

The Holy Grail

By Bob Osgoodby

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Can you make money on the Web? If you listen to the people selling bulk email addresses, you are sure of it. In the cold light of day however, the only people making money from this operation are the people selling the addresses. But the unsuspecting queue up and plop down their hard earned cash only to find that 15 million people really aren't interested in buying their program.

So where are they going wrong? They may not have a product or service that is of interest to anyone, let alone 15 million. But the hucksters who promote this, compare it to a "scatter gun" and say you will "hit" some prospects. "One tenth of one percent", they claim, "could bring you hundreds of thousands of dollars".

A cursory examination of the web will reveal numerous programs that consist primarily of people trying to sell something that they got hooked on. Basically they are trying to recover their money by finding other suckers that are just as dumb as they were.

Are there good programs on the web? Sure, but for goodness sake, use some common sense. Just because it is on the web doesn't make it an automatic money generator. You have to have a product, service or opportunity that will pass the basic credibility test. If people don't think it is a good deal, they will simply "click away".

Who is making money on the web?

Unless you have very deep pockets, like the big guys, forget the national rollouts. These guys sink millions in their web sites, and for every one that succeeds, ten fail - and these guys have deep pockets. If you can't afford to open a Walmart as a traditional business, what makes you think you can compete with them on the web? They have advertisements for their web site on prime time TV, in magazines and during the summer, on banners towed behind airplanes.

But there are people making money - they have found their "niche market". So what is your niche? Is there something that you know a lot about, or can you produce a product of interest.

If you want to make a living on the internet, you must find your niche. How about informational products? These cost little to produce and can be a profitable enterprise. While it helps if you have some writing ability, there are plenty of others who do, and might be amenable to bundling their

products for you to sell.

One of the things that always frustrates someone who does have a product, is the lack of time to sell it. Why not approach a few people who do have a good product, and offer to have them represent them for a piece of the action? Someone who has an existing "mall" might be a good candidate. Since you will be controlling the delivery of the "goods", it will be pretty hard for them "beat" you out of the money due.

Everyday someone tries to sell me something. If I get two or three offers from them in a row, I immediately create a filter in my email program to automatically transfer them to "Trash". Once the "junk" is weeded out (you know, the people shooting for 15 million) I do actually read the rest. I have read interesting offers and bought as a result of getting them. But the offers read, and ultimately purchased from, were in (you guessed it) a niche market. There are people selling things on the web that are not available anyplace else.

Finding a niche is key on the "net". Those that do, with reasonable advertising, can carve out their niche, and enjoy the benefits. Those that don't, like "Monty Python", will continue searching for their "holy grail".

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