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Making Money as an Internet Marketing Consultant

By James L. Paris

I'm going to let you in on a secret: most people who teach Internet marketing have side businesses wherein they make money as consultants. In some cases, they make more money as consultants than they do in their capacity as Internet marketing instructors.

Speaking for myself, I do NOT have an Internet consulting business. I've thought on occasion about having one, but honestly, I just don't have any time. With the size of our coaching program, as well as with the size of my own Internet businesses (Christian Money.com, et al), I really don't have any time for that, but I have to tell you that there's a lot of money that can be made at this. So, thinking in terms of our perpetual goal of realizing success at Internet marketing, overall, by developing multiple streams of income, I wanted to share with you here the idea of holding yourself out in your community as an Internet marketing consultant. Think about all of the different businesses in your community that don't have any kind of website at all just yet, or have a site that yields poor traffic results (and consequently yields poor results in picking up new clients); there are a lot of businesses out there that fit one or the other of those descriptions, so the opportunities for you to make money in this way are many and varied.

Now...you could conceivably do a business like this entirely over the Internet, and certainly there are plenty of Internet marketing

consultants who make their services available worldwide from a remote location. That said, I recommend that you pursue this by targeting your own community, at least at the outset. One of the reasons for this is that as a resident of that community, you can already claim a heightened level of expertise simply on the basis you are obviously better acquainted with the needs, whims, etc., of the community, in general, than could someone who was trying to gain a foothold as a consultant who lived across the country from you. The other thing I like about trying to be the "king" or "queen" of your own area is that you are available to meet with your customers in person. Don't underestimate the importance of this, even in the Internet age, and even when what you're selling is an Internet-based business; especially in the case of businesses that are not yet Internet savvy and therefore are those that still likely put a premium on the "old-fashioned" way of doing business, it will be important for you to be able to meet with people face-to-face in order to strengthen your connections to them.

Let's spend some time talking about a few of the different things that you could offer in your own community as an Internet marketing consultant, and then discuss some of the methods by which you would promote your services.

First off, it's reasonable to assume that one of the "core" services you could provide as a

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consultant would be to *provide assistance in setting up a website or a blog* for a business that does not have one. That said, let me provide you with a little bit of a warning, if I may. There are people out there who, for very little money...\$50, for example...will claim to be willing to set up a website for someone. This is important to know, because you need to be careful in how you present yourself and your services. You want to present yourself not just as someone who will merely build a website, but that you are an Internet marketing consultant and you deal with really the “A to Z” of that business. Remember that what a business really wants is not just a website, per se, but *customers*. They don’t really want a website, in and of itself—a website, from their perspective, is no more than a tool to capture customers. Accordingly, if some business just has a website, without any special attention paid to the features of Internet marketing that will encourage the capture of more customers, then having a website isn’t really going to do anything for them. This is important to remember when you’re out there promoting your business, that you’re careful to distinguish yourself from the other “me too” website builders that have become ubiquitous.

Search Engine Optimization

Beyond the matter of simply introducing a business to the world of websites and blogs, there is the all-important matter of *search engine optimization*. The ability to enhance search engine optimization is probably going to be, overall, the strongest benefit that you can offer to a business...which is, the promise that you will do everything possible to get their website as highly listed in the search engines as is feasible to do. I’ll tell you this...in a local market, accomplishing this goal is actually pretty easy. The reason is

that in a lot of small to medium-sized cities, there are not a lot of people who know how to do search engine optimization. I have a good friend who owns a local health club in the area of Palm Coast, Florida, and this friend, who knows what I do for a living, asked if I would set up a website for him. Now, I don’t really do this sort of thing for other people, which I alluded to earlier in this newsletter, but because he’s a good friend who had no idea where to turn in all of this, I agreed to help him out. Anyway, the name of his club is Synergy Health Studio, and, in the past, he had a domain name that incorporated the actual name Synergy. Now, as we know from our training, domain names that feature the unique name of your brand are not terribly productive as far as the search engines are concerned; when it comes to the search engines, you want to keep your domain name as much in line with the actual words that people will plug into a search engine to find what they’re seeking. So, with that in mind, we decided it would be best to use www.palmcoasthealthclub.com, and presently, my friend is now #2 in the search

As a self-employed Internet marketing consultant, your professional life need not look like this again.



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engines for the phrase “Palm Coast health club,” which is precisely the kind of result he was seeking and which he was *not* realizing from his previous domain name. He’s a guy who went from being nowhere, to one who’s now easy to spot because he can be found at the top of the very first results page.

Now, this is not brain surgery. I’m not speaking here about going up against the entire world to try to, using my above example, get my client to come up as the most highly-placed result for the search phrase “health clubs” or anything like that. Of course, in our Internet coaching training, we spend a lot of time discussing the best ways to achieve optimum search results even under the most challenging of circumstances, but what I want to get across to you here is that you need not feel like you should have to meet those kinds of burdens to be successful at helping *local* businesses...plumbers, electricians, whomever...enjoy better search results within their own community.

Along with creating an initial web presence for those who don’t have one (or revamping those which some may already have), then, you can add the all-important service of search engine optimization. Providing just those two services can be more than enough to justify your existence as an Internet marketing consultant, but there’s plenty more you could offer, as well.

Social Media

Let’s talk about social media and the opportunity that lies therein for you in your Internet marketing consulting business. I continue to be amazed at how many businesses find social media to be impossible to understand or implement as a marketing mechanism, but, of course, their lack of compre-

hension in this area is what presents the valuable opportunity to you. I’m not just talking about people in blue collar trades who may have little reason, historically, to utilize technology in their businesses, but also lawyers, physicians, and other highly-educated professionals who, despite all of their brilliance, seem to essentially “shut down” when the subject of Facebook, or Twitter, or any of the other different forms of social media comes up. In fact, let me share a quick story with you on this. I know a lady in my area who, for \$50 per month, offers people the opportunity to have her set up a Facebook account for them, and then she will call them up once or twice each week and sort of get the run-down on what’s going on at their businesses. For example, if the client to whom she’s speaking runs a restaurant, she’ll ask what specials are available that week, or if it’s a nightclub, she’ll find out if they’re having any live bands or drink specials (or whatever might be applicable) available that week, that sort of thing. After checking in with the various establishments, she’ll update their Facebook pages for them. If they email her some pictures or other graphics or whatever else they might want to see on their pages, she’ll put those up for them, as well. The bottom line is that she’s getting \$50 per month (and sometimes more) from each of these businesses in exchange for managing their respective social media campaigns, and it’s very easy work.

Now, in her case, she’s just managing Facebook for people, so she’s getting this money and not even having to manage more than one social media platform for her clients. Let’s say that, in your case, you set up both a Twitter account and Facebook account for each of your clients, and you agreed to contact them each week on Monday and Friday

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and get a few bullet points from them about what's going in their businesses at that time and update their Twitter and Facebook accounts appropriately. Your role as a manager of social media for various businesses can be something you offer as a part of your overall package as an Internet marketing consultant; that is, everything we're talking about in this article can be things that are sold separately as distinct services, or, alternatively, you could simply offer them all together as a part of your particular Internet marketing package.

I know that many of you...maybe even all of you...are surprised to learn that this is actually an opportunity, that businesses and businesspeople will have an acute need for this; the reality, however, is that they do—there remains large numbers of folks who are just too intimidated by these mechanisms to deal with it themselves.

This brings me to an important side point I want to make here. Many of you, particularly those of you who have been in this training for a while now, may not really understand just how much unique knowledge you've come to possess by now. Many of you might be reading this with somewhat of a dismissive attitude, thinking that no one is really going to pay you for these services. Let me assure you that they will. Do not lose sight of the fact that as you've been learning more and more about Internet marketing, those around you have been learning essentially nothing. Sure, the Internet is everywhere, and maybe most people know by now how to casually surf the web and even send an email, but the things we're discussing in this article are still well known to just a small handful of people at this time. It is precisely that dearth of knowledge on the part of the

masses that presents this opportunity to you.

Email Marketing

OK...let's talk about email marketing, which is another useful service that you could provide. Imagine if you could walk into a local restaurant and show them how to get their customers to put their names on an email list. The restaurant would, from the first moment they implemented something like this, begin to compile a list of customers which they could reach directly, as opposed to randomly through the use of the usual types of broad advertising campaigns. Each one of those customers could be sent, say, the restaurant's list of weekly specials, announcements, coupons, etc., and it would be a terrific way for that restaurant to build a greater level of customer loyalty than that which it may already enjoy. You may have already come across this sort of thing in your own dining experience; I know that when I eat at one of the larger dining chains these days, it's often that I will be presented by the server (normally when the check is delivered to the table) with an opportunity to earn a coupon or some other future benefit if I'm willing to go online and complete a quick survey or something like that. The restaurants that do this aren't doing it because they're overly interested in the survey results, but rather because they can capture your email and start sending you coupons and announcements to help entice you to return to the establishment.

I showed a lawyer friend of mine in Orlando, Florida how to do this, and he now has an email list that numbers over 10,000. This is very simple to do; again, however, something like this that we find to be very easy because of our expertise in the area of Internet marketing and Internet functionality is something that comes across as a very diffi-

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cult task to many local small to medium-sized businesses. Imagine yourself saying to a businesses, “Hey...how would you like for me to set up for you a way to capture all of the email addresses of your customers?” Who wouldn’t love that? You could have the establishment give you all of those emails in some agreed-to format, and once you have them, you would load them into the system, and then send out the announcements, specials, etc., that they want you to send out. You could probably get them to pay \$50 to \$100 per month for you to do just this one task for them.

Posting Photographs

Something else....putting pictures on the Internet for businesses. Once again, here’s something that you would think would be easy for everyone, but is not. You would be surprised at how many people cannot simply take a digital camera and take a picture, and then upload it to go online, whether it’s uploading it to Facebook, or uploading it to Flickr, or whatever, and just putting a picture online. The benefit of this service can be huge for businesses that have live events happening...restaurants, clubs, coffee shops, bookstores, etc. You could offer to come into these establishments and take pictures with your own digital camera and put those pictures on, say, the Facebook page for that establishment, perhaps the very same Facebook page that you also set up for that business. Now, maybe we’re talking about someone who is already one of your regular social media management customers, who’s already paying you \$75 a month for that service, paying you another \$25 or more to add the service of coming in to their establishment and taking pictures that you can upload as a part of your social media responsibilities. These could be pictures of some sort of



Setting yourself up as a self-employed consultant can help free you from the grip of the I.R.S.

grand opening, or “before” and “after” pictures of a weight loss competition...anything, really. We all know how impactful visual images can be, and so every business...*every* business...is going to have some measure of interest in graphic displays of things they’re doing, but you’ll find that even now, as common as you and I know these sorts of mechanisms have come to be, many more people than not really struggle with making this kind of thing happen for themselves and their businesses.

Posting Videos

On the same general note, you can also provide the same sort of service when it comes to video production and posting, as well. You can go out and get something like I use, a Kodak Zi8, and film videos for local businesses. You could provide something simple and “rough cut,” like videotaping an event and posting it on YouTube, or you could do something a little more involved; perhaps you have a lawyer as a client, and the lawyer has you set up in his conference room and he talks into the camera for a few minutes about what his law firm offers...perhaps doing

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something like this each week and offering a legal “tip of the week,” or another similar type of feature. Perhaps you have a music teacher for a client; you could videotape the music teacher giving a demonstration of what a client of *his* might learn as a music student. The point is that there is really no business out there that could not benefit from incorporating video in some form or fashion into its marketing campaign.

Don’t forget that as a business owner, part of your job will be to sell your services, to pitch prospective clients about what you can do for them. What I’m saying is, using my example of the lawyer above, you would do well, in your presentation to your prospect, to already have in mind specific things you can do for that person. For example, let’s say you ARE pitching a lawyer on your services—citing the idea of videotaping a legal “tip of the week” may be an idea to which he warms very quickly, but may also be something he might not have considered on his own. In other words, don’t just walk into a presentation with a prospect and point out, generically, the services you can provide (site building, social media management, email marketing, etc.); think about what your client does, and come up with specific ideas, unique to the business and what service the business provides, that will illustrate clearly what you’ll be able to do for the customer.

The other thing to remember about digital video is that with so many people accessing the Internet in so many ways, online video has become sort of a poor man’s television network....and I’m not even certain how “poor man” it really is. Think of how much a business owner would have to spend to buy a 30-second television commercial, even one that covers no more than his local market

area. The cost can easily climb into the thousands of dollars very quickly. With digital video, coordinated with social media platforms and other online applications, you have the ability to give to your clients a way to establish a visual presence in their marketing efforts that can simulate the television commercial to great effect.

Posting Audio

Speaking of video, why not make available as part of your services the ability to establish an online *audio* presence for your customers? I use a neat device called the Zoom H2, which is a small, portable device that allows you to obtain terrific stereo recordings from anywhere. All you do is just click “Record,” set it down in the middle of a table, and you can record. Your service could involve simply taking that recording and then uploading the finished product into, say, iTunes, and now your customer has an audio sample that can be downloaded 24/7. Perhaps you go out to see a given client once each week, and you have him record what becomes a weekly podcast. Let’s say you have a client that owns a local travel agency. That client could have weekly travel show in the form of a podcast. Again, simply having the know-how to make these kinds of recordings and upload them into the Internet seems rudimentary by now to those of you who’ve been at this sort of thing for a while, but it is not basic at all to many of the people whom you will have as customers.

This is important: Remember, too, that your clients may not be solely those folks who don’t know how to do these things—they may just as likely be people who DO know how to do some, or even all, of these things, but simply don’t have the *time* to do them. For example, you might make a presentation

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to a small law office....made up of one attorney and an assistant...and even though the attorney and assistant know how to perform some key tasks in the area of Internet marketing, they may well be too busy managing their current caseload to spend any time on it. Remember this in your research of prospective clients, as well in your presentation to them. Your pitch should be two-edged: "Here is what I can do for you if you *don't know how* to do these things, and here is what I can do for you if *you do know how to do these things but don't really have the time.*" By speaking to both "groups," you put yourself in a much better position to pick up clients.

Outsource What You Cannot Do Yourself

One of the things that's particularly important in and amongst all of those items we've been discussing is to know that if there are some heightened abilities that may be required in one of these topic areas in order to satisfy your customer, it's perfectly fine for *you* to outsource that job to someone else. This has come up in the past during the times I have taught the Advanced Coaching class. Part of the Advanced Coaching class deals, in great detail, with the whole subject of getting into the Internet marketing business, and whenever I teach that class, I will always be asked about what to do if a client wants, for example, a fancy graphic on his website, or some other service or feature that is a bit outside of my experience level. You should not be intimidated in the least by that sort of request, and you can absolutely expect to receive it from time to time.

In the case of a situation like that arising, I would encourage you to look to Elance (www.elance.com) as a resource for handling

things like this. I've spoken many times before about Elance (and will undoubtedly do so again); you can go to Elance and post for bid a computer/Internet-related job that you want done, and will be surprised at how cheaply someone will do the work you seek to have completed. Your strategy here, as the Internet marketing consultant, is to charge the client for the special add-on of work they're seeking...like a new and/or exciting graphic for the website...and simply outsource the work, paying no more to the outsourced party...and ideally *less...* than you're collecting in a fee. For example, if you charge your client \$75 for a graphic, you would want to pay the Elance contractor no more than the \$75 you're collecting, and if you can find someone on Elance to do the work for less than that, so much the better. Virtually all of this kind of work can be outsourced through Elance, so there should be little fear on your part that a more specialized request from a client will cause problems for you—I just don't see that happening.

Let me talk for a bit about Ezine Articles, as it relates to something you can do in the con-

As an Internet marketer, on behalf of yourself or others, can afford you the same great lifestyle.



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text of your consulting business. We've discussed before the idea of writing short articles and posting them online so that you can position yourself as an expert in your chosen field and drive traffic to your website. We like to mention doing this through Ezine Articles (www.ezinearticles.com), because they are a high-quality article aggregator, but there are multitudes of places through which you can place such articles. Anyway, posting articles in this fashion can be something you do not only for yourself, but for clients, as well. You could have a meeting with a client, set up a tape recorder, and have the client share some bullet points about what it is that makes his business really stand out, and then take that material and produce articles that could be posted online. Certainly an article like that can be posted directly on the client's proprietary site, but the article could also be sent into cyberspace for widespread distribution. This is just another of the many services you can provide.

Now That You Know the Services to Offer...It's Time to Go Get Some Clients

There's a lot of useful services you can provide to help the business owners in your area to grow. Now, it's time to put some thought into just how you begin getting these clients.

The first thing you want to do is set up your website so that it's search engine optimized for your location. For example, if you live in Daytona Beach, Florida, you would probably want to have the domain name of Daytona Website Design.com, or Daytona Internet Services, or something like that. See what I'm getting at? You absolutely want the name of your town or area associated with your Internet marketing consulting business, to include the actual domain name itself.

Another terrific way to gain an entry point in gaining clients is to do free work for charities. You will be asked a lot by prospective clients for samples of work you've already done (or are doing currently), but you can easily get caught in a bit of a "Catch 22," because if you don't have your first client as yet, how will you have samples to show? Well, one way to get some sample work to show other paying customers is to do some work *gratis* for your church or local charity; perhaps you can set up a website for the local high school band or some other non-profit group in your area. Remember that with every new business, you have to make an investment at the outset. Oftentimes, the investment is in the form of hard money, but it can also be in the form of work like this.

Free workshops are a great way to do local marketing, as well. You can reserve space at your local library for that purpose, and invite local businesses to see what you do; you can also offer a free class at your church.

Getting yourself booked as a speaker at local chamber of commerce-sorts of functions can be a great way to reach new clients. You could come up with a great presentation about how local businesses can grow their businesses in a tough economy, and deliver it to appropriate audiences. You can also start a free online directory for local businesses; setting up a directory can get your foot in the door with local merchants, and even uncover those that don't have a website at all.

While you likely enrolled in your Internet training without any thought of becoming a consultant, the opportunity to take what you learn here and sell to others as services is too great to ignore. Once again...*multiple streams of income*. God bless!