

Dear Bill Gates, or How NOT to Start Your Business

By Milana Leshinsky

Dear Bill Gates, or How NOT to Start Your Business

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This subject is familiar to many solo entrepreneurs. Yet you will rarely see it discussed openly. It is a side effect of selling a good product. Sort of a "bonus" that comes with being successful.

Once in a while I get an e-mail that reads along these lines:

"Send me your product first. If satisfied, will pay. Too many scams out there. Prove that you're not."

or

"Help me make it happen for me, then I will send you my payment."

or better yet

"I am a poor man from South Africa. Praying to God that you will send me ALL of your products for free. I want you to be my guide, my coach, my mentor... and have it in your heart not to charge me until I start making money."

At first, I thought, what the heck - his \$40 will not make me any richer, and would send the person my products free of charge. Especially since these e-books didn't cost anything to deliver.

But after a while, as my online business grew and traffic to my web sites increased, I started getting similar e-mails about once a week. People would ask me to send them my products for free, and when they start making money on the Internet, they would send me their payment.

What is going on? Can you imagine writing to Bill Gates, asking for a free PC, promising to pay as soon as it starts turning profits?

Or how about a free college tuition? "Let me go to school for a year, if I learn something new, I will pay".

Now, some of these claims may be true and sincere. Many people do not have the money to start their online venture. What should they do if that's the case?

The answer is easy: self-education. That is how I started, and that's how most successful but low-budget ventures begin.

Subscribe to 10-15 different web marketing e-zines published by reputable authors, and read each issue thoroughly, with a highlighter in your hand.

Visit popular Internet Marketing forums, participate in free teleclasses offered by gurus, download and read free e-books on the subject.

Spend a few hours a week browsing the Internet for web sites of companies in your target area - learn what the competition is doing.

Always keep in mind - it's either TIME or MONEY. If you don't have one, invest the other.

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Milana Leshinsky is a professional web developer, and the author of "Create Your First Business Web Site in 10 days".

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