
The New IP of Successful Internet Businesses

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Wikipedia defines the Internet as "a global network of interconnected computers, enabling users to share information along multiple channels".

Its origin stems from research and development in the US Defence industries and it led to the creation of a network of networks that could withstand a military attack.

As a "network of networks", the Internet makes it easy for information to get from one place to another through a huge variety of different paths. (which means that logic such as is this the fastest path or the most efficient path to take isn't as important as making sure that it arrives). This is the key to the overwhelming growth of the Internet.

If you go back in time to the fundamentals of how the Internet was built, you'll find that it began with a networking protocol known as IP (Internet Protocol); and it is the unique features of IP, that makes sure that all the information requested actually gets delivered.

It seems now however, that IP has taken on a new and equally important significance, in the modern world of online businesses and when you understand what it means, and apply it in the context of what you focus on, it can lead to massive results.

IP (as in "Internet Protocol") is responsible, in a large part, for the way data flows around the Internet. When you request a web page, document or some other piece of information, the information gets broken up into a number of electronic packages (or packets). It is these packets that get transmitted to your computer along a network of interconnected paths (that form the Information Superhighway). Once on your computer, your web browser reassembles the packets in the correct sequence to create the single file of information you requested.

It was during a recent Workshop that we got to appreciate the new "IP" of the Internet.

Where we originally set out to identify the Internet strategies being used by successful businesses, we also found something that presented a new and interesting perspective on emerging Internet business models. (Some of the new online business strategies were interesting enough, and we'll write them up more fully with time, but it was the remarkable pattern we identified that I want to talk about.)

This pattern relates specifically to creating wealth and value using the Internet and, in some ways, suggests that IP has already taken on a new meaning for Information Marketing.

For Information Marketers, the acronym "IP" represents three value propositions in the online business world -

Information Producer;
Information Publisher; and
Information Packager.

Lets explore what I mean by these IPs and consider how they can help you find the best strategy for the online side of your business.

Information Producer

An Information Producer is someone who has something to communicate and share with others.

These may be:

Knowledge
Wisdom
Skills
Experience
Tactics

It could be that they studied or learned their skill on the job. Or quite possibly it might be someone whose family and friends have said they do something special and they do it really well.

As an Information Producer, your strategy would be to put what you know into a book, audio recording or DVD video.

Books

Easy: To create an eBook all you need is Microsoft Word and the ability to save your document as a PDF file.

Beginner: If your ambitions are bigger and you want to create a book that sells in stores, one option is to get involved in Self-Publishing. Two of the best supported ways of getting into Self-publishing if you're a beginner are through Amazon.com and Lulu.com.

Advanced: Otherwise, you can fund your own up-front publishing costs and sell your books yourself with someone such as BookPal.

Audio Recordings

Easy: If you have an Apple laptop then using GarageBand to record your own podcasts (audio recordings) that you can sell through iTunes is a simple step-by-step process.

Beginner: Non-Apple computer users have the option of downloading and installing a free software application called Audacity. For first timers, using Audacity to create your audio recordings can be challenging and you will need to have a microphone and speakers for your computer. Once you've got it installed and are over the initial learning hurdles you'll find it has everything you need to create clean high quality recordings. Plus they have provide a free User Manual.

Advanced: To create professional recordings with background music with high quality production values a semi-professional products like Cakewalk's Music Creator has a huge set of features including being able to write directly to CDs.

DVD video

The advantage of having an Apple laptop computer for the Information Producer again becomes clear with video production being made easy with iMovie. Record video using the built-in webcam or upload what you've recorded with your home movie camera and use iMovie to turn your recordings into DVDs with background music, screen titles and voiceovers.

There are many options for video production, so we've listed a full of the fuller featured software applications that you can investigate VideoPad, Power Director, Final Cut Studio and Adobe's Creative Suite.

One final way to produce DVD videos is to enlist the assistance of a production company, who will do all the technical work for you. In Australia, places like Spun Creations in Darwin, Key Studio in Sydney, Solid Orange in Hobart, Createlt in Melbourne, Gatecrasher Media in Canberra, Flick Chicks in Brisbane, Matrix Multi-Media in Adelaide and Digital Video Production Australia in Perth.

The technology needed to create professional-quality information products has become very affordable and easy to use if you want to do it yourself, making it possible for the modern day Information Producer to create profits quickly.

Information Publisher

An Information Publisher is someone who specialises in taking your information product and getting into the hands of as many people as possible.

This can happen through a number of channels such as:

- Networks
- Promotions
- Social Media
- Communities
- Publishing

More specifically, the Information Publisher knows how to get your information product available on the web and found in places where lots of people (an audience) are, like on popular Blogs and Groups, search results pages with Google or Yahoo and social networking websites, like Twitter, Facebook, Digg, Youtube and Flickr.

Information Publishers are getting the message out using online services like Press Method, Free Press Release, TrueLocal, Best of the Web Connect Buzz, LinkedIn and through many, many other promotional channels.

The number of options for the modern day Information Publisher is enormous and with the ever increasing number of channels to choose from the opportunity to niche and offer new services continues to expand.

Information Packager

An Information Packager is someone who specialises in taking your information product and monetizing it.

This is generally the territory of the more experienced and includes concepts such as:

- Branding
- Search Engine Marketing
- B2C & B2B
- eCommerce
- Social Networking

The Information Packager is concerned with monetising information and this means doing things that maximise ROI and leveraging profitable networks of influence.

The Information Packager really adds value to the Information Producer and the Information Publisher by making sure the information product gets to spenders. Whether that's in stores like Amazon.com and iTunes, in advertisements in social spaces like Twitter, Facebook or Youtube and on highly relevant search results pages.

The new IP of successful Internet-based businesses, are three areas in which any organisation can leverage their growth, sales and promotions strategies to extend their business from the offline into the online world.

Take any idea and view it from the perspective of each of the three IP value propositions.

When you next find yourself doing something you've not thought about in a long time, put yourself in an IP mindset and ask yourself the following questions:

Information Producer

How do you do that thing that just comes naturally to you and how could others learn it?

Information Publisher

How can other people find out about what you're capable of doing?

Information Packager

How do you make it so that people can pay to learn your skill?

For advice or if you find yourself stuck in one particular area, drop us a line or have an online business development guru call you completely free of charge. We'll be happy to help and show you how to get a great result.

Related Reading

Plug Your Business! Marketing on MySpace, YouTube, blogs and podcasts and other Web 2.0 social networks

ISBN: 978-0977240623

Secrets of Social Media Marketing: How to Use Online Conversations and Customer Communities to Turbo-Charge Your Business!

ISBN: 978-1884956850

YouTube for Business: Online Video Marketing for Any Business

ISBN: 978-0789737977