

WHAT REALLY MAKES MONEY

An Independent Review of Business Opportunities & Money-Making Enterprises

NO PAIN, NO GAIN!

Why 'Voluntary Suffering' is Key to Success in Your First Home Enterprise

Realise how difficult it can be to set up a home enterprise.

There are so many challenges... adapting to a new technology or online platform... grappling with marketing techniques... finding time in your busy life to get work done... and overcoming the psychological obstacles of self-doubt, distraction and loss of motivation.

It's not always easy. Sometimes you might experience genuine fear about putting yourself out there and taking a risk with your time and money.

I want to reassure you that these are natural feelings. They're not a flaw in your character. Neither should they be a reason not to embark on a new enterprise.

In fact, there is plenty of evidence to show that suffering is a fundamental part of doing something meaningful and worthwhile.

Think about a mountain climber who wants to scale Everest. Pain, risk and suffering is inevitable if they want to reach the top. It's what gives them that sense of elation when they succeed.

Think about a novelist who spends years struggling with self-doubt, stuck at a computer for hours on end, who misses social events and gives up most of their free time. They know that without those drawbacks, they will never fulfil their dream.

Or even consider why we have children. The sleepless nights, the nappies, the dealing with tantrums, the daily school runs and all that worrying about their education, health and development. That's a lot of suffering – yet people voluntarily take it on.

So why do we do it?

Well, we climb mountains, write novels or have children because they give our life purpose and meaning. They deliver feelings of elation, satisfaction and pride that cannot be derived from 'easy' activities in life.

This is why, instead of running away from the idea of suffering, we need to embrace it, and understand that it's part of any significant goal in life.

In fact, it is one of the key ingredients of happiness.

This is the same for home business, whether you're trying to set up a side income, make a bit of extra cash, or develop a full-time enterprise. It won't always be easy, but the struggles, worries and sacrifices are all part of the process.

If you want to create the kind of income that transforms your life for the better, it will require some pain. Accepting that is what separates the successful people from the dreamers.

So if you are fearful about the challenges you might encounter on the road to a profitable home income, please don't let that put you off.

My role in *What Really Makes Money* is to reduce those challenges by giving you blueprints, shortcuts and tools that you can use to get set up in your first home business with as little pain as possible.

In this month's issue I will reveal three more ways you could potentially earn an income from home in your spare time. So please put aside any fears and doubts for now and let's get stuck in...

please turn over...

The Top 10 Affiliate Programs of 2022

You Could Turn a Blog or YouTube Channel Into a 'Paid Per Click' Income Generator... Selling Products That Other People Create

Affiliate marketing is a tried-and-tested online business idea that has stood the test of time. The basic principle is that you promote a link to someone else's product and get paid a commission for any sales that result from it.

However, in the early days of the Internet, affiliate products were sometimes a bit shoddy. Your main option was to join affiliate sites like ClickBank, which sometimes included eBooks and manuals that were light on detail, badly written, outdated or inaccurate.

On top of that there were a lot of 'multi-level-marketing schemes' doing the rounds with poor or fraudulent products at their heart. Often they required people to ramp up their commissions by hoodwinking others, making it more like a pyramid scheme than a legitimate business.

While such schemes still exist, affiliate marketing has become a lot more credible in recent years. Big name e-tailers like Amazon and eBay have affiliate schemes and there are many fantastic software companies, social network platforms, online course creators and outsourcing websites who use affiliate programs to market themselves.

There are many benefits to affiliate marketing for the home start-up entrepreneur:

- » You can set up an online enterprise that earns you an income without needing to create, stock or deliver your own product.
- » You can instantly gain credibility through an association with established products and services.
- » You don't have to deal with order processing, customer care or refunds.
- » You don't have to take on any significant risk. If you don't succeed in promoting your affiliate links, you aren't left with any unsold stock and

you won't have stumped up more than the cost of website hosting.

- » You can scale up the business very easily. Selling 1,000 products requires no more time or effort than selling 100. The more customers you have the more you make, without any limit.

Here's how it works...

A Quick Guide to Affiliate Selling

First, you need to sign up with a company that offers an affiliate program.

Before you do, check out what they're offering to sellers. This might include branding, logos, website banner and even marketing copy. They do this in order to help affiliates stay on brand and look professional.

They'll give you a link for each product, which they will be able to track. When someone clicks on your link, a cookie gets stored on their device. This allows the company to attribute the sale to you and give you the agreed percentage of commission, which can be anything from 5%-70%. Sometimes, rather than a percentage, you get a specified amount per sale or sign up.

With most affiliate programs – like Amazon's for instance – you get the commission EVEN if the customer takes a while to make their decision. That's because the cookie will have a time frame attached to it – anything from 24 hours to 30 days, depending on the affiliate company.

After that tracking period expires, you won't get the commission. However, buying a product is more down to emotional impulse than rational consideration, so if someone doesn't buy within the first few days they are unlikely to do so anyway.

The big advantage of affiliate marketing is that you get to profit from slick, credible and well-established

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online products that have strong demand and reliable commission schemes.

There is really only one big challenge involved. That is, getting your affiliate link in front of potential buyers, week after week.

To do that you need:

- » **A publishing platform** – You need to have an online presence so you can share free information related to the product you are trying to sell in order to draw your audience in. It will also be a base from which you can promote your links and attract email subscribers for direct marketing. The most common choice is a blog. If you keep it regularly updated with content, then over time it will get picked up by Google searches. You can promote it using AdWords campaigns. Alternatively, if you don't want your own website, you could use YouTube to create an ongoing video blog, and build your audience that way.
- » **An email service** – This is easy to integrate into a blog or promote beneath YouTube videos if you pick an email broadcaster like MailChimp. Having an email list allows you to directly market products, services and special offers. In my experience, email is the most powerful and effective direct marketing tool.
- » **One or two social media accounts** – These are your primary free networks for finding and growing an audience that you can direct to your blog. They also allow you to advertise with a controlled budget, so that you can find your specific audience, based on things like age, location and interests. You can also promote your affiliate links on social media, but primarily it should be a way of pushing people to your website and email service where you can do the harder selling. (For more information on how to build an audience on social media, please refer to the article on page 6.)

OK, so I'm sure that at this point you can spot a few downsides to affiliate marketing...

- » You need to be prepared to regularly publish content, which requires some research and writing (or speaking if you use video).
- » It takes time and patience to attract and build enough of an audience to make a decent income.

However, there are many rewards to affiliate marketing:

- » You can work any time of night or day.
- » You can run it part-time, in about 60 minutes per

day, or in larger chunks of time bunched up at the weekend.

- » Sales happen automatically online, 24/7 without you needing to deal with orders.
- » When you have built an audience you can use it to promote your own products and services to make even more income. Ultimately, you could have the foundations for multiple income streams, not just the one you make from your affiliate links.

Some of the biggest self-made entrepreneurs on the Internet have used affiliate marketing to get started. So if you get this right, there is the potential for a highly lucrative business.

Which Affiliate Program is Right for You?

If you already have a website, product or service then use this as a basis. Find an affiliate program with products that might appeal to the audience you're building anyway.

Similarly, if you already blog about a subject, whether that's through your own website or on Twitter, Facebook, Instagram or TikTok, then this could be a way to monetise it.

However, if you're starting from scratch, you need to think about what interests you, based on what you're about to see in the following list. Pick something you think you'd enjoy sharing information about, and that you can see yourself getting stuck into for the long term.

There are countless hundreds of affiliate programs in many different subject areas. This can make the choice seem overwhelming, so what I have done is given you one credible and workable option for each of the main categories: retail, marketing, webhosting, website building, beauty, travel, food and drink, and health.

Retail

Affiliate-program.amazon.com

With Amazon Associates you can get a commission of between 1% and 10%, depending on the category of the product you are selling, the highest being for clothes and luxury beauty products, both of which can earn you a 10% cut on the price.

The main advantage of affiliate marketing with Amazon is that people know the company and many will already use Amazon, so it's an easy one to recommend. And because the product selection is so wide, varied and vast, it fits many different audiences.

Simply sign up, get instant approval and you can

start adding Amazon affiliate links to your website or beneath your video blog. Beware that you cannot use Amazon affiliate links through email.

See also: eBay Partner Network.

Would suit if...

You blog or make videos about pretty much any subject in which your audience might desire physical products and books. For example, pets and animal training, fitness and health, fashion, arts and crafts, interior design, cooking, outdoor pursuits, gardening.

Marketing

HubSpot.com/partners/affiliates

HubSpot creates platforms and tools for businesses to manage marketing sales and customer care. You can make 15% recurring for up to one year or a flat rate corresponding to 100% of the first month's revenue.

They give you access to demo videos, banners, and copy examples to help you look credible and professional, so that you earn more commissions.

Would suit if...

You have any blog or publication aimed at marketers, small businesses, bloggers and entrepreneurs.

Online Courses

Teachable.com/partners

Teachable is a platform that allows people to put together digital courses without needing tech skills. It provides 'drag and drop' tools for creating the course modules, using a mixture of text, audio, video, pdfs and quizzes. It also helps users promote their product and deliver it to customers. With over 18 million students and 186,000 active courses, this is a popular and reputable eLearning service.

As an affiliate, if you refer course creators to Teachable you can earn up to recurring 30% commission on the referral's monthly subscription fee.

See also: The Kajabi Partner Program – the main rival to Teachable. This is also a good option, although you need to be a Kajabi user to join the programme.

Would suit if...

You blog about marketing, publishing, writing, eLearning and other subjects in which your audience might be interested in Teachable. Or if you are a course creator yourself

Web Hosting

WPEngine.co.uk/partners/affiliate

This company provides super-fast web hosting for WordPress websites. By promoting WP Engine, you can earn \$200 per signup or 100% of the customer's first monthly payment — whichever is higher. As a partner in the program you also get access to exclusive affiliate discounts that you can offer to your audience.

See also: Hostinger.co.uk are a web hosting provider. Less well known but you can get at least 60% per sale.

Would suit if...

You blog about online marketing, digital publishing, IT, home business, technology, and other related subjects, or if you're in IT or a website builder/designer. You could also promote website building products too, like this one...

Website Building

Wix.com/about/affiliates

This is one of the most popular web hosting platforms. You might have seen it advertised on TV. They have an affiliate program where you can get \$100 for every referral. They give you links and creative materials, including banners and landing pages. The only downside is that there is a minimum sales target of \$300 per month. If you don't hit that, the money stays in your account until you achieve it.

See also: LeadPages.com. This online tool creates landing pages that you can customise, and use to collect email addresses or make sales. But their affiliate program is only open to LeadPages customers.

Beauty Products

CultBeauty.co.uk/info/affiliates.list

Cult Beauty is a UK-based skincare and make-up store which includes their own exclusive brands and products. They offer a commission of 15% with the opportunity to earn increased rates and bonuses. To help you sell more of their products they offer banners and logos for your website. They also have an in-house copywriting and design team.

See also: BeautyBay.com. Another great option in the beauty category. They specialise in hard-to-find brands, which allows you to promote something more interesting and unique.

You could also consider Birchbox.co.uk/about/affiliate-programme

There is a rising trend for subscription box services for all manner of product types, from men's grooming to baking and crafts. One of the best known is Birchbox, which delivers five beauty treats to customers every month, personalised to their skin type, hairstyle and fashion sense. This includes information about those products and instructions in how to use them.

They have subscription box affiliate programs for the UK, offering 5%-7% commissions on all sales, depending on the subscription plans chosen by your referrals.

Would suit if...

You blog about beauty and lifestyle or you have a make-up channel on YouTube. However, it would also work if you have any kind of social media feed or blog aimed at women or that has a strong female following.

Travel

TravelPayouts.com/en

This is one of the biggest travel affiliate networks. It offers a wide range of travel services including flights, hotels, car rentals, and insurance. They give you up to 70% of their income for each reservation. The amount of revenue you earn from their affiliate program is different for each offer.

See also: Expedia and Trip Advisor.

Would suit if...

You blog about your travels, or travel in general, or about a specific country that might be one your audience want to travel to could also suit any service tailored for older affluent people who have the time and money to take regular holidays.

Food

HelloFresh.co.uk/about/affiliates

HelloFresh is a subscription meal kit service that promises fresh, whole ingredients with delicious recipes. It allows people to create tasty healthy dishes quickly from home, to restaurant standard. The customers tend to be families who are time poor but have a disposable income. Many people use it to learn how to cook or to create interesting vegan and vegetarian dishes.

They give you an £8 fixed fee commission on all sales or 25% of the order value in commission on all sales that you generate. They also give you exclusive time-limited offers that you can offer to your readers, with a generous 30-day cookie period.

Would suit if...

You have any blog or video channel related to food and drink. This might include a review site, a foodie enthusiast blog or an Instagram channel where you photograph your latest creations. It might also suit any health, diet and lifestyle blog. For instance, one in which you diarise your family life, or share your experiences of being a parent.

Drink

TheDrinkShop.com/affiliate

TheDrinkShop is a specialist e-commerce site offering wines, beers, spirits and gifts and associated products to the UK. It pays 5% commission for all sales generated from direct click-throughs. It has been reviewed and praised in mainstream media publications like the *Independent*, *Evening Standard* and *Daily Star*.

See also: Waitrose Cellar programme

Would suit if...

You have any blog or video channel related to food and drink. This could also include any social media feed related to partying, socialising and entertaining.

Ethical/Healthy

EthicalSuperstore.com/affiliate-programme

This site offers a range of Fairtrade, organic, vegan and eco-friendly products. It has categories for groceries, cleaning and household, fashion, home and garden, beauty and health, baby and children, gifts, pets, and more.

As an affiliate you can make 20% commission on food products, (compared to 1% from Amazon's grocery products).

See also: iherb, for health supplements, sport supplements, groceries, beauty products, and pet supplies.

Would suit if...

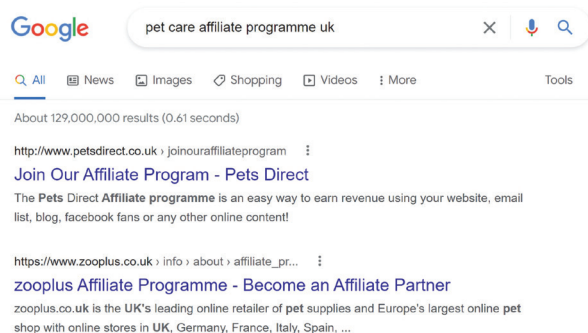
You have any blog or service aimed at vegans and vegetarians. Also ideal for blogs about the environment or that have a strong ethical slant. You could also use this program to add an income stream to any blog related to healthy living or to health issues caused by the environment and food, for instance allergies.

How to Find More Affiliate Schemes

As you can see, there are at least 10 schemes here to cover most types of blog and video channel. I have also suggested alternatives for some of them. But

this list is by no means exhaustive. You might find smaller, more niche programs that have a good fit to your audience or subject matter.

To find them, use Google and type in ‘SUBJECT + affiliate programme UK’. Here is an example for ‘pet care’.



When you find some options, make sure you look at two things: Commission and Cookie Duration. The higher the commission and longer the cookie, the better.

However, bear in mind that the more mainstream products, such as food, drink and electronics can have small commissions. The highest are for information products, marketing tools, web hosting, and business platforms. The reason is that when you refer someone to these companies, they can make very high annual recurring incomes from their customers, so each referral has a high value, and they're willing to sacrifice more of the income from the sale to get that.

How to Earn £65-£250 per Day as a 'Micro Influencer'

Making Money from Social Media Isn't Just for the Young, Trendy and Famous – You Can Do With Just 1,000 Followers in 'Older' Niches

You've probably heard of 'social media influencers'. They are often rich, famous, well-connected people, like David Beckham (sports star), Emma Watson (actor) and Harry Styles (pop star).

Other forms of influencer include fashion and lifestyle bloggers – often young, thin, trendy types who share their adventures in fine dining and travel, while getting paid for it in freebies from big companies.

The health and fitness industry has also created wealthy social media superstars, like:

- » Joe Wicks @thebodycoach – according to stats from April 2021, he makes \$13,909,255 (yep, 13 MILLION dollars) every year from 2,600,000 YouTube subscribers and 3,930,000 Instagram followers.
- » Rebecca Louise @rebeccalouisefitness makes \$677,564 from 3,290,000 YouTuber subs and 533,000 Instagram followers.

Those are huge incomes, but as you can see, the numbers of followers and subscribers is mind-boggling and way beyond the reach of most people.

But there are also very small-scale versions of social media influencers. People who don't have millions of followers.

Sara Tasker, a 32-year-old speech therapist from Yorkshire, set up her Instagram account while on maternity leave, posting one picture a day. She built up enough followers to start earning an income and leave her day job. She now has about 226,000 followers and does this full-time.

These medium-scale influencers can make the equivalent of £31,500 per year (equivalent to the average British salary) from an average of:

- » 125 sponsored Instagram posts.
- » 10,500,000 YouTube views.
- » 121,000,000 TikTok views.

Now these are still very big numbers, but we can go even smaller in scale...

The Micro Niches That Make Money

There are people who make perhaps £1K-£8K a year from only around 5,000 to 10,000 followers on social media. These are known as 'Micro influencers'.

Their secret is that, unlike the big-name influencers who share anything they feel like, micro-influencers build their social-media feeds around a specific niche. They find a small, but dedicated audience of people interested in one topic. This is hugely attractive to advertisers who might want to reach a specific group of people.

After all, 10,000 fans of sourdough bread are more appealing for a manufacturer of bread machines than 100,000 people who could be interested in anything.

Examples might be:

- » You post images on Instagram of your hikes with your dog every day, and then get paid to create a sponsored post by an outdoor clothing company, or a pet food company.
- » You make a video diary on YouTube of your process of losing weight, or getting fit, and get paid by companies who make supplements, gym equipment or fitness apps.
- » You share your passion for craft beer, and your adventures in making your own, and get sponsored by a company that makes home-brew kits, or a brewery promoting its brand.

Other niches including crafting (with smaller niches within it like crochet, decoupage and candle-making)... cooking (with smaller niches including vegan baking or pizza making)... food (going to weird and wonderful restaurants or reviewing pop-up street food vendors)... outdoor pursuits (hang gliding, rock climbing, wild swimming, camping)... travel (budget, countryside, coastal)...

You don't need to be an expert. You don't need to have fancy video or photography equipment. Just a smartphone and some enthusiasm for the subject will do it. Plus a willingness to post regular daily content and respond to comments and messages.

As a result, you could build up enough of a following in a year to start making money.

So How Many Followers Do You Need?

Here's a rough idea based on the most recent statistics from finance company Petal.

- » You need 1,000 subscribers on YouTube to be eligible for monetisation through YouTube's Partner Programme (YPP) with 4,000 hours of watch time in a year. Their ads will then earn you £3.01 per 1,000 views.
- » You need at least 5,000 Instagram followers to start making an average of £65 per post, £250 per sponsored post, which can go up to £500 per post if you pass the 10,000-follower threshold.

- » You need 10,000 followers, with 10,000 views in the last 30 days to make money from TikTok. You will make £0.03 per 1,000 views.

The likely best two candidates for you are YouTube and Instagram. They have more easily achievable numbers and decent earnings. You could choose one or both but I recommend combining them. You can easily share similar content between the two to help build each list up.

The income doesn't stop there. If you get enough followers to make money from sponsored posts you can then set up an Etsy shop to sell your own products, or an Amazon affiliate business where you sell products related to your niche.

You could also turn your experiences, insights and skills into a course, subscription website or

Five Tips for Building a Following on Instagram

Be consistent – Post regularly (daily at least on Instagram) and stick to your brand, theme or niche topic. You can mix in elements of your personal life and interests as long as they support and enhance your online persona and will appeal to your target audience.

Use hashtags – These are keywords like #instagood #photooftheday and #fashion that relate to your niche. These will help you be discovered by the kind of people like to follow you. To find out which ones are right for you, take a look at what hashtags people with large follower-counts in your niche are using.

Follow hashtags – You can follow hashtags on Instagram in order to create a feed of posts related to those keywords. This will allow you to find other influencers and fans in that niche who you can follow and interact with.

Follow others – Don't expect to grow a large account if you don't follow people yourself. When you follow someone, they notice you, and might follow you back. What's more, you'll build up a lot of knowledge about the kinds of content and hashtags that work. Look at people who are doing well and follow some of their fans.

Interact – When someone comments on a post or asks a question, engage with them in a friendly, upbeat way. You should also 'like' and comment on people's posts too, which will get you noticed and build relationships.

membership site that you promote to your followers.

What Information Should You Share?

There is a lot of free information on the Internet and people aren't short of it. If anything, they're tired of the overload. So the aim isn't simply to bombard people with facts, figures, data and recommendations.

They're looking for someone who can sift through all the clutter and bring them the best, more useful, most interesting stuff.

If you're a professional or expert then offer advice, live demonstrations, tips, methods and systems, psychological tricks, behind-the-scenes info and professional insights.

If you're an enthusiast about a subject then share news stories, gossip and rumours, offer opinions, review and test products, take up challenges and go on missions.

If you're sharing your experiences with others, then think of your posts like an ongoing diary – share glimpses of your life, the ups and downs, and help people understand and appreciate the subject matter.

How to Develop a Persona

The main principle you need to understand about building a social media following is that it's about your personality as the subject matter or facts you share. So you need to develop a clear and recognisable public persona.

A persona is a version of yourself that you're comfortable sharing, and which most connects with the kind of person who you want to attract. As well as your interests, passions and strengths it can include some of the flaws that make you human.

Here are some examples...

- Critical (you're always testing, reviewing and analysing).
- Rational (you approach everything scientifically and methodically).
- Compulsive (you act on instinct and emotion).
- Obsessive (you can't let anything go, you're a workaholic or super-fan).
- Philosophical (you think, muse, consider, weigh things up, look on the bright side).
- Impatient (you're so keen and hopeful, you want everything done now, always looking for the shortcut).

Five Tips for Building a Following on YouTube

Build your videos around one core subject, and try to make each one seem part of a series. That means maintaining a consistent style of presentation, music and tone. You want to be instantly recognisable as the same person starring in, or creating, each one, and for the format to be similar enough so that people know what they'll be getting each time they tune in.

Speak directly to the audience. Think about the kind of person you're aiming to attract and imagine talking to them, rather than attempting to address everyone and anyone. You're not trying to be universally appealing. You're building a loyal following around a niche subject matter.

Encourage viewers to leave comments and click 'like'. The more interaction beneath your videos the better. Respond to comments that you receive and try to create an ongoing conversation, so that people tuning in.

Subscribe to other channels in similar, or sympathetic niches, and comment (kindly) below their videos. They may well subscribe to yours in return, and some of their viewers might see your comments and check you out.

Promote your channel. Use Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and other networks to share your videos. You could also use 'sponsored' posts to advertise your latest videos.

- Sociable (love meeting people, always replying and questioning online).
- Fun-loving (it's all a big adventure).
- Self-deprecating (pointing out your own flaws and mistakes).
- Optimistic (you're always certain there's a Positive outcome).
- Honest (pull no punches, say what you think).
- Serious (determined, focused, earnest).
- Irritable (you're a bit short tempered, don't suffer fools).
- Sceptical (you're suspicious or wary of being scammed, sold false promises, or being duped).
- Opinionated (you have strong principles and beliefs).

- Angry (infuriated by misconceptions and prejudice).
- Socially conscious (trying to help society, always thinking of the big picture).
- Nerdy (you're unashamedly a geek).
- Traditionalist (loyal to certain values and virtues).

By having your own combination of quirks and obsessions, you will give your social media feed the following qualities:

- » **Uniqueness** – You offer something your competitors cannot: your own personality, opinions, interests and experiences.
- » **Memorability** – In today's crowded Internet, quirkiness and individuality will help make you interesting so that you stand out and stick in people's mind.
- » **Likeability** – People are more likely to warm to you if you're a rounded human being.
- » **Loyalty** – When customers like you, they are more likely to become loyal fans, and more likely to click, comment and share your posts, which will help you grow your influence.

In general, there are six kinds of persona taken on by influencers. I'll briefly sketch them out, so you can see which one most applies to you.

1. **The ENTHUSIAST.** You're passionate about your field of interest and like to gather useful information. You're always on top of the latest news and constantly finding out new things. You're enthusiastic and want to change minds or enlighten people.
2. **The SEEKER.** You're on a journey of discovery. It could be that you're learning new skills or aiming to improve in some way. You share what you learn as you get better and better. It could be that you're in the early stages of a new business, going through a life change or rising to a challenge.
3. **The CHAMPION.** You're so passionate about your special interest that you are compelled to share it with others and champion it so that more people become interested too. You're enthusiastic and want to change minds or enlighten people.
4. **The PERSUADER.** You're looking to solve a social, environmental, spiritual or political problem. You might be a lone crusader, or part of a pressure group, charity, club or organisation. You have a deep connection to a

cause, with ideals, passions and ambitions.

5. **The PROFESSIONAL.** You are an expert willing to share your story and insights with those who are in the same field or who want to be in that field. You are paid for your high level of skills and expertise. For instance, CEO of a company, a published author, a professional accountant, a bookmaker, a university professor, a marketer, doctor, accountant, architect, educator. You're skilled, confident, knowledgeable, experienced.
6. **The TEACHER.** You are someone who is paid to train, advise, coach or instruct, whether that's in business or a field of interest. You are good at helping people develop skills and guiding them towards their goals. You know how to motivate, encourage and guide others.

Always remember one thing – don't pretend to be something you are not. The aim of a persona is to pick the experiences and qualities you have, and which you are happy to share, and leave out things that aren't relevant to your audience, or which you would rather keep private.

Is this Side Hustle Right for You?

If you loathe social media, and never (or rarely) use it, then this is not for you. Similarly, if you're the kind of person who likes to argue, troll or vent steam on social media, this isn't one to try either.

This is all about being kind, enthusiastic, personable and willing to share. That's the only way to build up a big enough following of loyal and engaged followers who will buy things based on your recommendations.

If you have a passion, skill or interest in one of the niches that has advertising potential, then this could be a brilliant way to monetise your hobby.

SUMMARY

Social-media influencing is a great way to share your interests with others and make an income from it. But it's also an ideal side hustle to run alongside other business ideas. By building up a dedicated following on social media, you have a springboard to launch products, build email lists, direct traffic to websites and test ideas. It could become a hugely valuable asset for you in the future.

In fact, it could work in perfect combination with the next idea I want to show you.

Get Paid for Your Thoughts!

This New Subscription Newsletter Platform Could Make You £1,700+ per Month With Only 400 Readers

There is a new publishing platform in town, and I'm very excited by its potential for content creation as a side hustle or full-time business.

While it's still early days, I believe that it could prove itself a very worthy model for making money in your spare time, simply by sharing your opinions, experiences, advice and tips to a small-yet-loyal audience.

And if you've always wanted to become an author or journalist, but a publishing deal has eluded you, this could be a way to bypass all of that.

Introducing Substack

Substack (SubStack.com) was founded in California in 2017. The idea was simple: create a platform for writers to publish their work directly to paying subscribers. This way, they could monetise their work without needing to go through a publisher, and without needing to create and design their own website or email newsletter.

By August 2021, Substack had more than 250,000 paying subscribers and its top 10 creators were making \$7 million per year. The following month it hit the news when it announced an exclusive deal with the British author Salman Rushdie. He would get paid an advance to write serialised fiction delivered straight to the inboxes of subscribers who paid a monthly fee for the privilege.

He joined a growing army of artists, authors and comic book writers who have signed up to the service in order to monetise their work. It gives them an income far more quickly. No hustling for an agent or endless hunting for a publisher. It's an easy and immediate way to reach readers.

But this is not just for professional authors like Rushdie. This is a viable option for anyone who wants to write fiction or non-fiction, allowing them to make money directly from readers on a recurring basis.

However, here's why I think this could be of interest to *What Really Makes Money* readers...

Classic Info Publishing Made Easier Than Ever

Information publishing has long been one of the best ways to make an income online. The principle is that you provide useful, practical information about a specific subject matter on a regular basis. Usually this is offered for free in order to attract an audience.

As you grow your readership, you can make money in three main ways:

- » **Advertising products to them that other people create**, which they might enjoy or find useful.
- » **Advertising your own products (for instance, books, courses and consultancy)**
- » **Upselling them to a membership or subscription service** (higher level content)

What Substack does is remove any need to advertise products or create your own products.

Instead, you can get paid directly for the content by your subscribers, who commit to a small amount each month – anything from \$5-\$75 (which is around £3.50-£55).

You can offer some of your content for free, which allows you to attract and build an audience. Then you can upsell to the paid level where they get the really good stuff.

What's good about Substack is that it's an easy shortcut to information publishing that bypasses the old obstacles, because if you want to set up a classic info publishing business, you usually need to do the following:

- » Build and design a website for your blog, which will host information about you and allow people to sign up for free emails.
- » Sign up to an email broadcasting service, which gives you the power to build a list and mass mail to it.
- » Create a squeeze page offering a free report in order to capture email addresses.

- » Find or create products that will help you monetise your readership through sales or commissions.

But with Substack, you can do this all in one place. You can sign up as a content creator and it will give you a place to post your content and also send it privately to subscribers via email. You will start getting paid for the content without any need for products, affiliate links or upsells.

So if you have knowledge, skills or passions that you would like to share with other like-minded people, you could get set up on this right away and start earning.

Substack will create your online presence, and give you the ability to email all subscribers. They will also process payments and handle subscriptions. They have a ready-made funnel system that lets readers have some free content, but then restricts the best stuff, which they have to subscribe to in order to read.

No More Obstacles to Content Marketing

As you can see, there are huge benefits to Substack:

- » No need to set up and manage your own website
- » No need to get publishing deals or find an agent
- » No need to create physical works or take risks with your investment.
- » No need to create products or set up affiliate deals in order to profit from your subscribers.
- » No need to build your own email marketing database.
- » No need for tech knowledge.

Of course, it comes at a price. Substack takes between 10% and 15% of your earnings from subscriptions. In return it offers editing, proofreading, art and design, and legal services.

As well as written text you can share photographs. It even offers a voice recording option, so that you can share audio with your subscribers. That could mean clips, news and recordings of interviews – or even just reading out your posts.

One of the big benefits is that you don't have to become an affiliate seller or embed adverts. Instead, you get paid for your thoughts and opinions.

What's more, you don't have to worry about getting in trouble with your boss or family for what you share. Because it happens behind a subscription paywall where you share the most sensitive content with a private audience that you can control.

What I really love about Substack is that it lets you publish your content to the web and deliver it via email. For me, email is still the most intimate and direct means of online communication. It delivers your message into the inbox rather than relying on readers to come and find your latest post.

How Much You Can Earn on Substack

Substack have a useful calculator on their website that allows you to enter the number of subscribers and the monthly fee, so that you can generate an earnings estimate.

As you'll see, you only need to build a modest audience in order to make money. For instance, with just 400 readers paying \$7 (£5) per month, you could be earning \$2,319 (£1,700) per month.

Even with just 50 subscribers paying £7 a month, you could make £311 every month. That's not a bad side income for a writer with such a small readership. Think what you could do with that extra cash coming in regularly. And if writing is something you already enjoy, this is a way to monetise your hobby pretty effortlessly.

What Kind of Content Could You Share

You don't need to be a writer of beautiful prose or a crafter of exciting stories to profit from Substack. It can work in the same way as a blog or email newsletter, in which you diarise your experiences, share ideas, recipes and tips, offer constructive advice or campaign for a cause. Lots of people just use Substack to voice their thoughts and opinions.

Popular categories include finance, investing, trading, food, drink, sports, politics, technology, business, religion, culture and arts.

Here are some examples I've found, all of which have hundreds of subscribers. This means that their creators are likely to be earning £1,000+ a month at least.

Topic – Running. ('Real running for real people').

[LOGIN](#) [ABOUT](#) [ARCHIVE](#) [^](#)

Running Probably

Running Probably

Real running for real people

By Paul Flannery · Hundreds of subscribers

Topic – astronomy. ('For curious people who want to learn more about Earth, space, the Universe').



Bad Astronomy Newsletter

For curious people who want to learn more about Earth, space, the Universe... and who love reality for what it is, not what others tell them it should be. I have opinions, too: politics, life, climate science, and such as well. I'll write about 'em.

By Phil Plait · Hundreds of subscribers

Topic – Ageing (‘Perspectives on the joys and frustrations of getting older’).



Topic – cooking (‘cooking and life musings’)



Simmering: cooking & life musings from In Jennie's Kitchen

life, at the stove and beyond

Topic: Trading (‘Daily strategies, setups and insights from a 25+ year active trader’).



The Lund Loop

Daily strategies, setups, and insights from a 25+ year active trader. 80% technical analysis, 20% instinct, and a dash of humor. Join 5,000+ traders and investors to ensure you never miss an opportunity again.

By Brian Lund · Hundreds of subscribers

Topic: Self Improvement/Work (‘a weekly advice column about product, growth, working with humans and anything else that’s stressing you out about work’).



Lenny's Newsletter

A weekly advice column about product, growth, working with humans, and anything else that’s stressing you out about work

Subscription form with fields for email, name, and a subscribe button. Includes links for Login, Privacy, Terms, and Contact.

How to Set Up Your Newsletter

There are three options:

1. You can create a publication, with a title, like an online magazine.
2. You can collaborate with other content creators to create a newsletter with different contributors.
3. You create a newsletter based on your own name.

Unless you already have a publication or service, my recommendation is to choose option 3. Some of the most successful newsletters consist of one word or phrase, followed by the content creator’s name. ‘The Mix with Robert Simonson’, ‘Bizarre by Tim Denning’ or ‘Paperwave by Justin Davis’.

In my article this month about becoming a social media influencer, you’ll have seen how success is largely down to the persona you create. The same applies here. A strong personality with strong likes and dislikes, beliefs and opinions, will stand out.

Also make sure that there is a central subject or theme – the newsletter has to be ‘about’ something rather than general thoughts and opinions.

Finally, ensure that you have a consistent output, publishing at least two to three times every week.

Growing Your Audience

My recommendation is to publish some of your content for free. After all, you are not famous and don’t have an existing audience, so you need to build one from scratch. The best way to do that is to let people know about who you are, and what you stand for. Allow them to read your stuff for free and then convert those readers to paid subscribers when they know your value.

Most Substack publishers announce their Substack newsletter on social media, so this is a good route to take. If your newsletter delivers something they like, they will forward their email to other friends who have a similar interest, so this has huge word-of-mouth potential. Make sure you ask your subscribers to tell their friends and family about it.

Go to Facebook groups, subreddits, and forums related to your subject matter and seek out the audience there.

Comment on other Substack pages. This will show the creator your profile and also flag you up to their readers, who might then come and check out your service.

RECOMMENDED RESOURCES:

- Go to On.SubStack.com/p/grow-4 for information on growing your Substack list for free.
- Take advantage of ‘Substack Grow’, a series of free workshops for content creators to grow their readership and paid subscriptions.
- Subscribe to On.Substack.com, a newsletter about Substack for content creators.