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# PICK YOUR NICHE

Pick Your Niche is a detailed guide to creating and monetizing your own online niche business directory.

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Fourth Edition, by David Tang

## PREFACE

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In 1997, I built my first website. It was a fan site for my favourite band, Foo Fighters; and it was hosted on Tripod. *(Remember that service?)*

I spent hours working on that site, learning basic HTML and drawing bitmap graphics using Microsoft Paint. Yes, it was a crude looking site. But, back then, the entire World Wide Web was a motley of crude looking sites. There was no PHP, no Wordpress, no Google, no blogs, no JQuery. Dial-up was the big thing and AOL was still printing their free trial floppy disks like crazy.

I was monetizing that fan site with banner ads. It took me about 3 months to make my first check of \$20. *Talk about below minimum wage.*

Things have come a long way since then. These days, I launch 40,000 page sites in a matter of hours—and within one to two weeks, they start drizzling in money. Part of my noticeable gains in efficiency is due to raw practice. Over the years, I've created countless websites,

from search engines to social networks. But, the other—*more impactful*—part is the exponential evolution of the web itself. With databases, APIs, Google, social networks, and thousands of free and paid tools, launching a 40,000 page site has become infinitely easier.

Since I launched The Man Who Sold the Web (a site about creating profitable web sites), I regularly receive emails from folks who were just like me back in 1997—curious minds, eager to learn everything. There is a big difference between these people and 1997-me, however.

Back in 1997, even if I had the ambitions to build a 40,000 page site, I couldn't. It was too difficult of a task. There just weren't the resources available back then that are available now. For the beginner today who wishes to create 40,000 page site, this goal is entirely within reach. There is so much free information available now helping newbies (and experts) to build any type of website they can imagine. The difficulty today is not finding information, but in filtering down information to weed out the garbage.

This is the inspiration of this guide, which is the first guide I've published to the The Man Who Sold the Web. I wrote this guide to show that anybody—even a beginner—can create a profitable online business. Like any endeavor, all it takes is a little creativity and some work.

# INTRO

**What is a Niche Business Directory and  
why should we care?**

Let's begin by defining the term "niche business directory." A niche business directory is an online business directory focused on a specific industry vertical (e.g. pet stores, sushi restaurants, gyms, pizzerias, tanning salons, dentists, realtors, architecture firms, print shops, etc.). In other words, it is a laser-focused version of a Yelp or YellowPages.com.

Using the approach that I have developed and refined over the launch of several such web sites, you can create a niche business directory that will become a money-making machine requiring minimal maintenance after the initial launch. This is not an exaggeration, as I'm sure you will begin to see after reading a few more pages. In fact, for my latest business directory, sales are over \$1000/month by my 3<sup>rd</sup> month since launch. I have a day job plus several other side projects, so I have not put nearly my full attention on this site.

This guide will teach you all the methodologies and tactics that I use.

### **So, how did I come across this idea?**

It all started with reading a report I came across that discussed achieving massive profits through domain flipping. In a

nutshell, the domain flipping guide spoke about the idea of buying domain names targeting specific geography and business vertical combinations (e.g. SantaMonica-Bakeries.com), ranking those domains on Google, and then reselling them as soon as they reach page 1 on Google.

The idea was simple enough, but had 2 drawbacks which deterred me from pursuing it further. The first is that it's too time consuming. If I wanted to make 10 sales, I needed to create 10 domains, which meant, set up 10 websites, find 10 distinct sets of potential buyers, and go through 10 separate sales processes.

The second drawback is that the income is not self-sustaining. Once I stopped creating new domains, I would stop making money. I wanted an idea that could generate ongoing, passive income, so that, with time, the amount of effort I put in would steadily decrease. If it took me 100 hours to make \$1,000 today, I want it to take 1 hour to make \$1,000 in the future.

That's when I thought of the niche business directory. If you think about it, the niche business directory is essentially the domain flipping idea on steroids! Instead of creating a domain for 1 specific geography and vertical, e.g. SantaMonica-Bakeries.com, we are creating 1 domain for hundreds, if not tens of thousands, of geographies for that same vertical, e.g. BestLocalBakeries.com.

Instead of selling the full domain to a single buyer (which is a one-time and more difficult sale), we sell variety of different advertising and sponsorship options (e.g. premium listings, graphic display ads, listing upgrade options) to a large number of buyers. Here are some clear advantages to the niche business directory:

- **Multiple sales per buyer** – Sell premium listings for not only the buyer's city, but also surrounding cities and suburbs. E.g., a bakery shop in Santa Monica, California will likely also want to be listed in the Beverly Hills, Malibu, and Hollywood directory pages. If we have various sponsorship items, we can even make multiple sales on the same page to the same buyer.
- **Multiple sales/buyers per page** – We can sell multiple premium listings on a single page to different buyers (e.g. Bakery A, Bakery B, and Bakery C who are all located in Santa Monica). To further capitalize on competitive geographies, we can create a bidding system (similar to Google Adwords) to determine listing order (i.e. highest bidder gets the top, first seen listing on the page).
- **Recurring revenues** – We sell premium listings at a monthly price. Over the long run, we can easily make more money from a single buyer using a monthly recurring billing business model than a 1-time domain sale. For example, if we only sell 10 listings a month, in 1

year, we will have 120 subscribers. Assume we are charging \$18/listing, by month 12, we are making \$2,160 monthly, and that number will just keep growing. Plus, we're never giving away control of our best asset—the ranked domain or web page itself.

**Okay, so the vision seems all great and promising. How do we execute?**

The next several sections of this guide will take you through the full development and launch process. It's structured as follows:

- **The Basics** – Topics include picking the niche, picking the domain, and content creation.
- **Marketing Strategy** – Topics include positioning and SEO. SEO stands for [Search Engine Optimization](#).
- **Sales Strategy** – Topics include customer targeting and sales letter development.

Excited? Let's continue.



# THE BASICS

**What is a Niche Business Directory and  
why should we care?**

The first and, perhaps, most crucial step is to pick the right niche. There are countless niches to choose from. Some will be winners, many won't be.

To begin, hop over to this page:

[http://www.yelp.com/developers/documentation/category\\_list](http://www.yelp.com/developers/documentation/category_list)

This is a complete list of niches, as defined by Yelp. This list will not only help us brainstorm niches, but by picking a niche from this list, we will greatly expedite the content creation process.

Here is a list of sanity checks we should perform to validate the quality of our niche.

- Once we have a niche in mind, the first step is to Google that niche + various target geographic combinations. For instance, if we are interested in bakeries, search “Newport Beach Bakeries,” “Atlanta Bakeries,” “Austin Bakeries,” “Syracuse Bakeries,” “Stamford Bakeries.” Pick a variety of geographies that span different sizes. Don't go for the tier 1 cities only, e.g. New York City, Los Angeles, Miami. They are usually too competitive and are poor indicators

of actual competition.

- Look through the search results on the first few pages of the search and see if there are already niche business directories existing. If so, we may want to choose a different niche without any existing competition.
- Also, look at the ads on Google. Do we see any local businesses already advertising on Google? Note that we are looking for ads of bakeries actually located in the geography, NOT national chains. It is a great sign if we see them. These will be our most likely buyers, as they have already made the conscious decision and taken the action to advertise online.
- Look at the results in pages 2 and beyond. Do we see any local businesses? It's a good sign if we do. These are also potential buyers. If we don't, then this may indicate this particular niche doesn't have web savvy business owners and we may want to choose a different niche.
- Finally, go to the Google Adwords: Keyword Tool: <https://adwords.google.com/select/KeywordToolExternal> Enter our list of search terms (e.g. "Atlanta Bakeries, "Austin Bakeries," ...) into the **Word or phrase** text box and click "Search." In the results, check the

“Competition” column (it’s the column with the bar charts). Do we see mostly Low or Medium competition? Pick a niche with as low of a competition rating as possible. This will make our SEO/marketing efforts enormously faster.

After we have gone through these steps and found an appropriate niche, the next step is to pick a domain name. This is usually just an \$8 investment with GoDaddy after applying a coupon—and may be the only investment you need to make on this venture (assuming you have hosting covered already and can do your own SEO)!

When picking a domain, there is just 1 critical requirement.

**Our niche keyword needs to be in our domain name.**

Other than that, try to pick a domain name that sounds professional and appealing, so that buyers down the road are more apt to buy.

I recommend not creating a national business directory. It will make marketing easier if we focus on a regional geography.

For instance, create a bakeries directory targeted only at California. In this case, it would be good to also have ‘California’ in our domain name.

Once we have our domain registered, it’s time to actually generate the content.

The good thing is, because we picked our niche originally from Yelp, Yelp has already done the hard work of gathering all the content for us—organized by geography, too! Yelp is even available in the UK, which expands our geographic target options to beyond just the US.

Just do a search for our niche and our target geography in Yelp. Yelp also has a number of filters. Be sure to use them to isolate our target niche-geography combination. See the screenshot below, where I set the filters for “Redondo Beach” (where I live) and “Bakeries.”

The screenshot shows a search result for 'bakeries Redondo Beach' on Yelp. The page title is 'bakeries Redondo Beach' and the category is 'Bakeries'. The search results are filtered to show 1 to 10 of 18 results, with 10 results per page. The filters are:

- Sort By:** Best Match (selected), Highest Rated, Most Reviewed
- Cities:** Redondo Beach (selected), Los Angeles, More Cities
- Distance:** Bird's-eye View (selected), Driving (5 mi.), Biking (2 mi.), Walking (1 mi.), Within 4 blocks
- Features:** Open Now (1:48 pm), Accepts Credit Cards, Private Lot Parking, Wheelchair Accessible, More features
- Price:** \$\$\$\$ (selected), \$\$\$, \$\$, \$
- Category:** Bakeries (selected), Food, Restaurants, Grocery, More categories

Now, for select geographies, we need to copy the business information over from Yelp to our website or database.

If you're looking to launch to build a business directory spanning a number of zip codes (100s or more), I would recommend automating the process using a scraper. A [scraper](#) (links to Wikipedia) is a tool used to extract large amounts of data from other sites.

If you are looking for a full web site solution, you can check out [Niche Business Directory In-a-Box](#). This is a turnkey script that literally takes care of everything—from technical installation to web hosting to Yelp scraping. For more info, check here:

<http://themanwhosoldtheweb.com/business-directory/>

By the way, all we need is the first page of results. We are not looking for an exhaustive list—just enough to make our directory page look complete and legitimate. Remember, our objective is not to compete with Yelp or YellowPages.com. It is to seek advertisers who want to have a strong presence on Google.

After the original publication of this guide, I received a number of inquiries requiring specific examples. So, below, I have included a number of examples. I don't want to cannibalize my own niche, so I am not revealing links to my own directories. However, at the top of the next page, you will find a screenshot of a generic listings page on one of my sites.

**Serving the Baldwinsville, NY (13027) Area**

**SPONSORED LISTING - GET YOUR PRACTICE ONLINE EXPOSURE**  
 Are you a Chiropractor? Get your name listed here for as low as \$15. [Contact us to learn more about our advertising and sponsorship options.](#)

**Example of sponsored listing**

<b>A</b> <b>Musfanaro Chiropractor</b> 914 Old Liverpool Rd Liverpool, NY 13088 (315) 451-1152	<b>Syracuse, NY 13212</b> (315) 453-4040
<b>C</b> <b>NEW YORK SPINE &amp; WELLNESS CENTER</b> 5495 E Taft Rd Syracuse, NY 13212 (315) 552-6700	<b>D</b> <b>Cafania Joseph A MD</b> 5495 E Taft Rd Syracuse, NY 13212 (315) 552-6700
<b>E</b> <b>Devix Rina C MD</b> 5495 E Taft Rd Syracuse, NY 13212 (315) 552-6700	<b>F</b> <b>Storpe Michael A Dr</b> 1428 W Genesee St Syracuse, NY 13204 (315) 472-7128
<b>G</b> <b>Tiso Robert L MD</b> 5495 E Taft Rd Syracuse, NY 13212 (315) 552-6700	<b>H</b> <b>Tallanca Eric A MD</b> 5495 E Taft Rd Syracuse, NY 13212 (315) 552-6700
<b>I</b> <b>Palmaro Daniel Dino DC</b> 609 Vine St Liverpool, NY 13088 (315) 451-2222	<b>J</b> <b>Pirro Lombardi Elaine A DC</b> 5112 W Taft Rd Liverpool, NY 13088 (315) 452-9420
<b>K</b> <b>Harrington Laura E DC</b> 403 Tulip St Liverpool, NY 13088 (315) 461-4510	<b>L</b> <b>Greco Douglas</b> 609 Vine St Liverpool, NY 13088 (315) 451-2222
<b>M</b> <b>Dr Laura E Harrington</b> 403 Tulip St Liverpool, NY 13088 (315) 461-4510	<b>N</b> <b>Horodian Chiropractor &amp; Wellness PC</b> 5112 W Taft Rd Ste W Liverpool, NY 13088 (315) 452-9420
<b>O</b> <b>Conley Chiropractor</b> 609 7th St Liverpool, NY 13088 (315) 457-0500	<b>P</b> <b>Berto Joseph C DC</b> 4212 Brewerton Rd Coers, NY 13039 (315) 699-1441
<b>Q</b> <b>Dr Jeffrey Byrne DC</b> 4253 State Route 31 Coers, NY 13039 (315) 699-2219	<b>R</b> <b>Cestaro Chiropractor</b> 5420 Business Ave Coers, NY 13039 (315) 458-0840
<b>S</b> <b>Moran Chantel</b> 5797 State Route 31 Stop 1 Coers, NY 13039 (315) 699-4533	<b>T</b> <b>Goflewski Jennifer DC</b> 1428 W Genesee St Syracuse, NY 13204 (315) 472-7128

**I added an image related to the industry to be replaced later by a graphic ad**

**ADVERTISE WITH US!**  
 Get a leg on your competition. We offer very targeted, high visibility ads. [Contact us to learn more about our advertising and sponsorship options.](#)

**Notice I have text blurbs around the page to provide related context**

**Not even if you need a Chiropractor!**  
 Chiropractors, also known as doctors of chiropractic or chiropractic physicians, diagnose and treat patients with health problems related to the musculoskeletal system. Chiropractors treat the effects of those problems on the nervous system and on general health. Chiropractic is based on the principle that spinal joint misalignments interfere with the nervous system and can result in lower resistance to disease and many different conditions of diminished health.

**Nearby locations:**  
[Baldwinsville Chiropractors \(13027\)](#) | [Syracuse Chiropractors \(13212\)](#) | [Liverpool Chiropractors \(13088\)](#) | [North Syracuse Chiropractors \(13212\)](#) | [Syracuse Chiropractors \(13204\)](#)

**BROWSE BY STATE AND TERRITORIES:** [AL](#) | [AZ](#) | [CA](#) | [CO](#) | [CT](#) | [DC](#) | [DE](#) | [FL](#) | [GA](#) | [HI](#) | [IA](#) | [IL](#) | [IN](#) | [KS](#) | [KY](#) | [LA](#) | [MA](#) | [MD](#) | [ME](#) | [MI](#) | [MN](#) | [MO](#) | [NC](#) | [ND](#) | [NE](#) | [NH](#) | [NJ](#) | [NM](#) | [NV](#) | [NY](#) | [OH](#) | [OK](#) | [OR](#) | [PA](#) | [RI](#) | [SC](#) | [SD](#) | [TN](#) | [TX](#) | [VA](#) | [VT](#) | [WA](#) | [WI](#) | [WV](#) | [WY](#) | [DC](#) | [American Samoa](#) | [District of Columbia](#) | [Guam](#) | [Puerto Rico](#) | [Virgin A.](#)

**ABOUT QUALITY CHIROPTICUS.COM** Since 2007, QualityChiropractor.com has been your most comprehensive online source for finding, contacting, visiting, and quality chiropractors across the U.S. We are continuously updating our directory with chiropractors professionals with over 50,000+ data. Chiropractors are healthcare professionals focused on the diagnosis, treatment, and prevention of mechanical disorders of the musculoskeletal system, especially the spine.

**CONTACT US ADVERTISE**

**TERMS AND CONDITIONS** QualityChiropractor.com is a free service for the general U.S. public to use in their effort to find a local chiropractor. We do not represent, endorse, or in any way affiliated, with those chiropractors listed in our business directory. For any health or medical inquiry, please contact your physician directly.

Here are some illustrative examples I found online. Note a couple key points: 1) these are not my sites; 2) they look very different, so layout and design is *not important*. Just make sure it doesn't look like a 2<sup>nd</sup> grader put it together.

*Example 1:* Local Niche Directory (Chinese Food)

<http://www.northbabylonbusinessdirectory.com/chineserest.html>

*Example 2:* Regional Niche Directory (Furniture)

<http://www.furniturebrains.com/states/florida.htm>

*Example 3:* National Niche Directory (Cardiologists)

<http://www.mycardiologist.info/>

After you have your website up and running, you should get your domain indexed by Google as quickly as possible. Here's a free service that will do just that for you:

<http://themanwhosoldtheweb.com/rapid-google-indexer-access.php>



# MARKETING STRATEGY

**How do we make ourselves known?**

In this section, I will describe a marketing strategy I have developed to both expedite the Google ranking process and maximize sales.

In line with strategist Michael Porter's teachings, we want to focus. Don't go after a ton of geographies at once. Instead, **focus on 3 neighboring cities.** This is an important concept to understand. Google is smart and understands geographic relationships—and therefore, there will be synergistic ranking benefits among neighboring cities. Plus, when we start selling to the customer, our sales letter becomes much more compelling when we have multiple cities ranked on Google's first page. Moreover, the number 3 has a strong psychological impact on consumers, as discussed in numerous business publications (including the [McKinsey](#) Way). Furthermore, we can upsell customers to purchase listings on multiple pages.

Again, use the [Google Adwords: Keyword Tool](#) (referred to earlier) to pick cities that have low competition.

Once we have selected our 3 target cities, the next step is to get them ranked on Google's first page of search results. As we all know, ranking anything in Google essentially boils down to

Search Engine Optimization (SEO) work. SEO involves a lot of hard work and persistence; and is a constantly evolving field. However, there are definitely tactics that work and tactics that are simply a waste of both effort, and more importantly, time.

### *On-site SEO*

It is absolutely critical for us to have our keywords in our URL. We already have our niche keyword in our domain. Now, we need to have the city keyword in our webpage address. Here's an example:

<http://california-bakeries.com/redondo-beach-bakeries-90277.php> (not a real link)

This makes ranking the search “Redondo Beach bakeries” significantly easier. This tactic may not be as overwhelmingly effective for other types of sites, but for online business directories, this works wonders.

Within the page itself, we want to have that exact search term leading our page title, in <h1> tags, and somewhere embedded within a couple sentences of text on the page.

Google likes pages with a lot of text. A page with little text and a lot of links sets off the red flag of being spam. Therefore, I suggest finding some relevant content about our niche and inserting that into our page. I typically use Wikipedia to find

this info. Be sure to modify the content, so it's not verbatim from the original source. Modifications don't need to be drastic—e.g. just re-arrange a couple sentences; change up prepositions, adjectives, verb conjugations. If our niche is bakeries, we can place our content into a section called “Did we know?” and fill it with some factoids about baking. Additionally, you should have content related to your geographic target.

### ***Off-site SEO***

On the highest level, off-site SEO is about building backlinks. We want all our backlinks to contain our target search term (e.g. “Redondo Beach bakeries”) and nothing else. Remember, stay focused.

Here is a breakdown of the types of backlink sources that are effective and those that are ineffective for business directories.

#### Effective Backlinks

- **Links from Article Directories and Web 2.0 Sites**
  - On a high level, links from related articles posted to article directories and web 2.0 sites are good. However, there are exceptions. This is because some of these sites have been overtaken by Internet Marketers who have posted spammy and/or

duplicate articles and these sites have been downgraded after the Google Panda algorithm update. You can see which well known sites are still effective, and which aren't here:

<http://www.pandalized.com/>

- **In-post links from reputable blog providers** – Reputable blog providers include the likes of Wordpress.org and Blogspot. Wordpress blogs that aren't hosted on Wordpress.com still work well—just not *as* well.
- **Social bookmarking** – Google still values backlinks from social bookmarking sites, such as Reddit.com. These are also the easiest types of effective backlinks to gather. I have compiled list of 100+ social bookmarking sites that we can submit to, including several Page Rank 8 sources, which we can download from the link below:

<http://themanwhosoldtheweb.com/downloads/100-social-bookmarking/>

Before we even begin SEO-ing our geographic pages, we should social bookmark our own primary domain to get it indexed by Google.

## Ineffective Backlinks

Ineffective backlinks are links that do not provide nearly as much of an impact as the effective backlinks. That is not to say they do not have any impact—just significantly less. If we do have easy or cheap access to these types of backlinks, we should use these links to link back to the effective backlinks (versus linking back to our site directly). Creating this multi-layer backlink structure is an effective SEO tactic.

- **Forum links** – These links provide minimal link juice. More importantly, if someone is selling we a lot of forum link backlinks for cheap (e.g. 10,000 backlinks from unique forums), these links are usually generated by spam bots. Alert—this is a black hat technique and can be dangerous if we are using these links to feed directly back to our site! Forums that have been the victim of spam bots are not moderated and typically have been spammed with lots of adult or pharmaceutical ads, which Google hates. We do not want a backlink from a web page that is also linking to adult websites!
- **Profile links** – Same deal as forum links.

- **Sitewide footers** – These links are typically surrounded only by other links, which Google doesn't like. Google prefers links surrounded by relevant text. If we can have easy access to sitewide footers, use them to link to our articles or blog posts.

**An effective SEO tactic involves link diversity (i.e. different types of backlinks), multi-layers of links, and interlinking among links. If we can create such a “backlink matrix” for our keyword, we should be able to make Google’s first page within a week or two for Low competition search terms.**

In fact, when I personally do SEO, I create a 4-tiered structure that includes a large number of different types of links with random interlinking. I call this the SEO Matrix and you can read more about it here:

### **Deconstructing the SEO Matrix**

<http://themanwhosoldtheweb.com/blog/2011/04/the-seo-matrix-deconstructed/>

### **Putting the SEO Matrix on autopilot**

<http://themanwhosoldtheweb.com/blog/2011/07/put-the-seo-matrix-on-autopilot/>

If you are a complete beginner to SEO, I also recommending this article I wrote, which explains the key levers to SEO.

<http://themanwhosoldtheweb.com/blog/2011/03/understand-the-6-levers-to-seo/>



# SALES STRATEGY

How do we make the money?

Once our 3 target cities have made their way up to Google's first page of results, it's time to make some sales!

There are 3 ways to find potential customers, listed below in order of ease and likelihood to buy:

- 1. Existing Adword Advertisers** – Enter our search term or similar search terms into Google and check out who are the Adword advertisers. Refresh the page a few times to get the full rotation of advertisers. Be sure to only target the local advertisers, not national chains. Go to their websites and contact them with our sales letter. (More on the sales letter shortly.) We can contact these businesses usually just via email, which is the most convenient and quickest way to contact potential customers.
- 2. Business Listed after Page 1** – Our next set of targeted customers are those with webpages listed beyond the first page of Google results. These are businesses that understand the value of a web presence, but lack the marketing and SEO knowledge to get their own web page ranked on the first page of Google. That's exactly where

we come in!

**3. Offline Businesses** – Our last resort, though still effective, just more time consuming, are businesses that do not seem to have any web presence. To find these businesses, just flip through the Yellow Pages or look them up on YellowPages.com. We will need to contact these businesses via direct mail, unless we have a strong ability to sell over the phone. I have personally not tried the cold call sale, but would love to hear about your results and advice if you try this.

The 3 channels described above work for all niches. There is a 4<sup>th</sup> way that does not apply to every niche. This is to find prospective business owners on Craigslist. Let's investigate this further.

**4. Craigslist** – Craigslist is the biggest and most popular online classifieds service in the U.S. It's a great to find very targeted buyers, since you can browse listings by geography, category, and keyword search. If your particular niche falls into one of the classifieds section categories on Craigslist, then you're in luck. All you need to do is browse to that section, and you will have access to hundreds (if not thousands, depending on the geographic scope of your directory) of email contacts. In fact, each listings page on Craigslist displays 100 individual ads.

Open up any one ad, and at the top, there is a contact email. See the screenshot below.

**Avoid scams and fraud by dealing locally!** Beware any deal involving Western Union, Moneygram, wire transfer, cashier check, money order, shipping, escrow, or any promise of transaction protection/certification/guarantee. [More info](#)

please flag with care: [?]

- [miscategorized](#)
- [prohibited](#)
- [spam/overpost](#)
- [best of craigslist](#)

**Oak Dining Table + 4 Chairs + Bench - \$698 ( \*\* NEXT \*\* DAY \*\*DELIVERY\*\*)**

---

Date: 2011-03-23, 1:20PM PDT

Reply to: [sale-5ckcf-2282355425@craigslist.org](mailto:sale-5ckcf-2282355425@craigslist.org) [click when replying to ads]



If you're thinking there should be a way to automate this email harvesting process, we are thinking on the same wavelength! 😊

To expedite this process, I wrote an email scraper for Craigslist. For a limited time (point of reference being 3/23/2011), I am making access to this Craigslist email scraper freely available on my website here:

<http://themanwhosoldtheweb.com/craigslist-email-scraper-access.php>

Now, onto creating our sales letter.

The value proposition communicated by our letter is very straightforward. We are giving them a competitive advantage over competing local businesses by guaranteeing presence on page 1 of Google.

In our sales letter, there are several points we should cover to make our offer even more compelling:

- Most people research businesses online using Google before they buy anything. Back in 2008, the exact statistic was already over 90%.
- Most people do not go beyond the first page of Google. I think the statistic is over 80% of searches do not click past page 1.
- Consumers associate businesses on the first page of Google as being more reputable and consider them leaders in their areas.
- Our business directory's pages are already ranked on Google's page 1. Give them the exact search terms to search, so they can validate.
- We are sending this exact offer to all their competitors. Advise them not to give this competitive edge to a

competitor!

- We only have a limited number of premium listings available.
- Offer discounted incentives to buy ads for multiple cities. E.g, 10% off if we buy a listing on both the Santa Monica and Malibu pages.
- Depending on how price sensitive our niche is, we may also want to offer a first month discount. The key is to get them to subscribe to the monthly listing. Based on my experience, once a customer has subscribed, it is rare for them to unsubscribe even after the pricing increases on the second month.

Here is an example of an actual sales letter that I have used.

Hello! It's no secret that more and more people are shopping online or researching products online before going to the store. The same holds true for NICHE.

Here are a few more facts you should know:

**FACT #1** When shopping for NICHE, most people start on Google.

**FACT #2** 90% of people will NOT look beyond the first page of Google's search results.

**FACT #3** DIRECTORYNAME will put your presence on the first page of Google for those keywords and phrases you want! This translates directly into an increase in store traffic and sales.

As you may be aware, DIRECTORYNAME is a premiere online destination for people to research

NICHE in the United States. The purpose of my letter is to offer you a very focused and effective way to significantly increase your online presence to people in the Lehigh Valley area.

In fact, right now, we have pages appearing on the first page of Google’s search results for the following searches:

- KEYWORD Bethlehem
- KEYWORD Allentown
- KEYWORD Easton
- KEYWORD Emmaus

For each of those pages, we have 1 Premium Ad Space available. The Premium Ad is the first thing any person will see when they visit the DIRECTORYNAME page—and there is only one Premium Ad per zip code.

We have the following special deals going on:

<u>Premium Ad Special</u>	<u>Annual Rate</u>	<u>Monthly Rate</u>
Allentown page only	\$600/year (setup fee waived)	\$60/month + \$50 one-time setup
Bethlehem page only	\$450/year (setup fee waived)	\$45/month + \$50 one-time setup
Easton page only	\$250/year (setup fee waived)	\$25/month + \$50 one-time setup
Emmaus page only	\$200/year (setup fee waived)	\$20/month + \$50 one-time setup
Full package (all 4 cities)	\$900/year (setup fee waived)	----

We are offering this special to all NICHE stores in the Lehigh Valley area, so contact us now if you are interested. Don't let your competitors get the upper hand on this deal!

Please do not hesitate to shoot me an email directly (CONTACT EMAIL). Thank you.

There is no specific rules on price point. It depends on the price sensitivity of your niche and geography combination. For instance, realtors in New York City are willing to pay much higher amount than realtors in Des Moines. Similarly, within New York City, you can probably charge a lot higher to realtors than to maid service providers.

So, that's it! Rinse and repeat; and you should be on your way to creating a very profitable online business operating on autopilot.

I hope you have found this guide inspirational can translate that inspiration into action.

Once you have one business directory operational and have made it profitable, I am sure you will feel the urge to launch more. That's what I did.



## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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My name is Dave and I've been creating websites since the late 90s. I have created sites big and small, and through the years, millions of users have come across them. (Some of those are listed below.)

Through my experimentation, I have learned lessons on why some made money, while others didn't. These days, I focus on creating sites that follow a specific model—autoscale, autopilot sites that add value. Autoscale, meaning the site will organically grow to (hundreds of) thousands of pages; autopilot, meaning the site will require minimal (if any) ongoing maintenance; and value-add, meaning the site has a legitimate value proposition to its visitors.

Here are some examples of sites following this model:

- **NuTang** (<http://nutang.com>) - This is a blogging and social networking community I started in 2003, in the pre-Facebook era. It's the first social network to integrate Google maps and

location-based features, the first to offer revenue-sharing with its members, and the first to integrate social games. In its heyday, we had over 10,000 active members and over a million pages indexed by Google. The site was a prime example of autoscale (members generating thousands of pages with unique content on a daily basis), autopilot (I haven't touched the site in years and it's still active), and value-add (we still have a dedicated following).

- **Tabpole** (<http://tabpole.com>) - One of my most successful niche search engines, Tabpole is a search engine of music tabulatures (For your information, tabs is a type of music notes). It adds true value to visitors by saving them the time and effort of searching 5 or more separate sites for a good tab. It's autoscale, because with each search, a new unique web page is created. This is another site I haven't touched in years, but still making me money (i.e. it's on autopilot).
- **Niche Business Directories** - This entire category of websites fits the autoscale, autopilot, value-add model perfectly. What a coincidence! 😊

Though I have not perfected the art of making successful autoscale, autopilot, value-add sites, I have certainly developed a certain expertise in this area. On my site, The Man Who Sold the Web (<http://themanwhosoldtheweb.com>), I focus on this website model. I discuss lessons and tricks I've learned, share scripts and tools I use (including turnkey websites), and showcase specific case studies of my own sites.

My writing is geared towards the beginner audience. My aim is to help people starting out create their own autoscale, autopilot online business. If you have a moment, I invite you to check out The Man Who Sold the Web.

Thanks for reading.

Dave Tang

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