

Automating Your Business

By Stuart Reid

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To automate your business is everyone's goal. You can't, no matter what people say, automate *everything* but with a few simple tools you can do most of it.

The first tool is the Autoresponder. You've probably know a lot about these already. You often hear quoted the `fact` that on average your product needs seven exposures per visitor. An autoresponder will keep a product in a prospects mind and will keep on relentlessly promoting for you. It takes a bit of effort to set one up, yes, but for example a 10-letter autoresponder will save a LOT of time later on. And with modern autoresponders features such as inserting names etc. the person on the receiving end feels as if you are contacting her personally all the time. There are free autoresponders if you are on a budget - such as Webmailstation. Beware using other `free` autoresponders such as HotResponders or at least read the small print - you can find yourself unable to access your e-mails after a trial period! Backup your subscribers often. If you save your subscriber lists you have something to fall back on if your service goes down. Software like World Submitter will let you use saved lists to e-mail your subscribers.

Another is your credit card payment system. Again, you have free and paid for options. One good choice is PayPal - they are free and charge a percentage per transaction. They also let you transfer funds between accounts and to bank accounts. They are easy to set up for single-payments or web stores. Other credit card services such as ClickBank are recommended as well but charge an upfront fee. Clickbank also has other services such as letting you make an affiliate program for your product. The

beauty of an automated credit card account is the buyer can enter their details then get forwarded to a special webpage where they can download your item. Automation again!

Your website obviously runs on automatic when it is set up but services such as Moreover.com can add dynamic content to it, in this case news headlines, giving the illusion that your site is constantly updated. Your web site should be funelling visitors to your autoresponder and to your purchase page. Your autoresponders will funnel people to your website and your purchase page. As you can see once all this is set up, and it needn't take long, it becomes an automatic business! This is how those adverts tell you can make \$1000s while lying on the beach. It is kind of true but like anything the system will require some maintenance.

Customer service can be kept to a minimum with some good documentation on your site. You can never totally automate customer service so you should include plenty of ways to contact you. Providing a FAQ, a terms & conditions and a privacy policy can reduce customer service requirements.

Once the basics of your web business are running your time is mainly spent researching and promotion - and these are things that you *cannot* automate.

Stuart Reid is the publisher of Netpreneur News and webmaster of Netpreneur Now! Visit us for weekly tips, reviews, recommendations and more. Sign up for a free ad and over 30 free e-books. Free access to Members Only site. <mailto:signup@netpreneurnow.com>
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