

Letting Go Of Coattails

By Elena Fawkner

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If you're looking for a way to make money from home and you've been online for any length of time you will have quickly become aware of the preponderance of business opportunity sites and ads for many and varied business opportunities.

In particular, you've probably been bowled over by all the promises of fabulous internet riches that can be yours, if you only join so-and-so's innovative new groundfloor opportunity that everybody who is anybody wants in on.

This week I received an email from a subscriber asking for my opinion on a particular business opportunity. She was asking what I "really thought" about it because she had been "burned so many times in the past I just don't know who to trust". Sound familiar?

I've received several emails like this over recent months from people who have been dudded by the charlatans who seem to come out of the woodwork at the mere whiff of a victim, er ... prospect. This latest one though got me wondering exactly why it is that so many people seem to be looking to make a profit from promoting or participating in someone else's business opportunity or product rather than creating their own, using their own ingenuity. And this applies not only to scams but to legitimate business opportunities (yes, they DO exist). After all, no matter how legitimate the opportunity, at least some of your hard work and effort is going to benefit someone else.

Now, admittedly, promoting someone else's product (such as by way of affiliate programs) is a good way to get started in your online career, but it's not going to make you really serious money. By "serious" I mean sufficient money to represent a

worthwhile return on the investment of time and effort you must expend to earn significant commission income. By spending the same amount of time and effort promoting your OWN business, your return must necessarily be much greater. After all, you keep 100% of the profits for the same work!

Why is it that some people, let alone those who have already been burned, keep looking for someone else to deliver the answer to their prayers rather than creating it for themselves? Or worse, give up entirely? I'd be willing to bet that, for a goodly proportion, the answer is "I don't have any products of my own to sell" or "I don't have any good ideas" or "I don't know where to start".

Now, it may be that you're just dabbling with the idea of an online business and, for you, promoting a few affiliate programs while you gradually get more involved is a good place for you to be right now. Many of us started out doing exactly that. But for those of you who are ready to get into this in a serious way, have you thought about doing it for yourself? Why not let go of the idea there is a perfect opportunity out there with your name on it if only you can find it, and instead devote your time and your energy to creating it using your own brainpower?

I believe, absolutely and without equivocation, that ANYONE can make money with their own business. The key is to make sure that what you choose for your business is something you are passionate about. If you are passionate about what you do, your natural enthusiasm and motivation will lead you to develop ways to exploit that passion in a way that can generate income.

Let's say one of your absolutely favorite things in the whole world is gardening. You've always loved to garden, you have ever since you first got your own place and you do it every chance you get. Think about how you might translate that natural interest into a profitable business endeavor.

Here's just one suggestion how you can turn your green thumb to your financial advantage: start a gourmet herb business! You could indulge your passion for gardening by planting a herb garden in your backyard, drying and packaging the herbs you grow and marketing them to a niche market. Your niche may be the gourmet market, for example. You might decide to experiment with various combinations of herbs to come up with some exotic gourmet herb blends that are truly original.

You would need to invest in a small greenhouse perhaps and learn about how to dry herbs and all the other facets of a herb business. But once you've mastered that, and experimented with various blends to create a unique product, it's simply a matter of packaging them attractively for your market.

As far as marketing's concerned, this would take place both

online and offline. You will, of course, have your own website from which you offer your exotic herb blends for sale. Your website would contain a profile of all the various herbs, what they are good for, recipes and other resources that your site visitors would be interested in. In time, you may even expand into producing herbs for the homeopathic market! You could supplement your website by publishing a weekly or monthly newsletter devoted to all things herbal, including hints and tips for your subscribers wanting to grow their own herbs or who are interested in the health benefits of herbs.

Offline, you could approach local businesses in your area to stock your products and attend weekend markets to build your profile. By placing advertisements in local newspapers and taking an active role in your local Chamber of Commerce you would make the contacts that you need to become known within your local community.

Other ways to indulge your passion for gardening while at the same time operating a profitable business venture include: growing your own vegetables to produce gourmet pasta sauces; starting a packaged seeds business or a garden design consultancy service. It doesn't matter. Just make sure it has something to do with what you are truly passionate about.

Gardening is, of course, just one example. Perhaps your passion is sewing, needlecraft, woodworking, computers, sports, parenting, travel, automobiles, leadlighting or any one of a million other things. There is absolutely no reason in the world why you cannot take that passion and convert it into a money-making enterprise, particularly with the internet as a marketing medium.

So, for those of you looking for the right business opportunity "out there" somewhere ... STOP. Let go of the coattails, reach inside yourself and grab the one thing you are TRULY passionate about above all others. It's your ticket to a profitable, home business of your very own. And best of all, it's 100% all yours.

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