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## JAMES DRUMAN - ARTICLE EXAMPLES

Note: Not all areas of expertise are represented here. This is a light sample, and I work for many of my clients as a ghostwriter, which means I am restricted by contract from revealing details of our work together.

My main areas of writing expertise include Men's Dating, Men's Fitness, Personal Development, World Travel, Internet Marketing, International Living, and Business.

If you are interested in my Internet Marketing and Premium Web Design services, please see my other website at <http://www.InfiniteReachMarketing.com>.

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## WEB ARTICLES

### **Fiber Supplements for Weight Loss - A Few Things to Consider Before Jumping On Board**

Everyone's always looking for that magical pill that'll switch on the right mechanism so they can start losing weight fast and get where they want to be faster. And maybe you're not looking for overnight results, but wouldn't life be amazing if some daily supplement could accelerate your initial progress?

So you could start looking great and feel better about yourself that much sooner?

Then, just by stabilizing your diet and making all the right moves, you could hold your weight there where you wanted it and start aging with a little more finesse. Hey, we can dream...

But while there might not be completely magical solutions out there, we do hear about a supplement every now and then that's said to give dieters some pretty amazing leverage. One example getting a lot of attention lately is fiber supplements.

But what's the real deal? Is there anything to the hype?

Let's have a look.

#### **What Is Fiber Really?**

Alright, at the risk of boring you to tears, you need to know that there are two different kinds of fiber important to health and nutrition, both typically derived from plant material.

They're known as soluble fiber and insoluble fiber.

Soluble fiber is viscous. It absorbs water and ferments in your digestive tract, turning into gases and active byproducts. This reaction produces compounds some people think are very beneficial to your health.

Insoluble fiber, on the other hand, is best described as "roughage." It's basically plant material the body cannot digest (more on this later).

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The indigestible insoluble fiber just absorbs water and passes right through your digestive system without fermenting and breaking down because there is nothing in a normal human body that it reacts with. It also changes the way you digest other foodstuffs by attracting and holding water molecules from certain materials.

Not to gross you out, the end result is bigger, often coarser stool travelling through your body faster.

### **Fiber Supplements for Weight Loss**

So where does weight loss factor in?

Some weight loss enthusiasts believe fiber supplements can trim your waistline because they make you feel full, thus stifling your appetite. Fiber is also difficult to break down into energy, and since your digestive system still attempts to convert it into energy, your metabolism speeds up and you burn more calories.

Make sense?

As well as helping you to lose or maintain weight, fiber has also been shown to yield a number of other health benefits. Because of the way it 'wraps up' cholesterol, allowing the body to get rid of it more easily, it can help to lower cholesterol levels. It also binds with fatty acids and slows down blood sugar absorption (a physical reaction of much interest to diabetics).

To go on, fiber is said to improve digestion and alleviate some of the symptoms associated with health problems, like Irritable Bowel Syndrome.

But here's where things get interesting...

### **The Dangers of Fiber**

While most government organizations still promote adding huge amounts of dietary fiber to your diet – almost comically so – there is a lot of new research suggesting excessive fiber intake may be extremely dangerous.

Think about it and it makes perfect sense – weight loss and health enthusiasts basically rely on fiber because it's an INDIGESTIBLE MATERIAL.

And it's easy to see why digesting materials the body is not meant to digest could be a potentially bad idea, wreaking havoc on your digestive system and overall health over the long term.

Konstantin Monastyrsky writes in his alarming book, "Fiber Menace," about a huge range of problems caused by excess fiber. He argues that we have not possessed the technology to

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process insoluble fiber into food products for very long and, as a result, our bodies have not yet learned to manage the stuff.

Again, it's indigestible!

Effects he warns about include loss of control over the bowels (to the point of depending on laxatives), appendicitis, chronic constipation, rectal bleeding, diverticular disease, and increased risk of colon cancer.

This list, only the beginning of a longer one that reads like a nerve-wracking pharmaceutical commercial, is in exact opposition of everything our society has been told about fiber.

But the evidence is very compelling.

*Now, don't freak out because fiber is not going to necessarily kill you or turn your intestines into the Texas Chainsaw Massacre as long as you don't overdo it...hint, hint. Stick to getting small quantities of it from natural foods that haven't been processed – this natural stuff is typically soluble and doesn't mess with your body the way insoluble fiber does.*

As far as fiber affecting your appetite and thus aiding in weight loss, at the end of the day, if the growing concerns of fiber are true, losing a few pounds a little faster is never worth the damage it can do your body.

### **Not Ready to Sign On with the Anti-Fiber Crowd?**

Maybe you're not ready to give up on fiber and still aren't convinced the stuff is even bad for you. Mainstream fiber buffs have got their claws in you and they're not letting go...

You still might want to hold back a little bit on jumping on the supplement bandwagon and instead start educating yourself more about the benefits of a good diet, what "good diet" actually means, and how it can change your body and your life.

As indicated in the beginning of this article, supplements are a product of the magic pill phenomenon, and while some do have their benefits, there are dangers as well. For instance, did you know dietary supplements have no warning labels?

In fact, no purity standards are set in place at all, and since supplements are labeled as food, they are largely free of federal oversight.

A recent CBS News article by Sue Chan warns, "Some may inhibit blood clotting. St. John's Wort may negate birth control pills while Melatonin has been linked to seizures in children."

And the real problem with these "mays" and "mights" is that someone has to prove a supplement (or food) to be dangerous before it can be yanked off the shelves – a far cry from the way we handle pharmaceuticals. Not to mention it's hard to prove a supplement is hurting people when the companies who sell them are not even required to report complaints.

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Look, this is my take:

Have you ever noticed how the “supplement crowd” is always so quick to remind us that we should make sure to get our fiber (or whatever nutrient they’re promoting) from natural food rich in that nutrient as well?

If supplements are so amazing, why the emphasis on getting your daily dose from natural foodstuffs? I dare suggest they’re covering their own rear ends, knowing that getting the nutrients you need from real food is really where it’s at.

Certainly food for thought.

And knowing that all the healthy stuff your body needs to stay trim, healthy, and sexy can be found through the right natural food diet, that’s where you should focus your energy.

It really is the key to a long and happy life.

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### **Strength Training for Women: Will Resistance Workouts Make You a She-Hulk?**

Advise the typical woman trying to lose weight add a day or two of strength training to her fitness plan and you’d think you suggested she inject steroids by the way she looks at you. “But I don’t wanna look like one of those women bodybuilders!” she’ll often reply, alarm on her face. “I’m afraid I’ll just bulk up.” Today it’s time to grab this myth by its meaty bicep and find out what really happens when women add strength training to their routine.

But first let’s look at what we really mean by strength training.

#### **Getting the Strength Training Myth in a Chokehold**

When we really pin down the strength training myth, we find it often starts with how many of us define “strength training exercises.” What typically comes to mind are vein-rippled monster men doing squats or bench presses with a Volkswagen-sized stack of plates on each end of the barbell.

But that’s not all there is to it – you need to realize strength training is not synonymous with weightlifting, power lifting, or bodybuilding.

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Yes, these sports do depend on strength training exercise, but keep in mind that many other sports do as well. For instance, softball, volleyball, basketball, and rowing teams all depend on strength training to accomplish their goals, yet they all feature rather normal-looking athletes, male and female.

When it comes down to the meat and gristle, resistance training is no more than contracting your muscle against an opposing resistance, such as gravity – as is the case in weight lifting. The aim is to increase your anaerobic endurance, your strength, and/or the size (bear with me) of your skeletal muscles.

Resistance doesn't have to come from gravity – it can also come from hydraulic forces (machines), elastic forces (resistance bands), or the force of your own opposing muscles (isometrics).

Some of the methods of strength training for women simply leverage body weight. Think your run of the mill calisthenics or the more trendy Pilates.

Don't be afraid to stick with good old fashioned weights though either; there's no reason to shy away from them. Just use lighter weights with more repetitions. 10 – 12 reps per set is a good average for women, and you can increase the weight as you get stronger.

### **Wait, But What Does “Increase the Size” Really Mean?**

I could almost see your eyebrow twitch when you read that resistance exercises increase size – your face squinting into that “I told you so” look. But not so fast.

Some overweight women are deathly afraid of building strength because they look down at their arms and legs and what they see doesn't seem entirely flabby. It feels solid to the touch, and they probably see themselves as naturally bulky.

So, if your arms are that beefy right now, with little or no exercise, what's going to happen when you work them out? They'll get bigger, right?

Well, no.

When you have a higher percentage of fat on your frame, it's not just stored where it can be seen and pinched. It's also stored in your muscle. To imagine how this works, think of a well-marbled steak with tendrils of fat running through the meat.

So what this “marbling effect” does is make your muscle bulkier. But if you're overweight and start replacing your fat with lean muscle, your muscles will actually look smaller! They'll just get smaller and more toned looking, and that what you want, right?

### **Muscle Mass and Metabolism**

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The real good news about building muscle is the increase in metabolism. Did you know that a more toned, muscular body actually burns calories faster and more efficiently?

Most women think all they need is to create a calorie deficit and they'll start dropping some pounds, but adding lean body mass speeds up progress, even if it's buried below extra fat. That lean mass will burn calories all day no matter what you're doing.

As a result, the food you do eat won't have such a drastic effect on your weight and appearance – it will still be a factor, sure, but by giving your body the resources to manage your weight, you won't have to work so hard to manage it yourself.

### **Other Benefits of Building Strength**

The benefits of adding resistance training to your workout plan don't stop there.

In addition to helping control weight, it also reduces injury, increases stamina, improves balance, hones focus, and reduces symptoms of chronic diseases (like diabetes, back pain, or arthritis). To go on, one of the most important benefits is that strength training not only prevents bone density loss but actually can increase it, thus preventing and reversing the degenerative effects of osteoporosis.

### **The Final Rep**

Look, here's what it comes down to. Even men who WANT to bulk up have to spend a ton of time in the gym and eat exactly the right diet to get hard gains. Otherwise, they just get more toned ... and yeah, their muscles may get a little bulkier-looking because their bodies are just built that way.

But you're not a man; you're a woman. And losing weight while building strength is not going to make you look like a female bodybuilder. Do you realize how much work (and often drugs) it takes for them to get there? Your two or three days in the gym could never do that.

It'll make you slimmer, sure – more toned. It'll help you lose weight and improve your overall health – definitely.

And that's exactly what you want. Work your muscles, and they'll work for you in return. Strength training is vital for women too – believe it.

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### **Plant Based Diet Trends: Digging Down and Grabbing the Hype by Its Roots**

What do Mike Tyson, Bill Ford (of THE automotive company), Steve Wynn of Wynn Resorts, Russell Simmons, and former president Bill Clinton all have in common? Sounds like the beginning of a bad joke, right? Well, if you guessed they all eat and rally for the benefits of a plant based diet, you'd be right.

(If you didn't guess that, don't worry, you don't lose any points here ... )

Surely you've noticed that diets like this are currently all the rave and how celebrities seem to be jumping on the bandwagon left and right. But what is all the buzz really about? Is there anything behind the hype, or is it just a fad diet restricted to the world's elite?

More importantly, what can this type of diet do for our weight loss goals as well as overall health and well-being?

#### **A Look at "the Meat" of a Plant Based Diet**

Just like it sounds, the term "plant based diet" refers to any kind of diet based largely on plant foods (typically of the fresh variety but sometimes processed plant foods are included as well) and includes cutting back hard on animal products.

But there are a broad range of "plant eaters" out there foraging our supermarkets, and all these herbivore characters eat according to different principles, depending on their health goals and/or eating philosophies.

For instance, veganism is a strict version of this type of diet in which zero animal products are allowed, including dairy. Vegetarians, on the other hand, cut out meat but often happily gobble up milk based products, like cheese, and possibly even feast on a regular helping of eggs.

Then you get the occasional "vegetarian" who makes allowances for small amounts of seafood here and there.

I know a woman who claims to be a vegetarian but eats fish and bacon (if that makes any sense). There's even a term for her unique brand of vegetarianism: Wikipedia defines her as a "semi-vegetarian."

The point, however, is that a plant based diet is somewhat vague in actual definition and covers a wide range of different eating practices - there are no real hard fast rules besides the general inclusion of lots of plants and avoidance of meat.

Whatever camp of vegetarianism a person chooses to follow, no one can deny that it takes the typical person a certain level of self-discipline to take it up in any of its various forms. Not only because it means no more fat, juicy steaks but also because it requires is a hard charge against the grain in modern society, and it creates quite an inconvenience when shopping, dining out, or eating at the table of a friend.

So why do Mr. Clinton and all these other social superstars even bother? Is it worth the sacrifices, and are the health benefits remarkable enough to make up for the total life makeover it demands?

Let's have a peek.

### **What's So Good About "Eatin' Your Veggies?"**

The plant based dieting trend as it exists today stems from a growing pool of experts observing something inherently wrong with the Western diet. Study after study notes a plague-like epidemic of chronic diseases in the western world and points out how the rise of these diseases counter-intuitively corresponded with technological advancement (particularly in agriculture).

Others point out how regions of the world where the Western diet hasn't yet caught on, a diet largely associated with economic development, don't suffer the same alarming rates of these diseases. In fact, these diseases (which include obesity, heart disease, diabetes, and many forms of cancer) are often referred to in popular text as "Western diseases."

T. Colin Campbell, co-author of the groundbreaking (and sometimes controversial) book on the subject, "The China Study: Startling Implications for Diet, Weight Loss, and Long-Term Health," goes as far as to claim that "cancer is a geographically localized disease." He maintains that if you look at a world map, the areas of the world with the highest cancer rates clearly correlate with the areas of the world where protein is a large part of the local diet.

Meat based diets, his camp proclaims, are the villain.

A 40 year veteran in nutrition research, Dr. Campbell maintains that a human diet composed of more than 10% meat leads to a huge rise in cancer risk ... period. Not only that, he stresses, but a plant based diet even has the power to heal a body long battered by degenerative disease and restore good health.

And while Campbell is certainly the most active, vocal, and influential of the plant based diet crowd, he's certainly not the only one.

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Another study recently published in the Journal of the American Medical Association details how Canadian researchers fed subjects with high LDL cholesterol levels (that's the really, really bad stuff) a diet characterized by plant-based sterols, soy protein, soy milk, soy-based meat substitutes, nuts, and oats.

In the span of 6 months, the subjects saw their LDL levels drop by an average of 13% - a decline that equates to an 11% drop in the risk of a stroke in the next decade.

Another proponent of the diet, Caldwell B. Esselstyn, MD, carried out a twenty year experiment on advanced heart disease patients who were able to not only stop their condition from worsening but completely reverse it in 70% of cases.

### **And What About Weight Loss?**

Great question.

Another great benefit of the plant-centric diets is that they tend to lead to very significant, very consistent weight loss. One of the main reasons for this nice side effect is that red meats, and especially fried foods, are more calorically dense than are water-based foodstuffs like your run of the mill fruits and veggies.

Replace a larger portion of food on your plate with the plants, and the end result is you eat a lot less calories and you lose weight faster. Simple, really.

In fact, one study specifically related to weight loss monitored African American women, a demographic particularly prone to obesity, comparing subjects who ate a largely plant-based diet with those regularly consuming fried foods and red meat. They found the second group put on far more weight over the 14 year study.

The researchers were quick to point out how both groups tended to eat the same amount of food, but the calories were far higher for the second group. So, it was the high-caloric density of meat and fried food that caused the big weight gains.

Do you see where this is going?

### **Harnessing Your Inner Herbivore**

If the plant based diet makes sense to you but you're not sure if you're disciplined enough to go "cold turkey" on meat, one simple tip for switching over your diet without making it too hard on yourself is to start slowly, with incremental changes.

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Try swapping out a few meals a week with vegetarian food choices. Or replace a couple problem products that you use a lot with healthier alternatives, one by one – there are actually some real tasty and convincing meat alternatives out there these days, for example. Another possibility is to pick one or two days a week to "try out" being a vegetarian.

As time goes on, these simple choices can become a regular part of your new, healthier diet, and you'll gain the momentum for more radical changes.

Work some legumes, like beans, into your diet as well. They're high in fiber and protein, and they replace some of the calories you're missing – some dieters find a lag in energy levels when switching to a plant-dominated diet without adding a heavy replacement.

Finally, don't forget about the human tendency to eat the same portions no matter what sits on our plate. Trick yourself by taking up more room on your plate with fruits and veggies, leaving less room for the dangerous stuff.

For ultimate health, 80% of your diet should be composed of "water-based" foods – by that, I mean fruits and vegetables.

Try it and see how you feel.

### **A Word on Keeping it Simple**

As far as how strict your plant based diet should be, it's really a matter of which of the philosophies you follow and how hard core you are about personal food philosophy.

Is total veganism the only true plant based diet? Are vegetarians who eat a little fish and perhaps the occasional red meat dish (gasp) going to vegetarian hell?

It's a personal choice, but here's my take - you won't find many diets out there that don't admit grubbing down on more of those good ole' fresh fruits and veggies and cutting back on the red meat while lowering your calories won't do wonders for your health, your looks, and your waistline.

Be aware of these benefits and take them very seriously.

But before you get too drastic with your new diet plan, acknowledge that a successful diet is a balance between personal priorities, quality of life, and health. And it's completely possible to take up a predominantly plant based diet without signing over your soul to the veggie garden and completely outlawing cheeseburgers for the rest of your life.

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A good diet is maintained through basic guidelines, and an occasional cheat from time to time (once you've got it under control) doesn't make you a bad person or mean you're a traitor of some vague, esoteric clan. After you've established solid eating habits, cheating can even be a good thing sometimes.

Sure, there's a lot of research out there raising some very interesting questions about meat and the potential damage it can do to our bodies (especially in high quantities), but more research is still needed before any absolutes are determined.

Meanwhile, just use some common sense.

Michael Pollan probably puts it best in his book, "In Defense of Food," when he sums up his own rules for plant-eating as such: "Eat food. Not too much. Mostly plants."

It doesn't get any simpler than that, and any person out there looking to reap the health and weight loss benefits of a sensible plant based diet without putting themselves through raw broccoli boot camp would do well to follow his simple philosophy.

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### Thailand Temple Etiquette: 8 Customs to Keep in Mind

Some people come to Thailand just to see the sacred temples, and even the most die-hard partier takes the occasional break to bask in their beauty. It's a chance for a timeout from the chaos in a serene, picturesque setting while getting a unique glimpse of Thai culture.

Buddhism does indeed permeate the heart and soul of this country and all aspects of life here, so make sure you take the opportunity to see it up close and personal.

Before you do, however, it's a good idea to understand basic temple etiquette. Let's look at 8 rules to observe on your visit:

#### 1. Dress Properly

When you visit a Thai temple, it's an absolute necessity to observe the Thai custom of covering yourself properly. This may be overlooked in touristy temple destinations, but that's most likely due to the Thai cultural tendency to avoid conflict at all costs.

Maintain perspective about how this makes locals feel and follow tradition – after all, you're the guest. So just throw on some pants and a shirt with sleeves.

In this heat—Really? Yes, really.

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It never ceases to amaze me how oblivious travelers in Thailand are to how offensive shorts and tank tops are to traditional Thai people.

Many of the temples will carry sarongs or long pants that you can rent in order to enter.

## **2. Take off Your Shoes**

You'd have to be a complete social idiot to miss this one since the first thing you see when arriving at the temple door is everyone's shoes sitting outside. Thais believe the feet are the dirtiest part of the body, and that does actually make some sense, but to them the feet are also spiritually unclean.

Shoes, meanwhile, are considered absolutely filthy. Whatever you do—take off your shoes before you enter the building!

## **3. Watch Where You Point Your Feet**

On the same note, don't point your feet at religious artifacts or statues of Buddha when sitting or kneeling. Watch what the Thais do. Most kneel with their feet tucked under them and pointed backwards.

Since "Western" bodies are built differently and unaccustomed to this position, it can be uncomfortable for long periods of time – try tucking them off to the side instead of directly underneath you.

This is fine, and many Thais do the same.

## **4. Women and Monks**

Women should NEVER touch a monk.

Watch monks in public and notice how they always make an effort to not walk too close to women – especially clueless foreign women. A gentle brush up against their robes can mean a day or more of physical and spiritual cleansing and fasting.

This is one of the main reasons monks have special seating at public events.

When handing over an object of some sort, women should place it on the cloth or table reserved for the purpose. Do not hand anything directly to them.

## **5. Donate Some Money**

Most temples survive on visitor donations. Help preserve the temple's place in Thai society. Keep them going so future travelers can also revel in their beauty and mystique.

There's typically a donation box on site. Hey – you can even write it off on your taxes!

## **6. Do NOT Climb on Statues**

One of the most ridiculous cultural insults I've ever witnessed occurred at a mountaintop temple in Laos when a group of grungy foreigners decided it was okay to sit up on a statue and watch the sunset – while drinking beer and smoking cigarettes!

A Lao woman that worked there repeatedly asked them to get down, but they simply ignored her and kept taking pictures until the rest of us demanded they listen.

Come on, People! This is just common sense here. Are you determined to give foreigners a bad name in Southeast Asia?

Not to mention that these types of antics can get you hurt...

Another time I read a news story about a man in Bangkok spitting on a statue of Buddha and being beaten to death by onlookers. I'm not sure if he was a Thai or Westerner (obviously mentally ill), but the point is that disrespecting the Buddhist religion is serious business and can roust up dangerous emotions.

Use your head.

### **7. Bring Some Grub**

Monks eat by way of food donated by citizens. None will demand gifts from you (unless they are a scammer in disguise), but it can be a nice gesture and a show of your cultural appreciation to bring food.

That said, food given to monks must be purchased or prepared for that sole purpose. You can't just give them your leftovers.

Maybe you don't believe in karma, but a little good luck couldn't hurt, right?

### **8. Get Involved**

I realize your personal religious beliefs might rule out taking part in a Buddhist ritual, but my own make this a non-issue. If you're similar, get involved in the temple rituals.

Get sprinkled with blessed water by a monk. Make an offering. Wake up early one morning and give alms.

It really enhances the Thailand experience.

Before you get intimidated by all these rules and customs, know that Thais realize you're unfamiliar with their culture and expect basic mistakes. They are a light-hearted people and even their religion is taken with a healthy dose of humor; it's even okay to be playful in a Thai temple.

So don't take anything too seriously. Just try to remember these basic rules, follow the example set by the Thai visitors around you, and enjoy yourself.

Visiting a Thai temple puts me in a peaceful, relaxed state and helps me center. I hope the same is true for you.

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## Funding the Thailand Dream: Enroll in a Divemaster Internship

Long-term travelers and expats are always looking for ways to fund the dream lifestyle. Sure, it seems like pennies to the dollar when you're on a holiday in Thailand because you've likely got a pocketful of cash from back home, but as reality catches up, most long-term backpackers head home with their tail between their legs. It's not always so easy to find a job to fund a longer stay.

But thanks to a little paradise in the southern gulf called Koh Tao, some of us dreamers have found a way to stay.

When I first went to Koh Tao, like most people, I had one goal in mind and one goal only. Scuba diving. It's the cheapest place in the world to become a certified divemaster, and that's why this island paradise has become the ticket to freedom for an increasing number of travelers.

So what exactly does a divemaster do?

Basically, divemasters take groups of tourists out to dive the local spots and assist instructors at the schools, of which there are no shortage on Koh Tao. There are other places to dive in Thailand, much better places as a matter of fact, but none so cheap.

I myself had never even been diving before I showed up on Koh Tao's shores, but as a thrill junkie I knew it was for me. And as soon as I found myself thirty meters down, learning how to be weightless and watching the hulks of ships pass over as sunrays danced on the water, I saw I was right.

Becoming a divemaster in Southeast Asia is not the most lucrative life decision, but the low cost-of living makes it easy and the laid-back island life makes it ideal. And if you're really ambitious you can work towards your IDC certificate and move up to dive instructor, which offers much better pay.

Even with the low pay, no one's complaining.

You wear sandals and shorts all day. You get up in the morning or afternoon, depending on your diving preference (or your hangover), and head out on the water with your training partners.

Go two times a day if you like, and a third if you're not afraid of night dives. Get done in the evening and go sit down on the shores at a local bar to watch firestick shows by the water.

Some green curry and a fruit shake or some cold Singha beers. Who needs to be rich with that kind of lifestyle?

At most schools, once you pay for the divemaster internship enrollment fees you can dive free for life and never graduate. So even if you never want to be a paid diver and have another way to make money, you can always go back and keep diving without having to pay.

Not a bad deal!

And a divemaster internship opens up opportunities as well. You have basically created a way to live in the most beautiful locales across the Earth.

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Hawaii. Australia. Egypt. The Philippines. Belize. All major dive destinations. By getting certified in Koh Tao, you save, then you can head where the pay is considerably higher.

It won't take long on Koh Tao to see that's the whole idea.

This beautiful little island has become a way station for die-hard travelers and diving addicts from all over the world. Many have followed their diving dream around the globe and somehow always end up back on Koh Tao, even if it means so-so dive spots.

If you're looking for a way to stay in this amazing country, becoming a certified divemaster just might be the answer you've been looking for.

You won't regret it—I can assure you of that...

Note: It is illegal to work in Thailand without a work permit, but divemasters often skirt around the rule.

People are doing it. People are looking the other way. But if you get in trouble its your own problem.

(See more travel articles at <http://tikikiki.com>)

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### **Nikon D5100 vs D3110: A Snapshot of Two Solid DSLR Cameras**

Everyone is wondering about the new Nikon D5100 released in April of earlier this year. As the same digital single-lens reflex (DSLR) camera used in the striking short film, "Fragments," it has warranted a lot of attention – not to mention the use of this exact camera to film its own TV ads, starring the "one and only" Ashton Kutcher, as well.

Those of you thinking about upgrading from the Nikon D3100 or trying to decide which to start off with out of the two are no doubt asking yourselves, "Is there anything to all this buzz?"

There's no doubt about it – when it comes to top of the line DSLR cameras, no one breaks it down like Nikon. And DSLRs are the top choice for many professional photographers due to their accurate pre-exposure previews and interchangeable lenses.

So honestly, how can you go wrong with either?

The D3100 itself has enjoyed extreme popularity as a top of the line entry-level camera since it introduced the Expeed II processor, allowing image and video processing speeds a world apart from the previous processor. And the D5100 leverages that same technology.

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But how else do they measure up?

Well, the most important digital camera feature for most photographers is the sensor, so let's start there.

The D5100 comes with the 16.1 megapixel 23.6 x 15.6 mm sensor while the Nikon D3100 holds a 14.2 megapixel 23.1 x 15.4 mm sensor – certainly a contrast though not one of extremely epic proportions.

But for some seriously variable photography, the D5100 can be adjusted from a crystal clear ISO 100 all the way up to 6400, exactly twice that of the D3100, and with some boosting can reach an impressive ISO 25600.

So while the megapixel difference is only somewhat substantial, the whole package creates an extremely versatile camera.

Besides that, the Nikon D5100 has a better dynamic range, twice as many colors, semi-manual exposure control (as opposed to the Nikon D3100's complete lack of exposure control), more advanced special effects, and more scene modes.

Not to mention the awesome swivel screen Nikon include in this upgrade!

Some other comparisons between these two Nikon cameras:

Nikon D5100: battery charge life – 660 shots

Nikon D3100: battery charge life – 550 shots

Nikon D5100: 6 Lighting Options

Nikon D3100: On and Off.

Nikon D5100: 4 frames per second

Nikon D3100: 3 frames per second

Nikon D5100: 920k dot 3" swivel LCD screen (high resolution screen same as high-end Nikon DSLR's)

Nikon D3100: 230k dot 3" LCD screen

Verdict: Look, it's no secret that the D5100 blows the D3100 out of the water—if you can't see that, you just haven't been paying attention.

Does the D3100 have its advantages for amateur photographers? Of course it does.

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It's a lighter camera for one, fewer 55 grams, and at about \$200 cheaper with the same lens, what is there really to say? Basically, if you're at the entry level it's an absolutely fantastic camera that measures up quite well, especially considering what it delivers at the price.

But the advantages of the Nikon D5100 are stark if you've got a couple extra hundred dollars to invest. And if you're a serious photographer already spending \$600 plus for professional-quality in a digital camera, what difference is that extra cash in the big scheme of things, really?

The real deal is that you're either ready for the next level or not...

And only you can make that decision.

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### **Causes of Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder**

Your mind is overwhelmed with irrational urges and impulses, compelling you to do things over and over again even though you know they're unreasonable. You wash your hands repeatedly, compulsively pick at your skin, check the clock a million times, hoard junk, or act out nervous rituals that disrupt your life and make people look at you funny, raising their eyebrows.

For an OCD, or obsessive-compulsive disorder, sufferer who experiences the sheer inconvenience and anxiety on a daily basis, no reminding is needed.

The 4<sup>th</sup> most common mental disorder in the world, OCD severely interrupts and even destroys lives.

If you suffer from OCD, a considerable challenge lies ahead. Sometimes, it's just so easy to "give in" to your compulsions in order to clear your mind and get it over with – most sufferers realize what they are doing is abnormal but just want peace, so they obey.

But allowing it to control you can make it worse.

Are you ready to get proactive about the challenge you face instead? If so, the first step towards control is understanding the causes of OCD.

### **Psychological Causes of OCD**

Sometimes OCD is completely psychological. Believe it or not, some psychologists say an inclination to compulsive tendency affords us an evolutionary edge. Cases where evolutionary

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psychology favors compulsive behavior include things like constantly checking on a fire, taking close care of your hygiene, stockpiling important items, and staying aware of threats from enemies or nature.

It's the extreme cases that hinder rather than help a person, but people who exhibit the trait in extremes may just be on the far end of a normal psychological spectrum.

### **Biological Causes of OCD**

Evidence also suggests OCD is a biological issue; sufferers have been shown to have very abnormal brain patterns. MRI's reveal people with OCD to have far less white matter in their brain than patient control groups, and the disorder can also be caused by head injuries.

To go further, OCD has a lot in common with other compulsive disorders that are clearly biological in nature, such as Tourette Syndrome.

Think of it this way:

Certain brain circuits are wired in a particular way so that we don't need to constantly think about or monitor vital actions – some that come to mind include bodily functions, sexual desire, acts of aggression, or responses to danger.

For most people, these things occur almost subconsciously.

But the difference is that after a non-OCD person performs these actions, they are done with them. Their brain switches off that response and allows them to move on with their lives.

Biological cause theorists believe that in the case of OCD, something has occurred that leads to the brain not knowing how to shut off that typically-helpful impulsive circuit and bugging you to keep performing the action.

### **Neurological Causes of OCD**

As mentioned before, brain scans clearly show that OCD people experience different brain activities than other subjects. Close examination of these scans reveal some sort of "miswiring" in the striatum, or the input station of the basal ganglia system.

In other cases, serotonin production is being disrupted, influencing the ability of your cortex and your basal ganglia to communicate with each other.

Since the basal ganglia plays a large part in controlling your voluntary movements, either scenario makes sense.

## **Genetic Causes of OCD**

Did you know OCD can be hereditary?

Geneticists have identified a human serotonin transporter gene mutation shared by patients who have no family ties, and it has long been recognized that patients are likely to have someone in their immediate family with the same disorder – not to mention the common theme of twins sharing the condition.

An entry on obsessive compulsive disorder in the “The Lancet,” one of the world’s foremost medical journals, reveals that genetics are the cause of 45-65% of OCD symptoms experienced in small children.

That said, in cases where patients don’t develop issues until adulthood, genetics are far less likely to blame.

## **Social Causes of OCD**

OCD is not without its social causes and influences either. Freud believed, for example, that Western society’s regimented toilet training played a part in related manifestations of OCD, though critics point out that culture simply affects how the symptoms play out rather than being the actual cause.

Other researchers have shown that the way your family and friends respond to your compulsive behavior plays a part in how bad the problem gets. If they are too “forgiving,” in other words, they may be perpetuating your problem.

No one knows for sure exactly what causes OCD, and you can see from this article that there are quite a few potential catalysts depending on your personal circumstances. In some cases, it may be a combination of factors – which can be good news, because that means by confronting one cause or influence at a time, some peace is within reach.

Are you ready to get down to the bottom of your disorder and take as much power back in your hands as possible? To learn more about what causes OCD and what you can do to fight back, click here now.

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**How to Choose the Best Hair Dryer: 7 Questions to Consider**

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Figuring out how to choose the best hair dryer presents a substantial challenge for women these days – with new technologies promising to practically rip the power from the atom and bend it to your will, infusing hair follicles with seemingly magical powers, it can be hard to know what to believe.

Well, it's safe to say these hair dryer companies do "layer" it on a bit thick sometimes, so let's figure out what's really going on so you can pick the best hair dryer for your specific needs.

### **1. First Off, How Much Should You Spend?**

There are a wide range of hair dryers out there to suit just about any budget, from \$20 plastic "wonders" from overseas to high-quality professional dryers that cost \$300 or much more.

Looking for a diamond-studded hair dryer for that extra "wow?" These days you can probably find it...

Just keep in mind that those \$20 plastic wonders aren't really wonders for good reason, and exceptionally expensive products are typically targeting the "glamour buyers." As usual, somewhere in the middle is best.

I recommend a professional-quality dryer for somewhere between \$100-\$200 as a sensible purchase. If that still seems a little rich for your blood, keep in mind that professional-quality dryers leave your hair healthier, with less damage, and so in the end actually save you money on expensive hair treatments at the salon.

And that's just smart shopping.

### **2. How Much Wattage Do You Need?**

The amount of wattage directly affects drying time but also can directly affect hair health if you have sensitive hair. If your hair is quite thin and fine or has taken some recent abuse, don't use more than 1400 watts. If you have straight or slightly wavy hair, hit it a little harder – 1400 to 1600 watts will typically do the trick.

Head full of luxurious curls? Whether showing them off or maintaining them, it's time to really up the volts. Go for 1800 to 2000 watts.

No matter what wattage you decide on, the real key to minimizing damage to your hair is always keep your hand moving rather than directing the heat at one spot for long periods of time.

Electricity Voltage Note: keep in mind that if you plan to do some traveling, different countries use different voltages. Consider a dual voltage travel dryer that can switch from 110/120V to 220/240V as needed.

### **3. What Type of Heating Technology Do You Need?**

If you want to really know how to choose the best hair dryer, you've got to understand how heating works. Older hair dryers (and even some of today's cheaper ones) used plastic or metal heating elements that fried your hair and basically cooked the water out.

Manufacturers finally realized this might not be the best way to treat hair, which can be quite fragile. Too much blow-drying of this type left hair nearly ruined.

So, after experimenting with different technologies, most high-quality dryers now use ceramic heaters due to the natural ability ceramics have to conduct heat — ceramics produce a radiant heat that gets inside your hair follicles and heats them from the inside out rather than cooking them dry.

Interestingly enough, the same technology is often used in confined-area indoor heating because because there is less risk of fire.

### **4. So What About Ionic Drying Technology?**

Well, heating often creates positive ions that counterbalance your hair's neutral structure, especially when using cheap heat sources. This creates an extremely frizzy look or leaves your hair looking bland and lifeless.

Ceramics go a short way towards helping because they produce negative ions, which counteract the effect, allowing your hair to retain some moisture and thus retain its body.

An ionic hair dryer takes this a step further by creating even more negative ions, and the difference can be drastic. The water molecules in your hair are broken down rather than cooked, static electricity is kept to a minimum, and your hair dries faster, leaving you with a smooth, sleek finish.

### **5. And Tourmaline — Is This Some Kind of Joke?**

Many advanced hair dryers now incorporate a crushed semi-precious stone called tourmaline to enhance the ionic effect even further. Are they just capitalizing on the glamour effect of gemstone? Not exactly.

Tourmaline is a rare mineral that naturally produces infrared heat and negatively charged ions, going even further to protect your hair as it dries and ensuring that glossy, healthy look you want.

## **6. What About Size and Weight?**

You might think something as small as a hair dryer can never be too heavy, but when maneuvering for particularly complicated styles or ensuring hair is evenly dried across the whole of your head, the weight of your machine can make a big difference (especially over time).

You want dry hair — not a workout.

For maximum maneuverability and flexibility, go for something lighter than a pound — some of the dryers made for stylists come as light as 12 ounces.

## **7. Which Special Settings and Accessories Should You Consider?**

There are plenty of different settings and accessories available on today's hair dryers as well. Diffusers, for instance, allow you to lift hair and dry underneath, so you can add character. Other attachments are used to focus the heat in one specific spot, which is great for straightening.

You might also consider a dryer with an adjustable heat output; when your hair is only slightly wet, there's no need to abuse it.

Or, check out cool shot buttons, a feature that dries quickly with a few seconds of cool air, setting a sprayed style in place. Unlike hot hair, hair dried with cool air holds its shape well.

So, now you know a little bit more about how to choose the best hair dryer and can make a somewhat educated purchasing decision. Take some time to check out our honest, detailed reviews to find fantastic models that incorporate all your favorite features, creating the perfect hair dryer for you.

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**Fix Bad Credit: Use These 6 Steps to Take Control and Improve Your Credit Score**

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When facing the realities of destroyed credit in a world that judges us based on our score more than ever before, it can feel like life is completely over. After all, if your credit is destroyed, how can you ever live what has come to represent a normal life here in America? How can you ever qualify for a loan on a car or home?

After all, even simply getting a job or applying for a rental can depend on your credit these days...

Slow down. Take a deep breath. I know you're overwhelmed, but the world is not going to end. There are no tragedies in life, only challenges, and the only way you can deal with this challenge without getting into more of a hole is to step up and face it head on — take control.

So here is a 6 step proactive plan you can start on today to fix bad credit and improve your credit score.

## **Step 1: Recognize You Have a Problem**

I know it sounds cliché, but things may get out of hand again if you don't sit down and take stock of what got you into this situation in the first place. As Albert Einstein is often credited for saying, "The definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over again and expecting a different result."

I'm not trying to be hard on you, but excuses about runs of bad luck won't help you. At the end of the day, the majority of us got into this situation (yes, I've been there too) because we had bad habits or took unnecessary risks.

So before you set out to fix bad credit, fix your habits. Be honest about what went wrong so when you improve your credit score later on, you can maintain a healthy balance.

## **Step 2: Give Yourself a Credit Checkup**

Request a copy of your credit report and look it over, first to spot errors and then to determine what's hurting you the most. Right now you don't even want to look at your list of debts, but the reality is you have to.

Figure out what financial habits need to change, which debts cannot be put on hold, and where you're dropping the ball. Also, look at what you're doing right or have done right in the past — how can you reactivate or turn up the throttle on those positive habits?

This is just an analysis to get a sense of where you're at — write it all down on paper for steps 3 and 4.

## **Step 3: Plug Your Credit Leaks**

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If you turn on a faucet to fill a tub that is full of holes, you're fighting a losing battle; plug the holes first. When it comes to your credit, those holes are represented by payments you've given up making altogether.

Even if there's no hope of catching up with those debts, at least start making the monthly minimums.

Or maybe for you, credit cards are the unplugged hole — if so, be honest with yourself and get rid of them. Even just closing a few credit card accounts when you have too many can improve credit scores drastically.

And be sure to notify the credit bureaus when you make changes like this.

### **Step 4: Implement Positive Action**

Now you can turn on the faucets. You've asserted some control over your negative habits in order to fix bad credit, so now it's time to take positive action and build some healthy credit habits that actually improve credit score progress.

Here's a revelation too many people miss when in debt — one of the most important steps you can take is to make more money! Spending too much may not be the biggest problem you have — sure, put spending in check too, but sometimes our financial balances are topsy turvy because we're not bringing in enough to live the lifestyle we desire.

Simple — but it's an essential paradigm shift.

So while you're controlling those bad habits, start thinking about ways to bring more money in.

Once you've got your income up to a manageable level, take 20% of everything you make and put that towards your debts — you'll be amazed at how you don't even miss it if you throw it at debts as soon as you get paid. Start paying your debts down, paying the minimum on each and putting the rest of that 20% towards the smallest until it is paid.

Also, consider taking out a secured credit card or small loan (you might need the help of a family member for this) and using it to start rebuilding your credit — but only if you can handle the responsibility.

Don't use this card to buy things you don't need, like fancy clothes. Instead, use it to pay for a necessary monthly expense, such as fuel. Put your gas money in an envelope every month, and use your credit card to fill your tank, being sure to pay the bill early every month out of your envelope.

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The idea is you're building a history of timely payments! And man does that feel nice.

### **5. Plan a Regular Self-Audit**

Every month, sit down and take a good hard look at how you are handling your new habits and look at the bad ones to see if you've got them in check. Be honest with yourself; be proactive. Think of this as your monthly credit audit, and it's a great time to look over your monthly income and expenses again too.

On an annual basis, request your credit report again. Look for errors, and when you find them, contact creditors immediately to get them taken care of.

### **6. Take Massive Assertive Action if Needed**

All the above will have a definite effect if you take it seriously and stay on top of your plan. But some cases are extreme and need massive action — in these cases, you might want to consider joining a program or consulting a professional.

Or, there are some great tools out there for taking matters into your own hands. For instance, did you know you can actually go make corrections to your credit report yourself and delete items — that you can contest anything and the burden of proof lies on the creditors? Even bankruptcies and foreclosures can sometimes be deleted from your credit reports; it's completely legal and the credit bureaus are then put on the defensive.

One such tool is a multimedia software program created by a former credit professional with 20 years of experience, designed for easy point and click functionality so anyone can leverage its power.

Click here if you want to find out more.

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### **Why Writing Offers a Fabulous Path to the Mobile Lifestyle**

Most people who fall in love with Tim Ferriss' groundbreaking book about living the mobile lifestyle struggle with the exact same aspect of the reality he proposes — building the income streams needed for his particular brand of location independence.

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Muses, or businesses built for freedom of location and time, can certainly transform your life if you have the required skills, vision, and drive to create them. But for the inexperienced, the needed paradigm shift presents an insurmountable hurdle.

And thus, when initial efforts fail, many would-be globetrotters just go back to being “realistic.”

I don't want you to give up the dream.

Obtaining the freedom to roam the world is not impractical at all — not these days. Expecting to learn everything needed to create completely passive online income in a matter of months, however, does come across as extremely naive.

So how about just embracing a more reasonable game plan? How about a plan that might not completely free your time (yet) but allows you to live in paradise now?

If you fantasize about the footloose lifestyle but have no idea how to make it happen, a service business can solve your dilemma. More specifically, a freelance writing business.

Let's have a look at why.

### **Ease of Start-up**

I know of no easier way to get on the Internet now and start making money than to provide a content writing service. You don't need some fancy degree. You don't need to spend months or even weeks learning and practicing a new skill.

You don't, and I know I'll regret saying this, even have to be the best writer in the world. We're not talking about writing novels here; we're talking about writing basic articles, product reviews, and blogs, at least to start.

If you got okay grades in English class, you'll be fine. If people tell you that you're a good writer, ever, you're going to cream the competition.

### **And You Can Start Today**

Not only does it take zero experience, unlike other location-independent business models, you can start making money today and build a very solid income within a month or two.

You'll need to work hard, sure, but it's very doable.

When I first began writing online, for example, I made over \$200 in the first 3 days...starting from complete scratch.

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And because a writing business pulls in the cash ASAP, you can step away from the traditional life-plan almost immediately, hitting the road with money on the way and a smile on your face. Enough saved for a plane ticket and enough income from your first jobs to cover expenses in a cheap paradise and you're good to go.

A muse, on the other hand, takes forever to get off the ground, especially if you don't know your stuff.

### **Travel-friendly Business**

To go on, the nature of the writing business lends itself easily to travel. A writer needs a bare minimum of equipment: a decent laptop and an internet connection provide the foundation for your entire business.

In some cases, you may not need either. For instance, much of your writing work can be done offline, as long as the research isn't heavy. You just need to find a connection every once in a while so you can send your articles to clients on schedule.

A bit inconvenient, yes, but with a little haggling and some determination you could make it work.

And you might even forego the laptop when traveling in locations that feature nice, modern internet cafés. It sure keeps your pack light, and you don't have to stress on the thing getting stolen.

Best of all, most clients in this business just don't care where you live as long as you get the work done. Mine envy me more than anything else.

### **The Pay is Great**

I see it now — those of you balking at the idea of becoming a writer because you've swallowed the myth that writers don't make all that much money. Nothing could be further from the truth.

**Case in point:** I know one woman who started writing a couple years ago, built up a solid professional team, and as we speak is pulling her first million-dollar year.

An extreme case of success but very possible...

The demand for writing skills just keeps growing; we are currently immersed in the biggest information age in history. And while cheap, low-grade writers abound, many of which are not even native English-speakers, the competition for higher-quality writers remains quite weak.

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Writers who hone their skills and run a professional practice can build six figure incomes online much faster than you think.

## **Opportunities to Climb the Ladder**

Most people assume that heading off in search of adventure means giving up on the idea of any kind of worthwhile career. But choosing to take the writing path to freedom does not kill your future at all and, in fact, does not obligate you to penning articles forever either.

Opportunities abound for climbing the entrepreneurial ladder.

Your writing gigs will expose you to a whole new world of possibility, opening up the doors to markets you never knew existed. Thus, wordsmithing becomes a great jumping off point for sales copywriting, web design, SEO, marketing consulting, and plenty of other related fields.

Or, just pay attention to how your higher-paying clients turn your words into profits and mimic their business models.

## **You're the Boss**

Maybe you've flirted with the idea of establishing a virtual work agreement and holding on to a current job. While the security seems tempting, I still insist a writing business takes the cake in comparison.

As the name of this website might suggest, I personally value complete freedom over all else.

And when you freelance, you get to be the boss. You don't have to answer to anyone else, you choose when and how often to work, and you can even turn down jobs you don't want.

If a client acts like an ass, just tell them to go get stuffed (in not so many words of course).

## **The Real Deal**

Look, I'm not filling your head with some unachievable dream here—I leveraged writing skills for a dream-lifestyle in Asia for the past 4 years, collecting experiences most people cannot imagine.

I won't lie to you — writing content for others, for which they enjoy recognition, wears me out. And you may eventually feel the same. But I still wouldn't trade it for any job in the world.

And to deal with my burnout these days, I spend half of my hours building my own online assets, some of which now pay a handsome monthly profit. Within 2 months time, my own

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online real estate will provide 100% of my income, allowing me to continue traveling and working on other, more inspiring projects.

It wasn't easy, but I wrote my way to freedom; you can do the same.

If you haven't already stumbled upon some other way to fund your globe-trotting dream, take a real hard look at the business models proposed here on my website. With a burning desire and some legitimate effort, enough money to live in the world's most beautiful, cheap destinations lies just beyond your reach.

Treat it like a real business, and the world's more expensive destinations won't be far beyond your grasp...

(See more travel articles at <http://writeyourpathtofreedom.com>)

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### **Internet Marketing Help: When is it Time to Begin an Online Campaign?**

If you're looking for new ways to bring in additional revenue in this economy, you might be thinking about getting some Internet marketing help. For a lot of business owners who don't know much about computers or the web, this is completely undiscovered territory, and they don't even know where to begin.

You're right to look at the web as a place to go because there really are some amazing marketing channels that can have an exponential effect on your profits, but are you actually ready to start this campaign?

Let's take a look at some factors you need to take into consideration before getting started.

First, take a hard look at your current business processes to ensure you're making the most out of what you're doing right now. And by business processes, I mean every aspect of what you do.

For instance, have a friend or marketing expert make some phone calls to your business as if they were a customer. This will provide an idea of what the customer experience is like.

Are the phone operators picking up phone by the second ring? Are they knowledgeable and helpful when asked the tough questions?

Figure out what the LTV of a customer is, and then assume that every time the phone rings and is left to ring until the person hangs up and calls a competitor, that's how much money is being thrown away.

In many cases, it's the truth.

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Go on to review every contact point between your business and your prospects to identify instances such as the one above that are potentially leaving money on the table. Think of these issues as profit leaks and brainstorm smart small business marketing strategies for plugging them up.

After you've dealt with these profit leaks, analyze the process even more.

Is there more you can do to increase the bottom line with what you already have? Are you doing enough to get emails from your prospects and clients so you can build long-term relationships?

How can you make these people repeat buyers and thus increase the lifetime value of the average client? Can you improve the quality of your products and the backend support so you can increase prices by being the best in the industry?

Are you missing out on opportunities for upsells?

As you surely noticed, I'm throwing a heap of questions at you right now. And this is exactly the mindset you need to take to analyzing your business before you start thinking about internet marketing help – or any other kind of additional marketing for that matter.

Once you've completely optimized everything you have in place, THEN you can start thinking about further prospecting possibilities. I think you'll find that this analyzation process can reveal thousands, hundreds of thousands, or possibly even millions of dollars in missed revenue.

Imagine what some targeted traffic generation tactics can do for your business once the current marketing funnel is as tight as possible...

Think about it this way. With some solid search engine optimization and social marketing through Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, etc, I could send hoards of customers to your website, but if you're not ready for them, what's the point?

Sure, you'll convert a few through sheer statistics, but a system in place that makes conversions a certainty can combine with that new traffic to create a program that doubles revenues.

To find out more about analyzing your marketing efforts and getting some internet marketing help when you're ready, fill out my contact form and see if you're eligible for a free marketing consultation.

Or, if your business is ready for a flood of new customers already, check out my free buzz marketing video for some tactics that can do wonders for a modern business.

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## **Marketing for Consultants: 5 Ideas to Generate Business for Your Practice**

One of my favorite small business niches to consult are actually other consultants. Obviously I don't work with marketing consultants because they already know marketing — well, at least they should — I'm talking about life coaches, executive coaches, diversity consultants, and management consultants. While many of these professionals have a great eye for marketing, they often do not have the time to do it themselves or they just want to focus on what they do best.

Here are 5 simple ideas I use when marketing for consultants.

### **1. Email Marketing**

Email marketing is one of my favorite online marketing tactics, and many experts see it as the most powerful internet marketing skill to have. For a business involved in consulting, the relationship-building nature of this tool is especially powerful (particularly for life coaches).

For most businesses out there, it takes a minimum of 7 contacts to turn a prospective buyer into a customer, and for a consulting business, an industry the hiring process is often carried out by a board and high fees make it a budget-decision, a long decision-making process is the standard.

### **2. Testimonials**

I cannot stress enough how important testimonials are for this type of business. Do not wait for someone to be impressed and volunteer to rant and rave — always ask for a testimony. Your website should be plastered with them, and executive consultants should cultivate testimonials from especially high-profile companies.

### **3. Referrals**

Every time you take on a new client, the first thing you should do after the contract is signed is ask for a referral. In fact, create a standardized form with 5 empty slots for names and contact info, and ask them if they'd be willing to fill it out while you slip into the restroom.

Most people are naturally inclined to fill out empty forms because they were trained to do this in school.

Some may not be comfortable with this tactic. No problem. Just do the best job you can for every client, and ask for referrals after they're convinced of your worth.

Or, if you're starting out, try taking on clients for free or at a discounted price if they promise to give a certain number of referrals after they see results.

### **4. JV with Centers of Influence**

Centers of influence relevant to consultants are lawyers, accountants, CPAs...people who have constant, direct contact with executives in big firms and are trusted by their clients. If you can get in good with professionals in these fields, you can do JV partnerships to help each other out.

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If you've got a decent client list, you have just as much to offer them as they do you. If you can get in really good with one of these centers of influence, one of the best tactics you can use is an endorsed mailing to their client list.

People trust these professionals sometimes more than their own family.

### 5. Host a Seminar

Seminars are a fantastic marketing platform for consultants.

Find a local banquet hall and you can usually book the room for a few hours at a decent price, with meals included. Send out a targeted direct mailing to executives offering a conference — you can even charge a reasonable fee to cover your costs — and put on a presentation teaching something valuable.

Do not use this as a platform to sell though! If the information is valuable enough, people will approach you or contact you after the seminar and inquire about your services.

These are just a small sample of tactics that work wonders when marketing for consultants. Businesses who offer consulting services are growing in demand these days, especially as companies, from small businesses to big corporations, seek out new ways to stay competitive in this economy.

Are you interested in learning more about savvy marketing for consultants? The truth is I have kept my #1 tactic — my bread and butter — out of this article. If you want to find out what it is, contact me about my free marketing consultation.

Or check out my free video about buzz marketing strategies you can put into action to ramp up profits.

(See more Marketing articles at <http://www.InfiniteReachMarketing.com/marketing-blog>)

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### Marketing Ideas for Small Business: 5 Ways to Get Customers Spending More

In this economy, you're likely looking for new ways to bring money in, and countless sales gurus are knocking on your door telling you how this or that new-fangled technology can make all your business dreams come true. But sometimes the answers to our greatest challenges are sitting right underneath our noses.

Case in point: the fastest, cheapest, and most effective way to bring in more profit is to focus on current and previous customers. They've already proven their interest and to some extent you've already gained their trust.

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Therefore, many of the simplest marketing ideas for small business owners like you, who don't always have a huge budget for high-tech marketing, focus on leveraging this micro-segment of your market base.

Let's pick up some of that money you're leaving on the table.

## 1. Stay in Touch

First off, you absolutely, positively need to be staying in touch with your current and past customers on a regular basis. Don't just shrug this off — yeah, everyone's saying it, but are you really acting on it to the full extent?

It's crucial to build different systems for storing client and prospect information and then following up with them. And there are plenty of platforms for doing it these days.

How to get their information?

Simple ask during initial form-filling. Offer discounts or information packets on your website in exchange for email addresses and get them on an automated mailing list. Set placards in your place of business, offering an immediate discount to those who text your system.

Restaurants, especially, can fill up on a slow day by simply sending out a text message with a surprise discount!

Follow-up communication channels range from telephone numbers to email addresses to text messages to mailing addresses to social media, and most of these communication channels can be automated for your convenience (though I strongly advise against automating telephone calls).

Now that you've got their info, send them news about your business, industry goings-on that might affect them, alerts about promotions, or reminders about annual checkup dates.

It just depends on your business and your imagination.

## 2. Make Them V.I.P.

Create some kind of V.I.P. membership for people who frequent your business.

Entrance can be free or paid—depending on the value of your offer—but either way, people like feeling like they belong. You can see this idea used in businesses in almost every industry, and even a small-town sports bar can capitalize on the idea by giving cards to their regulars and offering a special price on certain drinks for members.

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Reward people for being regulars and they will reward you back!

### **3. Give Them Something for Nothing**

Many entrepreneurs despise marketing ideas for small business that encourage giving promotions, discounts, and freebies because they are obsessed with making a profit on every single transaction. Big mistake!

Instead, think of the lifetime value of every single customer.

How much does a customer typically buy over a year's time? How many years do they keep coming back? And how many of their friends and family members end up coming in to your business as well?

Isn't it worth breaking even sometimes to recoup the lifetime value of the average client?

Getting a break-even price or even taking a loss can be a great way to get people in the door, buying from your company, and you can make a lot of money on the back end or from future buys after you establish a relationship.

Dirt cheap oil changes. Free tooth whitening kits from dentists. Happy Hour restaurant specials. All marketing ideas for small business owners who want to leverage this powerful principle.

### **4. Tell Them What They Can Buy**

You'd be amazed at how much more money you can get off your current customers and prospects if you just ask for it — too many businesses don't do enough to educate their clients about what it is they have to offer.

Don't let people who are there to buy just make their purchase and walk out the door...what if they needed and wanted something more?

Always have a process in place to educate people about what else you have available — other packages, variations, upsells, crossells, and related services are great profit-building and value-adding mechanisms for any business.

### **5. Plug Your Profit Leaks**

How much money do you leave on the table just by letting people slip through the cracks?

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Think about all those times the phone rang but no one picked it up fast enough. Or all those times the person who answered the phone was in a bad mood or didn't know the answer to the question asked.

How about people who search for you online, ready to make a purchase, but cannot find you. Or that land on your website only to find the contact information out-dated.

Now think back to the lifetime value of each and every customer I mentioned before. Isn't it safe to say that very time a mistake like this is made it costs you the lifetime value of a customer?

That's just unacceptable.

Look, before spending more money on expensive new marketing campaigns, take a real hard look at your current systems and processes. Visit your own website and click on every link. Call your company and see how many rings it takes to get someone — how educated they are about helping you.

Analyze every contact point with customers to see where it can be tightened up. Some small business owners are able to double or even triple their profits simply by plugging the leaks!

Want more marketing ideas for small business success? Stay tuned for more articles on how to supercharge your processes.

(See more Marketing articles at <http://www.InfiniteReachMarketing.com/marketing-blog>)

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### **Lesson X: Creating the "Meat" of Your Information Product**

Okay, we've discussed the different kinds of information products out there, and you should have a rough idea of the format you'll be using – whether that be an eBook, a video course, or a comprehensive report; today I want to talk about actually creating your product. This is where a lot of the hard work goes on in Internet Marketing, but it's also the most rewarding step for creative types.

Let's get started:

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## Conducting Research to Serve Audience Needs

You've already thoroughly researched your market to find out what they want to know; now it's time to do the heavy research required to serve those needs, and there are plenty of different ways you can tackle this chore.

Don't know all that much about your niche? No worries — all the information is out there already, and it's often said that writing a book is the best way to master a subject you're interested in.

## Check Out Other Products

I highly recommend going to Amazon.com and buying 4 or 5 of the most popular books in your niche. Read them from back to front, taking copious notes.

**Note:** Don't think this means you're plagiarizing. You're not copying these books. You're studying them and producing something of your own based on your impressions, opinions, and experiences — as well as packaging it in a unique way.

Whether an "expert" does this after studying what other people wrote for decades or for weeks, it's the same exact process. And all experts perform industry research before writing a book or course.

You can also find popular products online — one of the best ways to create something unique is to know your competition in and out, so read their products as well.

## Perform Traditional Research

A lot of the answers your audience wants can also be found just by Googling and reading articles and videos. You're just delivering it in a packaged format for their convenience. Check out Wikipedia, WikiBooks, the library, YouTube, and other online information sources.

## Go to the Experts

How about leveraging experts by interviewing them? This is a real ego stroke for some professionals. Take their knowledge and expertise, format it, put a spin on it, and you've got a great product. Interview a compilation of experts and you've got an amazing product.

Many will be happy to just get a little publicity, but you can also send a digital or written copy of the interview to them to use as they choose.

## Purchase PLR Content

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Another shortcut for fleshing out an information product in record time is to buy prewritten content from an online provider – specifically, content with private label rights. Typically limited to a certain number of buyers, PLR is comes with resale rights but also permission to alter and use the content any way you see fit.

So you can change the graphics and stamp it with a whole new identity, seemingly creating a brand new product. The rights for these offers vary, so always read the fine print.

Also, I don't recommend using PLR without radically changing it though, as your offer won't be unique. Instead, use it as shortcut so you don't have to come up with the layout and outline of your content – then rewrite the material and add some personality and your own experiences.

You'd be amazed at how time-saving this can be. If the PLR is extremely high-quality, all your research will be taken care of already.

### **Public Domain Content**

What about public domain content? Did you know that all content created before 1923 is up for grabs and can be used however you choose? There is also plenty of royalty-free content out there that is more up-to-date – just Google “YOUR NICHE public domain” and see what comes up.

Please do your own research to find out what is legal in your area, however, as public domain laws differ from place to place (and I'm not a lawyer).

### **Repurposing Other Content**

If you've got content you've already used before, you can often repurpose that for this project. Some marketers use the same basic lessons and spin them in different ways, marketing them to different audiences.

For instance, maybe you'll create a book about marketing for freelancers and target it towards stay-at-home moms who want to make income writing articles. Then, you could open up the files, change it just a little bit, and direct your message at world travelers or maybe web designers.

Another way to repackage old content is to offer it on a new medium.

If you've got a bunch of articles on a popular website, they might be packaged into a book on Amazon. Or made into a series of videos. Or vice versa – a video series can be made into a detailed report or email course.

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Packaging these different formats together is also extremely effective for offering more value to your audience.

## Hire a Freelancer

Finally, you can hire someone else to create your product for you. There are a lot of solid outsourcers out there who specialize in ghostwriting information products.

One of the best places to hire them is Elance.com. Post a detailed job bid and different freelancers will bid on your job. And the great thing about Elance is they have a convenient escrow system where you can deposit the money until the job is finished or release it in small amounts as milestones are completed.

Other great places to find people to outsource to include Guru.com, Craigslist, and The Warrior Forum.

One thing to keep in mind though – it can be tempting to outsource your content creation to the cheapest provider out there, but you often get what you pay for, whether that be in quality standards or professional conduct.

It's crucial your main product be of the highest quality possible so your customers are thrilled with their purchase. If you pinch pennies, you may very well pay for the decision later.

To find out more about hiring outsourcers, click [here](#).

## Create an Outline

It's time to take all the research you've compiled and organize it into an outline of how your product will be structured. You know all the points you want to hit on, but you want an overriding theme that unfolds in a logical pattern.

Take a look at the big picture of your product and separate your message into main sections. You can then create main points and sub-points you want for each section. You learned how to do this in school when creating essays – outlining an info product is the same idea but just on a larger scale.

Don't be vague – dig deep and be precise about what you will discuss. As you go along, think of other ways you can add value to each point, and expand the outline until it feels completely finished.

Take a look at your competitor's products to get an idea of how theirs are laid out – this can also give you new ideas for how to present or categorize your section in a unique way that sets you apart.

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## Start Creating

Okay, you've got a detailed outline, it's time to turn it into something. If creating a written product, just sit down and follow your outline, fleshing out your sections point by point. If you're making a video course, use Camtasia Studio or a free program like Jing to record your videos one by one.

If you prepared a truly detailed outline in the last step, your product will practically write itself at this point! Now, go get started.

## Make it Happen

**Step 1: Research your subject, buy rights to pre-existing content, or gather materials.**

**Step 3: Organize your main points into an outline.**

**Step 4: Flesh out your content.**

(See more Marketing articles at <http://www.InfiniteReachMarketing.com/marketing-blog>)

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## 4 Ways an Effective Email Marketing Program Accomplishes Business Goals

One of the simplest, most effective methods a company can use to leverage online marketing for more profits is to implement an email marketing campaign. No other marketing tactic is so successful at increasing profits each and every time it is used correctly, and you'd be hard pressed to find a company for which it cannot add more to the bottom line.

If you don't know much about email marketing, here's a basic rundown of how it works. You offer something on your company website for your clients and prospects — some kind of incentive, like a valuable report related to your industry or a discount on your products and services.

The catch is that in order to access this incentive, they must opt-in using their email address, at which point they are added to a database.

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An email marketing sequence, set up beforehand, then automatically delivers messages to your database, maximizing your marketing reach. You can also send out broadcast messages to your list on a whim — one-time messages alerting readers to current goings-on.

So, what is the purpose of this automated marketing system? Let's look at a few of the goals accomplished.

## **1. Remind Clients and Prospects You Exist**

Well, the most essential purpose of an email marketing program is to keep your offer and your company in the forefront of your prospects' minds — as well as the minds of current and past customers.

In the marketing world, we often say it takes a minimum of 7 contacts to turn a prospect into a buying customer. So, if you just let visitors to your website slip through the cracks, you toss away the potential to convert them into customers.

Consider the many different instances where a website visitor might hold off on a purchase, even when they want to make one. They might be in a hurry to do something else, like pick up their kid from school. They might not have all necessary financial details on hand. Or maybe they're just still on the fence.

Email marketing allows you to "talk to" these visitors again and again so they can purchase from you when the time is right.

## **2. Build Credibility with Prospects**

Email marketing is also about building credibility with your database. Your occasional email builds brand recognition; often, familiarity makes all the difference in whether or not a person "feels" your offer is credible. Once familiarity develops, your company name becomes the first thing they think of when they need what you offer.

Emails are also a great place to build up your image as an expert in your industry. You don't want to constantly sell to your readers — rather, offer valuable information to create an image of expertise they can trust.

If you're already running a blog to build credibility on your site, broadcast those same articles out to your email list — a great way to kill two birds at once.

## **3. Spread the Word about News and Sales**

As hinted before, most email marketing programs also allow you to send out one-time broadcasts — a great feature for alerting your readers about specials, discounts, and news

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about your company. If business is slow, a well-targeted special can often charge things back up and get some feet walking through the door.

Or, pre-set emails can be automated to deliver news of holiday specials planned well in advanced.

Access to promotions only available to your list are often all it takes to get a customer handing over their email address, and they will look forward to your messages if your specials are good enough.

#### **4. Up Sells and Cross Sells**

You can also use your automated email marketing program to up sell and cross sell customers after they buy — indeed, the easiest, fastest way to add to the bottom line is to get more money from clients who are already purchasing.

Again, all of this is automatic, and your up sells and cross sells can be programmed to hit your client's inbox at predetermined times after they've made their purchase. A one-time offer delivered right after purchase is a great way to get them while they've still got their wallet in their hand.

Whether you're collecting emails from customers who actually come into your business or giving them a good reason to opt in at your website, there are plenty of creative ways to both entice them to sign up to your list and to start buying once they are in your database.

Stay tuned because soon we'll be discussing specific tactics you can use to accomplish the goals discussed in this article.

(See more Marketing articles at <http://www.InfiniteReachMarketing.com/marketing-blog>)

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#### **Using Pipe Screens: Filtering Through the Details**

Have you ever spent a good deal of money on what should have been premium tobacco only to smoke it out of a nasty-tasting, fouled-up pipe? What a waste, right? Or how about this cruel smoking experience — ever accidentally inhale ash or hot debris through the pipe stem and into your mouth and throat? Sheer fire-breathing misery...

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Moments like this quickly turn what should have been a relaxing smoke into you choking and reaching for a glass of water instead.

And let's face it, even when you don't suck in a throat-full of hot ash, a lack of a pipe screen still allows excess debris and tar into your lungs, which can be harder on your health.

### **Pipe Screens Can Help**

Pipe screens aren't just for show; they're meant to catch all that junk and allow you to truly savor the smoking experience. By pulling screens out frequently for cleaning and/or replacing, you keep your pipe tasting good so you can appreciate that high-grade tobacco you love.

Not to mention that pipe screens are so cheap and easy to use that for the great advantages had they're well worth the minor effort.

But what kind should you buy? Well, let's have a look at some of your options.

### **Brass Pipe Screens**

Brass screens are an extremely popular choice and have been around for a while — you can easily spot them by their typical yellowish-gold coloring. Brass is quite malleable and easy to put into your pipe, but some people complain it gives off too much of a metallic flavor.

While some brass models are high-quality, beware of the cheap ones, which can deteriorate over time and start coming apart. Once a screen has holes, it can cut fingers or, at best, allow debris into the pipe when smoking, which renders it worthless.

### **Stainless Steel Pipe Screens**

The stainless steel screens offer another option, coming in the usual metallic color we all know. Two different screen choices are available: coarse meshing, which is not as tightly woven, allows a greater flow of air volume to pass through, but fine meshing is woven much tighter.

Each has advantages. Coarse meshing may not filter the smoke as much as you would like, while the fine meshing tends to get clogged with debris and may be more difficult to draw through. It depends on what you're looking for.

Some smokers worry that extremely high temperatures may actually oxidize stainless steel, not only giving smoke a metallic flavor but possibly even being hazardous to your health, though the scientific evidence on this is questionable.

### **Additional Alternatives**

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Additional alternatives to the typical brass and stainless steel selections include glass and porcelain. These look a lot different than screens made from metal, with larger air holes and a freer flow of oxygen and smoke. They are also easier to use; just drop them in the bowl and you're good to go.

More health-conscious users like these alternatives because they believe they are 100% non-toxic and say they do not affect taste. Other tobaccos purists just like to get an unhindered draw off their pipe.

### **How to Use Your Pipe Screen**

Trying to put in your first brass or stainless steel screen can be confusing because it often just wiggles around in the bowl, refusing to stay put. Heat it up first until it is red hot, using a pair of tweezers, and after it cools down substantially, cram it in there whatever way it fits.

After you've smoked through it a few times it should stay in place.

If you can, leave some excess screen sticking up and out of the bowl. This makes it easy to tweeze and pull out later without causing damage.

Change your screens often, especially when using brass or stainless steel. Excessive use can form holes, which kind of defeats the purpose of having a screen in the first place. Always keep extras on hand so you can just swap them out easily if you notice them breaking down.

### **A Word on Making Your Own Screens**

Some low-budge, creative types like making their own screens out of a wide range of household screen items or just to "make do" when they run out of screens — don't ever do this!

Not only do they perform poorly for smoking purposes but these types of screens often come with a toxic coating of paint or some kind of plastic, which can really damage your health.

So, only use screens specifically manufactured for tobacco pipes.

Ready to stock up on your own pipe screens so you can smoke healthy and clean? Click here to check out some of the models we've reviewed for your convenience. And enjoy your smoke!

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### **Winter Biking: Nor Sleet Nor Snow**

For many, the last thing they want to do is trade their nice, warm car for a bicycle at this time of year, and even if you're playing with the idea the increasing rain and impending snow is probably your number one concern. But with a little preparation and perspective winter biking isn't as bad you might think.

Winter biking takes preparation but it is just as much an improvement for your life as biking any other time of year. For some of us, that fresh air even feels better when it's cold. It seems that much more fresh and invigorating.

And you will find you aren't cold at all once you get out there pedaling.

Believe it or not, a lot of people find themselves struggling to keep from being too hot, especially if they made the mistake of throwing on a big winter jacket. Just some decent warm clothes will be all you need once your heart is pumping.

Remember that multiple layers create more of an insulating effect than big bulky jackets. You don't need thickness to stay warm – try wearing a t-shirt and a couple long sleeves instead.

Also, you have to be more careful riding a bike in the winter. If the concrete is icy or wet it can get pretty slippery, but cars are more likely to be involved in accidents in these conditions too.

You just have to think about the conditions before you hop on your bike and be sure to take precautionary measures. One thing to really think about is that if the weather is particularly ugly it is more difficult to see you, so take heed on blind corners and intersections.

A solid helmet is a must in this kind of weather even if it is not required by law. You might not be going that fast, but make no mistake, if you slip on a bad patch of ice and your head hits the pavement you can be seriously injured.

To minimize the risks of these incidents, get some tires with really good traction. Mountain biking tires are a great choice, but if you have the money and will be riding in extreme conditions, try to get some winter tires.

Eye gear is also helpful to keep the rain and slush tossed up from passing vehicles out of your eyes. Some are fine with sunglasses; others prefer some cool-looking snowboarding goggles.

Good lights are a must for any serious commuter if you plan to ride at night. Your eyes usually adjust to the dark enough to see, so the headlight is more for being visible to other drivers.

Also, in many places it is the law.

I personally like a light with the pulse option because I find a flash is more eye-catching.

It's not necessary, and a lot of bicyclists don't like to have extra weight up so high when riding, but I like to have a quality backpack when I'm riding because I usually have my laptop with me. Victorinox, the company that makes Swiss Army knives, sells some high-quality packs with great organization features.

It's also a nice way to carry paperwork, my cell phone, a light jacket, and water or food.

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Take your bike to the shop before winter starts and get a tune-up. Or learn to do the maintenance yourself – it’s really a good skill for a regular bicyclist to have.

Some people even consider winter cycling a way to enjoy some sport in the cold season, and in particularly snow-blanketed times it can certainly be just as exhilarating. This is a good mentality to cultivate. It’s nice to take a break from being an adult and get in a little “play” on the way to the daily grind.

Enjoy your ride!

(See more green living and green business articles at <http://www.GreenBuyGuide.com>)

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### WEB CONTENT

#### About Page – Chinese Herbalist, Sik Chi Stanley Cha

Acupuncturist, Chinese herbalist, and massage therapist Sik Chi Stanley Cha is a native of Hong Kong who moved to the United States in 1996. He received his Bachelor of Science in Oriental Medicine (2000) and Master of Science in Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine (2001) at Bastyr University, one of a mere seven naturopathic medical schools accredited by the U.S. Department of Education and an institution recognized as a pioneer in the field.

As a licensed Washington State East Asian Medicine Practitioner, Chan began practicing in Seattle back in 2002 after graduation and specializes in acupuncture (Chinese, Japanese, and Korean style), herbs, and Tui Na (Chinese Massage). In addition, he holds national board certification as a Diplomat of Acupuncture and Chinese Herbology (NCCAOM)—a mark of excellence and integrity in the field of Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine.

In addition, Chan worked with Hoy Ping Yee Chan, Seattle author and acupuncturist, as well as several other expert collaborators, to compile and translate documents for the book, “Acupuncture for Stroke Rehabilitation – Three Decades of Information in China (Blue Poppy Press).”

Published in June 2006, the manuscript draws from scores of clinical trials to analyze evidence for the effective use of acupuncture in stroke treatment. “Acupuncture for Stroke Rehabilitation” now serves as a clinical text for Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine practitioners everywhere.

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Chan's main focus revolves around the use of acupuncture, massage, and herbology to tackle health issues and manage pain, approaching treatment of the human body from a holistic perspective. In accordance with Traditional Chinese medicine, he addresses both the symptoms and the root causes of a condition and bases treatment on the stage of the condition rather than using a "cure-all" solution.

Are you suffering from unnecessary pain, disease, or overall declining health?

Contact Dr. Chan today to find out more about Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine and how they can be used in conjunction to restore order to your life.

You can get in touch with Chan directly here, or read the articles on this site to find out more about his holistic approach to medicine.

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### **Restaurant Page – Zoe Yellow Bar & Restaurant**

Kick back to the chilled-out vibe in one of Chiang Mai's newest, trendiest restaurants. Let our misters cool you down while you listen to our laid back tunes or watch games and sports on the Big screen TV. Zoe in Yellow Corner is a great place to recover from your hangover.

And the food! Our unique Chiang Mai restaurant serves up both Thai and Mediterranean cuisine in style, offering a dazzling feast of zesty Greek specials, including homemade bread, tzaziki, hummus, and our signature feta cheese rolls. Don't miss the featured Beef Filet—a slow marinated beef filet served with French fries and a salad.

Cap it off with something sweet. Delicious desserts include brownies, carrot cake, blueberry cheesecake, and a baklava you'll not soon forget!

In the evening, stop by and order something from our full bar to warm up for the party getting started in our Zoe Club, one of the most happening places in town. We've got a wide liquor selection, plenty of the cocktails you love, and the international wines and beers that can be so hard to find here in Thailand.

Our restaurant has free wireless as well, so bring along your laptop to check in with the folks back home.

Open from 11am to midnight!

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### **Understanding the Value of Translating Your Message Into French**

Did you know that French is one of the most important, widely-spoken languages in the world?

Even today, the “language of love” serves as a first language in twenty-nine different countries around the globe. You can find French-speaking people in a wide variety of international destinations from Africa to Canada to Switzerland and even small pockets of the US.

130 million people worldwide claim French as their native language, and that number is growing fast. By the year 2025, experts estimate that number will grow to 500 million. As a major language in the European Union, the mark of this beautiful language on business, politics, and society is here to stay.

But is it really necessary to communicate in French for business purposes? After all, don't most French-speaking people speak English as well?

Well, yes, but not all do, and certainly not all of them are fluent. And when a native-French speaker searches online, which website do you think they go to first? The one in English, a language they may know but still struggle with, or the one in their native tongue?

Even the most adventurous French-speaking prospect will feel more comfortable spending their money with companies they are sure to completely understand.

In other words, they are skipping your site, and you are leaving money on the table!

To go further, competitors who have already caught on to this are having a field day because these French-speaking marketplaces are so much less crowded. It's just easier to stand out, whether that means by making your unique selling position known or ranking in the search engines.

By making the choice to send your message in French, you get to be a big fish in a small pond.

What about cultural differences?

Using bilingual translators for your online content can make or break intercultural marketing campaigns. Think culture is no big deal?

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In 1988, the General Electric Company and Plessey attempted a huge merger in Europe to form a company called GTP. Unfortunately for them, GTP sounds exactly like a French expression for passing gas—not the best way to put your foot forward in the business world.

Or what about Gerber, the company we all know for the innocent, smiling infant on the front of the package? Did you know Gerber doesn't even bother marketing in France because there the word means the same thing as "vomiting?"

If these huge companies struggle with these mistakes, what are you missing out on?

All of this can be avoided by simply having highly-trained bilingual professionals translate your online content for you and "proofread" your marketing message before it becomes a marketing mistake. Or have us put entirely new content together for you, in French or English.

To find out more about our services, click here now. Or go here to contact us today!

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### EZINEARTICLE.COM SUBMISSIONS

#### **5 Steps I Took to Change My Mindset and Get Over My Ex Girlfriend**

Have you ever had your heart stomped and felt like your whole world had ended? I used to see it happen to other guys, and I'd shake my head when I saw them act like life was over. And I'd be thinking, "Man, just move on."

Easier said than done - that's what you find out when it happens to you. But it can be done, and for me, the most powerful thing was gaining control of my mindset.

Here are 5 steps I took to change my mindset and get out of the rut:

#### **Step 1: I Determined the True Source of My Pain.**

One of the first things I had to do to get over my ex-girlfriend was put things in perspective. After some careful reflection, I realized it wasn't even really her I was so hung up on. In fact, I'd thought about ending it myself a few times. What really had me so shook up when it came down to it was feeling rejected.

#### **Step 2: I Got Realistic.**

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Once I realized why I was really hurting, it gave me a chance to step back and look at the reality of the situation. The truth is we never would have been happy together. In fact, I probably always would have wondered if I could have had something more.

The break-up wasn't her fault. It wasn't my fault. It was just one of those necessary things in life that hurts but is nonetheless necessary. And when I put it in perspective like that, it didn't sting so much.

### **Step 3: I Re-Evaluated My Life.**

Okay, I am embarrassed to say I had it pretty bad. I was so stuck on this girl that I had completely brushed aside all these other dreams I had. Moving to Hawaii. Getting some world-traveling under my belt. Applying for seasonal work at a ski resort.

After some time away from her, I sat down and realized I could do anything I wanted now. There was no "other half" to worry about. I hadn't felt so free in years.

### **Step 4: I Changed My Life.**

When I saw how off track I had gotten from what I really wanted in life, I was able to center and focus. I sat down and wrote a list of all the goals I'd been distracted from, then I chose four of those goals and wrote out an action plan for accomplishing them.

Some people say our worst moments in life are really opportunities - for me this was an opportunity to grow and start over. This not only changed my mindset about what it meant but gave me healthy habits and activities to take up my time and distract me.

### **Step 5: I Saw the Big Picture.**

All these points above all came down to this one thing - and this was the key I used to get over my ex-girlfriend - all these steps were about changing my focus in life. The end result was that I ended up a better man because we broke up.

I was now improving myself by working on my body, my life, my friendships, and my confidence. I wasn't so caught up in this dysfunctional relationship, and as a result of implementing all these positive life choices, I was able to start becoming more myself than I had been in years.

In the end, it gave me a better life and led to better relationships with better women in the future.

Are you struggling with your own heartbreak after some girl left you in the dust? I know, I know - she wasn't just "some girl" to you; I felt the same way. But you have to disassociate with that notion that she was "the one."

Four months from now, you'll look back and laugh at that idea.

Another thing I did to get over my ex-girlfriend was read how other guys were doing it. Go to <http://www.GetOverHerNow.com> to learn more now.

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## How to Recognize and Treat Periodontitis

Periodontitis is primarily caused by the body's immune system attacking and ultimately destroying the bone that holds the teeth in place. The facial bone plays a vital role in our overall health and helps to shape our face and if this bone becomes infected it leads to a multitude of problems.

One such problem occurs when bacteria are allowed to remain on the teeth in the form of plaque. An unchecked build-up of plaque will lead to gingival crevices forming around the teeth. These crevices then agitate the immune system and cause gingivitis.

If left untreated, gingivitis can turn chronic and will eventually lead to the development of periodontitis. The body's immune system attempts to get rid of periodontitis by removing the bone that holds the infected tooth.

Over time, the gingival crevices redden, swell, and deepen. Thus, the teeth lose support and are prone to falling out. Apart from regular brushing and flossing of teeth, the body's only other form of defense is using saliva to reduce bacteria.

People who lose teeth early in life typically do so because of periodontitis. This oral disease is commonly found in people who have poor oral hygiene and eat an unbalanced, unhealthy and sugary diet.

It is very easy for people to prevent plaque, gingivitis and periodontitis from developing in their mouths. Foremost is oral hygiene, followed by a balanced diet and regular visits to the dentist. Also, by brushing teeth twice a day with fluoride toothpaste, the chances of developing periodontitis is vastly diminished.

In ancient civilizations such as Ancient Egypt, the use of twigs and leaves to clean teeth was widespread. While the Egyptians may not have fully understood dental hygiene, they knew that keeping teeth clean and healthy would reduce the chances of serious dental issues later in life.

Many African tribes still chew leaves that contain antibacterial properties.

Furthermore, cultures that have developed outside of Western influence tend to have a regular diet and rarely consume large amounts of sugar. They tend to eat fruits, red meat, fish and other food stuffs that are rich in protein and low in sugar.

What's more, these cultures have not become addicted to nicotine as found in tobacco while many people from Western nations have.

Looking at these differences between the habits of other cultures and comparing them to our own simply stresses how much healthy habits can do. In summary, the risk factors associated

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with periodontitis are defects to the immune system, diabetes, genetic predisposition, poor oral hygiene and smoking.

To prevent plaque, gingivitis and periodontitis from forming, it is recommended that people brush their teeth at least twice a day, using correct brushing techniques. Instructions for these brushing methods can be found at all good dental clinics and online.

Also beneficial is the cleaning between teeth by using dental floss, but the top preventative measure is to quit smoking immediately if you are a smoker. This will not only prevent teeth from falling out, it will also improve a person's life.

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### **Digital Signage For Banks - Some Interesting Ways Your Financial Institution Can Use New Technology**

A bank is often thought of as a boring, drab environment, and digital technology is most well-known for its ability to liven up any environment. So naturally, when bank managers started seeing all the different uses digital signs had for modern environments, they were quick to hop onto the bandwagon so they could create a dynamic environment while maintaining the professional integrity needed in order for people to trust them with their money.

Here are some different uses we are seeing of digital signage for banks.

#### **LED Tickers**

LED tickers are always a great addition to any room that deals with financial numbers. They really set the tone and create a professional, modern atmosphere by displaying financial figures in a constant stream. Also, they can be used to display news headlines. In fact, LED displays are so versatile these days that they can display pretty much anything that fits on the screen.

#### **Transmitting Financial Information**

Financial information can be overwhelming to deal with for people who don't work in the industry and a bank or financial institution is an information powerhouse. The nature of the business means always providing up-to-date information to visitors and employees alike. Digital signage offers a way to transmit the information without confusing everyone and streamlines this process.

#### **Directing Customers**

One of the best uses of digital signage for banks is how much it streamlines the customer/employee interaction. Instead of having to deliver every bit of information personally,

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customers can be given specific directions as soon as they walk in the door. And in a way that they won't simply ignore as they blaze on towards business.

This streamlines processes to help ease the flow of bank activity and limit customer confusion. Not to mention that the wide array of customizable options with modern LED tickers means they can be made in virtually any shape and up to any length. Forming serpentine shapes over unique architectural features or even making circles around a bank kiosk, they can really liven up any room. And that's a benefit any business can live with.

### **Video Entertainment**

Finally, digital signage introduces an entertainment aspect to the banking environment. Standing in line can be monotonous and make people grow restless, but an aptly-positioned display can keep customers entertained and make time pass by a little more quickly. It can be news, a video program, a movie--the choice depends on the mood desired.

These uses do not stop here. The use of digital signage for banks is pretty open to the creative processes of management and can be used in a variety of different ways to coordinate not only with customers but the employees as well. To learn more about how people are using interactive digital technology in our modern financial institutions, go to [http://www.risedisplay.com/markets/financial\\_banking/](http://www.risedisplay.com/markets/financial_banking/).

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