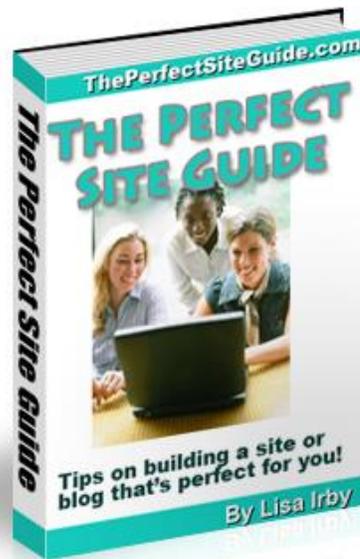


# THE PERFECT SITE GUIDE

by Lisa Irby of



Last updated on **September 2013**  
Always check [ThePerfectSiteGuide.com](http://ThePerfectSiteGuide.com) for updates.



Want to create a website, but have no clue how to begin? Well, you are in the right place! This tutorial will walk you through all the steps to creating and marketing a website from scratch.

If you are in a hurry and want to skip over all my tips, warnings and suggestions (not recommended), then you can skip down to the [Quick Start Guide](#) to creating your site.

If you decide to go this route and bypass all my juicy tips, don't say I didn't warn you! ;) )

Enjoy the book and feel free to share it with your friends and family by either sending them to the website address below...

<http://www.ThePerfectSiteGuide.com>

**OR...**

You can save this book to your computer (if you haven't already, go to "File", "Save Page As" in your browser now) and e-mail it to people, or offer it as a free download from your own website or blog.

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# Domains & Hosting (First Step)

Before we get started, you should understand that **EVERY** website must have two things...

- 1) A domain name
- 2) A web host



## Domain Names

The **domain name** is the address of your website (yoursite.com) and the **web host** is the company that allows you to publish your pages to the Internet, create e-mail addresses (name@yoursite.com) and develop additional features like chat rooms, forums, shopping carts, feedback forms etc.

I recommend getting your domain name and web hosting from [WebsitePalace.com](http://WebsitePalace.com). This is my reseller store. I offer free tutorials, free e-book creation software and videos to help you get started with your site. (**The links to the freebies are on the THANK YOU page after you order so don't miss them!**)

However, if you have a company in mind, feel free to use whatever registrar you wish for registering your domain and getting a web host. Registrars typically provide the same services, but the others won't give you my freebies, obviously.

## Web Hosting

A web host is the company that provides the server space for your web pages and whatever files you need for your website. You will be uploading your website files to your host. This is how a website becomes visible on the Internet.

They also provide you with e-mail addresses (name@yourdomain.com), scripts for forums, blogs, chat rooms, feedback forms, etc. **A website cannot exist without a host.**

## Website Palace Hosting

This is the most [common type of host](#) that most people use for their static websites and blogs. It's the most economical and you can do whatever you want with your site in terms of adding forums, chat rooms, user uploads, video, creating a blog, etc.

If you are going to build a static website (like 2 Create a Website), then you can either learn how to code online by going to sites like [W3Schools](http://W3Schools) or [Lynda.com](http://Lynda.com). Or you can buy a website designer/builder like [Artisteer](http://Artisteer) or [Dreamweaver](http://Dreamweaver).

If you plan to create a WordPress blog, this is the hosting option to choose. No software is needed since WordPress comes with its own templates. You will simply, [sign up for WordPress hosting](#) and you can begin creating your site right away.

**TIP:** Choose the [DELUXE plan](#) and you can **host unlimited sites on one account**.

Don't really know the difference between a blog and a static website? Stay tuned. I will talk more about that later.

## Coupon for WebsitePalace.com

*Surprise!!* Because I appreciate you supporting my site and downloading my book, here is a coupon you can use if you choose [WebsitePalace.com](#) as your domain registrar **or** host for your site.

In case you didn't know, you **do not** have to host your site at the same company you buy your domains from. So if you were planning to register (or host) your domain somewhere else, you can still host (or register your domain) at WebsitePalace.com and take advantage of the discount.

As long as you purchase *something* from Website Palace, you'll get the discount.

All products on the site are eligible for the promotion. You just have to meet the spending requirements outlined in the coupon below. Simply enter the appropriate coupon code during the checkout process to take advantage of the savings.

**15% off orders  
\$100 or more  
CODE:  
100CN15**

**THE PERFECT  
SITE GUIDE**

**COUPON FOR  
WebsitePalace.com**

**10% off orders  
\$50 or more  
CODE:  
50CN10**

NOT VALID FOR CUSTOMERS ON THE DISCOUNT LIST

**ENTER THE COUPON CODE DURING CHECKOUT!**

## I Don't Endorse FREE Domains or Hosting

I know what you may be thinking. *Do I have to pay for my website?* The answer to that is simple. **No, you don't.** But I highly recommend it due to some bad experiences I've had with free hosts. I am not going to recommend any free hosts here so you're on your own if that's what you're looking for.

Here's the bottom line. You get what you pay for (or **don't** pay for) and I will not spend any time endorsing any free web hosting companies here because I believe if you want people to take your site seriously, you will invest the money. (**Especially if your goal is to make money online.**)

You wouldn't believe all the people who email me and tell me they wish they had found my advice about free hosting before starting their free website. The horror stories regarding sites getting shutdown, no guarantees, etc. are endless. Trust me, I've been there!

Not to mention it is a **ROYAL PAIN** to switch from a free host over to a paid host, especially after you start building out a lot of pages. Do it right the first time -- even if that means cancelling a couple of monthly trips to Starbucks just to afford hosting. :-) It's worth it!

[Watch my video where I discuss the problems with using a free host.](#)

# WordPress

WordPress is the best solution for building a website today.

You can create a blog-like website where the content is arranged by date and category or you can create a more traditional site.

I was once a Blogger user, but switched to [WordPress](#) in January of 2008. I haven't looked back since. WordPress is much more robust and you can do so much more with your content thanks to the plug-ins available (which are free, by the way).

A plug-in is simply a script that gives your blog additional functionality and WordPress has a directory full of plug-ins you can use.

Let's say you want to display a listing of the top commenters on your blog (people who leave the most comments). You can install a plug-in that will publish a real-time listing of your blog's top commenters.

So there are tons of different plug-ins in categories (shopping carts, forums and more) that can make your site do many different things. WordPress is **EXTREMELY** powerful.

My blog, <http://blog.2CreateAWebSite.com> is a WordPress blog.

## Creating a WordPress Blog

There are two ways to create a WordPress blog.

- 1) You can use a free one at [WordPress.com](#) (no domain or hosting account needed) or
- 2) You can create a self-hosted blog on your own domain.

I **HIGHLY, HIGHLY** recommend doing the self-hosted blog on your own domain. If you do not and host it for free on WordPress.com, then you **cannot** add affiliate links or Google ads. A **huge** disadvantage if you plan to make money with your blog.

My blog is self-hosted, meaning it sits on my own domain at <http://blog.2CreateAWebSite.com>. If you go this route, you need a domain name and a web hosting account.

Just select the [WordPress hosting option](#) and the script will be installed on your domain. You can begin your site right away.

If you're interesting in learning more about WordPress, don't forget to sign up for my [free WordPress tips!](#)



# Blogger

Blogger is owned by Google and probably the easiest platform to use. It's completely free and you do not need to buy a hosting account to use it.

To create a Blogger blog, you simply go to [Blogger.com](http://Blogger.com) and sign up.

**Note:** Even though you don't need a hosting account with Blogger, I would **HIGHLY** recommend you [buy your own domain](#) for your blog so your address is **<http://www.yourblog.com>** instead of **<http://yourblog.blogspot.com>**.

Once you buy your domain, Blogger has instructions for pointing your domain name to your blog.

## Any Disadvantages to Using Blogger?

Even though Blogger is easy to setup and use, it's not as robust as WordPress. Some people find it tricky to setup static pages with Blogger and organize their posts outside of the standard blog format (newest to oldest). Plus there aren't plug-ins you can use like WordPress.

My advice is simple...

**Choose WordPress!** 😊

**Note:** There are other blogging platforms such as [TypePad](#), [Moveable Type](#), etc. I tried TypePad and didn't like it, and I've never tried Moveable Type. WordPress and Blogger are the most widely used blogging platforms.



# Making Money Online

Many of you downloaded this book because you have one goal, and that is to make money with a website or blog.

It is entirely possible to make a full-time living online. I do and hope to never return to a 9 to 5 again.

I can work when I want, travel when I want, wake up when I want and I have no one to answer to but **MEEEEEEEE**.

The freedom that this "job" provides is beyond measure. If you are prepared to work hard, set realistic goals and enjoy yourself, you too can have this lifestyle.

## But...

As I said earlier, this all came with a price. **I have spent an enormous amount of time in front of my PC over the years.**

I had to learn how to create my own websites (yes, that includes learning some HTML/CSS programming) and learn how to use different tools and software programs. I didn't have the luxury of a book like this or a personal mentor to give me any kind of guidance.

So let me set the record straight. If you are going into this expecting to make a lot of money in a few short months without having to learn, make mistakes and possibly spend some money (at least for your website), then you might as well stop reading now.

Also, I cannot protect you from failure. Many people let the fear of failure paralyze them and they become afraid to "just do it." But did you know that sometimes the best way to learn is to fail?

Do you think I did everything right the first time? Of course I didn't. But I didn't let that stop me. I learned valuable lessons from my mistakes. And fortunately for you, you have this book (something I didn't have) that can nudge you in the right direction.

While there's no way for me to protect you from failing (too much of your success depends on your own hard work, creativity and effort), but I **can** help minimize potential mistakes by giving you advice based on my own experiences.

OK, I'm done preaching (at least for now). But I really want to emphasize the fact that you cannot put a time-limit on your success. I cannot **and will not** tell you how long it's going to take you to make money. There are too many variables involved to make such a prediction.

But I can tell you that if you are a hard worker, enjoy the learning, and understand that success is not going to happen instantly, then you are already starting on the right foot.



I am going to make an important statement here so make sure you remember this...

**How much money you make online solely depends on how much TARGETED traffic you can drive to your site and how well you build credibility.**

OK, now that you understand that, let's talk about the different kinds of sites and ways you can make money online with a website or a blog.

# Google AdSense

Google AdSense is probably one of the most convenient ways to monetize your static website or blog. This program is free and you partner with Google by promoting their sponsored ads on your site.



Every time an ad is clicked on your site, Google pays you a percentage (undisclosed) of what the advertiser is paying them for the click.

Google's technology can read your pages. So they will determine what your page is about. And when you paste the AdSense code on your pages, their technology will generate ads **relevant to your content** – thus increasing the chances that your visitors will click.

So if your site is about baseball, you will see sports-related ads on your pages. Google is in complete control over what ads display. However, you *are* allowed to filter competitive or inappropriate ads if you wish.

When your earnings reach \$100, Google will send you a check (or pay with direct deposit).

## Applying For AdSense

Once your website or blog has several pages of useful, unique and organized content, you can go to <http://adsense.google.com> and apply.

Recently, Google tightened their acceptance policies. I've heard conflicting information on this, but some have been told that in order to get accepted with AdSense, your site must meet the following requirements...

- 1) Must be hosted on a true domain name (yourdomain.com) So that means you cannot use a Blogger blog without pointing it to your own domain**
- 2) Your domain must be at least 6 months old**
- 3) Content must be original and unique**

Rule #3 is not new, but 1 and 2 were not requirements when I joined. Although I will say I've heard from some people who have gotten accepted without meeting all those requirements.

I guess it depends on the quality of your site or blog. If your site is very well organized and provides a lot of useful content, then Google may accept you even if you don't meet all the requirements.

**Lisa's advice:** *Don't worry about applying to Google AdSense in the first six months. You are not going to make much anyway if you don't have the traffic. So you might as well focus on building and marketing your site and apply for AdSense (or any affiliate program) later.*

Too many people focus on making money right away and they can't wait to join AdSense. Then they join and wonder why they aren't making any money with their ads. Of course, if you haven't learned how to build traffic to your site then you aren't going to make anything with AdSense or **any** program.

How much targeted traffic you have is a big factor with how much you will make with AdSense. Actually, it's a big factor for how much you will make no matter how you attempt to make money online.

Don't ever underestimate the importance of learning how to market your site. Traffic does not just appear because you create a website. Marketing is everything.

## **Alternatives to AdSense?**

There are some alternative programs to AdSense. The only one I've really tried is [AdBrite](#). The ads don't pay as much as AdSense, but it's worth a try if you were either banned or not accepted into AdSense.

You are allowed to use both programs together on your site. I e-mailed Google to make sure it didn't violate their terms. I use AdBrite, but not in the same way I use AdSense. AdBrite also has a 3<sup>rd</sup> party ad management program that I use to sell flat-rate ad space on my site.

[Kontera](#) and [Infolinks](#) are two other AdSense alternatives. Both are in-text advertising services, so the actual keywords on your pages will turn into underlined ads. I am not a fan of these kinds of ads, personally. I think they are too intrusive, and I don't like the fact you can't control which words on your pages will become ads.

At least with AdSense and AdBrite you can designate a space for the ads. With Kontera and Infolinks you have much less control over where the ads will show up on your pages.

# Affiliate Marketing

Affiliate Marketing is how I make a full-time living online. As an affiliate, I build websites on topics that interest me and make money by earning commissions when I refer people to products and services that relate to the content of my sites.

I market my websites in places like Google (and other free search engines), Twitter, YouTube, forums, I comment on related blogs, etc. As my traffic grows, the more money I earn from the affiliate programs I join and programs like AdSense.

Once again, almost all affiliate programs are free to join. You simply go to the company's website and check to see if they have one. If so, you sign up and within minutes you can begin promoting their products.

## Here's an Example...

Let's say you love the sport of bowling and you want to create a website that teaches people how to perfect their game.

You could register the domain name **bowling-tips-for-newbies.com** and build a website with tons of information and instructional videos on how to become a great bowler.

After you create your site, you begin marketing it by learning about SEO (search engine optimization). This is the process of getting your pages ranked high in Google, Yahoo and all the other free engines. Your goal is to get found for popular bowling searches.

There are many more ways to market a website (forums, Twitter, FaceBook, paid marketing, writing guest articles, PPC (pay per click), article submissions, etc.) You can even create YouTube videos teaching your audience how to walk and throw the ball down the lane. YouTube will provide another way for people to find you online.

[There's more specific traffic advice here.](#)

**I'll say it again. Success online is all about marketing. No matter what kind of site you create, you must learn how to get in front of your targeted audience and give them VALUE. This is not an easy or overnight task.**



## Monetizing Your Bowling Website

To make money from this site you could display Google ads on your site (via the AdSense program that I mentioned above). You could also visit your favorite bowling supplies website and see if they have an affiliate program.

As an affiliate, you can refer your site visitors to bowling-related products and supplies. This means every time someone buys a product as a result of your referral, you'll earn a commission from that company.

Almost all affiliate programs provide tracking details so you can login to your account and see how much traffic and sales you've generated. The company will provide you with the links and banners you need to promote their products from your site.

## Where to Find Affiliate Programs

One way to find affiliate programs that match your niche is to join networks like [LinkShare](#), [ShareASale](#) and [CJ.com](#). These companies house a multitude of affiliate programs under one roof.

You can scour their directories for the perfect program, get affiliate links for your site and check your traffic and earning reports. Instead of getting a separate check from each company, the network sends you a lump sum check for all your earnings from the programs you've joined.

[AssociatePrograms.com](#) is another great site to visit to find affiliate programs. Allan Gardyne has compiled a directory of programs and they are sorted by category. You will also find some outstanding affiliate success tips.

## Payments and Taxes

Most affiliate programs pay by check, PayPal and some even pay by direct deposit. If you live outside of the United States and have questions about payments, you should e-mail the individual companies and ask about their payment options.

If you earn over \$400 for the year, the company will treat your earnings like an independent contractor, and everything you earned will be reported to the IRS. **So yes, you are responsible for keeping track and reporting everything you earn.**

You do not have to setup an official business name/corporation as an affiliate, but if you start making enough money, you will be able to file a Schedule C form with your regular 1040 and claim expenses for your affiliate business. So that means you can write-off things like your domain name, hosting fees and any other expenses associated with your affiliate business.

Keep in mind that in order to write these things off, you must be making a certain amount.

**I highly recommend you seek advice from a local tax professional so you can get advice specific to your situation.** Be careful about getting advice from the web as it may be incorrect and/or outdated. If you are going to get info from the Internet, make sure you go to [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov) – the official IRS website.

I purposely did not disclose specific numbers about taxes here. I want you to do your own research and make sure you get the answers you need from a local tax professional.

## **Videos Related to Affiliate Marketing**

[Which Affiliate Programs Generate The Most Money?](#)

[Is Affiliate Marketing Oversaturated?](#)

[MLM vs. Affiliate Marketing](#)

[Why Many Affiliate Websites Fail](#)

# Ecommerce Website / Selling Hard Goods

If you want to create a website that sells actual products then you will need some kind of shopping cart system in addition to your domain and web host.

There are several ways to go about setting up a shopping cart but I am going to discuss the most popular...

- 1) Installing a shopping cart system through your hosting account (or WordPress plugin)
- 2) Using PayPal to collect payments



## Shopping Cart Systems

Most domain registrars / web hosting companies have shopping cart solutions you can purchase as add-ons for your website.

For example, [Website Palace has one here](#). If you choose this option, there will be some setup required, so you'll have to get the instructions from the web host.

## Collecting Online Payments

To handle credit card transactions you will either [setup a merchant account](#) or use a 3<sup>rd</sup> party solution like [PayPal](#).

[PayPal](#) is probably the easiest payment system to setup and does not cost as much as the merchant account solutions provided by most web hosts. Signing up with PayPal is free and the only cost to use their shopping cart/checkout system is the fee you pay per transaction.\*

If you do decide to go with PayPal, you can integrate it with the [shopping cart solution](#) found on Website Palace.

## Using PayPal By Itself

You can use PayPal without setting up a shopping cart. If your website is only going to sell a few items then you may be able to get away with just setting up a few "Buy Now" buttons and directing your customers to PayPal to purchase. But if you plan on selling multiple items then you should consider setting up some kind of shopping cart system.

Make sure you check out [PayPal's site](#) for specifics on all the fees and options.

\* PayPal offers multiple merchant account options and there may be additional fees associated with the premiere accounts.

## WordPress Plugins

If you use WordPress to build your website then there are ecommerce plugins like [WooCommerce](#) you can add on to your website that makes taking orders a breeze!

## Digital or e-Goods

A digital or e-good is a product that your customers can access instantly (via download, e-mail, etc.) The main advantage to selling an e-good is you don't have to deal with shipping and handling.

Running out of inventory is also never a problem. Since your product is in a digital format, it never runs out of stock. You always have unlimited copies on your computer.

This e-book you're reading now is an e-good. I created it with Microsoft Word and used [Adobe Professional](#) (not the free Adobe Acrobat Reader) to convert it into an electronic (PDF) book.

Adobe allows you to protect the book from theft (copy and paste) and you can even restrict printing if you want.

One advantage to using a PDF format like this is that it's compatible with both Macs and PCs so you don't have to worry about people having trouble opening your book.

[Learn how to create a PDF/ebook with this video.](#)



## Selling Your e-Goods

Many people who sell e-goods, opt to use [PayPal](#) to collect the orders because they can setup PayPal to automatically e-mail the customer the download link to the product immediately after the order is placed. What a convenient setup! You can literally make sales and fulfill orders for your e-good while you sleep!

## Offer Your e-Goods for Free

Another option is to give away your e-goods for free (or at least a sample). First of all, it's a great viral marketing technique because many people will pass it on to others.

Second, if you are an affiliate, you can add affiliate links in the book to earn money that way. That's what I'm doing with this book. Even though I make no money from direct sales, I earn commissions when people purchase some of the products and services I recommend here.

You can also earn revenue by adding sponsor ads inside your book and offer advertising spots to people looking to promote their sites.

## No Ideas for Your e-Book?

Don't feel you know enough about anything to write a fabulous e-book? Jim Edwards and Joe Vitale will make you think otherwise in their e-book, "[How to Write and Publish an e-Book in as Little as 7 Days.](#)"

It's 180+ pages of advice on how to write your own e-book and interviews from other successful e-book authors. The book is quite lengthy, but it's a quick read. I enjoyed it!

# Forums / Message Boards

A forum is a site that allows people to have threaded conversations. Forums are usually divided up into smaller sub forums based on topic. You can see my forum by going to [WebsiteBabble.com](http://WebsiteBabble.com).

Most forums make money with advertising. Forum owners display Google (AdSense ads), allow paid advertising, sponsors, etc.



Just like everything else, there are multiple ways to build a forum. It depends on how much work you want to do and how much control you want to have. I highly recommend self-hosting your own forum like I'm doing with WebsiteBabble.com.

That means the forum is hosted on my own domain name and I have full control over everything from the address of the forum to hosting ads, etc. If you want to go this route, you need a domain name and regular web host. My forum is hosted at [Website Palace](http://WebsitePalace.com) and the forum script/software that I'm using is [vBulletin](http://vBulletin.com).

So to create my forum, I had to [buy the vBulletin script](http://buythevBulletin.com) and then install it on my hosting account at Website Palace. Yes, this will require you to learn a bit about uploading files to your web hosting account.

## Don't Want to Buy a Script?

In my opinion, [vBulletin](http://vBulletin.com) is the best forum script out there. The customization options are great and you receive the customer support. However, if you do not want to pay for your forum there is another option.

If you choose the [regular hosting option with Website Palace](http://regularhostingoption.com), there are some free forum scripts that come with your plan.

You can install the forum in just a few clicks without having to manually upload files, edit the scripts, etc. The forum scripts are not as powerful as vBulletin, but they may suit your needs. You can always upgrade to a paid script at a later time.

[Watch this video and learn how to setup a forum with Website Palace.](http://watchthisvideo.com)

## Getting Traffic to Your Forum

Just like social networking sites, forums are not as easy to draw in traffic as content-themed websites. One big mistake I made with my first few forums is that I tried to launch before I had enough traffic to my website.

It takes a **LOT** of traffic to get a forum active because most people who are exposed to your forum will not become active members.

So to give your forum a chance to succeed, you **NEED** an existing traffic base that you can promote your forum to. Just like social networking sites, I would not suggest creating a forum if you don't already have a well-trafficked site or blog first. Take it from someone who's had three failed forums.

## **Video Related to Forums**

[How to Create a Forum/Message Board](#)

# Selling Ad Space

Once you start getting traffic to your site, you may want to think about selling flat-rate ads to other advertisers.

This is different from contextual ad programs like AdSense because you will be charging a flat fee and the ad may run for a week, month, or whatever you decide.



I do not recommend trying to sell ad spots if you don't have much traffic. Think about it. Would you pay for an ad on a store window if you knew that store was on a street with no traffic?

You should definitely wait until you have a few hundred visitors per day before you think of selling ad space. Not to mention, it makes your site look very smallish if you have a "Your Ad Here" message up for months and no takers.

## Using Ad Management Software

### OpenX

If you want to keep all the profits yourself, the best thing to do is use your own ad management software. [OpenX](#) is probably one of the most popular, free scripts out here. You can integrate it with PayPal, and the setup is fairly easy if you are familiar with configuring and uploading scripts to your web host.

OpenX supports image and text ads.

### OIO Publisher

[OIO Publisher](#) is the perfect, hassle-free solution for WordPress users who want to host sponsor ads, but don't want to deal with setting up and installing complicated scripts. If you use WordPress, OIO Publisher installs just like a plug-in, so setting this ad management system up is a breeze.

OIO only works on PHP sites (sites like WordPress blogs and most forums), so if your site is static (HTML) then you'll have to convert your pages to PHP in order to use it.

I bought this script for my forum, [WebsiteBabble.com](#) and it worked like a charm.

OIO Publisher supports image and text ads.

## The Manual Method

If you don't want to deal with any scripts or 3<sup>rd</sup> parties, of course you can manually manage the ads on your site and collect the money through a site like PayPal. I would not recommend this method because it's not automated.

You have to keep track of when the ads expire and remember to take them down. Not too difficult if you have one or two ads, but if business starts picking up, you may regret this decision.

## Determining Your Ad Price

So how do you know how much to charge for your ads? One way you can do this is by checking your eCPM statistic from any ad program you may use.

If you are a Google AdSense member, you can login to your reports and check your eCPM for the day or the current month. The eCPM stands for *earnings cost per thousand*. So let's say your eCPM for this month is \$5.00. That means you earn \$5.00 for every 1,000 ad impressions.

So if your site gets 5,000 page views per month, then you would charge \$25/month for an ad (\$5.00 for every 1,000 page views).

Now this is just one way of doing it. And of course, you can adjust the price based on other factors. For example, if I used that formula on 2 Create a Website, my ad prices would be much higher than they are. But I also took into account the history of my sponsor ads click through rates, placement of the ads, competitor prices, etc.

So you can use that formula to get a base price, and then adjust as needed.

# Building Traffic to Your Site or Blog

Building targeted traffic is the most challenging task of owning a website. I get more e-mails about this than any other subject.

Your ability to drive targeted traffic to your site will probably be the determining factor for whether you succeed or fail.

Many people assume that if they have a great idea for a site, the traffic will just come.

People don't just stumble upon websites like they do stores on a street. You have to drive traffic to your site through either paid advertising or other online methods that I will discuss below.

This is where you need your creative cap because marketing your site effectively is the key to success. I will show you some of the most common ways people promote their websites, but it's up to you to execute, execute, execute!

[Let's get started...](#)



# Search Engine Optimization (SEO)

There's nothing like search engine traffic because it's free and very targeted.

Notice I keep using the word "targeted". I do so because there is a **BIG** difference between any traffic and targeted traffic.

I would much rather have 50 people come to 2CreateAWebSite.com who searched for "how to create a website" in Google than to have 500 random people on MySpace find my site because of a bulletin or e-mail I sent out.

Why? Because the people in Google were actually **SEARCHING** for how to build a website. So I know that my content fits their needs and it is more likely they will buy and become regular visitors. These are **targeted** visitors.

A lot of people think that sending out a blast e-mail to their FaceBook friends is marketing. Sure, some of your buddies will check your site out of courtesy, but most will not become customers because this is not **TARGETED** traffic.

Google and Bing-Yahoo are the most popular engines out there and make up for over 90% of the Web's searches today. Don't waste your time paying any submission services to submit to (50,000 sites). They're rip-offs. Most of the sites they will submit to are rarely used.

Also, when you do a web search on other sites, most of them use Google's results anyway. So as long as you're listed there, you'll also be listed on other sites that use their results.

## Search Engine Rankings are a Popularity Contest

Back in the day, getting a good ranking in the popular engines was all about adding meta tags and keyword stuffing.

Meta tags are descriptors that go into the top of your pages and they tell the engines what title and description to display in their results. Even though the search engines rely less on meta tags for rankings, you should still add them on every page.

[I have a video on creating meta tags here.](#)

Keyword stuffing is when you load up your paragraphs with the phrases you want to rank high for. So if you were trying to rank on the first page of Google for "home employment", your paragraph may have looked something like this back in the day...

*Looking for home employment? This site has the best home employment opportunities available today! Don't look for another home employment site because you won't find better employment opportunities than you will find here!*



Notice how many times I used the phrase "home employment"? Doing this used to help you increase your ranking for that phrase.

Now, as you can imagine, this method got abused because any nonsense site could rank high for anything they wanted by simply keyword stuffing. So the engines had to quickly adjust.

To learn more about getting ranked in Google, Yahoo and Bing [go here](#).

[Also find out why I don't chase links or buy into those "linking schemes."](#)

# Forums

Forums are another way to drive traffic to your site but this also takes time. I would **never** suggest you go to any forum and just blast ads for your site. First of all, that's spamming. Second of all, it's worthless.

The best way to promote your site with forums is to find ones that are related to your niche and develop a likeable profile. If your site is about tennis, find forums related to tennis by googling "tennis forums".

Join the forum and begin interacting with other members by asking questions and helping others. Develop a trusted personality on the forum by being helpful and kind. Most forums will allow you to add a signature to your posts. This is where the promotion comes in.

As you continue to build your reputation, it will increase the chances that people will visit your site that is listed in your signature file.

This takes time. Just make a habit of posting 5-10 posts per day in the forums of your choice and you will be amazed at how this can help get more traffic to your site in the long-run.

If you emerge as a helpful, likeable member, you gain credibility and the more likely other members will visit your website.

## Forums and Backlinks

Many people believe posting to related forums will improve their search engine rankings because of the backlink in the sig file. Remember, backlinks are inbound links to your site and the search engines keep track of how many relevant ones you have.

I do believe that posting to forums may help your link popularity some, but they aren't as effective as they used to be because the engines know people use forums in an attempt to increase their number of backlinks. So don't expect miracles from this.

The best benefit you'll get from forums is the traffic you'll receive from members who manually click on your signature. That's why it's important to post to relevant forums in your niche and build up a positive, credible profile with the other members.



# Social Networking Sites

Sites like [FaceBook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Google Plus](#) can be great places to build relationships and promote your site.

FaceBook even allows you to [create a fan page](#), so you can use that to promote your site as well.

Even though the founders of [Twitter](#) don't classify it as a social networking site, I would still say it falls in that category.

A lot of people think Twitter is a waste of time, but if you learn how to use it, I think it can be a great traffic generator/networking tool.

Here's an example. I did a [video](#) explaining how to use the WordPress theme called [Thesis](#). Right after I published the video, I noticed the developers of the product also had a Twitter account. So I sent them a tweet to let them know about my video.

They were so impressed that they began featuring my video on their site which not only helped me land more affiliate sales for the product, but it also brought traffic to my blog.

Social networking sites can be great promotion tools, but just like anything else, you have to use them effectively to get results.

Don't just promote your own content. Engage with other people and share their links as well. Social media is definitely a two-way street and not for people who are only looking to get from others.



# YouTube

YouTube has been one of my favorite places to market lately. It's fun and I get to build credibility by creating videos that teach and help build my brand and credibility.

People love video because it gives them a break from reading. It also gives you a chance to show off your personality and let your audience see the real you!

What's even better is once your channel becomes popular, you can become a [partner](#) and earn money from ads displayed on and near your videos.

To get the best video results you should use a camera with HD capability since YouTube will let you upload video in HD. I use a Sony HD Handycam, although you really don't need a video camera. You can use a regular digital camera that has video capability. The higher the megapixels, the better.

I also highly recommend getting a good video editing program so your videos have a more polished, professional look. I use Final Cut Express (Mac) and iMovie on occasion.

[Learn more about creating videos here.](#)

## YouTube and SEO

One cool aspect about creating YouTube videos is if your videos become popular and get "favorited" a lot, you might find them showing up in Google's search results for relevant keywords. Google owns YouTube so if you can create a popular channel with great videos, that can only mean good things for you as far as SEO goes.

I honestly can't see many reasons why you *wouldn't* want to add YouTube videos to your promotion portfolio. Check my blog to read my post titled "[10 Reasons You Should Be YouTubing](#)".



# Pay Per Click Marketing (PPC)

PPC allows you to bid on keywords you want to rank high for. Above, I wrote about SEO, which is the process of getting ranked in the free/natural results. PPC is the opposite of that. You will actually be paying for your rank.

Every time someone clicks on your ad/site link, you pay a predetermined amount. The most popular PPC programs are [AdWords \(Google\)](#) and [Microsoft Ad Center](#).

This is a great way to bring targeted traffic to your site, **BUT** you can also lose a lot of money quickly if you don't track your conversions and money spent.



## Here's how it works...

Let's say you want to rank in Google for the phrase "blue hats". You would create an account with [Google AdWords](#) if you want your site to show up on Google.com. AdWords will walk you through creating your ad campaign and will help you determine the price you will pay per click. So let's say your price ends up being \$.89. That means every time someone does a search for "blue hats" and clicks your ad/site, that is the amount you will pay.

In Google, the AdWords ads appear in a shaded box right below the search box on the search results page **and** on the right hand column under the heading "Sponsored Links". Try it now. [Do a search for "perfume" in Google](#). You will see the ads in both places. These are PPC ads.

Most people use PPC to promote specific products because it's easier to track your ROI (return on investment). As I said earlier, you can lose a lot of money quickly if you do not track how much you are spending. Some even do PPC full-time.

But you can also use it to draw traffic to your site. You can bid on very inexpensive keywords and set a monthly budget.

So let's say you bid on the phrases "blue hats", "red hats" and "gold hats" and set a daily budget for \$30. Google will automatically freeze your ad campaign when you reach your daily limit. This is a good way to keep your spending in check, especially if you are just starting out.

I don't have much experience with PPC. When I *do* use it, I bid on very inexpensive keywords to drive additional traffic to my site. I don't use it to promote specific products and track the conversion.

But I will tell you this. If you can learn how to master PPC as a business, you can make a boatload of money. Some people make 6 and 7 figures per year just working the PPC market alone by setting up campaigns to promote specific products for which they earn commissions.

The money sounds exciting, but it's hard work because you have to constantly monitor and perfect your campaigns while keeping track of your (ROI) to ensure you are making a profit.

If you are interested in learning more about PPC **as a business** (not just for driving traffic to your site like I use it), check out [PerryMarshall.com](http://PerryMarshall.com).

# Article Marketing

Article Marketing is where you submit original articles (that you've written) to a directory that allows other Webmasters and Bloggers to re-print your article on their sites.

If someone uses your article, they must also print your info box that contains your bio and link to your site. This is how this technique can bring a viral traffic flow to your site.

Another way to use article marketing is to create keyword-focuses articles on particular phrases that are commonly searched for. Some people believe that submitting articles to popular submission sites will get these pages listed/ranked faster in the major search engines. Then they can use that article to drive traffic back to their site.

Some popular article submission sites are [EzineArticles](#), [GoArticles](#) and [iSnare](#).

I would **NOT** recommend submitting the same articles you have on your site. **The search engines may ignore the article.** Make sure the articles you submit to these directories are unique to anything you've written or submitted elsewhere.

I used to use article marketing all the time when I first started marketing my sites. In fact, I credit this technique for helping me get traffic back in the early days. Although, as the Net evolved, the results weren't as sweet so I moved on to other things.

However, there are still a lot of people who use and believe in article. I think a lot of your success chances have to do with your niche. Some niches are more saturated than others. For the record, I'm not a big fan of this technique anymore.

**NOTE:** Now that search engine optimization has changed, article marketing is no longer as effective as it used to be, but some people still use it to drive traffic. I don't.



# Writing Guest Articles & Blog Posts

Guest writing is a very effective way to get exposure for your site. Imagine the traffic potential available if a heavily trafficked site features your article.

Guest writing is very common in the blogging world. Many successful bloggers will tell you they got their break by writing guest posts for other popular blogs.

Now, before you start submitting articles to any and every popular site you know, there are guidelines you should follow if you want to maximize the benefits from guest article writing...



- 1) Check to see if the site owner has submission guidelines. If so, make sure you follow them. If they ask you to submit a Word doc, don't submit an HTML file. The fastest way to get your e-mail deleted is to ignore their submission instructions.
- 2) Only choose sites that have an audience relevant to your topic. There's no point in submitting an article to an electronics site if your article is about beauty supplies. I know it sounds like common sense, but you'd be surprised at the lengths people will go through for traffic.
- 3) Submit **original** articles. As I mentioned in the section above, the search engines ignore duplicate content, so don't submit an article that you've already published elsewhere. Not to mention, the owner of the site will not want to publish the duplicate content on their site.

Ramit of IWillTeachYouToBeRich.com wrote a very solid article with outstanding guidelines for writing guest posts for other blogs. [You can read the article here.](#)

# Squidoo and Hubpages

**Squidoo** is a free site that allows you to create a one-page site (or a “lens”) on any topic of your choice. So if your main site or blog is about fishing, you might want to create a Squidoo lens on this topic and link it to your website.

One advantage of creating a Squidoo lens is that Google loves Squidoo. Why? Because it’s updated frequently with fresh content. (In case you haven’t figured it out yet, Google *loves* fresh content. That’s why blogs tend to get listed and ranked faster than websites.)

Another advantage is that Squidoo shares its ad revenue with their lensmasters (Squidoo users.)

[Click here to learn more about Squidoo.](#)

**Hubpages** are much like Squidoo pages, with a few minor differences. One major difference is the ad sharing/revenue piece. With Squidoo, you share the earnings. With Hubpages, you place your own AdSense code on your pages and keep the revenue.

However, the important thing to know is they can both help you generate extra traffic to your site if used effectively.

[Here’s an article that explains the difference between Squidoo and Hubpages.](#)

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This is not by any means an exhaustive list of ways to market a website. I just wanted to give you an idea of some common ways people promote their sites and blogs.



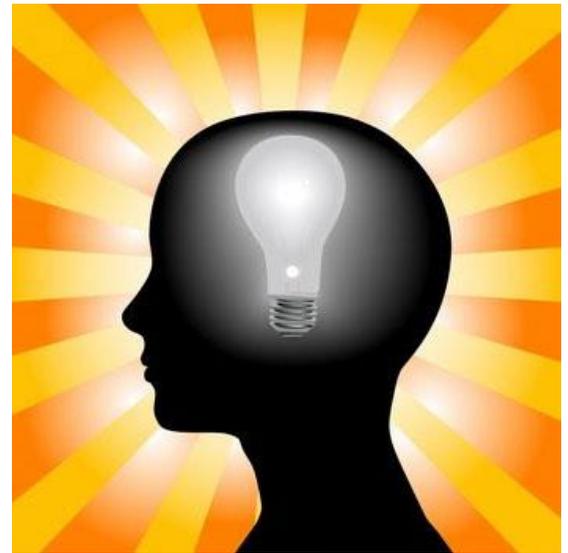
# Topic Choice is Everything

Now that you understand a lot more about how to build and market a website, I want to spend some time emphasizing the importance of topic choice if you want to make money online.

This section is especially for those who want to make money the way I do – build an information site on a topic and make money through affiliate programs, Google ads, etc.

Many people get the topic part wrong because they either copy other people's successful ideas or they aren't passionate enough about the topic to stick with it.

Remember, it could take you months before you start making decent money, so you have to enjoy this enough to hang in there.



## The Problem With Copying Someone Else's Idea

People aren't successful online because of the topic. They are successful because they have fresh, quality information and they present their content in a way that informs, entertains, builds trust and educates their audience.

When people hear that I make 6 figures online, they often assume it's only because of my topic, so many try to build a site similar to mine.

The problem is many of these people don't have the kind of experience I have with this topic so their content is often uninspiring and unoriginal. There's no point in building a site like someone else if you don't have anything fresh and unique to bring to the table.

**Affiliate websites that do well online are authored by people who have a great passion for the topic and develop interesting perspectives that engage people from the very beginning. Think different. Be innovative. Research potential competition and find gaps and opportunities they missed.**

While demand for your topic is still important, your knowledge, passion and innovation is even more crucial when it comes to building a successful website.

## Keyword Tools

Speaking of demand, there are many tools out there you can use to see what people are searching for. One of my favorites is the [Google AdWords Keyword Tool](#).

It shows you how many times a particular phrase was searched for in Google last month. It's a great tool to use while you're brainstorming for a topic.

Another option is to invest in a tool like [Long Tail Pro](#). It is one of the most thorough research tools on the market. It took me awhile to get used to it, but the more I used it the more I grew to like it.

Market Samurai takes the data from the free Google AdWords tool and helps you decide what keywords to target based on demand and competition.

[I wrote an article that shows you how to use it.](#)

## **“There Are Too Many Sites on My Topic”**

Be careful not to fall into the trap of believing there are too many sites on your topic. Even though there may be a handful of sites out there, you should also check the **quality**.

What are they missing? Do most of the sites just say the same thing? How good is the writing? Think you can present your ideas more clearly? Do they use video? Does the site have personality?

The truth is, even though there are billions of sites on the Web, the majority of them are low quality. Most people don't want to invest the time into building a long-term, quality website so they throw up something quick and abandon it shortly after.

That's good news for people who are dedicated, motivated and willing to take the time and energy to making it work.

*A lazy man's approach is a hard-working man's opportunity to compete and conquer the market!*

# Quick Start Guide to Setting Up a Website

Now that you've read over all the tips and suggestions for starting a website, here is a quick guide you can reference to make sure you have what you need for your site.

**Note:** I sure hope you didn't skip all the valuable information above. One of the biggest mistakes people make with creating their websites is that they rush and don't take the time to do the research. This often leads to failure and frustration.

## Step 1 – Register Your Domain Name

You can use my store, [Website Palace](#) or domain registrar of your choice. All domain registrars provide the same service for the most part.

The advantage to choosing Website Palace is you get the free guide, HTML templates and tutorials I provide to help you setup your site. I don't know of **any** host that offers this.

**Remember, your freebies are on the THANK YOU page so don't miss them!**

## Step 2 - Choose a Web Host

a) You can choose the [hosting plans on Website Palace](#) or a hosting plan of your choice. If you go with [WordPress hosting](#), it will automatically be installed and you can begin your site faster.

## Step 3 – Create Your Site

Don't forget that if you use WordPress, no software is needed. It comes free with your hosting plan **AND** you will get my FREE WordPress Guide if you use Website Palace as your host! It's available on the order confirmation page.

## Adding Forums, Shopping Carts & Additional Features

Some web hosts like [Website Palace](#) have built-in applications that you can add to your site with one click. For example, if you want a chat room or a forum, all you have to do is [login to your hosting account](#), select the "Applications" tab and choose the applications you want to install.



As far as collecting payments, you can either use a [merchant account](#) or [PayPal](#).

## Social Networking Sites

If you want to create a social networking site, you'll need to find a script that you want to use. As I mentioned earlier, you can either use [PHPFox](#) or [Elgg](#). (There are many more but these are two that I have read about). Just remember, you are responsible for setting these scripts up on your own hosting account.

The other option is to install a social networking script through your hosting control panel. Website Palace has a few you can install through your account.

## Social Networking Site -- No Domain or Hosting Needed

If you do not want to install and customize a script on your own domain, you can always use [Ning](#) or [SocialGo.com](#). It's much easier to setup and you do not need to buy a domain or hosting package. The downside is your site sits on a 3<sup>rd</sup> party server and you do not technically own the content. There will also be design limitations.

If you are going to use a 3<sup>rd</sup> party solution like this, you should at least [register a domain](#) and redirect/mask the name to your Ning or SocialGo site so the address is yourdomain.com instead of yoursite.ning.com.

[Website Palace](#) offers **free** domain redirection and masking with every domain purchase. That means you can buy a domain and set it to automatically forward to any site you choose. Masking allows you to hide the forwarded address in the browser address bar.

So if you setup a social networking site at Ning.com, you can [buy your own domain](#) and have it redirect to your Ning site so your address of your site is sitename.com instead of sitename.ning.com. Keep in mind, your site is still sitting on the 3<sup>rd</sup> party server, even if you are using a domain redirect.

## Hire a Programmer

If you cannot find a script for the kind of site you want, you can always outsource a programmer. I use a site called [Freelancer.com](#) when I need technical tasks completed that I cannot do myself.

The advantage of hiring someone to create your script is you can get exactly what you want and you don't have to worry about editing much of the code. Just make sure that you get a clear understanding of how to maintain/update your site going forward. Many scripts are very complex and complicated to update if you do not have a programming background.

You don't want to be left at the mercy of someone else's knowledge when it comes to maintaining or troubleshooting your site. So be sure you understand what you're getting into if you want to manage a social networking website.

## Feeling Overwhelmed?

OK, you've made it this far and may be feeling overwhelmed by all you've just learned.

Don't feel you have to absorb and do everything today. Honestly, the only thing you need to decide now is the topic of your site and the method you are going to use to create it.

Do you think I learned all this overnight? Heck no! I've been out here since 1998 so I've learned a little at a time.

...And I'm still learning. ;)

The best gift you can give yourself as an online entrepreneur is the knowledge to build and manage your own website or blog. I know it may be tempting to hire/outsourcing someone, but that's not always the best scenario for you in the long-run. I have nothing against outsourcing certain parts of your site (custom, complex scripts that involve hard-core programming, etc.).

However, I believe you should **learn the basics** yourself so you are not dependent upon a 3<sup>rd</sup> party to make basic updates for you. You need to be in control of your site and there's nothing more empowering than that.

If your goal is to make money online, remember it's **all about building a following first**. Don't worry about making money in the beginning or you will be focusing on all the wrong things. When you have the targeted traffic, the monetization options will be endless.

- 1) Choose a topic you love and one you are directly connected to
- 2) Do [keyword research](#) to discover the best angle and phrases to target
- 3) Focus on nothing but building helpful content and solving problems related to your niche
- 4) Use YouTube and social media to network, connect and build a following
- 5) Make helping people your number one focus and everything else will follow



## About Lisa

My name is Lisa Irby and I started making money online my senior year in college. Like most college students I was financially strapped for cash and wanted to find a way to make some extra money.

My very first website was hosted on a free web host (never again!) and it promoted a bunch of offers where I earned a commission for everything that was sold.

I learned how to get my site ranked near the top of the popular search engines and began to make money. Once I made my first dollar you could say that I was officially hooked on the concept of making money online.

I knew that if I could make one dollar, I could turn that into two dollars and so on.

Since that time I have been making money online using these same principles. I build websites on topics that interest me and earn commissions when I refer my site visitors to products and services I recommend.

[2 Create a Website](#) is by far my most successful site. It was created in 2002 and by 2005, the earnings from this site nearly quadrupled my 9 to 5 salary. I make the majority of my income by [reselling domain names and hosting](#).

## Bye, Bye 9 to 5!

In 2006, I quit my full-time job and started working on my Internet business full-time. This was the best career and personal life decision I've ever made.

Since then I've continued to build my affiliate empire by adding additional sites to my portfolio such as [WebsiteBabble.com](#), [Napturally Curly](#) and my [blog](#).

However, I want to emphasize that **you have to do the work first**. I spent the first few months really putting a lot of time and energy into building that site, developing my content and perfecting my approach to the topic.

I also had a **huge** advantage because I had created successful websites before and was familiar with the formula for success.

Not all my sites have been successful. I had a lot of failed sites back in the day, but I'm grateful for those failures because they taught me what works, and now I can publish books like this to keep you from making the same mistakes I made.



## Don't Forget to Plan

My most recent website, [2 Plan a Website](#), answers a lot of the preliminary questions people often have (costs to start a website, taxes, etc.). So make sure you stop by for a visit. It's a much smaller site and a pretty quick read. It's laced with additional getting-started facts and answers to frequently asked questions.

One of the biggest mistakes people make with starting an online business is they don't arm themselves with the facts. They rush, make assumptions, choose inappropriate topics and harbor misconceptions about success.

Taking the time to read over my sites will prevent you from making those common mistakes. Trust me. It's worth taking the time to educate yourself before you jump into this.

## Lisa's Last Words of Wisdom

No matter how you attempt to make money online, remember that you get out of it what you put into it.

Realize you may have to learn a little bit of programming to manage your website, but you don't have to become a certified programmer to succeed. I am far from that, yet I make a 6-figure salary and know enough programming to accomplish my goals.

Understand the commitment that is involved here. It's not about just throwing up a site and expecting the money to just appear in the next month. You have to learn to market and build traffic to your site. This is going to take time, but you must be resourceful and learn the appropriate marketing methods for *your individual site*.

What works for one Webmaster may not work for someone else. You have to find what works for you and perfect your skills.

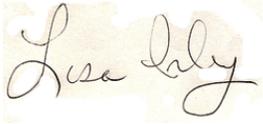
Being creative and innovative will also help. It's not enough to just put up a bunch of content. You have to have a direction, find your own voice and learn how to build a brand of one (if you plan to make money as an affiliate like me.)

I can give you all the guidance in the world, but I cannot give you motivation and a good work ethic. That has to come from within. This is not a lazy man's world. So if you aren't prepared to work hard and spend hours in front of your computer, you may want to think twice about this. **The desire to make a lot of money cannot be your only motivation.** You have to enjoy the ride.

You can do it. You just have to **belieeeeeeve** you can. Remember, I had no formal training, prior education or mentor when I started this. The only experience I had online was checking e-mail. I'm serious! So if I can do it, so can you.

I wrote a book called [Niche Website Success](#) that goes into much more detail on how to build niche sites the way I have over the years. It will show you how to brainstorm for the right topic, promote your site and there are even tips for making money with AdSense, affiliate marketing and more.

Wishing you all the success going forward and thanks for reading! Be sure to check the next page for ways to keep in contact with me online.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Lisa Lalay". The signature is written in black ink on a light-colored, slightly textured background.

# Stay Connected With Lisa Online

## My Websites

<http://www.2CreateAWebSite.com>

<http://www.2PlanAWebSite.com>

<http://www.WebsiteBabble.com> (Webmaster Forum)

## My Blog

<http://blog.2CreateAWebSite.com>

## Twitter

<http://www.twitter.com/2createawebsite>

## Facebook

<http://www.facebook.com/2createawebsitefan>

## Google Plus

<https://plus.google.com/118270448431930763629>

## YouTube

<http://www.youtube.com/lisa3876> (marketing and making money online)

<http://www.youtube.com/2createawebsite> (programming tutorials)

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