



The Million
DOLLAR
Woman

Public Domain: The Best Kept Secret
on the Internet

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CHAPTER 1: DEFINING PUBLIC DOMAIN

What is public domain...and why should you care?

The phrase “public domain” naturally conjures an image of an area open to the public. It’s logical to guess this phrase refers to community parks, playgrounds, unprotected natural land (if there’s any of that left), and structures like malls or downtown squares. Any place a bunch of folks can get together without danger of trespassing or loitering accusations might be a “public domain.”

However, this phrase also refers to a specific body of intellectual property.

Books, music, movies, images and photographs whose copyrights—the little law that makes Bill Gates grin every time somebody says “Microsoft”—have expired, or which were never copyrighted in the first place (at least before 1989) are officially considered “public domain.” They belong to the public, and any person may use their contents in any way they choose.

Why should you care? Because knowledge of public domain works, blended with a little business savvy and entrepreneurial spirit, can make you money...whether

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you're just looking for some spare cash, or the fortune you've always dreamed about.

You are about to discover the secrets to cashing in on the public domain. You'll find out what defines this vast pool of resource material that's free and clear for your use; how to locate and verify public domain works; which books, movies, music or images are the most likely to earn a profit; and how to get started making money in this exciting and largely untapped field.

NOTE: The majority of e-books on public domain profits provide exciting-sounding information on how to make money *without actually explaining anything*, and then try to convince you to buy more products or services from them, or have you resell their books to others so they can profit from your marketing efforts.

That's not what we're going to do here.

Here you will find everything you need to know to get started making real money in the public domain, from finding copyright-free works to preparing them for sale, from creating a web site to marketing your products online. You'll also get lots of links to essential web resources, articles, databases and free tools to help you succeed. Some of the products and services discussed have a small price tag

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attached—but if you choose to use them, you are buying convenience, not withheld information.

You don't have to spend another dime of your own money to profit from the public domain!

With a little effort and patience, you can start making money with no investment whatsoever. And most of the work is done for you: this book contains direct links to absolutely free resources for every step of the process.

And now...it's time to enter the public domain!

Requirements for public domain works

Each country has its own set of guidelines to determine whether a work's copyright has expired or is not valid. Here we're concerned with copyright law in the United States. There are three general rules you can use to evaluate works and decide whether they might be in the public domain.

The first rule is fairly straightforward:

If the work was published in the United States any time prior to 1923, it is now considered public domain.

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There are no exceptions to this rule. Anything published, created or produced before 1923 is in the public domain. You may think nothing published that long ago is of interest to modern consumers, but there is plenty of “outdated” material still relevant and entertaining today. With a little digging, you can uncover some real gems.

The third rule is also cut-and-dried:

All works, published or unpublished, created after March 1, 1989, are copyright protected for 70 years from the date the author dies. All works made for hire (corporate authorship) after March 1, 1989, are copyright protected for the shorter of 95 years from publication, or 120 years from creation.

These days, filing for copyright protection is no longer necessary. All creative work is automatically covered under copyright law, as of March 1, 1989. “Works made for hire” refers to corporate publications such as newsletters, employee manuals and annual reports, or any situation in which a creative professional was paid to produce a work for another party.

What, you may ask, happened to the second rule? Well, this one is a bit more complicated. Between 1923 and March 1, 1989, there are several factors to consider when determining whether a work is considered public domain.

If the work was published in the United States between 1923 and March 1, 1989, current copyright protection depends on whether certain formalities were observed such as notice of copyright, registration, and/or renewal.

Huh?

In order to understand this rule, you must know about the various changes to copyright law that occurred in this period. Following is a general description of which works are considered public domain—but keep in mind there are some exceptions.

1. Any work published in the United States without a valid copyright notice between 1923 and 1978 is now in the public domain.

Prior to the law granting copyright protection to all creative works, published or unpublished, a tangible copyright notice must appear within the work. Otherwise it is public domain. However, published works during this period with a copyright notice are protected for up to 75 years. The words “up to” are important, because not all of the work falling within this time frame has a 75-year copyright. Which brings us to the second clarification to this rule...

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2. Any work published in the United States between 1923 and 1963 with a copyright notice that was not renewed is now in the public domain.

The Copyright Act of 1909, which remained in effect through January 1, 1978, stated that any work with a copyright notice was protected for two consecutive terms of 28 years each. However, the second term of protection was only granted to works whose authors or creators filed a renewal application with the copyright office prior to the expiration of the first term. Therefore, works published and copyrighted between 1923 and 1978 were protected for a total of 28 or 56 years from the date of publication, depending on whether or not they were renewed.

To further complicate matters, the Copyright Act of 1976 (which went into effect in 1978) took into consideration the shorter term of previously published works in comparison to the 75-year protection that was then being extended. The second term for works who had applied for copyright renewal was lengthened to 47 years, in order to equal a total of 75 years for the two terms combined. This extension did not affect works whose copyright was not renewed.

In 1998, then-President Clinton quietly signed into effect the Sonny Bono Copyright Term Extension Act, sponsored by the late singer-songwriter and congressman. This virtually unnoticed law extended copyright protection for works renewed after 1923 a further twenty years, for a total protection term of 95

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years. Some believe this particular protection will be extended every time Mickey Mouse nears passage into the public domain, as the Disney Corporation contributed significantly to the lobby for passing this law. For now, the expiration time stands at 95 years.

(An important note: In 1992, the Copyright Renewal Act eliminated the need for the filing of a renewal application. Therefore, any work first published between January 1, 1964, and December 31, 1977, was automatically renewed for the extended 47-year copyright protection term.)

The only way to tell whether a copyright registered between 1923 and 1963 was renewed is to obtain a certified copyright search report (a process that will be covered further in this book). But there is good news: this pool of available material is larger than you might think. Only 7 percent of books published in the United States through 1958 were renewed for a second term. So checking into copyright renewal for works from this period will more often than not prove worth your while!

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Careful, Charlie – make sure it's in the public domain!

The final stipulation to works produced prior to the 1989 blanket copyright protection law is this:

3. Any work published in the United States between 1978 and March 1, 1989, without copyright notice that was not registered at the Copyright Office is now in the public domain.

Since automatic copyright protection did not go into effect until the 1989 law, and copyrighted work after 1978 was given a 75-year term of protection, any work published without notice prior to March 1, 1989, is considered public domain. Registration was encouraged but not necessary; works during this period with copyright notices are protected for 70 years from the death of the author, just as all post-3/1/89 works are.

There is one final exception to all of the above rules: United States government works. (Are you surprised? The government is exempted from everything else!)

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Any publication released by the federal government is considered public domain, regardless of publication date, and is not protected under copyright law.

Entrepreneurs have made successful businesses based entirely on repackaging and selling copies of government publications.

Be aware, however, that federally funded projects written by non-government authors are covered by the copyright protection extended to works of corporate authorship. Also, state and local government publications may be copyrighted.

SUMMARY

A work is considered in the public domain if:

1. It was published in the United States prior to 1923.
2. It was published in the United States between 1923 and 1978 without a valid copyright notice.
3. It was published in the United States between 1978 and March 1, 1989, without a notice and registration.
4. It was published in the United States between 1923 and 1963 with a copyright notice that was not renewed (remember, only 7% of copyrights issued through 1958 were renewed!)

A work is NOT considered in the public domain if:

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1. It was published between 1923 and 1963 with a copyright notice that was renewed prior to the expiration of the first 23-year protection term.
2. It was published between 1963 and March 1, 1989, with a valid copyright notice.
3. It was published or created any time after March 1, 1989.

Now that you know how to determine whether works may be considered public domain, let's explore ways to validate your findings so you can start turning public property into your own personal cash flow!



Don't be a monster – respect copyright laws

Copyright clearance: Obtaining a certified copyright search report

If a work you're considering for resale was published in the United States in 1923 or later, you must research the copyright to be sure it is now in the public domain.

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There are basically two ways to go about copyright searches: the slow free way, and the fast fee way. Which you choose depends upon your own time constrictions, preferences, and financial ability.

The Slow Free Way

You can perform a search of the copyright records yourself. The process is time-consuming, cumbersome, and sometimes inconclusive (however, even paid searches can prove inconclusive). But if you have the patience to sift through massive amounts of data, you can save yourself the search fees you would otherwise pay to the Copyright Office or a private company.

Before you begin your search, be sure you know the title of the work, the name of the author (or authors) and/or any pseudonyms they may have used, the year of publication or creation, and any other information that may help identify the work—number of pages, type of binding, whether it was part of a series. The more information you have regarding a work, the more likely you will be able to verify whether it is in the public domain.

You can make a simple check to determine whether the copyright of a work was renewed by searching for an edition published more than 28 years after the original copyright date and looking for a renewal notice in that later edition. This method is only useful for confirming renewal; it is not a reliable conclusion for the absence of one.

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To perform a thorough search, a good place to start is the Copyright Office's online records (www.copyright.gov/records/). All copyright and renewal records from 1978 on have been digitized and catalogued in searchable format, and they are beginning to do the same with earlier records (you can find online information about some pre-1978 records at the University of Pennsylvania's online records page (onlinebooks.library.upenn.edu/cce/)). However, keep in mind that these results are not always conclusive, even if you find no record of the work you're searching for.

For works created before 1978, you must search the print and/or microfilm copyright records available at the Library of Congress and other major libraries around the country, among them many [Federal Depository Libraries](#). Also, the following libraries possess a reasonably full set of records: the University of Chicago library, the University of California, Los Angeles, the Carnegie Library in Pittsburgh, and the Free Library of Philadelphia. Check with a library near you to find out whether they have access to records—your local branch may be able to locate the nearest library carrying physical records of copyrights and renewals.

When searching for a copyright renewal, you should look through records for the years that fall 27, 28, and 29 years after the work's original publication date.

(Remember, works published between 1923 and 1978 had to have their copyrights renewed for a second term in order to remain out of the public

domain.) The records are divided into two sections for each year: January to June, and July to December. You should search both sections for all three years, regardless of the copyright date listed on the work.

Another free method that may yield results is to write to the author, his or her agent or estate, or the last known publisher of the work and ask directly whether the copyright was renewed. You can often find this information on the copyright page of the book or work, or in the author's acknowledgements if there are any. You may not be able to get in touch with any of these parties, and if you do they may not be interested in cooperating, but it's worth a shot. Several people have found success with this method, and the results are at least conclusive.

HELPFUL HINT: There are thousands of works already proven to be in the public domain you can choose from, for which you will not have to perform any copyright search at all. Check out the resource section in the back of the book for links to sites listing and cataloguing known public domain works.

The Fast Expensive Method

If you don't want to take the time and energy to sift through copyright records, or if you would just rather leave the excavation process up to the experts, you can pay someone else to do it for you.

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The Library of Congress will perform a certified copyright search for you, at the rate of \$75 per labor hour. Remember, the more specific you are in describing the work you would like researched, the less time the search will take. You should not have to pay more than \$75 per title. The process is fairly simple: you fill out the form located in Circular 22 (www.copyright.gov/circs/circ22.html) (conveniently available online, and reprinted later in this book) and send it in to the indicated address—and eventually they will let you know whether a renewal was filed, if possible. They are a branch of the federal government, after all, so don't expect instant results. Occasionally there will be no conclusive evidence one way or the other. Circular 22 also provides extensive directions for self-searches within the Copyright Office's records.

NOTE: The Library of Congress does not guarantee a time frame for copyright renewal search results; in fact, they do not guarantee results at all. Unless you're reasonably sure the work you're researching is in the public domain, this method is not recommended. It's also not necessarily "fast."

If you're looking to get started sooner, consider hiring a commercial agency to perform a search for you. Their rates are usually higher (most charge a flat fee per title rather than a per-hour billing), but their turnaround times are much faster. Some can have results to you in three days or less. Additionally, a commercial agency will often offer additional services that the LOC does not, such as

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tracking down publishers, authors and heirs to be certain the work is in the public domain.

Following is a brief list of commercial copyright search companies:

[CSC Corporate Services](#): Offers a variety of legal services including comprehensive copyright/trademark/patent searches. Price not listed.

[CCH Corsearch](#) (Click on "Registration/Renewal Service"): Deals almost exclusively with copyright, patent and trademark issues. Offers a Copyright Office search for any work, including pre-1978 and pending applications. Prices start at \$100 for a three-day turnaround.

[Government Liaison Services](#): Dedicated to intellectual property research in all areas. Charges a flat fee of \$180 for copyright searches.

[LawMart](#): A general legal firm performing copyright, patent and trademark research as well as information on government publications (and loan assistance. You can't beat that: one-stop legal shopping!). Price for a single title search is \$269; however, they offer custom packages with discounts for multiple-property searches.

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Now that you know how to determine whether a work is in the public domain, it's time to embark on a treasure hunt. Let's find some gold!

CHAPTER 2: FINDING AND PREPARING PUBLIC DOMAIN WORKS

How to locate public domain content

Where is public domain content available? There are literally millions of creative works—books, music, music scores, films, photographs, artwork, images, and much more—that exist in the public domain. But if they’re so public, why are they hiding?

The short answer is: they aren’t. There are a multitude of well-known works that people don’t realize are now considered public property. From classic literature to non-fiction works on a wide variety of topics; silent films, classic movies, vintage cartoons and beloved songs; even some instantly recognizable artwork and images can be found in the public domain.

Below you will find several methods of finding public domain work that you can use in any way you like to start making money.

Internet Searches

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Where would we be these days without the Internet? There are literally millions of resources on the world wide web, available for anyone with the knowledge and patience to find them.

Search engines are a good place to start. Though Google remains the most popular and effective, not every site is listed on the search titan. Try running the same search on multiple engines: AltaVista, Dogpile, Yahoo, and MSN Search are just a few of the many options out there. (And if you really want to start out big, you can run a search for search engines first, then check each one in turn.)

Here are a few examples of searches that yield results:

public domain work examples

list of free public domain work

free public domain books

public domain web site

A note of caution: don't trust everything you read on the internet. Always find out where the web site owner got the information (for example, you can probably trust data from the Library of Congress, but not from "my next door neighbor Bubba who runs a successful business out of the trunk of his car."). Generally, if the same title shows up in multiple searches, it's probably public domain.

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You can also find forums, message boards and e-groups dedicated to public domain news and discussions. Check Internet directories or do a search for “public domain forum” (also: substitute group, list, board, news, or community for “forum”) and you’ll discover more information than you will need. Be sure to visit groups, lists and forums before joining—read through some of the posted messages and member profiles to determine whether the other people involved seem easy to talk with and open to new members with lots of questions. The Internet community is often a wonderfully supportive place to find people with similar interests, and most are willing to share the experiences they’ve gained.

Following are links to a few of the many public domain resource sites available:

[Authorama](#): A site featuring an extensive list of public domain books and novels, with links to the full original text of each work, which you can view, download or print right from the web site.

[Classic Book Library](#): A free online library featuring literary and genre novels in the public domain, from authors such as Jules Verne, L. M. Montgomery, and Sir Arthur Conan Doyle. Viewable chapter by chapter in HTML.

[Project Gutenberg](#): An enormous collection of novels, non-fiction books and other written work in the public domain, all available free in downloadable e-book format.

[RetroFilm.com](#): Provides a catalogue of public domain movies, television shows, cartoons, musicals, documentaries and more. The site serves television broadcast companies and does not provide copies of film footage for individuals, but it is a great place to find titles which you can then track down a copy of elsewhere.

[Public Domain Report](#): The site of a monthly newsletter that reveals significant works as they enter the public domain. Each issue features selections and samples from a variety of mediums—at least one new book, film, play, song, image, and children’s work are included every month, from well-known authors, artists and creators like Dorothy Parker and George Gershwin. A one-year subscription will set you back \$395, but for those who don’t have the time or inclination to do extensive research themselves, it is an excellent source of fresh material.

Public Libraries

Libraries are an excellent—and free—resource for finding public domain material. Pick a subject that interests you and scan the shelves for older books relating to the topic, or spend an afternoon browsing through the card catalogue. Most of the time, the publication date is right near the beginning of the listing on the card, so identifying works published before 1923 is a simple matter.

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Most librarians are quite knowledgeable about their library's collections and are happy to help you find exactly what you're looking for. If you're planning a visit to the library, it's advantageous to make up a list of questions regarding the object of your search and approach the librarian before you do anything else, particularly if you are going to a small local library. Larger state-run library and university library staff members may not have the time or resources to devote personal attention to every patron.

The [National Center for Education Statistics](#) features a library locator on their Web site with listings of libraries across the nation. Find a library near you and plan a treasure-hunting trip.

Garage Sales and Flea Markets

The old adage "one man's trash is another's treasure" is the absolute truth when it comes to looking for public domain works. Most people are more than happy to get rid of dusty old books, worn video tapes and antiquated records for mere pennies—and your miniscule investment could translate into thousands in profit.

There is a "season" for garage sales and flea markets, generally from late spring to early fall for most areas. Farmer's markets often feature indoor vendors offering more than fresh produce; these miniature street fairs are a great place to search through multiple displays and find something interesting. Also, consider taking a Saturday drive through your neighborhood and surrounding areas on a

warm day, when garage and yard sales are most likely to be held. It's not unusual to easily locate a dozen or more sales in a few hours of random traveling.

Flea markets are a virtual paradise for public domain seekers. These mass gatherings are often heavily advertised in order to generate buyers for the many merchant participants. Bargains are the name of the game, so bring your best bantering skills and be prepared for great deals.

A few tips for savvy garage sale and flea market shopping:

- Don't bring excessive cash. Aim for a maximum of \$40; that way, you can honestly tell vendors you don't have a lot of money to spend. If you find something really spectacular worth more than the cash you have, most flea market sellers are willing to accept personal checks.
- If you find an item you must have, try to act as uninterested as possible. If a seller believes there is potential to lose the sale, he or she will be more willing to lower the price.
- Ask if the seller would accept less for the item before you offer to buy it. Find out what's the lowest price they'll accept, and offer less—but be willing to go up to the low price.
- HELPFUL HINT: It's not worth the possibility of embarrassing yourself by arguing down the price of a paperback book from 25 cents to 10. Just pay the quarter.

Paid Lists/Reseller Programs

Quite a few people who profit from public domain compile lists of works, which they then sell to others who are looking to get into the game. There are advantages and disadvantages to using paid lists that you should weigh and decide accordingly whether you want to purchase one for yourself.

Advantages:

- **Save time.** Searching for the perfect public domain project can take weeks, months, or even up to a year, particularly if you plan to commission the Library of Congress to search for a copyright renewal record. Most lists are sold via electronic documents, so you can get started on your venture right away.
- **Be certain.** All the titles on public domain lists are known to be copyright-free. There is no guesswork involved; you don't have to worry about the possibility of legal delays or problems.
- **Good quality.** Paid public domain lists contain well-known and worthwhile works. You'll have a solid chance at success with most of the resources obtained from paid lists.

Disadvantages:

- **It costs money.** This one is rather obvious. Undertaking a search yourself is time-consuming, but free. Paid lists generally range from \$10 or so to a few hundred dollars (the more expensive lists grant the

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purchaser reseller rights, so you can profit by selling the lists as well as the works themselves). If you plan to purchase a list, rate your needs and spend accordingly.

- **Lots of people buy lists.** When you purchase a list, remember that hundreds of other profit-seekers plunked down money and received the exact same document. The more people attempting to profit from a particular work there are, the less market share will be available for you. Make your selections from the list with this in mind; try to concentrate on lesser-known works that still have interest potential.
- **Scams.** As with any other business, especially Internet-based industries, public domain list sellers harbor a number of scam operations. Before you purchase a list, check the name of the company selling it with the [Better Business Bureau](#) and find out if any complaints have been filed against them. You can also request to contact other customers of the list provider and ask them about their experiences. Be suspicious if the company will not grant your request...they're probably hiding something.

Here are a few programs that offer paid lists of public domain resources:

[Public Domain Sources Directory](#): This site is heavy on hype, but promises a huge directory of sources (80 million) for \$47.

[The WOW Content Club](#): A by-membership web site offering fresh public domain/resell products each month.

Some works that are now considered public domain

Most people assume “public domain” is synonymous with “stuff that’s so boring or badly done that no one cares enough about it to buy it.” The following list proves this is not only an erroneous assumption, but there are actually a number of well-known and highly popular works free for public use.

Books and Publications

Literature

- *Peter Pan* (the play) and *Peter and Wendy* (the book), by James M. Barrie
- *The Iliad*, *The Odyssey* and other epic poetry by Homer
- The collective works of Shakespeare
- *The War of the Worlds* by H. G. Wells
- *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland* by Lewis Carroll
- *Pride and Prejudice* by Jane Austen
- *Dracula* by Bram Stoker
- *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* by Mark Twain
- *The Picture of Dorian Gray* by Oscar Wilde
- *Andersen’s Fairy Tales* by Hans Christian Andersen
- *Frankenstein* by Mary Shelley
- *Great Expectations* by Charles Dickens

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- *Wuthering Heights* by Emily Bronte
- *Moby Dick, or, the whale* by Herman Melville
- *Secret Adversary* by Agatha Christie
- *Aesop's Fables* by Aesop
- *Alone* by Edgar Allen Poe
- *The Rhyme of the Ancient Mariner* by Samuel Taylor Coleridge
- *The Hound of the Baskervilles* by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle

Non-fiction/self-help

- *Roget's Thesaurus* by Peter Mark Roget
- *Relativity: The Special and General Theory* by Albert Einstein
- *Kamasutra* by Vatsyayana
- *How to Live on 24 Hours a Day* by Arnold Bennett
- *On the origin of species* by Charles Darwin
- *The Book of Good Manners; a Guide to Polite Usage for All Social Functions* by Walter Cox Green
- *Sequential Problem Solving* by Fredric Lozo
- *How to Speak and Write Correctly* by Joseph Devlin
- *Hackers, Heroes of the Computer Revolution* by Steven Levy
- *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations* by Adam Smith
- *Meditations* by Emperor of Rome Marcus Aurelius
- *1811 Dictionary of the Vulgar Tongue* by Francis Grose

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- *The Souls of Black Folk* by W.E.B. DuBois
- *A Short History of the World* by H. G. Wells
- *Familiar Quotations* by John Bartlett
- *Anatomy of the Human Body* by Henry Gray
- *Etiquette* by Emily Post
- *General Science* by Bertha M. Clark
- *The Devil's Dictionary* by Ambrose Bierce

Government publications

- CIA World Factbook
- Dictionary of American Naval Fighting Ships
- NASA space photography
- Teaching children with attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder
- Traffic Safety Facts
- The Facts About: How to Raise Money for a Small Business
- What's New About Your Money?
- High Definition Television: Coming to a Home Theater Near You
- A Primer on the Space Environment
- Terrorism: Are Our Water Resources and Environment at Risk?



You've seen this image before – and you can use it yourself, in any way you like!



NASA space imagery is beautiful – and free!

Movies and Animations

- *Laugh-In Bloopers*
- *Marilyn Monroe Video Scrapbook*
- *Striptease Terror*
- *Presidential Bloopers Reel*
- *Misadventures of Buster Keaton*
- *King Lear* (Orson Welles version)
- *Gulliver's Travels Beyond the Moon*
- *Attack of the 50-ft Woman*
- *A Farewell to Arms*
- *Black Dragons* (with Bela Lugosi)

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- *Oliver Twist*
- *Betty Boop, Casper the Friendly Ghost and Felix the Cat* cartoons
- *The Three Stooges*
- *Teenagers from Outer Space*
- *House on Haunted Hill*
- *Little Shop of Horrors*
- *Behind the Mask of Zorro*
- *Shoot Out* (with Gregory Peck)

Software

- Open Office
- WinMine Toolkit Homepage
- Machine Learning Library in C++
- Graf-FX

Images and Music

- Government posters
- NASA space photos
- Reproductions of Renaissance art
- Mona Lisa
- Tenniel illustrations for Alice in Wonderland
- Camptown Races
- Works by Frederic Chopin and Ludwig van Beethoven

Public Domain: The Best Kept Secret on the Internet

- The Comical Fellow
- Danny Boy
- Madame Butterfly
- Take Me Out to the Ball Game
- Earl Fuller's Famous Jazz Band

Scanning and Preparing Public Domain Works for Resale

Once you have found some public domain works that interest you, you're ready to prepare them for resale. Depending on how much you want to put into the project, you can either copy the work directly and resell them, or create your own version or spin (which you can then copyright protect so no one else can sell your modified work).

Books and publications are often a simple matter of downloading an electronic copy from a web site for redistribution. If you do not have an electronic copy, you can scan the content in readable format to your computer—this way you can manipulate and update the text with ease.

Audio content can be converted to mp3 format (the most popular for electronic storage) or burned to CDs and packaged for mail-order sales. Similar procedures can be used for video content, with the option of creating electronic files, DVD-ROM or videocassette versions, depending on what you're comfortable working with. What follows is a guide to getting your content in saleable format.

How to scan books and publications for electronic distribution

PREPARATION

To convert a physical book into an electronic one, you will need a flatbed scanner. If you don't have one already, you can purchase a good quality, large area scanner for less than \$100 (and often less than \$50) at any computer or office supply store. When buying a scanner, be sure it is able to copy in OCR (Optical Character Recognition) format. If you can't tell from the box, ask a store employee. Try to get one with a total scan area of at least 9" x 12" (this will allow you to scan two pages at once) and a resolution of 1800 dpi or higher (the higher the resolution, the better the quality of your scan will be). Scanners come with the necessary software to load page images onto your computer, but you may want to obtain [free OCR software](#) such as ABBYY FineReader engine or SimpleOCR that will improve the manipulation ability of your scans.

The method you will use for preparing a book for scanning depends on the size, binding type, and "flatness" of the book itself. If the book will lay absolutely flat when opened, and two pages will fit on the glass scanning area, you can simply place it face-down on the scan bed and copy two pages at once. The spines of older books are often constructed to lie flat, or will be worn enough for this process. Newer versions may not work so well, and scanning pages side-by-side

may result in “curved” text near the binding. Or, the book may be too large to fit two pages on the scan bed. If this is the case, then you must—gasp!—remove the pages from the book and scan them one at a time.

Though it will take some time, remember that you will only have to do this once. The easiest method for removing book pages is to hold a ruler near the interior binding and cut straight along the edge with a utility knife. With a new blade, you can remove several pages at once. **Important note:** Be sure to keep the separated pages in order once you’ve taken them out, or you will have another few hours’ worth of sorting ahead of you. Work from front to back, or back to front if you prefer. It may be helpful to keep chapters in separate folders as you remove them.

If the book’s pages are particularly thin, you may notice some “bleed”—traces of text from the opposite page visible on your scan. If this occurs, place a piece of black construction paper on top of the page before you scan; this will eliminate bleed.

About automatic document feeders: Some scanners are equipped with a feature that allows you to feed several pages in succession. Do not attempt this with pages removed directly from a book. If you want to use an automatic feed, you should first photocopy the pages onto plain white paper, and then scan the photocopies.

CREATING E-BOOKS

There are many ways to go about creating an e-book that you can sell. If you are simply reproducing an exact copy of a public domain work, the process is fairly straightforward: either distribute copies of the electronic version you obtained, or put the scanned pages of a physical book together in one file. If you are making changes to the text or the presentation, or “modernizing” the content, several options are available. You should choose to work with whatever method is easiest and most accessible to you. Here we will review the most common types of e-books and discuss how to create each one.

Create your e-book as an HTML file

HTML (hypertext markup language) files can be read by any Internet browser, and appear on a computer screen as a web page or series of web pages. To create an HTML e-book you can:

- Do it yourself with a word processing program like Microsoft Word. Most word processing programs have a “Save As” option that will allow you to save documents as HTML files. Simply make sure the document appears exactly as you want it to in the e-book, then save it in this format.
- Use e-book creation software. This is a good option for those not familiar with word processing programs. Most e-book creator programs are easy to use, and range in price from free to a few hundred dollars.

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Again, base your decision on how many products you are planning to create, and how much time you're willing to invest in learning the software. A few places to start are [Easy Ebook Creator](#), a full-featured, easy-to-use program that costs \$19.97 and comes with full resale rights (so you can sell the Easy Ebook Creator alongside your own e-books); [Ebook Compiler](#), which offers free creation software for personal use and charges a fee of \$29.95 for unlimited commercial e-book creation; and [Ebooks Writer](#), a complete e-book publishing package including cover design (the importance of your e-book cover will be discussed further in this section) and theft protection/security measures. There are many more e-book publishing software programs available.

BONUS: If your e-book is particularly long, it may be difficult to transfer the files to your customers. You can download the free [HTML Executable](#) program which will allow you to save HTML documents in executable (zipped and self-extracting) format, easy to attach to e-mails or place on a web site for downloading.

The logo for M\$W Learning Unit features a stylized sunburst or starburst design with multiple rays emanating from a central point. Below the graphic, the text "M\$W Learning Unit" is written in a serif font, with a horizontal line underneath the text.

M\$W Learning Unit

Create your e-book as a PDF file

By far the most popular format for e-books, PDFs (Portable Document Files) are viewed using the free Adobe Acrobat reader. The advantages to creating a PDF e-book are numerous: it will give your book professional flair; anyone with Internet access can read it with ease; and Adobe offers many special features you can use to create an interactive, popular e-book that gives buyers more than just words on a screen.

In order to produce a PDF book, you must first create the document in a format recognized by the Adobe Acrobat program for conversion. A PDF file is basically a snapshot of the original document with all the fonts, images, formatting and links preserved exactly as they appear on-screen. Some of the file formats Acrobat recognizes are: .DOC, .XLS, .PPT, and .MDB (Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint and Access documents); .HTML and .XML (web pages); .RTF and .TXT (text files); and .BMP, .GIF, .JPG and .TIFF (image files). Sound confusing? Most of these file types interact easily with one another, particularly between Microsoft Office applications, and can be joined into one document before converting to PDF.

When creating a PDF e-book, you have two choices: use the Adobe Acrobat software (the [standard version](#) retails for around \$299), or create the document in another program—*exactly as you want it to appear on the screen*—and then use a free online file conversion program to create the PDF version.

Though it's not cheap, the Adobe Acrobat program has its advantages. Once you learn how to use it, you can change the text, formatting, and layout of the file right in the program without going back to the source document, updating and then re-converting (depending on the speed and memory capacity of your computer and the size of the document, conversion to PDF can take up to an hour). Also, you can integrate sections of your book from different programs into one file; for example, if you wanted a few pages of captioned pictures, you can create PowerPoint slides and inject them into a Word document in the place you want them.

If you would rather not, or you are unable to, invest in the Adobe Acrobat program—and remember, if you are only creating one e-book or product, it may not be worth the outlay—you can download free software that will allow you to convert most files to PDF format. Remember: Your source document must appear exactly as you want it to on-screen before you convert it. Free file conversion programs will not allow you to make changes to the PDF once it's

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been generated, and you will have to start the process all over again. The following table provides links to free PDF conversion sites:

| | |
|----------------------------|----------------------------------|
| PDF Online | Pdf995 |
| Primo PDF | CutePDF |
| PDF4Free | Click to Convert |

HELPFUL HINT: Consider this when creating your e-book: almost all successfully selling e-books are non-fiction or self-help. Technology has not progressed to the point where e-books are as easy and portable as printed books, and most fiction readers do not enjoy trying to curl up in bed with a good computer. Additionally, non-fiction and self-help books allow the creation of marketing hooks, or selling points, which help convince people to buy them.

A note about e-book covers

The cover of your e-book is just as important as the cover of a physical book would be. It is often the first thing buyers see when they visit your web site—and if they don't like the looks of it, you've just lost a sale. Creating a professional cover image can convert interested browsers to paying customers, while slapping together a bunch of colorful words in large fonts (which often creates a jarring effect that makes people hurry to leave your site) can guarantee you will never sell a thing.

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How do you create a great e-book cover? Unless you're already a graphic designer, you should probably obtain cover design software. If you're using e-book creation software to generate your product, covers are generally included in the package. If you're using Adobe Acrobat or a free web converter program, you'll have to design it yourself.

Following are links to some cover creating software:

[Instant Cover Creator Software](#): \$15.95; includes loads of images and font options, and master resale rights.

[Virtual Cover Creator](#): Free cover creation software. BONUS: Use this one with a free program that allows you to generate a 3-D image of your cover, so that it looks like a photo of an actual book (this will add a further degree of professionalism to your offering): [Scott's Box Shot Maker](#)

[3DCovers.com](#): A membership-based web site that provides continual fresh graphics, content and cover generation. Good for those planning to produce multiple e-books over a longer period of time.

How to prepare books and publications for print sale

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Until recently, producing a physical book was a time-consuming process involving a heavy initial investment, the need to print hundreds or thousands of books at once and store them somewhere, and the many problems associated with inventory, distribution and shipping issues. But with today's advanced technology, you can enlist a third-party provider to store your content, produce books one at a time as they are ordered, and ship them directly to buyers. This process is called Print On Demand, or POD—and you can use it to print and sell books with absolutely no investment.

The only way to go. There are hundreds of companies using POD technology to produce books. Some are major publishers who rely on this method to bring back out-of-print volumes or test market a title before investing in a print run. Most are companies that cater to authors who would otherwise not be able to get published. These publishers charge a package fee, ranging from around \$200 to thousands of dollars depending on the “extras” ordered—and most of them would not consider public domain works anyway. However, there is one POD company that functions as a printing and distribution service rather than calling itself a “publisher,” and provides absolutely free printing for books, calendars, and more: [Lulu](#).

Original works require an ISBN, or International Standard Book Number, in order to be sold in bookstores and through online retailers such as Amazon. However, since you will be working with public domain material and selling from personal

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sites, you will not need to buy an ISBN. Lulu will print and distribute your public domain work at no cost to you, and you receive a percentage of the retail price from each sale.

NOTE: You will have to offer a “revised” or “updated” version of the work in order to use Lulu’s services; otherwise, they may not be willing to risk copyright infringement.

In order to publish through Lulu, you must be able to format an electronic version of the work exactly as you want it to appear on paper (see the previous section on creating e-books). Also, you must submit PDF-formatted files for printing. You do not have to convert the file to PDF format yourself, as the company offers a conversion service right on the web site, but sometimes file conversions do not work as well as they should. If possible, you should convert it yourself to ensure the book will appear just the way you want it to.

You can also use Lulu to produce and sell calendars and graphic coffee table-style books created from public domain images. Be creative! The possibilities are limitless. A few examples of image groups that might make for great calendars are: NASA space photographs, nostalgic movie posters, patriotic themed pictures, classic art reproductions, or even covers of public domain books with monthly quotations from each one.

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How to reproduce audio public domain works for distribution or sale

Audio public domain content includes songs, popular recordings, famous speeches, radio plays, and classic commercials. Once you obtain a recording of a public domain work, there are a few ways to go about reproducing and selling it:

Downloads. You can place a link on your web site that will allow people to download the audio content in a format compatible with electronic players such as .mp3 or .wav. Most computers come with playback software installed, so just about anyone can access downloaded audio feeds.

NOTE: If you are dealing with audio content, you should include a link on your site to where customers can obtain whatever free player software is necessary for them to listen, usually [Real Player](#) or [Windows Media Player](#).

To place a file on your web site for downloading, particularly a large file such as audio or video content, you will need to first zip or compress the file, and then store it on your web site as a .EXE file. You can find a detailed explanation of this process [here](#).

Briefly, the process is this: First, use a utility zipper such as the free [WinZip](#) program (most new computers come with this software installed) to compress

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your files and convert them to .EXE format. WinZip features a wizard that will walk you through the process step by step. Then, save the .EXE file to your hard drive and use the file manager on your web site to upload it to your server space (see more detailed instructions in the following section on web sites). When customers arrive at your sales page—after they have paid, or if you are offering free samples or bonus downloads—the address of the link they will click on will be something like this:

<http://www.yoursitename.com/product/file.zip> [this link is not active]

This will automatically initiate the download process to their hard drive. Be sure to provide a link to the utility you used to compress the file, just in case the customer does not have one already installed.

NOTE: The process for compressing and preparing audio and video content for download is the same for e-books. Also, some web site hosts provide tools for file downloads from your site that are much easier to set up.

Burning CDs. This method involves a bit of financial investment, but not much. Most modern computers come with CD-RW (compact disk rewritable) drives and software allowing you to copy files from your hard drive to a disc. Your investment will be in materials: blank rewritable CDs, CD jewel cases or paper folders, CD labeling equipment (some computers are pre-installed with this

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feature) or printable labels, and shipping and postage material (relatively inexpensive, since CDs are small and light).

Blank CDs generally range from 10 cents to \$1 apiece, depending on how many you buy—the more you purchase at once, the cheaper they are. Jewel cases are similarly priced, and you can often save more by buying CDs and cases together. You can also purchase cardboard CD sleeves or mailers for just pennies apiece. For labels, you can purchase software and printable self-sticking templates, or equipment that allows you to print labels directly onto the CD's surface. Though it will cost around \$100 after buying the programs, labels and printer ink or the direct printing system, this one-time investment will give your product a professional appearance.

Some consumers prefer to purchase a CD rather than download files that may or may not end up where they want them—and you can generally make a nicer presentation with physical CDs, and therefore charge a higher price. You will easily be able to recover the minimal investment you make and start profiting from CD sales, especially if you have an assortment of discs to choose from on your site.

You now know how to find, select and prepare a public domain work for profit.

The next step is to show you the money!

CHAPTER 3: MAKING MONEY

Now we're talking!

Here you'll learn about a number of methods you can use to profit from the public domain. Some are more involved than others, but a general rule of thumb is: the more effort you put into your presentation, the better the reward you will reap.

Some purveyors of public domain programs would have you believe their methods will make you an instant millionaire. Don't fall for it. It is quite possible to turn a healthy profit from public domain works—as long as you are armed with enough knowledge about the process, and you're willing to invest some time into building your fortune. If you are serious about making money from the public domain, print out the Self Commitment Contract at the end of this book and make the promise to yourself to reap the rewards of your labor.

NOTE: Remember to choose a project that you have some personal interest in. You will be dealing extensively with your materials, performing prep work, marketing and sales. There is nothing less convincing than a salesperson who is

obviously bored to tears with his or her own presentation. A bit of passion goes a long way toward success.

Think the public domain fortune is a myth? The following examples illustrate the incredible potential in this powerful and largely untapped field.

Famous Fortunes Made From Public Domain Works

Many people have made comfortable livings repackaging and selling public domain works. Here are two of the most famous and successful:

Walt Disney

That's right: the "magic man" himself took advantage of copyright-free creations to construct his fortune and bring joy to the world. A dreamer from childhood, Walt Disney built his billion-dollar empire of beloved characters, movies and theme parks from a public domain source: the immortal fairy tales of the Grimm Brothers. These wonderful stories entered the public domain, and Disney essentially copied them, changing a few of the characters' names and "modernizing" them (and rewriting for a happy ending, of course). What resulted was a magical world known and loved the world over...and plenty of profit for Walt.

Ted Turner

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Turner Classic Movies (TCM) cable network grosses millions a year in advertising dollars alone—and Ted Turner pays a fraction of the costs other stations must shell out in royalties and viewing fees. Why? Almost every movie shown on TCM is in the public domain. A shrewd businessman, Turner saw an opportunity to broadcast classic movies to a new generation and simultaneously turn over an enormous profit by breaking into public domain distribution.

Enormously successful single projects based on public domain works have been launched with regularity, and are still being produced and sold today. Just a few examples:

- *Les Miserables*, based on a public domain novel by Victor Hugo
- *West Side Story*, based on Shakespeare's eternal classic *Romeo and Juliet*
- Any of several book and film versions of Dickens' *A Christmas Carol*, including the movie *Scrooged* starring Bill Murray
- *The Wizard of Oz*, based on public domain works by L. Frank Baum

Money-Making Methods of Using Public Domain Works

You have your subject. You've chosen a work (or two, or three) that you want to share with the world. You're ready to enter the playing field and make a profit.

Now what?

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If discovering the public domain works that incites your passion is half the fun, then preparing it for sale constitutes the rest. Depending on the material, the format, and the medium you're most comfortable working with, there are plenty of available options to choose from for delivering a final product.

Replicate and sell e-books

You can exactly duplicate the contents of a public domain work and sell unlimited copies in e-book format (see the previous section on creating and preparing e-books for sale). Since there are no copyright restrictions, you will not have to pay royalties to the author or receive permission to excerpt, advertise and distribute the material in any way you see fit. And since e-books cost little or nothing to produce, and nothing to copy, you keep 100 percent of the profits.

This method is also great for generating free giveaways or bonuses to use in conjunction with a primary product, a powerful marketing strategy which will be discussed further in this book.

Edit and update the content, then sell revised editions

If you find a public domain work on a topic that interests you and/or you are relatively knowledgeable about, or if you come up with a creative new way to tell an old public domain story (like Walt Disney did with the Grimm Brothers fairy tales), you can create a revised edition of the work—and then sell it as your own.

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With enough revisions to the original material, you can even obtain a copyright to the work so that no one else can profit from your ideas.

Don't want to invest that much effort in your project? Feel like you don't have a single creative bone in your body? By simply changing the format of a work—making the type face cleaner; arranging text in attractive sidebars and tables rather than long, difficult to read blocks; adding graphics, headings or colored text—and making a few minor alterations to the existing text (or even subtractions of unnecessary material), your book or e-book is officially considered “revised.” If you implement only small changes, you probably should not seek a separate copyright for the “new” version. But most e-book software makes it possible to protect your files from major theft and tampering, so you will not have to worry too much about other people “stealing” your ideas.

HELPFUL HINT: If you know Photoshop, a fun way to create a product by altering public domain works is to generate humorous new depictions of classic images such as the Mona Lisa, the We Can Do It! government propaganda poster (or any other government propaganda poster, particularly from the WWI or WWII eras), or Leonardo da Vinci's Vitruvian Man (the six-armed, six-legged circular one).

You can group altered images and publish themed calendars, or use single images to create humorous posters, bumper stickers, coffee mugs or other gift

items. See the upcoming section on how to create public domain products for more information.

Reseller/Affiliate Programs

Many successful public domain-based e-book creators offer their materials as reseller or affiliate programs. Once you purchase a copy of the product, you can then sell the e-book under your own name an unlimited number of times for 100 percent profit. This business model is sometimes referred to as a “turnkey” or “franchise” operation.

An initial investment in a reseller/affiliate program will generally run under \$100; after that, your investment is purely one of time and energy. It is especially difficult to market affiliate products because many other people are attempting to sell the same thing. You can give yourself an edge using a turnkey system by:

- Charging a few dollars less than the average selling price of the product, thereby undercutting the competition and making your package more attractive to potential buyers.
- Ensuring your sales web site looks professional and clean, is easy to read, remains relatively free of marketing “hype,” and offers fresh content (see the following section on “Why You Need a Web Site” for more hints).
- Creating an e-book from another public domain work on a similar topic and offering it as a free bonus alongside your affiliate product.

Create products using public domain images

There are millions of images in the public domain, and many of them are popular photographs, graphics and reproductions familiar to just about everyone. With some patient sifting, you can discover some that appeal to you and reproduce them on the medium of your choice for profit.

As with the production of physical books, there are two ways to go about selling public domain image products. You can hire a promotional product company to manufacture an inventory, which you would then store and ship yourself, or you can enlist the services of [Café Press](#), a Print On Demand company that allows you to reproduce images on dozens of products like t-shirts, hats, book bags, coffee mugs, bumper stickers, posters, cards and more. Your products are printed when they are sold, and shipped from Café Press. They also offer personalized online storefronts hosted on their site to list all of your available products. And the best part? You guessed it—it's all free. You earn a percentage of the profits from every item sold.

Sell public domain reproductions on e-Bay

E-bay is the number one web site for selling products in the world. Buyers bid on offerings auction-style, or simply agree to pay a set fee. If you already have experience selling on e-Bay, you can just list your public domain product as you normally do.

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For e-Bay newbies, this [introduction](#) tells you how to get started and gives tips on increasing your sales and attracting buyers to your offerings.

Publish print or CD versions of public domain works

As discussed in the previous section, you can produce physical print or CD versions of public domain works and sell them from your web site. This method should generally be reserved for revised, updated or creative new versions of works in the public domain, as it is difficult and often expensive to create physical reproductions.

Downloadable public domain music, movies or software

Movies, music and software are consistently popular items with the buying public. You can easily generate an entire online catalogue of public domain offerings in these categories, and add fresh products often to keep people coming back for more. Online storefronts make it simple to list multiple downloads, track sales, manage your files, and keep your electronic inventory secure.

Though there is a bit of an initial investment, you can often obtain higher sales by selling physical CDs of audio and video content through mail order. Many people are still wary of downloading files from the Internet, and would be happy to pay extra in order to receive a tangible item.

Upsell original products by offering public domain works as bonus buys

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If you choose one or two public domain works of particular interest to you and invest effort in revising, updating or transforming them into new products, offering replicas of works on similar topics for free is a great way to boost sales and obtain repeat business. Most of the time you can simply find a free e-book version of the work you intend to use as a bonus, then save it to your hard drive and upload it onto your server. In less than an hour, you will have a powerful buying incentive for your customers and an expanded product base.

Article series or e-courses

For book-length public domain works, particularly non-fiction or self-help, you can break up the files into segments and offer subscription-based article series or e-courses (which can be made to sound far more exciting and valuable than a straightforward e-book). Here's how to do it:

Separate portions of the book into logical, self-contained segments. This process is simple if the book is already divided into chapters. If it is not, try to determine where one idea or subject ends and the next begins. If the chapters are too short or too long, you may have to do some creative shuffling. A good length for an article or e-course installment is three to five full-size pages—long enough to contain some “meat,” but short enough to avoid seeming overwhelming or intimidating to readers.

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Come up with intriguing titles or headlines for each section. Which article would you rather read: “Planting Flowers”, or “How to Transform Your Front Yard Into a Tropical Oasis”? It’s safe to assume you would like to peruse the second one. Many of the public domain works you will find have chapters called Chapter 1, Chapter 2, Chapter 3, and so forth. You don’t want to call your articles or e-course installments Lesson 1, Lesson 2, etcetera. Get a general idea of what each segment is about, and then write a title or headline that will make people want to read it. Posting a list of interesting “lesson” titles on your site will help you make sales, and you can even distribute the first few chapters as free articles around the Internet for more visibility.

Add links to helpful web resources. With a quick Google search and a few extra minutes of typing, your article or e-course installment is transformed into a valuable resource. If you have already taken the time to look up additional information for your customers, they will be pleased with your service and keep coming back for more.

Set up a mailing list with an autoresponder. Autoresponders make it easy to send out installments on a timed basis without plugging in e-mail addresses one at a time or keeping track of who signed up when. As subscribers opt in, you can add them to your autoresponder and they will begin receiving your articles or e-courses according to when you have set the release times. You can set the

responder to send one issue per day, one per week, or however often you would like.

Following are a few autoresponder programs you can check out:

[Free AutoBot](#): A free multiple autoresponder service.

[GetResponse](#): Free autoresponder service; upgradeable to professional ad-free subscription with additional features

[Responders.com](#): Free autoresponder and web site form processing.

[E-mail Marketing](#): Up to 8 sequential autoresponders. Free for 90 days, then \$12.95/month. Also offers completely free autoresponders with limited features.

[SendFree](#): An autoresponder service; free for the first month, \$19.97/month thereafter.

Get subscribers. Now that you have your series ready to go, you need people to sign up to receive it. There are several ways to do this. If you distribute the first few installments to other newsletters, e-zines or article archives, be sure to include a link to your site at the end and let readers know there is more to the series available. You can list your series or e-course on the newsletter and e-zine

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directories described later in this book. And of course, you will promote your e-course on your web site.

NOTE: You may want to consider a light “teaser” course or mini-course that you can give away free as a prelude to your main offering. Do not include all the information contained in your public domain work in the mini-course; instead, pull some of the highlights from the work, give out some interesting facts about what the main course contains, and supply the first full installment free (or at a reduced cost—people love sales!). Also, indicate that the free or reduced-price installment is available only to those who subscribe to the free mini-course. This way you will collect more opt-in addresses for your mailing list.

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Why You Need a Web Site (and How to Get One)

Now that you have a product in salable format, how do you get people to buy it? Here's the answer in two words: web site.

A web site is the most important marketing tool for any modern entrepreneur or business. Millions upon millions of people use the Internet every day for an increasing number of reasons—and that includes buying things. In fact, many businesses are entirely web-based, with no physical storefront, office, or location. They never even handle the product; every transaction is achieved with wireless ease.

If you plan to profit from the public domain, you must have a web site. Here you'll find out what you need to know to get started.

Getting a web site

Where do you go to get a web site? Online, of course! There are thousands of web hosting companies to choose from with similar, comparable service options. The first thing you should determine in choosing a web site host is whether you want a free site or a paid one.

You may immediately assume that “free” is the best option. However, there are some factors you must consider before deciding one way or the other. Each has its advantages and disadvantages, and your choice will depend on the type and number of products you’re offering for sale.

Free web sites: The first advantage of free sites is, of course, the price. You can’t go any lower than free (and it’s a safe bet there is no company offering you money to set up a web site with them). Another plus is the time it takes to “go live”—to make your site viewable to the public. Free web sites are often live the minute you finish the sign-up process, and generally no longer than 24 hours after you set up your account. Furthermore, most free web sites provide fill-in templates and WYSIWIG (What You See Is What You Get) drag-and-drop tools to generate your pages, so you don’t have to know HTML coding to build your site. You can get free site counters, images and graphics, hot buttons, and other cool extras, and adding them to your pages is a breeze.

On the downside, free web sites are limited as far as space for storing files; design options; and bandwidth (the amount of information that can be sent to the Internet from the server in a given day—if you run out of bandwidth, visitors will be unable to view your site and you will lose sales). Additionally, most free web site providers automatically post banner ads or pop-ups on every site they host—this is how they make a profit from their service. If you are only offering a select

few products, or using your web site to direct visitors to a third-party vendor like Lulu or Café Press, a free web site may provide more than enough to suit your needs. But if you plan to develop a catalogue, store large files for downloading directly from your site, or offer an original product that would benefit from a customized site design, you may need a more versatile and professional paid site.

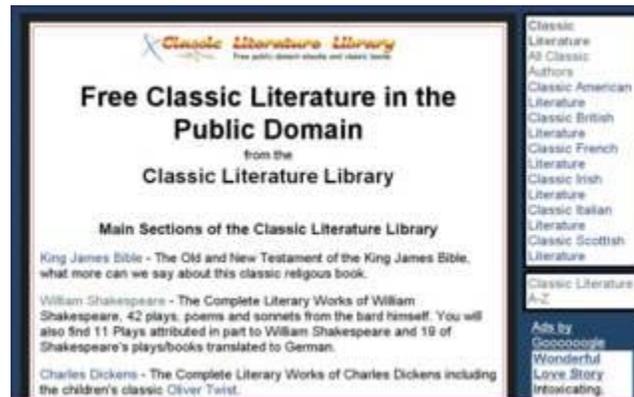
Paid web sites: Paid web hosting services generally charge on a monthly basis for their services. Depending on the type of site you're interested in, you will pay anywhere from \$4.95 a month for a basic-plus package with more storage and bandwidth than free sites, to around \$30 to \$50 a month for a good full-featured online storefront with easy setup, shopping cart services, and space to list hundreds of items with images and descriptions for each one.

Other than the extra space, the advantages to paid web sites include the ability to use your own domain name (domain names will be discussed in greater detail in the following section) and the capacity to design a customized site rather than using templates. Also, paid web sites contain no outside advertisements and offer more extras to include on your pages.

And other than being not free, one disadvantage of paid sites, which can be avoided with a bit of research, is that for some paid web hosting services you must know HTML coding to design your site—not just how to paste in a few lines

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of code, but how to construct an entire site from scratch. You can get around this by using web site design software like Microsoft Frontpage or Dreamweaver and uploading your completed pages to the server. However, the money issue again comes into play if you don't already own the software.



A site like this is indispensable in selling your products

Here's a sampling of web hosting companies:

FREE

[Bravenet.com](#): Free web hosting with decent bandwidth and storage, plus loads of free features. Also offers paid sites with free domain names and more storage and bandwidth. HTML-free.

[Yahoo! Geocities](#): Similar to Bravenet; offers free and paid hosting packages, tons of tools, and no HTML required.

[Zoomshare](#): Free web site hosting, no HTML. Templates include main site, blog, photo album and links page. Ad-free sites.

[Tripod](#): A free web site host including blog and photo album. Service run by Lycos, one of the major search engines. HTML-free site building.

PAID

[EZ Web Hosting](#): Plans start at \$5.95/month and include rollover bandwidth. Options for domain names; no HTML required.

[Homestead](#): Free 30-day trial; plans start at \$4.99/month. Premium service includes e-commerce solutions, shopping cart, and pay-per-click advertising credits with Google and Yahoo.

[Virtual Hosting](#): Upgradeable plans starting at \$2.95/month.

[iPowerWeb](#): \$7.95/month, lots of features plus a \$25 Google AdWords credit.

Choosing a domain name

A domain name is the words in the middle of the string of characters you type into a web browser, generally preceded by www and followed by .com, .net, .org, .cc, .edu, or .info, that brings you to a web site. Choosing a domain name is one of the most important steps in setting up your site.

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If you have a free site, chances are you will be stuck with a web address like www.bignamesite.com/yoursitename. But whether you opt for a free site or decide to purchase your own (www.yoursitename.com), there are a few things you should be aware of when registering your domain name.

Try to pick a domain name that is easy to remember and spell (for example, www.goodbooks.com rather than www.exquisiteliteraryclassics.com). If possible, avoid odd or alternate spelling (www.gr3atbookz.com) and use as few underscores, dashes and special characters as possible. If people are able to instantly memorize your web address, they will be more likely to visit your site than if they have to use a search engine or a complicated series of links to get there.

With hundreds of millions of web sites floating around in cyberspace, many domain names are already taken. Come up with a list of your three or four top choices and then search for availability at a site like Checkdomain.com or Register.com. If all of your names are taken in the .com domain, try for a .net, .org, or .cc domain instead.

When you find an available domain name that you like, take a few minutes before you register it and look up sites with addresses similar to yours. If you name your site www.goodbooks.com, and then you visit www.goodbook.com and find out their operation is virtually the same as yours, you will lose customers to

typographical errors. They'll know what they are looking for, and when they arrive at the other site they probably won't be aware it is not the one they intended to visit. Rethink your domain choice if there are sites just a few letters away from yours offering similar products.

Web site design

Give your web site a professional look, and you will attract and keep customers. Throw up any old sloppy copy and convince yourself the site is just there to collect credit card numbers, and you will have virtually no sales.

The look of your web site is as important as the content of your product or products. You have almost certainly seen badly designed sites: the ones with huge fonts in several screaming colors against a garish background that make your eyes bleed while you reach frantically for the mouse to click a link, *any* link, that will take you away from the horror. These sites try too hard. On the flip side, some sites don't try hard enough. You know the ones: white backgrounds, black text, all the same size. Bo-ring. No one will stay on a site like this for longer than it takes to type in a new address.

The best web sites are pleasant to look at, relatively uncluttered, fast-loading (translation: easy on the graphics), a snap to navigate, and fun to visit. They offer fresh content, lots of links, and information people want to have. Navigation bars—a sidebar or top list that links to all the other areas on your site from every

page—are great for maintaining easy accessibility, and they also increase your search engine placement by listing your pages more than once.

Many popular web sites incorporate a theme that runs through all the pages on the site. Templates offer an easy way to unify a site and make sure the elements work together to create a pleasant virtual experience. If you're going to lay out your own design, take a look at several sites on your topic or subject that show up in the top 10 listings on search engines and follow the examples that interest you—they must be doing something right.

The professionalism of your site extends to the words you put on it. Buyers do not trust sites that contain excessive spelling and grammar mistakes, nor are they interested in pages full of stuffed keywords—awkward, nonsensical strings of words and phrases stuck in various spots around the site in an attempt to boost search engine rankings. Sometimes the keyword strings don't have anything to do with the supposed purpose of the site, a practice that is off-putting, to say the least. Avoid blatant manipulation and maintain a clean, upfront (but exciting) approach to your visitors, and you will be rewarded with sales.

Content and web copy

In order to get visitors and keep them returning, you need content. This means offering web site visitors something of value, usually information or free stuff (samples, newsletters or bonuses) in exchange for spending time on your site.

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One way to get content is offering free articles relating to your product's topic. Like public domain works, there are millions of articles available online whose authors will be happy to allow you to reprint them on your site, as long as you include a link to their site at the end. When you find an article you like, be sure to contact the author and ask permission to reproduce the article. Even if there is a disclaimer at the end of the article giving blanket reprint permission, contact the author as a courtesy and let them know you plan to post their work on your site. They will be thankful, and you might even gain another customer.

You can also create articles yourself, either by excerpting public domain material or expanding on a subject found within your product offering. This establishes you as an expert in your field, making web surfers and window shoppers more likely to trust you and buy from you.

Another great way to supply content for your site is to start a blog. Short for web log, a blog is an online journal where users can post thoughts, useful information, cool links, or anything they find interesting as often as they like. You can sign up for a free blog at [Blogger](#) (the most popular blog host, run by—who else?—Google) and set up your account to host the blog pages on your server. Also, many free web hosts provide blogs as part of their template designs.

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Try to post new content as often as possible. This not only keeps people checking your site for updates, it also increases your visibility and search engine ranks. The more often you make changes to your web site, the more “spiders” (electronic impulses that crawl the web and feed information to search engines) will visit your pages and move your listing up through the search engine ranks.

M\$W Learning Unit

Visibility

Over 90 percent of Internet users find sites through search engines. To help make your site visible to web crawling programs, make it keyword-rich (but not keyword-heavy) and be sure you submit regularly to search engines, either manually (a pain in the butt) or with a submission service (easier, and sometimes free).

Here are a few web site submission services you can try:

[SubmitExpress](#): Free submission service to 20+ top search engines, includes Google, Yahoo and MSN.

[1 2 3 Submit PRO](#): Offers free submission to 21 search engines (including Google) in exchange for a reciprocal link, and paid submissions starting at \$9.95 to several thousand more. Also offers web site analysis and optimization services.

[SubmitShop.com](#): Free submission to 100 search engines—but you have to enter them one at a time.

[Ineedhits](#): Free submission to 20 search engines. Google not included. Hint: use this in conjunction with SubmitExpress.

[SubmitFire](#): Monthly submissions to 3000+ search engines; includes reports on submission success, link popularity and site rankings. \$7.95/month; must sign a one-year contract.

HELPFUL HINT: Before you begin the web site submission process, make a lengthy list of keywords and phrases you would like to target. All search engine submission programs will ask you for keyword information during the signup process; you can save yourself some time by having your terms prepared.

Pay Up: How to Collect Money from a Web Site

You want to make money with your public domain products. But how can you collect from people who live hundreds—or thousands—of miles away? If you've ever bought anything online, you know just about every major site, and most of the minor ones, accept credit card payments. You don't have to necessarily deal with credit cards, but it is an option. There are several methods of payment you can use online:

Provide a mailing address for checks or money orders. This method is the simplest and least expensive to set up. Unfortunately, it's also the least popular.

Most Internet buyers have no desire to write out a check or purchase a money order, stick it in the mail, and hope that a product eventually arrives in their mailbox. Web shoppers are accustomed to clicking a few buttons and receiving an e-mail confirmation stating their purchase is on its way, or being taken to a site from which they can download their purchase. Some sites are successful with the mailing address method, but most of them concentrate on local business (because their buyers know where they live, and will come after them if they don't receive their orders in a timely fashion).

Set up a PayPal merchant account. The largest online money transfer service in the world, [PayPal](#) allows you to send and receive payments through credit cards and checking accounts anywhere in the United States and between hundreds of countries worldwide. It's free to sign up for an account and free to receive money for personal transactions (if you are only selling one product, it can be considered a personal transaction). Sending money through PayPal costs a fractional percentage of the amount. Anyone with a PayPal account can buy your product through this service using a credit card or checking account.

If you set up a merchant account through PayPal, you can generate customized "Buy Now" buttons for each of your products to post on your web site, allowing customers to click and be taken directly to a sales page. For merchant accounts, PayPal takes a fractional percentage of the sale and your customers pay nothing extra.

Once customers make a purchase, you are sent an e-mail receipt for the sale. If your product is a download, you can have PayPal automatically send an e-mail to the customer with the requested product attached, or you can set up an autoresponder to send the product from your e-mail account when receipts are received.

NOTE: Security is still a major concern with any Internet money transfer. There is a fairly simple way to avoid most PayPal-related scams: when you receive e-mail from the PayPal web site, the message will always begin with "Dear [Your Name]." If you receive a message that appears to be from PayPal, but starts out with "Dear PayPal Customer," "Dear Valued Customer," or "Dear [anything that is not your name]," this is spam. Do not click on any links in the message; do not supply any of your personal information to the sender; and forward a copy of the message to spoof@paypal.com to report the spam and stop the sender from reaching you again.

Install shopping cart software. A shopping cart is an automated system allowing customers to make purchases from a web site with credit or debits cards, and sometimes with electronic checks. Most shopping cart systems require a decent grasp of web site coding, and those that do not are higher priced. There are a few free shopping cart software systems available, but most require a high level of HTML knowledge to install and run.

Some available shopping cart systems are:

[AgoraCart](#): Free software with many features and extras; requires knowledge of HTML, does not usually work with Windows.

[CartIt Commerce System](#): Free shopping cart system compatible with FrontPage generated sites and many other formats. Requires some HTML knowledge to install and maintain. Works in conjunction with PayPal.

[ShoppingCartsPlus.com](#): The total package. Service includes a ten-page web site, shopping cart, message boards, a newsletter feature, autoresponders, password protection, marketing tools, and more. 10-day free trial; less than \$25 a month. HTML knowledge not required.

[Bug-Mall Shopping Cart System](#): Offers either monthly hosting service at \$60 per month or a one-time software purchase at \$600. No HTML knowledge required to create your storefront or payment system.

NOTE: Many web hosting services offer shopping cart systems at an additional monthly charge. It is beneficial to maintain your web site and shopping cart through the same provider, if possible, as you are guaranteed seamless integration with your site.

Online storefronts. Remember those paid web sites we discussed earlier? One of the available web site models (usually the more expensive ones) is an online storefront. Though they are a bit pricey, online storefronts manage inventory, sales processing and product distribution automatically, saving you a lot of time and hassle. They are also easy to set up with customizable templates providing separate listings for your products and a built-in shopping cart system.

A few good online storefronts:

[VStore](#): Okay, so there may be one or two services that aren't too pricey. This one is free. They also offer a premium upgrade for a small monthly fee, with additional features such as autoresponders for downloading electronic products (so you don't have to bother fulfilling download orders with e-mail attachments). HTML-free.

[Microsoft Commerce Manager](#): Loaded with features, HTML-free, no setup fees. \$24.95 a month (includes a free 30-day trial) or \$249 a year.

[Yahoo! Storefronts](#): \$50 to set up, \$39.95 a month thereafter. No HTML required; use Yahoo's ultra-simple PageBuilder program to construct pages.

Distributing your product

Once a customer orders a product, you have to deliver it to them. If you are selling downloadable files, you can either include a link on your payment confirmation page that points to the file location on your server (as discussed in the previous section on placing video and audio content on your site); set up an autoresponder to deliver the product as an e-mail attachment when a receipt is received; or arrange your shopping cart or payment service to automatically send the product when it's ordered.

If you are selling physical products, you can either enlist a third-party site to produce and ship inventory, such as Lulu or Café Press, or mail products like CDs from your home address or P.O. box.

Choose the best method of delivery for your product or service. Most importantly, be sure every order is fulfilled promptly, within the promised time frame. This will spread goodwill among your customers and get them to recommend your services to others.

HELPFUL HINT: Always back up your files, even if you've uploaded copies onto your web site's server. In the event your computer crashes or the data becomes corrupted, backup files will be invaluable in getting your venture up and running again.

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You can burn files to CDs, copy them to a ZIP disk, or store copies in a thumb drive or removable hard drive. Save copies of your notes, marketing materials, web pages (if you've created them with a desktop publisher), any original scans or downloaded e-books, and of course, your products. If possible, keep a set of backup files in a location other than your home...just in case.

Choosing Public Domain Topics That Sell

We live in a driven society fraught with bandwagon mentality. When dealing with the public as a whole, some subjects are hot—and some are not. You don't want to invest your time and energy into a product no one is interested in...so how can you tell what will sell?

This section covers the topics most likely to succeed, and provides detailed information on how to test the marketing waters with a sample product before going all-out with your chosen offering. By exercising patience and taking these precautions, you can save yourself the anguish of a potential sales flatline.

Hot topics: Current sellers that can be found in the public domain

Here's a sampling of modern crowd-pleasing subject areas with plenty of available material—some that's been gathering dust unnoticed for years. As you search the public domain sea, be on the lookout for:

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- Children's books and stories, particularly illustrated collections.
- Books about palmistry, handwriting analysis, mind reading, thought transference and other occult topics.
- Books about natural remedies, herbal therapy, acupuncture, home cures, and other naturopathy subjects.
- Just about any movies, cartoons, television series and radio shows.
- Books on business: stock trading, commodities, marketing and advertising, office politics, and more.
- Books on collecting and hobbies: stamps, bird watching, pottery, figurines, china, toys and games, and more.
- Posters of old movies, patriotic images, historical significance (such as Uncle Sam Wants YOU!), space imagery, nostalgia, classic cars, and more.
- Serialized pulp fiction, classic detective stories, and retro comic books.

Timeless topics: Subjects that have general appeal

Some subjects never lose their charm...or their audience. You can bill the following topics as classic collectibles, or put a modern twist on them to appeal to a new generation. Set your sights on:

- Literary masterpieces: Shakespeare, Edgar Allen Poe, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, Herman Melville, Charles Dickens, Emily Bronte, and more.
- Books about love, romance, and relationships.
- Books about child raising and family issues.

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- Recorded collections of classical or era-themed music.
- Books about history, either straight non-fiction or fictionalized accounts.
- Books about world records, amazing accomplishments or true crime stories.
- Cookbooks of any kind.

Test Marketing Your Topic

As with any business venture, your public domain product must be tested before you launch a sales campaign. Fortunately, the Internet offers a wealth of accessible opportunities to try out your topic—many of them free.

Google AdWords Campaigns

The world's biggest search engine also features the world's biggest internet advertising program. Launching a [Google AdWords](#) campaign is a great way to find out who's looking for the kind of product you intend to offer. The process can get a bit technical, but you don't have to be a programming genius to use it.

Here's how it works: You have a web site, and you want people to find it. When you sign up with AdWords, you submit a list of keywords—single words or phrases you believe people interested in your product would enter in a search engine. For example, if you were offering e-book versions of Shakespeare's best-known plays, a list of your keywords might be: *e-book, download e-book, buy e-book, Shakespeare e-book, literature, classic literature, Shakespeare, plays,*

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plays by Shakespeare, books by Shakespeare, classic Shakespeare plays.

Come up with as many keywords and search terms as possible so you can increase your chances of getting visitors. You may also consider including common misspellings of your most important keywords; in the previous example, possibilities would be: *Shakespear, Shakespere, Shakspeare, clasic, literachur.*

NOTE: You can use Google's free [keyword tool](#) to generate related search terms you may not have thought of on your own.

You will also write several brief descriptions of your site, which will appear on the Google search page on the right-hand side. Ads are four lines each; the first line is your title, the last is your site's URL, and the two middle lines are descriptive text. Length is limited—25 characters for the title, and 35 characters each for descriptive text—so you should choose your wording carefully. Also, you are not permitted to use excessive punctuation (Great Shakespeare Plays!!!), gimmicky repetition (E-books, E-books, E-books!), or inappropriate symbols/abbreviations (Plays @ my site 4 U to C).

So, following the above example, our AdWords ads might look like:

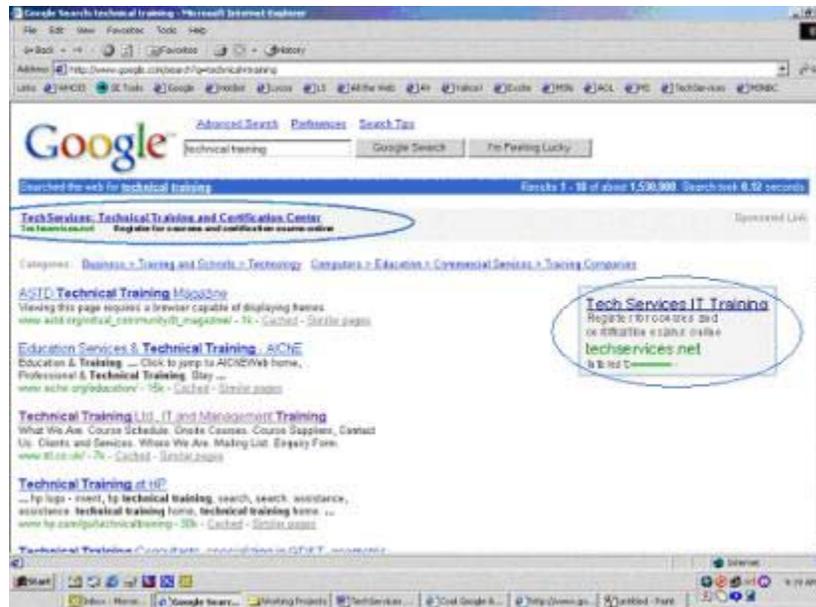
| | | |
|--|--|---|
| Great Shakespeare Plays Rediscover the classics! Low prices, instant downloads www.yoursite.com | Read The Classics! Buy Shakespeare e-books here Romeo & Juliet, much more www.yoursite.com | Best Deals on E-Books Get your dose of classic reads Access Shakespeare's greatest www.yoursite.com |
|--|--|---|

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AdWords operates on a pay-per-click basis. This means you pay nothing for your ads unless someone clicks on them. When you set up an AdWords account, you assign a monetary value to your keywords according to how much you're willing to pay for each click on your search terms—the minimum value you can assign to a keyword is 1 cent. Most pay-per-click programs require a minimum monthly spend for advertising campaigns, usually starting at around \$50. Not so with AdWords. You can start an account with \$5, and you will never be required to put more in (of course, if your campaign proves effective at bringing visitors to your site, you may want to continue the program). You will also set a maximum cost-per-click (CPC) value for your keywords, but AdWords automatically determines the lowest price you need to keep your ranking and charges your account accordingly.

Perhaps the most important advantage of AdWords is the [conversion tracking](#) feature. This allows you to find out which of your search terms are being clicked on and which aren't, so you can adjust your CPC values accordingly. The conversion tracking service is free, but you have to know how to insert HTML code on your web site. Fortunately, the folks at Google will help you do this. When you sign up for AdWords, you will be assigned to an account representative who will walk you through the process on request.

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AdWords uses context targeting so that ads are always related to the page

Terminology for search engine advertising

Google offers a complete [glossary of terms](#) for those unfamiliar with the world of web lingo. Following are the most common terms you should know to get started, as defined by Google:

Keyword - The keywords you choose for a given Ad Group are used to target your ads to potential customers.

Campaign - A campaign consists of one or more Ad Groups. The ads in a given campaign share the same daily budget, language and country targeting, end dates, and distribution options.

Ad Group - An Ad Group contains one or more ads targeting one set of keywords. You set the maximum price you want to pay for an Ad Group keyword list or for individual keywords within the Ad Group.

Impression (Impr.) - The number of impressions is the number of times an ad is displayed on Google or the Google Network.

Keyword Matching Options - There are four types of keyword matching: broad matching, exact matching, phrase matching, and negative keywords. These options help you refine your ad targeting on Google search pages.

Maximum cost-per-click (CPC) - With keyword-targeted ad campaigns, you choose the maximum cost-per-click (Max CPC) you are willing to pay. Our AdWords Discounter automatically reduces this amount so that the actual CPC you are charged is just one cent more than the minimum necessary to keep your position on the page.

Maximum cost-per-impression (CPM) - With site-targeted ad campaigns, you choose the maximum cost per thousand impressions (Max CPM) you are willing to pay. As with Max CPC, the AdWords Discounter automatically reduces this amount so that the actual CPM you are charged is the minimum necessary to keep your position on the page.

Mini-sites and e-mail/click tracking

A mini-site is a simple, one-page web site giving visitors a taste of what your main site will be about. Since there are so many free web site hosts available, you can set up multiple mini-sites and track visitors and traffic to determine which marketing approaches work the best.

It's a good idea to ask visitors to sign up for update information (and free giveaways—see the next section) when they arrive at your mini-sites. One of the main keys to an effective marketing campaign is generating buzz about your product before you offer it for sale. Take the time to build anticipation, and you will not only enjoy a big sales boost when you start selling, but you'll create more visibility for your site when search engines notice the amount of traffic you're getting to your pages.

To take full advantage of mini-sites, you should track how many visitors you're receiving. The simplest way to do this is to install a web counter, which most site hosts offer free. A web counter is just a numeric readout of the number of hits

your site gets, but it does supply a general idea of your traffic. It does not tell you how visitors got to your page.

HELPFUL HINT: Use various free web host providers to generate multiple mini-sites. This will enable you to spread through cyberspace faster, as search engines will recognize each site as a separate entity.

Click tracking provides more advanced data on web site visitors. Most click tracking requires a basic knowledge of web page code—as with the AdSense conversion tracking feature, you must be able to insert a few lines of code on your page. There are also companies that will track your stats for you, for a nominal fee. However, it costs nothing to learn enough HTML to install the code yourself.

Following is a list of useful links about click tracking:

[TrackPoint 2005](#): Affordable click tracking software with tons of features, easy to use, and comes with a money-back guarantee.

[ASP Click Tracking Tutorial](#): A walk-through article outlining the steps you should take to set up a click tracking system for your web site.

[Benchmark Tracking](#): A click tracking service that will monitor your Google AdWords or other pay-per-click campaigns, and provide real-time updates of your keyword stats, install your tracking code for you, and more. Offers a free thirty-day trial, perfect for your test marketing phase.

[Click tracking – software and tips](#): This article reviews several brands of click tracking software and provides information on how to manually track clicks for free.

[Anaconia RocketSales](#): Click tracking software offering a free trial version.

Free giveaways

Everybody loves getting something for free. There are a lot of ways you can offer freebies without sabotaging your profit margins, and still leaving people with the impression they've been given something of value for nothing.

Offer free sample chapters. You can start doing this even before your final product is ready for sale. Put together the first two to four chapters of your e-book (or some portion of whatever you're preparing to sell) and offer them as a free download from your web site. Most of the time, people will return to purchase the rest—especially if your sample is exciting, intriguing, or ends with a cliffhanger of some sort.

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Give away a replicated public domain work on a similar subject. If you're planning to update or revise a work, find a "sister" volume to give away as a teaser and distribute it as-is (so you're not investing as much time and effort in the freebie as your main offering). This will also draw out people interested in your topic, so you will be more likely to have an established customer base when you start selling.

Hold a contest. Offer to give away 50, or 100, or 500 copies of your product (choose a lower number if you're producing a tangible product rather than an e-book). Everyone loves a contest, and as long as you list yourself in multiple places on the web, the entries will come pouring in.

NOTE: State on your web site that by entering the contest, people agree to receive update information from you. This way, you can start building your mailing list (another test marketing method that will be discussed further on) of customers interested in your subject or product.

Make it time-sensitive. Offer to give your product away free for a limited time or to a finite number of respondents, and then charge a fee after the date or number has passed. This is another great dual-purpose method you can use to build a mailing list.

News of free giveaways spreads fast on the Internet. This is viral marketing at its best; mention "free" and back it up with an exciting product, and you've hooked a

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good portion of the market. Following are links to a few sites that will allow you to post your giveaway offers where they'll be seen by bargain-hungry browsers:

[FreebieList.com](#): Allows you to list free giveaways provided you link back to their web site from yours.

[Free Stuff Channel](#): Another that requires a link-back for a free listing

[FreeStuffCentral](#): List your free stuff...free!

[Freebies Planet](#): Free listing, no link-back.

[Absolutely Freebies](#): Free to submit, chances for acceptance are greater when you link back.

[Free-n-Cool](#): Also free to submit, with higher ranking for link-backs.

[Sweet Free Stuff.com](#): More prominent listings if you link back.

Free bonuses

Similar to free giveaways, you can offer free bonuses with your public domain work. In this scenario the customer must buy something to get something for free.

If you have your own original product to market, consider preparing a public domain work to give away as a bonus when your product is purchased. Again, everyone loves a bargain—and the best bargains are free.

You can also prepare two public domain works, sell one, and give the other away alongside it. This helps your test marketing efforts by showing what people are interested in paying for, and what they will only obtain if it's free. If you find you aren't selling many of your products, try switching the roles: charge for the previously free work, and offer the other one as a bonus. Or, advertise the products as a "two-for-one" deal. Sometimes tweaking your marketing verbage just a little achieves big results.

Build a list

Maintaining an e-mail list is an essential step for the savvy Internet marketer. Lists provide a sense of community and belonging to participants, and offer you more visibility and product recognition. They also provide an opportunity for you to collect feedback during your test-marketing phase.

There are a number of ways to build e-mail lists:

Require permission to send updates when giving away freebies. As discussed previously, collect the addresses of people who request free offers. Be sure to

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include a visible disclaimer stating that by signing up for free products, the customer agrees to receive e-mail offers and site news.

Provide a sign-up link on your site or mini-sites. You can either list an e-mail address for subscribers and add them manually to a group in your address book, or enroll in a list-building program that manages addresses for you. For the purpose of test marketing, it may be easier to maintain the list yourself, but if you plan to collect a large number of addresses, make it easier on yourself with an automated system you can obtain for free. Here are a few providers of list management:

[Coollist](#): Free list management service; also provides a free list directory

[FreeLists](#): Provides free commercial grade list management and hosting for internet and technology-inclined groups. The service is ad-free and remote managed, which means you can log in to your list manager from any computer.

[MSN Groups](#): Free service includes e-mail lists, message boards, chat rooms and photo albums. The only requirement is to sign up for a free MSN Passport e-mail account. Allows you to list your group in the MSN directory.

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[Your Mailinglist Provider](#): Organizes and stores list address, and allows you to format mailings and newsletters as either HTML or plain text. Professional, ad-free service.

[Topica](#): One of the most popular newsletter and mailing list distribution services. It's free, and opt-ins are required to confirm their subscriptions.

[GetResponse Autoresponders](#): A list building and management service that includes autoresponders and tracking features.

[Mailer4U](#): Provides an opt-in box for your web site to manage lists. Free service.

Start a free newsletter. The more often people see mention of your product, the more likely they will be to buy. Newsletters (or “e-zines”) are a great way to increase your awareness and share valuable information with your customers. You can offer “insider” information available only to subscribers; this provides an incentive to sign up rather than relying on visitors “checking back” to your site for updates.

Make your newsletter great. Include solid content, such as articles from other authors relating to your subject or “hidden” links to web sites not everyone knows about. It is also beneficial to offer the newsletter in either HTML or plain text format. Programs like Microsoft’s Desktop Publisher can help you generate a

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dynamic newsletter that people will actually look forward to receiving in their inboxes—and this translates to more sales for you.

As with free product offers, you should advertise your newsletter in as many places online as possible. Give your newsletter a catchy title, write a compelling description, and start listing:

[New-List](#): A one-time submission of your newsletter gets you listed on the site for free. Make sure your description is perfect before submitting.

[E-Zine Locator](#): Free six-month listing for link exchange.

[Free-ezines.net](#): Provides a free listing for link-backs.

[EzineXchange](#): Requires you to place a line of code in your web site, but allows you to earn free subscribers at a 1:1 ratio (for every subscriber signing up for another member newsletter from your site, you will receive one subscriber for your newsletter)

[EzineDepot](#): Free listing that you can maintain and update; no link-backs or reciprocal ads required.

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NOTE: In order to avoid being blacklisted as “spam,” you must make sure your list consists of people who have “opted in”—those who ask to receive messages from you. Searching the Internet for spare addresses of those who may or may not be interested is a sure way to get your site banned from search engines, news groups, and other online venues. With every e-mail you send, include a disclaimer stating the recipient is receiving the message because they asked to be on the list, and provide information on how to unsubscribe. Follow proper Internet etiquette, and you will build invaluable public trust that will help your sales.

Target a niche market

What in the world is a niche market?

A niche is a situation or activity specially suited to one’s interest or abilities. A niche market is therefore a group of consumers with a particular, common interest in a subject or topic. In other words, it is a gathering of select people who would be most likely to buy your product. For example: continuing with our Shakespeare model, appropriate niche markets would include history buffs, theater and play groups, classic literature book clubs, Renaissance groups and clubs, and Shakespeare fan clubs (yes, they do exist!).

The Internet is a great place to find niche markets. You can discover e-groups, forums, chat sites, communities, fan pages and mailing lists on just about any

subject imaginable. It is often advantageous during your test-marketing phase to spend some time joining several groups and forums. Introduce yourself to the members and start some dialogue about what you're doing, what you'll be offering, and why they should be interested. People are far more likely to buy from someone they know and trust rather than random advertisements from unspecified sources.

If you're not sure where your niche market is, a good place to start is self-assessment. By defining your own interests, abilities, and the types of people you prefer to interact with, you can begin to search for like-minded souls and find out where they like to hang out on the 'net. Then apply the aspects that interest you most to your marketing material, and start spreading the news in your defined target areas.

Here's a quick self-assessment quiz to get you started. Ask yourself the following questions—be honest!—and think of as many answers as you can for each one:

1. **What do you like to do?** Think about the tasks you enjoy most at work, and what you're most likely to engage in when you have no plans. Recall any activities you enjoyed, whether you expected to or were surprised by your enjoyment.
2. **Where do you like to go?** If you're heading out for the evening, what is your usual destination? What's the last vacation you took that you

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truly enjoyed? Where is your favorite room in your house? Your favorite chair to sit in? If you were given a million dollars and told you had to use it to travel, where would you go?

3. **Who do you like to hang out with?** What characteristics do you look for in a friend? List everything that made you fall in love with your spouse or significant other, or all the endearing traits that possess you to visit with your favorite relative, or the little things you find most enjoyable in your children. Imagine you've just entered a busy public place and plan to strike up a conversation with someone. What does your most likely candidate look like? What is she wearing? What is he doing?
4. **What do you like to buy?** Brainstorm your spending habits. What kinds of things would you be willing to plunk down \$10 of your hard-earned money for? How about \$20? \$50? More than \$100? What products would you only pick up if they were on sale? How about free? And what influences your decision to buy: price? Convenience? Testimonials from satisfied customers? Recommendations from friends?

Now take your findings and apply them to your product. This is also a good way to determine your interest level in the public domain work you've selected. Once you know what you like, you can look for people who share your interests. If they

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have similar tastes, they will be more likely to enjoy your offering—and they will then spread the word to their friends and acquaintances for you.

SUMMARY

Let's take a look back. You have found a public domain work or group of public domain works that interests you enough to generate reciprocal interest in buyers. You have verified, to the best of your ability, that the work is in the public domain. You have prepared your product or products for reproduction and sale. You have set up your business web site, you have test marketed your ideas and built a customer base, and you have made a commitment to yourself to invest time and effort in your new venture.

You're ready to start making money in the public domain!

The final section of this book provides bonus resources and materials to help you in your quest for public domain profits. You will find helpful web sites, marketing material, useful forms, and hot links to a variety of informative sources.

Many happy returns!

APPENDIX: RESOURCES

Bonus links, lists and appendixes to help you launch your public domain venture

IMPORTANT SITES YOU SHOULD KNOW

[Library of Congress online catalog](#)

[United States Copyright Office](#)

[Union for the Public Domain](#)

LINKS

Public Domain Groups and Forums

[PD Photo Forum](#) – Message board for discussing public domain images and other topics related to public domain; also has a database of free images

[Public Domain Content Message Board](#) – Online community of people working with public domain properties; discussions on finding public domain work, marketing, more

[Public Domain Forum Blog](#) – A blog about public domain issues; readers can share information, post and participate in online discussions

[Public Domain Resources](#) – Q&A-style forum with active and archived threads about public domain

[The Forum on Privatization and the Public Domain](#) – A very cool, self-explanatory site

Resources for Finding Public Domain Works

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[Bartleby.com](#) – Tons of free e-books, including encyclopedias, dictionaries, thesauruses, a large selection of fiction, and more

[Bibliomania](#) – Over 2000 free e-books; also provides study guides

[eServer](#) – Huge database of public domain and copyright-free works; over 30,000 and growing

[GPO Access](#) – Searchable database of government publications in the public domain

[GRIN: Great Images in NASA](#) – Database of the best NASA space photographs

[Internet Archive](#) – Thousands of e-books, audio and video files in the public domain

[Literature.org](#) – The online literature library. Full texts of classic public domain books.

[Litrix Reading Room](#) – Free public domain books in HTML format. Classics, sci-fi, westerns, mysteries and more.

[PDInfo](#) – A reference site identifying public domain music; lists over 3500 songs

[Project Gutenberg](#) – One of the most comprehensive databases of public domain works online. Over 16,000 full-text e-books available free.

[Public Domain Images](#) – Database of public domain and copyright-free images

All About Web Sites

[Funky Chickens HTML Help](#) – Free web site for teaching HTML code. Articles, e-courses, tutorials, FAQ's and more

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[Great Website Design Tips](#) – A collection of articles and links for beginners showcasing basic HTML, what to do and what not to do when designing your pages, and more

[HTML Basics](#) – A primer for learning HTML code

[Start Your Own Newsletter or Ezine](#) – article covering every aspect of newsletter and ezine publication; lots of links

[Verisign Guide](#) – Popular e-merchant service provider's free guide to e-commerce and payment systems

[What Makes a Great Web Site?](#) – Article outlining what works and what doesn't in laying out your site

[Why You Should Learn HTML](#) – An article explaining HTML basics, including how to paste code

Marketing Resources

[JeremyBurns.com](#) – Internet Marketing Resources

[AddMe](#) – Supplies tons of information on web site optimization, keywords, link tracking, and more. Free meta tag keyword generator and free search engine submission

[Free Internet Marketing E-books](#) – Including “Killer Internet Marketing Strategies” (free with a subscription to the Etips newsletter) and “30 Days to Success”

[Internet Marketing Training Course](#) – The Holy Grail of website Internet marketing

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[Merle's World](#) – Lots of links to e-book creation and marketing resources

Miscellaneous Useful Links and Free Stuff

[Free public domain search toolbar](#) – Instructions on obtaining a toolbar for your web browser that allows you to search popular web sites for public domain material

[Public Domain 4U](#) – MP3 downloads of public domain music; lots of jazz and blues

[Scumware](#) – A comprehensive guide site to spotting downloads that may harm your computer

United States Copyright Office Search Request Form

Mail completed form to:

Copyright Office
Library of Congress
101 Independence Avenue, S.E.
Washington, D.C. 20559-6000

Reference & Bibliography Section
(202) 707-6850
8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.,
Monday through Friday, eastern time
Fax: (202) 252-3485

Type of work:

Book Music Motion Picture Drama
 Sound Recording Computer Program
 Photograph/Artwork Map Periodical
 Contribution Architectural Work Mask Work

Search information you require:

Registration Renewal Assignment Address

Specifics of work to be searched:

TITLE:

AUTHOR:

COPYRIGHT CLAIMANT: (name in © notice)

APPROXIMATE YEAR DATE OF PUBLICATION/CREATION:

REGISTRATION NUMBER (if known):

OTHER IDENTIFYING INFORMATION:

If you need more space please attach additional pages.
Estimates are based on the Copyright Office fee of \$75*
an hour or fraction of an hour consumed. The more
information you furnish as a basis for the search, the
better service we can provide. The time between the
date of receipt of your fee for the search and your
receiving a report will vary from 8 to 12 weeks depending
on workload.

Requests for searches on a regular or expedited basis
can be charged to a credit card by phone.

Names, titles, and short phrases are not copyrightable.

Please read Circular 22 for more information on copyright
searches.

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YOUR NAME:

DATE:

ADDRESS:

DAYTIME TELEPHONE NO.:

Convey results of estimate/search by telephone

yes no

Fee enclosed? yes Amount \$() no

***NOTE:**

Copyright Office fees are subject to change. For current fees, please check the Copyright Office website at www.copyright.gov, write the Copyright Office, or call (202) 707-3000.

GLOSSARY

Autoresponder: A software program that automatically sends out preset e-mails on a timed basis when an e-mail request is received

Bandwidth: The amount of data transfer (measured in MB or GB) a web site's server can handle in a given time period

Blog: Short for web log; a web site formatted to appear as an online journal

Browser; web browser: A software program allowing computer users to view web sites. Examples: Internet Explorer, Netscape, FireFox

Copyright: The legal right to exclusive publication, reproduction, distribution and sale of a creative work

Domain name: A unique name that identifies an Internet site, which web browsers use to locate a particular page (ex: www.thiswebsite.com)

Download: The process of transferring information from a web site or other internet source to a target computer's hard drive (usually yours)

GB (gigabyte): A digital measure of file size equal to 1000 megabytes (see MB or megabyte)

Google AdWords: Popular pay-per-click Internet marketing program

HTML: HyperText Markup Language; the coding language used to create web pages and active links

ISBN: International Standard Book Number; a unique 10- or 13-digit numeric string assigned to books and other creative works registered with the Library of Congress for copyright identification purposes

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Keyword: Words or phrases relating to a web site that people are most likely to use on search engines to find information on a particular topic

Library of Congress: The United States government organization responsible for record-keeping and monitoring of all creative works produced in the United States

Link: A line of text or an image with an embedded URL that directs web browsers to particular Internet locations

Link-back/reciprocal linking: The common Internet marketing practice of linking to other sites from yours in return for having a link to your site placed on theirs; increases site visibility and search engine rank

MB (megabyte): A digital measure of file size equal to one million bytes (eight-digit strings of binary code) or approximately 1024 kilobytes

OCR: Optical Character Recognition; a software function that converts scanned images containing text into a format that can be edited with a word processing program

Pay-per-click advertising: Internet marketing program that allows you to list sites in reserved “sponsored” placement spots and pay a set amount for each click the link receives

Public domain: The body of creative work which is not copyright protected or for which the copyright protection has expired, and is free for public use

Search engine: A system for searching and locating information found on the Internet, usually via a web site

Search engine rank: A web site’s prominence or popularity on search engines

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Server: A computer or software program that stores files, such as web site pages, for remote access from other computers

Shopping cart: A software program or third-party provider that allows consumers to collect and purchase items from a web site using a credit card or electronic check

Spider: Also called “crawler” or “web crawler”; a program used by search engines to collect information from web sites for inclusion in their database

Upload: The process of transferring data from your computer’s hard drive to a web site server or another computer

URL: Uniform Resource Locator; the full string of characters identifying a web page (example: <http://www.thiswebsite.com/example.html>)

Web site: Internet pages stored on a server and viewable from other computers with an Internet connection and web browser software