

START A FITNESS BLOG

BLUEPRINT

YOUR TICKET TO FINANCIAL
freedom >

> JON GOODMAN

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Other Books by Jonathan Goodman

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Share this book with whomever you like. You're also free to print it. Blogging is a fun and rewarding gig both as a full-time occupation or side job. But if it's not done right it can frustrate you. That, and it's difficult to get started. All I ask is that you don't reproduce the work and pass it off as your own for either personal or financial gain.

So email this book to a friend or print and pass it on freely. Just don't sell it or republish it as "Joe Smith's Lessons to Start a Blog" or any other pseudonym.

I guess this is also the place where I tell you that this book is my opinion. It's a compilation of the systems that have worked for me. I share all of the software that I use as of April 2016. By reading this you understand that it is simply for informational purposes.

Starting a fitness blog / website is not easy

... Even though some people will try to tell you that it is.

- There's a lot of blogs out there. How do you get yours to stand out?
- Building a website is foreign. Where do you start?
- There's always a new piece of software or app that seems fantastic. (Don't try to keep up.)
- It's frustrating when you don't receive the support from your friends and family you expected. (Nothing against them. They just have their world and it doesn't revolve around you. This took me a long time to understand and come to terms with.)
- Computer speak is foreign. Nothing seems to do what you want it to do.
- There are 1,000 things to do and you don't know where to start or what to do next.
- Everybody and their mother are attempting to sell you their secrets or amazing new software. All of it seems awesome but implementation takes time and money. **What do you really need?**

Are you considering starting a website or blog?

Do you already have one and want to make it better?

This book will help. In it, I give you the basics of setting up your page. The bulk of this eBook is on content creating, generating leads, selling products or services, and creating multiple passive income streams that will last for years.

Some of this material I have seen published before, some of it I haven't. I have never come across a resource that flows from topic to topic like this one.

Hi, I'm Jon

I'm Jonathan Goodman or, as many fitness professionals who follow the Personal Trainer Development Center (thePTDC.com) know me, Coach Jon.

In addition to thePTDC, I own and operate [Viralnomics](#) – a place where I explore the balance between social media, psychology, business, and life.

While VNomics is my passion project, I recently released a book on my theories. It resonated with many even getting the attention of NYT bestselling author of *Contagious: Why Things Catch On* and professor at the Wharton School of Business, Jonah Berger, who said that the book is, “A must-read for anybody interested in social”. [You can learn more and get the book on Amazon here.](#)

My life is hard work but I do it entirely on my own terms. Freedom, to me, doesn't mean that I waste away sipping Mai Tai's on the beach. It means that I am financially free and have a business that allows me to be proactive exploring whatever I find interesting or meaningful at the time.

The best part is that I can do it from wherever in the World that I like. So, while my home is Toronto, Canada, my past four winters were spent in Costa Rica, Uruguay, Thailand, and Hawaii.



Working in front of the house that my girlfriend and I rented in Baan Tai on the island of Koh Phangan in the South of Thailand

These websites take a lot less day-to-day management than you think. Many of the systems that you'll read about in this book will help you become efficient through a combination of outsourcing and automating. The result is a continuous income stream that serves two functions:

1. My mind can relax knowing that all bills will be paid. The importance of this cannot be stated strongly enough. Worrying about paying bills is paralyzing.
2. It allows me to be in a continual proactive state developing ideas or working on bigger projects that will either feed the overall vision or add assets to the business (or both).

It wasn't always like this. I struggled building the PTDC. Anxiety and sleepless nights became the norm. But every problem that I encountered presented an opportunity for growth and discovery. Instead of paying expensive coaches or training programs, I spent the time to figure out solutions on my own. The result is that these systems are mine, and not simply re-workings of somebody else's ideas.

I could go on about stuff that I do, but that doesn't matter. This is about helping you achieve the freedom to work on your dream project and build your dream life.

I want to help you avoid wasting time.

I don't want you to make the mistakes I made.

I wrote this Ebook because it's exactly what I wanted to have when I started my first site. I hope it helps you.

-Coach Jon

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jon Goodman". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a long horizontal line extending from the end.

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Why start a fitness blog?

Fitness blogs create fitness experts.

An expert wields the power of their audience. Anything they recommend people buy and their classes and programs are always full.

Working harder is not the key to success, working smarter is.

It doesn't matter whether you want to sell Internet products, get more clients, or help build your brick and mortar business. A well-built blog will help you make more money and work less. With it, you can charge more for your services, pay less for advertising, help more people, and develop multiple income streams.

Write down what you already know. The information contained within your brain is worth exponentially more than the energy in your muscles.

Begin by using your blog as a way to organize your research or reflect on your training. If you are a personal trainer and are researching low back rehabilitation, write a short article on it. The exercise of writing will help you learn the material better. The best way to learn, after all, is to teach.

Most of all, that article has value. It doesn't matter what you do. Somebody out there knows less than you and would benefit from hearing about what you know.

You don't have to add anything new to the conversation.

There are two types of valuable fitness writers: innovators and simplifiers. An innovator is somebody on the cutting edge. Unless you're an academic or researcher, this likely isn't you. A simplifier is somebody who takes complex information and makes it more accessible. The majority of successful bloggers are simplifiers. The best blogs promoting local training business are simplifiers.

Your first major consideration is who your audience is. There seems to be a desire for bloggers to try and impress other bloggers. Fight that urge. You're writing for an audience and that audience is likely new or not particularly educated when it comes to exercise.

If you train for fat loss your top 5 tips to losing weight is valuable information. It may not be anything new to other personal trainers but to fitness illiterate people it's important information. By sharing articles like this potential clients who might need a trainer in the future will recall your article and reach out.

Lesson 1 – Be aware of your audience and understand what they need. Always write for them, and nobody else. The minute that you veer from this path your success will suffer.

The first step is to register a domain name and hosting.

Domain name registration and hosting

Picking a domain name is getting harder as pretty much all of the good ones are taken. Common SEO practice is to do endless amounts of keyword research and choose your name based on that. You will probably end up with something like www.howtoburnfatandgetasixpack.com.

Needless to say this is a crappy name for a site and an even worse brand. You could have the best information in the world and nobody would listen because of how generic, uninteresting and spammy sounding your name is.

In *How to Get Published: Writing Domination in the Fitness Industry* (www.theptdc.com/howtogetpublished) John “Roman” Romaniello describes his process for picking a domain name. In it Roman advises to pick a name that creates implicit understanding. It is here that you can start work on creating explicit trustworthiness and value.

Take “The Personal Trainer Development Center” (the PTDC) for example:

- I wanted to imply that the site stood for something. *Personal Trainer Development* achieved that.
- I wanted the site to appear as though it was more developed than it was at the time. I was approaching big-name players in the fitness world and wanted to appear important. The world *Center* achieved that.
- I wanted the name to be shortformable (it’s my book, I can make up words). The PTDC rolls off the tongue. Other than the Pakistani Tourism Development Corporation, nobody else is using it.

Ultimately what you decide to call your blog is up to you. As Roman advises it’s important to pick a name that creates implicit understanding. I’ll also recommend that you pick something you enjoy hearing and that can be made into a short-form or nickname.

Another important note is that companies come and go. For that reason I advise working to brand your personal name. There are arguments for and against but a strong brand and reputation behind your brand will serve you for the rest of your life. If you haven't yet, I definitely suggest you purchase the domain name corresponding to your name.

Registering your name

I've used for every domain name registration I've done (and I've registered a lot). The site is easy to manage, comparable in price (it's dirt-cheap to register domains), and their customer service is good. If you access the site through <http://www.theptdc.com/godaddy> then you'll get 15% off of your initial domain registry.

It's really simple to register a domain. Essentially you enter in your desired name in the box and search if it's available. If it is, GoDaddy will recommend you purchase related names, which is up to you.

Here's a quick overview of the process:

<http://support.godaddy.com/help/article/341/registering-domain-names>

If you can, grab the .com for sure. Depending on your country you might want your country code as well. I'm in Canada so I generally purchase the .ca. It's not a bad idea to register all related names and spellings. *For example I have [jongoodman.ca](http://www.jongoodman.ca), [johngoodman.ca](http://www.johngoodman.ca), and [jonathangoodman.ca](http://www.jonathangoodman.ca).*

If you're looking to build a company or brand you can also grab some accessory domains if you want to protect your intellectual property.

I suggest registering all domains for a minimum of 2 years and usually register mine for 5 years at a time. You can always renew but I was told that Google frowns upon domains with short registrations, as it's a sign of a spammer. I've never certified a domain.

The next set of options seems confusing. My first site I made the mistake of getting the expensive ones and it cost me a lot more. Unless you want to hide your identity (which you don't because you're running a blog) choose the standard option.

Setting up webhosting

Initially this might be the most confusing part of the process for you. Now that you have a domain, you've got to set up hosting. Imagine the hosting account as the house that your domain lives in.

Similar to domain registry, hosting is offered by countless companies. I use and highly recommend a service called WpEngine (www.theptdc.com/wpengine).

WpEngine is more expensive than a number of other options but it's blazing fast, easy to use, has excellent customer service, and, most of all, it's secure. The system automatically backs up all of your sites every night externally meaning that your valuable content and site is always safe. Even if you are hacked, you simply revert to a backup from 24hrs earlier and the problem is solved.

I've had too many headaches to count from other hosting companies ranging from poor security to slow loading speeds to website down time costing me many thousands of dollars. An extra few bucks a month for peace of mind knowing that your site will always be fast and will never be at the mercy of spam, malware, and hackers is worth it. Also, the service has a very reasonable "overage" plan meaning that if you do get a viral hit your site will never crash (like many other options) and you won't be charged a fortune.

After registering for an account with WpEngine you'll need to set up something called a Wordpress install and forward your domain from GoDaddy to there.

Step 1: Set up your Wordpress install:
<http://wpengine.com/support/wordpress-installs/>

Step 2: Set up your domain: <http://wpengine.com/support/add-domain-user-portal-preview-site/> (note that you don't have to do the preview stuff at the end of tutorial here.)

Step 3: Point your domain from GoDaddy to WpEngine. You do this by pointing something called the DNS in GoDaddy and then claim

ownership of the domain in WpEngine. This tutorial gives you all of the info: <http://wpengine.com/support/how-to-configure-your-dns/> (you'll see a link with info on how to do it specifically in GoDaddy).

This will be the most confusing process. If you have any issues at all, the WpEngine live chat is fantastic and they'll walk you through it. There's also a walk through when you first sign up for the service.

Because WpEngine is Wordpress specific hosting, setting up your site already has Wordpress installed so you can login and get going right away.

Installing a theme

Wordpress has a number of free themes you can install. To get started I would choose a very basic one. Put an image for your header at the top and install a couple basic plugins. (I'll give you a list in a minute.)

What I will note is that it's important to get your site professional designed. It shouldn't cost more than \$1,500 for a basic site design and is worth the investment. I use a more expensive but fantastic web design company called [Copter Labs](#). If you're looking for a high-end site, they're a good option.

I can't speak more to this subject, as I've never designed any of my sites.

If you're looking to get logo's and graphics designed you have four options.

1. Go to [fiverr.com](#) and get a crappy one made for \$5
2. Go to [eLance.com](#) and get a less crappy one done for \$30-50
3. Go to [99Designs.com](#) and get a great one for \$100-\$1,000
4. Hire your own designer.

Plugins

Wordpress is largely open-source and you can find a plug-in to do just about anything. To install them find the plugins button on the left side of your Wordpress site. Search for the plugin by name and hit

install. After it's installed you need to activate and usually configure it.

Here are my favorites:

- Akismet – Spam filter
- SEO Yoast – A great plugin to easily configure the information that you want search engines to see. There's also a tab for setting the meta data that Facebook picks up and shares.
- Contact Form 7 – Simple contact form that you configure with your email.
- Facebook comments – Installs the Facebook comment system at the bottom of each post or page or both.
- HelloBar for Wordpress – The drop down bar at the top of the page. Go to www.hellobar.com to set up an account first.
- Jetpack by Wordpress.com – Up to the minute stats

“As simple as possible, but no simpler” – Albert Einstein

This is by no means a full list of plugins. I use more and they vary from page to page. These are just some of my favorites and ones that I believe every page should have.

There are plugins to do pretty much anything. A Google search will help you find which plugin is best for your job. Keep reading though. I'm going to show you how to use Google in a bit.

Expert tip – Colors and Fonts: The color scheme is up to you but your page must be easy to read. Pink writing looks cute but it hurts the eyes. A simple black on white is the most effective.

Have two main colors on your site. Use one for most of the content and have one action color. Only use the action color when you want the user to click on a link, buy something, or opt into your email list.

Also, make your font at least size 15pt. Small writing is a great way to have your masterpiece ignored. For fonts, a clean sans serif is best for the web. 3 good options are Georgia, Times New Roman, and Arial. Don't try to be cute and fancy. Having 1.5 spacing for lines is a good idea as well. Keep it clean and easy-to-read.

Basic HTML

I'm not an expert at html. I know enough to get by and so should you. This section will explain the basic concepts of how html works. By the end of this section you should be able to scan some code and recognize when something looks wrong. I'll also tell you how to fix some common mistakes.

The simple editor on Wordpress works well 90% of the time. The other 10% things screw up and don't do what you want. Knowing some basic html will make everything line up nicely. It also enables you to Google a problem and know how to insert the code to fix it. Here are some tips that have helped me:

- Everything opens with `<>` and closes with `</>`. This means that whatever text you want the code to apply to must be surrounded by these symbols. So for example if I wanted to italicize the words "this is in italics" I would write `this is in italics`. (em is the code for italics.)
- Often the simple editor will have weird spacing. If you hit the tab to the html editor and scan it you will usually see that it created `" ";` in your text. The ` ` forces a line break. Simply erase the code and everything should line up.
- `<div>` tags can be your worst enemy or best friend. If your site completely screws up and you can't figure out why it's possible you copy and pasted something from an outside source. The editor got confused and entered a `<div>` tag. Go to the html and press control f (or command f on a mac) and search "div". Erase those suckers. If you're copying content from Microsoft Word or Facebook this is pretty common.
- Whenever you place something in the simple editor it posts the code in html. To get pictures to line up it's sometimes easier to enter them in the simple editor and cut and paste the code in the html wherever you want it to sit.
- `<h>` tags are headers. They are all different size but work great for differentiating headings and sub-headings.
 - To increase the size of your font the following code works:
`TEXT HERE`

(You can change the “xx-large” to “small”) . This words on almost all sites.

Html is pretty basic to understand. It’s logical and if something goes wrong, there is always a reason. Learn to understand the code; you don’t need to know how to create it. If there’s ever anything you want to do simply Google “html for _____” and you can find the code to copy and paste into the html editor.

As you get more advanced you can implement new code. Keep your blog posts simple in terms of formatting. Ease of reading is important. In the next section I go over the most important skill you can learn, how to Google like a champ.

Expert tip – On whatever note-taking software you keep on your computer enter in the code for the most common things you do. For example I have the code for a yellow highlight, a large size font for drop caps to start an article and a dotted line callout box.

This way they are easily accessible. When you want to use the code you can copy and paste it directly into the html editor instead of Googling it again.

Googling (or the most important skill ever)

Google knows everything. It can be your biggest ally or a big waste of time. I say this because I often found myself obsessed on little obscure details and wouldn't stop Googling until I found out how to do them.

Before setting out to Google something ask yourself if it really matters. If the job can be done without confusing code that will take you valuable time to find and implement it's better to not use it. Focus on the 80%.

In a minute I'll get into the skill of Googling (and yes it's a skill that can and should be learned). First, let's talk about forums and getting help.

Wordpress – The Wordpress codex forums are pretty amazing. Somebody has probably already found a solution to the problem you are having. I'll show you how to search the entire site in the next section entitled “most people suck at Google”.

Since the program is largely open-sourced, programmers are happy to help. I found some cases where people even wrote custom javascript snippets to solve common problems and posted it for free.

Aweber – Aweber also has an amazing faq section but it's a bit harder to navigate. If I'm having issues I'll go straight to their site and do a basic search. If that doesn't yield the results, call the customer support. They will usually send you the proper page to reference to or fix your problem on the spot. We'll get into Aweber and email marketing very soon.

GoDaddy – Just call them. The customer support is too good to mess around searching for help. Just watch out for upsells.

WpEngine – Again, great customer support using their live chat but they have a host of support documents as well.

Most people don't know how to Google (here are the tricks of the trade)

Google has built in 'operators' to make searching easier. Mastery over these symbols will save you plenty of time and help you find exactly what you're looking for.

Gone are the days of sifting through endless articles or pictures looking for the perfect one. In the following section I'll go over the different operators Google has built in that will help you get what you need quicker:

Basic search operators

“Site:” - Using this trick before writing your search term only searches the site in question. For example if you wanted to search ONLY the Personal Trainer Development Center (theptdc.com) you would write “site:thePTDC.com” before your search term.

“~” - This symbol tells Google to pick up related words as well. For example if you typed in “~workout” Google might also search related terms such as “training” and “fitness”

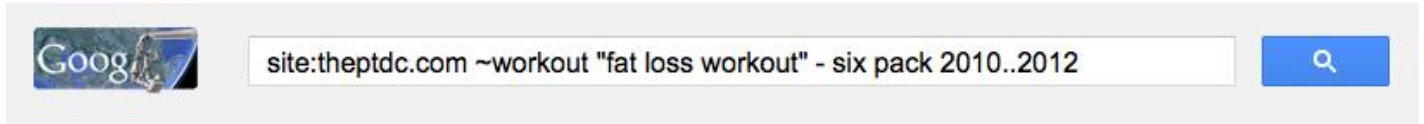
“” – Putting quotations around a phrase tells Google to search for the exact phrase and not each word separately. For example a search for “fat loss workout” would yield results from that exact phrase and exclude results for “fat”, “loss”, and “workout”.

“-“ - A dash before a word excludes it from being search. For example “-sixpack” would exclude the word “sixpack” from the search.

“..” - This symbol tells Google to only show results from within a designating time range. Say you only want recent results from 2010-2012 you would write “2010..2012”.

“>” – Often times I want to exclude regular blogs and only search sites that I trust. This operator allows you to only search certain types of sites. For example if I only wanted to search academic institutions for information on workouts I would write “workout site:>.edu”

A full search for somebody that wanted to look at fat loss workouts on thePTDC.com from 2010-2012 and was careful to avoid spammers might look something like:



Document search operators

Often times when I'm doing research I'm looking for documents to support or teach me about new things. I don't just want to find blog posts. Here are a couple operators to help you with that search:

“Filetype:” – This tells Google what type of document you want. So a search for a .pdf would start with “filetype:pdf”.

“Intitle:” – Here you're asking Google to only show you the results that have your keyword in the title. For example if you're looking for fat loss workouts specific to thighs you would write “intitle:thighs”.

“*” – Putting an * before a word replaces it with other common and related terms for the search to help you get a wider range of results. For example a “*weight” might also yield results for fat and scale.

A full search for a .pdf document on fat loss workouts specific to the thighs might look something like this:



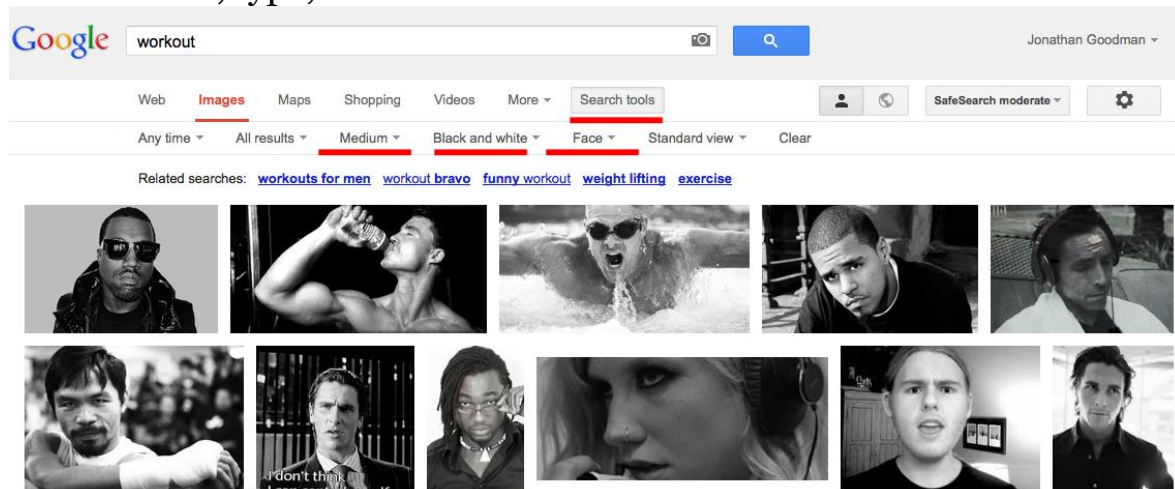
Some more Google tricks.

Aside from operators, Google has developed some other tools to use to both save you time and help you find exactly what you need.

Google history - Ever find something on the Internet and forget to bookmark it only to spend hours trying to find it again? I have. First go to your Google account and enable web history. Anytime in the

future you can go to www.google.com/history and search only the stuff you have browsed before.

Google image filter – Enter your search term into Google and hit the images tab. You will see a mash up of stuff, most of it useless. Look for the “search tools” tab underneath your search bar and click it. Once you do you will see another bar appear underneath with some great options. Here you can set Google to only find pictures of a certain color, type, or size.



An example where I only wanted to search medium pictures of faces which are black and white and related to a workout.

Expert tip – It’s important to give credit the creator of pictures that you use in your site. You don’t want to get in trouble for stealing images without permission and hefty fines are often levied to unsuspecting site owners who use random images from Google.

Some sites to get free pictures for your site are Photo Pin, sxc.hu, and Pixabay. Don’t take pictures randomly off of Google and use them in your blog. Stock photo companies have been known to levy hefty fines for doing this.

Email marketing and the ethical bribe

Now the fun stuff starts. Traffic is good but without a system to corral and monetize it there is no point. The answer is email marketing.

Do everything in your power to develop an email list -- It's the most valuable asset that you can have. There are 6 topics I'm going to go over in this short section. They are: choosing and configuring your software, the ethical bribe, email templates, web form design, broadcast messages and automation.

Choosing and configuring your software

I suggest using Aweber (<http://www.theptdc.com/aweber>) if all that you want to do is send basic messages. If you want to get more in-depth at some point with automation, Active Campaign (www.theptdc.com/activecampaign) is exceptional. I started with Aweber and have since switched over to Active Campaign.

Yes there are other options for email marketing and many will do the job well. Don't overthink the system you use. Pick one and get rolling.

Done? Ok, now I'm about to save you a lot of time by taking you through the exact ways to set up the account and automate a large chunk of it.

The first step is to set up a page on your website. Call it "thank you" and write a brief message thanking the user for subscribing. It's nice to have a custom page to send the user to as opposed to the template ones. Also be sure to include links to your Twitter and Facebook accounts and ask users to connect with you there as well.

Aweber walks you through the steps of setting up your list so I won't repeat anything. A couple notes on stuff I wasn't sure about:

1. It's considered good form to include a double opt-in. This means that when somebody enters their email they are sent a confirmation message. They then have to click on the link in order to be subscribed. This is both good practice and, in many places around the World, a legal responsibility on your part. In

- the confirmation message be sure to tell the user what they are going to get.
2. In the address section be sure to use the info@yoursite.com email and not your personal one.
 3. You must include an address. Setting up a P.O. box isn't a bad idea.
 4. In the "Confirmed Opt-In" tab put your "thank you page" URL at the bottom.

The ethical bribe

When I released the Ebook entitled *101 Personal Trainer Mistakes and the Solutions to Each* it created a frenzy. My email list was sitting pretty at 600 and 1-3 new people were being added each day. In the 3 days after the book came out I added 1600 names to my email list and went steady at 10-20 until I added a second Ebook to the pot.

The *Facebook Marketing for Fitness Pro's* Ebook only garnered 673 emails in the first 2 days. I was actually disappointed. Since then the site generates 50-150 a day with both books.

An ethical bribe gives your readers a reason to sign up for your email list. It's also a great way to begin to promote your materials. Your Ebook must standalone and provide a huge amount of value, but there's nothing wrong with promoting your coaching services at the end of it or working in other sources of monetization – something I'll speak about in a bit.

An ethical bribe gives your readers a reason to sign up for your email list. Once they do they will receive updates with all of your new materials, promotions, and on goings. The better you are at building your email list the more successful you will be.

A bribe doesn't have to be a book. Video courses work great as well. Don't overthink it. What's the biggest struggle of your audience? Is it fat loss for menopausal women? Or maybe it's getting a six-pack with a busy college lifestyle? Whatever the problem, map out 3-5 solutions and either write down or film solutions. Cut it up into snippets and film a video of you taking about each part. Use the email

autoresponse in [Aweber](#) to deliver the videos at increments based on when your subscriber signs up.

You could also do what I'm doing with this book, which is to help people solve a problem and work in areas of monetization throughout. In exchange for me teaching you how to set up and make money from your blog, my hope is that if you decide to use any of the software that I recommend you use my link.

Does that make sense? **Instead of the conventional approach of asking somebody to pay for something up front you flip the model on its head.** You provide them a valuable service 100% free and use it to either promote a premium service or work in other sources of monetization.

The point is that the better your ethical bribe is the more emails you get. The more emails you get the more money you make (I'll show you how). It's a simple equation.

Step 1 - Traffic

Step 2 - Collect emails

Step 3 - ???

Step 4 - Profit

The easiest way to start if you have never written an eBook before is to pick a subject and write as many points concerning that topic you can think of.

Create a Google doc with the question at the top and fill in a dozen or so entries yourself. Put the question out to your Facebook group and ask them to contribute sharing the Google doc. Tell them that they can list their name beside their contribution if they like and be noted as a contributor to the book.

When it's all said and done you should have at least 50 points on the subject. Then it's a matter of compiling it into a document, editing it, creating a cover (you can get a cheap one made for \$5 at [fiverr.com](#)), and converting it into a .pdf.

Upload the .pdf to your site via the media uploader and you can share the direct link to your Ebook in the first autoresponse message that your user gets when they enter their email.

Case Study – I’ve worked with Dan Trink. An amazing trainer out of New York that has 0 minutes to spare. He needed an Ebook as an ethical bribe for Trinkfitness.com. During our conversation I said, “you’ve been writing tips on your Facebook page right?” “Yeah for a while” he responded.

I told him I would call him back and checked out his Facebook page. In 20 minutes I copy and pasted 25 tips I found into a word document, titled it “Trink Tips: 25 to Get the Body You Want” and called him back.

I then took a picture he already had and mocked up a cover in 5 minutes on photoshop, saved it as a .pdf, uploaded it to his site, and created a web form in Aweber. The whole process took me 2hrs start to finish.

You probably already have the content to create your ethical bribe. Just learn how to package it.

For “101 Personal Trainer Mistakes” I created a Google doc and shared it with 30 personal trainer friends. I asked them to write down any mistakes they made and 2-4 sentences on how to fix it. Within 3 weeks I copy and pasted it into a document and uploaded it to my site.

The point I’m trying to make is to think creatively and figure out ways to get this eBook done without too much of a time commitment. Don’t try to get too fancy with it.

Popups

They work.

I know that you're thinking they are annoying and spammy but you cannot argue just how effective they are. Make yours clean and offer your ethical bribe right in your reader's face the minute they come to the site.

What this does is tell the reader that you have something more to offer the second they land on your site. Most people will click away the popup and read whatever article drew them to the site. When they're done reading your awesome article they now pay attention to the opt-in form on the right side of your page.

The best software I have come across is Popup Domination (<http://www.theptdc.com/popupdomination>). It's easy to install, implement, configure, and works like a charm.

I used Popup Domination for years. Now I have a more custom solution that I had coded specifically for me. I see an immediate increase in email subscribers when it's active.

A note on popups (and many other elements of your site) – As you grow in your blogging career you'll start to notice that specific pieces of software like Popup Domination are used on a lot of sites. Your first response might be to shy away from using it thinking that you'll be bunched in with the crowd. Know that it's pretty rare for a user to your site to have any understand how the economics of the Internet work. You're engaged in this World now so see this stuff all of the time. Resist the thinking that you're just like everybody else. Most readers to your site don't spend all of their time on fitness blogs.

Email Content

your type is up to you. I suggest keeping it short and using a large font (14pt - 15pt works well). Paragraphs in emails should be no longer than 4 sentences. Similar to a blog post, stick to an easy-to-read sans-serif font like Times New Roman, Arial, or Georgia.

There are two schools of thought on what to include in an email. If you follow the PTDC you'll notice that I used to copy all articles in full into an email. I did this because open rates are almost always going to be about double click rates. A while back I noticed that many of my longer emails were getting filtered as spam and not reaching my readers inboxes. I've since changed my method and email out links to articles and have found that the deliverability has improved.

Three strategies that I use to get readers to share content directly from my emails are:

1. **Click to Tweet** – clicktotweet.com allows you to pre-program a Tweet. Take a quotable from your article and write a Tweet that also includes your Twitter handle and link to the article on your blog. Please the link in your email. It's a great way to get sharing and increase your Twitter following.
2. **Related Articles** – At the bottom of each article I'll generally link 1-3 related articles from the blog. This way engaged users can link back to the blog and read more.
3. **Links Throughout** – Include outbound links as they fit in your emails that link to related articles from your blog the same as you would in a regular blog post.

What's especially beneficial is that when you do have something to sell, you can do the direct content marketing in an email. Send your reader a fantastic article and at the bottom of it a link to purchase directly. You don't even need sales pages for internal sales if you do it right.

If you do want to simply tease an article in your email, below is a nice template for how to do it:

- **Title – Catchy.** People get a lot of emails. Asking a question that entices the user to open the email in order to see the answer works well.
- **First line is always something shocking.** Give the reader a reason to care. Stats and quotables work well.
- **Middle content is a bit about the article.** Tell the reader what they will find out and why it matters to them.
- **Add in a link to the article.**
- **After the first link to the article add a bit more content.** A "p.s. did you know..." works well here.
- **Sign off the email and give the link again.**

Web form design

A web form is what you place on your site, usually at the top right and sometimes above each post. This is where you extol the benefits of your ethical bribe and ask users to sign up by entering their email address.

A high converting web form is paramount to your success.

Those that follow the PTDC can attest that I change my web forms often. I'm constantly remodeling it to see what gets the best results. Here's what I've found:

- Have 1-3 single line points to entice the reader. These points sell the benefits of your ethical bribe and show them why they need it.
- Warning somebody that they are screwing up is more powerful than telling somebody you are going to help them.
- Give instructions (i.e. enter your email) and mention that it's free. Say what they get.
- Add an attractive picture of the ethical bribe
- Make the "submit" button your action color that you chose earlier
- Include 1-2 testimonials below the form from people talking about how awesome your ethical bribe is and how much it helped them.

Creating web forms can be a bit finicky. Upload pictures to your site and copy the link the same as you did in emails. It will take some playing around but once you figure out the options you can create forms that look good in Aweber quickly. Generally Wordpress sidebars are 250px wide so make that your Aweber web form width.

Automation

Everything that can be automated online should be automated. The best systems for email marketing are simple and eloquent. For those who don't know, autoresponse emails are a sequence of emails that get sent out to a new subscriber at whatever frequency you decide.

Once somebody opts into your email list these emails go out to him or her at regular intervals for as long as you have set up the system.

The nice part about this system is that it's completely hands off. It will take you some time to set up all of the emails but once it's done you never have to touch it again.

I suggest that the majority of your emails be content rich but every once in a while you include a sale of your product or a product that you are affiliating (we'll get to that soon).

Aweber makes this very easy by including the "follow-up" feature. These are emails that automatically go out to your subscribers. The interval you set is the number of days the email is sent after the previous one went out.

Active Campaign allows you to create much more intricate autoresponse sequences beyond just sending basic emails. It's fantastic and I'm able to create amazing intelligent automated sequences. That said, the learning curve is higher.

You can set up your autoresponse countless ways, I'll walk you through the PTDC's old autoresponse and the one that we currently use and explain the "why" behind each.

At the beginning my recommendation to you is to keep it simple and not worry about setting up a large autoresponder. Set your first message follow-up message to say,

"Hey it's Jon. I just noticed that you signed up to learn more about _____. Do you have any questions for me right now? My email is _____"

This email works great to get a response from most of your subscribers. This way you can immediately build a personal relationship and maybe even transition them into online or in-person training based on their question.

When setting up the PTDC I wanted to focus on creating the best content, being consistent, and gaining traction within a large

audience of passionate personal trainers. This required me to develop systems to not only create new content, but ensure that any email subscriber received tons of great information many times a week without getting spammed.

It took time, but I built a 2-year autoresponse sequence. The automated messages were set to go out Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays, and Sundays. They would go out every 3-5 days.

New content was published on Tuesdays and Thursdays so there was a broadcast (one-time) email sent out. My autoresponse never sent out messages on these days so I knew that my subscribers were never getting two emails in a day. Saturdays are a dead time so I decided not to send anything that day. Here's a snippet of what mine looked like:

Mesg	Times	Interval	Type	Modified	Click Tracking	Subject	Spam?	Test	Copy	Delete
1		0	Text/HTML	10/13/12	On			TEST	COPY	X
2	M,W,F,Su 3PM-6PM	1	Text/HTML	10/13/12	On			TEST	COPY	X
3	M,W,F,Su 3PM-6PM	5	Text/HTML	10/13/12	On			TEST	COPY	X
4	M,W,F,Su 3PM-6PM	5	Text/HTML	10/13/12	On			TEST	COPY	X
5	M,W,F,Su 3PM-6PM	5	Text/HTML	10/13/12	On			TEST	COPY	X
6	M,W,F,Su 3PM-6PM	3	Text/HTML	10/13/12	On			TEST	COPY	X
7	M,W,F,Su 9PM-12 M...	3	Text/HTML	10/13/12	On			TEST	COPY	X
8	M,W,F,Su 6AM-9AM	5	Text/HTML	10/13/12	On			TEST	COPY	X
9	M,W,F,Su 6AM-9AM	5	Text/HTML	10/13/12	On			TEST	COPY	X
10	M,W,F,Su 9PM-12 M...	5	Text/HTML	10/13/12	On			TEST	COPY	X
11	M,W,F,Su 3AM-6AM	5	Text/HTML	10/13/12	On			TEST	COPY	X
12	M,W,F-Su 6PM-9PM	5	Text/HTML	10/13/12	On			TEST	COPY	X
13	M,W,F,Su 3AM-6AM	5	Text/HTML	10/13/12	On			TEST	COPY	X

This sequence worked beautifully when I was focusing on selling my own books and the site was being funded by commission / affiliate promotions. It helped build the audience for the site and I recommend it to anybody.

However, now that the PTDC has a host of its own products and I made the decision to forego affiliate promotions, I've changed things up.

When a user first subscribes they receive a 2.5-week welcome sequence. This includes a personal hello, a damaging admission (where I tell them how the site makes money), and a ton of our best content sent every 1-2 days.

After the user finishes the welcome sequence they are automated into the master list where they don't receive an autoresponse sequence. They only receive new articles and occasionally teases at other premium things.

The teases aim to identify anybody who might be interested in a product that the PTDC has for sale. If they take action by clicking a link in the email, they get copied to a different email list that is set up as a perpetual release for a premium product or program.

At any given time users are going through 3-5 perpetual releases of programs. When they are, they get excluded from one-off messages. In addition, users who have purchased a program are excluded from broadcast messages in the master list "teasing" the product that they've already purchased.

It sounds complicated and in a sense it is. But, like any system, it's eloquent in its effectiveness and simplicity. It grows as I grow.

Note: Aweber doesn't include the functionality to do all of the automation tasks that I use so I also integrate software called AwProTools to help with segmenting my users into various interest groups.

Less is more (how and when to publish)

Now it's time to get into the meat and potatoes of blogging. My viewpoint on how often to publish and what type of material has changed quite a bit over time.

At one point I was posting 4x/week on the PTDC and attempting to post twice a week on my personal site. This, in addition to occasional guest posts was exhausting. It also meant that I couldn't put out my best work.

Most of all, I ran out of ideas.

Maybe I'm just not that smart but I can't come up with new and innovative stuff multiple times a week. I have an idea once in a while that I think is good and hopefully solves a problem my readers are having. I test my solution and explore it from every angle and write an article about it.

I'm not willing to write about stuff I don't know or haven't investigated fully.

This left me with a problem – how could I keep growing my sites by posting less often. My solution was three-fold:

1. Write the best article I could ever write.
2. Re-package the material in as many different ways as I can.
3. Turn the PTDC into a collaborative effort.

Write less and promote more

There is no point in writing an article that nobody will read.

There is no point in writing an article that doesn't provide you (the author) any benefits.

After 8 months of watching social media feeds like a hawk I started to recognize a pattern. To me, it appeared as if people are mindless online. Not only that, I felt that they don't assess what they're sharing and the affect it may have on others.

To explore this I wrote an article called “Why You’re Failing to Make a Difference”. In this article I spoke my opinion on the motivational phrases that people share online superimposed over pictures of half-naked beautiful people sweating.

I postulated that the person sharing these pictures did so as a way of selectively self-representing, or boasting. I argued that it’s considered uncouth for them to write that they exercise so they share these pictures to show off.

To drive the point home, I concluded that these pictures were having the opposite effect of their claimed reason for posting. While the person sharing said they wanted to motivate others I feel they are creating an elitist atmosphere that is making people shy away from the gym.

The response to this article was more than anything I’d had seen to date.

I knew I was onto something and decided to focus much of my efforts on exploring the theory more. Using the same theory from that one article I:

- Wrote a version of that article for my friend Dean Somerset’s site.
- Wrote a version of it for an Australian fitness magazine.
- Recorded an audio lecture for sale on Movementlectures.com on the subject.
- Wrote an eBook for thePTDC called “Facebook Marketing for Fitness Pros”.
- Recorded countless podcasts on other sites.
- Wrote and published “Race to the Top: How to Take Over the Social Media Feed” largely based on the theory that originated with that one article. That book is no longer in print but the evolved (and much, much better version) is available in print, Kindle, and audio called [*Viralmomics: How to Get People to Want to Talk About You.*](#)

It’s all in the idea

Do you have a problem that you believe is unique and solves a problem that people have?

Does your idea approach a problem from a different angle?

Milk it for all it's worth.

First put the idea out to your audience and see if it garners the type of reaction that you hope. A blog is a fantastic platform for testing and exploring ideas. Then approach influencers with bigger blogs and offer them a guest post on the subject. Refer them back to your original article and tell them it will be similar in vein.

When you do get a guest post successfully published somewhere else, keep your author byline to 2-3 sentences. Link back directly to a page where people can enter their email to learn more. Generally these pages are called squeeze pages to “squeeze” an email out of a reader. I actually use [thePTDC's about page](#) for the same purpose. Here's an example byline:

“Jonathan Goodman CSCS loves deadlifts, hates bad socks, and has a constant hankering for fine key lime pie. He operates the largest collaborative blog for trainers dedicated to improving the perception of the industry and trainers success. It's called thePTDC and you can [click here to join 250,000+ monthly trainer-readers for free](#).”

Next, maybe decide to film a video for your YouTube channel talking about the subject.

Then you can record an audio version and upload it to iTunes.

Following that, you might decide to write a short eBook and sell it via Kindle or release it as an ethical bribe.

Heck, you could also have some fun and create memes using [memegenerator.net](#) making fun of the topic to share via Facebook and Twitter.

Finally you can write subsequent articles for your blog on similar topics but using different examples.

My point is that you don't have many great ideas. When you have one get creative and try to figure out as many ways as possible to get the idea to spread.

The best posting schedule

Don't worry about a posting schedule when you start off. Post the best content you possibly can and spend every spare second you have building relationships with your readers.

The time of the day and week to post is important especially when your audience isn't that big yet. Here are some superficial guidelines:

- Weekday mornings before work are good for short tips and motivational posts.
- Lunchtime is good for memes and status updates on Facebook or Twitter.
- After dinner (generally around 8:30-11pm) is good for posting full-length articles.
- Near the end of the week late afternoon can be a good time to post. It's when people are procrastinating at work and perusing social media.
- Sunday mornings are good for longer posts. It's when people hang out and read.

I say that these are superficial guidelines because the optimal times to post may change based on your industry. For example personal trainers generally work early mornings and later on in the evening. They sit twiddling their thumbs in the middle of the day. Therefore 2-4pm is a great time to post for that audience.

Know your industry. The rule is the same across the board. When people have nothing to do there is a better chance they are mindlessly surfing social media sites. This is the best time to post.

Professionalism and Consistency

If there are two things that are more important than any other consideration in what makes some blogs successful and others not, it's professionalism and consistency.

When I work with people I suggest that they have 8 weeks of content ready to go before releasing a blog. This eases the burden and ensures that they can stick to a release schedule.

Next, presenting your information in finalized format will set you apart. It's funny to say, but you're an outlier if you write well and present edited material formatted well on a blog. It might be worth using an editor. If you don't know somebody, [Scribendi](#) is a great service.

Finally, learn the basics of formatting. Read the newspaper and pay attention to the organization of the content. The elements are almost always:

1. Headline.
2. Lede (1-4 sentence overview of the article that grabs your attention).
3. Story.
4. Actionable solution or steps to solving.
5. Conclusion.

Before you publish your post

I go through the same guidelines before publishing a post and wanted to pass it on to you. Keep this section beside your computer and check off each step before hitting the publish button.

1. Re-read the post and delete as much as possible. Try to write succinctly. Understand and respect the power that some words have and refrain from using qualifiers like: basically, quite, moreover, therefore, and extremely. These words usually don't add anything.
2. Re-read the post correcting any obvious grammatical gaffs.
3. Re-read the post out loud paying attention to cadence. Try to get a rhythm to your words and take note both of when you pause and when you speed up. Does it feel right?

4. Make sure all citations are in the work properly.
5. Go over it one more time. Did you have an emotional reaction to the post? If you didn't then it isn't ready to publish yet. Go back in and make it more personal or add in some jokes.
6. Include A SINGLE call to action at the end of the post. This could be to ask the reader to opt-in to your mailing list, join your Facebook page, comment, buy your stuff or anything else.

The point of blog posts

Writing a good blog post takes considerable time and effort. Every blog post you write should have a purpose.

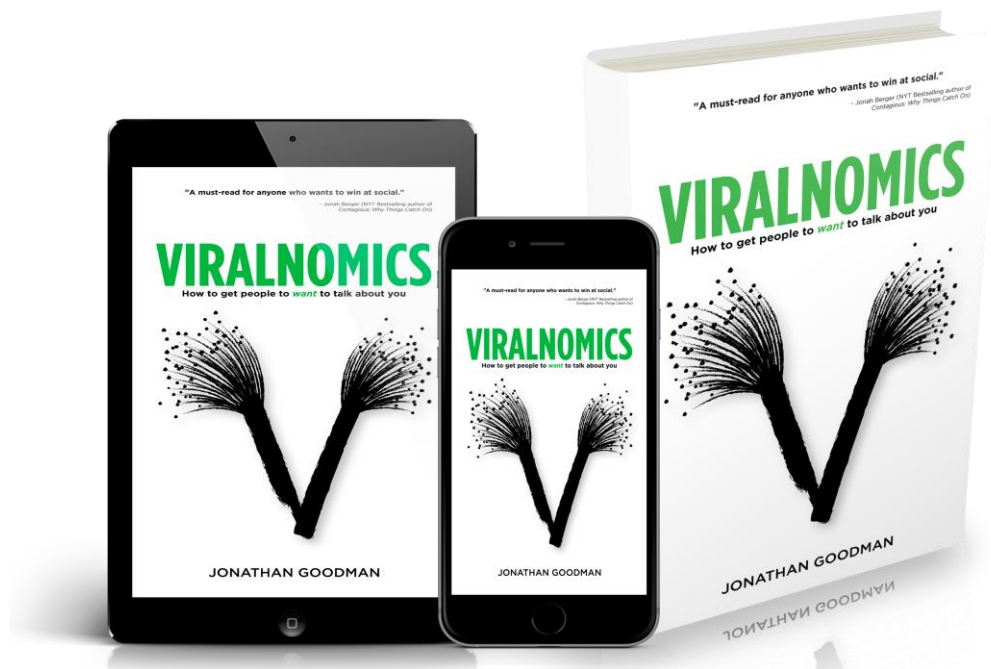
A good blog post gives the reader enough information to help them but also whets their appetite for more. The call to action is your sell on getting them to learn more about the subject by opting into your marketing funnel or buying your stuff.

A Final Note

I hope that this section provided you a nice overview of blogging, how to post, what to post, and when to post.

If you're looking for a lot more about the theory of why people share, what to write for your audience, and savvy strategies for getting your material to find its audience, I highly recommend you pick up a copy of my book, [*Viralnomics: How to Get People to Want to Talk About You*](#).

Truth is, I don't offer any coaching or mentoring. When I did coach on this stuff, I charged \$400/hr. For \$15 or less, you can get everything I know packaged in an engaging book. You won't find a better. Deal. Oh, and one more thing ... there's cartoons ☺



[Click here to see what the hype is about and get it on Amazon today](#)

Affiliate / commission marketing

When asked how I make money online the person usually interjects before I have time to respond and says, “advertising right?” When I tell them that I have never hosted an ad on any of my sites they’re surprised, dumbfounded, and interested.

I rarely participate in affiliate promotions these days. It was a decision based largely on focusing solely on building my own product offerings. It takes a long time to build up a strong audience to sell a digital program to and it takes even longer to build an exceptional program to sell. It took me 2.5 years before I released anything of my own for sale on the PTDC. Up until that point I financed the site with affiliate programs that I’ll go over below.

Affiliate marketing is huge and if you can become a trusted source it is very, very profitable. Commissions vary. Here’s an idea of the major ways to profit:

- E-products like eBooks and video / webinars usually pay a 75% commission rate minus fees. This means that a \$99 product will garner about \$70 per sale.
- More and more companies are seeing the value in affiliate marketing and offering commissions ranging from 10-30% on products.
- Amazon is the most widely used affiliate network. They start at 4% for most products and the percentage increases depending on how many sales you make. The nice part about Amazon’s program is that you get commission off of anything the person buys on the site through your link.

Clickbank

Clickbank is the most widely used service that affiliate marketers use. It’s free to set up an account and start promoting. You simply log in and get a unique link. When somebody buys the product after clicking through on your link you get the commission.

Usually, if you go to the bottom of those long sales pages you will see a link that says “affiliates” click on it to sign up for the program.

Clickbank also has a marketplace where you can search for products on pretty much anything.

Every product and sales page on Clickbank has to go through the company's rigid approval process. In addition the site forces a 60-day money back guarantee. Because of this it's a safe way to promote products while saving face on your website.

When you are promoting make sure to personally inspect each product. It takes years to build a reputation and seconds to break one.

After awhile, people might send you advanced copies of products asking you to promote them. If you can be a part of an initial launch it usually means more sales. Again, be sure to watch or read the entire product before promoting it.

Physical Products

Many fitness equipment companies and supplement companies offer commission / affiliate programs as well. Chances are if you see a company being promoted on a blog somebody is being paid. If you also use the product you may as well make some money from recommending it.

Go to the site of your favorite companies and look for an affiliate link usually in the footer of the page.

Expert tip, read the fine print – Affiliate contracts are similar but sometimes there are stipulations in there that are questionable. For example I turned down an opportunity to affiliate a company because they had a no compete clause. This meant that I could not promote any other fitness equipment if I promoted their company.

Amazon

I like Amazon because it's easy, trusted, and everybody uses it already. The commissions aren't as high as some of the other options but you will make a lot more sales. This and there's always a chance

that somebody will drop \$1,000+ on a big-ticket item having clicked through on your link. It happens to me at least once a month.

Whenever I reference a book, I grab the affiliate link from Amazon and plug it in. It won't make you rich but could easily result in an extra couple hundred bucks a month.

Software

This book is a perfect example. Many of the software programs that I use have affiliate programs. As I recommend them to you in this book, I'm using my affiliate link.

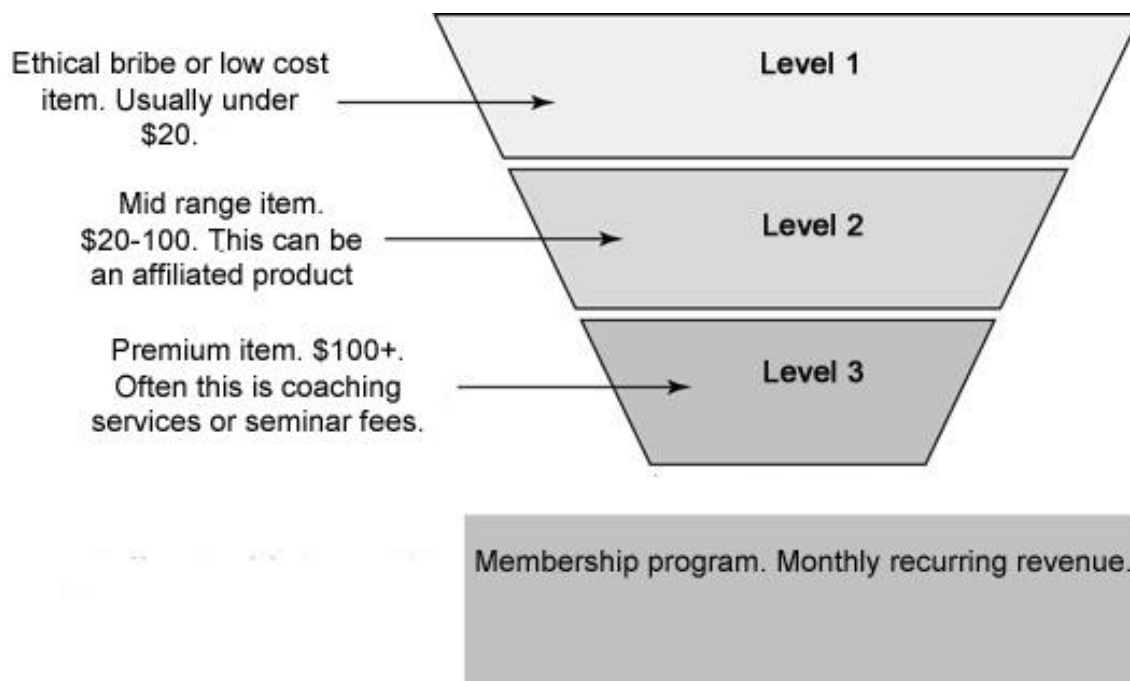
Software can be a particularly good type of commission because it's one of the rare, truly passive income streams. Since a lot of software is a monthly fee, the commission programs often pay out each month. For example, [if you sign up for Aweber through my link](#) then I get a commission every month when you pay your bill. You pay nothing extra. The company is simply paying me to advertise as opposed to a conventional TV spot or other type of ad. Pretty cool, right?

Setting Up various income funnels

This is the fun part. Everybody wants to talk about making money. You should work to have four main categories of generating income and each of them flow into each other. When you get them to work in synergy you have achieved financial freedom.

Consider it a series of funnels where the plan is to start as many people at the top and transition them into higher priced items. The goal is to do this with as little leakage as possible. All the while you want to be developing a passive recurring income stream as well – this could be a membership program or something like recurring software commissions.

It's not easy but it can be done and much of it should be automated. Below is a breakdown of the funnels. I'll explain each of the sections individually.



Most digital marketing works off of a model called “ascension”. While I don’t actually use the model (I’ll explain why later) it’s the right one for most. I’ll first explain the various levels of the conventional ascension model and how to link them together and then will discuss my method.

Level 1

This is your lead generating funnel. It’s where your ethical bribe or low cost offer fits in. The purpose of it is to create materials that appeal to as many people in your desired audience as possible and give them a low barrier of entry to learn more about you.

Whether or not you use the ascension model or not, you’ll need level 1 lead generators. Consider the analogy of a fishing rode. Simply place as many high-quality ones as possible in various places around the net and let them catch fish for you.

This book is part of my level 1 funnel. You’re in it. I plan on selling you stuff. Good stuff and stuff with tons of value. There’s a reason that I write 50+ page Ebooks and sell them so cheap or give them away for free. Making the book free on the blog allows me to rank the page that it’s on in Google. I then trust that people will enjoy and gain from the content of it so much that they’ll keep coming back or opt-in for a downloadable version and my other free Ebooks.

To be honest I meshed my level 1 and level 2 funnels here. As I’ve said before, many of the links in this book are affiliate links. If you can work in a way to generate passive income (the recurring portion of my funnel model above) at any stage, I recommend doing it. Just ensure that it doesn’t take away from the value that you’re providing.

My print books *Ignite the Fire: The Secrets to Building a Successful Personal Training Career* (www.theptdc.com/ignite), *Personal Trainer Pocketbook: A Handy Reference for All Your Daily Questions* (www.theptdc.com/pocketbook), and *Viralnomics: How to Get People to Want To Talk About You* (www.viralnomics.com/book) are also part of my level 1 funnel. Aside from purchasing them through my site, all three books are on Amazon and a host of other sites where people search and find them – they are fishing rods.

Having published books will set you apart from many of the bloggers out there. My decision to print my books as opposed to produce them as Ebooks and sell as digital products was a tough one. I left a lot of money on the table.

Time will tell whether it was the right move. I chose the possibility of making millions later as opposed to 10's or thousands now.

A printed book is cherished. People display books proudly at their house hoping others will pick one up off of the shelf and want to talk about it. It's highlighted, marked up, annotated, and dog-eared.

The book is passed onto others as a way of gaining social equity. A printed book has value to the owner, much more than an electronic version. It is referred back to years later and the reader is reminded about their connection to the author.

This is what I wanted when I produced my books. I never saw myself as a fly-by-night blogger. I have an ego. I want people to think of me years later when they see my book on their shelf.

Level 1 of your funnel is designed to attract as many people as possible. It's a place for you to show your value and entice people to want to pay for more. You can do it either with a free or low-priced items.

Level 2

This stage can vary depending on the nature of your business. Perhaps you have a physical product. Stage one would probably be an eBook detailing some common mistakes people have. The book will then directly feed into the solution – your product.

For content marketers like myself, level 2 can be a combination of affiliate products where commissions are anywhere from \$20-\$100 or material produced by the creator themselves.

These can be sold a couple different ways:

- Directly in blog posts extolling the benefits of the product.
- During a launch for the product via email blasts sent by you or embedded within blog posts.
- Messages in your autoresponse can feature a level 2 product every once in a while as well. This is nice because it's completely passive.
- As a stable ad on your site that you hope people see and click on.

In the ascension model level two is where many make the mistake of stopping. While selling an Ebook for \$27 is great and the margins are high, selling enough to generate wealth is very difficult. The same goes with affiliating other people's products. As your offerings get more and more specific and in-depth, you can charge more understanding that you'll make less sales. If you're using ascension, the goal of a level 2 is to feed people into level 3.

Level 3

These are your high-ticket items. Ideally these are ones that cost very little to produce and have a huge profit margin. Some examples include:

- Admission to seminars or in-person workshops.
- Online distance coaching.
- Mentorships.

These items are bought because somebody loves you or your company. The online economy is fickle. It's hard to communicate the true value of your product but it's simple (although not easy and extremely time-consuming) to create strong relationships with people you have never met.

In the ascension model all other levels lead to this one, which generally consists of products that cost \$200+. If you're looking specifically at [becoming an online personal trainer](#) then your top level might be an online coaching package for \$200/month, or \$2,400/year. You should have a top-level service that is very narrow in focus, premium, and very profitable.

Membership

Aside from your 3 levels in the funnel itself, you'll notice that my illustration has a row below. This illustrates a source of recurring income, ideally passive, but not necessarily.

Many experts will recommend a membership program as a source of recurring income and while I don't disagree, I urge you to be careful. First, conventional membership programs are low cost – that means that you'll need a lot of members. I.e. A lot of customers, which results in extra administrative work. What's also pertinent to note is that customers who pay the least expect the most. A membership program is also a commit from you to continually add new material.

The two best ways to run a membership are to:

1. Outsource the continual content creation and curation.
2. Create all content up front and have the membership for a set period of time (say 365 days) and use software or an autoresponder like Aweber to drip-feed the content to a user.

It took me 5 years to finally run out my membership platform, the [*Professional Trainer Society*](#). There was a huge investment in both time and money to learn how to do it right. A great membership program can fundamental change your business by developing a huge bulk of delighted customers and by adding in a reliable and recurring income stream to allow you to hire help. A badly-run membership site can hurt your reputation and drive you insane.

A membership site isn't the only way to generate a stream of recurring income but it's the most common. I have additional recurring streams from software commissions resulting from programs like Aweber and also software for managing online training clientele that I love called [*Trainerize*](#). Over time these can add up. My commissions for *Trainerize* alone should be over \$50,000 in 2016 (and that's completely passive income).

My Theory / Model

I don't use the ascension model. Instead I developed, what I call, the 98/2 principle. That is: 98% of material is free and 2% is premium.

The premium material is highly-vetted, thoroughly researched, painstakingly-developed, and professionally edited, polished, and presented. It's expensive and difficult to produce and it's impossible to produce a lot of it in different areas. A single program I develop for sale can cost upwards of \$75,000 to develop and years of time.

My current goal is not profit maximization. If it was, my model isn't ideal. My current goal is to generate enough revenue from the site that allows me to invest as much as I want back into it while living a life of freedom and focus. Instead of trying to sell thousands of \$27 Ebooks, I make the material for the Ebook free and develop it into another fishing rod to grow the exposure of the site. I don't want a lot of customers who pay me very little. I want less customers whose lives I can change through well-developed materials.

This allows me to focus.

Instead of getting bogged down with administration or worrying whether my next product launch will be successful, the 98/2 model allows me to focus on producing the best work possible, while knowing that I'm taken care of.

In a World where media is becoming increasingly fragmented and the public's attention is becoming more limited by the minute, sites like the PTDC are becoming more valuable. Ascension is a good model to maximize revenues today. I feel that the 98/2 model is the best way to position a site as a mainstay in a competitive industry for the years to come.

Recommend Resources

The following is a list of software and services that I use or have used and recommend. Some you may need right now, others in the future. These programs will take you from building your site on day one to maximizing your time later on I've split it into 3 categories: paid software, free software, and people

Paid Software

To start you don't need much, if any, paid stuff. However, many of the programs I'll list below help you to either deliver a better service or become more efficient.

If you're strapped for cash, bypass this section for now. You're fine using your email account and sending out workouts using Microsoft Excel.

Domain name registration - [Godaddy](#)



Where I register all of my domains. The customer service is good. I wouldn't recommend using them for anything other than registering domains. Their services outside of that are generally expensive and not all that good. I have over 40 domains registered with them. Get it at: <http://www.theptdc.com/godaddy>

Web hosting - [WpEngine](#)



While not the cheapest web hosting solution, WpEngine has been sensational. Their customer service is great, overage is reasonable (with no downtime. Last thing you want is to go viral and your site crash), and it's the fastest hosting around. Not only that, but all of your sites automatically back up every night so if you ever get hacked, you never lose information. That peace of mind alone is worth it. Get it at: www.theptdc.com/wpengine

Email marketing (1) – [Active Campaign](#)



I transitioned to Active Campaign (AC) from Aweber because I wanted a better solution. For just sending emails and very basic autoresponders, Aweber is fine. But if you have any intention on creating more complex automations, sales funnels, and logic statements, Active Campaign is amazing. Also, because of how AC measures its contacts vs. Aweber I saved \$300/month by making the switch (that part even surprised me. I got a much better service for \$300/month cheaper). Get it at: www.theptdc.com/activecampaign

Email marketing (2) - [Aweber](#)



I still recommend Aweber if you need a really basic solution. It's quite simple and if you don't have any intentions on doing anything other than sending emails to your list, Aweber is fine. I used it for 4 years without any trouble. Get it at: <http://www.theptdc.com/aweber>

Online training software - [Trainerize](#)



This is a specific program for personal training communication, fitness program design and meal planning for your online clients. For most online trainers, it's the best option out there. Don't overthink software. Pick one and start using it. Many different types of software are probably fine. You can get a free 30-day trial to check it out at www.theptdc.com/trainerize

Creating a membership site - [WishList Member Plugin](#)



This is the paid plugin that I use to manage the Professional Trainer Society. It's quite robust allowing you to manage a lot of members and has integrations with every major email provider and payment processing system. Simply install the plugin in, configure it and you have a membership site. It integrates seamlessly with

every major payment and email marketing system. See more at <http://www.viralnomics.com/membershipsite>

Creating squeeze and sales pages - [Optimize Press 2](#)



This is an affordable and high quality software to create effective squeeze pages. It integrates easily into Aweber, Active Campaign, or any major email provider and Wordpress. It's a one-time fee (unlike many of its competitors where you pay monthly). Not only that, but it comes with a free membership site plugin (not as robust as WishList member but still ver good). I currently have the unlimited license and use OP2 on 15+ sites. Get it at:

www.theptdc.com/optimizepress

Hosting Videos – [Vimeo](#)



I have a paid Vimeo account for hosting and protecting videos. You can upload to YouTube but I've found that the quality on Vimeo is better and host all videos for my courses on there. Vimeo is free. I use the premium account. Get it at www.theptdc.com/vimeo

Computer Backup - [Back Blaze](#)



No sense taking your chances with the valuable information on your computer. BackBlaze is a super cheap service that backs up your entire computer automatically (and always stays up to date). You can backup an unlimited amount of external drives as well. If anything happens to your computer, you can download all of the contents right back and not miss a beat. If your computer gets stolen, they will overnight ship an external hard drive anywhere in the world. Get it at www.theptdc.com/backblaze

Video conferencing - [Zoom](#)



Most people use Skype for their group video and one-on-one online consultations. Unfortunately, if either party has anything but

exceptional Internet connection there are lots of problems with the calls. Zoom is a new software that I use in the PT-Society for group chats. It crashes much less than Skype and has an excellent interface for one-on-one or group chats and is super-cheap. Get it here at www.theptdc.com/zoom

Scheduling - [Time Trade](#)

This is a great platform to book in client consultations. You get to choose the time slots that you want to keep available for others to have access to. The best part is that it syncs with the online Calendar for the client and yourself AND their independent time zones so you never miss another appointment. There are several online booking systems, I haven't researched the differences, but I've been completely satisfied with TimeTrade. Get it at www.timetrade.com/

timetrade®

Virtual Private Network - [Tunnel Bear](#)



This VPN is a simple privacy app that allows you to hide your IP address when you're working on an unsecure server or trying to get access from a restricted country. If you're like me and work out of a lot of coffee shops, a VPN is essential for computer security. Get it at www.tunnelbear.com

Password management - [Last Pass](#)



I didn't know what I was missing until I started using Lastpass. Online security is more and more of an issue every day. You should have different passwords for every site that you use and they should all be complicated. However, it's a nightmare to manage them all. That, and if you're like me and have a team around the world you need to share passwords with, it takes up a ton of time. Lastpass makes this easy. Not only do I use it as an enterprise user, but I purchase a yearly account for everybody on my team. Get it www.theptdc.com/lastpass

Delaying emails – [Follow-up CC](http://www.followup.cc)



Another one of those “I didn’t know what I was missing until I got it” things. This is a plugin for gmail that allows you to snooze emails (decide when you want it to be resent to your inbox) or delay sending an email. It’s great for keeping inbox zero, sending yourself reminders to follow up, and writing a bulk of emails when you have time (like on the weekend) and having them sent at the optimal time (like on a Tuesday). Get it at www.followup.cc

----- **Free Software**

Below is a list of mostly productivity software that I use. These programs help keep my notes in place, my time efficient, and my team working together well.



WordPress – WordPress powers 25% of the Internet, which means many plug-ins and programs integrate easily with it. Not to mention that there is literally a “how-to” video and/or blog a virtually any or your own paid hosting, WordPress has many templates to use. It will take a little time to learn the ins-and-outs, but I guarantee you it is worth it if you are serious about building your online brand. Sign-up here www.wordpress.com/

Note-taking - [Evernote](http://www.evernote.com)



I put everything in Evernote. It’s how I organize my thoughts on the go, take notes in books, and keep track of my favourite quotes. If somebody asks me a question or wants to see my review of a book, for example, I can simply send them a link to my Evernote folder. You can keep all of your client information in a note, for example. The options are endless. Get it at www.evernote.com

Storage – [Dropbox](http://www.dropbox.com)



Dropbox is free for storage up to a certain point, then you have to pay. I'm on the paid version with more storage than I'll need in a hundred years. It's used for keeping all files for all of my sites. Each member of my team has it and I can share folders, videos, and documentation. Additionally, dropbox is a great place to backup important files. Get it at <https://db.tt/527J4xVo>

Taking payments (1) - [PayPal](#)



PayPal's free to use. You pay a percentage of each transaction when you make a sale. I use it in tandem with Stripe, which I'll list below. It's trusted and really easy to use. Get it at www.PayPal.com

Taking payments (2) – [Stripe](#)



I use Stripe to process credit card transactions and use it in tandem with PayPal. You will likely need a developer to integrate it into your site (although they now have easy to use plugins). It's lightweight and super-easy to use. Similar to PayPal, it's free and you pay a transaction fee when you make a sale. Get it at www.stripe.com

Sharing information - Google Docs



I love Google docs and Google surveys. If you work with a team both parties can edit the document in real time and share it back and forth seamlessly. If you use gmail, you already have them.

Keeping abreast of research / articles – [Feedly](#)



Instead of having to navigate to your favourite blogs and websites to see if they update, simply add them all to your feedly account. This way you can login to feedly and quickly see whether they update, check a snippet, and read more if interested. My team uses Feedly to create our weekly best fitness articles feature on the

PTDC. Get it at www.feedly.com



Block social media – [Self Control](http://www.selfcontrol.com)

A simple free app that allows you to block any site you wish for a predetermined amount of time in order for you to focus. Get it at www.selfcontrol.com



Reduce your computers light at night – [Flux](http://www.justgetflux.com/)

Flux is a simple app that senses when it's nighttime and dims your computer. I have it installed in my computer because I like working early mornings and it stops my computer from blasting me with light. Get it at www.justgetflux.com/

----- **People**

Below are a few examples of people who help me with maintaining my websites, design, and editing.

Website upkeep and maintenance - [WPUP](http://www.theptdc.com/wpup)



These guys have saved my butt more times than I can count. If you're like me and own a wordpress website (or multiple sites) then having a reliable and affordable team to do upkeep, maintenance, and to call upon when something goes wrong is worth it's weight in gold. Get it at: www.theptdc.com/wpup

Contractors - [Upwork](http://www.upwork.com)



UpWork is my site of choice when I have a medium to high end design or editing project. It's a great place to find people to design pamphlets or books. I also use it quite a bit for editing work. Below I've listed a few contractors on the site that I've worked with and recommend:

- **Grace** - High end formatting for books, flyers, print, or web:
<https://www.upwork.com/freelancers/~0110999e82e9956ac8>
- **Ravi** - Kindle and Ebook creation. Very easy to work with and quick and cheap:
<https://www.upwork.com/fl/ravikumar>
- **Duncan** - Fantastic editor.
<https://www.upwork.com/fl/duncanKoerber>
- **Alan** - Sensational powerpoint slide designer for webinars:
<https://www.upwork.com/freelancers/~01bff7389c94adb57d>
- **Sam** (Mehboob) - Great interior design book formatter for print. Bit of a language barrier but will do anything to get the job right and can't beat the price:
<https://www.upwork.com/freelancers/~oba862dcc6ee4959>

My Books

I've written 3 books for print. People like them a lot (at least that's what they tell me). I think that you'll like them too, so I'm going to advertise them here.

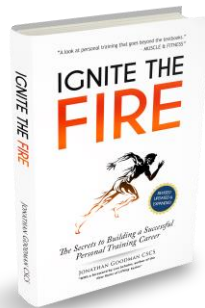
Books are the best deal imaginable. Think about it, you're getting years of somebody's work for 20 or 30 bucks.

If you follow me online, you're well aware that I love books. My collection continues to grow because I never hesitate investing in a book. The minute I hear about one that sounds good I order it either to my Kindle or in paperback to my home.

Sure I could probably get the information in any book that I buy for free somewhere. Truth is, you can get pretty much any information for free online these days. But is it worth it? Do you really want to spend the time digging through the net to find what you're looking for or would you rather have somebody do all of the work and serve it up to you on a silver platter for the price of a reasonably good dinner?

Because I know that not everybody loves to read or has the time, I had a voice actor professionally produce two of my books in audio format as well. Here's a bit about my books. I hope you love reading them as much as I loved putting them together.

Ignite the Fire: The Secrets to Building a Successful Personal Training Career (Revised, Updated, and Expanded)

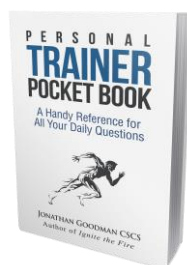


Ignite is the book that started it all. Now in a revised, updated, and expanded version, it's been called “the bible” for personal trainers. I won't try to tell you how good this book is. Instead, I encourage you to read through any of the 260+ 5-star Amazon reviews.

Get it on Amazon. Available in:

[Paperback](#) | [Kindle](#) | [Audible](#)

Personal Trainer Pocketbook: A Handy Reference for All Your Daily Questions

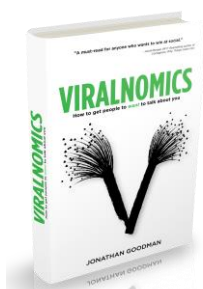


The pocketbook is the perfect companion to *Ignite*. In it you'll find answers to the 47 most common questions trainers ask. Keep this book with you at the gym. Whenever you're looking for guidance or don't know how to act (for example, when a client objects in a sales meeting), flip to the page in the pocketbook for your answer.

Get it on Amazon. Available in:

[Paperback](#) | [Kindle](#)

Viralmomics: How to Get People to Want to Talk About You



If you're at all interested in marketing yourself online, this is for you. It's not about fitness. *VNomics* is about the world we live in today. Years back I became obsessed with word of mouth, social contagion, and social media. At the time of publishing this book I had read every steady on the subject.

This book details the actionable strategies that came out of my research. In short, these are the strategies I used to grow a small blog from my one-bedroom apartment at night into the largest community of trainers in the world and a multi-million dollar business in 5 years. Also, it has cartoons.

Get it on Amazon. Available in:

[Paperback](#) | [Kindle](#) | [Audible](#)

Disclosure

As of December 1st, 2009 the FTC requires that I disclose whenever there could be hidden interests or unspoken biases related to recommendations. Know that I only recommend and provide links to buy products or services that I wholeheartedly recommend and use myself. However, to make sure I cover myself, assume that for every link in this book I'm receiving monetary compensation, sex, swag, and puppies. Lots and lots of puppies.