



Your Virtual Business Team

By

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Chapter 1

Creating your Perfect Business

CREATING YOUR PERFECT BUSINESS

Today, entrepreneurs are working harder than ever. Many of you out there who went into business for yourself for the lifestyle, for the freedom, and for the peace of mind, end up working 12-hour day. You may have the luxury of working from home, which is great, but what good is it if you're working all the time and your friends and family don't see much of you? Today, we're going to talk about creating the perfect business. It can be done. If you are currently looking to get into business it is going to be great for you because you'll see how to structure things properly. If you're already in business for yourself and you're buried, we'll show that there's hope for you.

Are you ready to tap into the one thing über-successful entrepreneurs do that may be missing from your business strategies? It's the one thing that separates seven-figure businesses from everyone else.

You want to be working on your business as opposed to being in your business. Outsourcing, in its most traditional sense, is the idea that you are outsourcing overseas. Originally, it had the connotation that you go overseas and you find a firm or a company that can handle a certain segment of your business. Sometimes people are confused. Am I building a team, they wonder. Am I delegating? Am I outsourcing? What am I doing?



The idea here is that you delegate things that are not your strengths. In this context, when we're talking about outsourcing, outsourcing is a staple of savvy business owners. If you are somebody who has your sights set on getting more income, it is really difficult. But if you recognize what you can accomplish by outsourcing, you can get there. It's going to take forever if you do it on your own, but when you start to outsource it's like taking a pool and being able to fill it in record time with a fire hose. You get a bigger bandwidth to move the tasks and activities necessary to your business.

First of all, many entrepreneurs, particularly in the first phase of growth, are strapped for cash. And/or the business is going through some kind of tragedy and there are cash flow restrictions and they are afraid to spend the money. They really don't understand the logic behind the outsourcing, or that they're actually increasing to expand ways to make money. Every day, business owners invest in their growth.

You've invested in marketing, you invest in sales, you invest in new products, you invest and you invest and you invest. But many times people don't realize the one investment area that would sustain their growth is to have a team and a system to

manage this growth. The fear of spending money is literally saying, I don't believe this investment in my business is worthwhile. You've got to stop believing: I can't afford it, or it is not a good investment.

You've got to say to yourself: what would have to happen with this investment if you make it profitable? The better way to think about it is: what would I have to do with my time, or the time of the people I'm hiring, to make the money to cover this investment and make it profitable?

The second reason is people don't understand how to delegate in a way that gives them the control they need, and predictable results. The third reason is, people struggle with slowing down long enough to hire the right people, train them and delegate to them. They think it's going to slow them down, rather than realizing that you can literally take two weeks to hire and train somebody, and then get 10 times as much done for the next six months. The fourth reason is people just don't know how. They're beginning to figure out where to find the people, what to get off their plate, what to do differently.

Those are some of the reasons that people hold back from doing the delegating and outsourcing that will really help them.

Think about what a typical entrepreneur's day is like. We've got a million things going on. We've got the stimulation of email and the internet. If you're on social media at all you're constantly barraged with new ideas, new things, and people needing things – clients, vendors, and team. We're just about able to stay consistent where we are right now, with the level of information we have. When we want to grow that means we've got to take on new stuff.

We've got to take on new tasks and new strategies. Maybe we even have to learn something. Maybe even have to create something. This can seem overwhelming because if you don't know how to really prioritize, or don't really understand how to streamline things and get things in alignment so that somebody can take them off our plates. Let's take this idea of growth for a second. If you're going to grow to the next level, and you're already impacted, you're already overwhelmed where you're at, how on earth are you ever going to get anything else off your plate, or to grow, if you don't have people helping you?

We just kind of spin around and around in this overwhelming environment and sometimes people we hire create more stress because we don't understand the delicate balance between our style and the people that we're hiring. So we end up hiring people that require things from us that we don't have the time for, or didn't really anticipate we need to do.

Generating Revenue with a VA



Is it more important to free you up to do the things that make money, or do you need to have other people getting more money making activities done, or both?

Sometimes, it is both. If you look at it from this point of view, most of us

spend more than 50 percent of our time doing things that are not our own high payoff activity. We do things because we have to. We do things because we've gotten lazy and we don't want to take the time to get them off our plate for someone else.

Sometimes you think you can just do it faster yourself, or you do things out of habit because you've always done it, or you think that nobody can do them as well as you. Sometimes you have to start by being very clear about how you could get some things off your plate, so you make sure that you are spending your time doing the things that only you can do to grow the business.

The second dimension is: can someone else be doing the things to make me money? There are three levels of this. One is getting the lead generation done you're

your marketing activities are done by other people it means they're going to get done. There are so many entrepreneurs that get busy serving clients and doing fulfillment so they don't have the time to do all the marketing. Blog posts, article submissions, social media management, SEO, linking etc., can be done in the backend to keep your marketing and your lead generation up, which is essential. The second thing is, can somebody help you do more sales?

Marketing becomes obvious, but at a certain point you need to look at someone else helping you sell more. You can't outsource everything but, depending on the model you're in and where you're at in your growth, when you're ready to leap to a higher level of success, you may start to realize that in order to make more money and to get more leverage in place, you need to have other people who are trained to deliver your service to clients. You can create "mini-mes" and start to replicate the things that you do well and start to offer more of those services to clients.

Outsource System

Here is an easy system to figure out what you can and can't outsource. It starts with writing down all the things that you are doing and then separating them into three categories. One category is: what gives me passion and fuel? What do I love to do? The next type of activity is the things that we do because we have to, but we don't really like

to do them. Maybe they burn us out a little bit. The third category is things we never get to, or we procrastinate, or we do them really badly.

The reason this system is called “Hidden Gold” is because there are hidden tasks you don’t even realize you’re doing that – when you get them off your plate – are going to free you up to generate more income because other people can help you.

Different Types of Virtual Teams

The concept of a virtual team can be confusing. Traditionally there is a virtual environment where there are employees. You hire somebody, either full-time or part-time, who is dedicated to your business.



Then there would be a virtual contractor. A virtual contractor is any type of expert that you hire to come in and bring a specific skill or expertise. It could be a web designer, a sales copywriter, a sales person, a marketing strategist, etc. The last one is more of what might be called a virtual assistant. A virtual assistant is a contractor, where there’s an outsourced role, but these people are actually different. They’re not typically dedicated to you, they typically have multiple

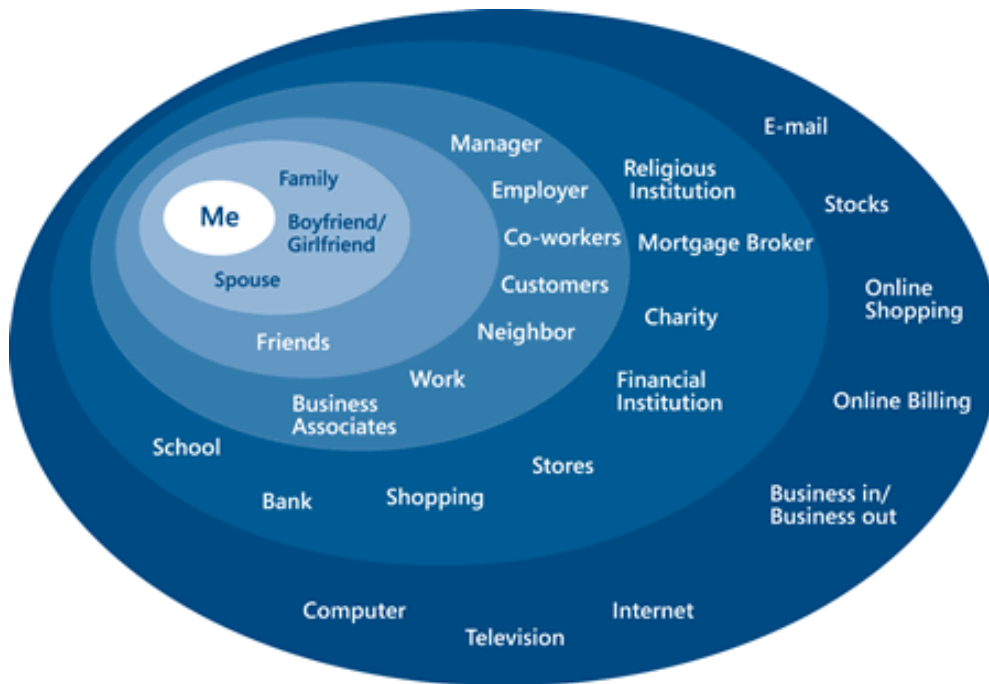
clients and they are going to have a varied set of skills such as online business managers, more general VAs, social media virtual assistants etc.

Privacy Issues

This has to do with the type of person you're hiring, and whether or not you're hiring someone to work for you as a contractor or as an assistant. You also have check and see if they are bonded, and check their track record. Do you know other people who have used them? You need to put basic legal documents in place, non-disclosures and different types of protection devices for you. If you have to let somebody go, always change all your passwords and anything they had access to so that they can't get in.

People in the Philippines are trustworthy almost to a fault. They're so trusting you have to be careful what you tell them because they'll believe anything. They spend most of their free time in church. These are people that would never consider stealing something, or wronging somebody. Today almost all shopping carts are encrypted and most CRM systems are encrypted. You usually just need the last four digits of a credit card so security is generally not an issue, but even if you your VA actually had sensitive credit card information, they wouldn't know what to do with it because nobody in the Philippines uses credit cards.

Figure 1. Levels of Privacy



The only time you could possibly not have enough tasks to outsource is if you're just getting started, you have no clients, and you're just starting to figure out who you are and what you offer. That may be the only time. But I always tell people, the minute that you have a clear idea of your products and what you have to offer, and you're ready to start marketing, you have enough tasks to outsource. A lot of people who are starting a business on the side and looking for it to transition them out of the workforce, or be a side business, are probably already working 40 hours a week.

You can get things off your plate that don't have to do with your product or service, which is what you do. You can get list-building and website updates, blog updates and all those things you just don't have to do, to someone else. It frees up your time to do more of the things that will move the business forward.

Mistakes

The first key mistake is called the hire method. The hire method is when we are looking for someone, we pick up the phone, we get a referral, or we see somebody's ad somewhere, we have a conversation, and we like the person. When you outsource and delegate, you need to make sure that you follow a proven process to get results. This is called the hire method, and it means that you're taking your time to be clear about what you want to get off your plate; you're taking the time to assess two or three different candidates, and maybe two or three different types of outsourcing firms. You want to make sure that you have checked references, maybe even give a test to make sure the candidate really has the competencies that you think they do.

Missing even one of those steps can put you in a situation later where you realize they are not suitable, and then you have to fire them. Having to fire somebody after spending the time and energy to train them is no fun.

The second key mistake is what we call the dump and run. Again, as entrepreneurs, we want to get things done. We don't want to spend a lot of time explaining ourselves. We want things done quickly. We don't want to slow down to teach somebody, or tell somebody, or really explain to somebody how to get something done. Or maybe we still think people are mind-readers and if we give a few cryptic on what we want done then other people are going to figure it out. The problem is we might have a talented person on our team, but we've dumped something on them and we have not really explained it very well and they're left in a quandary.

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Chapter 2

Outsourcing your Busy Stuff

OUTSOURCING YOUR BUSY STUFF



Do you remember why you decided to get into business for yourself: the freedom, the income, the ability to do what you enjoy? And then somewhere you ended up swapping those dreams and found yourselves answering emails, phone calls, and being overwhelmed by social media?

In this chapter, we are going to talk about BPO, or business process outsourcing, such as customer support, email filtering, checking voicemail, telephone services, invoicing, and more.

A lot of companies get into social media as a cost effective way to spread the word about what it is they do, and the public policy and social issues the business addresses. Starting a blog can increase your web traffic quite a bit. You can use Facebook and Twitter to update your followers about recent blog articles as well as using feed burner to get your RSS feed out. You can also use LinkedIn to connect with other professionals.

You can sign up for a free online community on Named that is devoted to writing measurable annual goals. Goal writing is really an art as much as it's a science. The goals are supposed to be like math word-problems and people who have the spirit of a goal in mind know what they mean when they write it down. However, it's not something that's portable; it's not something that somebody else can just pick up and know what it means. Writing in clear, succinct, tactically sound language is really important.

You can also use SlideShare to create a slide cap presentation where you upload a PowerPoint presentation, record an mp3 audio track to go with it, and then marry the two together on the SlideShare site. This is a free service and then you can embed the presentations on your blog and on your website.

Getting Traffic to your Blog



When you start out something new it takes forever for traffic to really ramp up, but you can look at forums and groups like Yahoo Groups, where people are posting questions about related issues, and you can answer some of those questions and include a link to your blog. If it is something that you have already written about, rather than

reinvent the wheel, you can just say you have blogged on this topic and tell them they could get more information on your blog.

You can also use a plug-in for WordPress which does SEO that automatically updates to Facebook pages and Twitter accounts.

LinkedIn can also feed your RSS feeds so any place where you have a social media presence, if there is any way to draw in your RSS feed and have it display at that other location.

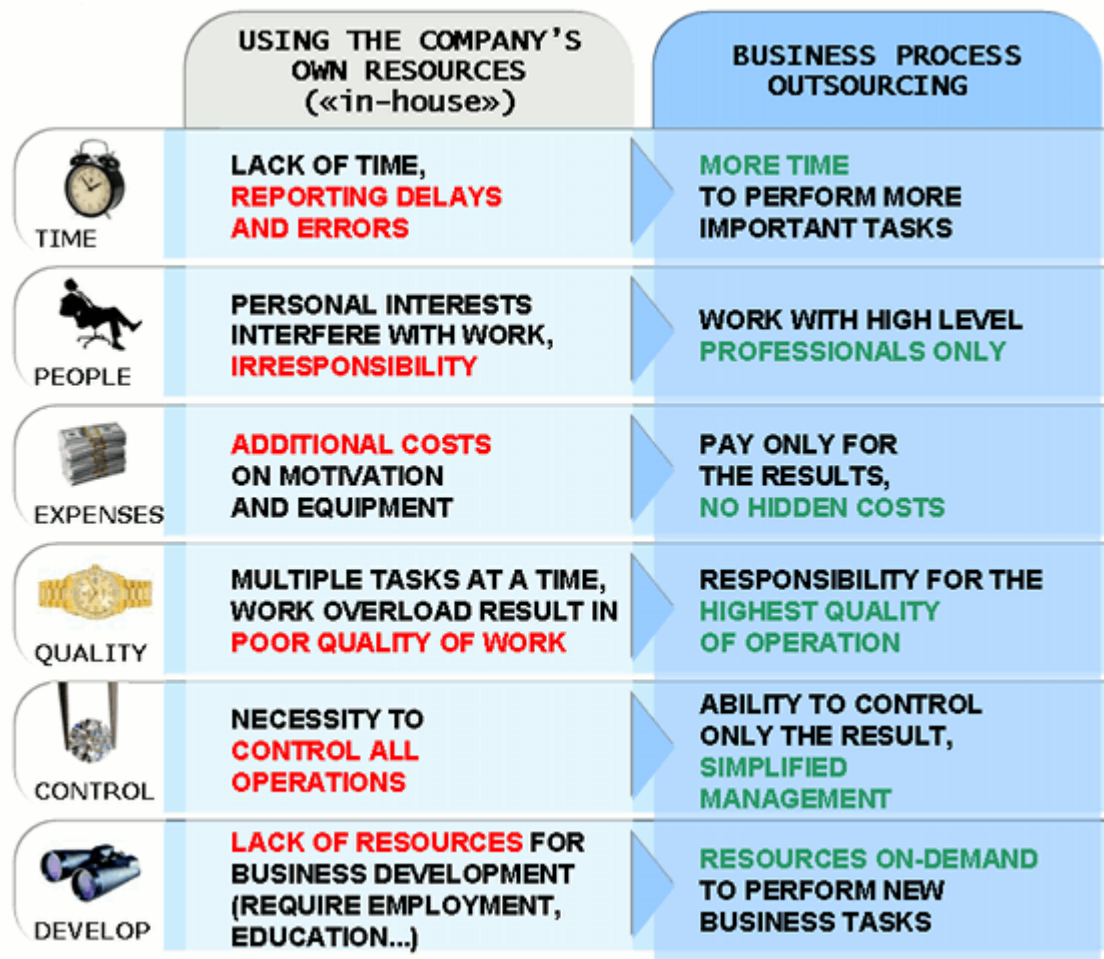
You can also use Podbean to host your podcast content so you don't have to worry about bandwidth and storage space which is a really nice thing. There are metrics that come from Podbean, as well as information on how frequently are podcasts are being downloaded which is good data as well.

Hire an Outsourced Employee

Most small business owners do everything themselves because it's not stuff that other people necessarily know, and they can't afford to pay a person even if they could find somebody that had the knowledge.

A lot of this is about cost; sometimes it is the most affordable way for you to get the help that you desperately need. Think about your voicemails: while you are calling in, listening to your voicemails and writing them down, five other people are calling at the same time and leaving you more voicemails. It's a vicious circle and it never stops.

Figure 2. Why you Should Outsource



Your virtual assistant can get your voicemails, transcribe them, and then email them to you. You can go through them and pick out the ones you can delegate back to your virtual assistant. If you don't have time to call them back, your virtual assistant can call them back. Your virtual assistant can also provide services such as personal assistance, customer support, email filtering, voicemail checking, answering phone calls, scheduling appointments, marketing, LinkedIn, Facebook, article writing, video marketing, telemarketing, data mining, and other tasks as well.

It is very important to give good instructions to your VA and you can use a system called BOSS, basic operational sequential steps. We want to emphasize the importance of creating systems and good training instructions using written, audio, and video tools whenever possible.

Using a standard written employee manual is a pretty outdated concept. Because if you do a print employee manual every time you publish it something changes, policy-wise, and you have to reprint content and redistribute it. Even if you do it as a PDF, you still have to redo it and redistribute it every time it gets changed. That can be tedious and time consuming, and people lose track of what the current version is and mistakes still crop up.

These days it is best to use a wiki, just like Wikipedia, because it can be updated on the fly and it can be kept current. Once you correct it, it's done and everybody's looking at the current version. TiddlyWiki is a good tool because it's free and easy to use.

Egnyte is a computing solution. Basically, you lease server space somewhere out in the universe and it's got a built-in dashboard that's a really intuitive user interface. As the administrator you can go in and create folders, set up permissions and have a large number of standard users. Your virtual assistant can be a standard user on the account so you don't have to pay extra for them. You can give your virtual assistant access to folders and they can log in and go straight to work.

Egnyte is inexpensive. You can also use it for off-site data backup, so it's an affordable backup solution, as well as a way to share your content with other users.

It's incredibly intuitive, once you get it all started, there are free templates to configure the way it looks so you aren't stuck with a generic version that it comes in. You can customize if you are good with HTML.

You can also use Dropbox, Central Desktop, or Basecamp, each of these include features such as creating internal workspaces for employees to share files and documents; ways to invite vendors, partners, clients into secure environments; ways to

grant access, permissions on an individual or group level; project management with your virtual assistant, clients, or partners; also discussions, threads, document management and calendar tools, Google Calendars and Google Docs are free. There are many tools and resources, and many ways to accomplish your goal; the key is to use them.

Turning Business Cards into Clients



I'm sure most of you go to networking events, or seminars, or conventions, and you probably come back with a stack of business cards. You have every intention of getting in touch with those people but you get busy and you don't monetize those business cards. If you have a virtual assistant when you get back to the office you can scan in the business cards, and email them to them. They are scanned and read by an OCR reader; they take that information and enter them into your database.

If your time is valuable and if you are overwhelmed by tasks that you know you can outsource to others for under \$6 an hour, you need to hire a virtual assistant.

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Chapter 3

INFUSIONSOFT & 1SHOPPINGCART

INFUSIONSOFT & 1SHOPPINGCART

If you run an online business you are likely familiar with shopping carts, merchant accounts, payment gateways, customer database, affiliate programs, and auto responders. If you're not familiar, we will cover some of the basics in this chapter.

However, our focus is on how to outsource many of the tasks associated with using the Infusionsoft and 1ShoppingCart. Now, please note that if you are using a different system, the same outsourcing and strategies that we discuss, and information on how to train your assistant, can be applied for other systems as well.

This subject matter is critical for anyone who is running an e-commerce business and wants to build internet-based business. Talk to any Internet marketer about shopping carts and affiliate systems and you'll hear about the biggest love/hate relationship on the internet. We can't do business without them but they are often a great source of frustration. We are hoping that we can assist with that by the end of this.

Our goal is to show you how to outsource many of the aspects of managing an e-commerce system.

If you currently have a shopping cart or an auto responder system you know it can be frustrating in the beginning. But ultimately, it's worthwhile. It will absolutely change the way you do business and allow you to be a marketing superstar. But often we talk to people who have assistants helping them with their shopping cart system. They are using virtual assistants and are paying around \$40 an hour for that support. What we want you to know is that for the first time I am aware of a company is offering an outsourced employee who can come pre-trained in these systems, for under \$6 an hour. This is truly revolutionary. I hope you're getting excited about it because we're very excited to it share with you.

Different Aspects of the Shopping Cart System

Number one, of course, is the shopping cart, a place where people can place their order and so forth. Then there is the merchant account. Shopping cart companies do not issue merchant accounts, but they generally have a favorite merchant company that they work with. But just because they do, don't get feel pressured to use them. 1ShoppingCart and Infusionsoft, which are the big boys in the market, both use PowerPay as their preferred merchant of choice. Take your pick, you can choose.

The aspects are of course, the shopping cart, the merchant account, and the payment gateway account. Think of the payment gateway as just a handshake, really. It's just the company that is the middle between the shopping cart and the merchant account; the company that facilitates the transactions. Why is there a gateway? I have no idea. My guess is somebody figured out the clever way to get into the middle and make some money. Nevertheless, you have to have one, no matter what. There's no way around the gateway. In addition to that there's the customer database, which is huge and critical. Some of these platforms are very intricate and allow you to track all aspects of the database. Others are simpler. There is also the affiliate program. Today, affiliate marketing is more popular than it has ever been. It's a tremendous way to not only build your base, but to make yourself known. Finally, website integration. It's all about taking that shopping cart and having that seamlessly integrate with your website so that nobody even knows that they are in a shopping cart. They will feel like they are dealing with you directly. This is very easy to do. It used to be a lot of harder but now it's super easy. You literally use code generated from your merchant account, then give it to a web designer or drop it into a webpage yourself, and you are off and running.

1ShoppingCart



1ShoppingCart was originally developed by George Tran. George created the first free shopping cart and he very quickly had 100,000 clients. It was amazing, but tough to monetize. I think it went under, or he shut it down. He locked himself in his room for a month, or three months, and wrote 1ShoppingCart, and then he was broke. So he drove out to Vegas, to an internet marketing convention, and shared it with every internet marketer that could find. He actually slept in his car because he could not afford to pay for the hotel room. Some of those marketers took off and ran with it, and it made George a millionaire. He later sold the company and now 1ShoppingCart is one of the most popular shopping cart companies there is. It is a fantastic system.

There are four levels of service. The first level is using it AWeber, or ConstantContact. It's an auto responder system. It is very robust and works great. Auto responder is a way to set up email sequences that will go out on a regular, whenever you want them to go out. It can contract your database and your email. On the database side, it's a little simple, but it's great. The pricing is around \$29 - \$39 per month.

Their system is scalable so it can grow with you, or shrink if need be. So, as time progresses and you decide okay, now I'm ready to start taking credit cards, you can then turn it into a shopping cart and it is easy. You just make the upgrade to the shopping cart module and it all fits together seamlessly.

As you grow, you are going to want to start up an affiliate program and 1ShoppingCart has that as well. You simply upgrade your service and now you have an affiliate module. They have a 19-page set-up guide. At that point, you are probably paying around \$99 a month.

They also have a fourth level service, so you can pay on personal basis or, for another \$30 a month, get phone support.

Infusionsoft



The other most popular software is Infusionsoft. Infusionsoft is a whole different animal. We don't recommend Infusionsoft to the person just starting out. As you grow and need more, then you'll want Infusionsoft. Infusionsoft has a lot more flexibility. A follow up does not have to be just an auto responder; it can include phone calls, triggering phone calls from your staff, automated calls, sending out mail, creating certain sequences of follow-up, and so forth; the list is endless. Infusionsoft is a fascinating platform because it looks very simple, even simpler than 1ShoppingCart. But internally, it's so complex that it can be a bit of monster. But I think you'll know when it's time for you to be with

Infusionsoft. It's when you've outgrown 1ShoppingCart and you need more. That's when you go to Infusionsoft. But prepare to pay; you are going to pay several times more. It starts at around \$300 a month,

There are a myriad of other shopping cart solutions, but for the sake of simplicity, we're going to talk about these two. We don't recommend any others and that's because we don't think you want to use a small, unknown shopping cart system. We don't think they will be able to give you good email deliverability. 1ShoppingCart has exceptional email delivery. The best in the industry is probably AWeber but we don't recommend it because it won't grow with you and Infusionsoft does not have the best deliverability.

Why Are Affiliate Programs Such a Key Part of the Internet?



Affiliate marketing is huge.

For those of you who don't know what it is, and I'm sure there aren't many, affiliate marketing is simply going out there, you create an affiliate program. You offer

commission for either sales or leads, and then you go out there and market your program. People will sign up for your program and then have a vested interest in your

success. They will go out there and market your product and services for a fee, for a commission. It's a great way to build business, it's a great way to not risk money on advertising, and it's also a fantastic way to get the word out. People think of it as being just for sales but you let's say you bring onboard 500 affiliates. We find It is about one percent of affiliates that really carry their weight. So, let's say its five or 10 that are making things happen, great. But the other 490 have still put up banners for your services, or put up links, or written articles about you. So it's a great way to get the word out on what you are doing. Affiliate programs are huge. It's something you absolutely want to be doing.

Training Virtual Assistants to use Infusionsoft and 1ShoppingCart

It may be a bit prohibitive to actually train all of your people in all the aspects of 1ShoppingCart and Infusionsoft. Both platforms can do so much that it would be a huge training program. Fortunately, Infusionsoft and 1ShoppingCart have done a great job with their tutorials. They have tons and tons of material.

The one thing that you would probably not want to outsource is setting up the actual merchant platform and merchant account. There's really no need to share that information with your employee. Not that they could do anything with it, nor would care,

but you probably don't need to. Both platforms are different. In 1ShoppingCart, it's pretty straightforward. Your agent is going to have access to your entire account.

In Infusionsoft, that capability already exists so you'll have a master account, and will use the master account to set permissions and restrictions for your virtual assistant. You can give them their own user account, or they can share your account. You probably would not want to give them access to your master account unless you are only using that account. Otherwise, in the master account, you can set up the preferences, the restrictions, and the permissions for your virtual assistant. Apart from that you can have them access and take care of everything else. There are not really security issues or anything like that; they don't have access to full credit card numbers. I think the more access you give them, the more they'll do for you.

Other functions that virtual assistants handle include managing billing, refunds, managing affiliate systems, adding people to the database in Infusionsoft, ensuring the affiliates are stacked properly, regenerating missing affiliate links, creating affiliate programs, updating client records, creating new offers, creating new web forms, adding things to shopping carts, etc.

Auto Responders



Creating a follow-up sequence in 1ShoppingCart is very simple. First of all you want to write the copy and paste the copy in. You can go text or HTML. You can do what's called inheriting an auto responder. You can inherit a sequence and make

modifications to it. You just set when they are going to go out, like zero days, five days, 10 days, 15 days, 20 days, and how you want to go.

Where to Start your Outsourcer

It actually depends on where you are in your business. Let's say you are just getting started and you're going to sign up for the first time with one of the shopping carts. Your first step would probably be bringing in your database. The second step would be working on your auto responder series in 1ShoppingCart (in Infusionsoft, they call them follow-up sequences) so all of that has to be done. Let's say that you have a mature business that has been running for a while. You're using one of these shopping cart systems, but now you want to start an affiliate program. You can have your virtual

assistant build out your affiliate backend. They could set up how it's structured, what the commissions are going to be, are they going to be paid weekly or monthly, or paid as one time, or an ongoing residual. They can load in all the emails, the marketing emails, the banner, the text links, and so on and so forth. It really depends on where you are in your business.

How to Sign Up

The first step would be signing up for one of those platforms. You can decide what level of service you're going to do. If you are going to go with 1ShoppingCart, you can go with auto responder only; or you can add e-commerce if you want. You can add affiliate if you like. It'll come with a month of free voice telephone support, after that, you'll have to pay for support if you want it (but it is worth it). If you go with Infusionsoft, it's not tiered like that. You'll be paying about \$300 a month to start. And if you set up a second user it is will be another \$50 a month. We suggest starting with 1ShoppingCart unless you are in a larger business, or if you're in multiple platforms and you want to bring it all into one platform, in which case you want to go with Infusionsoft. Once you get all that squared away, or if you already have that squared away, it's time to get a virtual assistant.

Charge Backs

If somebody comes your company and they purchase something from you then they decide they want a refund, no problem, give them the refund. But, if they decide to take it to the next level, and actually go back to their bank, then they are going to file what's called a dispute, and that turns into a charge back. Merchant providers have very little tolerance for charge back, generally, it's one percent. Occasionally, they will let you go two percent, but, you're on their list if you go to two percent. You want to avoid charge backs at all cost. You want to do everything you can to keep you clients happy so it never escalates to a charge back. Unfortunately, in this day and age, charge backs are on the rise and because people know that they can make disputes. It's easier to do today than ever because of credit card law, and because of all the online services. You can easily jump on a web page and dispute something.

You need to do everything you can to fight that or you will lose your merchant account. You have to be very careful.

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Chapter 4

Questions about Outsourcing

QUESTIONS ABOUT OUTSOURCING

Outsourcing is a big deal in our economy. There are articles and books written on it, you can attend countless seminars and hear speeches on the subject, and there is still a lot of confusion. If you Google search “outsourcing,” there are over a million links that come back. There is so much information on this subject, and a lot of differing opinions on what you should and shouldn’t do, and how to do it right, and how not to do it right.



One popular way to outsource or build your business is to decide what you’re good at and outsource everything else. You focus on your company, your core competencies, and you let somebody else do everything else. It sounds really great to pay someone else to do the things you don’t know how to do and focus on your greatest skills. But sometimes it is a little overwhelming.

The best way to know what to outsource, and when to outsource, is to make a list. Make a list of the things you do in a day. Today there are so many entrepreneurs and solopreneurs that are working from home. Why is it we are so bogged down to minutia? Why is it we have more work than we ever have? Why is it that we work for 12,

sometimes 15 hours a day and the next morning we go back in and read another couple hundred emails? It is an ongoing thing and there are so many entrepreneurs at their wits' end. Of course because of the internet, because of computers, we can do more than we ever did before. But also, we're working from home. Maybe 10 years ago, or less, we worked in an office environment. If we were working on something that wasn't really an income generating task for us, we would delegate that out to another employee and we'd get busy doing something else that was a better use of our time. We can't do that from our home office, which is why we need virtual assistants, a virtual staff and team. So the best thing to do is make a list.

Make a list of your IGTs, your income generating tasks. Make a list of what actually makes you money. Everything else should be outsourced. Everything else should be given to somebody else. That is the only way that you can work on your business, as opposed to in your business. That is the only way you can grow your business. You know where your time is best spent; it is best spent in strategizing, strategic alliances and sales. This is what makes a business grow, not emails.

There are always budget constraints. If you can spend a few bucks to outsource, you want to start at the very beginning. You want to grow your business the right way. Of course it's all about budgets. In the U.S. you can hire virtual assistants for \$20 to \$50 an hour. Overseas, you can hire someone for under \$6 an hour.

Privacy Issues

There are several ways you can protect yourself. First of all, you have to realize there is almost no need for the protection, so you're okay. Let me explain why. Most databases have a web-based option. If you work in a web-based application, or web-based CRM, all that information is encrypted and it's safe. The next thing is that your information. Although it's incredibly valuable to you, it is completely meaningless and worthless to a virtual assistant in the Philippines. Even though it is proprietary information to you, it means nothing to them, there is nothing they want to do with it and there is nothing they could do with it. Let's talk about maybe an e-commerce business where your agent might have access to valuable credit card information, which is a valid concern. With credit card information most of the systems like 1ShoppingCart and Fusion Update encrypt all the digits except the last four anyways so you are okay. Even if they were handling the actual credit card numbers, names and everything, they don't use credit cards in the Philippines so they wouldn't even know what to do with that information when they have it.

Those of you who know Filipinos in the U.S. know they are caregivers, they're trustworthy, and they are just great people. It's the same in the Philippines. Basically these people spend all their free time in church. These are honest, hard-working people that would never commit a crime.

Finding Outsourcers

You have to realize there are a lot of hidden cost savings through outsourcing. You can get employees for under \$6 an hour, you're not paying taxes, you're not paying insurance, you're not paying into a 401(k), you're not paying for the desk, the chair, the computer, the internet, the telephone, you're not paying for the office space. Many things can be outsourced.

Filing Online



Let's say you have a doctor's office. You could have a stacking document scanner where everything would get scanned in, it would be in the computer system with an off-system back-up, and it would be totally paperless.

Compensation



You can pay people overseas less because they don't need much to live on. In the Philippines you can pay under \$6 an hour and it is an excellent wage. As a matter of fact, for the very first time in history there is a burgeoning of a middle class in the Philippines and it is all due entirely to the outsourcing business. It's really quite amazing. In addition to that, we encourage you to pay a little bonus to your employees based on performance. You don't have to do this, it is purely elective, but you'll get better performance. Also, they'll tell their friends about you so when you're ready to hire more staff you'll get the cream of the crop. These are small bonuses, it is nothing for you. But these bonuses are quite a bit for them. You have to realize is that there is no such thing as a Filipino who just supports themselves. They are always helping their mother, their sister, their brother, their father; so you're not just feeding one mouth, you're generally feeding two or more. If you haven't been to the Philippines before, the level of poverty is striking, they are a developing nation. Sleeping on a cement floor is normal. You are making a huge difference on a humanitarian level. You have to remember that in a global economy you're not just a citizen of the U.S., you're a citizen of this planet. You're doing a great thing and this is also going to benefit the U.S. because you're going to stay in business and get more tax dollars in the U.S.,

you're going to spend more in the U.S. and you'll inevitably be hiring more people in the U.S. as well.

Getting Started

Marketing and advertising is the only way you're going to grow your business. The first thing I think about in marketing and advertising is Google. I think: where is the best place to go to get the best, laser-specific leads? It's Google. But unless you know what you're doing, given the saturation Google has, all you're going to do is throw away massive amounts of money. If you're on a tight budget that's the last place I'd be looking. I'd be looking for alternatives and using a virtual assistant to outsource your lead generation and list building is the least expensive, most effective way of going about it.

The Philippines is probably the best choice for most people in the U.S., but if you're in the U.S. you want people with a very light accent and that's what you get in the Philippines. Also you want people to get your jokes and laugh back so that there is a connection on the phone. Because we all know what people are buying: they are not buying your product or service, they are buying you. So if your virtual assistant is the front person to your company you have to make sure it is a person who sounds fantastic. That's why I like the Philippines. Also they are hard-working; they're honest, they're eager to please, they're just happy to help you. In addition to that there are some other places you can outsource and we'll just talk about those for a moment.

If you have a Spanish speaking client base then you probably need Spanish speakers. You might want to use the Dominican Republic, Panama or Costa Rica. You will pay more though. If you have a larger company and you need both Spanish and English you might want to split it. You can set up a phone tree where the Spanish speakers go to one center and the English speakers go to another center. These are some of your other options.

At the end of the day it's accountability. That's what you're buying when you go to the center of accountability. If there is a problem you've got an HR person assigned so they can immediately nip that problem in the bud. Where there is management in place, there is recourse if you're unhappy, and that's what you get. There is structure and there's redundancy. If one internet connection goes down, there's a site that automatically kicks in; if the power goes off, there's a generator to kick in; basically, we cover everything.

Bonuses

The choice is completely yours. Every business is going to be different. The way you want to do it is figure out what you are willing to pay and then divide it by the amount of sales you do. For instance, say you would be happy paying an extra \$100 a month in bonuses. Let's say you would like your employee to close 20 sales a month but

really on average they can close 12 to 15. You give them a \$5 spiff for each sale that they do knowing that you'll hit around a \$100. An extra \$100 a month is a great bonus, it is a fantastic bonus.

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