

Up and Running with Niche Sites for Beginners



Table of Contents

Niche Websites: What Are They and How Can They Make You Rich?.....	3
What is a Niche Website?.....	3
Monetizing Your Niche Website: The First Step.....	3
The Final Step: Promoting Your Niche Website.....	4
How to Start Researching Your First Niche Website.....	6
How to Find a General Topic for Your Niche.....	6
Keyword Tools or Free Research?.....	6
How Much Money Do I Need to Invest in My Niche Website?.....	9
How to You Can Find Quality Content for Your Niche Website.....	10
Using Content from a PLR Website.....	10
Tips for Writing Your Own Content.....	10
Outsourcing the Work to a Freelance Writer.....	11
How Much Content Do You Need?.....	11
A Word About Keyword Sniping.....	11
How to Effectively Monetize Your Niche Website.....	13
Setting Up AdSense.....	13
Amazon Associate’s Network: How it Works.....	13
Ebay Partner Network: How it Works.....	14
Are There Other Options to Monetize a Niche Website?.....	14
Donations Work Better Than You Would Think.....	14
Experiment for Success.....	15
How to Promote Your Niche Website for Better, Targeted Traffic.....	16
Expand Your SEO.....	16
Bookmark Your Site with a Vengeance.....	16
The Power of Article Marketing.....	17
Crossfire Linking – A Magnetic Technique for Article Marketing.....	17
Comment on Related Blogs.....	18
Create a Squidoo Lens or Hub Page.....	18
How to Improve Your Niche Website By Tracking Results.....	19
Analyzing Your Traffic.....	19
Analyzing PageRank.....	19
Tracking Conversion Rates.....	20
Setting Up Google Analytics.....	20
When Will the Niche Website Start Making Money?.....	20
When To Scrap a Niche Website.....	20

Niche Websites: What Are They and How Can They Make You Rich?

Niche sites are a popular term that a lot of internet marketers are throwing around these days – and the main way that I currently make my passive income. Chances are, if you ask any real marketer how to make money online, they are going to tell you, “Find a niche, and make it your own.” So what exactly does that mean? This article is going to explain exactly what a niche site is and how they have made a lot of people very wealthy.



What Is A Niche Website?

To start with, let's define the word “niche.” A niche is officially defined as a small enclosure that is set back. It's a corner, so to speak. When you start up a niche website you are placing your focus on a small corner of the market that nobody else has yet capitalized on. For example, there are a lot of websites that sell electronics. If you start up a brand new electronics website you're going to have to do a lot of work to get it to rank up with the likes of Sony or even eBay.

However, if you started up a website that promoted electric toothbrushes, you would have refined that market down to a much more targeted audience. It's still fairly broad though, so you need to narrow it down even further. Make it electric toothbrushes for senior citizens, and you have what is known as a niche product.

Once you have a highly refined, specialized niche product it's much easier to build a website that will rank at the very top of the search engines for those specialized keywords. It's still going to take a lot of research to find the right keywords, and even more to start making money from it, but by starting out with a niche product you already have your foot in the door.

Monetizing Your Niche Website: The First Step

There is a lot more to learn and understand about actually building your site, but let's take a minute to go over the most important part of your niche site: making money.

There are basically two ways that a niche website makes money:

- Pay Per Click Advertising
- Affiliate Programs

How to Use Pay Per Click

Pay per click, or PPC, ads are advertisements that you allow businesses to place on your site in exchange for a small royalty for each time a visitor clicks on the ad. The most common PPC program is Google AdSense. You can set up a free account with AdSense that will manage the advertisements and the subsequent clicks, and you simply place an html code

into your site.

Is Google AdSense the only program offering PPC ads? No, but it is the most popular simply because the Google search engine is the most used search engine in the world. That means that more people have the opportunity to see the ads, leading to more click-thru's. Yahoo and Bing offer similar services, and third party companies, while not as well known, provide a higher cost per click for publishers.

Some of these sites are:

- ValueClick
- AllClicks
- BulkClicks
- FlyCast
- SearchBucks

Setting up PPC ads on your niche website is easy and most important, it is free. One of the biggest benefits of niche sites is not the amount of wealth that they can provide, but the fact that investment capital is practically zero. Besides paying for a domain (and you really don't even need to do that) and hosting fees, you can start up a profitable online business through a niche website without paying a dime.

The Basics of Affiliate Programs

Okay, so let's take a look at affiliate programs now. Affiliate programs are sponsored by either a direct company or another e-commerce website (Amazon.com, for example) and they pay advertisers to promote their products – in exchange for a commission of course.

To start using an affiliate program, you have to go to their site and usually at the footer of the website will be a group of internal links. Find the one that mentions their affiliate program and proceed to sign up. These programs are becoming a lot more popular these days; so many sites have actually moved the link to their affiliate page to the top of the site. Here are some of the biggest affiliate programs that people are using to monetize their niche sites:

- Amazon Associates
- Ebay Partner Network
- Commission Junction
- Linkshare
- Clickbank

Sometimes the approval process for an affiliate program can take a few days. The Ebay Partner Network in particular will take quite awhile and you will need to have a website already set up that they can view. The same goes for several of the Commission Junction publishers. The work doesn't stop once you are accepted into an affiliate program; you need choose a product to promote and then truly "make it your own."

The Final Step: Promoting Your Niche Website

Setting the website up is easy; promoting it is going to take some work, especially if this is your first niche site. Promotion and SEO go hand in hand, so the first thing you need to do is

optimize the content for search engines and for keywords that you pick out. Let's go back to the previous example: electric toothbrushes for seniors. If that is your primary keyword, you want to place that exact phrase several times on each page of your niche site. Stick it into articles or product reviews that you write so that when people search for that phrase, Google will consider your site to be the most relevant result.

You're going to want to take this a step further by making use of article marketing. Article marketing is writing articles (again, optimized to your keywords) and placing them on free article directories with a link back to your niche site.

Building a niche website is not hard to do; in fact it's a lot easier than most people think. The most important thing is to go into the process with a clear understanding of what exactly a niche site is and how they can make money. Once you understand the basics you can try it out for yourself and soon you'll be well on your way to earning a solid passive income online.

How to Start Researching Your First Niche Website

Without a bit of doubt, the research you put into developing your niche website is the most important step in the entire process. This step comes before anything else that you do. You shouldn't even design your site or pick out a theme until you know what type of niche you will be working in – I've made this mistake far too often with my niche sites. Doing the research properly means understanding how keywords work and figuring out the best ways to find the exact key phrases that your future audience will be searching for.



The easiest way to do keyword research for your first niche website is to use tools designed specifically for that purpose. [Market Samurai](#) and [Micro Niche Finder](#) are two of the most popular products available for this, but there are other methods for finding the perfect niche as well. We're going to be taking a look at researching keywords with the help of research tools and also how to do the research on your own.

How To Find A General Topic For Your Niche

The first thing to do is just sit and think about topics that you would actually like to work with, without thinking about the potential profit. Ideally, you should start by looking for a niche that interests you. The biggest cause of failure in niche websites is a simple dwindling of interest. Now you may be thinking, "Who could lose interest in money?" but the truth is it could take a few months to start bringing in a solid income.

For this reason, working with a topic you're interested in can keep you going during the beginning weeks when your traffic is still building up. This is especially important for your first niche website, because I know no matter how many times someone tells you that something will work, sometimes you just need to see it for yourself. One rule of thumb is to think about what you generally read online. From there, you can take it to the next level and look for a niche within that topic. In comes the research.

As I've mentioned before, my very first niche website was based on boxing equipment. I never had a real passion for boxing, but at the time I had just purchased a heavy bag and some gloves, and I was doing some boxing in my basement. Other example niche websites I had previously read about focused on sports related products, so I decided to give boxing equipment a shot... As you progress, creating the sites will come more naturally and you can focus on other niches, whether or not you have an interest or not.

Keyword Tools Or Free Research?

The core of keyword research is this: Looking for a keyword that has a high volume of searches every month and low competition. Competition is the number of other websites out there that are using the same keyword or key phrase. The lower this number is the better chance you have of ranking high in the search engines right from the outset. Understanding that principle allows you to perform your research manually if you want, but most people decide to use a keyword research tool.

There are two of these that work well, both of which I own copies of:

- [Market Samurai](#)
- [Micro Niche Finder](#)

Let's look at both of them.

Market Samurai

The core of [Market Samurai](#) is the Keyword Research function. It allows you to enter in any keyword, and it will display all variations of that keyword along with relevant information about the traffic, searches, PPC, and competition. For example, if you input the word "diet," you'll receive information for "diet" as well as "diet books," "diet tips," "diet that works," etc. Each of these separate key phrases can then be used as the core keyword to narrow down the searches and find something that works.

The area that Market Samurai really stands out in is the **SEO Competition** tab. Here you can check an in depth breakdown of all the competition on Google's first results page. This includes their back link info, Page Rank, cache, and domain information.

Keyword: diets Track Rank

SEO Competition

Off Page On Page

Domain Age (DA) Domain Backlinks (BLD) Keyword in Title? (Title) Google Cache Age (CA)
 PageRank (PR) Page .edu/.gov Backlinks (BLEG) Keyword in URL? (URL)
 Google Index Count (IC) DMOZ Directory (DMZ) Keyword in Description? (Desc)
 Page Backlinks (BLP) Yahoo Directory (YAH) Keyword in Header Tag? (Head)

Backlink Source: Majestic Index: Max Backlinks:

#	URL	DA	PR	IC	BLP	BLD	BLEG	DMZ	YAH	Title	URL	Desc	Head	CA
1	http://www.webmd.co	-	5	414,000	53,583	299,348,474	10	N	N	Y	Y	N	Y	5
2	http://www.webmd.co	-	6	414,000	2,370,871	299,348,474	42	N	N	N	N	N	Y	5
3	http://www.southbeac	-	6	1,110	312,045	630,529	482	Y	Y	N	N	N	N	5
4	http://newsfuzion.com	-	0	3,530	0	11,479	0	N	N	N	N	N	N	-0
5	http://www.everydiet.o	-	5	863	45,299	120,850	18	N	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	1
6	http://www.diet.com/	-	5	16,600	2,069,622	7,043,389	25	N	Y	N	N	N	N	1
7	http://www.nlm.nih.ge	14	6	74,300	6,273	47,547,611	390	N	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	4
8	http://www.modeldiet	-	3	980	11,321	19,361	0	N	N	N	N	Y	N	4
9	http://www.ediets.co	-	6	924	574,773	3,300,973	273	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	-0
10	http://www.faddiet.co	-	3	104	18,584	32,718	45	N	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	4

Additionally, there is a direct Monetization tab that allows you to find affiliate products for the keyword that you choose.

Micro Niche Finder

Now let's take a look at the other product that marketers use a lot, and the first product that I purchased to help me pick some of my first niches: [Micro Niche Finder](#). This tool does essentially everything that Market Samurai does, the interface is not too much different, and the results tend to be about the same. There is a lot of debate about which tool is better, but in reality they're both pretty much the same, and they both work well.



The screenshot shows the Micro Niche Finder interface with search results for the keyword 'diets'. The search type is Organic (New KW Tool) and the search date is 04/12/11 10:29:47 PM. The results are ordered by Phrase, Ascending. The table below shows the search results:

Phrase	Domains	Local Search Count	Global Search Count	Local Search Trends	Phrase Count	Ad Cost OCI	MOB	SOC
best diets	3	6,600	6,600		Get Exact Phrase Count	2.55	Get OCI	Get SOC
best diets for women	3	1,300	1,300		Get Exact Phrase Count	1.11	Get OCI	Get SOC
best diets to lose weight fast	3	2,900	2,900		Get Exact Phrase Count	0.05	Get OCI	Get SOC

One difference in Micro Niche Finder though is the strength of competition analysis, which not only provides the amount of competition you will have for a keyword but crawls their pages to find out how strong their page is for that keyword. This is not a review of either of these products, but they both work well. It is up to you if you want to use either one of them.

The Third Option: Manual Research

This method takes a bit longer than using a keyword tool, and doesn't provide as many analytic values, but I would not be helping you out if I didn't mention it. Keyword research tools cost money, so if you are looking for a bare-bones starting option for your first niche website, you can make use of this. This entire method hinges on a free tool that is similar to Keyword Samurai: Google Keyword Tool.

It does the same thing, you search for a keyword, it gives you monthly searches and competition for that keyword. To really make it work though, you need to apply a formula. Here are the steps for making your research worthwhile:

- Look for a keyword or key phrase that has at least 5,000 monthly searches.
- Look at the Competition column. Google doesn't provide an actual number for competition, just a low, medium, high estimate, so what you need to do at this point is open up a blank search in Google and input your keyword using "quotes."
- The SERP will display the number of results found, and that is your competitor data.
- 1 to 9,999 competing websites is your ideal number, and coupled with over 5,000 searches per month, you have a "money" keyword.

This is a rudimentary research system, but if you aren't willing to pay something up front it can be very useful. Researching is arguably the most time consuming part of starting your first niche website, but it is easily the most important thing you can do to start earning a high monthly income. If you have a bit of money to spend, I suggest you get one of the above mentioned tools, as it will save you lots of time in the long run.

How Much Money Do I Need To Invest In My Niche Website?

We already covered one of the possible expenses: keyword research tools. The two mentioned have fairly reasonable prices, \$149 for a lifetime use of [Market Samurai](#) and \$99 for [Micro Niche Finder](#). These are optional, and we'll talk about creating content another time, which is also optional. The only sure expense will be registering a domain and hosting it. Domains can be bought for around \$10 per year, and hosting can be as cheap as \$5 or \$10 per month. Two of the best cheap domain / hosting sites are:

- [GoDaddy](#) – Google for a coupon. FAN3 will usually always get you 35% off a .com
- [HostGator](#) – I use this for the majority of my websites. Under \$7 a month for unlimited domain names and unlimited storage.

Building your website is easy enough; you can install a WordPress plugin so that you can use pre-existing themes. See my previous post about [Why I Love WordPress](#).

If you choose to use a keyword research tool, your startup price for your niche website is going to be around \$250 for the first year, a ridiculously low amount compared to the type of profits you can expect to see in that year. Researching your own keywords will obviously make this expense much lower, and you can usually make the entire site for less than \$100.

I recently ran some quick numbers, which I might decide to include in my next income report for comparison purposes... The first year that I started creating niche websites (roughly Feb 2008 – Dec 2008) – I earned just under \$5,000 for the year. My total expense between hosting, domain names, [Micro Niche Finder](#), and some other misc software was probably right around \$300.

Building a niche website takes some time, but fortunately it doesn't require a lot of money. This means that everyone has the opportunity to earn a solid income online. If you can scrounge together a couple hundred dollars to get started, you should have no problems making your money back.

How to You Can Find Quality Content for Your Niche Website

Once you have figured out what type of niche you want to market, and after you have done your [in depth keyword research](#) to figure out exactly what people are searching for, it is time to develop the actual content for your niche website. The content is arguably the most important aspect of the site; proper keyword research is vital but without the appropriate content it is next to useless.



There are typically three routes you can take to get content:

- Write it yourself
- Hire a freelance copywriter
- Use a PLR website

Using Content From A PLR Website

A private label rights website is a directory that sells pre-written articles and website content. If at all possible, you want to avoid using these. There's a good chance that whatever content you purchase has already been used multiple times on different websites, and the new Google algorithm that seeks to crack down on 'content farms' may end up punishing you for using duplicate content on your site. If you must use a PLR website, be sure to rewrite the content enough that it becomes a completely different article.

Tips For Writing Your Own Content

Of course, if you're going to rewrite the content anyway, you might as well just utilize Google and the free article directories such as [articlesbase.com](#) and [ezinearticles.com](#) as your source material rather than paying for it. It's fairly easy to write content on any topic; just brainstorm a bit and search for the information that you need. Then, simply rewrite it in your own words. You can use a free program like [DupeFree Pro](#) to make sure that it is less than 5% similar to the original article.

If you are still stuck and having trouble rewriting content, then it might be time to turn to some type of spinning software. I use the [Best Spinner](#). It's simple to use and they constantly seem to be updating their synonyms database, which makes writing unique articles even easier. They've also recently added a free article directory, which you can automatically submit spun articles to for other authors to use on their websites (free backlinks).

Using this method it's a fairly simple process to write ten or fifteen short, original articles to put on your niche website. You want to be sure to put your money making keywords into the article several times, making sure your main keyword is in both the first sentence and the last sentence, and once or twice in between. A tendency with newcomers is to try to stuff the keyword in as many times as possible, but this can actually do more harm than good. The best selling content looks and feels natural. Even when using a [spinning software](#) to write

your article, you should be able to make them sound natural if you put in a little bit of up front effort.

Outsourcing The Work To A Freelance Writer

Your last option is to just outsource the website content to a professional freelance writer. Writing your own content is free of course, but you may not have the time to write several pages worth of content, or you may just not be that proficient at writing. In the event that you decide to hire a freelancer, you have a lot of options to choose from.

Using a Freelance Job Board

The easiest way to find freelance work is to use websites like [Elance.com](#), Guru.com among others. The way these sites work is employers (you) post a job that you need completed. Freelancers then have the option to “bid” on your project, leaving you to choose the proposal that works best for you. You can set a budget on your project to give the freelancers some idea of what you are working with, and you can even simply state a per-word price in your project description.

So how much is this going to cost? Surprisingly, extremely high quality content can be had for a very reasonable price using a freelance website. Typically, you can expect to pay as low as \$5 to \$ 8 for a 500 word article, although if you want the highest quality writing you should expect to pay closer to \$20 to \$ 25 for the same size article. All said and done, it’s easy to get high quality copy for your niche website with just a small investment, and most importantly it frees you up to work on other aspects of your site.

I’ve also mentioned in a previous series, that you can [find article content using Amazon Mturk](#). In most cases this content will not be as professionally written, but it will most likely be much cheaper. It all depends how and where you want to use the content.

How Much Content Do You Need?

The amount of content you need for your website depends a lot on the selling quality of the content, what you’re selling, and how effective your SEO is. A good rule of thumb for your first niche site is to start with at least five articles of around 300-500 words. Seven articles are better. You’ll have enough to post once a day for the first week, and after that you can get smaller posts of 250 or 300 words up, with a keyword in each title.

It’s important to get a good amount of quality content up in the beginning, but when do you stop? How large does the site get? The answer to this is -it varies. There are thin niche websites that have 2 pages of content and make a lot of money, and there are sites that have over 15 pages that don’t make that much. You need to remember that you don’t need to be an authority site, and in fact you shouldn’t try to be. A niche website is small and compact, and readers get there because it’s the only site offering exactly what they need. You’re setting up shop in your little corner, or “niche” of the internet.

A Word About Keyword Sniping

If there’s one SEO practice you want on your site, it’s a method called “keyword sniping.” Keyword sniping is where you take your primary keyword and place it into every article you

put on the website. On each keyword, embed a link back to the homepage of the site. This is not only a good SEO technique but an extremely effective one.

Again, PLR websites aside, the two methods that you want to seriously consider for your niche website's content are:

- Doing it yourself
- Hiring a Freelancer

If you have the time, it's always best to write the content yourself, just so you have complete control over what it looks like. If you [hire a freelancer](#), ensure that they understand how you want your keywords placed within the article.

Once you have the content for your niche website, you're just about done. You only need a few techniques to monetize the website before you're making an income with it.

How to Effectively Monetize Your Niche Website

Now that you have the [content for your niche website](#) out of the way, it's time to move on to the most exciting step: monetizing your niche website. This is what it's all about: **making money**. With the correct techniques your niche website will be creating an income for you while you sleep, while you spend time with your family, or while you take a vacation to the beach. Basically, it makes money for you while you do anything except work. That's the attainable dream of a completely passive income, and that's the goal of your niche website.



There are a lot of ways to monetize your niche website, from simple PPC AdSense ads to links to product websites to full widgets for Amazon or eBay that put the products right on your site. You might want to experiment with several different options, and there's no rule saying you can't have multiple components on your website. Here are some of the most effective ways to monetize your niche website:

- [Google AdSense](#)
- [Amazon Associates](#) network
- [Ebay Partner Network](#) (using something like [PHPBay](#))

Setting Up AdSense

Let's take a look at AdSense first. If you've been living under a rock and aren't already familiar with Google AdSense, it is basically text or image advertisements that you can display on your website for free. They are tailored to the content on your site, and anytime someone clicks on an ad you get paid. It's as simple as that, and there are a lot of profitable websites that make money solely through AdSense. If you take a look at some of my recent [income reports](#), you will see that AdSense has taken over as my biggest money maker of late.

To set up an AdSense account, simply go to Google.com/adsense and follow their step by step instructions. You can use your existing Gmail or Google account, and if you don't have one you will be prompted to register for one. Once the account is set up you start by creating your advertisements. You have control over what size or shape the ads will be, what colors the links and content will be, and where they are placed on your site. There are many techniques for improving your AdSense click-through rates, such as matching the ad colors to the colors of your website, and placing links in "hot zones", where they are more likely to be clicked.

After you set up an ad unit, you'll be provided with an HTML code. Paste this code into the HTML of your niche site and you're ready to go.

Amazon Associate's Network: How It Works

The Amazon Associate's network is an incredibly useful tool for any niche website. When you are registered with Amazon as an affiliate, you have the option of linking to every single

product on their website. That's hundreds of thousands of options at your disposal. You can pick one for your niche or go with several. What's even better is that even if your viewer doesn't purchase the product you're promoting, as long as they enter the site through your affiliate link and make another purchase within a certain amount of days, you'll still get a commission.

The best way to work with Amazon Associate's is to create product reviews and post them on your site. Usually they're 'spun' in a favorable light, so after reading the review your viewers will be more likely to click on the accompanying affiliate link.

Ebay Partner Network: How It Works

The eBay Partner Network is a fairly unique affiliate program. It's sort of like a cross between AdSense and Amazon Associate's. It's a CPC program, just like AdSense, which means that you get paid per click on the ads. However, the amount that each click pays is directly related to the number of conversions that arise from those clicks. If your ads are bringing in a lot of sales for eBay, your price per click will go up. Conversely, if traffic from your site rarely or never purchases anything, your commission will go down and eventually you may get dropped from the eBay Partner Network. They call this method Quality Click Pricing.

Getting accepted to the eBay partner network is pretty straightforward – but can be difficult; you must have a website that they can review and a valid email address. Be sure that your website has quality content **before** applying for the program. If you apply with a basic website with no content, you will be declined.

Adding PhpBay to Your WordPress Niche Site

If you are using WordPress for your niche website, you have an extremely versatile option with [PhpBay](#). This is a widget that integrates with the eBay Partner Network and allows you to more easily add products directly into any WordPress websites. I discuss [PhpBay in more depth in this article](#).

Are There Other Options To Monetize A Niche Website?

There are literally dozens of options that you can choose from to pull a profit from your niche website. Here are a few more that you can look into:

- Clickbank
- Linkshare
- Direct Banner Advertising (OpenAds, OioPublisher)
- CPM Ads (ValueClick, TribalFusion, BurstMedia, RightMedia)
- In-text Advertisements
- Commission Junction

Of the above mentioned methods, I also promote Clickbank products ([with limited success so far](#)) and some Commission Junction products. What makes Commission Junction nice is that you have thousands of different companies and products to choose from. Each one has it's own application process and payout rate. (Linkshare is very similar).

Donations Work Better Than You Would Think

One of the options that a lot of people often overlook is just a simple donation button. If your niche website focuses more on providing information about a particular topic rather than selling a product, you could earn a sufficient monthly income just from adding a Donation button to the bottom of your pages.

The problem with donation websites is that they typically take some more work than other forms of niche websites. Readers tend to expect the content to be updated on a periodic basis, so it doesn't work well as a site that you can just "set and forget." WPCandy is a great example of receiving donations, and they explain the entire process in a recent post: "[How to Create Your Own Powered By System Like Ours](#)".

Experiment For Success

Monetizing your niche website doesn't have to happen all at once. Some forms of monetization work better with some sites but don't work at all with another. Affiliate links tend to work extremely well with products, and almost any type of site can benefit from some well-placed AdSense ad units. The idea is to experiment for the first few weeks and find out what is bringing in the most money.

That being said, sometimes it takes a few months to start seeing results from certain methods, and your site may not even start to see traffic for at least three or four months. Promotion will make a huge difference in how fast your niche site takes off, but don't worry, as long as you follow all these steps, it will take off eventually.

How to Promote Your Niche Website for Better, Targeted Traffic

Congratulations! If you've read this far, hopefully you've successfully created your first ever niche website – or you are on your way. Sit back, take a deep breath, and get ready for the next phase: **promoting your site and bringing in traffic**. While good, high quality content is the core of any good niche website, promoting it is the lifeblood, and this is how you're going to get a steady stream of relevant traffic. There are several steps to promoting a niche website, so we're going to take an in depth look at each one of them so that you can choose which route you want to take with your first niche site. The more ways you to choose your niche website, the better off you will be in the long run, and the better chance you have of receiving quality, targeted traffic.



Expand Your SEO

Optimizing your site for search engines should have been done along with the content, so this is going to be a short section. The keywords should already be in place, but what you should focus on is linking between the pages of your site. In every page, include at least one link on a major keyword that links back to the home page. This is a powerful technique that can give you a lot of points with Google or another search engine.

Updating your niche website periodically will do a lot for your search engine ranking too. Fresh content is like food to search engine crawlers, and they won't come back often if there isn't anything on the dinner table. Human visitors like unique content too.

Bookmark Your Site With A Vengeance

This is where the real promotion comes in. Social bookmarking sites like Delicious, Digg, StumbleUpon, and Reddit categorize links to websites. This will give you a backlink and put it out there for a lot of other people to see. There are literally hundreds of websites where you can submit a bookmark, and my advice is to take full advantage of them. If you can build up a reputation on a website like StumbleUpon, you're tapping into a wealth of traffic resources. Here are a few other bookmarking sites:

- A1-Webmarks
- add.io
- AllMyFaves
- MisterWong
- BlinkList
- Blurpalicious
- Box.net
- BuddyMarks

- [BookmarkingNet](#)

Personally, I don't do much social bookmarking anymore. Many of the bookmarking sites have become over run with spam, and that is basically what you are doing when you bookmark your sites. Still, some people still swear by the bookmarking sites. I've had much better success with article marketing and social networking sites.

Social networking is similar to bookmarking, but different in its own way. Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and others provide valuable outlets for you to market your niche website and connect with like-minded users on a personal level. Always include a link to your website on every one of your profiles. It also helps to setup a Twitter account and Facebook page that match your niche website. For example, if you create a niche website about tires, then you may want to create a Twitter account to promote and tweet about monthly specials.

The Power Of Article Marketing

Article marketing serves two purposes:

-It acts as sort of a 'pre-sale' for your viewers, evoking an initial interest in your product or website before they even head over there.

-It provides quality, do-follow backlinks that search engines will consider when they are ranking your niche website. Each backlink counts as a 'point' towards your PageRank. Not all backlinks are created equally though; links from a strong domain will have more gravity than links on a poorly ranked website. Most article directories, have a well-ranked domain and can be great resources for your article marketing effort – though with the recent changes to Google, the article directories do not pull quite as much rank as they have in the past. Despite that fact, many website owners still use the article sites to syndicate their content. This means that when they pull an article from an article site and place it on their website, you will receive a free backlink in return.

There are, again, hundreds of article directories, but here are a few that I like to use to get started with:

- [EzineArticles](#)
- [ArticleSnatch](#)
- [ArticlesBase](#)
- [ArticleAlley](#)
- [ArticleBlast](#)
- [GoArticles](#)

Simply putting a link to your niche website on each article works well, but there is a more effective way to rank both your website and the articles, which in turn will bring more traffic back to your website. I call it Crossfire Linking.

Crossfire Linking - A Magnetic Technique For Article Marketing

Article directories are great, but the one issue with them is that even though the domain is strong, that strength is spread out rather thinly over the thousands of articles on the site. As a result, your individual article may not be considered especially "strong" and it probably won't

get a lot of traffic.

So instead of linking directly back to your website with every article, do this:

Say you have two articles, Article A and Article B. Instead of linking to your website from Article A, create a link instead that points to Article B. In Article B, create a link that points to a specific page of your website. From that page, create your sniper link that points to your homepage, and then have another link embedded that points to Article A. Each link should be placed in a strong keyword as the anchor text, allowing all of your articles to gain rank for that keyword.

Continue this process with as many articles as you want, crisscrossing them like a giant ethereal spider web.

Comment On Related Blogs

Blogs hold a lot of power with search engines if they are ranked well. As such, any link of yours that appears on a high-traffic blog is going to do well. How do you get your link on a blog like that? By commenting, of course! The trick with this is to actually write a useful comment. Don't put your link in the actual comment unless what you are saying relates directly to a specific page on your site. Most of the time your name above the comment will be a hyperlink back to your website.

If you can find a way to engage other readers in your comment this technique will work even better. Ask pointed, well thought out questions for the blog owner, or directly challenge anything that comes across as false or ambiguous. Other readers will take note and head over to your website to see where you are coming from.

Create A Squidoo Lens Or Hub Page

Last but not least, Squidoo can be used for promotion to great effect. A Squidoo Lens is basically a micro-blog where you can post a small article, provide links (to your website of course), and do much, much more. In fact, some people have even started using Squidoo to make dozens of tiny niche blogs that actually generate an income. It's easy to get started, and Squidoo offers a lot of marketing tips and reading material as well. Hug Pages is very similar to Squidoo and basically offers many of the same features.

As you can see, the process of building a niche website doesn't actually stop with the website itself. If you can learn how to successfully promote your niche website, you can create an organic traffic stream that never stops bringing you money.

How to Improve Your Niche Website By Tracking Results

A fitness expert once said that if you can't analyze and track your results, you are never going to be successful. He was talking of course about diet programs, but the same philosophy is surprisingly true in the online world. Once you have your niche website completed, what comes next? Assuming you've done all the promotion that you need to do to bring in traffic, your next step is to analyze everything you can.

Tracking the performance of your niche website takes on many forms, but there are a few key aspects that you want to pay particular attention to:

- Google PageRank
- Traffic
- Conversion Rates
- Bounce Rate

Of course, since this is your first niche website and you're probably pretty excited about it, you will likely be keeping track of even the smallest details, such as how many visitors you had that came through Twitter on a Mac using an IP address located in Singapore. It's great to have that kind of fervor, but once it dies down you need to keep your attention on the four points mentioned above.

Analyzing Your Traffic

A tool like Google Analytics (which we'll talk about in a bit) makes traffic patterns easy to spot. You can easily view how many visitors you had on a certain day and where they are coming from. It's vital to locate your largest traffic sources because you can pour more resources into those areas and scrap the sources that aren't providing you with anything.

Similarly, if there is one source that's giving you decent traffic, you can focus your energy on bringing more traffic from there. What you are trying to figure out when analyzing your niche website's data is how to improve the website, and then either applying that newfound knowledge to your existing site or using it when you make your next niche website.

Analyzing PageRank

There are tools that will do this for you, but the simplest way to check your PageRank for a certain keyword is just to search for that keyword in Google. It's rudimentary, but it works. Alternatively, you can use a keyword research tool like Market Samurai that will track your domains and display how well they are ranking for individual keywords. If you find that a certain keyword isn't doing you a lot of good, you can either boost your efforts for ranking for that keyword or scrap it and focus on the ones that are working.



Tracking Conversion Rates

Your rate of conversion is the number of people who made a purchase compared to the total number of visitors on your site. This is crucial to track, because this is what you want to tweak to get the most profit from your niche site.

If your site is getting a huge amount of traffic but your conversion rates are low, you need to fix something on the site. Take it slow, and try one thing at a time so you can pinpoint exactly what is making the difference. Sometimes it's as simple as changing the font of your articles. If you find that a bold black font works better than a light gray, you'll be able to use that on your next site.

Setting Up Google Analytics

Google Analytics connects right to your existing Gmail account, so setup is a breeze. If you already have an AdSense account there's actually a link on your dashboard that asks if you want to set up an Analytics account. You'll get an HTML code that you need to place in your website's HTML right after the last [head] tag. There are detailed instructions on the Analytics website.

There are other tracking services that will do the same thing, but Analytics is completely free and will provide a massive amount of depth in your data.

When Will The Niche Website Start Making Money?

There's no easy answer to this question. It completely depends on the niche itself, how well you researched your keywords, and your promotion methods. There are some niche websites that start making a profit within the first few days. This isn't exactly rare but it's not exactly common either. Typically, a well-built, search engine optimized niche website should start seeing a profit within the first three months.

During this time, keep paying close attention to the traffic levels of the site and play around with different marketing techniques to determine what brings in the most traffic. Some people say that you shouldn't even expect to make any money on your first niche site; that it should just be used as education, but if you followed all these tips for creating a niche website you should definitely be seeing a profit, even if it's a meager one.

When To Scrap A Niche Website

Finally, an easy question. When do you scrap a niche website? In short, never! There's absolutely no reason to, as long as it's making at least \$10 per year (or whatever covers the cost of the domain registration). You aren't paying anything extra for hosting, so there's never a good reason not to just leave the site up.

If anything, you can use it for experiments. If you have a technique that might work, but you don't want to try it on another site for fear that you'll mess up a good thing, take one of your lame-duck sites and try the technique out there, tracking the results of course. You can even just use it for motivation to see how far you've come from the beginning. Basically there's never a reason to scrap a niche site that doesn't work right away.

Rinse, and Repeat!

Okay, now you've gone through the entire process of creating a niche website.

Congratulations! You have just created an income stream out of nothing, an income stream that could continue to flow for the rest of your life.

So, what's next?

The easy answer is: Build another one. If one niche website can make you this amount of money, what could two do? Or three? Or twelve? That may be easier said than done though and you should try to balance the number of sites that you maintain with the amount of time it takes to keep each one producing results. If you try to create too many sites at one time, then they will all suffer, so build your portfolio gradually.

This is the secret of successful marketers, and soon you can be counted among their numbers. The process may seem tedious at times, but always stay positive, and you just may never have to work a full time job again.