

SPARTAN ENTREPRENEUR

BLOG ARTIST



VICTOR PRIDE

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**BLOG
ARTIST**

VICTOR PRIDE

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BLOG ARTIST
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SPARTAN ENTREPRENEUR

BLOG ARTIST

Welcome to *Spartan Entrepreneur: Blog Artist*.

This information is for aspiring blog artists – people who want to make art and money.

This information is for people who will treat their website like a piece of art – a piece of valuable art that grows in worth over time.

Before we get started, I want to tell you a secret in the form of one tip.

If you only ever take one bit of advice to make a great blog, take this advice:

Look great. Write great. Be great.

That's the best piece of advice in the world for making a money-making blog.

Look great, write great, be great and the work is done.

In fact, if you follow that plan and you can skip the rest of this book.

But...

I know you want the meat, the technical details.

I get asked constantly for the technical bullshit so I've included the technical bullshit.

I've even included the bullshit I don't even care about so after you read this book you should know everything I know about blogging.

Rule #1 for building a great blog:**There are no rules.**

There's no plug and play business model that will give you an infinite stream of cash.

There isn't a secret formula for instant success but there are some basic guidelines that will help you get started on your climb to the top.

These guidelines are the things that have worked for me and have helped me build a digital empire worth 7 figures.

In this book I've answered most of the common questions you'll have about starting an online business, and I've put it in a format that is easy to read and isn't "too much, too soon."

Read it at your own speed.

If you want to read it from start-to-finish, fine.

If you want to read it in bits and pieces, fine.

Remember to pay attention to the number one rule...

There are no rules.

Let's get started.

-VICTOR PRIDE

CHAPTER ONE

BLOG ARTIST
THE WHY

Why am I writing this for you?

I'm writing this because I know that approximately 7 billion people want to make money online and be free from the shackles of their job.

So here is the guide containing almost everything I know about using the internet to run a location-independent business.

First things first, I want to instill in you the confidence to make money from a blog.

You *can* make money from a blog and anyone who tells you otherwise is a moron. Remember that, because it's 110% true.

In the coming pages I'll show you:

- A full breakdown of all the various ways I make money from my website, Bold & Determined
- The mindset you'll need to emulate (not copy) my success
- A description of how to use the tools available to get things done

I want more guys to live life on their terms, not waste it working for the man, because I get that same tired email every day...

"I wish I could live like you, Victor, but I can't. I'm stuck in a job."

Here's the stone cold reality...

Can you make money online? Yes.

Will you make money online? Probably not.

Not everyone on Earth has the brains or the balls to make it online.

Not everyone can work for themselves. The world needs dentists and plumbers too.

But those guys aren't reading this book, you are.

WORKING FOR YOURSELF ISN'T EASY

There is a unique set of challenges you're going to face when working for yourself with no taskmaster to give you orders.

You need to have internal drive and internal motivation. If you don't have internal drive then you can stop reading now because I guarantee it won't work for you.

The most powerful motivational force on earth is internal. Internal drive is that fire inside you that you can stoke and stoke and never run out of fuel.

But there's a catch...

Most people need an external push to get going. Most people simply don't have a strong, deep internal drive.

If you've lived your whole life expecting people to give you plans, outlines, and directions, then starting your own business online is going to be like a punch to the gut.

There's nobody making you do it, except for you.

Here's an uncomfortable truth for you. Most people that succeed with their own business do it out of necessity; not just because it seemed like a nice idea.

They *had* to do it.

I had to get away from all the nincompoops that worked in the companies I was hired by, so I did. I created my own fortune with an unlimited upside.

It's easy enough to make a fun little hobby blog and maybe make \$10 - \$15 per month on ads, but to *really* make it and fully replace your income with online revenue you have to need it.

Not just *want* it, *need* it.

You have to require it from a deep part of yourself. It has to be something that you will not compromise on, something that you will not give up on, and something you will not stop at

until you reach your goals.

This is a long haul, and when you look at it from the beginning stage it seems like it's a lot of hard work.

That's partially true. It is a lot of work, but it's not particularly difficult. It might not be that hard compared to designing rockets or roofing in mid-summer, but it is work and you absolutely *must* put in the hours. But...

If money and location freedom is truly your dream then there is no better way than starting an online business.

A blog is an especially good choice because with a blog there is no time clock, there is no staff to pay, there is no office boardroom, and the costs to get started are basically nothing while the upside is limitless.

If you build a profitable blog you can do anything you want.

You can:

- Spend months surfing the world's most beautiful beaches.
- Hike ancient pilgrimages across Spain or China.
- Learn how to dance with the best tango instructors.
- Learn to fight Muay Thai with the best coaches in the world.

There is no better way to accomplish all of your desires than by starting an online business.

But, and this is a big but...

You have to put in the work before you can reap the benefits.

It won't work if you go play around at the beach all day and neglect work. That's not building a business, that's just being a lazy person.

The work comes first, always.

Remember this - The work comes first.

ESSENTIAL HABITS OF SUCCESS FOR ANY BUSINESS

If you look inside the mind of any successful man, you'll see very common threads.

Success is not an accident - it always happens when these 3 things come together:

- Motivation
- Persistence
- Planning

Specifically:

- They have a deep drive that says they *must* succeed.
- They don't give up at the first sign that things aren't working.
- They follow a plan and have their sights on a destination before they start.

"How long should I stick with it to see results?"

Everyone wants fulfillment and success now.

No one wants to do the work.

Most of us are impatient. I am too, but I'm glad I didn't know how long it would take before I would see 6 figures in my bank account. If I'd known how long it would take to reach big success I might not have started in the first place.

Remember this - It takes as long as it takes.

There is no way to predict how long it will take to get results in your pocket, so don't ask me that dumb question.

"Do I have to be a great writer?"

The currency of blogging is words. You have to use those words to convey your message, then you have to turn that message into money.

So you don't have to be a great writer, but you have to know how to write in a way that inspires people to take action.

If you haven't mastered the art, then you'll need a little more practice than an experienced guy.

CHOOSE THE RIGHT SUBJECT TO WRITE ABOUT

You don't have to be a great writer, but you do have to be an expert in your field to make

money. Authorities make money, non-authorities have hobby blogs.

For Bold & Determined, the subject is self-improvement for men. I write about physical fitness, bodybuilding, increasing income, getting rich, mental focus, clarity, becoming better, total domination, winning and grinning - all of which I have ample experience with.

If you don't have experience you don't have anything.

If you don't have experience, or if you aren't an expert on XYZ subject then it will take you longer to make your money. And that is where most people start and stop.

Realistically most blogs never make money. The reason that most blogs don't make any money is that the writers quit before they have their breakthrough of success.

You need to commit to a year of blogging before you even think of throwing in the towel. *(Of course, if you're even thinking about throwing in the towel it's probably not going to work for you.)*

HOW TO BOOST YOUR CHANCES OF SUCCESS

Break all the rules.

Follow all the guidelines I have laid out for you.

These guidelines I have laid out go against the normal blogging advice and that's why I'm rich and most bloggers are broker than broke.

Use ideas from the greatest artists of all time and ignore standard advice and suggestions.

If you're following all the standard blogging rules you've got a tough (fruitless?) fight ahead of you. Follow the advice in this guide and you'll be much farther ahead.

Do it your way with heart.

If you're following a business plan that you couldn't really give a damn about, it's going to be a lot harder to punch through barriers.

The fact is, if you hit the right idea, the idea that you deeply want to commit to, you'll have all the energy you need.

That's the big secret to unlimited energy - Do what you want to and do what you're excited about. Don't pursue opportunities that sound draining. If you only focus on what really excites you, you'll find there aren't enough hours in the day.

WHAT'S YOUR BIG IDEA?

When you first start out it's tempting to get into the "perfect idea" trap. But you know exactly where this leads: analysis paralysis.

That's what this course was designed to shortcut. You don't need to laser-in on a perfect idea. That's one of the most common traps.

What you need is an idea that is close to home, an idea that you feel in your gut is right. An idea you can pursue for several years or more.

If your idea sounds like something you've heard before (like the ten-thousand copycats of Bold & Determined), think harder, because copying me won't get you from A to B.

You need to pursue your idea, not my idea. You can't out-Victor Victor. All you can be is you.

WHAT NICHE SHOULD YOU GET INTO?

You're going to create your own niche. You're going to be your own niche.

The internet is starving for unique voices. It doesn't really matter what you write about, as long as you write with personality and experience.

In the beginning, no one was doing what Bold & Determined does.

To this day no one is doing what Bold & Determined does. That's because I'm the only man alive who can do Bold & Determined. Bold & Determined *is* Victor Pride. We are inseparable.

Likewise, no one should be able to do what you do. If no one can do what you do then there is an unlimited market.

DON'T FALL INTO THE TRAP OF SPECIALIZING TOO EARLY

You know what happens to animals that specialize too quickly? They go extinct.

Ask a panda how it gets along. Able to survive on exactly one food that provides so little calories they must spend all day searching for more food.

Bloggers do the same thing all the time.

"Should I write a blog about fishing with lures made from a rare kind of wood only found in Borneo jungles?"

If you can keep that topic up for years, and have enough to say, and really care about it as your life's major focus, sure.

Otherwise, no.

If you look through the [Bold & Determined archives](#), you'll see that I've written about a wide variety of topics. That's because I'm interested in a wide variety of things.

That doesn't mean that all of those things make money or that all of those ideas are worth building products around.

Lots of jokers will tell you to build "niche sites." Niche blogs are a waste of time. Niche sites don't bring repeat traffic and they don't build up a customer base (the lifeblood of a business).

Don't waste your time making niche sites.

Build one business that you can filter many different ideas through.

"How is this different from 'make money from your passion'?"

It's a little bit different in that you shouldn't be passionate about it. Passion is for romance novels. You should be *obsessed* with it.

If you need some ideas, here are the 4 key areas of focus that comprise most of the content online:

- Health
- Wealth
- Relationships
- Expensive Hobbies

You can make money in other areas, but the above topics are the ones with the most turnover of cash.

That's because these needs are hardwired into us:

- The need for health and longevity.
- The need to stand out from the crowd.
- The need for human connection.
- The need to show off status.

Rather than force yourself to repeatedly service a very small segment of customers (like you would with a very specialized site), you will have an easier time finding “evergreen customers” that will buy from you again and again if you incorporate one of these broad appeals.

You’ll even notice that on Bold & Determined I discuss all of these topics.

I get asked all the time how I make money when I only have two books for sale. They ask me what I’ll do when I “run out” of readers. I always respond that there are 7 billion people in the world and I’ll never run out of readers because the topics I cover are universal in appeal.

3 TRAITS THAT ALL THE BEST BLOGS SHARE

The best blogs are far from how-to guides.

Ehow.com explains how to do stuff, but it does it with no style whatsoever. That’s why they have to resort to scummy SEO tactics to make a dent in the world.

If you produce something that solves a problem and do it with style, you’ll have a winning formula.

That’s a formula you can repeat, again and again.

Look at what is valuable:

- Solving problems
- Telling stories
- Provoking emotions

The best blogs do all three.

“Does my blog have to have a clear direction?”

Your blog does need a clear direction.

Don’t let anyone tell you otherwise.

The direction to pick is very simple. The direction is YOU.

You are the ultimate arbiter of all the decisions.

You are the indispensable part of your business.

Because this is the common thread in your blog, make your blog about that.

Don't get paralyzed by thinking you need to "fill a niche" from the beginning. That's bullshit. Leave that to the fakers and not the makers.

If you have life experience or specialized knowledge then you've got everything you need to write a great blog.

It doesn't have to be only about one thing.

In the end, the only blog you'll actually write for – the only blog you'll actually commit to and follow through with and adhere to a posting schedule is one that follows your interests as they change through your life.

For instance, you may have a long history and deep understanding of bodybuilding, but that's probably not the only thing you care about. More likely you care deeply about fitness and health, which covers the entire spectrum of human existence.

Your topic, or "lens" is just the way you see the world, and the coloration to the value you bring. It's nothing more, nothing less.

Don't feel like you have to make a blog about books, and then write about nothing but books. That can get boring quickly. Make sure your blog has the flexibility to accommodate you as you grow.

THE LONG GAME: YOU DO WANT TO BE INTO THIS FOR YEARS, DON'T YOU?

Ask yourself this simple question:

"Do I want to be doing this when I'm 50?"

If the answer is ever no, then shut down the blog.

That's an extraordinary depth to have.

Obviously our lives change, we develop and grow. But you should have a resilient blog that grows with you.

I don't mean this bullshit of moving from one topic to the next with a new blog every month, but a wide enough focus that you can relate any topic or story you want to tell back to a central theme.

BONUS TIP: STUDY FROM THE BEST

Now that you've chosen your path, you can easily replicate the success of others.

Keep in mind though, although you should examine the works of writers and businessmen you respect, don't just copy what they've done.

Here are two ways to discover the most successful blogs in your area of focus:

Feedly

<http://feedly.com>

Feedly is best known as an RSS reader, and became the default after Google killed Google Reader.

What you can use it for is very simple - Finding blogs like the blogs you already read.

1. Sign up for a Feedly account.
2. Add a few of the blogs you already read.
3. Check the "suggestions" in the sidebar.

Social Crawlytics

<http://socialcrawlytics.com>

This is a tool for discovering your "competitors" most shared content. For example, what kind of headlines and articles have strong appeal, and what your audience wants to hear about.

Of course, if you follow my guidelines you will never have any competitors. Only you can be you.

Take ideas then mold them into your own (but don't copy) and you'll find yourself never running out of things to write about.

CHAPTER TWO

HOW TO GET STARTED

DOMAINS AND HOSTING

There's a lot to do when you start a blog, but let's cut it down to the three essentials that you'll need:

1. A domain name (like boldanddetermined.com)
2. A hosting plan (like you can get at badnet.com)
3. A content management system (like WordPress)

With those three things in place you will have everything you need to start writing, showing off your art, and making some dough.

STEP 1: PICK A KILLER DOMAIN

If you pay attention to popular names you will notice that the best names stick in your head like glue.

The best names always seem to perfectly match with their brand, product or website.

Even without knowing what it is, a name like Bold & Determined sticks in your head like duct tape to a pipe fitting.

It's a perfect match to the product, it's easy to share, and it injects a little curiosity when you hear it.

"What's in a great name?"

5 simple things:

- The fewest words possible
- Unambiguous spelling
- Easy to repeat

- Powerful & shareable
- A curious twist

Names are VERY important. If you can't get a great name, there's almost no point in getting a domain at all.

If you want to start a website or business, grabbing the perfect name can be difficult, especially if you've tried to search for a dot com that matches the great name you have envisioned.

I will share with you a little tool I found that can help you pick a great name, even if you barely have any ideas.

Not only will it help you come up with great names that roll off the tongue and are sure to make an impact, you'll also know instantly if the name is available as a domain name you can buy.

This is better than any other "name generator" I've found, and has helped me snag some great domain names for secret projects.

The tool is called Impossibility (<http://impossibility.org>) and it's about as easy as it gets. Using keywords Impossibility will search available domains and present you with a list of names to choose from.

Here's how it works:

Let's say you want to start a blog about doing easy financial management, but aren't sure how to pick a kick-ass name that will get shared and talk about.

1) Type in your idea

You need a seed word to start generating domain name ideas. In this case I've used "finance."

Hit the big red "Search" button, and the tool will go to work finding great domain names for you.

2) Play with the options

Next, you may want to change some of the options. In the first menu, I like to choose, "anything" to get the most variety of ideas.

You can complete a few searches using various options until you find a domain you like.

And that's it.

STEP 2: GET A HOSTING ACCOUNT

Every website needs a webhost, which is basically just a computer somewhere that your blog "lives on."

There's a wide range of hosting providers, some more trustworthy than others.

If you search around for "cheap hosting", you can expect to get what you pay for.

A slow website... extensive downtime... and support staff that's hard to find if you ever need some help. (Which you probably will.)

Luckily, good webhosting is not expensive.

A good shared hosting account typically runs about \$4/month.

Caution: Don't make the mistake of getting "free" hosting with a blogspot.com or wordpress.com address.

Using these greatly limits what you can do with your blog.

Since you don't own it, you can be shutdown for any old thing at any time. You can be shutdown for such treasonous acts as...

- Making money
- Speaking your mind

Just don't use free websites.

STEP 3: INSTALL WORDPRESS

If you've got your hosting purchased you'll be dropped into a file manager and told, "knock yourself out!"

Not such a great idea.

Sure, you can hand-code all your own web pages and muck around with your server... but why would you?

Let's make it easy so you can get to the actual work of blogging.

Install WordPress from wordpress.org (notice the .org) and you'll have the world's most popular free blogging software on your side.

It's what Bold & Determined uses, as well as all of my other online projects.

WordPress is a blogging platform that handles all of the complicated code stuff so you can just focus on writing and publishing just like you would if you were writing an email or making a document with a word processor.

ANOTHER OPTION: FREE BADNET SETUP

If all of the above seems like a lot of work and feels like a daunting task as you're unfamiliar with the tech side of things, I've created a free WordPress setup service called Badnet.

When I first started, I had to invite a friend over to install WordPress for me. I had no idea about the essential technical things necessary to starting a blog that makes money.

Luckily, I have a special offer that can help you out. Go to <http://badnet.com> and sign up for web hosting (and claim a free domain name).

Not only will we set up the blog for you within 24 hours, *(at no additional cost to you)*, we'll install WordPress and several essential plugins to get you started as fast as possible.

Your site will be fast, secure, and search engine friendly with no work on your part. Not a bad deal.

BONUS TIP: OWN YOUR OWN NAME ON THE INTERNET

You should always own your own name on the internet. Even if you don't do anything with it, you need to own your reputation.

Do you want to know the real way I make money online?

It's not because I'm a great writer or because I'm a whole lot smarter than other guys.

It's because of my reputation. I've built my reputation from years of excellent work.

And how do I protect that reputation? I own my name.

If you take a look at victorpride.com, you can see that I own the conversation about me. If people search for me in Google, they'll find websites that I own, not some websites authored by, let's say, jealous types.

Imagine what could have happened if I didn't own my name...

Imagine that some loser takes offense to something I've written. They could snatch up the domain name victorpride.com and write whatever they want to.

All of a sudden the conversation about me would be in someone else's hands. Uh oh.

Then when people search for Victor Pride, they won't see me, they'll see what some lesser person wrote under my own name. Not good.

I know, you can't see this happening. That scenario just seems to fantastic. What if you don't want to be a public figure?

How about this - When your employer Googles you to see if you're a respectable character, what are they going to find?

When business contacts look up your name, how do you present yourself?

Will they see Facebook photos of you passed out with Sharpie all over your face or a professionally designed website that presents you in the best light?

You need to own your name online and protect it.

Luckily, it is both cheap, and incredibly easy to do so.

Owning your name online is one of the best ways to doof-proof yourself from haters, both online and off.

You don't even have to develop a site, you just need to own it. In fact, I owned victorpride.com for almost 3 years before I ever did anything with it.

People would type it in their address bar to learn a little bit more about me, but there was nothing there. And that's still a good thing, because it meant no one could "squat" on my valuable reputation and throw trash at me.

Even if you're not a public figure, you still need to protect your name.

Here's what I would do:

I'd pick up my FirstnameLastname.com domain for FREE by getting website hosting through badnet.com. For a little under 4 bucks a month you're protected from haters and bad guys.

Then I'd throw up a blank HTML page simply saying the website was not available.

Of course there's a million other things you could do with Yourname.com.

- You could offer consulting services and cut out your boss.
- You could start a blog and start building a reputation.
- You could throw up your vacation photos and let your family or friends see them somewhere that isn't Fakebook.
- You could just have a simple contact form for potential clients, friends, or people you meet at conferences to get in touch with you.

Either way, you need to own your name.

"What if Myname.com isn't available?"

It's likely that you won't get Yourname.com. Maybe some evil scammer is just sitting on the name, waiting for you to pony up \$\$\$\$\$. What you can do in this case is try out variations of your name.

For instance, if your name was James Goldthwait, and JamesGoldthwait.com was taken, you could check...

JGoldthwait.com
JimGoldthwait.com
JamesGold.com
JamesG.com

Or any other combination of names that is available for purchase.

Buy your own name, and you'll have your own property on the internet that you can protect, develop, and show to the world.

Don't go for a .org, .net, or anything other than .com if you can avoid it. Google loves dot com and doesn't love anything else, and neither does anyone else. Everyone remembers dot com. No one remembers dot biz.

CHAPTER THREE

DESIGN

HOW TO CREATE TIMELESS STYLE

The No-Getter

Grabs a free theme he found online, and does no custom work on it. It looks like his blog is a decade old. The fonts are hard to read, the site looks dry and flat, and it's hard to navigate.

The Go-Getter

Has the sharpest looking blog on the street. He knows that even if he doesn't have a creative eye or design skills, it's 100% necessary to have a kick-ass theme so that his readers feel warm and welcome.

Poor design is the biggest "missing feature" for nearly every blog.

Most men who write blogs don't believe that style makes any difference and they could not be more wrong if they tried.

Most popular bloggers have professionally designed blogs for a reason - good looking blogs get more readers and they get more money.

Their sites are easy to navigate and pleasant on the eyes. They draw you in and trap you.

Compare that to poorly designed text-only blogs.

If you're in it to win it, you know that your blog is your public face.

And just as you dress sharp if you want to impress a client or meet a classy girl, you need to make sure your blog looks sharp as well. First impressions count.

That means that you need to keep your design – the theme – clean and trim.

You keep your mane shaven and your hair trimmed, and you need to give your blog an appropriate theme that showcases your words instead of letting them rot.

All text and no design screams "I don't care."

DETERMINING WHAT IS 'GOOD STYLE'

Don't chase trends.

Instead, choose subtle, timeless style.

This can be tricky, especially for guys.

Nearly all the popular male blogs on earth are written by effeminate guys (I'm one of the only exceptions) who nevertheless are raking in \$\$\$\$\$.

Do you wonder why they make so much?

It's not all about the content. You can be the best writer in the world but if your blog looks like garbage, good luck getting people to stick around.

It's all in the presentation.

This is how Bold & Determined spits on every other blog.

I write for men.

I care about how my blog looks.

99% of guys forget about number 2, and lose all their readers because of it. I'll never revisit a blog (even if the writing is good) if the site looks like dog shit.

Closely study the blogs that do big traffic numbers. They're slick, professional... even a little gay, but that's okay because they make bank.

So if you're starting out, don't make the mistake of ignoring design just because it takes a little more time.

The time you invest making your site look good will always pay off.

If your writing is good, you do yourself a disservice by sending it into the world dressed in rags.

HOW TO FIND A GREAT THEME

Great themes are all over the place, but you might have a hard time picking one that suits

you without too much modification.

The best, easiest option:

The easiest way to get started with a great looking theme is by grabbing a theme from Studiopress.com.

All of their themes look good, and won't break the bank.

You can also check out:

- <http://mythemeshop.com> (They offer a simple, well-optimized Genesis alternative)
- <http://themeforest.net> (be sure to check the developer's ratings and comments)
- <http://elegantthemes.com> (for clean, easily customizable themes)

The second best option:

The second best option (though more expensive) is to hire a designer to do a custom theme for you. You can either start with a free theme or go the full-custom route, but depending on who you hire, this can run into the thousands of dollars.

If you want to go this route while spending less money I would recommend finding a broke student to customize a free theme for you. Just put up an ad on craigslist and you'll be sure to find someone at a reasonable price.

The completely free option:

Going with a free theme is a gamble.

There are decent ones out there, but good luck getting them to look great without a lot of custom work.

If you go this route you should already know CSS (or be willing to learn it).

Caution: Don't make the mistake of downloading packs of "premium themes" without paying for them. If you download paid themes for free, you'll almost certainly get an "extra bonus" of viruses that will infect your site even after you remove the theme.

These themes often insert spam links on your website for porn and pharmaceuticals – and you may never even see them.

The only place to find free themes that you can be sure have no viruses is wordpress.org/themes.

THE QUALITIES OF A GREAT THEME

There's a few things you should keep in mind as you browse through the thousands of themes available.

Is it "responsive?"

Surprise surprise, over 50% of pageviews for most websites are done from smartphones now. Make sure your site looks great in a mobile browser before you commit to using it.

A responsive theme will allow page elements to resize to fit the device's screen. In the case of sidebars, they may shuffle to display underneath content rather than beside it. Menus may hide unless clicked or tapped. Perhaps most important, text and images will scale to remain clear and easy to view even on small screens.

This means your blog will look great on phones as well as computers and tablets.

Is it easy to modify?

Some themes can be easily changed using the "Customize" menu in WordPress. You can change the fonts, the colors, and more, but not all themes have this.

Unless you plan to stick with the default style of the theme or you know how to change things with code (or you don't mind paying someone who does) you'll want to make sure that the changes you want to make can be done through the WP Customizer or through a theme options page.

Does it practice good SEO?

The best themes will have clean HTML that is easily crawlable by Google and other search engines.

CHAPTER FOUR

CONTENT

HOW TO WRITE COMPELLING WORDS

Sometimes creating content is like pulling teeth.

And sometimes it's like an overflowing torrent.

What if you just don't have any ideas?

My method is a little different than most, because I have the luxury to think about Bold & Determined from dawn to dusk.

As I've tried to put in your head earlier, you should think about your blog around the clock.

How does this event relate to my topic?

How can I draw a story out from this unfortunate situation?

How can I apply this silly conversation to my business?

You'll quickly realize that ideas come from everywhere.

They come from the supermarket, from the subway, from travel.

In fact, you'll quickly realize that the best ideas you'll ever have come from the most unlikely sources. Not from reading other blogs, but from living life and getting into adventures.

The best source is always life.

THE BUSINESS OF YOU

As I wrote about in YOU Inc. (<https://boldanddetermined.com/youinc>) the most profitable investment is always yourself. Invest in yourself, and reap the rewards.

Unless you run yourself like a profitable business, it's highly likely that someone else will come and sweep up the gains from under you.

They'll take your creativity, your life force, and put it to their own ends to make money.

Pretty shitty, isn't it?

So why not take control of your life, and direct your creativity towards your own purpose.

Why not blog for money?

I hate the word blogging, so I had to come up with a new phrase: **Blog Artist**

Blogging is a stupid word and I hate to use it, but that's what this is called.

On the other hand, this is my realm, so I can call anything what I want to.

I like to call what I do being a Blog Artist.

I am an artist and my blog is my art. That means that I take exactly the same care in blogging that a painter takes with their paintings.

Some paintings take months to develop. Some paintings get 99% done but for whatever reason don't satisfy the artist. They sit in the studio ignored for years. Some paintings burn. Some come back to life like phoenixes.

But the thrust is still the same.

Always be making art.

Blogging the Victor Pride way is a very specific type of business

It's a business where the product is limited, capricious, and un-sellable.

It's a business where the product is you.

No one can write like me, and nobody can do exactly what I do.

Yet exactly what I do is the cornerstone of my business.

Can you imagine if I sold Bold & Determined and gave it to some other person to write?

My readership would drop like flies. No one would respect the brand anymore because the brand is me.

For blogging, you'll have the most success if you put your soul into it.

Great writing is where the author is intimately connected to the work, and the readers develop a relationship with it.

That means the multi-author 115 posts a day blogs where you couldn't give a shit about who wrote what will never be able to fill the need that you can. So don't even try.

Their business model is completely different.

But the blogs where you get to step into the writer's mind, and uncover for one second, their unique genius?

That's the only kind of blog you can really learn from.

That's the kind of business Bold & Determined is.

And it's why I recommend it to you.

THE FOUNDATION OF A GOOD ARTICLE

There's really only one essential ingredient to a killer blog post.

That's obsession.

When an artist bleeds on the page, you will echo the emotions they felt living it. When they give their all, you feel the words resonate in you long after you've finished reading.

We have mirror neurons for a reason: they make human connection easier.

The world is already too full of garbage articles telling you how to sleep right, or how to do pushups. No one cares.

Words are not just words.

Words have the capacity to touch, to inspire, to fulfill.

Words have the power to change lives.

Words have the power to bring out what is most important in you and make it ring clearly like a bell.

HOW TO NEVER RUN OUT OF IDEAS

There's really nothing to it.

Live an awesome and interesting life, and everything else comes for free.

This is the trick to never wondering "what should I write about":

Live an interesting life, and then put it into words.

That's it.

In fact, if you're living a sufficiently interesting life, you'll have a different kind of "problem."

You'll have so much to write about, you'll have trouble picking what goes next!

That sounds like a great "problem" to have.

But let's say your idea generation engine needs a little help.

1. Carry around a pad of paper and write down all the things that you notice throughout the day.

- Things that interest you.
- Things that you struggle with.
- Things that seemed out of the ordinary.
- Things that provoked questions.

When you get home, pick the best three ideas and write out some "proto-posts" about those ideas.

You don't have to expand upon them right then (though you'll probably find that you want to).

Keep these ideas in a file for later.

And when you say, "now I need to write a damn post!", you'll have a creative log of ideas. You might not actually use any of them, but it's easier to get started if you're filled up with creative juice ahead of time.

2. Gather inspiration from unlikely sources.

Here's where the best inspiration comes from - unexpected sources.

It took 3 years before anyone finally guessed about the book and movie that my site, Bold & Determined, draws inspiration from.

But these were the creative fires that drove the site in its early days, not now.

You've all heard the Picasso quote:

Good artists copy, great artists steal.

But what he left out is this:

Elite artists borrow from unexpected sources.

I draw inspiration from different places. Some books, some movies, some songs. But you'll never guess which.

Why?

I keep my sources a secret.

If I read the same stuff you read, listened to the same music you do, you'd easily guess where the inspiration for Bold & Determined comes from. It'd lose some of the "magic."

Because I keep my sources closed, everything seems new and fresh.

THE BONES OF A GREAT POST

"What else does a great article need?"

We've already discussed point number 1: obsession.

That can be the fuel for a whole article, but usually you've got to share something more.

It can be a mindset switch or a practical tip. Just share something.

You can't write "smoke and mirrors" for long before you get found out.

At the same time, overly technical posts get boring.

So, say you want to share some real hard technical data, but you still want to make sure your article is not so boring that a reader falls asleep before getting through it...

Easy. Make it a story.

Stories are basically the way we think.

We write a story about our lives every time we make a judgment about events.

We write a story about other people when we observe them doing something funny or stupid.

We write a story in our minds about why everything happens when it does.

We're uniquely wired to experience everything as a story, so if there's no story to your article, you'll quickly find it's missing something essential.

You'll find that the article drags on with no reason or purpose.

With a story, however, even the most mundane topic suddenly becomes exciting.

You don't need to make the story obvious. In fact, most stories we see are non-obvious, and they star the most unlikely hero – you.

Nearly all of my articles tell a story to you, the reader, and you are the hero. Since you're the natural hero of your own story, it's no wonder that these kinds of stories tend to resonate.

I like to keep myself out of the picture.

There are good storytellers who talk about themselves all the time. The only way they can pull it off though is by being damned interesting.

That's not most guys.

Most guys are going to need to poke and prod for real stories – by placing the reader as the hero.

Not only does that give your article broad appeal, it creates instant, lasting chemistry that will bond your reader to you.

If you can write words that resonate and move people, you can move mountains.

“How transparent should I be?”

As transparent as you want to be.

As you may know, I used to blur my face in pictures.

I was worried about being found out, but then I realized how stupid that was.

If you want people to trust you, show who you are.

It will not surprise you that Victor Pride is a pen name.

You can make money anonymously, but you will make much less than if you show who you really are.

When you hide yourself, you hide the best parts of you.

Step out. Think about those that you trust the most.

They show their face.

They use their name, not some dumb online nickname like JuiceBro69.

They write truthfully about their challenges, their successes, and their weaknesses. Sure, you'll get haters.

You don't have to take this to the "Radical Honesty" side of things. You don't have to be upfront about your deep insecurities. Although, that is one approach that can work very well.

All you really have to do is bleed on the page.

Show us the real you. Then you become unassailable.

The more open you are, the more invincible you become.

CHAPTER FIVE

WRITING—FINGERS TO KEYS
PRACTICAL TIPS TO WRITE WELL***The No-Getter***

Writes a post whenever he feels like it, believing that creativity needs to strike before he takes any action.

The Go-Getter

Writes constantly, not just for his blog, but to practice putting his thoughts into words. When a creative urge hits, he seizes it immediately and rides it out until the streak is over.

Professional writers do many things differently, but they also do many things the same.

One type of writer is the workhorse.

They always make sure they crank out a certain number of words per day, and try to hit “word goals” all the time.

I would highly recommend against becoming one of those.

These guys write a lot because their words are crap. They have no emotion, no heart to their work.

Instead they have to work, machine-like, at becoming more productive.

Writing is not about productivity.

It's about emotional impact.

And the more you do of it, the better you'll get.

PRINCIPLE 1: DON'T WORRY ABOUT PUBLISHING EVERYTHING, JUST WRITE

Similar to all new habits, the more you do it, the easier it becomes.

Initially you might find it takes 10 or 15 minutes to get to a writing flow. For me, it now comes instantly when an idea strikes.

I throw open the “New Post” button in Bold & Determined and start drafting.

Whenever an urge strikes, I take advantage.

Doesn't matter the time, day or night.

PRINCIPLE 2: ALWAYS BE READY

You need to have your tools available whenever a creative urge leaps at you.

Most guys who try having a daily “writing time” unsurprisingly find that they have nothing to write when sitting in a chair in the corner doing nothing, but have amazing insights while out in the world, or about to fall asleep.

Whether you're stuck in a subway at midnight somewhere, out in the woods, or hitting the beach, you need a way to record your ideas as they come to you. Otherwise you'll lose thousands of great thoughts you could have brought into the world.

Tip: Your new habit - Carry a pen or pocket recorder everywhere you go.

Your phone can make a great recorder for thoughts if you remember to listen to the recordings later.

A low tech alternative is a pen and pad and those are really the ultimate tools for unlocking creative potential.

The dead-easy way to do this is to fold up printer paper (A4 sheets) into quarters and keep them in your back jeans pocket. It's easier to carry than a notebook and gives you plenty of space to explore bigger ideas.

An easy off the shelf option would be to snag yourself a pack of Field Notes and a Fisher space pen off of Amazon. Both are small enough to stick in your pocket without causing inconvenience if you aren't out and about with a bag to lug extra things around with you.

PRINCIPLE 3: ALWAYS BE REFILLING

We all know what it feels like to run dry on ideas.

But what if you could constantly have a refilling well, and never be at a loss for new ideas?

Other than the obvious ways I've described already – travel and living an interesting life, there's another way: absorption.

If you are consistently putting out good content, you need to be reading, listening, and watching others doing the same.

Seeing the work of other artists will provoke your own.

Be observant, create your own brand of art by blending your own special brew of influences.

PRINCIPLE 4: WRITE FAST

When you sit down to write, do it fast.

The reasons many writers struggle while developing their writing habits are:

1. They get distracted
2. They edit as they go.

To solve the first problem, turn off your internet. Either unplug your router, install StayFocusd for Chrome, or LeechBlock for Firefox. Just ensure that you can't access the internet when you write if you know you'll get distracted.

To solve the second problem, write really fast.

It's usually easier to write a whole post in one go and then edit it later.

When you stop to make edits as you go, you'll be using two different parts of your brain at the same time.

You'll be splitting your mind up – a clear recipe for failure.

Instead try separating your production and your editing times. That way you can get a post to 70% complete, noting everything you want to talk about, and then come back later to polish.

If you do this, your writing will flow much more smoothly, because it will follow the natural

rhythms of your brain.

HEADLINE MINI-COURSE

No-Getter

Leaves his headline writing to chance, and will often just tack on something that sounds cool at the time. Most of his headlines are one or two words, or a song title he likes.

Go-Getter

Is running headline ideas through his head as he writes the article. He knows that to make an article popular, the headline has to intrigue the reader. He practices the art of writing headlines by playing with multiple versions until he's satisfied.

Don't wait till the end of writing a post until you have a headline.

Get started on your headline before you write the article.

If you wait until you're finished, you'll probably skimp on this important part.

A headline has to do two things:

1. Draw interest
2. Describe what's inside

You might be a fantastic writer, but if you continually fail to attract readers with an attention-grabbing headline, you'll never get your writing read.

Headlines are very important.

People who read your writing in an RSS feeder will just see the headline.

People who get linked to your blog by Twitter will usually just see the headline.

And in the sidebar of your blog if you have a "Popular Posts" plugin? Just the headline.

Headlines are what compel readers to step forward and invest the time to read your content, so don't skip them.

HOW TO PRACTICE WRITING GREAT HEADLINES

The best way to get started learning how to write headlines is to copy, by hand, other headlines you see on websites that cause you to click.

If you pull up a list of wildly popular blogs, they undoubtedly have great headlines.

You can directly copy by hand (for practice), and then modify to suit your specific posts.

What this does is train your brain to think the same way that the writers did when penning the title.

CHAPTER SIX

REVISING

HOW TO TAKE A POST FROM AVERAGE TO EXTRAORDINARY

No-Getter

Decides that as soon as his first draft is done it's time to slam that publish button. He rarely, if ever goes back to edit. His blog lacks any shine or impact.

Go-Getter

Knows that his first draft is merely the bones of an article. There are many steps between finishing it, and hitting "publish", but most of the work is out of the way.

After you've written your post, now it's time to add the final polish.

Don't skip these steps.

These are as essential as writing the post in the first place.

In fact they're so essential that they're the big obvious indicator of a pro.

You might feel like you're 90% done.

The truth is, you're about 60% done. But don't let that discourage you.

MAKING EDITS: CLEANING UP YOUR WRITING

Editing your work is the most profitable and most important of the "polishing" steps.

What you don't know until you see how the sausage is made, is that almost all writers are terrible in the first draft.

Kurt Vonnegut himself once said, *"When I write, I feel like an armless, legless man with a crayon in his mouth."*

So don't despair when you realize that writing and editing are harder than they initially appear.

It's the polishing process that really makes the words sing.

This is not purely (or even mostly) checking for spelling mistakes and grammar errors.

You should do those of course. Dot your I's and cross your T's.

If you don't write in a word processor where you automatically get spell checking you can use a free spell checking plugin in WordPress like [TinyMCE Spellcheck](#).

The real magic of editing is not correcting misspellings, it's taking a lump of clay and building a masterpiece.

Editing is such a different mind state from writing that you'll benefit from getting away from the computer.

It's an entirely different mode of processing.

Your basic gameplan:

1. Find the places that don't flow, and rearrange, or delete them.
2. Read your work out loud. Where your energy drops in the presentation, or where you trip over your words, is a passage that needs some work.
3. For longer posts or books: Print it out, and go over it with a pen.

Don't be afraid to cut.

You'll no doubt write more than is necessary during your first draft. You'll repeat yourself too much. You'll stumble over several ways to describe the same thing.

When writing your first draft, you should expect a little too much rambling.

But when you're cleaning it up: tighten everything.

Stephen King once received this prudent advice to make his final edit, "*A first draft minus 10%.*"

You can always delete sentences and place them in another file if they're good, but don't fit in that particular post. In fact that's one of the best ways to clear your mind of the "this is so good, I need to leave it in!" syndrome.

Even with as little as one great sentence that doesn't add but instead takes away from coherent flow. Do what I do...

Keep a morgue.

A morgue is not just where things go when they die.

In my case, it's where the dead sometimes rises to join the ranks of the living.

Many of my posts and rantings sit dormant for weeks or years in draft form on WordPress.

Then in a sudden urge – I'm driven to finish them.

You have the freedom to save everything, which is why you can delete and cut worry free. Just throw everything great that doesn't fit in a morgue file and watch the bodies pile up.

If you ever need them, they'll be easily accessible for a little necromancy.

Don't think your work is precious.

You can always make more.

And you will.

This is the one thing that kills guys from making their work as tight and impactful as possible – being afraid to cut the stuff that's not good enough.

Always cut.

Always clean.

Your work will be 1000% better for it.

ADDING PHOTOS

You might think, "what's the point of adding a photo?"

And you'd be right, it can be a pain in the ass.

That is, if you're not taking pictures yourself.

Doing it the smart way means all original content.

No need to bother with releases, no need to pay out the nose, and you'll have exactly the photos you want.

Sure, you might not be a great photographer. You might not want to snap pictures all the time.

Lucky you, there's a thing called a smartphone, and you've probably got one sitting in your pocket right now.

If you take a couple pictures of interesting things you see on a day to day basis, not only will you train your visual eye, you'll also build up your own photo stock arsenal.

But let's say you don't want to go that route.

"Do I really have to?"

Yes, you do.

A blog that's all words looks scary and intimidating.

People have the attention spans of fleas – they won't read anything long and intimidating.

Even newspapers know they have to include a photo with each article they expect to really be read.

If scaring away people is your thing, have it your way.

But don't make the mistake of limiting your readership simply because you were too lazy to throw in a simple photo.

Photos make a strong style impact, and are essential to include with every post.

CAPTIONS, ALT TEXT, AND SEO

Including captions is a good idea.

"Why?"

Because that's where our eyes go to first. We read the headline, then we read the caption of the photo. (Don't ask me why, it's just the way it works.)

The caption doesn't need to be clever. Just write a short description or question or if you need to identify the source or photographer that would be the place to do it.

“How about the other fields when you upload an image in WordPress?”

The bare minimum if you're lazy is filling in the "alt text." Just describe what the picture is in a few words.

Those of you who want to juice out an extra 0.1% of SEO can go ahead and fill in the title and descriptions, but "alt text" is all that's strictly necessary. That's what's displayed if an image fails to load or if someone with impaired vision is reading your page using special screen reader software.

- Caption
- Alt text
- Description

Most of these fields with the exception of a caption will probably not be visible on your WordPress front end.

I would recommend making the title of the actual photo file descriptive.

This means you should name it something like yellow-balloons.jpg and not DSC9918.jpg

Google does take this into account. And eventually people will find your blog from Google image search.

Aside from Google, it can make searching through your media library in WordPress a lot easier so it's just good practice to try to give each photo a unique and descriptive title.

Caution: Photos should be a benefit not a hindrance. Use them for the purposes of illustration and breaking up large chunks of text but don't overdo it. They should not be a distraction.

Make sure to optimize the photos according to usage. Don't upload an image that is 3500px wide if you are using it for a feature thumbnail that only displays at 150px wide. You will slow down page loading times which Google will take into account but more importantly you are giving your readers a poor experience.

Be mindful of the file size. Learn to know when to use a .gif, .png, or .jpg. Make use of your computer's photo editing software to optimize before posting or use an online tool or plugin like [EWWW Image Optimizer](#) or [WP-Smushit](#).

BUILDING YOUR SPIDERWEB: DEEP LINKING TO ARCHIVED POSTS

The final piece of the puzzle is essential.

And it becomes even more important the more popular you get.

That is interlinking your content.

Whenever you write a new post you should include links to older posts so that a reader is sucked into your spiderweb no matter what post they land on first.

Luckily, WordPress now has a feature where you can easily add links to old posts without knowing the URLs.

Just highlight the text you want to use as the link, click "Insert/edit link" and search for the post in the bottom that you want to link to.

You should link at least a couple of your old posts in each new post.

You want to lead your readers deep down a rabbit hole, so after reading one article, they already have 5 more tabs open ready to read the other interesting articles you have linked to.

Also, this gives you passive protection against dirty web scraping thieves who will pirate your content and post it on their own sites. If someone copy and pastes your article, the pasted part will still include your links.

CHAPTER SEVEN

TRAFFIC

BUILD IT AND THEY WON'T COME?

So you've got your blog set up, have a regular posting rhythm, and yet something's still not right.

Something's missing.

You've built a beautiful stadium, and now no fans are showing up.

Here are the most common problems.

TRAFFIC PROBLEM #1 - YOU'RE NOT POSTING ENOUGH

If your visitors see a last post date that was from months ago, how likely will they be to come back?

How likely would you be to stick around in a place that's old, obsolete, worn out and full of weeds?

If your last post is from over a month ago, it looks like you've given up. Some people may explore your archives, sure, but if they know that there's a hard limit to the wisdom you can offer them, they're much less likely to stay, come back, and tell their friends.

Welcome to the blogging graveyard.

There are millions of dead, forgotten blogs on the internet. Some authors move on, some lose focus, and some become different people entirely.

But the most interesting blogs are the ones that show aggressive growth.

The ones that invite you in and show off freshly baked cookies.

Not the ones that say, "Welcome to the Cold Buffet. You can have as much as you like that

you see out there, but we won't be replenishing anything."

See, if you want to experience massive success and create raving fans you're going to need to get them addicted to you.

You want to become the steady stream of content they can't live without.

And when you go missing, it hurts.

That's the difference between my blog and 99% of other blogs.

When other bloggers take a break for days or weeks, no one cares.

And if no one cares, good luck getting in their wallet.

When you're starting out, and haven't become a fixture in people's minds yet, you need to regularly put out great content. It's easy to vanish from someone's mind if you don't regularly produce great content.

Do you want to join the dead and forgotten?

Or do you want to rise above and become a pillar that people can nurse from like a nectar tree providing them glorious sustenance in their dark hours?

I'd highly recommend a schedule when you start.

At least to get out your first 50 or so posts.

And if you keep in mind the quality rule that means you're going to need to give yourself ample time to think everything over, write a post, edit it, and put in final touches.

Your schedule might start very simply, one post by Tuesday every week.

For a beginner blogger, I would not recommend a more aggressive schedule than that. Once you go full time, you can post 2-3 times a week without losing quality, but that takes a lot of time you probably don't have right now.

But less than once a week will likely mean that you forget all about your blog for days at a time.

And if it's not on your mind, welcome to the graveyard.

The benefit of regular deadlines is not that they cause stress, but that they focus and narrow your mind, like the tracks on a train.

If you wander through the countryside with a plan to reach a certain city, you'll certainly take an interesting course, but you'll get there much more efficiently using roads.

Regular deadlines hone your mind, and create an expectation of success. If you know you have to publish once a week, your mind will give you all the tools you need to do so.

So make the commitment, pick a day. And get to work.

TRAFFIC PROBLEM #2 - YOU DON'T NETWORK ENOUGH (OR AT ALL)

The second dumb mistake is failing to network.

For Chrissakes, the "net" in internet comes from network.

But most people do this completely wrong.

(Now keep in mind, I never did any of this. I took my time, and became discovered as more and more people decided that they like what I had to say.)

You don't have faceless entities on the other side of your writing.

You're not read by a thousand computers loading up your website. A better way to think of it is you are writing for one friend. It's always a single person, and always will be.

People treat the other end of any conversation online like they're talking to a computer. But in reality you're talking to another human on the other end of the line.

Here's a few specific things you can do to prime your blog for growth, and begin to meet your new biggest allies (which are not passive readers but other writers).

NETWORK STRATEGY #1 - COMMENT ON OTHER BLOGS

Drill this in your head - You are no longer *just* a reader.

You are a person with an opinion. You are a person whose voice counts.

So when you read other's blogs, as I know you do, leave a comment. It doesn't matter how short or long it is, as long as it's honest.

But here's a caveat – say something real. Don't just give more ego-stroking. Everyone can see through this.

Offer real words of thanks, real questions the article provoked, or even genuine retaliation.

The emotion you express doesn't matter, what matters is that you wrote something that was real.

Not,

"Thanks this is the best post ever!"

But,

"This really changed my thinking on XXX, thanks for putting the time in to write it. Do you also think that YYY?"

Notice how a little flattery and a provocative question is more likely to get a response, and get you remembered than over the top buttery bullshit.

Other readers who are reading the comments and see your quality comment will click on your link and go to your site. Win win.

KEEP IT AT YOUR LEVEL - THE TRADING UP STRATEGY

You think Tim Ferriss is going to read and respond to your silly little comment, out of hundreds he gets every day? Not likely.

Talk to guys at your level, and slightly above it.

Who's going to appreciate a comment more...

An already massively popular blogger getting thousands of views a day, or a small time guy who's obviously serious but hasn't experienced his flood of success quite yet?

Give praise to those that need it, and criticism to those that deserve it.

REASONS TO COMMENT

One is that it will provide you a link.

Usually the form to submit a comment will provide three fields:

- Name
- Email
- URL

Now obviously for the name, pick something useful. It might be the name of your website, it might be your personal name.

But put something more revealing than "Dave."

Who wants to click on "Dave?"

At least leave your full name.

Put your blog in the URL, and you've got yourself a nice little link back to your site. This will boost your blog in Google's eyes, but it's not the real reason you should do it.

The real reason is that if you leave a good comment, people reading will want to know more about the author.

They'll click on your name.

They'll land on your website.

And if you've done everything correctly, maybe, just maybe, they'll like what they see.

They'll click around. They'll leave a comment for you.

And down the road, become a loyal customer.

That's the plan, isn't it?

NETWORK STRATEGY #2 - JOIN A FORUM

Why join a forum?

I've said it before, most forums are for losers.

Most forums are designed for losers to complain in the presence of their fellow losers.

But they do serve one very excellent purpose:

They are traffic hubs where a large number of people already gather and read what is written.

If you start a thread, write a compelling headline, and offer some real insight or value, you'll have hundreds of eyes on it within hours.

Probably not the case for your fledgling blog.

Now you might say, "But if I take the time to write something good for a forum, isn't that taking away from the time I spend writing for my blog?"

Yes, but there's a very good reason for it.

Refining and developing ideas in a public space, especially one with no consequences (a forum) is a powerful way of improving your skill as a writer.

- You'll learn to handle haters at a fast rate.
- You'll learn how to write headlines that quickly become popular.
- You'll learn how to create controversy and create a movement about more than just yourself.
- You'll learn what potential allies and comrades you've never met think.
- AND if you write well, you'll end up with a steady stream of traffic from that forum, even if you don't post very often.

The tricky thing, of course, is finding a forum that's not full of losers.

Again, the SEO benefit of this is minimal at best. The real advantage is in showing people reading the forum that you are an authority.

NETWORK STRATEGY #3 - SEND COLD EMAILS

Since you've built your list of potential allies this next step should not be hard.

Don't you want to meet the people that talk to you, talk like you, and think you're great?

Of course.

Here's the first way to deepen the relationship. Rather than just leave a comment at their blog, send them a hand-typed email.

If you can't find a contact page, leave. You're dealing with an amateur. Every pro blogger is not writing into the void. They're writing for discussion.

So send them an email, but never ask for anything in the first email.

Just say hello.

Say you like what they do.

Ask a pointed, simple question if you want (that they have not answered already and that doesn't require an extensive backstory to explain).

And if you want, make an *offer*, not an *ask*.

Example: "Here's another post I read by (another blogger) that really adds to what you said about X. I think you might enjoy it."

Notice how you're offering them something interesting, and not making a demand.

You're not taking anything from them.

You're not asking them a favor.

You're not asking them to link to you, or partner with you, or anything.

You're giving them the present.

That's all you need to do.

NETWORK STRATEGY #4 - ARRANGE A CALL

Relationships are the name of the game in blogging.

And if you can build stronger relationships, you can have a stronger presence and grow much faster than you would otherwise.

Now take the other side of the picture for a moment.

Who's going to have a bigger impression on you, the salesman who sends you a piece of junk mail, or your friend giving you a phone call to discuss something interesting?

The friend of course!

This is something most bloggers will never do and that's particularly what makes it so valuable.

After a few email exchanges, ask if you can get them on a Skype call to discuss your common interests.

Most people will be open to this if you are accommodating to their schedule and don't ask for too much time.

ASK FOR WHAT YOU WANT

If you want people to give you money – **say so.**

If you want people to sign up to your email list – **say so.**

If you want people to share your posts on Twitter – **say so.**

If you want people to reply to your questions – **say so.**

Asking for what you want is the first step to getting it.

Actually it's the second... The first step is admitting what you want.

You know deep inside exactly what you want, but you're too afraid to say it. Almost everybody's living like a coward instead of a lion.

So lion up.

Roar in the face of fear, and admit to yourself exactly what you want.

If it's a popular blog – **you'll get it.**

If it's a hot girlfriend – **you'll get it.**

If it's a million dollar business – **you'll get it.**

As long as you know exactly what you want, you admit to yourself fully that it's your desire to create it, you'll get it.

Ask for it.

Don't be so afraid after conquering your fear of yourself that you're unwilling to ask for what you want.

Put your desire into the world. Ask for what you want, and get it.

Just as salesmen are taught to ask for the sale, you must learn to ask for the "sale" of anything.

Sign up for my list, check out this product, share this post. Whatever it is, if you don't ask, you won't get it.

Simple.

TRAFFIC PROBLEM #3 - YOU DON'T BRING INTERESTED READERS BACK

How many times have you landed on a website, said, "Wow! This is really great! I hope there's more like this!" Then you closed the tab and walked away, never to see that website again.

That's what happens with most visitors to your website.

You might impress them right away, but if you want to keep them around, the easiest way is to get them on an email list.

This is probably the second most important aspect of your blog to ensure that casual readers become fans.

BUILD A SUBSCRIBER BASE

First you'll need to find a mailing list service provider.

You can pick from any of the big names, they'll all work fine.

- [Mailchimp](#) - Free to \$199/month
- [Aweber](#) - \$19/month and up
- [GetResponse](#) - \$15/month and up

There are plenty of others. I personally use Mailchimp, but any of them work.

SIGNUP FORMS

In order to get people to sign up, you'll need a form on your website to get them to signup.

You can either use the HTML form generators from within your email provider, or use a plugin to incorporate the code into every page of your site.

Personally, I use the [Metro Pro theme](#) using the [Genesis framework](#) from [StudioPress](#) which includes a special plugin to collect emails called [Genesis eNews Extended](#).

I used that for years before switching to [Thrive Leads](#) for a more robust solution, but there are plenty of other options to collect emails.

Some great free options include:

- [Magic Action Box](#)
- [SumoMe](#)

The paid options can get you a little further if you're trying to eke out a few more subscribers.

You've probably experienced pop-up opt-ins on many sites you've visited. I don't *like* these, but there's no question that they work.

If you want to make sure more subscribers end up on your list by offering them great value, consider using these higher-powered tools:

- [Ninja Popups](#) – \$25
- [OptinMonster](#) – \$9/month and up
- [Thrive Leads](#) - \$67 for a single site

“How should I design the form?”

Offer exactly what you will send them in the form.

If you plan on emailing them frequently, let them know.

If you're going to send them an email series of your best posts, let them know.

Many people recommend a bribe (AKA lead magnet), but I don't think it's necessary. There's too many free ebooks around that don't offer any value and bribing subscribers will ultimately give you an inflated mailing list full of freebie seekers.

If you've already made a good case with your writing that your material is worth reading, it shouldn't be a hard sell to keep readers informed.

For input fields, all you really need is an email address. You can ask for a name, but anything that gets in the way of signing up is going to hurt your conversions, and you're not tricking anyone using their name in a mass email letter.

“What should I email?”

You can use your email list for many different things – but the overall goal should always be the same.

Get them moving forward.

What I mean by that is this:

Every email should contain something to click.

Every email should take the reader out of the email, either to a post on your website, a cool

link that you found, or a resource you think they'd find valuable.

Most of those links should be to your website, but feel free to link to others every so often.

"When should I email?"

Definitely email every time you've got a new post.

And email when you've got a product for sale.

But don't email just because it's Tuesday and you feel like it.

You want your readers to be excited to open your email when they've got an otherwise full inbox. And the best way to do this is to offer something good every time you mail.

CHAPTER EIGHT**MAINTENANCE**
TRIMMING THE WEEDS

Maintenance is just another word for “trimming the weeds.”

The good news is that it won't take much time, yet will keep your blog in tip-top shape.

DEALING WITH TROLLS

As you start blogging you'll start to get comments from haters.

You can take the option to approve them, showing that you're a fair-minded individual, but I'd highly recommend just hitting delete.

Bold & Determined is a blog that creates a positive atmosphere for my visitors. When you come visit, you know you'll be inspired, driven, and ready to take action.

That's why people that bring hate and vitriol are not welcome.

Deal with internet haters ruthlessly and your life will be much easier.

SECURITY: MAKING YOUR BLOG A FORTRESS

You might think of security as a boring topic... until you've been hacked.

The fact is thousands of sites are hacked every day.

WordPress in particular is a popular target for hackers because WordPress is used on millions of blogs and has tons of out of date and vulnerable code.

But I'll show you how you can easily secure your site from showing porn links, or getting delisted from Google (yes, this actually happens).

Update your plugins and themes as soon as you can

WordPress has a handy little update feature that will allow you to update your plugins and themes with just a couple clicks from your WordPress Dashboard.

This is essential for security. Always update your plugins as soon as an update becomes available.

Bonus Tip: Make sure any updates don't introduce new problems.

A good developer will test new updates before releasing them into the wild but in the world of software development stuff happens. There are so many different server configurations and the potential for conflicts with other plugins as well.

When updating you can click the "details" link and usually there is a changelog so you can understand the changes made in the update.

There should also be a support link where you can view the support forum at WordPress and you can scan the latest posts about issues after the update to make sure you are not experiencing any of the ones being reported (if any).

Delete old and unused themes and plugins

You might have downloaded several themes to try out, but once you finally settle on your perfect theme, you should really delete all the other themes from your server.

However, you should still keep the latest version of a default WordPress theme (Twenty, for example) in case you need to revert to default when trying to diagnose a site issue.

This ensures you don't have any old security holes.

Secure your login page

Every hacker knows they can find your login page at <http://yourdomain.com/wp-admin>, and many of them will automatically try thousands of different usernames and passwords to get in and steal your website.

- Change your name from the default "admin" to something else.
- Make sure you have a long, secure password.
- Use a plugin like [Wordfence](#) or [WP Limit Login Attempts](#) to slow brute force attacks.
- (Optional) Create a Secure Login to your site so only you can access the login page. See the full guide here: <http://www.wpwhitesecurity.com/wordpress-plugins/wordpress-ssl-setup-login-wordpress-https-ssl-plugin/>
- (Optional) Create an *Administrator* account and only use it for back-end site administration. Use a different username for an *Author* account for public posting.

Install a security plugin

WordPress by default is not a very secure piece of software, so you need to rely on the community to provide a better piece of software.

The current best option is Wordfence which will scan your site for vulnerabilities and offer suggestions for how to fix them. If you are hacked, it will even offer ideas for how to fix it.

Protect from A-Z

If you're hacked you could end up with thousands of dollars of lost revenue and being de-indexed from Google.

It's best to enlist the help of professionals when you have the means.

If you do get hacked the guys at sucuri.net can clean up the bad stuff in less than 48 hours and get you up and running again at top speed.

If you're doing real business, it's absolutely worth the price.

ANALYTICS

You will want to learn about the people who visit your website.

Where do they come from? What articles do they like the best?

That's what analytics is for.

Sign up for a [Google Analytics](#) account, and you'll be given a block of code to put on your site.

Some themes will provide an option to include this code into the header or footer files. If your theme doesn't offer this capability then you'll need to manually add the code into the theme files (preferably in a child theme that won't be overwritten on update), but rather than manually entering that code on every page, you can just use a plugin to do it for you.

The best plugins are:

- [Google Analyticator](#)
- [GA Google Analytics](#)

You can search for these plugins from within your WordPress Dashboard or search the plugin repository at wordpress.org. They work just fine. Pick one and go with it.

If you're looking for an alternative to Google Analytics, check out:

- [Clicky](#) – The #2 best analytics company
- [Matomo](#) – Self-hosted analytics (formerly known as Piwik)

CHAPTER NINE

MONEY**SHOULD I RUN ADS? THE EASIEST (AND DUMBEST)
WAY TO MAKE MONEY FROM YOUR BLOG*****No-Getter***

Fills his sidebar up with AdSense. He has ads running for payday loans and scammy fitness programs before anyone reads him. When he starts to get traffic, he sells ad space in his sidebar to anyone who can drop \$75 and design a banner.

Go-Getter

Keeps the fortress of his blog secure and stylish. He only runs ads on his site for his own products. Meanwhile, he creates ads to run on other people's blogs who don't care enough about their own real estate to mind his encroachment. His empire grows and prospers.

Ads are a seductive way to make money.

I can make money doing no extra effort? All I have to do is compromise all my principles and make my site look like dogshit? Sign me up!

Here's the reality of running ads: you're renting your valuable piece of real estate to someone else who is actively making you look bad.

ADS ON YOUR BLOG - THE WHEN, WHY AND HOW

Running ads on your site for other people's sites says a few things:

- I don't care about my readers.
- I don't care about my blog.
- I don't care about making real money.
- I don't respect myself.

Let's look at the lowest common denominator, AdSense.

These are the crappy little text links in sidebars, in between posts, and sometimes visual ads in the sidebar of sites by authors who don't care about themselves.

Know how much I made from running AdSense on a little site? \$2.33.

Google uses an algorithm to come up with an ad that "might" be related to what you write about.

In other words, you're accepting the judgment of a robot instead of seizing your personal authority.

The next level up is selling ads on a network, such as BuySellAds.com, or Blogads.com.

Same deal, but you merely leave an empty space for people to buy ads. A human looking for ad spaces still has to select your website and run it.

Next up, is selling ad space personally on your site. It's a hands on touch that can work well. You get to turn away ads you don't want, and run the ones you do.

There's only one problem.

You don't pick the design.

You accept *their* design, and run it on your blog.

Can you see why this is such a big deal?

Your blog is your art – and you've accepted some amateur polluting it with ads for weight loss products.

It's like someone paid you pennies for the privilege of taking a big dump on your painting. Would you accept that, given that you'd placed thousands of hours into the painting?

Don't think so.

I'm not saying running ads doesn't make money for the authors.

Sometimes it can make a lot of money, but at the end of the day it's a deal with the devil. At the high end advertisers pay for pageviews. In other words, how many times they can show their ad.

Which means you need more eyes, at any cost.

This leads to guys becoming workhorse content farms, resorting to garbage journalism, and basically everything that makes most popular blogs terrible.

But there are alternatives to running ads that can bring you real money, not pennies, and will ensure your blog keeps looking snappy.

1. Design your own ads

You should definitely have ads for one thing – your own products.

That way you can pick the designer, you pick where the ad should go, and you collect 100% of the profits.

That's my way of business, and it has worked very well.

Ever notice how great the ads on Bold & Determined look? That's because I hired a pro to design them, and they're for products I believe in.

They don't look out of place, they look like they belong. They're integrated with the whole website design.

2. Be the aggressor

This is the difference between the winners and the sinners. The kings and the peasants.

Taking new territory.

One very effective way to expand your reach is to run advertisements on other guys' blogs.

If they are so careless as to let an enemy invader come in and steal their readers, by all means, take advantage.

So if you can, find a website that meets the following criteria:

- Has medium readership
- Runs ads
- Has reasonable rates

Go for it. You can design your own ad, and begin to place outposts in enemy territory.

You should only really do this if you already have your own product, or some way of making back the money.

MAKE IT PAY - MAKING REAL MONEY FROM YOUR WORK

Now that I've killed your confidence about running ads, and actually suggested you spend money to acquire new readers, I'll let you in on the secret to making your blog pay.

But first a detour...

Money is not hard to make. Money is easy to make.

You'll make as much money as you want to, but you've got to demand it.

You've got to make the money demand YOU.

You've got to develop a love relationship with money.

Make money your bitch.

Frankly, it's very simple to make money from your blog.

All of my posts either:

Build my authority

or...

Make money directly for me

The only people who make any real money are those who are authority figures.

You can make money as a little guy, but you've got to have people who believe you, who trust you, and who know you can make their lives better.

In short, be the one in charge.

Every article I write cements my authority as the greatest blog in the world.

So each article needs to show yourself as a master.

What if you're not a master yet?

That's not a problem. Show your growth.

Show your progress.

If you do it honestly, people will follow, identify, and soon you will become their go-to resource for truthful advice.

You may take a little longer to make money, but when you do it will be with people who already trust your advice.

If you think of your skill level as somewhere on a 1-10 scale, you can always learn from those one step above, and teach those one step below. (In fact this was the whole basis of old schooling systems – each grade would teach one grade below.)

Don't be discouraged if you don't feel you are the best at something – Not everyone wants to (or can) learn from the best.

As a matter of fact, one of the problems with “masters” is that they become so good, so minimal at their movements that they can barely explain what they do.

You want to learn from someone just a bit ahead of you.

And you can always teach those below.

Heck, even if you're only at a “3” level for a skill like Photoshop, you can still teach those at level “1.” What's more, they'll appreciate you more for using beginner language that they're familiar with. You're actually more familiar with the frustrations and challenges they face since you so recently conquered them.

Don't give up your authority to “experts.” Be the expert.

THE SALES LETTER

You'll notice that all my blog posts sell something.

This isn't an accident.

But notice one other thing...

I never *push* anyone to buy.

Instead, buying something becomes the simple, natural next step if you truly want to solve the problem.

If you want to get disciplined, you can get the outlines from reading my free stuff (which will always be free). But if you want a helping hand with nuts and bolts guidelines, you've got to get [*30 Days of Discipline*](#).

If you want to build a body men envy and women desire, you can learn lots of bits and pieces from my many posts on bodybuilding, but the comprehensive approach lies only in [Body of a Spartan](#).

If you want to build a blog from scratch, you can follow a million long-winded tutorials online. Or you can let my team do it for you for free at [Badnet.com](#).

There's no push, because I don't care if you buy that day.

I just want you to be aware that these things are available to you if you want them.

The reason that Coca-Cola does such great business is not that they produce the best soda (that title belongs to Lost Trail).

The reason Coke does great business is that they are available everywhere.

The purpose of ads promoting Coke is never to get you to rush out and buy a Coke that instant. They are playing a long game, just like Bold & Determined.

Think about it, Coke doesn't make much money from each soda sale. A few pennies.

Bold & Determined doesn't make a lot from each book sale.

It's a battle for mindshare.

When you repeatedly see that I have the body of a statue you'll wonder how I do it. When you see that I continually publish great articles you'll wonder how I do it. When you see what my website has gotten me, you'll wonder how you can do the same.

And eventually, you'll buy something.

Be someone who people envy, and they will do anything they can to get your success.

It has nothing to do with "promotion" and everything to do with "awareness."

And it's an easy way to make some bucks.

But please please please, avoid reading anything about "affiliate marketing."

Those guys are all scum. Full of air.

Here's the right way to do affiliate marketing: Don't push anything.

Just offer it up if it fits a need your readers have (which you haven't already met with your

own products).

Example: Many of my readers struggle with focus.

I've been on a never ending quest to find what can help with focus, energy, and motivation.

The answer, I've found, is a smart drug called Modafinil.

The best kind of affiliate marketing is just like this - informing your readers about something they might like... something you've tried and experienced yourself.

Not pushing some bullshit they don't need.

There's a huge difference, and everything you read online about affiliate marketing is geared towards that second group of losers.

Here's the nuts and bolts:

How to affiliate market without being a scumbag:

- Live life, find stuff that you love.
- Go to the product page for something you've used and like. Hit Ctrl-F and type in "affiliate" to search the page for their affiliate program (often these links will be in the bottom of the page.)
- Sign up to join the affiliate program.
- Write up a review of the product on your website.
- Get the [Pretty Link Pro plugin](#) to make the links easy (and make it easy to swap affiliates if they stop offering the product.)
- Drop your special affiliate link in the review of the product. Two or three times is enough.
- Publish your review.
- Collect the checks.

This is straightforward once you set it up.

You will need to sign up to different programs if you promote different products.

Getting started: Try this out yourself right now.

Go to <https://boldanddetermined.com/affiliates> and sign up for the Bold & Determined affiliate program.

This costs you nothing and will take only 2 minutes. Do it now even if you don't plan on recommending Bold & Determined products. You need the practice.

Next, write a review of Bold & Determined or one of my books. Do you like it? Is it helpful to you? How could it be better?

Finally, post the review on your blog.

That's it.

Now whenever someone reads your review, clicks over to <http://boldanddetermined.com> and picks up a book, you get paid. Very simple.

The Bold & Determined affiliate program pays out 75% commissions on sales of my ebooks. Even guys with very modest traffic make \$20 - 100 a month recommending my products - months after they've written a review.

They write it once, and it's done, bringing in money month after month.

MAKING YOUR OWN PRODUCT

Most affiliate programs only pay out once a month, so how can you continue to make money every day, instead of getting monthly payouts?

Have your own products for sale.

An easy way to make a product is to expand upon reader questions in an e-book or online course.

That is, when people ask you for more in-depth answers than you provide in blog posts, just provide the answers to those in a course.

I'm sure at this point that you've already thought about selling your own product.

And you wonder how easy it is...

As a matter of fact, it's very easy. You just make the thing, and you sell it. Give people what they want and they will pay you.

Do it sooner, rather than later.

I would recommend offering something for sale as soon as you possibly can. Even if it's something small.

The great thing about this is that you don't need to be comprehensive. (In fact, that's one very easy trap to fall in).

Instead, offer one very specific solution, to a very specific problem.

30 Days of Discipline simply began as a program that I used myself and found worked.

So I put a price tag on it and I offered it to my readers (who told me they struggled with discipline and getting things done).

Very straightforward.

Example: Say you run a fitness blog.

Your most popular posts have been about how to sculpt great shoulders.

You might make a book called "*How to Develop Broad Shoulders in Half the Time and Never Get Injured.*"

Solves a very specific problem, and for the right person will be a no-brainer purchase.

The best products require no convincing.

When you have a specific problem to solve, you'll pay anything to solve it.

In fact, many guys say that despite *30 Days of Discipline* being a relatively short book that it is priced too low – since it solves such a massively important problem – how to master yourself.

But that's OK, because I want it to reach as many guys as possible, even those that don't have a lot to work with.

As you become more skilled, you can offer higher priced, better products.

But consider this: don't create a "sell train." Don't be one of those guys who is continually pushing new products because they need to pay the bills. Make good products that last, and contain everything you need to know.

OTHER WAYS TO MAKE MONEY FROM YOUR BLOG

Not everything you can sell by being an authority is simply an affiliate offer or your own product.

You can also sell...

Physical Products

Physical products are great because they can have much more impact than simple digital products.

They tend to stick around longer, and become more ingrained in a person's way of life. This can be everything from t-shirts to physical books to anything your mind can think of.

Here's a basic outline if you want to get started now:

- Find a provider of the product you want to sell. If you need ideas go to a trade show.
- Ask if they can sell your product "white label/private label", meaning that you can sell the product with no branding but your own.
- Get set up with a shipping/fulfillment company.
- Make your first production orders, and send them directly to the shipping/fulfillment company.
- Sell on your own site or marketplaces such as Amazon.
- Profit.

Of course, while the upsides are great there are more upfront costs and dealing with inventory management and logistics is more work than selling digital products.

Selling Your Time

The final way we'll discuss how to make money from your blog by selling your time.

For various reasons, I don't do this, but it does make a lot of money for some guys, and can bring you a lot of dough and reputation.

So here's how I would do it.

Add a "Consulting" or "Services" page to your blog.

Write a page in WordPress describing what you can do, how much it costs, and how to get started.

Don't write some "inquire within" bullshit. Make it as easy as possible. Show examples of your work. Publish quotes or results from previous clients if you have them.

If you have real life experience, and real experience changing lives, at least give yourself a

proper title.

Consultant sounds much better than “coach.” A “coach” is someone at the side of a child’s baseball game, who never made it to the big leagues.

A consultant is someone who gets professional results.

Don’t make the foolish mistake of not publishing rates.

If you want to work on a per-project basis, say up front what a typical project would cost.

For instance, if you’re a graphic designer, don’t just say, “Contact me for more info.” That’s childish.

Say, “Typical Branding + Logo rates are \$350 for a logo and color scheme.”

Be up front, and people will trust you more.

How much should you charge?

That depends a lot on the market, and how long you’ve been doing it.

In the beginning, charge more than you think you should. If you do good work on your first few projects, then begin to raise your rates.

I wouldn’t charge less than \$50 an hour for most work. Even if you consider it to be simple stuff. If you solve a problem, people should pay.

If you feel like your work isn’t worth that, then you probably shouldn’t offer consulting.

CONCLUSION

Go forth into the world and make a blog that kicks ass.

This book is not meant to be read and forgotten. You now know everything that I know.

Use that knowledge.

You can make money from your blog.

You can become a blog artist.

The only things that stand in your way are yourself and your excuses.

So just get out of your own way and let the money come in.

Until next time.

Your man,

-VICTOR PRIDE

START FROM THE START
LET US HELP YOU START YOUR FIRST BLOG

BADNET.com
FREE BLOG SETUP SERVICE

The TOP 5 reasons to use BADNET to set up your new blog:

- 1) You get a FREE domain and a great deal on hosting.
- 2) FAST setup time - ready to go within 24 hours.
- 3) You get unlimited 24/7 support from Bluehost and BADNET.
- 4) You get 7 useful plugins and 4 FREE blogging reports.

You get the Quick Start Guide to help you start your first blog. Plus you get three additional reports that cover the basics on how to build, manage, and monetize your blog.

- 5) BADNET is not just for aspiring bloggers and blog artists.

Many users have found BADNET to be useful for posting their photography, advertising their skills, or just simply as an elegant landing page with some contact info for potential clients or friends and family.

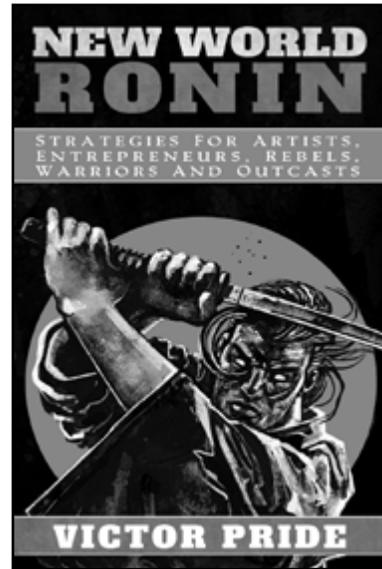
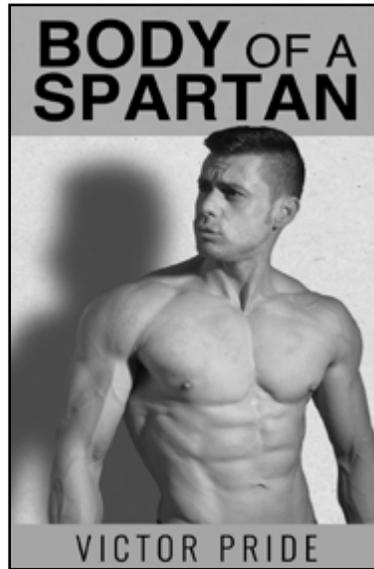
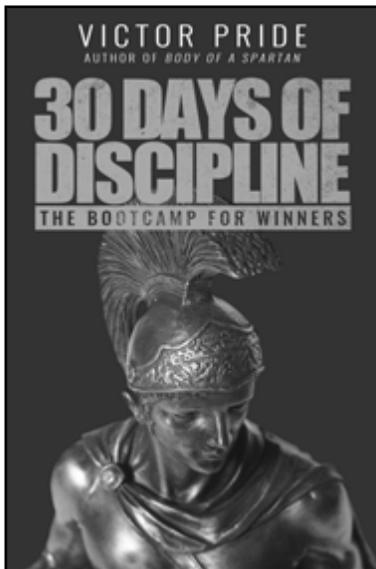
There's nothing about making a site with BADNET that's specific to just web based businesses: you absolutely can also use BADNET to start a site for a brick-and-mortar business!

Not sure if a blog or website is for you? No problem. Your hosting plan with Bluehost is fully refundable for the first 30 days. That should be plenty of time for you to figure out if you made the right choice, though we're certain once you start building your vision of a great blog, you will not need a refund!

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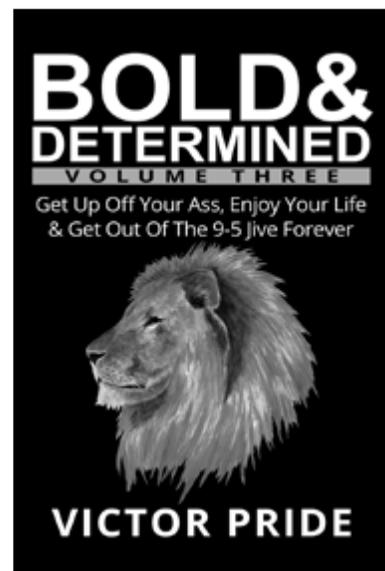
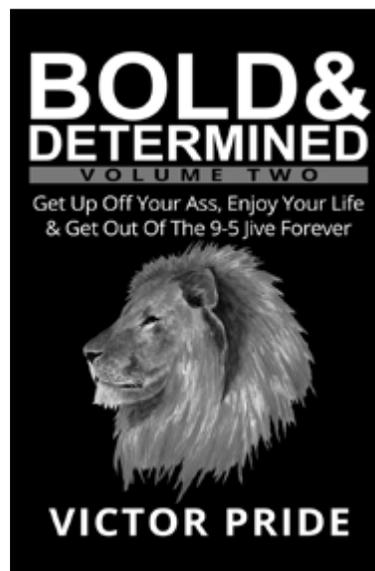
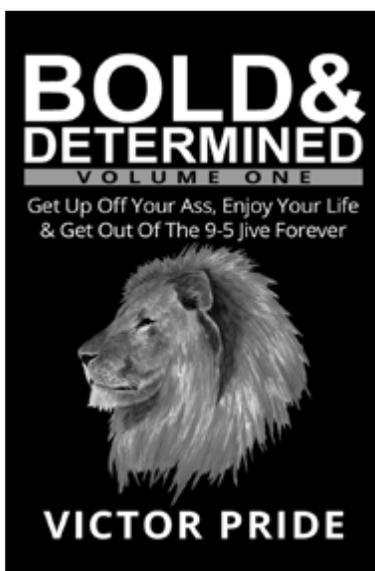
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