

Use Your BusinessHeart™

Creating Heart-Centered Websites

*Content, strategies, and technology
on how the web can support your business.*

By Mark Silver

*Fourth-generation entrepreneur
and Sufi spiritual teacher*

<http://www.heartofbusiness.com>

Creating Heart-Centered Websites
A workbook by Mark Silver.

May the peace and love and mercy and justice of the Real be upon all of the holy prophets, guides, knowers, teachers, and each one of us and all of our hearts, so that we may become of the family of the Real.

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Published by BusinessHeart™ Press
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IN THE NAME OF THE ONE,
THE INFINITELY MERCIFUL,
THE MOST TENDERLY COMPASSIONATE,
THIS BOOK IS DEDICATED TO THE FACE OF THE REAL.

ANYTHING OF THE TRUTH THAT IS WRITTEN HERE
HAS COME FROM THE ONE,
AND ANY MISTAKES OR OMISSIONS ARE FROM MY SELF.

Creating Heart-Centered Websites

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THE REMEMBRANCE

This book references the practice of Remembrance. If you are unfamiliar with this practice, please visit us at <http://www.heartofbusiness.com> and get our free workbook, *Getting To The Core of Your Business, How to Have A Profitable Business and Your Heart*.

IT'S EASY TO BE IN INTEGRITY

If you did not receive this workbook directly from Heart of Business™, then you have an illegal copy. The best way to make up for this oversight is to simply go to <http://www.heartofbusiness.com> and purchase it.

Gratitude

As always, I feel a mixture of pride, relief and vulnerability in releasing a new book. But, most of all, I feel gratitude. I feel especially grateful to:

My wife Holly, who has become an equal partner in this beautiful business over the last year, and without whose love, support, contributions, creativity, strength, and determination I could never have done so much. Her care, attention and expertise is present in every page of this book. She's my best friend, my best editor, and the love of my life.

My MasterMind buddies– Adam, Jason, and Mona. Whose daily support and feedback, love and friendship, have carried and guided me through my most joyful year in business yet.

Dawud Miracle, who designed my website, and who has helped me to understand the technical aspects of web design, the human aspects of usability, and the deeper bonds of friendship.

My parents Rae and Stephen Silver, who have always loved, supported, and encouraged me so strongly, and whose consistent heart-centered business practices I have steeped in my entire life.

My clients, both individual and within the Opening the Moneyflow: Focus on Marketing classes, who trusted my guidance with some of their most precious hopes and dreams. Their sincere and mercifully unrelenting questions helped to form this material into a cohesive whole.

All of my sisters and brothers in the Way, who, no matter what name your spiritual path goes by, and what form your rituals take, are accompanying me in this unstoppable journey to find love in every last, dark corner of this magnificent world.

Peace upon each and every one of you.

Introduction

We're All Caught in the Web

As late as 1999 I was still telling people, “A website is a good idea, but it’s not absolutely critical.” Those days are gone. The reality is that many, many people go to the internet before they pick up a phone book or call information. Even people who never liked to use computers before are being drawn into the web more and more.

The result: if you are serious about your business, you need a website.

Luckily, it has become easier than ever to go online and navigate around. Creating a website has also become almost as easy as using Word. This has a down side: many people think that all they need to do is put up a website, and customers will come. Unfortunately, it doesn’t work like that.

The other side of all of this is that there are many websites that are very successful financially— but at what cost? It’s an every-day event to come across yet another website that’s screaming at you to buy this or that latest thing that is sure to do miracles for your business, your weight, your health, your love-life, whatever you want.

One of the things I’ve learned is that it is possible to be successful on the web, without sacrificing your values. Without catering to people’s greed, or magnifying their fears.

All that’s needed is the gentle strength of the heart, the structure and words through which to express that strength, and the strategies that reinforce values of connection and service, rather than greed and fear.

I’ve come a long way in my knowledge and ability to do business on

the web. I've spent years tinkering and thousands of dollars learning from others. I've tested and tweaked and delved deeply into the mysteries of design.

At this point, my website easily brings in five-figures in revenue every month. And, it's accelerating.

I've been amazed by the internet in so many ways. For a small business, it's possible to support your marketing and business infrastructures very inexpensively in ways that just weren't possible at any cost ten years ago. Instead of needing to be six people at once just to run a simple business, the internet, and especially your website, can handle so many of those tasks.

Even more than the success and productivity that's possible, what really wows me is the ability for unlimited generosity.

You can give to literally millions of people in truly helpful ways, across time zones, across international borders, without needing a multi-million dollar budget. You can let go of any scarcity of resources, and just give to your heart's content, and serve people, without exhausting yourself.

More than the money that's coming in, which I have a lot of humble gratitude for, is the satisfaction in knowing how many people are being helped by our website. The inspiration and hope engendered by the articles and information we have online are truly heart-warming. I get emails nearly every day from people all over the globe who are moved, inspired, and uplifted by what they've read on the website.

This happens not because I'm such a gifted writer, although I have spent plenty of time honing my writing skills. It's happening because I was finally, through both spiritual practices, and through understanding the human heart, able to take the focus off of me, and truly connect and empathize with the people whom my business serves.

You can do this, too.

And, believe it or not, this type of generosity and service is what creates a real abundant cycle for your business. All you need are the strategies and structures in place both to give and to receive.

MORE FUN AND USEFUL THAN WRITING A BUSINESS PLAN

I've seen lots of people write business plans, or come to me asking for a business plan template. Although there is a lot of useful information and learning that happens in the process of writing a business plan, understand what the true purpose of a business plan is.

The true purpose of a business plan is to have a strong enough case to present to a bank or investor to have them invest in your business. If you are reading this book, and are running a small or micro-business, I'm

guessing the chances are good that you may never be in the position to have anyone invest seriously in your business, nor will you need to.

Creating Heart-Centered Websites is useful for more than just creating a website that works, and far more helpful for your business than writing a business plan. Going through this book thoroughly, and putting together all the pieces of a truly Heart-Centered Website means that you will come to know your business, and your customers, intimately, in a way that perhaps you never have before.

It doesn't matter if your business is brand new or whether you've been at it a while. The system and structures I outline here are foundational and you'll be using them over and over again as your business and website evolve, as I still do myself.

This process is so useful and powerful, that I would recommend it to anyone, even if the internet didn't exist. This book takes you on a journey towards truly knowing and understanding the people your business serves. You will see their hearts, and learn to give them what they need in a way that creates a real willingness to receive from you.

The journey to understand and know another heart is, I believe the most profound journey we can ever undertake. If you are successful in it even a little not only will your business thrive, but you will also experience a sense of unity as you truly see the people you serve and empathize with them. Your business is thereby a doorway through which you can touch Wholeness, or Source— the goal of every spiritual path.

SEPARATE, AND YET PART OF THE WHOLE

And this leads me happily into this product's relationship to *Unveiling the Heart of Your Business*. When I finished that first book, a little over a year from writing this introduction, I released it knowing that there was a huge gap in it about how the internet worked. This product fills that gap.

Creating Heart-Centered Websites was designed to function well as a stand-alone product. However, as you work through it you will see where I reference the Guidebook: *Unveiling the Heart of Your Business, How money, marketing and sales can deepen your heart, heal the world, and still add to your bottom line*.

If you are wanting the principles presented here to spread throughout every part of your business, and if you want to understand the spiritual teachings and nourishment behind these principles, you will want to get the Guidebook, if you don't have it already.

Once you've worked through *Creating Heart-Centered Websites*, and

seen how it resonates with your heart and business, you will know if you want it: <http://www.heartofbusiness.com/thebook>

In the meantime, don't worry about it. Just settle back and relax into the guidance here. I think you'll find it inspiring stuff, as I did when I was learning it.

What you'll find in these pages is everything you'll need to create content, design and strategies for a really effective website. I'll offer guidance on how to find a web designer you can trust if you need support with the technical aspects of making your site live as well.

If you are familiar with me at all, you know that I encourage no one to go it alone. There is a reason we aren't born each on top of our own private mountain. This is to say: don't work through this material alone! Get a buddy, a colleague, a trusted friend, even a group of friends, to give each other compassionate accountability and the synergistic energy of brain- and heart-storms. Build your website in community.

This is a guide to creating a website that will both feel good to you and be effective for your business. And since I'm sure your business is a real gift to our struggling world, this guide is a peace offering.

Your business, like all small businesses, is an important thread in the tapestry of our communities. I pray that your business is a strong thread in that tapestry, and becomes a bright beacon of generosity and service to all who come into contact with it.

As you venture off into a new way of looking at business websites, I'd like to feed you some words from the Sufi poet Hafiz:

The Sun
Never says to the Earth,
"You owe me."

Look what happens
with a Love like that.

It lights up the whole Sky.

(from The Gift, translated by Daniel Ladinsky)

Understanding Strategy

Your Website Isn't the Whole Web

And I don't just mean it's not the whole World Wide Web- that's obvious. But, it's not the whole web of your marketing structure, either. A website only works when it plays a specific role in building your entire relationship with your customers.

The roles of your website:

- Available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, for others to get information about your business, when you aren't available.
- Creates safety, by allowing people to inquire anonymously, before revealing themselves to you.
- Helps you to give to people generously and sustainably- you can serve an unlimited number of people without lifting a finger.
- Automates the formulaic steps of the sales process, leaving you free to deepen your relationships with the people you serve, and to creatively develop your business.
- Enables you to reach outside your geographic area.

But, never forget that it is primarily a medium of connection and relationship. You must be present, and other modes of communication must be used, if you are going to get the most out of it. Although the website makes the process MUCH MUCH easier and more powerful, it doesn't function solo.

For instance, let me chart out a recent customer's interaction with my website, so you can get a sense of how it all works.

See if you can notice all the different mediums of communication that are used:

The Adventures of Customer “Joan” with Heart of Business

Martha emails Joan, “You gotta check this article out.”

Joan clicks on link in email, and reads article archived on website.

Joan stays on website, and reads the “Home” page, the “Is This You” page and the “Most Dangerous Myth” page. Clicks around a couple of other pages, skimming. And then puts in her name and email for the free workbook and weekly newsletter.

Joan checks email and then downloads free workbook.

Joan goes about Joan’s life.

Two months later, Joan has received 8 articles- one each week. Joan has read three or four or five of them. They’ve been helpful. Joan has not been back to the website, or bought anything.

Martha calls Joan, “How’s business?” “Eh, it’s okay. I’m feeling kinda stuck with my marketing...”

The next day, seemingly be coincidence, Joan receives another article by email, talking about the exact issue in marketing Joan was struggling with. Joan reads the article carefully, including the invitation to buy the book.

Joan clicks on the link in the email, and goes back to the website, and reads about the book. Looks good. Doesn’t buy.

Two weeks later, two more articles. Joan reads one of the articles, but not the other.

Joan clicks through again to read about the book.

Joan emails me a questions, “Will the book help me with this particular situation?”

I email back, “Yes, and this and this and this.”

Joan buys the book, and gets it in the mail.

Joan starts reading the book, and working through it.

The next month (four articles later), an offer for the Heart of Money class comes through.

Joan clicks through to the website, reads about the class, feels inspired. Fills out the application.

I read the application, like it, and send back another email with registraton details.

Joan clicks the link in the email, and pays for the class.

Here are all the modes that were used:

- Email from a friend
- Website
- Email from me
- PDF downloadable file
- Phone call with friend
- Autoresponder delivered email articles from me
- Web “landing pages” (more on these later)
- Physical mailing of product through post office. (Note: even if someone busy only the digital version of the book, I still mail them a letter thanking them for the purchase, with additional details.)
- Personal email to me
- Personal email from me
- Shopping cart web page (more on this later)
- Web “landing page” for the class, with class application.

And, it could have just as easily included a phone call with me as well. Including the website, emails, referrals and mailings, my business interacted with Joan, directly or indirectly, about 24 times throughout the process of Joan buying the book and signing up for the class. If I had to make all those contacts myself, it would have been pretty exhausting. However, my personal time was involved only with answering two emails, and the work that I do to send out articles, the same articles that go to all 3000 people on my list.

Some customers buy more quickly, some buy more slowly. The time frame could have been three contacts in a week before the purchase, or it could have been forty contacts over a year or more. This is not something you can control, nor should you want to. The customer has their own timing. And creating heart-centered marketing systems using your website makes space for their timing, respectfully, through the Internet Trinity.

THE INTERNET TRINITY

Although there were many different ways Joan and my business interacted, there were three main ones, and that’s where I want you to focus.

1. The Basic Eight.

These eight pages are where your new visitors spend their time, and so it’s a critical place to create connection and trust with them. The sole purpose of these pages is to allow those folks who will truly be served by

your products and services to connect with you. These pages aren't hard to write, once you understand the specific intention of each one.

2. Regular email (or postal mail) contact with your opt-in list.

This is your Second Journey marketing plan. I describe the Three Journeys of Marketing in detail in *Unveiling the Heart of Your Business*. And, I summarize it for you here on page 11. In your Second Journey you give something valuable to people who are interested, who opted into your list, on a regular basis.

3. The Landing Pages.

A landing page is a web industry term for a web page where someone "lands." The sole intention here is to present one particular offer for sale, in a way that helps the right people make a purchasing decision before they leave the page. Landing pages take a little more finesse to write.

Although I intend to give you a formula in this book to help create a basic, functional landing page, if you want to learn the details and finesse of creating highly effective, very profitable landing pages that can help you, with integrity, generate tens, or hundreds, of thousands of dollars in revenue, you will want to consider a good copywriting course. We offer one, as do other people I trust.

ABOUT DESIGN AND COST

I received an email from someone in Israel who asked me about website design. "I've been quoted \$10,000 to redo my site. Is that expensive?"

I nearly choked. She ran a small nonprofit organization, without any complicated needs. While I like to think the best of people and assume the website company was honest, I did suspect they knew very little about what makes a website effective for an organization. I couldn't quite imagine what the heck they wanted to do for \$10,000, considering what I knew about her organization.

I told her that she could get a simple, effective website created for no more than a third of what she was quoted, maybe less. Maybe much less depending on what she was looking for.

I'll give you some design tips and resources at the end. But, first let's get the content down. You'll be wasting your time and your designer's time if you don't get clear on your content. With your content written, and a good web designer, you can get a website up pretty quickly, without spending an arm and a leg.

So, without further ado, let's look at The Basic Eight.

Website Content

The Basic Eight Pages

Only eight pages? I hear about websites that have hundreds of pages. It's true that a website seems to expand exponentially with time. My own website has over 150 pages on it.

The vast majority of those other webpages have to do with different special events, over 100 archived articles, and other resources.

Fortunately, to get your website going, you only need eight basic pages. And, each page is only 3-10 paragraphs. That can't be too hard, can it?

There is one thing you must understand before you start writing this content: all of these pages collectively have just a single intention, and one intention only: creating enough clarity for your visitor so they will know if you can truly help them, and enough safety and connection so they decide to give you their name and permission to be contacted on a regular basis.

This is called, in web terms, the Most Wanted Response.

Most Wanted Response (MWR): The single most-desired action someone could take.

When you are in a conversation with someone, it's easy to go in any number of directions, because the two of you are present, and making decisions in real time.

On a web page, you don't have that level of live interactivity. When a human being provides different possibilities of responding, we call that flexible and adaptive—friendly-like. When a web page provides too many options, we call it confusing, and we click away.

Why is it so confusing? Because there is no way to ask a clarifying question of a webpage (did you mean go to dinner right now? Or in ten minutes?)

For the basic eight pages, the MWR is meant to guide the right people towards opting-in to a longer term relationship with you and your business, by giving you their name and email address. So there is a chance in the future of having that conversation.

You are NOT trying to selling them anything at this point. A very few may impulse buy, depending on what you are offering for sale. But don't count on enough of these to sustain your business. The real sustainability comes from the Second Journey marketing plan: building a list and keeping in regular contact.

UNDERSTANDING THE THREE JOURNEYS

Although *Unveiling the Heart of Your Business* covers this in much



more detail, I offer a short review of the Three Journeys here.

The First Journey is when someone who doesn't know you or your business, but has a problem, the very problem you help to solve, is out wandering in the desert of the marketplace. The First Journey ends when they meet you and decide they want to stay in connection with your business.

The Second Journey continues, as this person stays in relationship with your business, through receiving entertaining, educational, useful features of one sort or another; articles, newsletters, etc. The Second Journey ends once this person takes you up on an invitation to purchase a product or service.

The Third Journey is when your customer continues to purchase additional products and services from you, and, through having really enjoyable experiences with your business and what you offer, becomes a raving fan. Your customer then takes an active role in promoting your business to people her or she knows.

Understanding the Three Journeys is critical, because most business owners try to make people journey too far too fast. The Basic Eight pages are focused on one thing and one thing only: helping people complete the First Journey.

As more and more people complete their First Journey with you, and end up on your ‘interested’ list, you will have many occasions to continue to build trust with them, until, slowly but surely, and fairly effortlessly on your part, many of them complete the Second Journey and become customers.

In the previous chapter, you read about the Adventures of Customer “Joan” with Heart of Business. Her adventures, and the 24 times she had contact with us before she completed her Second Journey and purchased, highlights the importance of the Three Journeys.

When you are wanting to build your business fast, the Three Journeys can seem like an agonizingly slow way to go about it. But, I must ask you to have faith in the Three Journeys. Your customers may not move as quickly as you would like, but they won’t move as slowly as you fear, either.

And, without implementing strategies to guide people through the Three Journeys to your business, you’ll have very few customers, indeed.

LIKE A HOME FOR YOUR CUSTOMERS

It’s easy to think of each web page individually, and forget how they relate to each other. But, imagine having just a kitchen and no bathroom and no dining room? Suddenly your kitchen isn’t nearly as useful. It’s only when all the rooms in your house are connected that it truly becomes a home.

Your website is no different. When you place the heart of your customer into your website, your website is transformed into a home for them that they can settle into, and receive nourishment from.

Before you can start to think about decorating your home, you have to think about who is going to be spending time there. Who is your customer? How do they think of themselves, and what problems do they confront that your business helps them with?

These very basic questions are what I call the Who and What: Who you are serving, and What you are helping them with. Although these questions are deceptively simple, I’ve noticed that it takes a lot of wrestling to get completely crystal clear.

But, you don’t need absolute clarity to get started. I’ve noticed that for myself, and for my clients, that clarity is found through doing. I suggest you start with where you are, and use the process of working through the

rest of this section to help develop the clarity you are looking for.

THE CUSTOMER-FOCUSED STORY: A SEEDLING FOR THE 8 PAGES

How do you welcome their heart into the website? Through the Customer-Focused Story. Chapter 19 in *Unveiling the Heart of Your Business* goes through the Customer-Focused Story in detail. I'm going to summarize it here.

A Customer-Focused Story is the story of your business (yes, your business does have a story), told in a way that creates empathy and connection to your best customers, and helps them move forward in relationship with your business as far as it resonates with them.

In *Unveiling the Heart of Your Business* I talk about it in terms of syntax. Syntax is the term used in grammar to describe how words are put together so they make sense. If the syntax is messed up, there is no way your message is going to be understandable.

For instance, a normal English sentence can run like this: "The little boy picked up the toad and put it in his pocket." But, if you pay no attention to syntax, the sentence can come out: "In put his toad pocket and the boy it up little the picked." Even if with all the words there, it makes no sense whatsoever.

What's worse, is forgetting both about syntax, and leaving out words, so even a committed reader can't puzzle it out. "Boy pocket toad the picked." Huh?

The same thing happens in your marketing messages, and paying attention to marketing syntax helps to remedy the problem. It comes in the form of the Customer-Focused Story, and consists of five parts:

1. An empathetic description of the problem.
2. What they've tried that doesn't work.
3. Why the usual solutions they've tried don't work.
4. What they really need to do (how it really works.)
5. Why you are so good at supporting how it really works.

One of the most helpful approaches I've found to writing a CFS is to take time in Remembrance, and ask in your heart to truly see things from your customer's perspective. To step out of your reality, and stand in their shoes. You are already experienced with whatever solution you provide. For your customer, it's all new, and the whole situation looks very different.

Writing the CFS may seem somewhat beside the point. Wouldn't it be easier to just skip it and jump right into the pages themselves? Well, actually, no, it wouldn't be easier. Developing a clear CFS is a process most

business owners skip entirely, and without the clarity of what it looks like from your customer's perspective, you can struggle for years trying to get your business to go.

Once you take the time and attention to write a clear, empathetic, heart-centered CFS, writing the rest of the web pages comes much, much more easily.

BACK TO THE BASIC EIGHT

Throughout this section on the Basic Eight Pages I use the fictitious example of a business that provides instruction on how to improve your golf game. All eight pages are expanded from the following Customer-Focused Story that was written for this fictitious business. And, if you ever come across a business like this, tell me about it! My swing could sure use some help...

Customer-Focused Story for AwesomeGolf.com

Start with the Who and What- Who you serve, and What you are helping them with.

(Who) For golfers who love the game, (What) but aren't enjoying it because their playing is so inconsistent.

(1) Empathetic description of the problem.

You know how it is: it's a beautiful day, your good friends are all around you. And then it starts.

First you duff your tee-off. But, you rescue it when you hit a beautiful ball within yards of the green. And then, instead of rolling it right up to the pin, you pitch the ball way off to the left into a trap.

Why are some swings so sweet, and some so maddening? Is it ever possible to have a consistent swing?

(2) What they've tried that doesn't work.

You've tried everything- golf books, golf videos, opening your stance, closing your stance, lucky shoes, lucky balls, changing your grip, and changing your underwear. You may even have tried meditating (when no one is looking.) None of it works.

(3) Why the standard solutions don't work.

All these things you've tried don't work because you need three key elements to increase your consistency, and generally these methods only focus on one element at a time.

(4) What you really need to do.

Our approach to the golf stroke works really consistently, without beating you up, because it concentrates on three key elements:

- **Body mechanics.** Get clear on how different muscles and bones help each other out, and your movements become incredibly smooth and consistent.

- **Your emotional game.** Emotions, such as nervousness and stage fright, affect both your thinking and your physical movements.

- **Fun.** Golf is a game, and a light-hearted attitude, without losing the thrill of competition, is key both to hitting consistently, and enjoying yourself.

(5) Why you are so good at what you do.

One of us is a PGA Tour Pro, personally mentored by Arnold Palmer, who has been playing for 25 years, 12 years professionally. The other is a Certified Somatics Therapy instructor.

We've trained dozens of golfers over the last three years to improve their scores by an average of 10 strokes, and to just have a lot more fun on the course.

The reason we're doing is we've seen how important it is to have fun in life. When you enjoy your life, the love you give to others is just that much better.

That's an example of a Customer-Focused Story. While it's not that long, for sure there aren't eight pages worth of website content there, within it is the foundation of all eight pages. You'll see, as I take you through the Basic Eight, how you can easily expand the elements of your own Customer-Focused Story to become engaging pages that connect with your best customers.

HOLD YOUR HORSES

Unless you've done previous work on your Customer-Focused Story from *Unveiling the Heart of Your Business*, I wouldn't suggest working on it the first time through this book. Read through this entire section on the Basic Eight, and get the lay of the land. Then, come back and sketch out your own CFS.

Why wait? Because the CFS requires a certain amount of clarity

about your business. It can take a fair amount of internal wrestling to come up with that clarity, and I don't want you to exhaust yourself here before you've even understand what lies ahead.

Trust me, read through, get the lay of the land, and then work on your own CFS. And, if you need even more help working out your CFS, I recommend you get the Guidebook: *Unveiling the Heart of Your Business*.

WHICH IS THE MOST IMPORTANT WEB PAGE?

Asking which page is most important is like asking which room in your house is most important: the kitchen, the bathroom, or the bedroom? It depends on the moment, doesn't it?

Similarly, the most important web page on your site is the one that answers whatever questions your visitor has in any particular moment. Here are the Basic Eight pages of your website, which will be answering the questions your visitors are most likely to bring with them.

- Home page
- Is This You
- How it works (or How we work)
- The Last-Ditch page
- About
- The sign-up page
- Contact
- Archives

I'll talk about the significance and content of each of them in the pages ahead.

SOME OTHER TIPS

As you read through these eight pages, I want you to pay attention to a few things:

Paragraph length. Notice how short the paragraphs are in the examples?

Keep your paragraphs short, 3-5 sentences, max.

The headline. For now, just notice the headlines, and see what pops out at you about them. You will probably want to take some time to learn about good headline writing. Sean d'Souza of <http://www.psychotactics.com> has a great headline writing tutorial.

What happens at the end of each page. I call it 'Ask and Link.' At the end of every one of these basic eight pages, do two things: First, tell people to go get your free give-away that also signs them up for your regular contact list. Second, right after that, for folks that haven't taken

the first advice, tell them what page to read next, and provide them with a link.

This last bit of advice is very important. If someone was engaged enough to read what you wrote, and now they get to the end of the web page, what do they do? If you are expecting them to go to your navigation bar and pick another page, it's kind of like writing a novel, and, when someone finishes page 36, just randomly skipping to page 128. It may make sense, it may not. Take the guess work out of it, and point them to the next page they should read.

Next, I'm going to show you how to write the Home Page- including a surprising secret.

FIRST PAGE- THE HOME PAGE- PLUS A SURPRISING SECRET

How many times have you seen something like this "Welcome to XYZ, Inc." at the top of a home page? The business owner calls it 'welcoming them in.' I call it 'the Kiss of Death.' As a visitor you don't call it anything- you simply click away.

It can feel agonizing trying to figure out how to write the home page of your website. What will really catch their attention, without being full of hype or manipulation?

Let me ask you a question: When you first walk into a party, what do you do?

My wife and I had the pleasure of going to a friends' party recently. Now, I'm not a big party person, but I do like hanging out with interesting people and eating good food.

The party was already in full swing when we got there. I could hear music and voices as I approached the door. Knowing our friends, anyone and everyone could be there- they know so many different people from so many different walks of life.

I have to admit I felt ever so slightly apprehensive. Was I going to know people there? Was it going to be easy to make a connection with the people I didn't know?

The first thing I did, unconsciously, was to start to look for people I either knew, or thought I would feel comfortable with. I realized that until the moment when I saw someone I knew, which happened immediately, I was a little nervous and holding my breath. When I saw our friends, I could breath again, settle in and enjoy the party.

One thing I know is that it takes a LOT of gumption to crash a party. Although I can be an extrovert, it's a pretty rare moment when I'm comfortable in a place where I don't know ANYONE.

When someone comes to your website, the first thing they are look-

ing for, unconsciously, is whether they belong there. They are asking, 'Do you know who I am? Am I going to be comfortable here?'

Your job is to make them feel welcome. And, saying 'Welcome to my website,' in bold at the top of your home page just doesn't do it. Why not?

Have you ever seen someone looking your way, and asking you a question: "Want to come to a party?", and then you answered them... only to realize they were talking to someone behind you. How foolish did you feel?

Your visitors have experienced that also- yuck! So, simply saying 'welcome' doesn't let them know you are talking to them. They let the 'welcome' slide right over them.

THE OTHER BIG MISTAKE: THE THIRD DEGREE

Some people take a stab at creating empathy by asking questions. Have you ever seen a website, or flyer, that starts out like this:

"Are you struggling with a crying baby?
Are you exhausted from not enough sleep?
Do you want more from life than round-the-clock baby care?"

This is what I call the "Third Degree Syndrome" as used in marketing. Someone walks into your website, and before they can even take a breath- BAM- you shine a bright light in their face and start barking questions at them: "Where were you on the night of April 12? Did you kill Colonel Mustard in the library with the candlestick?"

Your visitor's instant reaction: "Ahhh! I don't know! It wasn't me! (I'm getting out of here.)"

So if a big welcome doesn't work, and the Third Degree doesn't work, what does? How do you help a new visitor feel welcome, so they take off their coat, and stay awhile?

EVERYONE NEEDS EMPATHY FOR WHO THEY ALREADY ARE

George Lakoff, a brilliant cognitive scientist, described a tremendous phenomenon in his book *Don't Think of An Elephant*. He studied the political process, and his findings show that people do not vote based on what they need, or even on what they want. They vote based on identity. If someone identifies as a conservative or a liberal, and they are presented with a candidate or bill that will directly affect their quality of life, they will ignore how it affects them, and vote based on whether the candidate or the bill matches their conservative or liberal identity.

Amazing, but true. It's because people hate to change. Well, we don't hate to change, we're just scared. An article in Fast Company magazine cited the statistics that, when given a choice between either changing their lifestyle and eating habits, or continuing down a road that, medically-speaking, would almost certainly cause their death, 8 out of 9 people did not change.

If the threat of death can't get people to change, I doubt your website will, either. So, on the home page, or anywhere in these initial eight pages, don't try to change anyone. Instead, support them in their current identity of themselves. That is to say that if they are in your target market, you let them know that you see and understand them.

Think of who your business serves, and what problem they are facing before they get help from you. Then, describe it in a few clear sentences.

Do you love playing golf, but are struggling with getting a consistent swing?

You know how it is: it's a beautiful day, your good friends are all around you. And then it starts.

First you duff your tee-off. But, you rescue it when you hit a beautiful ball within yards of the green. And then, instead of rolling it right up to the pin, you pitch the ball way off to the left into a trap.

In the example above, you can see how a single headline and five sentences creates connection through empathy with this websites target market.

WHAT ARE THEY LOOKING FOR?

Empathy is great as far as it goes. But, if you stop with empathy, you are basically a shoulder to cry on, but not someone they are looking for help from.

Given the situation they are in, what are they looking for? This has to be in their own words. What, in their own words, are your clients looking for? What kind of results and outcomes do they need?

On the home page, don't tell them how to do it. Don't give them any big expositions or much detail. Just give them reassurance that they can get what they want. When we showed up at the party I mentioned a couple of pages ago, I wasn't informed as to how the food was made, or what food was there. I was just told, 'Come on in- we've great some great

food here.'

That was enough for me. I could stop worrying about dinner, and relax into the party.

EXAMPLE:

Why are some swings so sweet, and some so maddening? Is it ever possible to have a consistent swing?

If you love golf and would play every weekend if you could, and want to get to the sweet spot in your swing as consistently as possible, you are in the right place. You can get a consistent swing— maybe you'll never be on the Tour, but you can genuinely enjoy your game.

No fancy or detailed explanations of what or how. Just assurance that it's possible. On the home page, that's enough.

HOW DO YOU GET IN?

Many websites leave you in dead-ends and cul-de-sacs. If they've managed to engage you at all, you've read down to the bottom of the page, the original navigation bar has scrolled out of sight, and... bam! No where to go but to click on the bookmarks bar... to another site.

When someone comes into your home, there aren't a dozen doors out of your entrance-way— maybe there's one or two. In our home you can either go to the left into the living room, or straight ahead into the dining room. Once you are in those rooms, there are other choices. But initially, only two.

At the bottom of the home page, suggest where you want them to go next.

EXAMPLE:

How do you get started? Well, first download our free *Consistent 6-Foot Putts* handbook, with a video demonstration. Plus, you'll get additional articles every week on how to continue to improve your consistency.

[Click here](#) to go get the *Consistent 6-Foot Putts Handbook*.

And, you may be wondering, can our approach really help you?

[Click here](#) to find out who really benefits from our approach.

The home page is all about your Who and What; Who you are helping, and What you are helping them with, and assurances that there is a solution to their problem.

For instance, let's say your Who is for people who are committed weekend golfers and the problem you solve, the What, is they are struggling with their swing. For these folks, you could do worse than simply repeat in various ways: "If you love golf and would play every weekend if you could, and want to get to the sweet spot in your swing as consistently as possible, you are in the right place."

I used to have my entire Customer-Focused Story (as described in Chapter 19 of *Unveiling the Heart of Your Business*) on the home page, and it worked. You can do that. But, when I changed the page to just emphasize identity, the Who and What, my subscriptions doubled.

Here are the elements to the home page:

Headline

Your Who and What.

Emphasizing What they want.

Empathy for the What, the problem they are facing.

Assurance that they can overcome the What.

Your recommendation on what to do (get your free give-away and sign up for your list).

Link to the Is This You page.

EXAMPLE:

Do you love playing golf, but are struggling with getting a consistent swing?

You know how it is: it's a beautiful day, your good friends are all around you. And then it starts.

First you duff your tee-off. But, you rescue it when you hit a beautiful ball within yards of the green. And then, instead of rolling it right up to the pin, you pitch the ball way off to the left into a trap.

Why are some swings so sweet, and some so maddening? Is it ever possible to have a consistent swing?

If you love golf and would play every weekend if you could, and want to get to the sweet spot in your swing as consistently as possible, you are in the right place. You can get a consistent swing—maybe you'll never be on the Tour, but you can genuinely

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How do you get started? Well, first download our free *Consistent 6-Foot Putts Handbook*, with a video demonstration. Plus, you'll get additional articles every week on how to continue to improve your consistency.

[Click here](#) to go get the *Consistent 6-Foot Putts Handbook*.

And, you may be wondering, can our approach really help you? [Click here](#) to find out who really benefits from our approach.

Empathy. Reassurance. The way in. With these three you have some of the most elemental parts of an effective home page, that leads people where you want them to go, because they want to go there.

And you've done it without hype, and without manipulation. Just caring, clarity, and love.

Suggested exercise: Identify where each of the Home Page elements are in the example above.

SECOND PAGE— IS THIS YOU? (AND YOU AND YOU AND YOU)

Whether or not your visitor has done the polite thing and come in through your home page, which they don't often do, he is going to have some questions on his mind.

And a big question is: "Yes, but my situation is unique, how do I know you are really talking about *me*?"

You see, everyone likes to think they are unique. I know I do. And, the truth is, everyone is unique. The Is This You page helps your visitor to say, "Yup, that's me to a 'T'. I am in the right place."

If you've ever been in a big group of people, and had the speaker call on you, and you've thought to yourself, "Are they really calling on me? Or is it the person next to me?" then you know what your visitor is feeling at this point.

So, the job of this page is to either reassure them that, yes, I was talking about you, or make it really clear that, no, I wasn't talking to you.

There are three elements to an effective Is This You page: Mini-scenarios, demographics, and values.

A LITTLE VIGNETTE WITH YOUR PAGE?

A vignette is just a very short story. All good stories have a happy

beginning, some kind of drama of conflict where the happiness goes away, and then a happy ending, or at least some kind of satisfying resolution.

Because your visitor, the hero of her own story, is in the middle of the adventure, there is no happy ending... yet. So, your vignette needs two elements- the happy beginning, and a description of when things went south.

Although not every scenario needs to follow this 'happy-sad' formula, it definitely helps if most of them do. The happy part gives the reader something positive to identify with, and the sad part gives them empathy for the real situation.

And, as far as I can tell, many of us humans in many different situations are genuinely surprised when things don't work out as well as we hoped. Although it's not always true- and that's why you can have some of your mini-scenarios be of the 'start bad, end bad' variety- because it is often true.

So give your visitor the first part of their story. Once they know they are in the story you are telling, they'll know they belong. And they'll want to stick around long enough for the happy ending.

First Element: Mini-scenarios.

As a golfer, do any of these situations seem familiar?

- You spent 20 minutes on the range, hitting your balls beautifully straight out towards the flags. But when you get on the course your swing goes whompy, hooking and slicing in a bizarre manner.
- Your swing is pretty good, pretty consistent, but you don't know how to get more power behind it. Every time you try to get more distance, you lose your precision.
- On the green, you can get the putt within six feet of the cup. But from there, it's all up to some golf god whether it goes in or not. You've sunk miracle putts (by chance, but don't tell the others), and totally boffed 3-footers.

As you can see, there are two happy-sad scenarios, and then a sad-sadder scenario.

How many vignettes do you need? You'll want no less than five, no more than eight. Less than five and you probably aren't capturing enough diversity in your potential customers. More than eight and your visitor just loses interest and clicks away.

Second Element: Demographics

While the vignettes are important, there is going to be yet more di-

versity than your vignettes can cover. This is where demographics come to the rescue.

A demographic is an observable fact about someone, something that a second person can say, 'Yes, that is true.' For instance, 'loves chocolate' is NOT a demographic. Only you can say for yourself whether you love chocolate or not. It may be absolutely true, but no one else can verify that.

However, 'eats at least three chocolate bars a day' is a demographic, because it's verifiable by someone else.

Demographics can touch on any verifiable fact about someone:

Goes to church on Sundays, over 6 feet tall, lawyer, plays baseball, earns \$50,000/year, has a back injury, age between 45 and 60, wears glasses, rides a bicycle, cooks 4 out of 5 dinners at home, eats out 3 nights a week, takes vitamins daily, works in the garden every weekend, makes sculpture, works in construction, owns a small business, lives in Portland, Oregon, diagnosed with cancer, etc, etc..

If you notice, these are all verifiable facts. There are no emotional words used 'likes, dislikes, hates, enjoys, values, etc...' Nothing at all to indicate the inner state, beliefs, or experiences of the person. Just the facts, ma'am.

By taking the time to create a list of demographics on which your visitor can find themselves, it creates yet more safety. The demographics where someone is standing in life is important. When you let your visitor know that you are familiar with exactly where they are standing, that takes the trust level up a notch that, yes, what you are saying really does apply to them.

EXAMPLE:

Our approach works for:

- New golfers
- Golfers who used to play, but it's been awhile and you want to get back into it.
- Committed golfers who have reached a certain age, and find that their body changes are affecting their swing.
- Long-time golfers who have plateaued, and their game, while very good, hasn't improved in a while.
- Recreational golfers, who play a few times a summer.
- Men or women.

As soon as they spot themselves, they breath that sigh of relief, and move on to the next element.

Third Element: Values

I've read in numerous business books that one thing you should do is to list your own values in business. Well, that can be a great exercise, and it's certainly nice to know what you believe in, but you tend to know these things fairly intuitively.

Of far greater importance is to know the values of your best customers.

Often, these values are called 'psychographics.' Psychographics are feelings, beliefs, attitudes that people hold, that are absolutely as true as the demographics, but are not verifiable by anyone outside. Only you can say for certain whether you love chocolate, believe in God, or care about the environment.

In the earlier section on the home page, I wrote about George Lakoff and his work surrounding people's identities and how that drives their actions. People's identities are such a touchstone of safety for them, that if you can let people know that you know and can work with their particular identity, that takes the trust level and heart connection up yet another notch. When people agree on values, there is a tribal sense that arises, a 'you're my people' feeling, that feels like a hearty welcome home.

Remember, values are internal feelings or beliefs: loves chocolate, believes in God, enjoys sports, cares about the environment, committed to social justice, willing to invest in themselves, enjoys adventures, values integrity, loves good food, believes in helping others.

Notice that feeling words are here, words like 'believes,' 'loves,' 'cares,' 'willing,' 'enjoys,' 'values.'

For heart-centered businesses, psychographics are almost more important than demographics. Here, similar to demographics, you list the values.

EXAMPLE:

Our approach will work for you if you have the following values:

- You love golf.
- You are patient with yourself.
- You enjoy learning something new.
- You have a good sense of humor.
- You love life, and

You'll probably end up with five or six. Limit yourself to no more than eight.

Then tell them where to go next again by adding the links at the end:

[Click here](#) to go get the *Consistent 6-Foot Putts Handbook*.

And, you may be wondering, can our approach really help you?

[Click here](#) to find out what you really need to do to improve your golf game.

Not too, difficult is it?

And now, you finally get to talk about what you do! (Sort of...)

THIRD PAGE— HOW IT ALL WORKS

Remember all those excited conversations you had with folks when they asked you what you did, and you went on and on until you noticed they were kind of glazed over...

Yup, I remember those, too. From both sides. Ah... live and learn.

But, now is the time for you to talk about what you do, and they won't glaze over. Amazing. Magical. Well, no, just appropriate.

It's finally appropriate to tell them about your process because by the time they get to this page they have felt seen and heard— they trust you know them. This arouses their curiosity in the form of a question: "I get that you really are talking to me, and can help my situation. So, just how in the heck *are* you going to get me out of my problem?"

But hold on a second. You still don't want to overwhelm them with minutia. Because the objective here isn't to teach them entirely how to do this, but merely have them feel safe enough with your principles and how you work, that they are willing to sign up for your list.

THE PHILOSOPHY OF YOUR BUSINESS

Your business has a philosophy to it— a way it approaches the problem it solves. And, with the philosophy comes a process of applying that philosophy.

The concept of a business philosophy may seem rather stale, strange or academic. I've heard many people respond to this suggestion with "No way is my business like that!"

Yet, this is one area where many business owners find they have a pretty large blind spot. You may believe that your approach is very intuitive, custom, creative— you approach every new customer and client as a

separate individual and give them exactly what they need.

However, many of my clients are surprised when they start to examine what they do and how they do it. They discover that they do have a process, something fairly formulaic that they repeat with almost everyone.

This isn't a bad thing. Having a formula means that the structure of what you do is solid, and gives you the room to be creative where it counts— in interacting with the individual customer.

The trick is to identify three or four key principles to your approach, or key elements to your product or manufacturing process, that explains why you are so unique and effective. The fourth section of your Customer-Focused Story has this information.

THE VALUE OF PHILOSOPHY

Having a philosophy means that you have a process that is explainable to people, that they can get their teeth into. And this is no small thing.

The process of getting clear on this page can also uncover a rich mine of creativity and clarity for you in your business. More than one of my clients, in writing this part of their website, discovered that they actually had an outline for a book, or other products and services.

What This Page Isn't

- It's not a detailed, step-by-step, how to solve your problem yourself.
- It's not an extended philosophical treatise.
- It's not a technical, scientific, or academic paper.

What it does is help explain, in a straight-forward, conversational tone, the main principles, key steps, or primary stages, someone needs, goes through, or learns as they solve their problem with your approach.

EXAMPLE

**Our approach to the golf stroke works
really consistently, without beating you up,
because it concentrates on three key elements:**

- **Body mechanics.** The Somatics work of Thomas Hanna studies the natural mechanics of the body, and reveals all sorts of fascinating information, such as the myth that you have a “waist,” when you really don't, and understanding how different muscles and bones help each other out. Get clear on a few of these, and your movements become incredibly smooth and consistent.

- **Your emotional game.** While many golf approaches focus on the “mental,” we know that your brain is fine. It’s just that those pesky emotions, such as nervousness, or competition, or stage fright, affect your thinking and your physical movements. We help you handle your emotional game.

- **Fun.** Golf is a game, and it’s meant to be fun. But, when you are frustrated, it’s easy to forget. Our approach keeps a light-hearted, fun attitude, without losing the challenge of competition and the desire to win.

If you focus on only one to the exclusion of the other two, frustration is bound to be the result. You know, because you’re been there.

But, when you bring these three elements together, it’s hard not to both perform better, and enjoy yourself more.

With this example, there is no explanation of how we’re going to do each of these, but just enough information for it to make sense.

Then, ask them to subscribe. As far as linking, you may link them to your Last-Ditch page if you choose to write one (more on that decision later). Otherwise, link them to your About page.

If this makes sense to you, and, more importantly, if it sounds like fun, start out with our free *Consistent 6-Foot Putts* handbook.

And, if you are still on the fence, you may be caught in one of the most dangerous myths of golf. What myth? [Click here](#) to read about it.

FOURTH PAGE– THE LAST DITCH, A.K.A. THE BENCHMARK

Your visitor, in all likelihood, has had his little problem, the problem you can help him with, for quite awhile. Although it’s painful for him, it’s also normal. He’s used to it.

So, until the pain of the problem hits some high tide mark, he doesn’t mind coping. He can just put up with it, maybe indefinitely.

Is this good for him? Not really. Coping with a problem is not the same as solving it. Because of our almost inexhaustible human capacity to cope with pain, this page is meant to help answer the question, “Why now, and not later?” This page helps make your visitor aware of the urgency he has around the problem he’s facing.

IT'S ALL ABOUT URGENCY

Urgency is what moves people. Urgency is what helps people, in the midst of their busy lives, to prioritize. When something is more urgent, we take care of it. When it's less urgent, we ignore it until it moves up on the urgency scale.

People are extremely reluctant to ask for help, and by asking your visitor, you create the possibility that she might break out of her mold, and actually ask for, and receive, your help. Which means everyone wins. But if you don't ask, she may suffer in silence.

Is this a healthy way to live? Not exactly.

Because we have filled out modern lives with so many things to do, to learn, to pay attention to, it has become the norm, although it's not healthy. In fact, this way of living has probably helped to create or exacerbate whatever problem your guest is facing.

A BENCHMARK OVERCOMES OUR TENDENCY TO MINIMIZE

When I was a paramedic, if I asked someone how badly it hurt, they might say, "I'm okay," grunting through their grimace of pain.

But, we were trained to ask someone who is hurt in a different way. We asked, "On a scale of 1 to 10, where 10 is the worst pain you've ever felt, and 1 is no pain at all, how would you rate this pain?"

"Oh, it's a seven."

Hmmm... How does a "seven" equate to "I'm okay." When a patient would face the reality that he just said it was a seven out of ten, suddenly he isn't quite as reluctant to get help. He's faced the reality that he really is in pain, and needs help.

That 1 to 10 scale is a benchmark. And, it's a subjective benchmark. We're not trying to perform any scientific experiments here. Everyone feels pain differently, one person's "seven" is someone else's "three" is another person's "twelve." And that's okay.

Because you're not trying to prove them right, or wrong. You're simply wanting your visitor to see if the pain she is feeling really is urgent, and if so, that perhaps it deserves attention now, not later.

That's why you create a benchmark, or 'last ditch' page.

I call this one the "Last Ditch" page, because if your visitor hasn't decided to sign up after the previous three pages, she is probably needing to decide on whether this is truly an urgent need or not. If it is an urgent need, your solution deserves space in her life. If it's not urgent, then she can make a clean choice to bypass whatever offer you are making.

THE ELEMENTS OF A SOLID BENCHMARK

A really useful benchmark has three elements.

The first element is some action, situation, or feeling which is measurable or observable, either subjectively or objectively.

The second element is a scale of measurement of the action, situation or feeling, where one end is clearly preferable, and the other end is clearly not preferable to your visitor.

In my paramedic example, pain was the feeling I was using as an element, and the scale was 1 (no pain) to 10 (the worst pain ever). It's really clear that a pain that is closer to 1 is preferable, and closer to 10 is not preferable.

Other types of examples may be:

Number of times per week that your energy dips in the late morning. (For an organic breakfast foods company.)

Number of times per day where you tell yourself, "I'm too old to do that." (For a company that helps elders feel more vital.)

Number of times in a day when you find yourself frustrated at how slow your computer is running. (For a computer services company.)

Number of times in a week that you get in an argument with your spouse. (For a relationship counselor.)

Out of the last four times you paid bills, how many of them did you spend time in a panic over how they would get paid? (For a financial planner.)

The third element is a standard of measurement for comparison.

If you can give them statistics that couples that have serious arguments more than twice a week run the risk of splitting up, then that becomes a strong benchmark. If you can show that elders who don't pay attention to their age have fewer health conditions, that can be a strong benchmark. If you can show that after one year, 75% of computers run 20% slower due to lack of maintenance, wasting up to one hour of processing time a day, that's an impressive benchmark.

Numbers, facts, details give your visitor something solid. If you bring these three elements together, then your benchmark provides your visitor with a clear and honest way to decide for herself how urgent her need is for your help.

YOU NEED A SPOTTER WHEN USING A BENCHMARK

You must always be cautious in using a benchmark, because it's very

easy to fall into a couple of traps. **The first trap is being insulting or condescending.**

When you are talking about someone else's painful situation, a lot of compassion is required. You don't have to walk on eggshells- you want to be very clear and honest with them. But make sure you get someone else who is in your target market to spot you by reading it, who can tell you honestly if they feel insulted or talked-down to.

The second trap is the hype trap. I already know because you are reading this book that you hate hype. You hate encountering it, and you certainly don't want to perpetrate it.

Let's be clear: what is hype? Hype is, according to the Merriam-Webster Dictionary, "To put on, or deceive. To promote or publicize extravagantly."

Unfortunately, when you are the expert, it's easy to frame worst-case scenarios that can lend themselves to hype. When I was a paramedic, a worst case scenario was pretty gruesome indeed. However, when most people think worst case scenario, they don't think in those terms.

You can, and should, be honest and straight-forward with people about what can happen. But, listen with an empathetic ear, and make sure your visitor won't think he's being scared into accepting your help.

The third trap is the niggle trap. This is the opposite end of the spectrum from the hype trap. A 'niggle' is just a little bother. It's an extremely minor worry, something that is easily overlooked, compensated for, or just ignored. To an elephant, a fly landing on its back is just a niggle. It won't move the elephant to action, even if she notices the fly is there.

One way niggles happen is when you pick a situation that just doesn't matter very much to the visitor or isn't easily understood by them. The elephant and the fly is one example. A business owner who can't find the exact shade of blue pen they want, they probably don't care. An artist may care very deeply about the exact shade of color for her paint, but the business owner and her pens... it's a niggle.

Another way niggles happen is when you aren't honest with your visitors about what really could happen. In trying to avoid hype, you pull your punches, and so you describe a situation that just doesn't matter that much.

Any way a niggle happens, your visitor reads it and ends up saying, "So what?"

It can sometimes feel like you are walking a tightrope between these three traps. And you are. But, if you stay in your heart, remain honest and authentic, and see things as much as possible from your visitor's point of view, it won't be hard.

EXAMPLE:

The Myth of the Perfect Swing

We all know that the perfect swing doesn't exist. However, you probably aren't truly looking for "the perfect swing." What you'd be happy with is a good consistent swing that you can improve upon with time.

Take a moment and think about your last few rounds. If you like, go to your golf bag and pull out your last scorecard, and look it over. How many holes, how many swings did you say to yourself "Ugh! I knew that was off as I was swinging."

If more than three out of ten of your swings are like that, it's probably making for a pretty frustrating day out, even when you're in beautiful surroundings, with good friends, and you should be enjoying yourself.

We're not asking you to trust us.. yet. But we do want to help. Just download our first lesson for free, and you'll continue to get tips and insights from our pro instructors every two weeks.

Do you see in the example how the situation is described, and the visitor is asked to measure themselves, specifically the number of golf strokes where they said "Ugh!"? That's the benchmark. If you make it measurable, whether or not they follow through and measure it, it attains the validity of observable data, almost clinical in authority. It helps to motivate people— not to change, but just to accept the help you are trying to give.

After your visitor tests herself with the benchmark, there is only one place to send her. Don't link her to any other page than page number five: The Sign Up Page.

The place to get started with enjoying your golf game more, and getting to live in that "sweet spot" on the head of your club, is with one of the most challenging parts of the game: the long putt.

[Click here](#) and within moments we'll get you a copy of our *Consistent 6-Foot Putts* handbook. And, it's free.

FIFTH PAGE— (ALL ROADS LEAD TO) THE SIGN UP PAGE

This is it. This is where you want every new visitor who could potentially be a good customer to land. The Sign Up Page is Rome for your website, and it's where all the first level pages should point to.

Why? Remember that your website is about developing a relationship with your visitor. If they don't give you their email address, then you can't keep reaching out, sharing bits of stories and strategies of how you solve problems like theirs. That is to say, if you have their email address, you can continue to offer them hope.

The other pages have already built trust, connection and empathy with your visitor. And, they've voluntarily clicked to get to this page, interested in getting your free-give-away, and/or subscription.

In truth, you could call this page a sales page, even though no one is paying you any money. To understand this, let's remember that, at the core, a sale is just an agreement. And, this page is asking your visitor to make an agreement to be in relationship with you and your business, and to receive a gift from you.

WHEN A GIFT IS ANNOYING

Just because you offer a subscription to a newsletter and a free give-away of some sort, doesn't mean people will take it. We all have so much stuff coming at us, that many of us don't take things unless we think we really need them.

For instance our hometown newspaper has been making a big effort over several years to sell us a subscription. They've given us a free newspaper every Wednesday, and, most recently, they've given us a free four-week subscription. We were so annoyed that my wife called up and cancelled it.

Cancelled a free subscription? Why would we do that?

We don't get our news through the newspaper. And having them just pile up around the house, getting ink on everything, and then going directly into the recycling bin doesn't feel like a gift to us. It feels like an annoyance.

Your sign-up page needs to establish that your newsletter is not just going to take up space in their inbox, and that your free give-away is not going to clutter their hard drive. You want to give a truly useful gift that will help and enrich your visitor's life in some way.

You need to create enough safety, connection and trust that your visitor wants what you are offering. At the same time, it is free, so you don't need to oversell it, either. If you try too hard to sell something that's free, immediately that sets off your visitor's suspicion-o-meter.

So, this page is short and sweet, but not too short. What's too short, and what's too long? There are three elements to include here to help establish the value of being on your list, and of your free give-away:

1. Using personality and heart, let them know why you are want-

- ing to give this away for free.
2. Testimonial from others who have used your free give-away, and how much they enjoyed it, including results they received from it.
 3. A picture of what you are giving to them, such as the cover of your free give-away.
 4. Assurance of safety, privacy, and ability to unsubscribe.

EXAMPLE:

Why are we giving this particular handbook away for free?

There are a few reasons. One is that we just love golf- that's why we started this company, and it's heart-breaking for us to see so many people out playing with steam coming out of their ears, instead of just enjoying themselves.

And yet we know there are a million different golf-improvement options out there. We don't want you to just take our word for it- we want you to try us out, and see if our whole-person, fun approach really clicks for you. Here's what one person told us:

"Wow, thanks for the free lesson! I was really skeptical at first, but I figured, what the heck. Surprise! Not only was it fun to go through and read, but it was really easy to follow, and I started seeing results immediately- on one green that I always mangle, I sunk a long putt, and I just kept thinking of the lesson as I was doing it. I haven't enjoyed myself that much in a long time." Steve, Washington, D.C.

Just fill in this form, and the handbook will be on its way to you, plus you'll get additional tips from us every couple of weeks.

Name: _____ Email: _____

We won't ever share your email with anyone else. And you can unsubscribe anytime you like.

Simple, just a few paragraphs, but it really speaks from the heart.

SIXTH PAGE- ABOUT YOU

The About You page is a particularly sticky wicket for many people. For one, many people just don't know what to write about themselves, or how to write it. What does your visitor really want to hear about you, anyway? Do they even care?

The second reason, beyond the shyness and discomfort with tooting your own horn, is the spiritual reality that the human heart is a pretty humble organ. As powerful as it is, it prefers not to have the spotlight on itself. Your spiritual heart is happiest when it's in service, and reluctant to hog attention.

Well, then, let's get your heart some relief. The About You page, when written effectively, is actually of profound service to your visitor. But, you may have to lose some of your professionalism.

THE GLASS DISPLAY CASE

Have you ever been to a house where everything is fine china and lead crystal behind a glass display case? You know, the kind of place where you're afraid to breathe, for fear of messing something up.

Unfortunately, your desire to be professional may be creating just that effect in your business. Everything feels like it's behind a glass display case. Your best prospective customers may desperately want what you are offering, but they are afraid to disturb anything.

Professionalism is a curse for you as a small business owner. Just the other day, someone asked on a discussion forum: "I'm going to be published, but should I include my website as a contact? I'm afraid it will turn off people who are more conservative."

What I wrote to her was: "Be yourself. Forget about 'conservative areas.' If you hide who you are and they show up, then what are you going to do? Continue hiding? Or show up and then they disappear anyway?"

"Also, don't make assumption about 'conservative areas.' All kinds of wierdos (like you and me) live everywhere, and one of the strengths of the internet is that people can access like-minded people without risking social censure from others in their community, who are probably doing the same thing they are, on their broadband connections at 11pm."

Why do people buy from you? They buy because they trust you. How is trust built?

There are three components to building trust in a business relationship:

1. Expertise. Do you know what you are talking about? Can your product or service really help me?
2. Dependability. Are you really there? If I lean into you, can I trust that you will catch me? That your product won't break down on me, that your service will really get me the results I'm looking for. If something goes wrong, will you show up and help fix it?
3. Humanity. Do I know who you are? Can I relate to you? Are you enjoyable to be around, and are you real and authentic with me?

Adam Cohen's book *The Perfect Store: Inside eBay* is a fascinating read. It was amazing to learn that the company was profitable from its first month and was one of the fastest companies in history to reach \$1 billion in value. And it started with Pierre Omidyar's vision to "level the marketplace," so anyone could participate, not just big companies.

But what made the company successful was the community that grew up around it. Rabid AuctionWeb users (as it was known in the early days) who spent hours on message boards, forging relationship with each other, helping each other.

And the glue that kept the community vibrant, and drew more and more people into it, were that there were a few characters who exhibited all three of the trust characteristics: Expertise- they knew their stuff and were happy to share it, Dependability- they spent hours on the boards helping people, and people noticed when they went missing, and Humanity- they had distinct personalities.

One of them, Uncle Griff, became known as a "cross-dressing bachelor dairy farmer who liked to answer questions."

I see the same thing in action on a marketing discussion forum I take part in, where one of the members is outrageous in his stories, prolific in his postings, and both deep in his knowledge of business and generous in sharing it. And he is openly credited as being the person who built the activity on the forum when it was stagnant a few years ago.

When I look around in the marketplace, and I think of businesses I genuinely like, and are big-time successful, they have all three of those characteristics.

I'm guessing that in your business you are already displaying your expertise and your dependability. But, did you translate that into a quiet "professional" demeanor?

Your About You page is a great place to add who you truly are into the mix. Be outrageously you.

If you are a financial professional who likes playing a dragon, breathe fire! If you are a nutty New Zealander cartoonist who loves psychological marketing, write in a fake French accent. If you are the chief technology officer of a fast-growing firm, email customers referring to yourself in the third person as "Skippy," a technology genius who lives in a cave and has a pet vole named Marta.

All three of these examples are real, and each of them has achieved outrageous levels of success in the business world, by being themselves. Me, I'm a Sufi spiritual healer who loves small business. I don't impersonate a dragon, but I do quote ancient mystics, and spend a lot of time talking about wierd things like your business having a heart of its own.

Of course, it's not all about personality. But that's the part that gets

left out most often when someone in your position thinks they have to leave their heart behind to be successful in the so-called ‘business world.’

And the so-called ‘business world’ is poorer for it. Here’s a question for you to take action on: What part of yourself are you hiding from your business, because you think it will scare people off? And, how can you begin to introduce it into your presence in the marketplace?

THE FIVE ELEMENTS OF THE ABOUT YOU PAGE

As you work on your About You page, you’ll want to make sure you have these five elements included, which span the full palette from ‘professional’ to personal:

1. Certification/training.

Why you are qualified. Certifications and trainings provide a level of third-party verification of your expertise. Many people make the mistake of chasing certifications thinking that they guarantee you clients.

They don’t. But, having some certifications definitely is one little bit of increasing trust with your visitor.

2. Experience.

How long you’ve been doing it, or how many people have used it. People like to think of themselves as unique, but very few people actually like to crawl out on a limb and be a pioneering trailblazer, especially with something important they are struggling with.

By including your experience, it will help your visitor to relax and know that others have gone this way, and that there aren’t any booby-traps waiting for them.

But what if you don’t yet have a ton of experience? That’s okay, we all start there. When you have less experience, your fees tend to be lower, and you draw fewer customers. That’s okay. Start there. As you draw in the customers that you do, the ones who are attracted to the heart of what you offer, then your experience will grow. And so will the number of your clients. And you can keep updating this part of your About You page.

3. Passion.

Tell them why you care so much to build your business around what you do. People want to know why you are spending so much time and energy doing this. This is definitely a place to be vulnerable, take a risk, and show some of your idealistic dreams. Nearly everyone holds idealistic dreams in their heart, and hearing yours may well ignite their own.

And here’s the most authentic antidote to the question: “Are you just doing this for the money?”

4. Photo.

Show your face! Smile. Look friendly. Of all the places to spend time and money, a good photo can't be under-estimated. And, a photo that truly represents you is critical. Too many web sites are undone because the photo is a simple snapshot that shows you feeling insecure, self-conscious, or awkward. You want to be the real, authentic, in your heart, powerful you.

5. Humanity.

This is the element that you can use to shake off the wearisome cloak of drab professionalism.

Be yourself!

Use your everyday likes and dislikes as a way to bring yourself to your business. Like a certain kind of music? Mention it here. Like to cook? Include recipes. Include who you are, because it allows your visitor to answer the question: "Do I really want to spend time with this person?"

In choosing what authentic parts of yourself to share, remember there is a difference between "like-able" and "understandable."

You don't want to hide yourself in order to be "like-able." But you do want to be understandable in your uniqueness.

Take a good look at references you make to be sure that what you communicate is understandable outside of your in-group. Especially on the web, in today's increasingly global marketplace, you can connect with people from anywhere. It's not an uncommon week that I receive emails from Germany, Australia, Israel, Saudi Arabia, Canada, as well as all over the U.S.

You don't have to explain every little bit, but just make sure any important points you are making are clearly understandable. Left out is not how you want your prospects to feel. But for them, hearing something unique from your culture, in an understandable way, can be very attractive.

How much is too much? Remember that these are not intimate friends, but new acquaintances. If you were at a party hosted by someone you knew, and you met someone, what would you feel comfortable talking about in the first 15 minutes of conversation? That's a good rule of thumb. You'd probably talk about common every day interests, but probably not intimate details of your personal relationships.

And, don't worry if you don't click with every stranger you meet. You don't have to sell to the entire world.

The last time I checked, the planet had more than 6 billion people on it. Your business doesn't need to appeal to even a small percentage of that in order to be very, very successful. How many customers do you re-

ally need to be super-successful? A few thousand?

Case in point: A retail store I know does more than \$5 million in sales annually off of a list of about 6000 people. Adding even a thousand or two people to that list will have a huge effect on sales.

EXAMPLE:

Who In The Heck Are These Guys?

Well, we basically just love golf, and have been lucky enough to have some extraordinary experiences. One of us is a PGA Tour Pro, personally mentored by Arnold Palmer, who has been playing for 25 years, 12 years professionally. The other, while no slouch on the golf course, isn't a pro at all, but a Certified Somatics Therapy instructor.

Working together since 2003, we've trained dozens of golfers to improve their scores by an average of 10 strokes, and to just have a lot more fun on the course.

The reason we're doing this goes beyond our love of golf: we're both passionately involved in some really inspiring causes, and we've seen how important it is to have fun in life. When you enjoy your life, the love you give to others is just that much better.

[Serious photo/Goof Photo]

After you tell them all about you, then give them a way to contact you. Link to your Contact page.

We love to hear from golfers who love the game. [Click here](#) to drop us a line.

You can see the five elements in the example, and it didn't take up a lot of room. You can certainly write more, but you don't have to. If you were to go on, here is how it might look.

If you're really interested in who we are off the course, here are some photos of us volunteering for one of our favorite organizations:

[photo]

And, without boasting too much, one of us loves to cook, and one of us doesn't. Guess which?

[photo goofing off in the kitchen with family]

Adding these kinds of touches, once you get through the initial five elements, can establish a human connection.

SEVENTH PAGE— CONTACT

This is a straight-forward page. Your visitor may have a question, and want a way to contact you. The obvious solution might seem to be to just put your email on your website, but, it's not the most effective. Why not?

Putting your email on your website is kind of like handing a postcard to a guest, and asking them to go out on the porch, fill it in, and mail it to you. It works, but, not the friendliest or most direct.

Having a contact page with a form on it is important, mainly because it makes it easier and more inviting for people to ask questions. You want people to reach out, because the more contact you have, the more trust you build and the safer they feel to engage with your business.

It can be very simple. Invite them to fill in the form, tell them how much you love to hear from people, and how soon they can expect a response from you.

Also, always provide your phone number and mailing address as well. You will almost never have someone pick up the phone, but it gives them some security to know they can pick it up if they have a problem.

I bought something from a website once, and had a problem come up. It was then that I realized the company didn't list a mailing address or phone number anywhere. This time it worked out okay, they were still legitimate. But I was nervous and upset for awhile there when I didn't have any options to contact them other than the internet.

Another advantage of including your mailing address is you never know when someone is going to send you a gift. We occasionally get thank you cards and even gift books in the mail from people who were touched by what they received from us. It's a great pick-me-up on a work day to receive a gift like that.

There is another advantage to using a contact form, and actually hiding your direct email address. Two words: spam control.

If you put your email on your website, you will get a lot more spam. There are these little 'robots' that automatically scan through millions of websites, looking for email addresses. When they find one, they 'harvest it,' and give it to the spammers.

By creating a form on the site, and hiding your email address, you both make it easier for your customers to contact you, and keep your email address safer. A competent web designer can fill you in on the details around this.

EXAMPLE:

Fore!

Send your questions and comments our way. We'd love to hear

from you about your game, our program, or anything about this site. You can call us at : XXX-XXX-XXXX or write us, or just fill in the form below. We generally reply to emails within one day, except weekends, when we're out on the links.

[FORM]

EIGHTH PAGE– ARCHIVES/RESOURCES

Traditionally, the Archives/Resources page of a website holds a few different offerings. Among them are past issues of your newsletter, short audio recordings of you giving a talk or being interviewed, and links to other websites you recommend.

This is a deceptively important part of the website. If you are writing articles for your newsletter that people enjoy and find useful, and you archive them on your website, then that makes your site a resource.

If your website can become known as an interesting information resource on your topic of interest, you are more likely to get others linking to you, or just recommending your site.

Over the years I've ended up writing over 100 articles, and some of the best ones are available in the archive section of my site. I have many sites linking to our site simply because they see our site as a powerful resource.

You don't want people linking to you just because they are doing you a favor, or because they like you personally. You want people linking to you because they see that you are in service, that you are helping people, and your help is seen as useful and valuable.

Of course, if you are just starting out, you may not have even one article to archive yet. Don't let this bother you. Step by step you'll be putting all of this in place. I remembered the point when I realized I had written 50 articles. 50! Wow! How did I get there?

The same way you will: one article at a time.

When you do get to that point, you will want to scale back. Posting 100+ articles is not only a little overwhelming, it's overly generous. You can leave your top 15-30 best articles up as a sampling, and that will be more than enough.

Other Tidbits

Over the years, different people have interviewed me for articles, strategic alliances, lots of different reasons. If the interviews come out well, these are great audio clips to share with first-time visitors. You don't want to put a whole hour interview up, but a 5-15 minute snippet can help them really get a sense of who you are, and help them connect to the

heart of what you are doing.

Similarly, you might have a recording of a class, or a talk you've given. Or perhaps you were quoted in major media, or there was an article on your business. These are great things to share that show legitimacy for who you are and what you are doing.

Recommended Links

I've heard some people say never put an outgoing link on your website, because you don't want to lose anyone. I say: Hogwash. You can't trap a visitor on your website. She can leave as easily as hitting the 'back' button on her navigation bar.

I think it's just good common sense to include recommended links of other resources. If they are recommendations that you can stand behind, it shows a certain generosity of spirit. And, all of your links don't have to be professional referrals. You can link to sites that have helped you in ways that may have nothing to do with your profession.

Many of our clients link to us simply because we helped them build their business. We ourselves link to those who have helped us.

And, I've always included links to just a few sites that I consider to be entertaining, or fun. This can create joy and fun for your visitor, and it reinforces the humanity aspect you bring out in your About page.

ARCHIVES, TIDBITS AND LINKS ALL TOGETHER?

Do all three of these things go on one page? No, they don't. You'll want them to each have their own separate page.

If you are just starting out, and you have plenty on your plate as it is, I'd say your number one priority is getting the Free Articles/Archives page up, plus getting things to archive on it.

After that, you can take time to add the others. A competent web designer can create a navigation bar for you that has space for those pages, but hides them until they are ready to appear.

And that's it, you're done with the Basic Eight Pages. Congratulations!

HOLD IT! WHAT ABOUT MY PRODUCT OR SERVICE?

Kinda wierd, eh, not actually talking about your product or service? You do want those pages, but they deserve a whole section unto themselves, which comes later.

First, we're going to talk about the free gift. Since so much of the Basic Eight is focused on getting your visitor help immediately, as well as signing them up for your email list, it's just logical to work on what that free help is before moving on to other things.

So, let's move on to the free give-away.

Bringing Them Help Now

The Free Give-Away

If you've spent time on the internet, you've probably already seen lots of websites offering free give-aways. "Sign up and you'll get this free report."

It seems like a great tactic, and it works. When I started offering a free workbook, the number of people joining my list on a daily basis went up immediately.

But, doesn't it feel like a strange come-on? "Hey, baby, want to see what I've got?" In the words of one of my clients: "For five years I've always considered the free give-away as a bribe to get them to subscribe."

The Free Give-Away can, of course, be used like this. But I don't recommend it. First of all, it's just an integrity issue. Why use any form of bait and switch, no matter how subtle?

Second, people who are bribed into joining your list because they get some free prize are not going to make your best customers. They just wanted the prize, and may not be genuinely interested in what your business is about.

So why am I still recommending that you use a Free Give-Away? Because, with a clear intention, the give-away can be a tremendous gift to your visitor.

I hope I've made it really clear that your website visitor is needing some help with something. That's why she is on your website. She's looking for help with something that you can provide a solution to.

The need for help is real, and it's happening while she's reading your

web pages. In fact, it's brought into clear relief simply through her visit to your site. Sometimes people live in denial about their problems because they seem too hard to handle, and the empathy your visitor receives on your site may have finally help her face what's really going on. This brings the urgency and challenge of whatever the problem is to a higher pitch, simply because she's thinking about.

If you invite her to subscribe to your newsletter, you are offering her help that is out in the future. What your free give-away does is bring the help into the Now. And, by connecting it to your Second Journey strategy of continuing to offer something valuable over time, whether it's a newsletter or something else, you offer the best of both worlds: Help now, and continuing help into the future.

It's the exact same tactic as the bait-and-switch bribe we discussed above, but with a clean, honest, generous intention. This is completely different. And your visitor will be able to feel that difference.

An additional benefit that comes from bringing the help into the Now, is that if your free give-away is truly useful, and it works, then your visitor is going to start trusting you as an expert, and as someone who is generous, and will, in all likelihood, want to come back for more.

AVOID TOP TEN LISTS

If you are offering help in the here-and-now, that puts a bit of a burden onto your free give-away. It means that it actually does have to deliver some help for the problem. It needs to be useful in some way.

There is one particular kind of give-away that I don't recommend writing. It's the 'Top Ten' variety of give-away. You'll see lots of reports offered that are in this style:

"The Top Ten Worst Mistakes You Can Make With X."

"The Twenty Best Ideas to Get the Most Out of Y."

"The 15 Mistakes Even the Experts Make with Z."

Stay away from these types of give-aways. Why? If they are so popular, what's wrong with them?

The problem with a Top Ten give-away is that you are dealing with a limited amount of space. You aren't going to be writing a 100-page booklet, more likely something that is between 5 and 25 pages.

With something that short, you don't have a lot of space to go deeply and thoroughly into more than one subject. If you have five, ten or twenty subjects to cover, you are basically just going to be providing a bullet list.

How useful is a bullet list to your visitor?

A bullet list might provide some insight or new information, but it's

going to give very little in terms of how to actually apply a solution to a problem, and get some real results.

If they don't get real results, then they don't get the value of your work. No trust or deeper connection is created with your visitor, and you've missed a golden opportunity to really help someone. It's also important to note that someone who feels the generosity of being helped tends to come back around for more help, and to pay for it.

MAKE IT USEFUL

How can a free give-away be useful? There are many ways it can be useful, and how depends on your business. First, I recommend taking time in your heart with the Remembrance to empathize with your visitor and the situation they are in.

Read back through your Is This You page, and some of the scenarios you wrote. Spend a few minutes with each scenario, and really get the picture in your mind and heart. How does it feel to be in that situation? What's going on for them? What kinds of issues do they have going on in that situation?

Brainstorm a list of those issues. Here are the mini-scenarios from our AwesomeGolf.com example:

As a golfer, do any of these situations seem familiar?

- You spent 20 minutes on the range, hitting your balls beautifully straight out towards the flags. But when you get on the course your swing goes whumpy, hooking and slicing in a bizarre manner.

Issues they are dealing with:

Frustration. Hooks. Slices. 'Situational' mistakes (okay at the range, off target on the course.)

Next scenario:

- Your swing is pretty good, pretty consistent, but you don't know how to get more power behind it. Every time you try to get more distance, you lose your precision.

Issues they are dealing with:

Anger. Embarrassment. Losing distance. Losing precision.

Next scenario:

- On the green, you can get the putt within six feet of the cup. But from there, it's all up to some golf god whether it goes in or not. You've sunk miracle putts (by chance, but don't tell the others),

and totally boffed 3-footers.

Issues they are dealing with:

Confidence. ‘Spotlight syndrome’ (messing up while being watched.) Short to medium putts. Precision on the green.

You can see that just from reading a few mini-scenarios there are quite a host of problems here. There is plenty you can help them with. But don’t think you have to solve everything, or even most of these, with your give-away.

LOOK THROUGH THE KEYHOLE

When you look through a keyhole, you only get to see a small piece of what’s going on inside. And you see what is directly in front of the door—what you can’t help but trip over when you do open it.

The problem you face is that you know a whole heck of a lot about what your business does— you know the whole room, and probably the whole house, not just what’s visible through a keyhole. It’s probably painful to not give someone as much as you know.

But, think back— how long did it take you to learn it all? That’s right— months or years. So why try to compress your six months, six years, six decades of experience and knowledge into a five-minute slot?

For your best potential clients, they are tripping over things that you can help them with— things that are directly in front of their doorways. That’s what we did with the example above. We looked at the mini-scenarios, and saw the most obvious problems that showed up front and center of their situations.

The AwesomeGolf.com free give-away is this:

The place to get started with enjoying your golf game more, and getting to live in that “sweet spot” on the head of your club, is with one of the most challenging parts of the game: the long putt.

[Click here](#) and within moments we’ll get you a copy of our *Consistent 6-Foot Putts* handbook. And, it’s free.

Because these guys know golf, they know that putting is one area every amateur golfer gets frustrated with. It’s a good give-away for the following reasons:

- It’s an issue that almost every visitor to their website struggles with.
- It’s a very specific issue. It’s not about 20-foot putts, or miracle drives, or hitting out of the rough. It’s just about the 6-foot putt.
- They have knowledge they can give in a handbook, that can bring

about an immediate improvement, without a lot of complicated work.

You don't have to understand much about golf to know that the longer shots require a full backswing, and so there are a lot of mechanics that are hard to communicate on the written page. That's what the DVD products and workshops are for.

Putting, on the other hand, is the very opposite of an aerobic, fast-moving activity (except for when a frustrated golfer jumps around yelling after boffing a supposedly 'easy' putt.) Because it's non-aerobic and doesn't require fast action, a simple written description and some illustrations allow the AwesomeGolf folks to help someone with his or her putting.

They found a keyhole, and they offered immediate help. If a visitor felt any sense of connection to them and their message, it's not going to take much to get that visitor to take them up on their offer.

The action step here is to pull out the mini-scenarios from the Is This You page, and see what kind of 'Keyhole' issues your potential clients have that you can offer help for. Then pick one.

WRITING YOUR GIVE-AWAY

There are plenty of ways to write a give-away. However, I'm going to give you a simple template for one way. In fact, this template can also be used to write your articles. Just write your articles considerably shorter than your give-away.

This template involves three things: a keyhole, which we've already discussed, a Drama, and a Step-ladder.

Drama isn't just for actors anymore.

Once you have the keyhole, the next step is to engage your reader's physical senses with drama.

A drama is simply an engaging story. For an article, obviously you don't want a complicated plot. Something as simple as 'What do you see when you look through a keyhole?' can be a drama.

Use this law of Nature: everything exists in everything else. Meaning use the drama as an analogy to bring in an in-body, immediate understanding, and make your point with interest.

For example, I used tailgating when driving a car as a metaphor for the struggle to be unique in your business. How do you be uniquely you when you've been learning from/following the masters in your field? The drama of tailgating, and examples of when to tailgate and when not to, took an intellectual concept about uniqueness, and made it engagingly, physically real.

A great article engages your reader's physical senses, because 'sitting

in a chair' is more real than 'thinking about support.'

Help your reader climb up beside you.

What needs to be done to solve the situation may look obvious to you, because you've dealt with it so many times, but chances are it's out of reach for your visitor, if they don't have a stepladder.

Your readers may 'get' the point you are trying to make, but if they don't have a way to apply it in their life, it won't really sink in, and they won't get any results.

The do-ability of your give-away is critical, because someone may read something and say, "Yah, that's interesting." But it's when they apply what you are talking about that they get something more profound. And that creates trust and connection with you.

And a desire to get more of what you are offering.

Whatever concept you are writing about, break it down into a step-by-step process. Or identify two or three keys, with examples, of how your visitor can make it work for her.

I'm going to repeat myself: make sure it's do-able.

I know you are afraid that if you give away your secrets, they won't need you anymore. Please hear me with your heart: it's not true! The more you help people, the more they will want. Why?

As I said before, it's taken you months or years to learn the basics of what you do, and years or decades to master it. Take a moment now and in Remembrance ask your heart to show you how profound and broad what you know is compared to your customers. You didn't learn your mastery from a single article, or even 100 articles.

And your customers won't either. But they will be grateful to know more about the Keyhole. And when they need to see the rest of the room? They'll be coming to you.

There are, of course, other ways to write reports and articles. But this is a darn good one, and easy enough.

If you want to check out the tailgating article I mentioned above for an example of keyhole, drama, and stepladder, go here:

<http://www.heartofbusiness.com/articles/2006/Jun21.htm>

And here's another example of this model.

Getting Fear Off Your Business' Back:

<http://www.heartofbusiness.com/articles/2006/Jul5.htm>

Although these are articles, and not full free give-away reports, you can still see how the elements take a keyhole issue, make it real through drama, and make the solution do-able with the stepladder. And, actually, there is only one difference between an article and a give-away report.

And no, it's not the length.

DESIGN MAKES THE DIFFERENCE

The only difference is the design. Sure, with a give-away report you have more room to write, so you can make it longer. But, you can have a very successful, very short give-away as long as it's complete, and really helps your visitor.

What elements of design are needed? Let me reach back in my memory to my days as the managing editor for a magazine, and introduce a few different elements that will help.

Each of these elements contributes what is known as 'eye-candy.' Eye-candy is when you make something look good, so the eye wants to take it in.

To quote Mary Poppins, 'A spoonful of sugar helps the medicine go down.' And your report, because it's offering help for a problem, definitely qualifies as medicine.

THE COVER

The cover of a give-away is important. You'll hear all kinds of people say: "Don't make a fancy cover because you'll waste all of your visitor's ink, and they'll hate you for it."

Well, the people who say that are only half right. It's true if you fill your report with lots of full-color images on the interior pages, trying to make it look like a glossy magazine, your visitor could be irked by the amount of ink used.

But, a simple, striking color cover is definitely important eye candy. And your visitor can always choose to skip printing the first page easily enough.

Here are the elements of a striking, eye-candy cover:

Color: One bold color, or two colors that go well together.

Title: Something strong, with personality.

Subtitle: Make it clear, it can even be a longish sentence if you like.

Your name and title as author.

A testimonial, or simple graphic.

To see an example of how this can look, simply take a look at the cover of this book. Go ahead. Take a glance.

See, simple. No fancy graphics done by expensive graphic artists. Just the simple of use of color and space.

In particular I want you to notice that I limited the number of ele-

ments to three. I go more into detail about what a ‘design element’ is in the Design section of this book, but simply put you see “Use Your Business Heart” as one visual element. The title and subtitle are squished close enough together to count as a single element. And the third element is my byline with the URL at the bottom.

Only three things for the eye to look at. Clear. Simple. Eye-candy. You’ll want to use an image of the cover on your webpages, especially on your sign-up page. For an example, see how it’s used here:

<http://www.heartofbusiness.com/thecore/index.htm>

It makes it really clear what your visitor is getting. And helps them pick it up.

THIS IS A SUBHEAD

See the word “Subhead” right above here? That’s a subhead. :) Using subheadlines to break your text into min-sections makes it much easier for your visitor to move through it.

Pull-quotes

A ‘pull-quote’ is a magazine term for when they take a quote from from the text, and blow it up really big and splash it across the page.

“...and blow it up really big and splash it across the page.”

This is a great way to draw attention to a particular point, and just a way to attract attention to it. It will definitely have a ‘magazine’ feel to it, so depending on the kind of tone you want to hit, you may or may not want to use a pull-quote.

Drop Caps

A ‘drop cap’ is when the capital letter drops lines, as it has in this sentence. It’s usually only used at the beginning of each chapter in a book. In magazine articles, it’s not uncommon for drop caps to be used for different sections of a longer article.

Drop caps can be fun, but they should be used sparingly.

Using different fonts and styles for different parts.

When you are quoting someone for more than a couple of sentences, or if you are giving an example or a case study, it’s great eye-candy to give it an entirely different look from the rest of the text.

Case Studies Can Stand Out

If you use a case study, like this one, and make it look different, your eye wants to read it. If you read magazines, you probably notice that you read the side-boxes and other sorts of stand-alone sections first. In fact, different styles can be used for all sorts of different changes in the text.

Whenever you change styles, you need to use some discernment. It's easy to go crazy and have fun with all of these different approaches, and just make a big mess. So get a sense of the different elements in your give-away and make some decisions about a few format styles to use for readability.

The Gray Box

Using a gray box is another great way to make a sub-point, anecdote, or side-note stand out in a way that breaks up your text, provides eye-candy, and in general just makes your report more fun to read.

THE WORKBOOK EXAMPLE

Maybe you are offering a workbook exercise in your report. It's an act of great generosity and helpfulness to offer a sample answer to the question. For instance:

1. Describe how you usually set-up for a putt:

(Usually I walk up to the ball, plant my feet nice and steady, then aim the club head at the ball. I'll take a few practice swings, and then give it a good poke.)

By providing a sample answer in a 'handwritten font' (the one I used here was 'Chalkboard') you not only make it easier for your reader, and invite responses. You also are adding eye-candy.

PAY ATTENTION TO MARGINS

The effective use of margins is where you can often tell a professional designer from an amateur. Nice wide margins, with plenty of white-space around the text, not so much that it looks like you are trying to fluff out a book report like “some of us” used to do in grade school, stretching 15 paragraphs into a 10-page report.

But a comfortable sense of spaciousness in the margins makes it easier for your reader to rest into the text, to dive in and read it. Look at books and magazines for examples.

THERE IS PLENTY MORE EYE-CANDY WHERE THOSE CAME FROM.

These are a few of the easiest and most common ways of creating eye-candy. If you want more ideas just stroll on over to your local news-stand, and glance through different magazines.

Again, make sure you don't get so entranced by the eye-candy that you lose sight of the simple readability issues. Remember that the eye-candy is trying to make your report easier to read, not harder. It's a good idea to think about the tone before you start throwing eye-candy around. A free give-away for mother's of crying babies is going to maybe look different than a free give-away for CEOs of small companies who are having staffing problems.

IT'S WRITTEN. IT'S DESIGNED. NOW WHAT?

Once you've completed your give-away, whether you are using a word processor like Word, or a complicated type-setting programming like InDesign, you'll need to convert it to the ubiquitous Adobe Portable Document Format, otherwise known as PDF.

You don't want to send your give-away out as a Word document because for one, it's just not considered professional. But, more importantly, each person's computer is different. Different fonts, different settings.

What if they don't have the font you used? Someone can load your perfect-looking Word document onto their machine, and blammo- it looks miserable and out of place, just like this paragraph.

Another great thing about PDFs is that you can make URL links to your website 'live.' So that if they are looking at the document on their computer, your link is 'clickable' it will take them right to your website.

If you are reading the digital version of this book, you can see a live link at the bottom of this page. The heartofbusiness.com website address

at the bottom is something that you can click on, and it will take you right to our website.

If you are lucky enough to own an Apple computer, you have a function in the print menu where you can simply save your document as a PDF, and you're done.

If you own a PC, you might need to get your hands on a PDF converter. Luckily, there are plenty of PDF converters out there, either free or low-cost. Although I am a Mac user, this one has come recommended by my friends who use PCs:

<http://www.cutepdf.com>

ALWAYS EXCHANGE PHONE NUMBERS

One last caution: only offer your free give-away as part of a package with a subscription to your newsletter. Folks have asked me "Would it work to offer the give-away without having to sign-up for anything, and then have them come back if they are interested?"

Actually, no, it's not a good idea for you or for them.

See, we all have very busy lives. If you meet someone you like and all you do is give them your phone number, what if they drop those jeans in the wash, and can't call you back?

With someone new, it's always best to exchange phone numbers. You give him yours, and he gives you his. That way, either of you can call if you're interested. And besides, you're wanting to give more help to them than just a give-away. You have lots more generosity waiting to outpour on them.

IT'S FREEBIE TIME!

I've given you the goods, now go create a free lunch for all of your visitors.

If you are still unsure, please go collect free downloads from all the websites you can find. Notice what you like, and what you don't. What's useful and what isn't. What impresses you and is easy to read, and what's boring, or hard to look at.

Have fun!

Keeping In Touch

The Autoresponder: Your Website's Personal Secretary

How do you fill a party with great people? Well, first you dream up an invite list, and send out invitations. And, if it's a big party, like a wedding, you first send a 'save-the-date' invitation, then send the real invitation, with an RSVP card.

Then lots of people show up with presents for you, and dance their behinds off. Right?

So, how do you then fill the next party? Well, sure, follow the same formula. But, it would probably make it easier if you actually sent out Thank You notes to the folks who came to the first one.

That's a lot of work, all those invites and notes. What a dream to have a personal secretary to deal with all of that.

THE ADOLESCENT FANTASY

Age 13. My bar-mitzvah was over, and I was surrounded by gifts from family and friends. If you aren't familiar, a bar-mitzvah is the coming-of-age ritual for Jewish children. Kind of like a wedding in terms of the amount of production and craziness that goes into it.

What is the hardest thing to get a 13-year-old boy to do? That's right— write Thank You notes! It took my parents months of nagging to get me to finally complete all the Thank You notes to the various people

who had given gifts to me. I thought it was just a pain in the you-know-where. But my parents would've heard about it for years if I hadn't gotten them out.

Plus it's nice to thank someone for their gift, don't you think? If only I'd had a personal secretary...

An autoresponder may not hand-write and sign cards for you, but it does take almost all of the pain out of keeping in touch with people who respond through your website. And keeping in touch is what builds those trusting relationships with people who come visiting your business.

This goes beyond social niceties- it is critical. Imagine if you called up a friend and left a voicemail message, 'Greg, can you call me back? I have a question.'

Now imagine if Greg never called you back. How would you feel? Would you be inclined to call again? And again? And again? Despite getting no response?

Using your website without an autoresponder is just like having voicemail on your phone, with no intention of getting back to anyone.

WHAT THE HECK IS AN AUTORESPONDER?

Well, first imagine the list of everyone who every expressed interest in what you do. Maybe you are thinking of 5 or 10 people, maybe you're thinking of hundreds, or thousands. Doesn't matter.

Each one of those people has an email address. If they can pay for your service, it would be hard to imagine them not having an email address at this point.

An Autoresponder is a service that you use through a website. It distributes responses you've pre-written to the emails of all those people. And it does more than that.

You know how, when a friend of yours moves you have to change the information in your address book? It's not that big a deal to do it yourself, and, besides, it's your friend, so you want to keep in touch.

Now, if your business has hundreds of potential 'friends' and the number increases every day or week someone hears about you, that's going to be a lot of time you are spending just keeping your address book up to date.

The Autoresponder handles all of that automatically. And even more. But, we'll get to all the details in a bit.

You will probably be tempted to avoid using an autoresponder, because it costs money to use (maybe \$20/month), and it's not familiar. So you hesitate.

If you hesitate, you'll probably try one of these methods instead:

Send individual emails.

Impractical for any kind of a list of more than, say, 10 people.

You can send using your email program's address book.

The usual way this is done is to create a nickname, or address list in your email application, and then put that list into the BCC (blind carbon copy) that hides the addresses to the recipients.

It can work, but it's a pain. For one, you have to manually add the email addresses, and remove them when someone unsubscribes. You have to manually handle "bounce backs" when an email can't be delivered because an address is wrong or changed. And, the truth of the matter is that many emails sent using "bcc" will be screened out by spam filters.

You can use a database program like Filemaker.

This can work. But, do you know how to make it work automatically with your website and your email program? Can it respond to people immediately, even if they are looking at your website at midnight and your computer is turned off or asleep? A database is not a great way to go unless you are already very technically saavy.

You'll eventually come back to the Autoresponder

So, please, take my advice. Instead of building up a list of, say, 10,000 email addresses in your AOL address book (as one client of mine did prior to working with me), just start from the beginning with an Autoresponder.

OKAY, SO WHAT DOES AN AUTORESPONDER ACTUALLY DO?

All the above, and folds your laundry and makes you breakfast, too. Well, maybe not. But if you use it properly, you may be able to afford to hire someone to do those things for you. :)

It all starts when you sign up, and get a little bit of code to put on your website that inserts a form to fill out. We've all seen them: "To get this fabulous prize, just simply put your name and email address in below>"

Then the magic happens. When someone fills out the form, the information goes to your autoresponder service, which will:

- Automatically add the person to your list.
- Automatically send that person any number of follow-up emails.
- Automatically handle any unsubscribe requests.
- Automatically handle any 'bad addresses' and stop sending to those addresses.

- Track how many people are opening your emails, and how many are clicking through on links you provide in your emails.
- Allow you to write newsletters to go out ahead of time and schedule them, so you can go on vacation, and still have your newsletter show up on schedule.
- The good autoresponder services work proactively with the major internet providers to avoid having your email caught in spam filters.

As you can see, it's a pretty nifty service. There are a number of them out there: Cooler Email, Constant Contact, among others. I myself use a service called Aweber: <http://www.aweber.com/?202227>

I've found Aweber to be very reliable, and they have a free trial if you want to give them a spin. Just click on that link, or type it in.

(Full disclosure: Yes, it is an affiliate link, so if you use it, and eventually decide to sign up with them, I do get a commission. But, it doesn't affect your price at all, and if it bothers you, please just type "www.aweber.com" directly into your browser without the rest of it, and you'll bypass my affiliate link.)

“JOAN” AND THE AUTORESPONDER

Remember The Adventures of Customer “Joan” on page 5 of this book? If you don't remember, take a moment and go glance at it.

My Autoresponder service is the secret sauce. Out of 24 contacts that Joan had with Heart of Business, only two of them required my personal time. The rest were handled by a combination of the website, and the autoresponder.

Is this heartless to take so much individuality out of it? No, not really. My bar-mitvah invitations, or our wedding invitations, were full of love and caring for the guests who were coming. And, there wasn't a lot of need for individual care. We didn't need to write an individual, personal note to each guest to invite them.

And, to tell you the truth, my thank you notes that I did eventually finish were fairly similar to each other, the only difference was the name it was addressed to, and the gift that was received. This didn't mean I wasn't properly grateful (as grateful as a 13-year-old adolescent boy is capable of being). It's just that there wasn't a lot of originality from note to note.

The lesson? If you put heart into the original message, or the original invitation, it doesn't lose that heart and that caring just because the same message gets sent out to many people.

Of course, if you like, you can write heartless, uncaring emails for your autoresponder. Like any tool, it can be used for evil, or for good. I

don't think I have to twist your arm to get you to use it for good. I hope I don't have to twist your arm to get you to use it, so you can be free to put your energy elsewhere.

THE FULL, MAJESTIC USE OF THE AUTORESPONDER.

Like the brain, most people only use a small percentage of the Auto-responder's potential. There are so many creative ways to use it— it's not just for breakfast anymore.

The general rule is that any time one of your visitors needs either:

- The same information that other visitors have needed; or
- The same warmth, caring, and contact that other visitors have needed;

Chances are, you've got a great situation to use your Autoresponder. And here are some of the most common:

When someone first wants to join your list.

As you know by now, the whole purpose of the Basic Eight pages is to create enough safety, trust and connection that the right visitors want to be in ongoing relationship with your business.

On the 'Sign-up Page' you offer some sort of a free gift, and also have them subscribe to your newsletter. The right people do exactly that, they add their name and email address through your sign-up form on the webpage.

The thing to do when someone subscribes to your list, is to have a single Thank You email set up in your autoresponder to follow-up. Here are the elements to put in this first Thank You Email:

- An expression of gratitude.
- A link to the free gift you promised them.
- A reminder to add your email address to their address book or 'white list,' so their spam filters don't block you.

Keep it short- just a few paragraphs. In this example, notice that "{!name_fix}" is simply the way the autoresponder knows to insert your visitor's name:

Hello {!name_fix}

Thank you for requesting my free workbook, and the Business Heart ezine. I'm really glad to have you join, and appreciate the space you give me in your inbox.

First thing to do is make sure 'mark@heartofbusiness.com' is added to your address book or spam filter white list. That will ensure you actually receive more of these emails, even if you

tighten up your spam filters later down the road.

You can download your copy of the Getting to the Core of Your Business(TM) workbook, by clicking on this link:

<http://www.heartofbusiness.com/pdf/gettingtothecore.pdf>

If it's not an active link for you, you can cut and paste it into your browser. If you still have trouble downloading it, please contact me- I want you to receive the workbook!

The ezine comes out weekly- with occasional additional reminders of classes and offerings. Let me know how helpful it is in your business, and if there are any particular topics you'd like addressed.

If you ever want to unsubscribe, simply follow the link at the bottom of any email you receive from me. Heart of Business complies with the CAN-SPAM Act, and never shares your email address or personal information with any other organization or business, for any reason.

I am taking the liberty of having the latest issue of Business Heart emailed to you within the next 24 hours, so you don't have to wait.

If you have any questions, just click here to drop me a line:
<http://www.heartofbusiness.com/contact>

best to your and your business,

Mark Silver

Notice how the email opens "Hello" and no comma after the person's name? That helps if your visitor hasn't put a name in, but just an email address, then the email doesn't look funny. It will show up just saying "Hello" as opposed to "Dear ,," with that space and then an odd-looking comma.

The other thing to notice are the links. Each one of my links includes "http://". Many people just list a link starting with the "www". Unfortunately, there are still email programs out there that won't automatically turn it into a clickable link without the "http://" If you add that, you increase the chances that your visitor can just click on it, without having to do any cutting and pasting or retyping.

Little things like this make a big difference in how easy it is for your visitor to access your stuff.

Don't stop after the first email.

So, that's the first email. But don't stop there. A single email can be great, but by adding a few more follow-up emails after that, you can create a real connection with someone, and help them out in different ways. It gives you the opportunity to treat a new subscribe with some extra care, in

a way that a more long-term subscriber may not want or need.

I would suggest maybe 3-4 total follow-up emails. Here are some ideas for how to use those follow-ups.

- Send your new subscriber a back issue for your newsletter.

I noticed that people subscribed when they darn well wanted to. Sometimes, I was in the middle of promoting a class, or a product of some sort. Unfortunately, this meant that for the new subscriber, the first email they got from me after the Thank You was an email asking them to buy or sign-up for something.

Not a very nice thing for a new visitor. So, I started sending out the most recent back issue of my newsletter as the second follow-up email. So, the second thing they get from me is helpful content, not a promotion.

- One or two weeks later, point out something in your freebie.

I download free things from the internet all the time, sometimes on a whim, sometimes with great intentions of reading it later. And yet, many of them just sit there on my desktop until I delete them.

Maybe they were exactly what I needed. I'll never know, because I never opened or read them.

To keep people from deleting your freebie unused, send a helpful email out seven days later that points them to a specific section of your freebie, and gives them a reason to go look at it. For instance:

Hello {!firstname_fix}

You may have missed this, but on page 36 of *Getting to the Core of Your Business* there is a spiritual secret that helps you get out of the way, so potential people can see your business more clearly.

I recommend reading it, and the section immediately following it, to get a clearer sense of how to make your business more attractive to the right people.

And, if you've misplaced the workbook, here it is:

<http://www.heartofbusiness.com/pdf/gettingtothecore.pdf>

Enjoy!

My best to you and your business,

Mark

You can send two or three of these. By doing this, you improve your chances that whatever you give will actually get read and used. And, that

means people will get value out of it. If they've gotten value out of it, they'll come back for more.

- Ask for referrals.

The people who will most benefit from what your business offers often know others in the same boat. I ask directly for referrals a few weeks after someone subscribes.

Hello {!firstname_fix}

By now I hope you have had a chance to enjoy the Getting to the Core of Your Business workbook, and the latest issue of Business Heart. If you have found these helpful, I want to offer you a chance to get yet another free workbook, an excerpt from my Heart of Money Transformational Journey workbook.

I'm on a mission: I want as many people as possible to be centered in their hearts in business, as successful heart-centered businesses help to create healthy communities.

Because of the power of Remembrance, I simply want as many people as possible to have the free Getting to the Core of Your Business workbook. You can help me do this, and get yourself the free Heart of Money workbook excerpt in the process, simply by telling your friends and colleagues about Getting to the Core of Your Business.

For details, click on this link:

<http://www.heartofbusiness.com/tellfriends.htm>

Then follow the directions, and you'll have your free workbook in minutes.

Both workbooks are excerpts from my book, "Unveiling the Heart of Your Business: How money, marketing and sales can deepen your heart, heal the world, and still add to your bottom line." If the workbooks resonate for you, you'll love the complete book.

You can find it here: <http://www.heartofbusiness.com/thebook>

Thanks!

my best to you

Mark

p.s. If for some reason you haven't yet downloaded Getting to the Core of Your Business, click here:

<http://www.heartofbusiness.com/pdf/gettingtothecore.pdf>

You don't ask, you don't get. And, you don't have to have written a book, or even a second freebie. People are happy to refer when they value something. And, if you can sweeten the pot with another freebie, it can certainly help.

Just don't feel like you have to do it from the get-go. You can always just ask for the referrals first, and, later, once you catch your breath, you can create a second freebie to encourage more referrals.

And, all this talk about emails leads us right to my favorite tips about making your emails more readable and usable.

EMAIL TIP ONE: DON'T GET ATTACHED.

Your give-away is a free document that comes as a PDF. An article, report, workbook, something that helps sweeten the deal and give an immediacy to their subscribing.

There is a temptation to want to send it as an attachment, but don't do that. Instead, make sure it's uploaded to the server where your website is, and provide a link that your visitor can on click to download. Why?

Because many spam filters, especially at larger companies, block the attachments from coming in. This can lead to a frustrating round of "I send you that attachment." "I didn't get an attachment." I re-sent the attachment." "Nope, I still didn't receive the attachment..."

Just give them a link, like this:

<http://www.heartofbusiness.com/pdf/gettingtothecore.pdf>

And they can click on it, or paste it into their web browser window, and it will download happily onto their computer, by-passing all spam filters.

EMAIL TIP TWO: DON'T WORRY ABOUT A FANCY HTML TEMPLATE.

People spend a lot of time and energy making their emails look fancy. As of this writing, I'm still sending mine out without anything special in them. It can look nicer, and if you are into it, go for it. But don't sweat over trying to make it fancy.

The key is to make them easy to read, with these email design keys:

Make like the Parthenon.

Limit your line length to no more than 60 characters. Newspapers use narrow columns because they are easier to read. When you read a newspaper column you start at the top and travel down.

If the columns were wider, you'd be travelling in two directions: left to right, and top to bottom. You wouldn't think it would be tiring just because the column is wide, but it is.

Since your readers already have to travel vertically to read through your email, by limiting the width you reduce reader fatigue, especially on screen.

White it out.

Don't be afraid of white space. Hit return a time or two. Use a line of "======" or "—————" as a separator for different points in the text, or emphasis.

Careful with text color.

Just use black. You never know what color your reader's computer will display. Your beautifully subtle lavender may come out as a screaming pink on the other side. Or, if they choose to print out your lovely lavender, they may curse you for wasting their color ink cartridge.

Short paragraphs.

You want to use short paragraphs in your emails.
Really short.

I'm not kidding. Because when you write really, really long paragraphs by email and they go on and on without stopping about every last thing you want to say, then it becomes this block of text that's hard to read and follow. Your readers become frightened to start the paragraph, and, if they do actually start the paragraph, they get lost in the middle and never reach the end. And if they never reach the end, then they never see the next paragraph and basically the gig is up, because they've missed the point of what you were writing about, and you may as well never have written in the first place. And, because you lose them as readers you never hear back from them, you've gotten no response and so you can start to feel frustrated. Then angry. Then sad. Then you begin to fill with despair and wonder if anyone cares about you at all, and whether you should even be in business, or even in the world. Maybe you should just give it all up and go get a job in a cafe. When, it's really not that bad, it's just because your paragraphs were too long.

Make sense? Short paragraphs. No more than three or four lines.
'Nuff said.

DON'T WAIT TO SET IT UP.

Please don't read this section and say, "Hmmm, sounds like a good idea. I'll get to it later." If you do this, you'll be sorry. You'll write the content of your website, you'll get help with the site design and get it live. And then, you'll start getting people who are interested. Your list can start growing pretty darn quickly after that.

One of my clients launched her new website, and is writing her articles, and all of sudden she's getting subscribers from all over the globe, and her list of subscribers is growing every week.

Once that happens, if you aren't already using an autoresponder, you've just created extra work for yourself, because transferring a list can be a big pain.

If you already have list, don't put off transferring it, because you WILL lose some subscribers in the transfer. Do it now, before your list gets any bigger.

If you don't already have list, perfect! Start with an autoresponder. It's worth far more than you'll pay for it. In many ways, the autoresponder will be the most valuable part of your business, because it will be the place where you have your 'interested' and 'customer' lists. And, the only thing more valuable than an 'interested' list, is the customer list.

I hope I've thoroughly convinced you that an autoresponder will save you effort, and help you immensely as you build your business. If any of the technical aspects are confusing or overwhelming, a good web designer can support you here, so it's no trouble at all.

It's okay to take a breath now.

That was a lot to take in. And, after you take that breath, it's on to your products and services. I bet you were wondering when we were finally going to get to them. After all, they are what your business really is, in a very fundamental way. Now you'll find out where they live in your website.

The Landing Page

Your Products and Services

With the Basic Eight we've tried to keep the spotlight off your products and services as much as possible. Yet you are in business after all, so you do want to let folks know about your offering.

Even so, I don't want you to lose the visitor's perspective even as we approach showcasing your offerings.

Here's the truth about most purchases: very few of them are spontaneous, first-time you saw it you bought it. And the rub is that many times the folks who buy spontaneously are not necessarily your best customers.

Why not?

When someone buys spontaneously, they could be acting out of one of two major impulses. The first impulse is Divine heart-centered guidance, when something just feels 'right' and they say "Yes," to it. These are great customers to get. And, you don't have to worry about them— they'll buy from you, unless you close up shop completely.

The second impulse is when someone is in a state of need, or compulsiveness of one sort or another, and they see your offering. They don't take time to look at it closely, they don't think through the purchase, they just buy.

What are they buying? Are they really buying what you are selling?

In most cases no, they aren't. They are buying what they imagine you are selling. Their hasty journey through your product/service description will leave them with a lot of half-truths, misunderstandings, and false beliefs.

Therefore, when they finally receive what they bought, their chances

of having their expectations dashed is very high. This will make for a very unsatisfied customer, someone who will take up a fair amount of your time trying to get what they thought they bought, which you weren't really offering in the first place.

These aren't bad people, they are just in a hurry for some reason or another. When you are really short on cash, you think these people are a God-send, and the sales, for sure, can be helpful. But, ultimately, you don't want to build your business like that. It doesn't feel good, and it's not sustainable.

WINDOW-SHOPPING IS UNDER-RATED.

Have you ever strolled down a crowded street during a holiday season? Festive lights, people in and out of stores with smiles on their faces. You are looking in and out of windows, at all the pretty things there.

Browsing is an important part of the finding-help process. It helps your visitor actually see what you offer, get her hands on it, and see if it's right at all for her.

A first-time visitor may not buy anything, but they may browse, making a mental note for later. Of course, mental notes are not a very effective filing system, that's why the Basic Eight pages are aimed at collecting her email.

The question the product/services web page answers is: "Okay, so what does it look like? Is it a pill I take, or a powdered drink, or a class, or an individual session, or a book, or what? What is it?"

Window shopping. They get to see the show-room floor model.

The biggest mistake many people make is to write a product/services page that is in-between a window-shopping page, and what is known as a full-on landing page.

Your visitor, upon arriving at such an 'in-between' web-page, will be confronted with both too much information to easily understand what's being offered, and not enough of the right kind of information to make a decision to purchase or not. So, your hapless visitor, upon encountering such a page, will quickly retreat... back to some other website.

Your product/services page initially, at the first level, is like a catalog, or a display window. It's not intended to create purchases right then and there.

What this looks like is a series of short paragraphs, with a link to a different page if they want to take a closer look. And, remember what your visitor is looking for when they are window shopping: something that looks good, and is fun to look at and consider.

Think about what mood you are in when you are window-shopping,

even for something serious. My wife and I went to Sears to look at storage freezers recently. We weren't ready to buy, we just wanted to know what was available. The salesperson was friendly, and helpful, and gave us just a little bit of information, which was perfect.

Yet, if he had gone whole hog with all kinds of performance details, and how it works, we would've been bored to tears, and annoyed at having our time taken up.

Your visitor wants to know, "Is this something I might want to take a closer look at?" So, the elements that you are going to include in a page like this are:

- Headline for the page.
- Short intro paragraph
- Descriptive paragraph of each offering, which will have the following elements:
 1. Product title.
 2. Product subtitle, which describe the problem it solves, plus a description of how it's delivered (DVD, workshop, teleclass, bottle of powder, what have you.)
 3. 2-4 sentences of description focused on: A description of the problem, a short, non-specific description of the solution, and a link to the Landing Page for the product, which I'll be talking about shortly.
 4. A big plus is if you can add in a graphic to illustrate the product in some way. Not necessary, but very helpful for the window-shopper.

Example:

Going out for 18: Products and Services

You may not be able to join us for a round at our favorite course, but you can get the goods. Here's a variety of products and services that help you implement what it is we're teaching.

Tweeners: Finally conquering that black hole between 30 and 90 yards. DVD and book set.

How you play inside 100 yards is the difference between ecstasy, or cursing the day you were born. You know you can add 10 strokes simply by duffing the tweeners. Finally you can stop the tyranny of the twener. [Click here for more details.](#)

Letting the Big Dog Eat: How to increase both distance and accuracy in the long shots. DVD and book set.

It's embarrassing to tee off and have your shot dribble out 70 to

80 yards. The driver and fairway woods, as well as those handy hybrid clubs, require a special approach all their own. We'll show you how it works. [Click here for more details.](#)

[Links Hijinks:](#) In 3 days cut your score, while having fun.

Join us on a championship course for three days of golf clinics, learning, and fun. Very limited spaces allows for a lot of personal attention. [Click here for more details.](#)

Someone can glance through this page and very quickly get a clear idea of what you offer, and whether any of it is interesting to them. And they can do this with very little work on their part to figure it out.

BUT WAIT, NOW THERE'S THREE MORE PAGES TO WRITE!

It's true, and I'm glad you were paying attention. This little overview page that you just threw together so joyfully has three links embedded in it, emblazoned with those too-familiar words: "Click here for more details."

Each of those links leads your visitor to an entirely new room in your website. You see, if your products and services are to grow up well-adjusted and healthy, and able to pull their own weight in your business, they each need their own bedroom.

In Official Website Marketing Geek terminology, these individual webpages are called "Landing Pages," I'm guessing because someone 'lands' there, and (supposedly) doesn't leave until they've made a decision.

THE BEAUTY OF A LANDING PAGE.

The real beauty of a landing page, when it's done with a lot of heart, is that it can create a lot of safety, connection, and trust with a prospective customer. When it's well-constructed, well-written, and authentic, a landing page can be a very inspiring experience for the reader.

Of course, when a landing page is done poorly, using a lot of hype, manipulation, fear and iffy 'persuasion' tactics, it can taste and smell like those leftovers that were left in the back of the fridge two weeks too long. Moldy, cheesy, gross.

Because the full scope of a landing page that truly facilitates many of your best customers to buy, would take a book in itself, I'm going to show you a 'quick and clean' way to write a landing page.

Will this ‘quick and clean’ method be a dazzling super-star? No, probably not. But, a dazzling super-star is not always what is needed. If you are overhauling your whole site using this program, then what I’m teaching you here will get the job done, helping many of your best potential customers to purchase from you. Yes, it will do that quite well.

And when you’re ready to fine-tune your landing page I recommend you take a copywriting course. There is a link for the one I teach at the end of this section.

Before we jump into the details of how to write a quick and clean landing page, let’s take a look at why and how someone purchases from you.

THE WHY AND HOW OF SHOPPING

Your visitor buys because he has a need, and he sees your product as an effective strategy to help fulfill that need.

That’s the only Why anyone ever buys. Need fulfillment. It might be a need for hope and inspiration. It might be a need for effectiveness and efficiency. It might be need for entertainment and fun. But it is an unfulfilled need.

Because we humans are so courageously and effectively able to cope with the pain and struggle that come from unfulfilled needs, it takes a certain amount of time and readiness before most people will purchase. The pain that your visitor knows feels safer and more certain than the unknown of your product or service.

So your visitor waits.

He waits until you make a good connection to him, he feels safe, and he knows what he’s getting into if he buys. That is until your product becomes a known quantity that looks better than the situation he’s sitting in.

That’s the How. How your visitor purchases is through Trust, Safety, and Connection. Remember those three as you begin to work on your landing pages, because every word you write should be helping to communicate one, or more, of those three.

WHAT KIND OF OFFERS NEED A LANDING PAGE?

Any offer that you don’t want to have a unique, personal, start-from-scratch conversation with every person who is interested. It may seem obvious that a landing page would work really well for products like books, CDs, information products, oatmeal, clothing, and any kind of a product that stands alone, and is either shipped, or downloaded digitally.

It may also seem clear that any kind of class, course, seminar or train-

ing can use a landing page for enrollment.

What may not be so clear is that a landing page is actually extraordinarily useful for custom offerings like: individual coaching or consulting, custom made-to-order products like shoes or furniture, and even complex, high-commitment offers like three-year trainings, or team facilitation.

You may be wondering, “How in the heck am I going to fit my custom offer onto a landing page, when every conversation I have with a potential customer or client is so unique and individual?”

The key is in understanding what the ‘call to action’ is, which is the last of the seven elements of the “Quick and Clean” landing page. So read on, and with just a little persistence and patience it will all begin to make perfect sense.

SEVEN ELEMENTS TO A “QUICK AND CLEAN” LANDING PAGE

For any offer you have, I recommend thoroughly applying this seven-element structure to it in order to create a “Quick and Clean” Landing Page.

Some of the elements will not be included verbatim into the final draft of your landing page, but each will be important in how you put the page together.

The First Element: Who and What

Remember Who your offering is for, and What it helps them with. Each of your products and services is meant to serve a specific type of person. Not everyone who is on my email list is appropriate for the Heart of Money class, or for the Marketing class, or even for this Creating Heart-Centered Websites product you are reading through now.

Each of your products or services serves a subset of your whole prospect population. Your job is to get really clear about who your offer is in service to and what problem it solves.

This doesn’t have to be complicated or challenging, because it will be related to the Who and What that you’ve already defined for your business.

Let’s find the Who and What for the product from the example a few pages back ‘Tweeners: Finally conquering the black hole between 30 and 90 yards.’ The Who and What for the example AwesomeGolf.com is “For golfers who love the game, but aren’t enjoying it because their playing is so inconsistent.”

So, the Who and What for Tweeners, is For Golfers Who Love the Game, but they are struggling to have accurate golf shots between 30 and 90 yards out from the green.

Any of your offerings will have a subset that is defined by either a

more narrow definition of the problem they are facing, or a more narrow definition of the type of person.

AwesomeGolf.com could just as easily have created a product for the new golfer, which is a more narrowly defined Who, who wants their score to break 100 before they finish their first year of playing, a more narrowly defined What.

Second Element: Marketing Syntax

Remember that earlier in the Content section of this book I described the Customer-Focused Story, which is based on marketing syntax (p. 13)? Quick review of the five parts of marketing syntax:

1. An empathetic description of the problem from their perspective.
2. What they've tried that doesn't work.
3. Why the usual solution(s) they've tried don't work.
4. What they really need to do (how it really works.)
5. Why you are so good at providing what they really need to do.

Each product or service you offer will require its own version of marketing syntax, written specifically for the offer's who and what. And, the end part explains why this product or service is so good for your prospect's problem, instead of why you are so good at what you do.

You will be using Marketing Syntax as the basic outline for the entire landing page, with some additions.

Example:

Tweeners: Finally conquering the black hole between 30 and 90 yards.

1. You've hit a great second shot after your tee-off. But, the ball rolls down the fairway until it finally comes to rest... about 60 yards from the green. And then you spend a frustrating three strokes hitting the ball across the green into a trap, out of the trap into the rough, and then finally... onto the green. A great hole ruined, by the Tweener.
2. You've spent a lot of time trying to judge the distance correctly, but it still frustrates you. It's a mystery: how do the pros handle these shots so well?
3. Well, the truth is that even the pros have difficulty with these shots, and they usually will lay up to avoid a tweener. Knowing how much backswing gives you how much yardage is just a difficult thing to judge.
4. What you really need to handle Tweeners is first: learn the

strategy to avoid Tweeners in the first place, and second, understand how the pros judge distance for these difficult shots, and some unusual ways of approaching the green without landing in traps or water.

5. This DVD/workbook set will show you both the strategy to avoid Tweeners in the first place, and walk you through the steps of how the pros judge distance and swing for short shots.

Don't try to make your marketing syntax perfect. The important thing is that you have a clear concept of each of the five parts of syntax, and could explain them clearly to a friend in conversation.

Third Element: Frequently Asked Questions

Once you have the Who and What, and the marketing syntax, the next element is to brainstorm any and all questions about your offering. It will be important to get some help with this, because friends or colleagues who don't know your offering as well will come up with questions you never would think of.

For instance, I had a participant in my Opening the Moneyflow marketing class, and he was wanting to hold a retreat in the desert for his target market.

On his own, he came up with about five questions. But, when the entire class started to participate in brainstorming questions, we came up with a couple of dozen questions. My favorite question was one about safety: "Will I be physically safe in the desert?"

Now, he was so comfortable in the desert, he didn't think about safety from a newcomers perspective. But, as he thought about the question, he realized that there were all sorts of safety concerns that he knew how to deal with almost without thinking.

Once you have brainstormed questions, group them into two types. One type are the logistical questions: When does it happen or when will I get it, what is it made of, how much is it and how do I pay?

The other type of questions are content questions: Will I be safe? How will I know if I like it? What kind of topics do you cover? What kind of results will I get? What happens when I use it? Does this really work? Have other people used this offer successfully?

Remember, people buy because they feel safe. Any question they have is something they don't feel safe about. If all of their questions are answered in the landing page, then they will buy, if it's right for them.

Once you have your list of questions, go ahead and answer them. As you answer them, just write them as if you were talking to a friend. Don't

worry about whether or not what you write at this point will be included in the final landing page- much of it probably won't. You just want to have the answers to all of these questions clear in yourself.

As you move into writing your landing page (but not yet!), you'll be taking the questions, and your answers, and weaving them into the narrative of the page itself. You see, the Q & A format can feel a little stilted and distant, almost as if your visitor is listening to you be interviewed by someone else.

EXAMPLE OF Q&A

Q: What if I've swung this way for 20 years, and I can't see how I would ever change?

A: This is a normal question for most people. Our approach isn't about modifying your swing, which is notoriously difficult to do, because new is always uncomfortable. Rather, it's about showing the natural, relaxed, supported, comfortable positioning and movement of the body in a way that easily creates consistency.

See how it reads almost like a magazine interview? Interesting, but how long can you stay focused just listening to two people have a conversation that you aren't a part of?

Instead, with a little bit of tweaking, you can weave the question and answer directly into the narrative of the page, like this:

EXAMPLE OF ANSWERING THE QUESTION IN A NARRATIVE

You've probably had the golf swing you do for a long time, maybe even 20 years. The way most of try changing our swing, or other habits, is to make little incremental changes in ways that hopefully improve our results.

The problem with this approach is similar to bicycling near trolley tracks: it's all too easy to just slip back into the old habits, because the grooves are there, and it's more comfortable, even if it doesn't work worth a darn.

Our method actually shows you just enough about body mechanics and structure so you can slip into the deeper, more comfortable grooves of natural movement. This natural movement of the body, because it's the way our muscles and skeleton are actually designed to work together, creates more consistency, accuracy, and power, without the hard work of incremental change.

You see how weaving the question and answer into the narrative using marketing syntax puts your visitor firmly in the spotlight? You are talking to your visitor, not having them listen from the side.

Fourth Element: Logistics

Some of the Frequently Asked Questions were what I called ‘logistical’ questions. They dealt with facts, just the facts, ma’am.

You want to separate out all of the logistical questions, and their answers, because they are very important, and need to be given in a single place and laid out clearly.

For example, the Tweeners landing page might have it displayed like this:

Tweeners comes as a workbook and DVD set. You get:

The workbook, with illustrations and descriptions of everything we’re talking about.

The DVD, that shows us clearly demonstrating every single step of what we’re teaching.

The cost is \$69 plus shipping. To order, [click here](#).

You will want the logistical information near the very bottom of your Quick and Clean landing page. Why at the bottom, why not present the logistics first thing?

The logistics are what your visitor needs right before they make the final decision, Yes or No. Whenever someone sees a price, and all the other logistical details, it tells them, “Okay, here it is. Do you want it or not?”

If they see the logistical information first, they don’t yet know what it is they are looking at. They can make some assumptions, “Oh, a DVD and workbook. That’s kinda like that horrible DVD and workbook I bought from that exercise company. No way do I want that.”

It’s a disservice to give the information too soon, because the brain is not good at taking in new information. It tends to want to naturally compare it to what it already knows.

If your visitor doesn’t have a real idea of what you are offering, in other words, the answers to the content questions, then she will make a decision based on some other experience, some other product that she has seen.

This means that your visitor, at some unconscious level, is not making a decision about your offer— she is making a decision about someone else’s offer. Not only is that not fair to you, it’s not fair to her.

Put the logistical information at the bottom of the page. This way

your visitor is truly making a decision about your offer, one that her heart will be happy with when she receives it.

Fifth Element: Bullet Points

Many people confuse logistical information with bullet points. Bullet points, as I'm talking about them, are not meant to cover logistical information, or to talk about how your offer is delivered.

Bullet points are for results and benefits only. Meaning what happens when someone takes you up on your offering, what happens for them?

For instance, a benefit is: "being able to accurately judge your backswing for Tweener distance." Or "To stop overshooting the green with too much power on your pitching wedge."

Great, those are benefits. However, benefits aren't usually something you can physically put your hands on. Even if it's "Adding 200% more to your bottom line," or "having a conflict-free relationship." Although these might be tangible benefits, they don't exist yet, and so your visitor may want them, but can't quite get her teeth into them yet.

You need to add an element of physicality to your bullets. This is why so many successful bullets use words like: "the myth," "the secret," "the four ways," "How it works," etc. The main point is to make sure that a noun is included in your bullet, that gives the result you are offering some sort of physical vehicle that your visitor can understand.

The second component is the result itself, either positive or negative, of using or not using the subject of the bullet.

EXAMPLES:

Our golf program covers these topics:

- The myth of the waist and how it's ruining your swing.
- The secret to not looking up, and why it's not really the problem anyway.
- The link between laziness and accuracy, and how to improve both.
- The five elements of the golf swing, and how to integrate them into a smooth, accurate action.

Notice how each bullet point has those two elements, a noun of some sort "myth", "secret", "link", "five elements" and a result that the noun produces.

How many bullets? Make up as many as you can. If you end up having

more than eight, you will probably want to group them into topics, each topic listing four to eight bullet points.

The Sixth Element: What do others say? Testimonials.

Testimonials can be powerful additions to the landing page, because they add third-party witnessing to what you are saying about the value of your offer. Sadly, most testimonials don't do that. And, even worse, there are some testimonials that actually push people away.

Again, let's think about it from your visitor's point of view. He is reading your landing page, because he's interested in your offer and how it can help him. He has some natural, healthy skepticism, "Is this for real, can this really work?" as he reads along.

Then, along comes the testimonial. "This Tweeners thing is the best thing since sliced bread! I love it!" What is your visitor going to think when he reads this? "Yeah, right buddy. How much did they pay you to say that?"

The secret to a powerful, authentic testimonial, is to interview people who have used your product or service around some of the Frequently Asked Questions you came up with. At the same time, ask them if they had any doubts or questions before they decided to take you up on your product or service.

In this way, a testimonial can then mirror the experience of your visitor, and it becomes much more believable that way. If one of your customers had some authentic doubts, put it in the testimonial. Then, let them answer your Frequently Asked Questions.

EXAMPLE:

"Man, I'd tried every golf improvement course in the book, because I've been golfing for thirty years. So, you can imagine how skeptical I was when these two guys told me I could get more consistent with my swing. The only reason I tried them at all, honestly, was because a buddy had worked with them and said they were just hilarious—lots of fun to be around. So, I figured it couldn't hurt, and at worst I'd have a good time."

"Boy am I glad I went. Yes, these guys are a kick- we had a great time. But, I was -amazed- at everything I learned about my own body. And the difference? I've taken 5 strokes off my score, which means I scored under 85 for the first time in my life last weekend!"

The question this testimonial was answering was "Will it be fun?" And, in the process, it was also answering "Will it be effective?" Also, notice how the healthy skepticism expressed in the beginning really in-

creases the power of the testimonial. Pretty reassuring to read it, isn't it?

So, instead of having 'catch-all' testimonials, use different testimonials to answer different questions. Have one person talk about how easy it was. Have another person vouch for the results they got. Get a third person to describe how great you were. Let each testimonial capture a different issue.

How do you get testimonials? You ask. But hold it, you don't have to always ask for a testimonial. You can simply interview them about their experiences. The basic questions cover the following topics: What was it like before you tried our product? Were you doubtful or skeptical before you bought? How was it using our product/service? How have things changed now that you've used it?

You may have to dig for some answers. Don't be afraid to ask for more details. 'Things are much better.' 'Oh, yeah? That's great! How are they better? What's changed?'

If you are merely asking for feedback, and not asking for a testimonial, you'll get really honest, and probably surprising, answers from your customers. And, you'll get great testimonials.

When someone has given you an interview that you think would be a great testimonial, ask them for permission: "Wow, I really appreciate what you've said. May we use this, with your name and photo, as a testimonial on our website?"

Most people will say yes. Get full names, and, if possible, photographs. It makes the testimonials more powerful and believable.

The Seventh Element: Call to Action

Finally, now this is where it all comes together.

Here's a funny thing about us humans: we have a horror of looking foolish, most of us. And in situations where we aren't fully confident, and don't have really clear directions, or someone leading the way, most of us won't take a step, in any direction!

The first six elements are helping someone to make the right decision. Now this seventh element helps them to act on that decision.

What action do you want them to take at the end of the page? This question may seem obvious, but you would be surprised how many people just don't get clarity about the next step.

There are basically two options for which action you could have them take.

Option One: [Click here to order now.](#)

This is simply the option when they get to the bottom of the page, and you say, "If you're ready to buy, click here to order." For any products,

and for some classes, this is the option you want to use.

To use this option, you will need some kind of what is called a ‘shopping cart.’ A shopping cart is simply a service, similar to the autoresponder service, that allows visitors to purchase through your website.

Anytime you’ve been on a website, with a ‘buy now’ button, and a way to enter credit card information to take your payment, you’ve interacted with a shopping cart.

These days shopping cart services seem to be fairly easy and straightforward to deal with. The one I use currently is called 1shoppingcart:

<http://www.1shoppingcart.com/app/default.asp?pr=1&id=61926>

As with the Aweber service, this is an affiliate link, meaning if you click through and purchase their service, I get a commission. I’ve been satisfied with their service, it works. If affiliate links bother you, feel free to just type in www.1shoppingcart.com into your browser, and you’ll end up in the same place.

Other options besides 1shoppingcart include:

<http://www.paypal.com>

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

Both of these services are relatively straight-forward to use, and easy to set up.

Option Two: Fill out the application below.

Here’s where I finally answer the question I posed before I began explaining the seven elements, regarding how to use a landing page with a custom offer.

If it’s a higher-priced service or product, in many cases it’s better to have the person fill out an “application” or “inquiry” form. Once they fill that out, they are inviting you to engage with them. Now you can complete the sale in a conversation.

If you take care in creating the application questions, your visitor can get a real sense of what your offer will help him with, just by the questions you ask him to engage with.

Here’s a tip– for the last question in the application, always ask: “Are you ready to sign up now? Or do you have any questions that you need to ask?”

If you include this question, your visitor has the option of letting you know they are ready to go. This way you understand where they are in their readiness, and you can have an appropriate conversation with them. Sometimes, if someone writes to me that they are ready to go, I don’t even have to have a big conversation– an email with a link to the shopping cart payment seems to work fine.

You can use this ‘application’ approach even with the ‘buy now’ option. Include a form at the end after the ‘buy now’ link, asking for their name, their email and “If you have any questions, just ask!” I’ve found that over 90% of the visitors who ask a question, end up buying!”

IS THERE MORE?

You bet there’s more. But start here. You can get results from implementing the action steps here, and experimenting with them.

If you want to go further, you may want to take advantage of the Heart-Centered Copywriting Course:

<http://www.heartofbusiness.com/copywriting>

As examples, you may want to check out a few of my product and service pages. These four pages, together, have done the bulk of the work in generating well over six figures in a year.

EXAMPLES OF SUCCESSFUL LANDING PAGES:

<http://www.heartofbusiness.com/thebook>

<http://www.heartofbusiness.com/websites>

<http://www.heartofbusiness.com/copywriting>

<http://www.heartofbusiness.com/money/transformationaljourney.htm>

<http://www.heartofbusiness.com/marketing/focusonmarketing.htm>

<http://www.heartofbusiness.com/obdp>

Here’s a useful exercise: print out one of these pages, and go through and see if you can identify:

- The questions I’m answering.
- The action I’m asking for.
- Elements of marketing syntax.
- The different questions the testimonials are answering.

Then, do the same thing for your own product or service. Experiment, have fun, and never forget that you are in service to your customers.

It’s easy to get caught up in the details, but keep remembering that you are offering your product or service because it’s genuinely helpful, perhaps even revolutionary, for your customers and clients. If you write your pages from an intention of generosity, service and support, and answer their questions, then people will respond.

Going Live

Designing and Launching Your Website

I'm going to be honest with you: If you don't have dozens and dozens of hours to spare, and you don't love technology, then you are going to be better off hiring a web designer to get your site up for you.

The truth is, if you have someone helping you who is really good, and you have the content written aside from minor editing, it's possible to have a really effective website up in one to two weeks, without a lot of fanfare. If you are comfortable and committed to doing it on your own, it will take longer, depending on how quickly you learn.

A good designer will walk you through everything, make it simple and straightforward, and set you up so that you don't have to go to them for every little change. And, you *will* be making changes. . .

So, what I'm going to do here is give you some design tips and resources. Whether you decide to design your own site, or hire someone to do it for you, you'll be headed in the right direction, towards people and products I trust.

WHAT IS A WEBSITE, AND HOW DOES IT WORK?

Many people have a lot of confusion about website technology, thinking it's complicated, when it's really very simple. For instance, on your computer right now, your files are organized into folders. And let's

say you have some articles you've written, and you've saved them all in a single folder.

That's what a website is. Somewhere in the world, there is a computer. And that computer has a folder with documents in it, graphics and text. That's all a website is, really.

When you use a web browser, like Safari, Mozilla, or Explorer, you generally type in or click on a URL (which stands for "Uniform Resource Locator"). This URL merely points to that folder I was just describing, somewhere in the world, on a computer, where the documents are for that website. In theory, editing a website can be as easy as editing a letter you've written on your computer.

EFFECTIVE WEBSITE DESIGN

Two things slow down the launching of the website: design and content. Earlier sections of this book covered the Basic Eight pages. The length of time it will take you to create that content is reflective of how much clarity you have about your business. If you already have your Customer-Focused Story, you can probably write your Basic Eight in a couple of weeks, or less.

Once you have your Customer-Focused Story, you don't need to linger over content for months. But do give yourself some reasonable amount of time for the creative process.

Now let's talk about design.

Remember the purpose of your website: to create a relationship with the right people, connecting with their hearts, and helping them feel safe enough to take the next step in their Journey with your business.

The design, meaning the physical layout and "look" of your website is very important, but not exactly as you might imagine. In considering a website, you have probably sweated it out over how it looks— is it beautiful or striking? Does it truly reflect who I am? Is it exciting and eye-catching?

With this kind of anxiety and attention to detail, many websites end up dressed like the models on a Paris fashion show runway— outlandish costumes that look striking and (sometimes) beautiful, but wearing clothes that are impractical, overdressed, or sometimes simply wrong for the everyday job of greeting visitors and helping them get what they need.

If this is your first or second serious stab at creating a website for your business, I want to ease your worry about what it looks like, and let you know you don't have to sweat so much over getting dressed up so fancy. For most websites, the equivalent of a simple shirt or blouse with a nice

pair of slacks or skirt will do very well.

Besides, as your business grows and develops, you will tweak and change your website. Heart of Business changed website designs four times in six years. Bear in mind that what you are doing isn't permanent, so don't worry— as your business grows and becomes more successful, you'll have more resources to develop the website of your dreams.

For now, let's just get your website dressed, heart-centered, and ready to connect your business to the world.

WHAT IS YOUR VISITOR LOOKING FOR?

Your website is a part of your business. This means that it's dedicated to the same thing your business is: helping certain people who are facing a certain kind of problem, challenge or need. This means that the visitors to your site are looking for something.

It's important to understand this. You don't need to entertain them. Imagine showing up at a friend's house to eat. You've worked all day, you're hungry, and you've been looking forward to dinner. Yet, once you arrive, they keep you waiting for three hours while they pull out family home movies, or their wedding album. It's not that you wouldn't eventually like to see those things, but first, can we have dinner, please?

Save the home movies: big fancy graphics, slide shows, animation, all of that, for later. You want clean, straightforward, simple, non-confusing. Here's the table, here's where you sit down. Here's your fork, knife, a glass of bubbly, and your plate full of food. Please sit down and enjoy yourself. By all means have elegant china, silverware, and napkins if you like. But don't forget that the food you are serving is really what your site is all about.

If you understand this, it will save you hours of agony over design.

DESIGN BASICS: COLOR

Color is a very, very tricky thing on the web, and this is because hardly anyone's screens display the same color in the same way. One color can look like lavender on one screen, bright pink on another, and positively gray on a third. It's very frustrating.

This is why it's better not to be too risky with color on the web. The day is coming where color displays will be more dependable and standardized, and web designers everywhere will breathe a huge sigh of relief when that happens. Until then, don't get too fancy with color.

Pick two or three main colors that complement each other. Start by looking around in your life, and seeing the colors that help you feel comfortable, that feel like you.

Then, go on the web and look around. See if you can find websites that use colors that are similar to the ones you've chosen, and see what they look like on screen. You may be surprised, colors that you thought looked fabulous, may not look so good on a website. And a color that you ordinarily don't like, may come across as very pleasing.

I used a dark blue on my first site, but it ended up looking miserable. After I received enough feedback from folks, I finally surrendered, and changed the color. Don't let your attachment to a particular color blind you to how your visitors are experiencing your site.

DESIGN BASICS: ELEMENTS

Elements are merely things. A logo is an element. A headline is an element. A photo is an element. Too many elements, and your page will be confusing, cluttered, crowded.

This happens more quickly than you think. Three elements is your maximum. It doesn't give you a lot to play with, but here's a trick: an element is defined physically, not conceptually. So even though a graphic logo and a tagline are conceptually two different things, if you put them REALLY close together, they form a single element to the eye.

Example:  Love!

You see how your eye takes in the heart, and then goes to take in the text? Two elements. Now, take a look at this:

Example: 

Now, do you notice how your eye takes in the heart and "love" all at once? One element. Things can be closer and more cozy than you think.

DESIGN BASICS: TEXT

With text, you have three things to consider- **color**, **size**, and **Font**.

Everything I said about color applies to text, but more so. Many of us are passionately attached to colored fonts on fun backgrounds. I like them, too- they are really fun to use. Except, they aren't so easy to read. There are a few exceptions to the rule, but, in general, use black text on a white background. It's simply the easiest to read. If you go away from this,

be exceptionally careful not to exchange readability for fun. ‘Exceptionally careful’ in this case means get someone else’s opinion, someone who doesn’t mind disagreeing with you.

You can use some color for emphasis, but be careful how much. Generally just pick one font color for emphasis, maybe a red because it stands out, and use it very sparingly. Steer clear of using blue for text or for emphasis, because everyone on the web has been trained to expect blue text to mean that it’s a link to another webpage.

SIZE MATTERS WITH TEXT

Most web designers are twenty-something. And depending on your business, many of your best customers may well be over 40. When you’re over 40, you may find yourself buying reading glasses. But, when you’re twenty-something, reading glasses are for old-fogeys.

If your eyesight is good, the best font size may be a bit larger than you feel comfortable with. I upgraded my website, and it was in every way better than the last. Except my parents hated it.

It took a lot of questions and coaxing, because they didn’t understand why themselves, until my mom said, “Your old site was darker.” Not darker—the fonts were bigger! I upped the font size, and asked again. They loved it. “Much better. How did you make it darker?” Not darker... bigger!

Font choice is another place where you may have to wrestle with your ego. We fall in love with fancy fonts that have PERSONALITY. Unfortunately, similar with color and size, ‘fancy’ often means ‘unreadable.’

Even more challenging, most fancy fonts are not distributed universally. Your webpage doesn’t actually deliver the font to your visitors, it merely tells your visitor’s computer to use such-and-such a font. So, if you pick a fancy font like this:

“We’re here to help committed golfers enjoy the game by improving their swing!”

Your visitor’s computer, which probably doesn’t have that font, may display it like this:

“We’re here to help committed golfers enjoy the game by improving their swing!”

or like this:

“We’re here to help committed golfers enjoy the game by improving their swing!”

Ugh!

The two safest fonts to use are Georgia:

“We’re here to help committed golfers enjoy the game by improving their swing!”

and Verdana.

“We’re here to help committed golfers enjoy the game by improving their swing!”

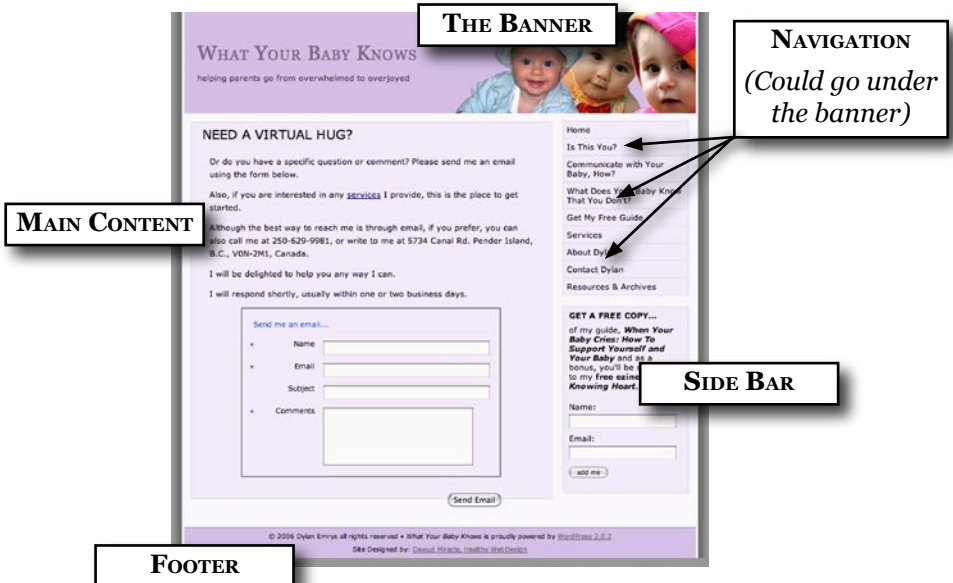
These two fonts were specifically designed to be easy to read on-screen, and nearly everyone has them on their computer already.

THE ELEMENTS OF A WEBSITE

At its simplest, which is where I advise you to start or restart, there are only five elements that make up a successful webpage:

Yes, that layout looks just like many other websites you’ve seen. That’s okay. In this case, you don’t want to be different from the crowd with some unique site layout.

Why avoid unique design layouts? Many websites look the same structurally- and so do human beings. You don’t have to look at the back



of someone's knees to find their eyes. People know how to connect with each other more easily in part because of structural similarities.

Your visitor has been trained to expect certain conventions in web design, so they can find what they are looking for. Don't play a guessing game with them by creating some outlandishly creative and confusing design.

THE FIRST THING THEY SEE: THE BANNER

The banner is what you see at the top of the website. Let's ask the obvious question: what is a banner supposed to do for your website?

The purpose of the banner is to help your visitor:

1. understand immediately what the website is about so he knows immediately whether he is in the right place or not;
2. feel confident and safe that this is a solid business, and not a fly-by-night operation out of someone's garage;
3. see some of your personality, and allowing your visitor to connect with you and your business to some extent.

Without understanding these clear intentions for a banner, it's easy to get distracted and think the banner is supposed to 'grab your attention and hold it' or 'attract you in.'

You don't want a banner so ugly that your visitor has to turn his screen off. Yet, the truth is that once he has arrived at your website, there isn't any other competition in the browser window. Your website is the only one there at that moment. You don't have to resort to any strange acrobatics or animation to catch and hold his attention.

If you get caught trying to make your banner do these kinds of things, then your banner starts doing exactly what you don't want it to do:

1. You don't want the banner to constantly draw your eye. You want people engaged with your content, not your banner.
2. You don't want your banner to confuse your visitor. You want a clear message on it, not clever, but clear.

When a new visitor comes, you want the spotlight on him. On your about page, you can show all kinds of photos and personalities. But, in the beginning, you want the spotlight entirely on them. And the banner is always there, at the beginning of the new person's visit,

To do these three things, you need: clear, straight-forward, non-confusing. Here are my recommendations for a good banner:

A simple graphic or photo, the name of your business, and your Who

and What statement. If you want to get slightly fancy, you can add some simple navigation (links to other pages) on the right hand side, but you generally will only need this if your site is more complex than your average site. Your designer can help make it beautiful, within these simple structures.

There. You're done with the banner. That wasn't so hard, was it?

NAVIGATION: WHERE AM I AND WHERE AM I GOING?

Navigation is how your visitor gets from one page to the other. The Navigation Bar is simply a horizontal or vertical strip of buttons that link to other pages on your site.

Again, think of your visitors. In the earlier part of this book where I discussed content, I talked about the order of pages, and how to link them: Home links to Is This You links to How It Works links to the Last Ditch page and they all link to the Sign-Up Page.

In your navigation bar, list the pages in this order. Put the Services and About Me pages further along in the Navigation Bar.

Also, don't get fancy with your titles. You may think "Everyone has an Is This You? page, I'm going to get clever and call it something else." It's fine to do that, but only if what you pick is completely obvious and requires no thinking or guesswork on your visitor's part.

A variation of Is This You? which can work is "Who We Help." It's not as powerful, because it mentions "We" and not "You." But at least it's clear.

A variation that does not work is "Mars and Other Planets." Your mind may think it's obvious- if you feel like you are from Mars or another planet, we can help you. But, your visitor won't make that leap.

What about submenus?

Submenus are when you have more than one level of navigation. For instance, you've probably been on a site where you put your cursor over "Products and Services" and suddenly a whole list of options pops up.

Submenus are fine, and can be a great help to your visitor. By staying out of the way at first, the navigation bar looks clean and straight forward. But, when your visitor needs more, POP, the options come up. It's a great thing.

If you do use submenus, the general rule of thumb is to make sure it doesn't take more than two clicks to get to any particular page on your website.

Products/Services- the first click. Then, to read all about the Tweeners DVD/workbook product- the second click. And you have arrived. Two clicks.

THE SIDEBAR

The sidebar is a very useful, more narrow column of content, to either the right or the left of the main content box. Why is it so useful?

When someone visits your website, you are wanting to do two things at the same time. The first is to keep the message as clear and straightforward as possible, without distractions.

However, you have other things you want to tell them. The sidebar, because it's more narrow, and it's off to the side, gives the visual clue that "Here's some other stuff that's good to look at, but don't let it distract you from the main conversation we're having right now."

There are a few different things you can include in the sidebar. One is **testimonials**. Always include the person's name and either location, or other identifying tag, like their website or business name and title. It's also really useful to include a small photo of their face, which lends credibility and builds trust.

Another thing you can have is links to **time-sensitive announcements**, such as one or two upcoming special classes, or products with a time limit of some sort on it.

If I were you, I would put testimonials closer to the top, and any other announcements lower. As I explained in the section on Products and Services, you don't want to try and sell a new visitor too quickly. What you really want at first is to get them into the Basic Eight pages which will get them to the sign-up page.

However, it can be useful to have a link to an upcoming offer, for example if they were referred by a friend about that offer in particular. You don't want someone feeling frustrated who comes to your site trying to find something. You want it to be understandable, non-neoned, but present.

The sidebar can also contain the navigation bar, if you like. One advantage to having the navigation here is that each link has more space to stretch out, so you can use longer labels. A disadvantage to having the navigation bar on the side is that you are using up valuable space that could be filled with connecting content, such as testimonials and those offers we were just talking about.

THE MAIN CONTENT

Remember all the time we spent on the Basic Eight pages, and how important they are? Because the Basic Eight is the primary conversation you are having with your visitor, those pages get the main stage.

Have you ever had a conversation with someone when, behind you, there were all kinds of interesting things going on? Police cars rushing past

the window, the television playing some action movie. How much attention is your friend really giving you with all of that right behind you?

The main content should not be distracted by anything going on in the other sections. The content of the banner and the sidebar should have good manners, and sit there patiently until your visitor wants to look at them.

Similarly, it's good sense to put a solid border around the main content area, so your visitor's eyes don't easily ping-pong out of the text. Obviously you aren't trying to glue them to you— you are just wanting to minimize distractions so your visitor can relax into a conversation with you.

Other pointers that help: Keep the column width narrow enough so that the eye can easily scan across it without too much movement. And, I've already talked about keeping the background color simple, usually white, with no distracting patterns behind the text. Use a generous margin of white space around your content so when your visitor starts a line or ends a line their eyes don't catch another element and get pulled away from your content.

Clear. Distinct. Easy to find. Easy to read.

THE FOOTER

This is a very simple element, and its main purpose is to create a visual boundary at the bottom of the page. When your visitor is reading your page, she's scrolling slightly as she's reading. If her peripheral vision takes in the fact that there is a footer, she knows where the page ends, and doesn't have to worry about how long it's going on for.

You do want to put some basic information in the footer. Full contact information for your business, with the sole exception of your email address, to avoid the evil spam 'bots I talked about earlier. Remember, the evil spam 'bots roam the internet, harvesting emails from websites in order to sell them to spammers. Give your visitor your phone number and mailing address, and give them a link to your contact page.

Also, you want to put a copyright notice in your footer. A simple "©2004-2006 Your Name, all rights reserved" works just fine. You'll be pleased to learn that in order to copyright content, that's all you need to do. No need to register it anywhere, or send it to the Library of Congress for US citizens, or anything else. Just a copyright notice, and it's yours.

You may also want to put your web designers information there, if you were happy with the work she or he did.

Some people put in what are called 'Quick Links.' This is a simple list of the most frequently used links on your website, to save your visitor the

trouble of scrolling up back up to your navigation bar.

I tend to discourage quick links. They aren't a horrible thing to do, but remember you are wanting to send your reader in a certain direction. Each of your Basic Eight pages have specific recommendations and links at the bottom.

Offering Quick Links in the footer, is kind of like spending 20 minutes with your nephew while he decides whether he wants chocolate or strawberry ice cream. And then, just as he decides, you offer him 20 additional flavors, and start the decision process all over again.

CHOOSING A DOMAIN NAME

A 'domain name' is what shows up after the 'http://www.' in every website address. For instance, in 'http://www.heartofbusiness.com', 'heartofbusiness.com' is the domain name.

The domain consists of a unique name, followed by one of the designated suffixes: .com, .net, .org, .name, .biz, and any of many others. Before we discuss how to choose a domain name, let's think about how domain names get used.

You are probably aware of billboards, magazine ads, and television promotions that list website addresses. The people responsible for this type of advertising are hoping you will see the website address, remember it, and then go type it in to your browser.

Do *you* remember web addresses and type them in? When was the last time you did? It doesn't happen that often.

What's more, is your business going to be on billboards, magazine ads, or on television? Maybe someday, but probably not right now.

How do you find your way to most websites? I'm going to bet that you get to the majority of them in one of two ways: a friend or colleague emails you the link, or you find a link to a website on Google or on another website. Did you actually memorize, or have to spell the web address? No, you didn't.

You can relax a little about the importance of your domain name. It is important, but not as all-fire mortally important as you might have thought.

The main characteristics of a good domain name are that it is easy to remember, easy to spell, and not too long. How long is too long? When it becomes easier to miss-spell.

Another thing to watch for is if someone else has a domain name that is close to yours. These two domains, www.awesomegolf.com and www.awesome-golf.com are uncomfortably close, and can easily cause confusion for your visitors.

It can seem as if all the good domain names are gone, but be assured, they aren't. A little creativity, and you can find one that fits you and your business.

Remember, when you're choosing a name, it doesn't need to be so literal to your business. I was part of a discussion recently where a friend of mine and his wife were choosing a name for their healing clinic. They had a long list of possible names, but the one we all jumped on was "Two Frogs Healing Clinic."

It turns out that they had a frog, and his wife had suggested, "Well, the frog needs a friend." Thus, two frogs. Ribbit ribbit. Memorable, easy to spell, and there's a good business and domain name.

So, if you get stuck, get some friends, and do a wild brainstorm. Don't work too hard at it. Just notice what pops out.

When you decide on a domain name, you need to register it, so that no one else can use it. To register a domain name shouldn't cost you more than \$10 or \$15 a year. Two sites that sell domain name registration are:

<http://www.dotster.com>

<http://www.godaddy.com>

They are both reliable and have decent prices.

CHOOSING A WEB HOST

Choosing a good webhost can be a little trickier. What should be an affordable and straight-forward service has become complicated because many people are unfamiliar with the technical aspects of webhosting.

I'm not going to go into detail about webhosts. I have a couple of recommendations, based on the one that I've used for years, and the one that my web designer trusts. They are both very affordable, have a lot of functionality, and great support if something goes wrong.

<http://www.westhost.com>

<http://www.dreamhost.com>

They are many, many webhost companies out there. Any of the reputable ones will come with lots of storage space, many functions and applications you can install, some of which you won't even understand what they are for because they deal with how different advanced applications are programmed on the web.

One thing you want to be sure of is that they have good support. If your website ever has a problem it can be nightmare. It's such a helpless

feeling because you are totally dependent on these other people, on the other side of a phone line, to put things right.

Things happen. The important part is the support. Make sure the webhost has 24-hour support. And not just online support, but pick up the phone and talk to a human being who can fix your problem while you are talking to them kind of support.

For basic business site hosting, you should pay about US\$8 to \$16/month, and not much more. Also, don't let them sell you some expensive 'ecommerce package.'

If choosing a web host is at all confusing to you, then your web designer can help you out. There are so many ways a decent web designer can help you.

THE BIGGEST CHOICE: CHOOSING IF, AND WHICH, WEB DESIGNER

I know for many of you choosing a web designer can be like me choosing a car mechanic. You see, for whatever reason, I totally missed the point of the whole 'guys fascinated with cars' thing. I never really cared about cars.

When I was a paramedic, and we would go on scene for a car accident, it was pretty common to have a firefighter come up to us and say, "We need you at the '92 Chevy SomeCarName'." I would then ask, "Do you mean the red car, or the blue pickup."

With a disgusted look, the firefighter would point in the direction of the car he was talking about. I was hopeless. Still am.

As a consequence, I don't know a lot about how cars operate. If I take a car into the shop, a mechanic can talk rings around me and I wouldn't know it. It's really important to me that I have a mechanic that I can trust, who will be honest, and explain what's needed and why. Thank goodness we found a mechanic like that.

If you aren't familiar with all the web technical stuff, if letters like CSS, HTML, SSI, CMS, PHP, and PERL mean very little to you, you need a web designer like the mechanic we found.

A good, trustworthy web designer is worth their weight in gold. I almost don't want to tell you about my web designer, because I want him available to help me, and not get so busy that I can't get on his schedule. But to be fair to you and him, I will tell you about him. First, though, let's talk about designers in general, because there are many other good designers out there.

With literally thousands of web designers to choose from, how do you judge? Web designers seem to come in a few different flavors. Let me describe some of the flavors I've seen.

The Techno-geek

The Techno-geek is someone who knows the technical aspects inside and out. Those letters I listed earlier are just the very basics to this person. If you are reasonably comfortable with technology, and you understand thoroughly the marketing model I've been teaching here, you can safely hire someone like this, especially for advanced functionality in your website.

If you aren't technologically saavy, or the marketing aspect is new to you, watch out for designers who seem mostly interested in the technology, and have trouble explaining aspects of web design in a way that you can easily understand it.

The Artist

The Artist loves bringing beauty to the web. He or she has a real flair for manipulating photos, even doing subtle animation, and perhaps even translating the feel of your business into visual terms on the web.

The problem is that the Artist is an artist, and may not fully understand business or marketing. They may also be more interested in your authentic look, and sacrifice readability, or usability for some unique design.

If you are thoroughly comfortable with the marketing model I've outlined here, and have real clarity about what you are looking for, an Artist can make your site beautiful. This is true especially if you have the clarity to reel the Artist in when art gets in the way of effectiveness.

If you're unclear or don't think you'd have the confidence to stop someone even if they had 'done it this way a million times,' then don't hire the Artist.

The Student (alternatively: The Kid Next Door)

Many people choose to go this route, and for good reason. It's often someone they know, maybe even your kid. The Student will do it for very little money, sometimes free (especially if they are living under your roof.)

Things to watch out for: A Student may be interested in practicing the latest thing he or she has learned, instead of making your site effective. A Student may have a lot of competing interests, and may disappear for weeks at time when a new girlfriend/boyfriend-sports season-exam week-spring break takes their attention.

Finally, the relationship you have with the Student may not be a professional one. Meaning, if they are doing something you don't like, because they are doing it for free or low cost, you may not feel empowered enough to ask for what you need.

If you have a clear and honest relationship with your Student, if he or she is responsible and able to follow through, and if he or she is willing to read your copy of this book and follow your directions around strategy and content, then a Student is an excellent choice.

Professional Web Design Firm

A professional web design firm can be a good choice. Their prices will be higher, but, if they have their act together, they will be super available to take care of you.

But, beware! There are many Professional Firms who, in their attempt to make things easy on themselves, make you entirely dependent on them. Before you hire any professional firm, make sure that you have complete independence on content updates, and that there is no monthly retainer, or ongoing service charge higher than the webhosting and web-domain fees I listed.

Also, some designers want to hold onto the copyright of your site design. At first glance this may seem reasonable. But, if you decide you want to stop using them, and go to someone else in the future, you have to start over from scratch, because they own your site.

Not a good situation.

In an effort to sum all of this up, here are some characteristics to look for, and characteristics to avoid in your designer.

Characteristics of a Designer You Can Work With

- Speaks about technology in plain, easy-to-understand language.
- Understands small business marketing and is willing to keep learning.
- Primary attention is always on the results the website produces.
- Dedicated to making you self-sufficient for content changes.
- Offers you a package price, rather than charging by the hour, except for special jobs, or add-ons.
- Has a track record of producing websites that get results.
- You ‘click’ with them. You enjoy talking with them.
- They don’t get flustered when you hit overwhelm about technology, deadlines, or feeling vulnerable about going live with your site.
- Is familiar with autoresponders, and how the rest of your business can interface with your website.
- Committed to you having ‘portability.’ Meaning, you can take the site to someone else down the road if you want.

Characteristics That You Should Avoid At All Costs

- Expensive Monthly Retainers
- The Designer retaining any copyrights on your site (except for proprietary applications they may have written— which shouldn't interfere with you having portability to go to another designer later.)
- Dependency on the Designer for content changes.
- Refusal or inability to explain technical terms in easy-to-understand language.
- Lack of experience with marketing or business.

I know I've given you a lot of cautions and a lot to look for. That's mainly because I've come across so many websites that my clients had prior to working with me that just weren't effective, or they were hamstrung and unable to make any changes. Very frustrating.

But take heart, it's not that serious! It's a fact of life that unless your business is very developed and you've been online successfully for awhile, chances are that your business will go through three or four or five site redesigns over a handful of years.

This means that whatever isn't perfect, will be better the next go-around. Although we've covered a lot of ground in this book, the essential strategies and content that will make your website successful aren't that complicated, and so your average good, good-hearted designer will do a fine job for you.

IS THERE MORE?

There is always more, grasshopper. I learn more every week, it seems, because the world wide web is evolving at a very rapid rate.

There will be a lot of alluring siren calls out there. What about blogs? What about YouTube and video-casting? Sure, there are benefits to all of that, and I encourage you to explore them.

But, don't let them pull you off the basic essentials of strategy, connection, and heart-centering that I've outlined here. Stick to the basics, and your website will grow your business.

THE WORLD IS YOUR WEB

One of the most solid steps you can take with your business is giving it an effective website. So, what are you waiting for?

WEB DESIGN RESOURCES

Reluctantly, and jealously, I'm going to give you the name of my web designer. Why do I like him so much? Check him out:

DAWUD MIRACLE, HEALTHY WEB DESIGN

<http://www.healthywebdesign.com>

Dawud designed my latest site, and I love him and his work. He's a client and a friend and a gifted Sufi healer, as well as an extremely experienced and passionate web designer.

The gift of his work is that he works exclusively with small businesses who really love what they do; he has done a tremendous amount of study into what makes a website truly usable and easy to navigate (which means it's more effective); and, because of his training as a healer, he is incredibly patient and compassionate with any technology overwhelm you may have.

Whether you have an advanced, complex site, or a new one, he'll get you up and going, affordably. Tell him I sent ya.

SITE BUILD IT

<http://www.sitebuildit.com>

To be perfectly honest, I've never used this resource. But, I've heard such consistently good things from so many people I respect, I feel I would be remiss in not mentioning it. It's a web-based resource package that helps you build your own site. From what I understand, their advice uses a slightly different content model than I offer here, but their package won't keep you from following my advice.

Go forth and enjoy!

The Most Powerful Attractor

Like the setting on a ring

We've covered a lot of territory over the last hundred pages. A client of mine who saw the rough draft told me, "There was nothing in here that I threw away, or that wasn't important."

And yet if you try to implement it all at once, you may find yourself overwhelmed. So let me remind you about the core of effective marketing: your heart.

Your heart has a Jewel in it, a unique way that your being expresses Truth and Love and Source. Everyone has a Jewel, and there are similarities. But each and every one of us on this planet is unique, and the uniqueness is because our Jewel is unique.

Your Jewel is unique. It carries qualities that other people are thirsty for. This is part of what will save us as a human race, if anything will: that we need the love and qualities that each of us carries, and we can afford to leave no one out.

This Jewel is the most powerful attractor in your business. If anyone has ever said to you, "As soon as I heard about you, I don't know why, but I knew I had to work with you," they were experiencing your Jewel in action. If you've ever suddenly had a good day, and then the phone started ringing with clients and customers for no reason, then you've experienced your Jewel in action.

This website that you are building, or rebuilding, is like the setting on a ring. It can show off your Jewel to advantage. There are settings that help to show off the shiniest parts of a jewel, and there are settings that

block the brightest facets from shining. Similarly, some websites are more effective than others.

But never forget that the website is not the attractor: your heart is the attractor.

Let me repeat that: without your heart, even if the website is perfect, it's just an empty shell. If you find a ring with a perfect setting, but the Jewel is missing, do you wear the ring? Or do you cry out that the Jewel has gone missing?

All of what I'm teaching you is meant to help show off your Jewel. But, being human, you can probably fall prey to the same thing I do: getting caught up in the mechanics and strategies, and forgetting the true reason why we're doing all of this.

Please, do whatever you can do to remind yourself of your heart, and the hearts of the people you are here to help. Don't fall into the 'strategy is king' trap. Without your heart, your website is an empty husk.

Let me share with you words from my Sufi sheikh, Sidi al Jamal:

“What are you searching for? Search for your heart, the heart of your soul. All the secrets are in the heart of your soul. Everything is inside you. You have many hearts, yet all these are one. When I say many hearts, I mean many stations of the heart. In every station there is a garden with a quality. Know the meaning of this quality in every station. It may be the garden of the polite, the garden of giving or the garden of the love.

What you see are many gardens inside you. You can 'be' the holy word if you know everything that I see inside you. You are very holy. Know this!” (from *Music of the Soul*)

I have to admit that I do love business. It's like a game, and it's very fun, once you get the hang of it. I hope that you learn to have fun in business.

But, the deep truth is that's not why I work in business. There is no corner of this world that does not need the light of love to shine on it. Because you, like me, are dedicated to helping people and being of service, because you do want to make a profit, but your main motivation is to make a real difference in the world.

Because of this, let's keep reminding each other of what's truly important.

In the words of Mother Teresa, “No one can do great things, one can only do small things with great love.”

I have great love in my heart as I offer you this small thing on how to make a better website for your business. I am delighted when I think of the great love that you are bringing to the small thing of your own business and its website. And thus, we will inspire each other more strongly towards love, with every step we take.

The flap of my tent is always open for you. Please reach out and ask any question, or just say 'Hi.' How to reach me? Well, I do have a Contact page on my website... ;-)

peace upon you
Mark

Perfection is a quality of the Divine.

And I'm only human. Although I have edited through this work-book, and it has been distributed widely, bugs, problems, mistakes, typos, and all sorts of things can slip through despite my best efforts.

If you have a question, issue, find a problem or what looks like a mistake, let me know! It's only through each other that we can hope to experience the true Essence of the Divine, and, in the process, produce excellence.

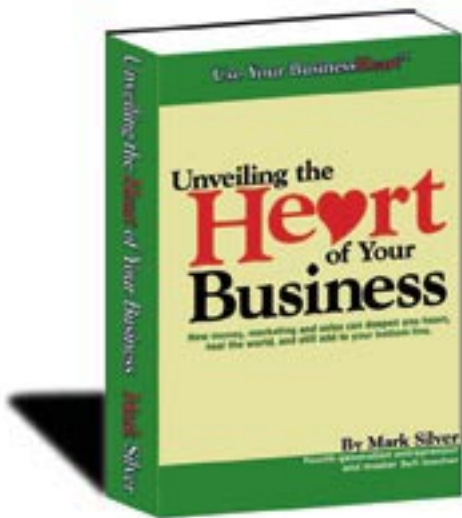
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But wait, there's more...

The Sufis have a saying: "Be the earth for your brothers and sisters. Hold them up as they walk their path." This is something we do for each other, because none of us is self-sufficient.

If this book inspired you, and you want more, I would love to be the earth for you. Here are some of the ways we can work together:

The Heart of Money Transformational Journey™

In eight 90-minute sessions over four months, you can transform your relationship with your finances, forever. When you are ready to finally have a healthy, abundant relationship with your finances, join me for this Transformational Journey™.

📅 10/15, 11/12, 12/9, 1/6, 2/3, 3/1, 3/22, 3/29, 4/5, 4/12

Opening the Moneyflow: Focus on Marketing™

Marketing can be enjoyable, authentic, full of integrity, and effective. This class will take you there. Join a dynamic group of like-minded business people, led with expert facilitation and guidance.

📅 10/15, 11/12, 12/9, 1/6, 2/3, 3/1, 3/22, 3/29, 4/5, 4/12

The Organic Business Development Program™

Direct. Personal. Rapid. Individual, customized program to develop and grow your business, organically, without trampling on your heart.

📅 10/15, 11/12, 12/9, 1/6, 2/3, 3/1, 3/22, 3/29, 4/5, 4/12

Does Your Group Need A Presenter?

Do you need a lively, engaged speaker with a ton of experience, who can easily integrate an accessible yet profound spiritual approach with down-to-earth practical business skills? Keynotes, breakout sessions, tele-conference calls. Contact me, and we can talk:

📅 10/15, 11/12, 12/9, 1/6, 2/3, 3/1, 3/22, 3/29, 4/5, 4/12



About the Author

Mark Silver, author of *Unveiling the Heart of Your Business*, is a fourth-generation entrepreneur, all the way back to his great-grandmother who ran a stocking factory in turn-of-the-century Poland. Running businesses is in his blood.

After several careers, including running a magazine, a distribution business, a graphic design firm, and running around on an ambulance as a paramedic, his spiritual journey connected with his journey in business, and he now integrates more than 5000 years of spiritual tradition with down-to-earth business practices.

Since 1999, he has worked with hundreds of entrepreneurs, self-employed, and small business owners, in the areas of money, marketing, systems, and just plain doing well in business. His writing and teachings are followed by people in small businesses around the globe.

One of his earliest forays into business systems was a meticulous inventory of his Hallowe'en candy at age 8. The upside was that it prevented previously untraceable loss (his parents could no longer sneak chocolate.) The downside was that he was more attached to counting than to eating, and still had some candy, long since stale, remaining next August.

When he isn't involved with spiritual business healing, he loves spending time with his wife, Holly, who is also his best friend, and usually there is a cat or two around. When he gets out from behind the screen of his iMac, he's either baking in the kitchen, on his bicycle, or on the golf course— his latest maddening hobby that he's loving or hating, depending on his swing. On Sunday nights you can find him making Remembrance with a bunch of other oddly-dressed Sufis.

He invites you to share what Heart of Business™ has given you, by recommending the free excerpt of this book, *Getting to the Core of Your Business™*, to your friends and colleagues. They can find it online:

<http://www.heartofbusiness.com>

WHEN YOU WANT TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE,
BUT NEED TO MAKE A PROFIT.™