Selling Digital Products Online

The Down and Dirty Guide

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NOTICE: This is currently a work in progress. You have been warned.

In my business I see and hear from many people that are brand new and frankly don't have a clue as what to do or how to get started. They purchase something such as a PLR product and don't know what to do next. Been there, done that myself, we all have.

I thought it might be a good idea to put together a guide to help those that are new, get a start and get something accomplished.

This was put together rather quickly because there were people waiting for it, so bare with me if the grammar is not english teacher proof. Not that I'm an expert writer in the first place.

I also using a new version of MS Office that is so very different than my previous version. Just when I was getting the hang of the last one. Oh well.

It's the content that counts, right?

So let's get started….

I am going to gear this guide to the products I sell and how most marketers make money online. I don't know much about turning these products into physical goods, so I won't go into that.

Most marketers pick up Ebooks, Video's, Audio, ect to resell as digital downloads. In its basic form, they put up a website (many PLR and MRR products come with a salesletter) and use some type of sales system to automate the process.

The big draw to selling digital product online is that the entire process can be automated. Web Surfers visit your sales letter, decide to buy, click the buy button, pay for it, download it and the sales process is complete, with no need for you to be there or to help them. The except is when your customers have questions or there is a problem with the sales process (it's not always 100%, things happen).

You could compare it to the self serve grocery store. Customers put the items they want in their shopping cart, go to the self serve checkout line and complete their order all by themselves. Such as a similar system online, it works for you 24/7 without you needing to "be there". The only time the customer might need your help is if they have a problem, they may need customer support now and again. Then again, with the right system, customer service can be very little to none. Course you'll never make every one completely happy, there will always be some need for support.

The only draw back to a "automated system" is the fact that there is little personal interaction with the customer, so it's a trade off.

Tools You'll Need

No matter which way you go, there are a couple of tools you must have, and you'll need at least basic knowledge on how to use these tools.

- Web page editor to edit your sales letter, download page and other web pages.
- FTP to upload the web pages files to your web site.
- Web Hosting – A place on the internet to "host" your web site. You can't run a website from your home computer. Well you can, but it's not easy and not something a person that is new will be able to accomplish. Best leave the hosting to companies that are in the business and know how to serve web content. I also don't think you want just any one have access to your computer.

There are links at the end of this report to all of the above tools and services if you need them. If your reading this, it safe to assume you already have a computer and an internet connection or access to both.

Before you even start…

As I've mentioned, you do need some basic knowledge of the necessary tools. I see so many people that do not know how to use the tools and they end up dead in the water. None of the tools I listed previous are that difficult to use, though they may seem like it in the beginning. Everything is tough when you're getting started, but believe me, you will get it and before you know it, it will be like second hand knowledge.

Something that might be of help is the following site, www.quickimvideos.com which contains step-by-step videos on using the above tools and much more. For most people it's much easier to learn when they can see it done first hand. You could follow along with the video and the tool at the same time. It could save you time and all kinds of frustration.

While you might think you're saving money by learning on your own and doing it all by yourself, I know from experience, your time is worth much more and some times you need to invest in your business. I don't say all this to get you to sign up for something or buy something, I tell you this because I've been there.

There was a time I thought I'd create my own PHP links script for my websites. While I did have a sense of accomplishment, it literally took months of my time to create that script and to get it working properly, time I could have used for more profitable tasks, such as driving more traffic to my sites and making more money. Often you much further ahead by buying something readymade, or pay to learn something quicker.

We all have limited time so we need to decide on what will help us be more productive and profitable, that may mean spending a few dollars. Think of it as an investment in your biz.

<mark>The bottom line though, you REALLY do need to learn how to use the basic tools I've listed above. Not only so you do not have to pay someone else to do something for you all the time, but also, so you are not constantly waiting and relying on any one.</mark>

Teaching HTML and how to build web pages is a subject in its self, not something to be covered here. There are SO many websites on the internet that can teach you web page building much better than I can. Also, many web page editors have built in help and how-to guides.

How to Get Started…

A bare bones system is quite simple. You'll need the following in place to get started:

- Sales letter (to sell the visitor and get them to buy)
- System to accept and process payments (Pay Pal in most cases)
- Product delivery system, usually a download page or link

As I mentioned, many resale products include a sales letter, normally found in the **website** folder. In most cases, all that you'll need to do is to upload the files within that folder to your web site with an FTP program. Most every sales letter comes with graphics or images, these are normally found in the **images** folder, which you need to make sure you upload those as well, just make sure to upload the folder, because that is how the images are pulled into the web page. The only editing of the sales letter you should need to do is change the order link(s) to your own order link. You might also want to put your name of the sales letter. You would also edit the sales letter with your web page editor to reflect the price you want to sell the product for. Just make sure to check the products rights, some products have a minimum price the product can be sold for.

Some PLR and MRR product also come with a download page, where the customer ends up after paying for the product; this is the page where they can "download" their product. The same holds true for the download page, you should only need to upload the page and any images for the page. This page is also referred to as a **thank you** page.

If your product did not come with a download page, no problem, simply take the sales letter page and strip out sales copy and save it as say, download.html. Just make sure you don't take out the code and save the page without a different name because you'll wipe out our original sales letter page. It's always a good idea to keep another copy of any page you have in a different place, just in case, as a backup.

One important thing to remember before I go further, when your uploading web pages, such as the sales page, download page, ect, you need to upload them exactly as they are, and upload image folders, NOT just the images themselves, the entire folder.

Next you will need to add a payment button or link. This can be done easily in Pay Pal, under the "Merchant Services" Tab in your account. Usually it is easier to use the Buy Now button. You will need to add this to your sales letter, you are usually given code that you copy and paste into your web page. If you go this route you will also need to enter your return url in Pay Pal, this will be where the customer will be sent after paying, the download page, which is covered below.

You will then need to set up the download link on the download page. You'll need to get your product ready first. You will probably want to edit it (if it's a PLR product and comes with the rights to be edited), by adding your name, links of your choosing or anything else you'd like to add.

To edit the product you will need the source file with is normally a Microsoft Word file or .DOC file. The DOC file can be edited with MS Word, or an alternative program is Open Office, which edits DOC files as well. Both programs are just word processors, so I won't get into that.

A quick note: Sometimes the source file is a ODT file, which is a Open Office Document file. It is very similar to a DOC file. Just wanted to throw that out there.

After you edit the documents, you need to "package" your product. You can include extras, such as other ebooks, rights files, what ever you want to include. Once you have everything you want in the package, you need to turn it into a zip file. If your running windows, it should have this feature built in. Just highlight all the files and folders you want in the package, right click and click, "create zip" or "send to zip".

A zip file is just like a box, to hold all your files in one container. The zip process also compresses all the parts of the package to make one smaller file. It is also much easier for people to download one zip file, then trying to download a bunch. Plus it's much easier and faster to create one download, rather than several.

Once your product is packaged, you'll need to upload it. It would best to create a new sub folder on your website, something that will not be easy to find such as yourwebsite.com/e433kl/product.zip. Think you'll agree, it would be quite difficult for anyone to guess that web address, less chance of someone downloading your product for free. If they can find your download file or download page they can get it for nothing. Believe me, there are people trying to do just that every day.

Once you've uploaded your product, you will need to put that web address on your download page, so the customer can simply click and download. Going by the example above, your download "link" code would be something like:

What ever text you want here

Last step is to upload all the web pages and your "system" should be ready to go.

If you want to check your new system, Pay Pal has a Sandbox feature, which allows you test without spending any more or bugging your friends to try your site. Basically they give you a test Pay Pal email to take your process for a test drive. It might be better than leaving your customers to test and you end up with some unhappy people.

That is the very basics of selling digital product on the internet and with that said, there are some better ways to do it.

There are systems that do much of the above for you and make for a more secure sales process, keeping your product safe.

Let's see what we have here…

What System Do You Use?

The sales process I talked about earlier will work in a pinch but it does have its flaws. The biggest "hole" in the system is that the download page/product is not well protected. It would be easy for any savvy web surfer to find your download page and get the product for free. These pages also often show up in the search engines, giving any one direct access to the product at no cost.

First you need to decide what you want to do. Do you want to sell one ebook at a time or do you want to set up a store?

If you're looking at putting up one product at a time, one of the best scripts to do this is:

[$7DollarSecrets](#)

As you might have guessed, it will only cost you $7. The package is an ebook about setting up and using the script and the script itself, both are included for the one price. Many people are confused when they go to the website; they often think it's only an ebook.

Not only is the script quite inexpensive, but it is also very powerful. It automates the entire process of selling digital products and it protects your downloads. When a customer buys, they are given a temporary encoded link that expires. This link makes it so no one can guess the download location and give it away to others, and even if they do give away the download link, it expires, so there is less change of your product getting stolen.

One other key feature of the script is that it has a built option to build a email list, which was the main feature of the script. It also comes with a refer-a-friend option, but I personally am not to keen on that, for a few reasons, but it's there if you want it.

To use the script you only need to edit the config file with your settings, set up your sales letter and upload your product, it's as simple as they come.

You could even take a pre-made sales latter, copy the link from the script's sales letter template, add it to the pre-made one for your product and save that over the scripts template sales letter, just be sure to name it the same as the template that comes with the script.

The rest is in the config file, such as your download location (which you already know to make it difficult to guess), the product file name and more.

One other key feature of the script is that it has a built in Affiliate system, meaning you could have your own affiliate army selling your product. Most marketers give affiliates 100% of the initial sale and a percentage of the one time offer.

I forgot to tell you, it has a built in One Time Offer feature if you want to use it, a great way to increase your sales.

Now one thing to remember, if you have affiliates sell it, the payout is a little different. If you want to give the affiliates 50% of the sale, for example, since Pay Pal does not split sales, the sales take turns. For every sale your affiliate makes, you get 100% of one sale, the affiliate gets of 100% of the next one and it goes on like that. It's a work around to the fact that Pay Pal does not split sales or commissions. Instead of getting 50% of each sale, you and your affiliate take turns getting 100% of every other sale. Clear as mud?

As I've said the script is quite easy to install and set up, and last I heard, it comes with better instructions. I've used the script many times; I have products right now that sell on their own, using that script. Kind of nice to set something up once and see sales coming into your Pay Pal account on a regular basis and even while you're sleeping. ☺

As I've mentioned, the only real drawback to using this script is that it's really only made to sell one product at a time, plus a OTO product. It's not a script to use if you want start something like a store full of products. Though it still has it's uses, I use it all the time, one example would be to use it for WSO's on the Warrior Forum, it's a perfect match.

As the very least it's a great way to get started. You can always move up to other systems, such as Ecommerence sites. The idea right now is to get something up and get it selling, making you money now. This script will do just that for you.

Store full of products….

You could also put up your own "store", or ecommerce website, but it does take some work. It's not for every one. If your looking to sell only a couple different products, you might want to stay with my recommendations above.

But if you must, if you really want to know…

One of the most popular shopping cart software platforms is OSCommerce.

Be warned though, it is not an easy thing to master. Don't get me wrong, it's a GREAT shopping cart software, it's never failed me. It's roboust and takes a load.

The problem is, out of the box, it lacks so much. It's more the framework. You need modify it quite a bit to get a well-rounded store. For example, I had to add a modifications for, extra images (you only get one per product with a stock OSC store), modification for SEO friendly URL's, a modification for meta data per page, download controller to sell digital products and a support ticket system modification.

Thing is, to add this modifications you need to actually edit the code on the store pages, and a lot of code. I remember spending a lot of time to get the store up and running how I wanted, with all the modifications and getting them all to work together. Even had to pay a friend to help me in one spot.

So if you want to use OSC, be prepared to do some work and you better have some experience editing PHP code. It is NOT for the beginner, unless you have money to pay someone to do it for you.

I have found a nice plug-in that works with Wordpress, that will give you a ecommerce store without too much trouble. It doesn't offer as many features or options as something like OSC. But it will get the job done.

The plug-in I am talking about is wp-commerce, which is free. Though, if you want to add many images for your products, you will need to spend $40 for a gold upgrade, which gives you a few more features. The plug-in is pretty easy to install, setup and use, though I wish it had a few more features.

There are plenty of shopping cart platforms out there, too many to mentioned, but those two are the only ones I have experience with and I am not going to recommend anything I don't know anything about.

Affiliate Platforms

Another option for selling digital products is using something like Clickbank. You create a sales page and download page (many PLR and MRR products come with those items), go through Clickbanks process and pay them $50 per product you add.

The advantage of using something like Clickbank is that you would have a built in affiliate program. Any Clickbank affiliate could sell your product for you, if you choose. Of course you'll need to give them a percentage of each sale they make for you, which you set up in Clickbank when you add your product. You'll need to offer at least 50% of the sales, and even more if you want to attract the most affiliates.

While it might seem like your giving away the farm, giving a good part of the sale to your affiliates, these affiliates are giving you sales you would not have made on your own. Plus they don't get paid until they make the sale, so you're not out anything. It's really like free advertising.

Another thing to remember, the most successful affiliate program owners have a well-tuned sales funnel or backend in place. They might be making little on the front end, but they make up for it big time on the back end, such as with upsells. It's a very important factor that I think few people understand or grasp, or put into practice.

But Let's move on…

A similar option is PayDotCom.com which is very much like Clickbank, except the sales all go through Pay Pal. It works in pretty much the same way as Clickbank.

You could also try e-junkie.com. I'll admit, I do not have that much experience with it, I think it is more of a delivery system, but it is an easy way to set up your products to sell. I "think" it costs a few bucks a month. You'll need to check the site for more details. Just thought I'd mentioned it as an option.

Even though an affiliate program to sell your product might sound like the pot of gold at the end of the rainbow, which it can be, there are some things you need to know.

To sell your products, the most import thing you need is a sales letter that converts, turns visitors into buyers at a respectable rate, that is a given. This is even more important if you're planning to offer an affiliate program.

If your sales letter does not convert, your affiliates are going to drop your product. Why should they waste their traffic, likely they have worked very hard to get it in the first place. They will stop promoting your product and never come back and it's possible they will NOT recommend your product to other affiliates.

Another very important aspect to keep in mind is that you <u>HAVE TO</u> provide the tools your affiliates need to promote your product. There is nothing is more frustrating for me, than to browse the Clickbank marketplace and find very few programs that have any tools I can use the promote them. Program after program that has no banners or any promotional items, it really amazes me. Guess they don't want tons of affiliates. They quickly lose me as a promoter.

Also, make sure you make it easy for affiliates to find your affiliate page in the first place, something that happens too often as well.

It has nothing to do with Clickbank, not their fault, so it's not a knock on them. Just surprises me how many people put all this time, money, effort into a product and laze-out in the most important part.

Okay, enough of my rant…

It really was meant to be friendly advice, some things to keep in mind. ☺

As I mentioned in the beginning, this report is a work in progress. I will be adding more to it as soon as I can, so stay tuned.

I want to leave you with a BIG tip!

There are a few things I would like to leave with you, if you're going to sell anything online, more tips than anything and here we go…

Outstanding Customer Support

Your customer service will either make or break your business. It can either help it grow, or it can put you out of business before you get a good foot hold.

I realize its common sense, but many marketers do not seem to get it. I can tell you for a fact that outstanding customer service can grow your business beyond what you'd expect.

I am not going to say I get customer support right 100% of the time, that's impossible and we both know that you cannot please every single person every single time. I am also not trying to brag. I am trying to impress on you how important outstanding customer service can be to your business, good or bad.

While we'd all like to have a business that runs 100% on auto pilot, it's not totally possible when you're selling something. You need to be there for your customers when they have a problem. The faster you take care of them, the better they will love you and your products.

Take care of your customers quickly and they will, well, they will be amazed, seriously. I think you know why.

Whenever you can, go out of your way to help your customers, go the extra mile and it will pay you back 10 fold, if not more, I've seen it firsthand. The same holds true for going above and beyond.

I've always been a big believer that, when you do things for people, it always comes back to you. It probably won't come back from the same person, but it does come back. I've proven it many times.

Course I learned later on that this concept is often referred to as Karma. Illustrated quite well by one of my favorite tv shows, My Name Is Earl.

I think business can be, and should be, more than just selling "stuff" to people.

BONUS TIP – EXTRA BIG ONE

I've been working online for almost 12 years now, I've seen many people come and go. More tend to go actually. In that time there is two things I've noticed, time and time again…

The two reasons people do not make money online is because, they either give up or they don't do the work. Plain and simple. Nothing else to it.

Anyone can make money online, anyone. Everything you need to know, you can learn. All the tools you need you can buy, or in most cases get for free.

The only excuse left is… ?

There is no excuse, that's the point.

I'm not going to say it's going to be easy, nothing worthwhile ever is. You and I know that. Some people quit because they don't make money right away. Others quit be because they "think" it's too hard.

I've lost count how many times I've seen or heard people saying they are not making any sales. When questioned further, 99% of the time it's because they didn't do anything to make it happen.

So it's obvious, never give up. Find something, anything, to motivate you to, not only keep going, but to be successful.

As Robert Schuller said, "If it's going to be, it's up to me".

Need I say more?

Enough from me…

As I said in the beginning of this report, this is a rough draft, to get something going. I hope it is usable to those who are not sure where or how to start. I will do my best to add to it, and improve this guide, the best I can.

To help me, I could really use your feedback. Tell me if it's helpful or if it's not. Tell me what I missed, what I should have covered. Let me know, good or bad, you won't hurt my feelings.

Let me know how I can help YOU!

The best way to contact me is through my contact form here: Contact Form

To your success,

Ron Killian

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