016**

**SKILLS TO LEARN FOR 2016 SUCCESS**

**F R E D L O T G E R I N G**

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## ABOUT LOTCON BIZ WORLDWIDE

Operational and Business Management strategies, individually tailored for small businesses seeking to expand or diversify their product and/or service, on a local, international, or even global scale. Regardless if you are a home-based business or a successful local business owner, LotCon Biz Solutions provides assistance to further maximize your income through the Internet.

We develop innovative and creative business products. Our turnkey Business Blogs and Blog Services provide total communication, marketing and information solutions for "YOUR" Business. Among a plethora of business services, blog design, blog optimization, reliable hosting, e-commerce blog solutions and customized business applications are a just a few that we currently offer.

Our business-driven approach separates us from orthodox web design companies. For more than fifteen years, we have further built a reputation for creating a positive return on investment for our clients. If you are serious about your web success, we can get you there. We manage all your web projects with exceptional quality at an affordable cost.

### **Business Blogs**

LotCon delivers a "turnkey" solution for "YOUR" Business Blog. That includes domain registration, professional hosting, personalized theme design, SEO optimization and whole range of special business plug-in's and business programs (such as customer registration and mailing systems, e-commerce system) and other business and marketing tools. We offer ongoing maintenance, backups and SEO optimization at competitive monthly rates.

### **Business Branding Products**

Branding is about name recognition and how "YOUR" business is different from your competitors. The purpose of a brand is to distinguish yourself from your competitors. Once you make a distinguishing impact then an advertising campaign can be much more effective. Let us help you! We can assist you with business branding and creating traffic to your blog by utilizing all current Web solutions. Not only do we have the marketing products available but you can also outsource this tedious work to us.

For access to all our products and services visit: [LotCon Biz](http://LotCon Biz)

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## SKILLS TO LEARN FOR 2016 SUCCESS

Being an entrepreneur is something that a lot of people dream of becoming. It's a great dream to have and there are so many avenues open to the person who's willing to put in the effort to make the business succeed.

Part of succeeding means being honest about areas that you feel you lack in, such as advertising, writing, social media, etc. To be good at what you do means that you have to engage in continuing education.

It's important that you do this because in the world of entrepreneurial pursuits, not growing in knowledge can kill your business. Strategies change and so do business models and you have to be able to keep up.

This is something that can be good for you as you discover things that can take your business to a new level. Not only will being part of continuing education in your business prevent boredom from setting in, but you can also find things that will feed your motivation and keep you excited about the business.

## ARE YOUR WRITING SKILLS ADEQUATE FOR CONTENT CREATION?

When you're creating written content for your business, you want to let who you are shine through in your voice. Your life's experiences are what makes you unique.

It's what helps your audience to be able to connect with you. Your writing should be as unique as you are. It should be something that's 100% you. If you take writing from other people and plagiarize that as your own, you risk a couple of things happening.

First, it's not going to be fresh if you're copying content from someone else. Second, plagiarizing is morally despicable and can hurt your business. Once people learn that you've plagiarized something, your reputation is ruined online.

People don't want copycat information. Plus, if you do it, your actions can subject you to fines and other penalties because it's against the law. With the passing of the Digital Millennium Copyright Act (DMCA), the works that people write and put online are protected.

When you write, you need to write material that's engaging. When you write in such a way that your audience can connect with you, it's easier to develop a business relationship with these people.

They will invest their time and money in someone that they feel they know over someone that they don't. When you write in an engaging way, you'll be writing things that others find interesting and they'll keep returning to your site to see what else you have to say.

Many marketers have built huge careers simply because they knew how to engage an audience with their words. Whatever you write needs to be well-written.

You need to know how to formulate your thoughts and come across in a logical manner. If you write in a way that's confusing and unorganized, your audience will label it as rambling material.

Your spelling and grammar should be good and what you write should be free of typos. Everyone makes mistakes, that's a given. But if you're constantly churning out writing that's full of bad grammar and spelling mistakes, it will make you look unprofessional.

At the same time that you need to be sure your writing is free of grammar and spelling mistakes, you don't want to write in such a pompous way that you come across as talking down to your audience.

Write in a tone that reads like you're sitting across from the person having a cup of coffee and conversation. Your material should also be up to date. If you're always writing about things that are a few beats behind the information that's fresh, people will turn to your competitors to get what they want.

Coming up with content yourself might not be a talent that you naturally possess. However, it can be learned. Take the time to assess your writing skills. You can analyze your shortcomings with writing content by being honest with yourself.

If you find writing a chore and you hate it, you're not really going to want to give it your best effort because you just want to get it over with. If you know you struggle with grammar and spelling, you can either take some refresher courses, adult education courses, or you can outsource to someone else – even an editor for simple proofreading!

## DOES YOUR SOCIAL NETWORKING NEED IMPROVING?

Social networking opened up the world for entrepreneurs. You can reach out online and have access to people thousands of miles away, in different countries and different time zones.

It's made doing business faster and easier. Plus, it's a great tool for building relationships. Like any tool, though, you have to know how to use it well in order for it to perform for you.

There are too many people who come across as uninteresting, too business focuses or too standoffish and an audience doesn't feel a connection to those people.

These are the entrepreneurs who languish in relative obscurity while their competition builds thousands of followers. You have the ability to make social networking a powerful tool if you use it right.

When you're online, don't retreat into yourself. Don't clam up and let self-doubt have a field day with you. This is what happens when that internal thought track tells you that you're not interesting and that people don't want to hear what you have to say.

Don't sign up for social media and then stay behind the scenes. That defeats the purpose of having the accounts to begin with. Once you sign up with various social media sites, start to engage with people.

That's how you build your audience, your mailing list and basically your business. Let people feel as if they know you, as if they have a peek inside your life. Share both personal and business stuff on social media.

Personal doesn't mean that you air your dirty laundry. Don't get on there and talk about your uncle getting drunk every holiday and dancing on the table. It's okay to share things like photos of pretty flowers that you took or a picture of your dog.

You can start conversations about foods that you like, about a movie you recently saw or a book that you read. Some social networking sites are better than others depending on what your niche is.

For example, Pinterest is a good platform for someone in the wedding or fitness niche. You can post pictures of weddings and wedding accessories. Or you can post workout gear, before and after shots, or pictures of workouts.

Facebook is good for niches that use videos or tutorials and you can create a group dedicated to that particular niche - such as pets. You can share information about dog products, how-to train videos etc.

Google+ has a lot of tech people, a lot of professionals. It's not used by the baby boomer crowd as much. So this would be a good social media site for niches that are into information products.

When you post on social media, pay attention to which ones get the most interaction. If you post a video and then a picture, if one got more interaction and more views, then you know what the audience prefers.

The timing of your posts is important too. Don't push any sales or information when there's a national crisis going on. You'll look insensitive. Likewise, you can use stats to tell you when your audience is most active on the site.

## BRING YOUR ADVERTISING EFFORTS INTO A NEW DAY

Advertising is something that never stays the same. All you have to do is look at the advertisements from 20 years ago to see that focus changes, attitudes have changed and people have changed.

What was cutting edge and worked then won't work now. If your advertising methods are more than six months old, it's likely that they're out of date. You can't use old, outdated advertising strategies - not if you want to bring in today's audiences.

Even though it's a powerhouse social media site, there are still many entrepreneurs who don't take advantage of using Facebook for their business advertising.

That's a huge mistake because currently, there are over a billion people on Facebook. You can't afford to overlook those kind of numbers. Advertising on Facebook is fast, easy and gets your business in front of a huge audience.



Make sure you know what the purpose of having the ad is for. For example, let's say you want to gain new subscribers. Then define your objective by using the ads tool.

You'll be given choices like promoting your business page, boosting posts or having ads that will lead the audience to your site. In the ad manager, you'll be able to custom pick your audience according to where they live, their age level, what their shopping interests are, and so on.

You'll also be able to set a budget based on how much you can afford to spend. You can also use retargeting. This is an ad method that uses cookies that are placed on websites.

Many times people visit a site and don't stick around. What these cookies do is they track the visitor's Internet visits. When this visitor heads to a different site, your retargeting service can follow the cookie trail.

Then your ads will appear in front of these visitors at another time on a different site. Retargeting works to land potential buyers because your ad appears again and they remember your site and their original interest.

They head back to your site and buy this time, giving you a boost in your ROI. With ads, you'll want to analyze them. By monitoring them, you can measure what you're spending on the campaign versus what you're gaining in new customers or revenue.

Follow the information on your ad tool dashboard in Facebook to tweak your ads. You may find that you need to change location or gender or other things that can improve how your ad performs.

## GET BRAVE AND START VIDEO MARKETING AND LIVE STREAMING

If you want grow your business and increase sales, then you need to be part of the video marketing world. Video marketing helps you connect with people and build an audience right on your own blog.

Videos are popular because of the depth of the connection that's available. With certain ads (and even text) on your site, you can't grab an audience with storytelling the way a video can.

Videos are more personable. Your audience can see you or visualize what you're talking about if you're showing how to do something. Because we live in a visual world, people tend to relate to videos over just reading something.

You can have a lot of success with video marketing because you can make them personal and fill them with tips or advice that can help your audience. Not just that, but your videos will have additional value over just a "buy me" sales pitch that the audience reads.

They get to see that there's a real person behind the product or the information. They're able to put a face with the name or with the brand. What this does is remove that wall of anonymity even though they won't know in depth personal information about you.

With videos, you become a storyteller and you can literally captivate an audience and in some cases, create a viral marketing tool. When you use videos, they help convert the tire kickers into solid buyers more so than if they just read the sales copy.

Live streaming is an excellent way to market because you get to interact with the audience and there are several platforms you can use to do this with. One of them is Blab.

On this platform, your audience can join you once they're accepted and you'll be able to see what they want to ask you. It gives you and the audience the ability to have a conversation in real time that goes below the surface.

It builds trust and enables you to discuss ideas, offer solutions and it's great for getting feedback from your audience. Periscope is a live streaming app that lets you broadcast in front of an audience.

You can build a tribe, meet your audience and build a business by increasing sales. You'll get greater exposure for your business with each broadcast. It gives you real time access to customers almost as if you're having a face to face meeting with them.

This allows your audience to feel as if you're authentic - and that in turn builds trust. People can use Meerkat with their mobile devices connected to social media to connect with their audiences.

With live streaming, what you're seeing is what your audience sees. They can comment as they watch and you can reply back. It's an instant connection and interaction.

Plus, the Meerkat platform lets you share the video and then it alerts the audience with a link. You can immediately have a thousand people watching your video.

## CONVERT BETTER BY IMPROVING YOUR SALES COPY

You need sales copy in order to have sales of your product. But not all copy has the potential to convert. Sometimes there can be something missing that causes your audience to move on without ever making the purchase.

If you notice that people are landing on your page but they're not buying, that's a good sign that they need a little more convincing because your copy isn't compelling enough.

You need to analyze how people are responding to your page. If you have a high bounce rate, it's time to make some changes. While you certainly don't want to copy your competition, if they're successful, then you do want to check them out to see what it is that they're doing right.

It could be that they're doing something with their sales copy that you're not doing. Or maybe they're not doing something that you are. Either one of those could be something that you can tweak and see if you get better results that way.

Locate some of the competitors in your niche and go over their site carefully. Make notes of how they persuade an audience. Check out their ratio of sales push to advice.

How personable are they? What topics are they talking about? How often are they talking about new things? Study how much or how little detail they give about their product or information.

Could it be that you're giving away too much? Or not giving away enough information to hook a person's interest? What is your competition's sales to personable ratio of information on their site?

How fresh is their site content? Once you've compared your copy to a competitor that you know is successful, you can make some changes on your own. One way to do that is to use split testing.

With split testing, you create two copies of something like your sales letter. Copy A would have one headline while copy B would have a different headline. Then you would send your sales letter to your email list so that half your list gets copy A and the other half gets copy B.

Then you can see which headline was more effective. You can figure that out just by looking at your data. You can check your colors, formatting, and even font this way to see how it impacts the buyer's final decision.

You can use split testing to send traffic to two separate landing pages and then you can see which one performs better. You can use video on one page and plain text on another.

To keep from getting overwhelmed by all of the possible changes you can make, only implement one change at a time. You can also make a hybrid sales page - using both video and text on your copy to attract your audience.

If you want to test this, you can use video in split testing and send half your list video and the other half text. Then compare those results to a hybrid mix, where you combine different media formats on the page, to appeal to more potential buyers.

## MASTERING YOUR MINDSET FOR 2016

You want success, but you're not sure what the key is to getting there. It's actually quite simple. It's your mindset. Your mindset is the attitude that you have toward something.

And your mindset is the deciding factor in whether or not you'll actually achieve the success that you're looking for. You can have a negative or a positive mindset.

People who have negative attitudes usually see the reasons why something can't be achieved and these people are self-limiting when it comes to success. But people with positive mindsets see the problems in a task and look for ways to adapt around or through the problem to come up with a solution that works.

Mindset matters because with the right mindset, you'll be able to tap into the potential that you have for success. Everyone has this potential, but not everyone reaches for it. Those who do will experience personal and professional growth.

## HAVE A CLEAR FOCUS IN MIND FOR YOUR GOALS

If you ask people what they want, many of them will simply say they want to be successful. But if you ask them how they plan to achieve this success, they won't have actionable goals.

If you have random milestones that are too broad, you won't be able to reach those goals. For example, if you have a bunch of goals like wanting to be successful financially, wanting your business to grow, wanting to be able to level up in your business, those goals are so broad, so all over the place, that you won't be able to reach them.

Goals have to be broken down into actionable steps. They can't be so broad that they're one-size-fits all. Those types of goals don't give you a road map. They're just contributing to your confusion and overwhelm.

If you say you want to make an extra \$40,000 this year, that's fine - but what are the steps that you're going to take to get there. You don't make \$40K overnight. You make it by taking the smaller steps that lead you to that goal.

You need to define these smaller steps that end up feeding into your larger goal. So instead of having a goal of making more money overall, set a goal of how much money you need to make each day or each week to meet that ultimate goal.

If you want to make an extra \$40K, then you would need to bring in about \$3,333 a month. Break that down by how much you would need to bring in a week, which is about \$833 or about \$119 a day.

That's what you focus your goal on because when you make that \$119 a day, it feeds into the weekly goal which feeds into the ultimate goal. And it's not so overwhelming.

If you have streams of income right now that aren't moving you toward your goal, then you have to come up with a way to increase that income. You can offer an information eBook.

You can set up paid tutorials or start a members' only forum. What you can't do is sit down and think about your goal, plan it and then do nothing to move toward it.

Wishful thinking or hoping doesn't lead to changes or results. When you set actionable goals, it allows you to have a clear focus and helps you have the mindset to reach them.

You need deliberate goals in order to have a sense of direction. It allows you to lead your life rather than to be led. Plus, when you have actionable goals, it lets you keep track of your success.

If you know that you have to make \$119 a day and one day you make twice that, then you're ahead of the week's goal. And that will help if you have a shortcoming on another day.

You need to first determine what it is that you want. You can't set goals until you know what you want. These goals should matter or mean something to you. They should be goals that you're driven toward.

The most successful people have an underlying motivation to their goals. They want to be successful but many of them have a "because" in there. Such as "I want to be successful because I want to be able to spend more time with my family."

Some people have an underlying motivation to be successful because they know what it's like to struggle and they don't want to live the rest of their life that way. Your goals should be narrowed down to specifics.

Name exactly what you want. Break the issues down so that you can keep track of the goals in smaller, actionable steps. It's important that you have these goals outlined with a way to track them.

Use deadlines for yourself. If you know you want to make that \$3,333 in a month, then this allows you to be able to break down when you know you have to have a product ready - or take a step to get something out that will work toward bringing in that money.

These goals should be ones that are within your reach. If one of your goals is to make a billion dollars in a year, odds are really high that's not an achievable goal. So don't set yourself up to fail right out of the gate with a goal that you won't be able to accomplish because it's not realistic.

When you create your goals, make sure that your mindset is positive. Don't set self-defeating goals. An example of this would be a positive goal of "increase mailing list by 25%" rather than the goal that has a negative spin such as "find a way to make up for subscribers who are unsubscribing."

Once you've created the goals that are going to move you in the direction that you want to go, you'll want to reinforce them. Look over them once a day. Put them in front of you to remind yourself that even if you don't see huge changes overnight, these changes are happening as you reach these actionable goals.

## ISOLATE YOURSELF FROM NEGATIVITY

You might have heard how negativity is a bad thing when it comes to having the right mindset for success. It's true. Negativity is one of the biggest things that can derail any attempt at success.

The reason that negativity can keep you stuck, holding you back from obtaining goals and changing any part of your life, is because negativity wipes out motivation.

It's hard to feel motivated about anything when your head is full of negative messages. What happens is that you're fired up, ready to charge ahead with reaching success, when along comes someone who says that you don't have the talent, the knowledge, the money, the support or the courage to make it happen.

Before you know it, that negativity has seeped all the way into your inner mind and you find that the self-doubts are multiplying. You begin to believe they're right.

You don't have the talent. You don't have the knowledge and the next thing you know, you're not even trying to move forward any more. When negativity destroys your motivation, it destroys your confidence.

It's not a matter of whether or not you're going to encounter this negative response, but when. Because many people just have a damaging outlook and they spread that negativity.

It's second nature to them, but it doesn't have to be accepted by you. You can reject their negativity. Who's destructive in your life? First, it's usually always going to be family.

Under the well-meaning guise of trying to be helpful and not wanting to see you get hurt or fail, they're going to try to persuade you that what you're trying to do can't be done.

Next, it will be your friends. Many of your friends probably have their lives already mapped out right through their retirement years and you can bet it doesn't involve stepping out and running their own business.

Friends often play it safe and so they want you to do the same. It's true that being an entrepreneur means there will be some risk. There will be long hours. There will be trial and error.

But that's not a bad thing. It's just part of the process and you can't let friends influence you to give up. You'll find on your entrepreneurial journey that there are even some fellow marketers who are negative.

These people whine about how difficult it is. They point out the pitfalls, they talk about the downside and it seems like they do nothing but discourage others and themselves.

They're almost constantly griping about stuff and comparing themselves and you to success stories. They'll even point out how they and you will never reach that same level of success.

If you really want to be a success, you have to isolate yourself from negativity. If you don't, eventually, you will start to believe this negative feedback. As a result, your motivation will either suffer or disappear altogether and eventually, you'll give up.

What you need to do is to surround yourself with people who are positive. People who look forward to challenges and see setbacks as opportunities to learn from rather than as signs to give up.

Being around positive people will be a support team for you and help you keep your motivation high when you do reach places that are hard as you try to build your career.

## LEARN HOW TO MOTIVATE YOURSELF WITH MANTRAS

Motivation is something that we all have with certain tasks, but it's not always a given. The truth is that many of us can have our motivation wane. When motivation dwindles, it can be difficult to push yourself to do anything much less have the desire to strive for success.

Motivation goes hand in hand with achieving success, but you can't always expect motivation to come from outside sources and you shouldn't rely on that anyway.

Outside sources, such as a friend who cheers you onward and helps you feel inspired, might not motivate you the next time. What gave you a burst of incentive one day might not be available the next and that's why it's so important that you learn how to encourage yourself.

When you feel motivated, you'll be able to find the willpower to keep on reaching for your goals. And when it's within you, you can tap into a well of enthusiasm that will keep you going regardless of what you come up against.

The key to self motivation is to find a mantra that you can use. Mantras are words or phrases that you can repeat to yourself. What these mantras can do is they can help you keep a confident outlook.

Your mindset will be focused on the positives, which in turn help your motivation. In our subconscious minds, we're not geared toward the positive. We're not automatically geared toward success.

The brain and the body both want the path of least resistance because it's a survival technique. We walk away from the things we view as mentally or physically difficult or frightening, especially if it makes us feel stressed.

With being an entrepreneur, your subconscious mind is one of your best tools to being successful. But if your subconscious is fixated on the negative or what hasn't worked for you in the past, this can be a stumbling block.

Fortunately, your subconscious can be retrained to think differently, to have a success mindset - and the way to do that is with mantras. By using mantras, you'll also feel better emotionally.

What you have to do is to pick a mantra that's geared specifically toward success. Success mantras help you to be mindful of the positives in your life every day and it creates a mindset of gratitude.

Mantras can change your perspective and help keep you motivated through to an optimistic attitude. You can use mantras for , such as "My goal for success today is \_\_\_\_\_" or "I have the

ability to succeed.” Mantras not only strengthen your outlook, but they also help you feel stronger and have a better self-esteem.

## SPEND TIME READING THE BEST SUCCESS MINDSET BOOKS

Your mindset can change your life. It can give you the success that you crave by helping you stay motivated to reach your goals. Sometimes though, if you’re stuck in a rut of always thinking a certain way, which is known as having a fixed mindset, then you can struggle to overcome that.

There are tools that you can use to reach the right mindset. These are also tools that you can use to help you maintain your motivation. These tools are books that focus on having the right mindset for success.

They cover problem areas and show you how you can overcome things. You don’t have to devour the books in one sitting, but you can digest a little of the books each day and you’ll notice a difference.

One of these books is *Time Warrior: How to Defeat Procrastination, People-Pleasing, Self-Doubt, Over-Commitment, Broken Promises and Chaos* by Steve Chandler.

This book can help you find motivation by showing you how to push past the fear and self-doubt that strikes many entrepreneurs. It covers helpful things like how you can handle life when you’re overwhelmed and how to succeed with your goals.

He also covers how you can live in the moment and take action. There’s a part in there that talks about failure and why it’s not necessarily a bad thing. You’ll learn how to see problems in a new light and how to overcome the things that prevent most people from being successful.

Another book you’ll find helpful is *E-Squared: Nine Do-It-Yourself Energy Experiments That Prove Your Thoughts Create Your Reality* by Pam Grout. In this book, the author covers nine experiments authors can use to help shake themselves out of misinformed thinking.

This helps free the subconscious from rigid thinking that prevents motivation and success from occurring. There’s also *The Power of Story: Change Your Story, Change Your Destiny in Business and in Life* by Jim Loehr.

In the book, the author covers the assumptions that we make about ourselves and how these assumptions are essentially our story. But when the story that you tell about yourself to yourself is faulty, it can affect your mindset and how you achieve success.

The book touches on the pessimist as well as the optimist mindset and how the little voice inside your head can influence your life. He teaches how you can retrain your way of thinking to write your story with a successful slant.



## CUSTOMER ENGAGEMENT TIPS FOR 2016

When you have customer engagement, you'll grow your business with social proof, but more than that, you'll be able to design your business in a way so that it caters to the needs of your audience.

It used to be that you could engage your audience by sending out an email, but that's all changed. Customers aren't interested in a one sided relationship anymore.

You can't just *have* an online presence. You have to be interactive. You need to engage - and if you think this something that only small businesses do, you'd be mistaken.

Big businesses have learned that social proof matters and they're engaging with their fans. It's especially important if you're a solo entrepreneur who doesn't have the same branding as a big company does on a global scale.

### WHERE TO ENGAGE YOUR AUDIENCE

You'll have plenty of opportunities to engage with your audience online. Depending on the social media platform that you're using, how that engagement takes place might differ.

If you're using Facebook, then you need to have a variety of posts. One mistake that entrepreneurs make is to post the same kind of stuff day in and day out. You need to shake things up a bit so they don't grow stale.

People don't want to see the same things all the time in the same format. By switching it up, you can see what kind of posts your audience reacts to the most. Use posts of videos, photos, links, pose questions and more to draw your audience in.

You can create quizzes, share articles and other content that's related. You can also do things like asking the audience to caption a photo or have a throwback post.

That's where you post a picture from years past - like funny 80s clothing or old technology to stir up the conversation. Make sure that you post consistently and that you when you do, you're available to interact with the audience.

There's nothing worse than a drive-by poster. Use a Pinterest account to interact with your audience. You can do things like holding a contest where everyone has to share a photo of something.

You can offer prizes and other perks to increase interest. Use the site to offer consumers deals where, by sharing what you pin, they can have access to some type of discount.

Have more than one board because this lets you have more content and the ability to share more topics, which offers a wider range of appeal to your audience.

Re-pin what your audience posts. This causes consumers to submit topics and feel like they're part of the inner circle. Twitter makes it pretty easy to engage with an audience fast.

Make your Twitter account personable. Don't use a fake profile or avatar. Talk about things that you're passionate about and share pictures. Talk back to others.

Respond, thank people, and share their news to give back. Your audience will feel connected to you. When sharing content that's not yours, don't just pass it along, say something even it's just "love this" and don't use all the 140 characters.

This allows people ease of use for when they pass it on. Get involved in chats that your audience is part of. Keep your sentences short. It's okay and even eye-catching to not have the sentences on the same line. Use hashtags (#) and @mentions to engage your audience.

If you use Instagram, keep your attention on the personality behind your business rather than the selling. Make sure that you take advantage of re-gramming a post.

That's where you will repost something your audience shared. Make sure you acknowledge where the original post came from. Don't ever share things just to share them – make sure you support or are intrigued by the idea.

Use videos and offer promotions such as telling the audience if they comment, they're eligible to win a particular prize. Keep an eye on the influencers on Instagram and engage with them.

This helps build your audience, too. Take advantage of the hashtags like #follow or use the emotion ones like #happy. Interact with the audience by commenting on the conversations they're in.

## HOW OFTEN SHOULD YOU POST AND INTERACT?

People handle social media in two ways. They either bombard the site or they use it every now and then. You must be consistent with whichever social media method you use.

But being consistent doesn't mean posting so often that people get sick and tired of seeing your stuff. There's a fine line between sharing and spamming and you don't want to cross that line by not understanding how social media should work.

It's true that you should post frequently. No one can get to know you and you can't engage with your audience if you're never around. At the very least, you should post something every day - and those posts should be done often enough so that you build a relationship.

How often you should post is going to depend on which site you're using. If you're using Pinterest, it's okay to spread out your posts up to 4 times a day. Just don't do one giant post.

Post in the morning, once in the afternoon, once in the evening and once at night. Each time you post, you can engage with your audience. For Twitter, don't post more than three times each day.

You'll actually find that your audience starts to grow tired of seeing your content if you post more often than that unless it's highly useful or relevant. Instagram analytics don't really show that audience engagement lessens with multiple posting as long as you interact.

Facebook interaction should be done once in the morning and once in the evening, minimum. If you post all day long, it looks like you spend all your time there, and you don't want to give that impression as a leading expert.

You can engage more often if you use Google+ because this site actually sees audience engagement boosts when you post more often. Still, you want to spread it out through the day and stick to about 3 times each day.

## WHAT TO POST FOR INCREASED ENGAGEMENT?

You might sometimes feel like you don't have a lot to say on social media. Maybe that's why you haven't posted as much as you should. But coming up with something to post is a lot easier than you think.

When you do post, make sure that you post something with a picture. Studies have shown that if there's an image with whatever you post, it gets a higher response rate and people tend to share pictures more than other types of posts.

People love to be inspired - and a great way to engage with your audience is to share quotes that inspire them. You can use ones that have a special meaning to you.

When you run across something that you really like, save it to your computer in a folder so that you'll also have a supply of inspiring quotes on hand to share. These quotes can range from business inspiration to personal motivation to quotes that make people stop and think about life in general.

The good news is that when they see that quote later, more often than not, they'll remember that you're the one who shared it before. If you think that you have trouble knowing what to say on social media, keep in mind that other people do, too.

They might see a post they really like but won't comment on it because they're too shy or don't know what to say. You can stir up more engagement by asking questions on your social media sites.

People will answer questions because it's more of a group effort. When they see others responding to the question, they'll jump in. It's okay to share posts about new products that you like or even your own products.

Just make sure that you don't let the post come across as a pushy sales post. Instead of hawking the product, you can post it and say something like you just finished working on it and you're so excited.

Then it comes across as you letting them see behind the scenes rather than you turning into a sales person. Share personal stuff, too. This doesn't mean that you showcase embarrassing things or any family drama.

It means sharing a picture of your garden or your vacation. You can share the latest antics of your cat or dog - or an event that you attended. What this does is it makes you come across as a

human being rather than a business - and people connect more when they feel like they see the person behind the brand.

## REWARD YOUR AUDIENCE FOR ENGAGING

When you reward your audience for engaging, it helps build loyalty. People love to be rewarded. They love to get something that they weren't expecting. It helps them feel appreciated.

When people feel appreciated by someone, it makes them feel as if they know you and that you're someone they can build an online relationship with. It's easy to find ways to make sure you regularly reward your audience.

You don't want to do it so often that people only show up and only interact because they think you're giving something away every time. But you want to do it often enough so that it makes a difference.

Small giveaways throughout the month are appropriate with bigger giveaways spaced out through the year like a grand prize. You can arrange it so that when someone in your audience comments on something that you've posted that get access to information or maybe a beta version of a product before anyone else does.

If someone shares one of your posts, you can reward them with the same deal. What this does is it creates a kind of street team of loyal followers who will gladly promote you to other people on their own social media sites.

People love to have the chance to win prizes too and you'll see your engagement soar when you offer specific prizes. Gift cards are extremely popular. You can offer coffee store gift cards, bookstore gift cards, ones to restaurants or Amazon gift cards.

Some people will use Rafflecopter to handle the entries in any type of contest they have. But that's not the best course to take because you can have people sharing just the link to the Rafflecopter widget.

That means that it won't increase views or interaction. It also means that people who don't have the slightest interest in you or your brand will enter the contest multiple times in hopes of winning.

What you want to do is to pay attention to the people on your social media who actively engage with you. When you see this, reach out to them and offer them some exclusive perks.

Maybe you can give them some new software you created or a special report that's usually only available in your membership forum. There are endless ways you can go above and beyond with your audience!

## USE DATA TO MAKE YOUR ENGAGEMENT SOAR

Knowing when to post something on social media is just as important as knowing what to post. You don't want to spend time and energy focused on creating engaging posts only to have them disappear unnoticed into the cyber void of social media.

This void is what occurs when interest and engagement is at its lowest point – your audience is offline, sleeping or doing other things. If you know when those times are, then you can avoid it.

You can also make your posts more audience specific if you learn who they are. Posts that are directed to a narrower audience will hit their target more than a broad, all inclusive post will.

It's just a fact of life that not everyone is going to be interested in what you have to say. So why not gear your interaction toward the people who do want to hear what it is you share?

You can use data to make sure that you're posting during the times that your audience is most active. By posting during these times, what you post will end up at the top of their feed rather than buried at the bottom.

For example, if you use Twitter and you tweet during the week, you don't want to tweet first thing in the morning. Most people don't hop right on. They take care of a few things first, then check their social media.

So you would want to put your tweet out there in the mid morning. You would also not want to engage in posts on Twitter late at night because that's when the site is the least active and your tweet could end up getting missed by your target audience.

This information can also help you redefine your marketing campaigns when you do those. By knowing when and what to post, you can create content that's tailor made and hits the mark.

Most social media sites have analytic tools that you can use. Plus, there are outside ones that you can use to check on how well your posts are performing. You can use Facebook insights to see what demographic was interacting with your page.

You might see something that shows that 65% of your demographic were women while 35% were men. You'll also be able to see age and relationship, language and the size of their household.

You'll be able to ascertain how often your audience is active on the Facebook site. If you check out page insights, you'll see the number of people who shared your posts or engaged on your page.

All of this information and research into your social media experience can help you build a rabid fan base of people who not only like what you share and teach, but feel compelled to get others onboard, too.

## ZEROING IN ON TRENDY TOPICS FOR NEXT YEAR

When you've chosen a niche for your business, you have to know what's new in the field that you're in. It's important that you stay on top of all of the cutting edge information.

If you don't, then the details that you have will be out of date and your audience will consider your content useless. They'll move on and spend their time and money with your competition.

There are some ways that you can keep up with the trendy topics so that you never fall behind the times. Learning how to research and be aware is an important part of your business success.

### WATCH MAGAZINE COVERS FOR TOP TIPS

Trying to come up with topics that keep your content fresh and help make your niche as good as it was intended to be can be tough. But one tip you won't want to overlook is one that's right under your nose.

You see these every time you go to the grocery store or the pharmacy and probably never realized what a gold mine it was. Magazines are what you want to pay close attention to in order to find tips for your niche.

If you've ever paid attention to the covers of magazines, you'll notice that they're full of attention grabbing headlines for the articles. These headlines are designed to hook the reader and make them feel like that must buy that magazine in order to gain access to the information in it.

One of the best fields where you're always going to find what's trendy is on the cover of women's magazines. The editors of these magazines know that yesterday's topics just won't keep the readers returning.

They have no choice but to stay on the cutting edge of what's hot in the world at that moment. They can't afford to fall behind the current information or the readers will seek out other magazines.

So take the time to read over the cover of magazines, especially the women's magazines like Woman's World Weekly. The topics they cover are wide-ranging, interesting and can fit almost any niche that you might have.

You'll always see articles on dieting because this is an evergreen topic. These articles will cover a variety of points about low carb eating, cutting out certain ingredients, or just learning about portion control.

You might see one headline that talks about how to get started changing your diet for health reasons like inflammation, or diet topics related to finances, such as how to eat low carb on a budget.

You might see another headline for an article on low carb eating that will focus on the audience like beginners or the over 40 crowd. Another one might offer a list of the top foods to eat on a low carb diet or to stave off the aging process.

Still others will offer a menu plan for a week or a month. Some will share how to shop when you're dieting. Or how to handle dieting around the holidays. You'll also notice that women's magazines cover things like stress relief.

This is a huge niche and the topics that you can cover in it are almost unending. There will be articles written about how to deal with stress in romantic relationships. You'll see ones that talk about how you can lower stress when you're with your kids or when you're visiting extended family members.

Some of the articles will cover stress in the workplace and how to deal with the pressure of the job or the coworker that gets your blood pressure soaring upward. The topics might also cover stress and how it affects your body physically, which you can use to spin topics for your niche in yet another direction.

The magazine headlines might talk about combating stress by using a method such as exercise. Or it will point out the benefits of meditation on stress. You'll notice that these articles always bring awareness about a problem but then turn around and offer the solution.

Some examples of headlines you'll see can be examples such as stress in children, stress in teens, and stress in the elderly. You'll see articles like what not to do when you're stressed that cover ideas like not making a significant life change when you're stressed.

You'll see checklists that will cover the signs of stress. Many common niches you can think of have been covered on the front of a magazine. So if you're scratching your head wondering how to keep up with what's new, just look at those.

Obviously, you can't stand in the grocery store and make notes of the topics that you see on the front covers of the magazines. Not only that, but you don't want to buy an armful of magazines every time you're looking for the trendy or hot topics.

That would be a quick way to break your budget. You can find these magazines online. Many of them will offer you a free downloadable copy of the magazine if you do a web browser search.

You can also go to the magazine's main website and just read the front cover. For example, if you search for Woman's World Weekly, the front cover of the magazine pulls right up and you can see headlines that cover the beauty niche.

There are headlines talking about how to make your skin look softer and younger.

Other headlines cover the weight loss niche, how to combat hair loss, or how to find relief from pain.

Prevention Magazine is another good one to look up online. They have a huge supply of ideas for your niche. Recently, they covered weight loss, menopause, foods, nutrition, beauty, skin care, emotional health, diseases, makeup, eating disorders, foot care and hormone replacement.

## LISTENING IN ON NICHE FORUM CHATTER

If you're not part of a niche forum, you really should be. Being part of a forum community can be helpful to you when it comes to finding out what topics are currently trending.

What forums do is they let you discover what potential customers are going to be looking for. It's an inside look at where the future is heading. You'll get a jump start on what their product or information needs will be.

This will help you fine tune what you're promoting or selling to your audience. Plus, you'll also see what's popular and you can use that information to bring in traffic to your site.

These forums will have numerous threads where you can glean information and most of them are extremely helpful toward entrepreneurs who are new in the field. You can learn a lot simply by reading what's on the forum and you'll often discover that someone else has asked questions that you need answers to as well.

When you need to be in the know about whatever is new that's going on in niche marketing, you can check out the current posts. You'll see that people there will start conversations about a topic long before it hits mainstream search engines.

Look specifically for the threads that start with things like, "Has anyone heard of..." and those threads will talk about a particular product or a new research fact that will tie in to your niche.

You'll also see other topics where multiple forum users are talking. When you notice these threads, that's a clue. It means that interest is starting to peak about that topic. You want to pay attention and get in on the latest news to use it for your business before it hits mainstream and then everyone is talking about it.

Pay attention to a flurry of comments and questions when you see topics you don't recognize. For example, right before the hCG diet became popular, there were questions on the forum about it.

These questions came across as "hCG users anyone?" And just by reading the comments and questions, you would be able to learn enough information to know what it was and be able to gauge the current level of interest.

You could then use that to start promotion of an hCG product or create an information report about it. You'll also see people posting thing in the forums such as "does anyone know..." and that tells you they haven't found a credible leader online for that topic.

If you don't know of any forums pertaining to your niche, all you have to do is Google what your interest is followed by the word *forum* or *forums* and you'll get a long list that you can check out.

## SET UP GOOGLE ALERTS FOR BREAKING NEWS YOU CAN CAPITALIZE ON

You can't capitalize on information that you don't know anything about. You have to have the most up to date information in order to be able to compete well in your niche. Obviously, if you were to spend time every day searching, it would take up too much of your day.



Time that you need to spend on your business is precious. Plus, when something is a trending topic, by the time you get around to searching, that topic might be several hours or a day old, which puts you behind window of opportunity.

You'll want to set up Google Alerts so that you can stay on top of what's going on in the field that you want to know about. What you do is you go to Google Alerts and a search area will be at the top.

You input whatever search words you want to get results about. For example, if you wanted information about weight loss, you would type that in there. It basically works just like the regular Google search engine.

After you put in the search words, you'll have options where you can choose how you want it and where you want this information to come from. There will be a box asking you how often you want to receive these alerts.

It's important that you check "as-it-happens" because that's trending. Getting the information once a day will put you behind the curve. Then make sure you check automatic.

You'll get to select the language that you want as well as the region. You'll be offered a choice between "only the best results" or "all results" so be sure and check all results. You want to filter the information yourself as to whether or not it's useful.

When you set this up, it allows you to be the first marketer to whip up a short report, even a \$7 one, and get it in front an audience hungry for the information. If you're first to bring the information to the audience when there's not much information out there about the topic, you'll outsell your competitors because you had what the audience wanted all ready to go.

## GOING AGAINST THE GRAIN

There are always new trends cropping up. Some of these trends take off so fast and suddenly, everyone's onboard. The world is always looking for new answers to the same problems and always seeking more information to help their lives run more smoothly.

So new trends are going to appear in every single niche. You'll have brand new weight loss pills, new diets to try, products that clear skin, medication that treats a variety of illnesses and so on.

Since you want to be ahead of the competition, you'll want to jump on that trending news and give it to your audience. But, you don't want to assume that everything is going to be wonderful.

Just as there will thousands who embrace this new trend, there will those who speak out against it. This kind of backlash always happens. As a marketer, you need to be prepared ahead of time for this to happen.

There's nothing worse than having people speak out against something you're promoting and to be unprepared. It will make you look like you haven't done your homework and don't care about anything other than the money.

So what you have to do is have a plan so that you can go against the grain. You need to be prepared with a product or information that swings the other direction from whatever is trending.

If there's a huge pro-hCG diet trend, then you can bet there will be a diet that comes out that talks about how bad the hCG diet is. What you want to do is if you see a product that's trending and you suspect there will be a backlash, is have a product or information set to promote that guides people toward an alternative solution.

This way, you're still capitalizing on the popularity of the product receiving the backlash. But if it's something that you believe in and it's a great moneymaker, you might not want to go the opposite direction.

If that's the case, then you need to be up on the latest research about the product. You need to have as many facts lined up as you can so that you can defend the reason behind your support of the product.

For every researcher or scientific expert who debunks a trend, there are others who will defend it. You can use that research or those facts to help bolster your reason for supporting the product.

## USE OUTSOURCING AS A WAY TO EXPAND YOUR 2016 INCOME

As an entrepreneur, you're going to be faced with having to wear many hats. It's up to you to make sure that your business thrives. But trying to do every task yourself can be a mistake.

By outsourcing, you stand to gain more for your business than you'll spend on the money it takes to pay for the outsourcing. You'll be able to hire professionals who can do the task faster and easier.

This not only saves you time, but it takes the stress off of you since you won't have to do it all yourself. You end up gaining more productivity because you're freed up to focus on other areas of the business that only you can handle.

Plus, by outsourcing, you'll experience faster business growth because you won't have to wait until you complete each step of a project.

### ASPECTS OF YOUR WAH BUSINESS YOU CAN OUTSOURCE

Many tasks involved in running a business are time drains. You should outsource these tasks so that your time is freed up to concentrate on growing the business. You can outsource the writing for starters.

Whether you're a good writer or not is irrelevant. Writing has the potential to take up a lot of time - and if you have dozens of writing projects you need to complete, you can spend many hours simply developing content that you have to have.

These are hours you could spend on something else. It's faster and even cheaper to hire a writer. Some entrepreneurs worry about the cost effectiveness of hiring someone to write their content for them.

But if you tally up what your time is worth and what you can potentially make per hour versus outsourcing the work, you'll see that you come out ahead. Use a writer to write your eBook materials, to write your reports, your articles, your product descriptions and more.

Whatever you need written, hire someone else to do it. You'll also want to outsource your graphics. It takes time to design the graphics that you'll use in your business.

Even if you have experience in this field, you still might not be able to afford to spend the time it takes to create the graphics that you'll use. Instead of tying up hours of your time designing them yourself, hire someone to create your graphics.

You'll use graphics for sales pages, banners and buttons, and social media images. You'll need logos, blog graphics, headers, add to cart buttons and the list goes on.

Every time you need something new, you don't want to have to stop what you're working on to create it. That can slow a project down. Instead, assign it to a graphics designer and keep on moving ahead with a project.

Research is something else that you'll want to outsource. Looking up the information that you need can be a huge time drain. You'll need to find facts and reliable sources.

You'll want to read articles and sites that can give depth perspective. When you're spending time researching, it can take multiple hours and in some cases even days.

You can't afford to do that yourself because while you're spending time researching, everything else that you need to take care of grinds to a halt. Setting up a site is another area you want to outsource.

Despite some sites' step-by-step setup guides, it's still going to cost you valuable time. Setting up a site can easily be a day or two project for you versus a couple of hours if you hire it out.

Tech details are something that you want to pay a professional to do, especially if you're brand new. You can dig around behind the scenes on a site, mess up a simple code and crash everything.

Rather than trying to figure out the tech stuff, just let someone else take it on and save yourself the stress. When you work at home, you're going to have to deal with customer service.

The good, the bad and the really ugly come out when dealing with customers. Not only can this drain your time, but there can be a lot of stress involved with handling the customer service side of any business.

Instead of letting that take up your time, outsource it to a virtual assistant (VA). You can also use a VA to help with SEO, your email marketing campaign, your social media, or to work on your blog.

A VA can send information to clients while you're busy or out of the office. Many VAs specialize in different areas. You can find ones that have experience in whatever field you need.

## WHERE TO FIND THE BEST FREELANCERS

It's true that with the Internet, anyone can put up a site and claim that they offer great freelancing services. Rather than trying to navigate the sea of possibly inexperienced freelancers, you want to go to the sites where professional, experienced freelancers are known to frequent.

Not only that, but by going to these sites, you'll often get help from others like yourself who have used the services before and they'll offer helpful recommendations.

You can go to places like Elance. When you go onto Elance, they have numerous freelancers that you can pick from to hire. You would need to go to the site and list the job that you want to hire someone to do.

Elance will take what you've posted and then give you a list of freelancers that fit the parameters of the job. Once you have a list of people that Elance suggests or who bid on your project, you can look over these applicants and see what kind of proposal they're offering.

These proposals will often vary according to time to complete the task as well as the amount of money. When you look over the applicant proposals, you'll be able to see what kind of work they've done in the past and whether they have experience with what you're looking for.

You'll also be able to see what the applicant's client satisfaction ratio is. Once you choose an applicant, you'll pay Elance directly and the funds go into escrow. The site has the ability to use hourly time tracking if you've chosen an hourly project.

Once the job is completed to your satisfaction, you release the funds from escrow and Elance handles paying the applicant from those funds. Another place to find freelancers is on the Warrior Forum.

You'll find these under threads like "warriors for hire" and others. With the Warrior Forum, the people there are usually very experienced in what they do, especially with Internet marketing and other specific niches.

You can find copywriters, ghostwriters, freelance writers, tech gurus, virtual assistants, graphic designers and more on Warrior Forum. Another place you'll want to check out is Fiverr.

Some entrepreneurs shy away from the site, thinking that paying someone \$5 means that the product will be low quality - but that's not the case. What the \$5 means is not necessarily that you'll only pay \$5.

For example, some of the writers on the site charge \$5 per certain word count. So if the provider says \$5 per 200 words and you need a 600 word article, you'll actually pay \$15.

Plus, you can find a whole wealth of categories on Fiverr - including proofreading, SEO content, design services and more. They have portfolios and feedback that make it easy to hire someone with confidence.

## HOW TO POST A PROJECT FOR A FREELANCE GHOSTWRITER

When you have a job that you want to hire a freelance ghostwriter to do, there's some information that you'll have to share so that you can make sure you're both on the same page with the project.

Make sure that you're clear on what you want the style to be. A ghostwriter can write an article and sound comfortable and breezy like he's talking to a friend. Or, he can write an article and sound formal.

The style that you want is up to you, but the ghostwriter has to be clear on what you're going for. You'll also want to cover the topic. With this, you'll want to be specific.

You could end up with material that's not what you wanted if you're not clear. For example, if you need a few articles about the topic of genetically altered foods and you're thinking of them in a positive light, you need to tell that to the ghostwriter.

Otherwise, you could end up with articles that talk about all the cons involving genetically modified foods. It can also be helpful if the ghostwriter knows the audience you're gearing the article toward.

An article on driving will be slanted differently for someone who's in their 70s versus a brand new teenage driver. The more information you give the ghostwriter, the more the material will sound like you wrote it in your own voice.

It's imperative that you cover deadlines. If you post a project and you don't talk about the deadline, you might end up getting it long after you need it. If it's a rush deadline, tell the ghostwriter that up front. Many of them are willing to do a rush project for an additional fee.

Cover the cost of the project up front. State clearly what the job pays and don't be the kind of client who wants to add to the scope of the project after you've outlined what's involved.

If you need research done, mention that. Most ghostwriters are skilled at research and that can be included in the parameters of the work project. Sometimes, when new entrepreneurs post a project, they come across as pushy or demanding and then don't understand why ghostwriters are reluctant to work with them.

Don't treat the potential ghostwriter like you're gifting them with a project. It's a mutually beneficial deal. Plus, if they do a good job, you'll want to hire them again and again in the future.

## HIRING A FREELANCE GRAPHIC DESIGNER

There will be times during the course of your business that you're going to want to outsource some of your tasks to a graphic designer. It's not cost effective to have one on staff - especially if your business is still in the early days.

But it is cost effective for you to hire a freelance one on an as needed basis. Know that just because someone says they're a graphic designer doesn't mean they're actually any good at it.

Since the graphics will be representing a portion of your business, you want to hire someone who knows what he's doing. Graphic designers can handle a multitude of tasks.

They can design headers for your business sites. They can also create the header for your blogs, for your social media sites and more. If you're working on creating some information products like eBooks, graphic designers can create your ecovers.

While you can create ecovers yourself, if you don't really understand how graphic design works, then your ecovers will look second rate, which in turn screams unprofessional to potential clients.

It's always better to outsource your graphic design needs than to try and complete them yourself. Also, if you're going to build minisites, you'll want a graphic designer's skills behind it.

Minisites get a lot of traffic specific visits and you want these visitors to see a page that looks well designed and draws them in. When you find some freelance graphic designers you think you could work with, the first thing that you'll want to do is to get a look at their portfolio.

This will contain work that they've done for other clients or it might showcase their abilities. Analyze their portfolios. Not every graphic designer will have experience in the area that you're looking for.

It's always best to hire one who knows what you're talking about. It makes the jobs easier on both of you. For example, if you're looking for ecovers, hire a graphic designer with experience in that area or one who's willing to create a mock up to show you so that you can be sure he knows how to make one that's what you're looking for.

Most designers will give you a mockup free of charge. Before you hire the freelance graphic designer, make sure that know what your style is and also cover how long you expect the job to take.

If you need it in two weeks and the designer is booked and can't start for a month, that won't work for you. Make sure that you and the designer both know the value of the job. You want an agreement spelled out before the work begins.

### FIND THE RIGHT VIRTUAL ASSISTANT FOR THE JOB

There are tons of virtual assistants that you can hire to help you with whatever task needs completing. But not every VA has the expertise or quality of work to be able to handle the project.

A VA that has the attitude of, "I can do any job even if I've never done it before" is probably thinking more highly of his or her abilities than they should. For example, a VA who has never done an email campaign won't understand the purpose behind it or how to gear it toward a specific audience.

A VA who's successful in one area won't necessarily be in another. That's why it's important that you find out what the VA is capable of handling up front. If you're a marketer who has niche specific work, then look for a VA who has had experience in that field before.

It will make it easier if she understands all the buzz words associated with the type of job you need. You can ask to see the VA's portfolio or check out their client list if it's available.

Some VAs will share prior projects they've worked on for different clients while others won't. Anyone can create a portfolio and claim experience. You want to know for sure they've had this experience.

Some virtual assistants will specialize in administrative jobs and that may not be what you're looking for. It's okay to ask for references and, depending on the nature of what you want the VA to do, it's probably a wise step to take.

You can find a Virtual Assistant by going to forum sites such as Warrior Forum or job sites like Elance, Intelligent Office, eaHelp, Fiverr, or Fancy Hands. In order to work well with a VA, you have to know exactly what you expect with hiring her.

You spell out what you need done and have a list of what you want accomplished. Make sure you have open and often communication and don't expect a VA to do a job you haven't equipped her to do. She can't do her job if she doesn't have all of the information.

## PRUNING VS. GROWING YOUR BUSINESS IN THE COMING YEAR

When you focus on something, it means that you're paying attention. But with the way we praise multi-tasking today, we've learned to give things our *divided* attention.

That's bad in relationships and it's bad in business. What happens when we get too many irons in the fire is that we become scattered. We're trying to do too many different things at once and we end up not doing any of them well.

There is a fine balance. You don't want to become so focused on one task that you overlook other ways to make money. There's a way that you can streamline your business so that you're able to do what you choose and do it well.

### DO YOU FEEL LIKE YOU'RE ALWAYS WORKING YET GOING NOWHERE?

This feeling is a symptom. It's your internal radar trying to let you know that you're too scattered. You're all over the place with your business and it's not going to get any better if you don't make some changes.

Something that can cause you to feel like you're always working and getting nowhere is having too many niches. You're involved in so many different ideas that you can't give your full attention to any of them.

There's just not enough time, not enough money and not enough of you to go around for all of the niches that you want to be part of. Instead of being part of fifteen different niches that are struggling and stressing you out and causing you to work hard with little in return, cut back to a couple of niches that you can devote yourself to and watch them take off.

Obviously, you need a strategy in business. You have to have a workable plan in order to bring in a steady income. But a problem (or multiple problems) can arise when you have too many strategies.

You might be an entrepreneur who wants to be involved with affiliate marketing. This isn't a bad thing and it can turn into a steady income stream. But this is an area of marketing that takes time to build and you have to put some effort into it.

If you could devote yourself solely to affiliate marketing, you could make a decent amount of money with it. What happens is people add to it. They turn around and add info product creations.

Maybe that's you. You've seen people earn money with their own product creations and you decide that you want a piece of that pie. So you create a product and you put it out there.

So now, you have both the affiliate marketing and the product creation to keep up with. You feel like this may not be enough, and you might as well add coaching to the mix.

So you throw that in. You offer your advice to other people so that you can teach them to do what you've done. Now with three streams of income, things are getting a little hectic.



You might reach the point where you're forced to choose between putting out the latest product creation update or investing the time you do have in the coaching side of your business.

And don't forget - there's the affiliate marketing, too. You start to feel some pressure when you realize that you could make even more money if you offer services.

Someone comes along and they don't know how to create a product from start to finish and launch it, so you'll do that for them and they can just pay you. Or, what about a joint venture?

You could get involved in that. Before you know it, you have several opportunities and they're all good ones, but now - because you're so busy giving a little of yourself to each area, stretching yourself thin - none of them are the success that you'd hoped they'd become.

Each area of your business needs your full attention and planning. They have to be nurtured. Handling business endeavors using a drive-by method doesn't work well.

### ARE YOU STUCK IN ONE ONLINE BUSINESS THAT'S HOLDING YOU BACK?

There's no doubt that you can make money with an online business. Unfortunately, too many entrepreneurs lose sight of the fact that building any business takes some time to get off the ground.

If you decide that you want to become an affiliate marketer, you can make a steady income and that income can be pretty good. But it's not going to happen quickly.

Depending on which business you promote products for, it can take awhile to get paid from these companies. That's because the people that you promote for get their money from the manufacturer or seller first.

Then they settle everything 60-90 days later. So if you expected that you would hang your affiliate marketing shingle one week and then get paid the next, you'll be disappointed.

Not only does it take time to get paid from the promotions, but it's going to take you time to build traffic for your site. You won't get any traction right out of the gate.

You have to build it - and that's where patience and motivation will keep you going even when you don't see results. You don't want to put all of your hopes and dreams of making money into one online business - especially if you start with affiliate marketing.

Instead, what you can do to bring in money faster is you can promote info products. When you do this, you get a return on your efforts faster because the hold back time to settle payment isn't as long of a wait - in fact, in many cases, it's instant.

The good news is that you don't even have to step outside your chosen niche to make this additional income. If you're in the weight loss niche, you can choose to promote weight loss info products or health products.

It can be things for whatever niche you're already involved in. Maybe you're someone who is already doing an info product and you want to bring in more money.

In that case, what you can do is to look to do promotions for people or brands who already have the traction to move the product. Make sure the offers complement the ones you're developing so that your audience always sees the relevancy in your promotion.

## LEARN THE ART OF FOLLOWING THROUGH

Some people will start a business project, get it partially done and walk away. This happens sometimes because they might feel as if they lack the knowledge of how to finish it.

Other times, people will start a project and then quit it because something new catches their attention that seems more enticing. Whatever the reason, if you're not careful, you can end up with dozens of half started business projects.

It's important that you follow through with what you start because unfinished tasks can weigh on your subconscious mind. You first need to be able to clearly identify what it is that you're hoping to accomplish with the project you've chosen to spend your time and energy on.

This definition gives you a goal to work toward and it helps you keep your motivation level high so that you can push forward when you want to give up. Know up front what it's going to take to complete the project.

If you know ahead of time that it's going to take long hours and you won't see fast results, this will help you keep going. You might not be able to see the end result quickly, but you'll have that mental image of what it will be already set in your mind.

This allows you to maintain focus. Make sure that your strategy for follow through includes having the right tools and the right knowledge to get the job done. Buy what you have to have to complete the task and bring in outside help if you have to.

For example, if you can create the info product, but you can't do the graphics, you either have to learn how to do it yourself or you have to hire someone to do it for you.

If taking the time to learn it yourself will keep you from following through because you already have so much going on that you can't take the time to study anything new, then you're better off paying someone else.

Being an entrepreneur often means that you don't have someone waiting in the wings to tell you when you have to get a project done. You have to learn the art of follow through by assigning due dates to each step of the project.

This helps give you accountability and keeps you on track so that you do finish. With follow through, you have to learn to recognize when enough is enough. You don't want to overdo a project.

Some people will constantly tweak a project. They keep finding one more thing they want to change or fix. When that happens, the project doesn't get finished because you don't ever let it go.

Ask yourself two questions to help you figure out if the job is complete or not. Did you do it to the best of your abilities? Did you accomplish what you set out to do? If you can say yes to both of those, then it's completed and you need to move on.

## HOW TO HAVE MULTIPLE BUSINESS BRANCHES THE RIGHT WAY

There's nothing wrong with having several different branches in your business. But branches have to be added on, you can't simply try to grow them all at once or the foundation of your business won't be able to sustain them.

The right way to have multiple branches is by building them slowly. You always want to start out with the one that's going to be the money maker. You need this one so that you can live on the income and take care of your bills while you build up the other branches.

So choose the branch that brings in the money first. What this will mean for most people is something like service providing. When you provide a service to someone else, they pay you faster than if you're trying to create something.

If you provide services for someone else, that also gives you the money to invest back in your own business. This helps keep your business growing. After you have a steady stream of income that can sustain you, that's when you can have the financial flexibility to start adding on to your business.

But don't add more than one thing at a time. You can start by doing something like creating an info product. You can work on this while you're providing a service to someone else in the meantime.

Work on your first info product and get it available to the public. That will start to sell, but while interest is growing in that product, you should be busy creating another info product.

In the beginning, you might have to do all of the work involved with the product creation yourself. As this branch of your business grows stronger, however, you can start to outsource some of the work.

You keep creating info products and adding them to your branch until this area is doing well for you financially. When it's steady and thriving, then you move on to another branch, such as coaching or ad revenue.

Work that branch until it's a success as well. By taking the time to focus on a single branch at a time, you avoid spreading yourself too thin. You're able to concentrate and nurture each branch toward success.

## SET UP A BUSINESS THAT YOU HAVE TIME FOR

When you want to be an entrepreneur, you have to know the value of time management. Without it, your business might not make it. If you ask some people what time management is, they'll answer that it means managing your time wisely.

While that's part of, that's a small part. Time management is more than knowing when to do something and scheduling a slot for it in your day. It's knowing that the task you're planning to do is an investment.

You're putting hours into something and hoping to get a return on that effort. When you set up a business that you have time for, you can have the kind of returns that you're looking to receive.

Don't plan to cram your day full of to-do tasks associated with your business. That's not time management. Time management for an entrepreneur means that you block out enough time for each project so that it has the best opportunity to be a success.

You have to have the time set aside to make sure that project takes off and thrives once you're done. You don't gain in business by rushing through your projects.

If you have so much going on that you can't afford to allocate enough time to each project, then you have to scale back. It's better to let stuff go and have one or two projects be successful than it is to have a dozen mediocre projects or failures.

When you give a project the dedicated hours that it needs, you actually improve your time management through effectiveness rather than lose time. You'll discover that you're more efficient the more time you're able to give a project.

It's far better for you to spend 4 hours of your day working to create value for one of your business branches than it is to rush through half an hour on multiple projects or spend half an hour trying to get through some tasks for each task.

It's harder to focus like that and harder to give 100% of your effort. Plus, if you do that, you'll end up scatterbrained and feeling as if you're not really accomplishing anything anyway.

Remember that with all businesses, there will come a time for pruning in order for new growth to take place. You want to make sure you're doing all that you can to allow for your business to be able to thrive.

If at any time, you realize that you need to cut back, consider whether or not it will be a temporary move, setting something on the backburner, or if you're going to get rid of it for good. Sometimes it can ease your mind to lighten your load.

## ANALYZE YOUR PREVIOUS EFFORTS AS AN ENTREPRENEUR

When you become an entrepreneur, you have a strong desire to succeed. If the desire to succeed was all that was needed, then the world be filled with nothing but success stories.

But desire alone won't keep you from failing and you may have experienced countless failures on your entrepreneurial journey. What you need to do is to take a step back and look at what you've been doing that *hasn't* worked for you.

Once you can identify what's not working and what you're struggling with, you can then find success by making changes. You need to understand what's gone wrong despite your best efforts.

### FEAR OF FAILURE

Did you know that it's not failure that keeps people from trying? The world is full of examples of people who failed multiple times and yet ultimately found success. There's something worse than failing - and that's fear of failure because often, fear of failure keeps you from even trying anything at all.

There are some solid reasons behind having a fear of failure. No one disputes that. You might be hesitant to put yourself out there because you're afraid that people are going to laugh at you or your business idea.

Remember that people laughed at Henry Ford, too - and yet he became a well-known success story. You might be concerned that you'll end up failing and be humiliated. There are countless numbers of online success stories.

There are gurus everywhere online who share their failures with their mailing list and talk about it on their website. They do this because failure was part of the journey, it wasn't the *end* of the journey.

You can overcome a fear of failure by learning to recognize it for what it is. Failure is never the end unless you give up. It's a stepping stone that many people have walked on to reach the success that they dream of having.

Sometimes a fear of failure comes because we're afraid to make mistakes. But making mistakes is how you reach your goals - simply because you're not perfect. There's yet to be a single fail-proof human being on the Earth.

Instead of fearing failure, embrace it. Use it as something that you can learn from. Cut off the negative sound byte in your mind. This is what plays in your head telling you that you're right to be afraid of failure, that you're not good enough, that you're not smart enough, that you're not talented enough, or not educated enough.

It's this sound byte that has a loop so that it will play on forever as long as you allow it. Negative thoughts of what you can't accomplish become reality. Kick the glass-is-empty mindset to the curb and replace it with one that's optimistic.

If you can't bring yourself to say that you'll succeed, then simply say you're willing to try. That's all it takes. One step forward. Identify what it is about the fear of failure that's holding you back.

Is it the scorn of others? The thought of pouring your heart into something and not making it a reality? Fear has been identified as False Evidence Appearing Real. We often have a habit of creating worst case scenarios in our minds that never come to fruition. Let go of the fear of failure and go after what you want.

### FRUSTRATION WITH TECHNICAL TASKS

It's easy to get frustrated when you come across a technical task that you don't know how to do. When you're ready to move forward and get stuck by a lack of know-how, it can start that negative chatter running through your head again.

But keep in mind that no one has all of the knowledge they need to do everything. None of us are born knowing what we need to do. We learn as we grow and the same holds true when it comes to being an entrepreneur.

You might not know how to set up a blog and if you've never done it before, it's understandable that you wouldn't know how to get started. But in today's age, the Internet gives us a world of knowledge right at our fingertips.

If you don't know how to set up a blog, you can pull up a video on how to do it and then follow the instructions step by step until you're finished. Some people already know how to build a blog, but they don't know how to set up call-to-action buttons or how to add a shopping cart.

All of this type of information can easily be found in video tutorials. You can take the time to go through the video and pause it at each step as you implement the task. And there are hundreds of videos out there that address every technical task question you might have.

You can also join entrepreneurial forums and post a question when you need help with a specific task. Many of these forums are filled with people who have already traveled the path that you're now on. These people freely share the knowledge that they have with others.

If you're trying to work with software and can't quite grasp it, you can also look this up with videos. You can also go to a search engine, type in the name of the software and add the word manual after it.

There are often PDF manuals for software available that will walk you through whatever it is that you need to do. You'll learn as you go along. Months down the road, you'll be amazed at what you've learned and then you'll be in a position to help someone else when they have a question about a task.

But keep in mind that there will always be a technical task that you might not know how to do because learning should never stop when you're an entrepreneur. You want your business to succeed and that means growth.

Any time there's growth with a business, there will be new things you have to handle. Give technical tasks a shot and if you get stuck, you can also go on a marketing forum and simply ask a very specific question telling people where you got stuck, so they can help.

## COMPLACENCY ISSUES

You've heard the story about how if you put a frog in a pot of boiling water, he'll jump right out. But if you put a frog in water and slowly turn up the heat, he'll boil to death. While this is a myth, it's also a metaphor for life and shines the light on how you need to take charge to prevent complacency from setting in.

Complacency means that you're content with where you're at in life and with what you're doing. You've found your comfort zone and you're sticking with it. Being complacent is not a good thing because what it does is keep you stuck exactly where you are.

When you're complacent, you don't try to learn and improve your skills or your business. You don't aim for growth and you don't try new things that can help your success. What happens then is that it can become easy to lose your purpose for your business.

It can also be easy for a lack of inner leadership to develop and things just fall by the wayside. The problem that arises most often when people reach a level of complacency is that they don't want to make the effort to do anything to change their lot in life, but they want to bring in more money.

Complacency and the desire to make more money aren't compatible. If you want more money, you don't get to be satisfied with the status quo. Since money isn't going to rush toward you when you're complacent, you have to do something about it.

You have to be proactive. You have to do something to change your mindset so you develop a hunger for success. What this means is that you have to gain more knowledge.

When you've reached a certain skillset, nothing is ever going to change if you don't level up. You have to learn new things and you need to do it consistently to keep on growing and earning money.

That means that you're going to have to put more effort into your business. Some people think that once they've reached a certain level in business, it will always stay that way.

They think they'll always make the money and that the money will just grow without them having to do anything to make that happen. That's not true. Money is brought in based on your efforts, so it's time to adopt new habits of learning and trying new ideas.

## ENVY OF THE COMPETITION

When you're resentful that your competition has what you'd like to have, or accomplishes what you'd like to do, that's envy. While it can be natural at times to feel envious, when you envy the competition, you can end up doing a lot of harm to yourself if you don't let it go.

Envy arises because we worry about the entrepreneurial experts. They're so polished. They know just what to say. Hundreds, if not thousands of people seem to hang on to their every word.

Every idea they churn out seems to turn into a money maker and when you see these experts and their booming business, you resent that you don't have that, too. But what you're not realizing is that no expert's success story was readymade.

They didn't simply get up one morning and put on an aura of success. They build their success just like everyone else does. A piece at a time. When you look at an expert, you don't see the rough road they walked to get where they are.

You don't see the times when they struggled. Or the times they were afraid. You don't see when they worried about the next move or the money flow. You don't know what they went through to get where they are.

When you envy the competition, what happens is you're setting yourself up in the comparison game and no one ever wins that. It's played on a concept where there will always be someone who's better in business than you are.

But there will also be someone who's *worse* than you. Comparison is a measuring stick that will ensure that you come up short. It's the key to berating yourself and it creates low self esteem.

You might not realize that when most people compare themselves to the competition, they never choose to compare themselves to someone who's failing. They always choose the experts - the huge success stories.

What you need to realize is that how they become a success isn't the exact same business model that's going to work for you anyway. If you do compare yourself to the competition, only do it to create the determination to be better than they are and not to make yourself afraid or to feel bad about yourself.



You don't want to become a lemming and follow whatever the competition is doing. There are enough lemmings. Enough carbon copies. Choose to be an original and bring what's unique about yourself and your business to the masses.

When you do that, when you choose to create a business that's all you and you'll find your own success story. You'll become the person that others look to with envy because you've followed (and achieved) your dreams.

### OVERLOADED WITH EXCITEMENT OVER OPTIONS

In today's world, when you start a business, it can be easy to become overloaded with excitement. It happens often because there are countless options available. One of the things that entrepreneurs have to be on guard against is shiny new object syndrome.

This is what happens when there are so many ideas that you want to try them, all so you hop from one idea to the next. It always feels like the newest idea is going to be great.

We find a new technique, new software, new tools and we chase after them. The beginning of something is always exciting because it holds the promise of success. It's what we've always been waiting for - this new idea or tool - so we have to do it or have it.

The problem with so many options is that it can cause you take off down various paths and end up preventing you from actually accomplishing anything at all. It's a lack of attention and focus that can derail your business if you're not careful.

Because when you're chasing the newest idea, you're not spending time on your business. You're not focusing on the things that matter with it. When you experience shiny new object syndrome, it can make you a jack of all trades and a master of none.

You're so busy chasing whatever is new and comes along that you don't complete the tasks that you should do in order to make your business a success. So what happens is you lose time and money on things that are wrong for your business.

You can get caught up in information overload, too - just like you can with shiny new object syndrome. When you have information overload, there's too much data for you to take it all in.

It's hard to know what to process and how to make a choice when there's too much information. If you have shiny new object syndrome, you might be able to start a hundred projects, but you won't follow through with any of them.

You'll end up getting about halfway done and then something new will come along and off you go again. With information overload, you can end up feeling paralyzed and unsure of what decisions to make, so in the end, you don't make a decision at all.

You can stop both of these from happening. With shiny new object syndrome, when something new comes along, always ask yourself if you have something that needs to be finished.

If there's something waiting for you to work on, don't get involved in another project until the other one is completed. With information overload, only take in the information you need to complete your task. Focus on one portion of information at a time. Remember that it's better to do one thing well than to do a dozen things poorly.

## CONCLUSION

We can help getting your Business off the ground in 2016

So many would-be entrepreneurs look forward to a fresh start when a new year rolls around. They buy a planner. They consider which business models they want. And then as time marches on, their productivity wanes and the business never quite gets the kind of lift off they were hoping for.

They failed to look to the trends. They failed to make the commitments. They failed to get help.

The future months of the year are spent floundering and struggling until another one is in the books, with nothing to show for it. You want that to all change in 2016. It's time to plan the right way and take action in a way that will have you seeing results, instead of forcing you to be down on yourself.

There are several things you can do to fortify your efforts and ensure they lead to a return on your investment of time and energy, rather than frustration. All you need is to adhere to a plan and follow through with it from start to finish.

### **Seed Money and Support Needed to Get Started Online**

When you think of starting your own online business, you might be full of excitement and can hardly wait to get started. Then, like a slap in the face, you remember that you don't have all of the money, if any, that you need in order to get your business off the ground.

What you do have are the ideas, the energy, the enthusiasm and the desire to make money online with your own business. That's not enough in some cases, so you have to make a viable plan to help you have the funds you need to get going.

Starting an online business doesn't require as much as it would cost to invest in an offline franchise or anything like that. But you do have to pay for simple things like a domain, hosting, email autoresponder, and any outsourcing you need to do like with content or graphics.

You could technically get away with a simple blog and domain, which would cost about \$10 for the domain per year and under \$10 a month for hosting. Almost anyone can afford that if they give up one or two fast food meals per month.

For some of you who want to give your boss a pink slip and are completely out of work, you have to have enough set aside to finance your life while you work on starting your own business (unless you plan to work both jobs until the work at home career is turning a profit).

You don't have to be wealthy to run your own business. There are dozens of ways that you can secure the seed money that you need to get started. Go through your ordinary channels first.

That includes setting aside a little at a time, cutting back on your spending to save for your online business needs, and finding ways to earn a little extra money, such as with eBay, selling off some collectibles you have lying around.

For people who have the means and the credit, you can choose to go to your bank for a small loan. Most banks are happy to lend startup funds to small business owners. But know that when you go, you need to have all of your paperwork in order - and that includes a business plan. We Can even help you with that. Contact us.

## ***Success!***



*Fred Lotgering*

**LotCon Biz Solutions**

Fred Lotgering is a professional Internet Marketing consultant working from multiple locations around the world. He is dedicated to help to grow small and medium sized businesses by offering a variety of Internet Marketing tools! He is the owner of LotCon. (“**LotCon**” comes from **Lotgering Consultancy**). LotCon is registered in the Netherlands and in Brazil).

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