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# **15 STEPS for Online Marketing Success**

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# 15<sup>(or so)</sup> STEPS for Online Marketing Success

Why 15?

I wanted to keep these steps down to 15 for a reason...

Rugby has played a big part in my life, and the number 15 pops into my life often.

However, there are actually 17 steps here, so you are getting 2 bonuses. The extra 2 steps are more personal, so they can be separated from the rest legitimately.



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**The truth is, these are the steps we use as a template for online success, and they all need to be followed.**

This business has come a long way since 1999, as it has evolved we have all made many changes.

**Change is inevitable and evolution is normal in the digital era...**



Whilst the digital world continues to change, it is important to remember that our ethics, and the fundamental marketing principles have stayed constant for many decades...



## Step 1

### **Everything you do must be building your list**

The people who got this right are reaping the rewards, big time. I wish I had discovered this long before I did. However, like I found out, it is never too late, but you have to start now.

Your email list is the one true asset you have in the online world. Your content can get outdated, your technology can be improved, your SEO can be changed by search engines, but nobody can take away your list. It is the one thing you own and have control over, it is your insurance policy.

All of your marketing, with Social Media, blogs, PR, offline - everything you do, must be aimed at building your email list.

## Step 2

# Build a relationship with your list

Everyone wants a big list, but what's more important is the relationship you have with it - how engaged are they, do they respond to you, do they buy from you?

**A small engaged list will always outperform a large cold one.**

People who, when asked correctly, gave you their email address, you must treat them like gold. If they gave you this very special asset, you have to give them great content, with much higher quality than they expected.

Behind each email address is a person who has asked you to send them something, but before they can become a client or even a prospect, first you have to earn their trust.

Like any relationship, it is give and take, but you always have to give first, and the more you give, the more you will receive.





## Step 3

# Find out what the market really wants

A good starting place is to find out what pages on your website get the most traffic, or which blog, vlog or social media posts get the best engagement.

Data first, instinct after - there is so much data available, so put your guesses to one side and follow the figures.

Give what the market wants, not what you think it wants, or what you want to sell - it's not about what you have, it is about what your audience wants.

## Step 4

# Create what the market wants

Follow the data. Then ask questions, and listen to your clients and prospects - even ask your list what they want. A short survey often works well.

Then make a product out of it - give them what they want.

This is rarely what you were expecting them to be interested in, so it is important to remember that even if you really do know better, you have to put your thoughts to one side and give them what they want.

Be careful here though, if Henry Ford followed this advice he would have created a faster horse, not a car.

What his audience really wanted was speed, the vehicle can come from your intuition as long as it is led by the market need.

Delve deeper into the reasons, the answer will be there.



# Step 5

## Find the easiest route to the market

**You know the answer - Your list !!**

Create an Email Marketing System which is automated and geared to give you regular hot leads, as opposed to 'hope marketing'.

Use all your skills to craft great emails, but that is just the start. Then optimise - split test, experiment, listen and learn. Perfect the route to your market and make it as simple as possible.

The quickest and easiest way to get your message to prospects is through your email list.

The list should be full of engaged people who you regularly treat with great content. If you show them respect they will return it, so when it is time to sell them something, they will be happy to listen - the rule of reciprocity.



## Step 6

# Take the longer view, win with strategy

Chasing the money, and offering transactions is a short-term strategy, which will position you in the wrong place and not help your reputation.

Deliver quality, consistently. Connect with the market and give that market solutions to problems.

See the bigger picture for your prospects and clients.

Be proud of what you do for your clients, and strive to find even better solutions - be relentless in your quest for quality.

BIGGER PICTURE



## Step 7

# Multiple sources of traffic

Being dependent on just one source of traffic is dangerous. I often hear people talk about getting to the top of a Google search, but focussing your attention in one place will divert you away from what really matters.

If you find out what the market wants you will see many ways to engage with it, find people where **they** hang out.

Email is not going away, so building your list should be at the front of your mind. However, email is not the only way to get your message in front of people.

There are multiple ways to source traffic and build your list at the same time...

- Social Media (whichever ones relate to your market)
- Joint Ventures or Affiliate Programmes
- Search Engine Optimisation
- Content Marketing (blogs/vlogs, PR articles, guest blogging)
- Events (webinars, exhibitions, conferences)
- Advertising (Paid Advertising, online and offline magazines)



## Step 8

### **Create advocates**

When you are about to sell something, especially online, your job isn't over, it has just begun.

The buying experience must leave the client with a good feeling - so over-deliver.

The product should be fantastic, and should really do what you said it would, plus more.

This process will create an advocate who will buy from you again (without the big marketing budget), and can't wait to tell their friends and colleagues about you.

## Step 9

# Products, yours or someone else's?

Authority breaks the ice, so writing a book and selling your own product gives you this in spades. I am a huge fan. Higher profits and better control over quality.

With higher margins you have more money to spend on marketing and improvements - quality.

However, I am also a great believer in affiliates, and joint ventures with partners who have the same Avatar (ideal client) as you.

Try not to see them as competition, working with each other can actually help you all (and it builds your list).

Be strategic about your JV partners and get the right mix, this will help you diversify your reach and revenue streams.





## Step 10

# Create great value

To begin with you could get some success using tactics and gimmicks, but how long will that last?

If you are doing transactions without delivering great value there is rarely any future.

The way to long-term success is to give great value, consistently - and by the way, it is the client who measures value, so stay close to them.

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## Step 11

# Network and include your industry

Don't see people in your space as competitors, instead see them as potential partners, who could add great value to you, and you to them.

In today's digital world everyone can see pretty much everything about you anyway, so why not share?



# Step 12

## Press the button

Procrastination plays a big part in why many businesses don't fulfill their potential - it has happened to me in the past, and I'm sure countless others.

Stop beating around the bush, and get on with it.

If you believe in quality you will be striving for perfection - this is NOT achievable, so stop for a while, live with what you have and go sell something, anything.

If you really care then you already have a product that is great, and how can you prove how good your after-sales care is unless you sell something.

Get some revenue flowing, and then you can start to spend some of your time perfecting, and you will have the resources to do it well.

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# Step 13

## Back the right horse

**There are so many opportunities vying for your attention, you have to be careful which one you put your efforts into.**

Choosing the wrong road can have huge implications in your business. Even if you are careful with overheads there are still large costs in time and energy.

I'm not suggesting for you to do nothing, that in itself has an opportunity cost. This is just a reminder that if you choose to go down a road, it means there are many other roads you will not be able to go down.

Don't underestimate the opportunity cost of each choice you make.

You have a finite amount of time, energy and resource, use them wisely.





## Step 14

# Be human, not corporate

Nobody wants to see or hear corporate speak - unless it is in a contract.

The most difficult thing about writing is to get personality into it. Speaking to your specific Avatar is vital, and equally important is to be yourself.

I discovered a long time ago that I will never be a top corporate person, so I don't pretend to be. Be comfortable with who you are and write sales emails as if it was going to your best friend.

Write as you speak...

People want to hear from people, not corporations, so keep your own personality in your words.

# Step 15

## Baby steps

The first time you draft anything important it will be terrible - that's ok.

Just stick to your plan, and keep moving forward.

**You will get there - just get started.**

I'm sure you have heard a few versions of this, but marketing guru Seth Godin mentions that "it takes about six years of hard work to become an overnight success". Based on Bill Gates and Mark Zuckerberg, he is an optimist.

Don't try to perfect anything straight away. Instead, concentrate on the plan, and take baby steps, you will reach the goal eventually.

Then you can be an overnight success too.





## Bonus Step 1

### **Live below your means**

When things start to go well it is easy to think you have made it. Resist the urge to buy the new car.

Remember where you came from and keep doing the things that brought you success - too often people change and lose everything they have worked for.

### **Take the long-term view.**

It is much easier to make decisions knowing that you are not having to chase cash-flow all the time. Take some time to enjoy the freedom cash can give you.

## Bonus Step 2

# Invest in yourself

My formal education was cut short, and that has never stopped me from moving forward.

I spend a lot of my time and energy educating myself, and learning more skills. I always have.

My Mother was distraught when I told her I was selling my first business, after 9 years of hard work. I told her that all I was selling was the business, I still have the skills, and perhaps I can do something even better.

Keep learning and investing in yourself. When you sell a business, or when things go wrong, or if 'things' are taken from you, what you will always have control of is your knowledge.

When you have knowledge and skills, nobody can take away control of your destiny.



# About the Author

## Alan Cheesley

Sport is a great leveller of people, especially rugby union, which has taught me discipline, how to be calm under pressure, and how a team relies on all of its members whatever their shape, size or background.

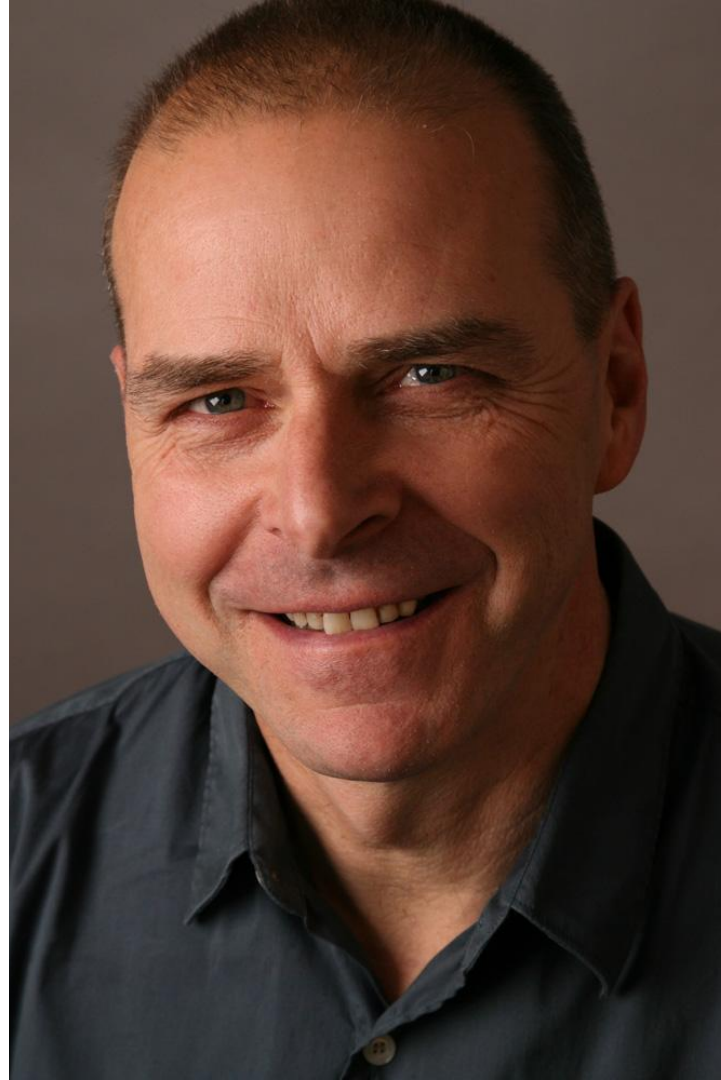
There have been many ups and downs in my life, and the confidence I possess to get back up and to move forward comes from hard work, dedication, and the willingness to learn new skills.

Celebrate your wins, but not for too long. Equally don't be down for long when things don't go to the plan. If you have done your best, you have to move past it, learn well, and take the experience with you.

My first experience of self employment was at 17. I sold t-shirts on the beach in Bournemouth and personalised them with transfers and a travel iron from the back of my estate car. What a great summer.

Through my Digital Marketing business Flow Online, I have tried to create an environment where learning is easy, to encourage creative thought within the team, and listen to new ideas. I have surrounded myself with an exceptionally talented team, and I try to make it easy for them to grow personally.

This is the platform where I can make a difference, and help clients do so too.



This will take time, and strategic planning.

We are here to help and would love to hear from you  
to see how you are doing.

Please [contact us](#).

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