World Internet Experts Series

7 Highly-Effective Ways To Corner a Niche Online From An Ex-Bank Manager Now Six Figure Webpreneuar

Featuring Neil Stafford

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Alan: Good evening, everyone, to another one of the webcasts from the World Internet Summit UK. On behalf of Ted Ciuba, Brett McFall, Tom Hua and Alan Forrest Smith, we'd like to welcome one of our superstar guests, Neil Stafford, from England. He's from a place called Wiggins, in the Lancashire area. Up north, as we say in England.

What I'm going to do is I'm going to introduce Neil in a minute. But just a very quick comment. If you need to know anything else about the World Internet Summit, you can to me, Ted, Brett or Tom direct. All of the numbers are available on the web page, which is WorldInternetSummit.com/UK, or you can just use WorldInternetSummit.co.uk.

So welcome, Neil Stafford.

Neil: Good evening, Alan. How are you?

Alan: It's good to have you, Neil. It's been a while since we last did this together. Next time, you'll be paying for sure.

Neil: Is it my turn to buy?

Alan: Definitely, yeah. So listen, Neil, there's quite a lot of people on the call tonight. So I think it would be best to start off with I know you're going to take us through some eight points that our listeners can use any particular time, but let's have a little bit of history about you first, Neil. Why should people be listening to you, Neil Stafford? What are you all about? Fire away, Neil. Tell us some stuff.

Neil: Certainly, Alan. I saw the e-mail that you sent out, about bank money. That pretty much sums it up. Slightly different than working in a branch. I spent eight years with a UK bank. Three of those years was as a training manager, training the sales staff, training the managers. And five of those years were spent working on what we call a joint venture site, where we set joint venture companies up with the bank and its various guises.

Sounds very glamorous. You might imagine me being picked up to go to the airport, flying out to Paris for a meeting, having a meeting, spending the day in Paris and coming back. It sounds great, until you realize that to do that you have to be up at 3:00 in the morning to get the early flight. And all you do is get picked up in Paris, taken to a meeting, spend all day in a meeting, take a taxi or a cab back, and then you're back in the UK at 7:00 or 8:00 at night. It's a long, long day.

I enjoyed it. I thoroughly enjoyed it. But there was a time I thought, "I don't want to do this. I don't want to be spending 12, 13 hours a day out, away from the family, away from things that I want to do." So I decided to make a change.

Alan: Yeah. So what kind of hours were you working on a weekly basis? You must have been doing mad hours.

Neil: Absolutely; 12, 14 hours at least three days a week. The rest of them were definitely 7:00 until 7:00, your 8:00 until 7:00's.

When someone says you work in a bank, they expect you to be behind the counter or working one of the ___. But no, it was long, long hours. Thoroughly enjoyable, but I wanted to take my life back.

Alan: Yeah, just absolutely schlock.

Neil: Yes.

Alan: Were you getting well paid for that, Neil? Don't tell us the exact figure, but was it a well-paid job?

Neil: It was. It was a very well-paid job. It came to be I owed a lot to the company, BMW at the time, so to the outside world you looked and you're deemed very successful. But the sacrifices you have to make to get there, you have to give an awful lot up. Weekends weren't your own. If something was wrong or something had to be done, you had to work the weekends.

Alan: It's a little bit like the health, the wealth syndrome. Isn't it, really, those kind of hours?

Neil: It was a cash rich/time poor. I don't want to ever go back to that.

Alan: Yeah. So what happened, Neil? What was the transition?

Neil: I've always had an inkling in the back of my mind, to be able to do something for myself. When you put the hours in that we were doing, you do, every now and then, have a wake-up call and think, "Hang on a minute, I'm putting in hours once and I'm being paid once. I could work for

myself in a business that's allowed me to do the work once but be continuously paid, there's utopia, there's the holy grail, as we say."

You start looking, buy a few things, you look at the adverts in some of the magazines, you look around the internet and you buy a few of the courses. There's something always there I wanted to do, but couldn't quite put my finger on it. Or I was always searching, as they say. I think one of the turning points was I got invited to go over to the states, as people do, to go to a seminar. And I got the chance to meet several homebuilder people, actually, who were making a decent living using the internet.

Now I'd had a little bit of success in some offline ventures, in our spare time, what spare time we had. But I wanted to do everything on the internet. I think this really gave me a kick in the butt so I could make a start.

Alan: When you actually met these people who were making a living online, the part I'm getting to is when you're flying to Paris and you're meeting these people, joint ventures, all that stuff, and suddenly you met these people in the states who were actually making a living online, what was your first impression, your honest impression when they were telling you?

Neil: I did not believe them, to be perfectly honest. I thought they may be the big executives. And when we talk about joint venture deals in the corporate world, it's nothing like the joint ventures that we do online, where we work together with a common goal and a handshake, a lot of the

times. These joint ventures were drawn out with the lawyers, every I dotted, every T crossed. And there's much profit to your company coming out of it.

So there's me thinking, "This is the way to do business." And I'm talking to a guy, he's probably a couple of years younger than me at the time, and he's making twice what I'm making online, working – what I now know to be true – a hell of a lot less hours than I was.

Alan: Yeah.

Neil: And I thought, "Right. I need to research this."

To be honest, I think the words were, "I want a bit of this."

Alan: So when was the turning point in there? Was it when you got home from America or was it one after that? Was it the time we met or was it before that?

Neil: No, it was before that, Alan. After everybody'd come back and I hit the Monday – probably Tuesday – morning syndrome, which is back straight into work, I let probably another few months go by before I said, "Hang on a minute, I want to take a step back."

At the time, there was a guy who I used to work with, who was probably 10 years older than me, who had another heart attack. He had a stroke. He wasn't ___, but he was doing a lot of hours, similar to what I was doing. Probably more, because he was further up the corporate ladder. You take a

moment and you think, "Hang on a minute! Let's look ahead. Will that be me?"

So I went back to the notes, I went back to all of the information I gathered and started researching again. And I said, "I'm going to try this. Let's just do it. Let's just try it."

First of all, you try and look at all the business opportunity side of it. But I did pick up one good idea, which was choose a niche, do something that you're interested in. And people keep saying, "No, you have to choose something that you're passionate in." I say that would be ideal. Definitely pick something that you have an interest in or would like to be interested about.

Although, ___ and I try and keep it simple. I'm inherently lazy now. If I can do something with less hours, I'll certainly do it.

I started taking one step at a time and going forward.

Alan: You're telling me that your first kind of online venture was immediately successful? Was it work or what was the deal?

Neil: My first online venture was not successful, sad to say. In fact, I did sell a couple of them. I had an interest in paintings, oil paintings. Although I cannot paint, it just fascinates me. At the time I thought, "I could sell." Now, this wasn't information products, this was a physical product, paintings. I knew a lot of artists and I thought, "Artists like to paint, they don't like to sell. I could actually sell their paintings online."

Now, it just makes me laugh now, thinking back to it. But you'll try anything once, as they say. We sold a couple. It wasn't fantastic. We did sell a few. But it whet my appetite to actually think, "Right, I can do this! I can do this to a degree where – and dare I say it at the time – I can give up my full-time job."

I spoke to my wife and got the "you are mad" talk.

But once we sat down and said, "Listen, if we can just replace part of the income, once you actually sit down and say, "What do I actually need to give up my job," you don't actually need to replace all of your income.

Alan: So just tell me this, Neil. When you first started these ventures online that people are interested in doing for themselves, did you replace your wage or was it nothing like your wage, or was it just a little bit of extra cash, or was it 10 times more than your wage to begin with?

Neil: When I first started, the extra cash that was coming in, it was slowly coming in. We tried different things. Some would work, some wouldn't. But I always had that thought in the back of my mind, which is don't give up. There is a point that people probably know, that says, "When things go wrong, as they sometimes will, the road you're trudging seems all uphill." It just goes on like that. It says, "Rest if you must, but don't you quit" is the last line.

So sometimes, when you're doing like a 14-hour day, you come in and you think, "I've got to do something on my business," sometimes it would just get to me and I'd think, "I can't do this." ___ and X amount of thousands a

month in my employment, and I'm working X amount of hundreds, so I'm earning X amount of hundreds of pounds in a part-time business.

So it's had its ups and downs, and there are times that I've left it for a couple of weeks at a time and come back to it.

Alan: Do you want to tell us your first kind of venture online? Perhaps from the pictures, what was the first thing you really got to grips with and you started to grow from there?

Then, after that, we'll move into your eight points.

Neil: The way I think, if I'm trying to do something now, I try to think of different ways to profit from it as well. So if I'm learning something, how can I apply that and make a profit from it as well?

So one of the ventures I started at the time, and we've talked about, was a newsletter on internet marketing.

I actually started because I wanted to learn about internet marketing. I should reposition that and say I wanted to learn about how to market on the internet. The internet, if you take it in it's purest sense, is another route to market. That's all it is.

Alan: That's right.

Neil: The internet isn't a business in itself. The internet is a route to market, to reach your customers.

So I wanted to learn how to market on the internet. That led to me publishing a printing newsletter on internet marketing, which had subscribers.

Alan: So was this via website, Neil?

Neil: It was both. It was both by a website and also some offline advertising as well.

Alan: Right. What was that website called?

Neil: It was www.InternetMarketingReview.com. People can go there and have a look. And that is marketed both on and offline. Primarily online, as the name suggests, Internet Marketing Review. I do do some offline, as well. And I'll come onto that a bit later on.

Now, that was a way of me producing an income from something I was learning about. So by publishing the newsletter, by editing the newsletter, I was learning about marketing on the internet as well.

Alan: And at the same time, that was paying the bills.

Neil: It certainly was. It certainly was. And then that became very, very successful. I wouldn't say very, very quickly. I only had a handful of subscribers to begin with. And I can tell you this: producing a printed newsletter with a handful of subscribers takes a lot of motivation to do.

Alan: Yeah. So when you say a handful of subscribers, how many are we talking there? Can you tell us?

Neil: When we started off, I spent several months producing a printed newsletter for less than 10 subscribers.

Alan: Oh, my goodness! Now, that is endurance.

Neil: It certainly is. But the reason I kept on doing it is because I was learning every time I put articles in there and I wrote about it. So I was learning from that. That was a good motivation.

Alan: Yeah, good.

Neil: Today, it is successful today. Today, we now have over 1,600 subscribers to the newsletter. And it's a printed one that goes out one a month.

But that's just part of the business that we run now. I'll cover some other topics later on, but we've got niche market products now, ranging from sport to song writing to horse riding – this will make you laugh – bonsai trees.

Alan: Once you get the process, and that's the only way I can put it, the process down and the steps to follow, you can actually move into whatever market or niche market you've got an interest in.

Neil: Yeah.

Alan: Alright, Neil. I'll tell you what, we've discussed some interesting points our listeners can pick up on. But I know you now, and I know you're doing okay, you're doing well. You're doing very well, actually.

So we told everybody we're going to go through eight vital points that they can pick up on and hopefully apply to their own online business.

So let's just ___ and maybe expand on the points as we go through, if that's okay.

Neil: No problem at all.

Alan: So let's jump into them all then, Neil. Fire away, mate.

Neil: These are eight points which I'm going to stress to everybody I follow now. Now you're first starting a project, these seven – actually eight points I've got written down here – I follow them with every single project that I take on now. I don't deviate from it. I do all eight steps.

Now, within the eight steps we have to expand and talk about what's going on. But the first one, most people will probably sit there now, listening to this call, thinking, "He's going to say you need to choose a niche." Well, I'm not.

The first step that you need to do is so simple. It's make a decision to start. You've got lots of ideas. People have lots of ideas with potential. And we all know potential plus commitment equals nothing. I know you've got an ideas book, I've got an ideas book full of ideas. But if you don't make that decision to start, that's all there will be.

Alan: Okay, Neil. Well, how do you know, once you've made the decision? With the internet, we're getting so much information, overload and everything else, how do you know when it's decision time?

Neil: The decision time comes when it's a mixture of, "I'm going to do this," and you don't get the "Oh my God, what happens if it doesn't work?"

I'll come to the next point, but you'll hear me all the time say to people, friends who've got an interest in this, members of the newsletter, "There's two words: just start." Pick one of your ideas, one that you'd like to spend the next X amount of weeks working on, that you'd like to spend some time around that type of product, that type of industry, that type of niche, and say, "Right, I'm going to make a start."

Most people are afraid to start. They've got the fear of success. "Oh my God, what happens if it works? What happens if it doesn't work?" And you've hit the nail on the head. There's so much information out there, it's paralysis of analysis. Isn't it?

Alan: Yeah, that's right.

Neil: You don't know where to start. Most people just say, "Right, I've got this idea. I'm going to start with that one."

Alan: Alright.

Neil: That leads on to step two. Again, this is very, very important, whether you're working 14 hours a day or you've got the whole day free. You need to allow time and make time for you to work on that project. The biggest excuse is, "I don't have time to do this." I just think back to my days when I was working full-time. It just doesn't wash with me.

If people say, "I don't have time," all that means is they don't have a big enough desire, want or drive for their own business.

Alan: Okay. So let's be really realistic here, Neil, because people do genuinely say, "I don't have time." So where do they find that time from? I know they need the hunger and the drive, but where do they find the time from, do you think?

Neil: I'll tell you some of the things I speak to people about, and what worked for me when I was working.

The days where I wasn't traveling, I would get up an hour earlier. I get up an hour earlier, and I'd work for that hour before I went to work. I'd have set down what I was going to do for that hour, and I'd get up and I'd do it.

Also, sometimes I've said to people, "Do you have a dinner hour?" "Yes." "You can go out to your car and go to the canteen, take some reading with you, take your notebook, take your notepad. Maybe one hour in the evening, maybe a half-hour in the evening, and on the weekend."

If you got up at 8:00 on the weekend and work until 10:00, that's four hours you can put into your business. I'd rather see people do a half-hour, an hour a day on their business consistently, rather than eight hours on a weekend, sporadically, every now and then. It's building up a habit.

Alan: So what we're really saying is really claim some time back.

Neil: Exactly.

Alan: Just look at where we're losing time. I know one thing that I did a few years ago, is cut right back on TV. When you think of the amount of time you can sit and watch tele, you can have hours and hours and hours.

I think a good point is get up early. If we are working from home and we're used to staying in bed until maybe 9:00 or 10:00, which is impossible in my house with four kids, if you're doing that, that's time you can claim back.

So that's a brilliant point, Neil. Thanks.

Neil: If somebody watches two soap operas in the UK a week, that's five hours wasted.

Alan: That's right. That's a lot of time.

Neil: As you know, Alan, we don't have children. So I find it very hard, sometimes, to talk to people with children. I do know they do take a lot of time, and quite rightly so.

But I've got people who I know very, very well, very good friends who've got children. And we talk around it, and it seems like when you get in from work, if you're working full-time, don't confuse it. Your family is very, very important. Spend time with your family. Spend time with your children. And when they've gone to bed, set aside a half-hour or an hour to work on your business. Put that extra half-hour in, put that extra hour in. Forget about the soap opera, forget about Friends, forget about ER when it's back on. Very hard to do. I really like that program.

But if you want your own business, you're going to have to – I hate this word – sacrifice. It sounds like you have to give up an awful lot. But you only have to give up one or two things, but I guarantee it will pay you back 1,000 times if you do that now.

Alan: That's just where the long-sightedness comes in, Neil, as well. Sometimes, I can still feel it now, in the past, where I've been building up my own business, and I know you have, you're on your computer until 2:00 in the morning, knowing full well that you're getting up at 6:00 or 7:00 in the morning. You come to that stage a couple of years down the road, where you're just thankful that you don't have to do that.

Neil: I know. I was thinking a few years back now, when you run the several businesses that you have, you made time to build your business, the internet savvy business. We used to laugh and joke about the hours, late nights, but it's paid off.

Alan: Yeah, it pays off. Just remember, Neil, I'm interviewing you.

Neil: Sorry, you know what I'm like. I'll just go off on tangents.

Alan: One of the other things, as well, you say to people, "When you go online, what do you do?" You hear it all the time, "I'm just checking e-mail." Soon it turns into I've been on this machine for three hours, and all I've done is surf the web. It's so easy to go and check e-mails, click a link, and the next time you look up, three hours have gone by.

I am the world's worst for that. I can go and mess around, thinking that I'm doing something, but all I'm doing is just following links and reading something.

I can picture people on the call nodding now, saying, "Yes, I agree with that."

Neil: So I actually have set e-mail times now. It's usually morning and evening. The first thing when I go on, last thing during the day, before I switch off, or I'll check it one time in the evening, to make sure that there's nothing urgent that should be done straightaway.

I'm going on specifically for e-mail, nothing else. I actually close e-mail client down and don't open it again. It's so easy to say, "Oh, an e-mail's come in. What's this? Another e-mail. What's this?"

No. Have set e-mail times.

Alan: Good point, Neil.

Neil: When you go on to surf the web, as well, have set surfing time as well. And have a start and an end time. Take an alarm clock, if you have to, and set it for an hour. And there's your hour open. And you set down the points that you set out to find.

Alan: Okay. I'm going to jump into number three here, Neil.

Neil: Number three? Again, normally, keep it simple. Actually start one project. What do I mean by that? So many people are jumping around

from project to project, from opportunity to opportunity. They never actually physically start one project. And when anyone's starting out, if you're new to the web, I would categorically say, "Just choose one project and work on that."

Alan: Stick at it.

Neil: Exactly. The biggest mistake you can do is try and work on several projects at once. I'll guarantee you'll never finish it.

You said earlier on, what project would you need to start on? Well, I've listened to several of these calls now, and there's been some excellent information out there that people have given for free. I'll reiterate. What project should you start on? You can choose one from your idea book, then you need to research that, using the tools available online for free.

I've heard people talk about Google. Use Google to search. Are there any websites out there already on your niche? And if there are, are there any websites that are actually selling something for pound or dollar amounts? And if there are, that means there's a market willing to pay for some of that information.

And again, look down the right-hand side of Google. Are there Google ads on your niche? Are people paying for advertising? Are these people consistently advertising? If they are, they're making money.

That doesn't take two hours, that takes 30 minutes.

Alan: That's right.

Neil: And a piece of paper and a pen to jot down some ideas.

Alan: Yeah.

Neil: You're the one who used to use Overture, the suggestion tool.

Alan: Yeah.

Neil: **www.overture.com**, click on advertiser tools, and it's in there. You put in your niche idea, and it will come back and tell you how many related searches in your niche have happened in the previous month.

Alan: One of the big failings I find with clients all the time online, is they're trying to do too many projects at once.

Neil: Absolutely.

Alan: And it's every single time. Instead of doing one project and getting started and concentrated and getting it all lined out and making it work, they're doing one thing and another, "Hey, I'm going to try something else."

And when you are outside looking in, you know that if you just stick to that one thing, it's going to work.

Neil: You hit the nail on the head. Again, there's another friend of mine I won't name. He's either on potential minus commitment equals nothing, because he's got so much potential but he won't commit to one project. You speak to him in a couple of weeks and say, "How's project A doing," and he's not on project B, he's on project F and G and H and I. It's

unbelievable. And I say, "What happened to the other one?" "I'm working on it. I'll get back to it." "Just finish it."

Alan: I think ___ as well, Neil. We're not just saying go for one income stream, are we?

Neil: No.

Alan: We're saying get one project out of the way, if it's viable. If it's not viable, just drop it. If it's viable, get it working, get it moving, and then move on to the next project. That's what we're saying. Aren't we, really?

Neil: And actually become more confident with actually starting and launching a project. You can then start to work on maybe two at once, or maybe three at once, once you become confident. Different projects will have different timelines. For example, you may be waiting for some information. So while you're waiting for something on that line, you can start researching another project.

If you're new and just getting going, or you've lost your way, you need to come back and start with the basics. Pick one project, do your research, and stay with that until it's finished.

Alan: I know one thing I do, Neil, is on Monday, between 9:00 and 12:00, one of my oldest sites, which is from our magazine.

Neil: Is that Hairee.com?

Alan: Hairee.com, yeah. I generally spend from roughly 9:00 until 12:00 on a Monday morning, just doing that. But that is the only time I spend on it. I don't spend any other time on that site.

Neil: You put that time in once, and it pays you back 20 times, doesn't it?

Alan: That's right.

Neil: If you set the time aside, work on it 9:00 until 12:00, finish at 12:00, and then move on to whatever else you've got for the day.

Alan: Yeah, that's it.

Neil: Especially when you're starting a project, people try and overcomplicate it. Don't overcomplicate the process. Don't try and make it all singing and all dancing, bells and whistles, when it doesn't mean ditch.

Alan: That's right.

Neil: Find out what people are actually looking for and provide that information for those people.

Alan: I think so many people come to me, clients, and I can give you one example. I spend ages, and I couldn't spend the time, really, if I had to tell the client, "___," and it all had to do with a form on his website. I wanted the table highlighted, I don't want it highlighted, I want it this color. I want that word to say that."

What is the point of spending so much time on details like that, when the detail needs to be spent on the marketing of the product.

Neil: Absolutely.

Alan: Get it all going, get it up and running. Marketing the product is the secret.

Neil: Yep. Get it out there, get it in front of your prospects.

Alan: That's right, yeah.

Neil: And go to the people that are going to buy the product. That's the important thing.

Alan: Yeah. I find a lot of people who spend a lot of time on irrelevant details, like that, they never actually make any money.

Neil: Nope. They never get going at all.

Alan: No.

Neil: The four things I always think of when I'm promoting – well, it's not promoting, when actually putting a product together. One of the calls that you actually got in the states, Phil Gosling, he touched on that as well.

The products that people put together, think of it this way. The product either needs to provide new information – that's the hardest to do is actually brand new information – or it should offer a new perspective or a new experience. Or a third one, can you reposition the information that's already out there?

Alan: Interesting.

Neil: New information, that's actually taking a blank piece of paper and putting everything new down on a certain product. That's very, very hard to do.

A new perspective could be another way of looking at it. For example, I'll use art because it's the easiest thing to do. Have you got a new perspective on the way that oils are put on the canvas? Can you talk about that? Can you express it?

A new experience. I'm working with a guy at the moment, he's a first-time dad. I used to work with him, actually. A high-flying executive. And he's suddenly got this young daughter, who he wants to spend more time with.

So he's actually a first-time dad, and that's a new experience. So you can imagine the product that we're putting together on that.

Or, the last one was how to reposition information. The perfect example is the printed newspaper that I have. It's a printed newsletter on how to market on the internet.

Now, there's 1,000 to a 1,000,0001 e-zines out there. But there isn't 1,000, 100 or even 10 printed newsletters. So what I've done is repositioned information into a new kind of product.

Alan: That's a good point, Neil.

Neil: It doesn't have to be brain surgery. Can you provide the information? Can you provide a new perspective? Can you provide a new experience? Or can you reposition information that's already out there?

Alan: I'm not going to work on my e-book called brain surgery, because it sounds like this is going to work.

Neil: Alan, don't take this the wrong way, but I wouldn't buy it.

Alan: Alright. Let's jump into number four, then.

Neil: Number four is an absolute lead-on from number three. We've touched on it already. It's finish the thing. Finish the one project you're working on. I know we've sort of blended three and four together.

But if you don't complete the product, you can't sell it. It's a simple mantra to remember. Don't complete it, you can't sell it.

You complete it by choosing how to present it. You've done the research, you've started to put it together, you've decided whether to put new information on there, whether to represent it, whether it's a new experience. You're going to be choosing how to present it.

What I mean by that is, is it an e-book? Is it an electronic audio file? Is it a CD? Is it a cassette tape? Is it a manual? Is it a course? Is it a downloadable manual or is it a downloadable course? Is it a DVD? Is it a video? You need to choose how you're going to put that information across.

Now, if somebody says, "What's the simplest one to do," I say an audio project is. An audio project is the simplest one to do. And I don't actually recommend this. You could record it yourself. I've done that. I've spent the weekend in time segments, recording directly onto a cassette tape, one of my products in the past. If you're comfortable stating and happy with that, the easiest way to do it is what we're doing now, is an audio interview.

For example, one of the sites I have, I've interviewed a songwriter, somebody who writes songs for AMI in the past. He's written songs for the pop idol people, so he's got a lot of experience. I'll cover that later on.

It's so simple to do. For example, a total recorder is only $11. And I think it's available from Highcriteria.com.

What that will do, you can either put a microphone into your PC, press start on your screen, with your mouse, and start recording whatever you say.

Now, if you want to record it onto a tape deck and then put your tape deck into the PC, you press record on your screen with your mouse, and you press play on the tape deck, and it records it.

Well, it turned it into an MP3 for you, and you've got a downloadable file ready.

Alan: Yeah.

Neil: Audio is the simplest one to use.

Alan: It's so easy now. The software is nothing, is it?

Neil: No, $11. For people in the UK, that's about six quid.

Alan: That's ridiculous.

Neil: Really. That's sort of a standard one, and that's all I have. There is a higher-end edition, which I think is the monster amount of about $20.

Alan: I paid actually $20 for mine.

Neil: Don't get me all whipped out for that. But that allows you to do some adding and moving the tracks around, which we don't need. That's more for probably musicians.

Alan: Alright. Let's jump onto number five, please.

Neil: Number five, once you've started it, you've completed it, you know how to present it, simple, launch. Launch and drive traffic.

You need to put up a website sales letter. It doesn't have to be fancy. Sounds like it was my biggest fear when I first started, and we've spoken about it as well. You can make lots of points with sales letters, and helped me with them in the past.

Alan: Yeah.

Neil: I think a lot of people feel the same. "Oh, I need to put a sales letter together." Now, I know you're a really good copywriter, Alan, and don't hit me the next time you say this, but copywriting is an important bit in there called copy. You need to get out to the websites that are already

operating, selling in your niche and in other niches, and see how they're put together.

Alan: That's right.

Neil: I think nearly all the best copywriters have what's called a swipe file, where they take the sales letters that they like, sales letters they know are working, and put them in a file where they can use it for inspiration.

Now, what I'm not saying is you go out there and rip off a sales letter and change it to your product and your name. Don't do that. You'll get into trouble.

But use them as a template to starting your own sales letter. See where they're using psychological triggers. See where they're using headlines. See where they're using bullets. Look at the guarantees. Look at the PS's.

And again, there's a habit forming here, with me having four points. If I'm writing a sales letter, I just need these four points. It needs to be clear, it needs to be compelling, it needs to be believable, and it also needs to be achievable. People need to think that what you're selling is achievable for them.

I thought point number four was going to be ___ and ring Alan.

Alan: Yeah. When people are starting out, sometimes forms can be typed, and you've got to do it yourself.

Neil: I'll tell you one tip I can give anyone on copywriting. There's a sort of mysticism of copywriting at the moment. I don't know why. But I think people try and make it far too complicated.

And copywriting is about not writing to a massive audience, but sitting face-to-face with someone and having a conversation. That's what copywriting is.

Alan: Yeah. You do that very, very well. And that's what I always try and do when I speak to my PR. You've done letters for me, which have been hugely successful. I'm very, very lucky to know you. I don't have to pick your brain, but look at your old letters and say, "What can I take out of them?"

Neil: I know you very well talking to you.

Alan: I'm going to have to buy lunch next time. Alright, number six, please.

Neil: I'm working through them. Number six is just do it. Accept that your first attempt will be dubious, at best. But your next one will get better, and the one after that will get better still.

Alan: I just had something come to mind is I'll go out with sales letters, something I've done plenty of in the past, is actually read the letter out loud to someone.

Neil: And see if it makes sense.

Alan: Yeah.

Neil: Because sometimes – and I always do it with my wife – she'll say, "It sounds absolutely stupid. It doesn't flow well. It sounds like somebody's wrote that and somebody's wrote this."

Alan: Yeah, two different styles, mismatched. Yeah, it's a real simple, easy way to do it. Just read it out to someone.

Neil: What I do is – you know me – when you have a product that sells, and sells well, I always say, "Don't tell anybody." If you've got some winners, don't tell anyone.

I know we've spoken before the call, and agreed with this, but to help people get going, I'll give two website addresses of two niche market products I've got that they can go and have a look at and have a look at the sales letters.

One is called **www.YouTheSongwriter.com**.

Alan: So when you say you, is it just the letter U?

Neil: No, it's Y-O-U-T-H-E-S-O-N-G-W-R-I-T-E-R.com.

Alan: Okay.

Neil: And the other one is **www.coachandrunjuniorsoccerteams.com**.

Now, people can go have a look at those two websites, and then look at them immediately after each other. And they'll see that the sales letter structure is virtually the same.

Alan: Is that what you're asking people to go and look at, Neil, is the structure?

Neil: Go and have a look at the structure of the sales letter. And you can see that the sales letters are virtually identical in structure. And some places have the same words, that will lead into the next paragraph, into the bullet points. And look at the structure. Those two sites sell. One is electronic downloads with an upsell for hard copy, and the other one, the soccer one, on that site, is actually a physical tape of it. We don't set the world alight with sales, we don't sell thousands a week, but we do sell 20 and 30 a week.

Alan: Right.

Neil: Look at the prices, multiply that by only 10. Would you like that a week? Multiply it by 30. Would you like that?

Those sites wouldn't sell if we hadn't launched them, if we hadn't finished and launched them.

Alan: Alright, great.

Neil: Part of the launch was drive traffic to the sites. This day and age, it's so simple to drive traffic to your website. It's going to be selling. You'll hear this all the time, but Google Ad Words. You can set up a Google Ad Word account, and within 10 minutes literally driving traffic to your site.

Alan: Yeah, that's right.

Neil: You can also use Overture, again, to pay for click search engines. However, I always try and use that once I know people are buying from my Google Ad Words.

Alan: Yeah, that's right, because of the cost.

Neil: Exactly. Another way to drive traffic, we do this day in and day out, is free articles. An article can be 500 to 900 words long. You can take it from your main product. You're not rewriting anything. You're taking sections from your main product.

You'll hear people say, "Submit them to e-zines in your niche." The reason why so many people say that is because it works.

Alan: Yeah, it does.

Neil: It does. We see it, all the time, driving traffic to our websites.

Alan: Especially if you've got something niche, because that kind of information, just to expand on that a little bit, I feel one of the hardest things to do now is actually get in touch with someone and say, "Can I send you this?"

So it's just a simple phone call or an e-mail. I'd actually go for a phone call these days. E-mail doesn't add as much. But a simple phone call saying, "If you do this, I'm going to do this. There's no direct competition. I'm willing to supply you free information." And that gets your name in the marketplace, then.

Neil: Yeah. And don't just think e-zines, as well. The next one is offline media.

Alan: That's right, yeah.

Neil: Alan, you know that I write for a magazine in the UK, and people think, "Wow! You write for a magazine? How did you manage that?"

Alan: Yeah.

Neil: Well, I managed it by picking up the telephone, speaking to the editor saying, "I've got some articles which may be of interest to your readers. May I send you some to have a look at them?"

The lady obviously went, "Yes, you can send them in." I showed them to her. I then followed it up and she said, "We'll certainly run these. I'll do a little bio for you, to link back to your website, put the telephone number there, if you want it. And also, you can have a full-page advert free every month."

Now, I didn't ask for the advert. I just wanted my article printed. And that's been now two and a half years. So every month, I have an article and I also have a full-page ad for which I don't pay for it. They are a thank you for submitting articles.

Alan: I actually do that, as well. I've been writing for a magazine called Salon Business – which is just for hairdressing salons – for about three years now. And it's just a case of I've got this stuff they're interested in. I

also do one for an international magazine called Living ___. It's just hairdressing management once every quarter.

It really is as simple as picking up the phone and saying, "I've got information that your readers need, and I'm willing to provide it for free." It's that easy.

Neil: Again, just do it. Just pick up that phone and do it.

Alan: I'll tell you what, Neil, the traffic it drives to your website is unbelievable. Plus, it puts you in a different league, from people's viewpoint. They're saying, "This guy is an absolute expert."

And, I'll tell you what, there's nothing better, when you've got phone calls from – as an example – Russia or wherever, somebody says to you, "We read your stuff, been reading it for two years, and we know you're an expert, we'll pay you XYZ to come over and do a lecture."

Neil: I know you've just done that, haven't you?

Alan: Yeah. It's a brilliant feeling. It's good. But we'll have to move on.

Neil: No problem. The final one where they can submit their articles to, I'll give one example, Yahoo article groups. If you go to Yahoo.com or Yahoo.co.uk and type in article groups, you can actually submit your articles to the article bank or article group there, and then it gets published on the web.

That gives you two advantages. They can publish it in their groups, when then sends an e-mail out saying, "There's new content on it, would anybody like to use it on their e-zine or offline?"

But also, importantly, it gives you a link on the web back to your site. So there's other sites linking back to your main site. And as we know, we can't go into detail here, unfortunately, but page links and page ranking work well with Google.

Alan: That's right.

Neil: It also helps on there, as well.

Alan: That's a great point. I'd actually forgotten about that, Neil, the sales.

Neil: And it works. One of the soccer sites we've got drives probably about 100 or more visitors a day from those articles now. And it's qualified. They've read your article, they know what you're offering. For more information, click here, it comes to our site.

Alan: Excellent. That's seven, then?

Neil: Yeah.

Alan: Fire away, Neil.

Neil: Tweak and test, the two T's. You've launched it, you're driving traffic now. It's important that you start tweaking sites and testing to see what works. It's ongoing all the time, to increase your response and

conversion. Or, in simple terms, how many visitors to how many sales, and how you can increase your sales to visitors.

Alan: Right.

Neil: The question is what can I test? You, as a copywriter, Alan, will probably echo these sentiments. You can test a lot of things: the headline, the sub-headline, the currency, the PS, a whole new letter if need be, the price, the funds, the color, the sign-up form.

Alan: The one thing, essentially, is format it online. I discussed it on another call the other week. But I just finished a test on one of my sites, and the test failed miserably. But it succeeded. So I got the result, I knew what was working and what wasn't. And when I put it back to how it was, with a few tweaks, it was just under a 400% increase in sales the next day.

I couldn't believe it.

It's absolutely essential that you test these pages are working. That goes for the layout, the works of a table. A table should be 600 pixels wide, because that is a readability fact. Little things like this make a difference to making it work online. Tweak and test.

Neil: The immediacy of the internet and the web allow you to test it, drive traffic using pay-per-click, and you can test it. Depending on what type of niche you've got, in an hour you can see the changes in some markets.

Alan: Oh, you can. Yeah.

Neil: And after that, I've got a bonus tip, which I'll go through. Once you reach that stage, you've tested, you've tweaked, the word is repeat. Do it again with another product. What we just talked about, choose the product you'd like to work on. Make a decision to start. Allow time and make time when you're going to work on this; because, remember, you've got one project up and running which you have on autopilot, using autoresponders and all of the software that's available. But you still need to put a little bit of time in. We're not going to pull the wool over anybody's eye. You will have some service e-mails. It's a hard job to total up how much you've made that week, but you still need to do it.

So pick a new project, make a decision to do it, make the time, put the time in, allow time to do it, and go through the steps that we've done.

Alan: That's right. And again, I think it's simple enough to remember that not every project is going to work, Neil. Is it?

Neil: No, not at all.

Alan: If it's just not working, don't waste time, resources and energy trying to make it work because you believe in it. Just because you believe in it doesn't make a good enough thing that everybody else wants to buy it.

Neil: Exactly. One of the things I took from the corporate world was don't get emotionally attached to a project.

Alan: Exactly.

Neil: Don't get emotionally attached to a business, we used to say. Fix, sell or close. Can you fix it? If not, can you sell it? And if you don't sell it, just close it down and move on.

Alan: That's right.

Neil: Final bonus tip.

Alan: Yeah, fire away.

Neil: We've looked at the processes I go through of developing a product. That isn't the be-all and end-all, that just works for me. Rather than how-to, it's how I. And it's worked for a lot of people I've talked to on a weekly and daily basis.

But I would also say you develop that product and it's producing an income stream, hopefully, to make that pay off better for the work that you've put in, I always try and think of each product, four ways to profit from that product or niche idea.

What I mean by that is, for example, if people look at CoachandRunJuniorSoccerTeams.com, that is a tape set, at the moment. That is in pounds sterling. That is ___ geographically at the UK.

Alan: Right.

Neil: Now, it's a physical tape set. A lot of the other sites have got the same sales letter. It's in ClickBank. It's a downloadable into an MP3 file.

And that is targeted worldwide. And we've used different ___ in the sales letter, as far as spelling. We make it more international.

Alan: Yeah.

Neil: So that's two ways we've profited from that.

Now, the third way from that, the tape set led to a membership site. We put a tape set together to test the market, whether people who coached junior soccer teams would actually pay out to learn more about how to.

It's done with a friend of mine, who's a coach license holder. I interviewed him. My background is I was heavily involved with junior soccer. But that MP3 file told us that there's a market out there. And that then led to the membership site. So if people go to **www.JuniorSoccerCoach.com**, they'll see a membership site where people pay quarterly for their annual fee to join.

As we were talking before, Alan, from that one idea we're now producing soccer training DVD's.

Alan: Yeah.

Neil: We were joking about it before. It's been good fun. They always say don't work with animals and children, but it doesn't say about children.

Alan: I can tell you now, Neil, that junior soccer coach, just because I knew we were talking today and you've given me access in the past, I've

been through that site today and it's absolutely fantastic. It's a brilliant site. It's really good.

Neil: It just came from that one idea, when we were mapping it out, where do we take it.

Alan: The listeners would actually be interesting. What have you actually used to build your membership website?

Neil: We're using software called Member Gate. When we were researching the membership side of it, again using the words "inherently lazy," I wanted software that could actually automate a lot of the processes behind for content publishing, for membership, updates, for membership billing, if somebody's card is expired and we go to claim the next payment, we want it to automatically follow-up.

So we actually concentrated, like we said before, the marketing of the website and not the content.

Alan: Let me just ask you again, Neil, is that MemberGate.com?

Neil: Yeah, www.MemberGate.com.

Alan: Okay. Listen, we're running out of time. So is there anything you want to say, you want to promote, anything you want to tell about yourself? This is your minute, Neil. Fire away.

Neil: If they want to get in touch with me, they can go to **www.InternetMarketingReview.com**. Or they can e-mail

Neil@internetmarketingreview.com. Or if you want to give me a call, I'm quite accessible. 01-257-427-647.

And then I'll also add another bonus tip. If I could leave people with one thing, I'd say always think about continuing education. You can buy an e-book, you can buy a course, you can go to a seminar, but that's just one piece of learning.

Once you start this business, if you get to another seminar, the World Internet Summit is the ideal one to go to, not just for the information you're going to get but the people you'll meet as well.

Always look for continuous improvement, as well. Japanese word, Kaizan.

Alan: I'm not sure.

Neil: You don't know your Japanese? It's continuous improvement, continuous education.

If you're thinking of doing the internet business, just start and believe in yourself.

Alan: Yeah, make a start.

Neil: You can go to make a start.

Alan: Okay. Neil, that has been a wonderful interview. To so many, they may sound simple. But it's so simple, most people we know, we meet them, we consult with them, I write for them, they just don't do it.

So I just want to thank you, Neil. You've given us some great points there. I'm sure there must be 20 points in ___. You've given us some great information. You've given us your time for free, Neil, and we really appreciate that.

So on behalf of myself, Alan Forrest Smith, co-host of the WorldInternetSummit.com.uk, co-host Ted Ciuba, Brett McFall, Tom Hua, we'd like to just thank everyone for listening.

And remember, all of this information is archived on our website. You can find it, again, on WorldInternetSummit. So if you missed some of these interviews, you can go back. There's stacks and stacks of information in there.

I just want to mention one thing. If you would like to take a friend with you to the World Internet Summit, October 28th through the 31st at Wimbley Conference Center, the tickets are two for the price of one. Bring a friend along with you. It's unbelievable value.

It's going to be a fantastic few days, especially when you see the live World Internet Challenge. It's absolutely incredible.

So Neil, thanks for coming, mate.

Neil: My pleasure, Alan.

Alan: I really enjoyed it. It's been good. Remember, you're buying the beers.

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