

How To Create Your Own Information eBooks

In A Few Easy Steps

by Monika Mundell

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About the Author



My name is Monika Mundell and I'm a freelance writer, pro-blogger and Internet marketer. I provide web masters with the copy they need to attract attention and help them get ranked well in search engines.

For a full range of my services feel free to visit my websites:

- www.MonikaMundell.com
- www.TheWritersManifesto.com/blog

First and foremost I'm passionate about what I do. I came to be a freelance writer quite by accident; after failing in my network marketing business to be exact. It turned out that I just wasn't cut out to be a sales person and so I found solace in writing which quickly turned into a full-blown passion.

Then another thing happened. Over the years of being online I increasingly noticed how many people were being taken for a ride by so called "gurus", people who were only too willing to take your hard earned money but never really bothered to communicate with their customers.

I found that if I could only help one person in succeeding online, it would be worth my time and effort. Through my blog I have met many people like you. Some are totally clueless when it comes to online marketing and others yet have the basic knowledge to get started.

In my quest to build my freelance writing business and help others do the same I started blogging. It felt great to share my knowledge and experience with others and it still does to this day.

After seven months of hard work, self promotion, branding, and many failures along the way I finally earned a full-time income, meaning I was able to quit my offline job for good – hopefully never to return to it. That was back in January 2008.

I've been published in many well known and highly trafficked blogs and worked with small home business entrepreneurs and corporations to help boost their online presence. I guess I'm an author and this eBook is designed to help you become one too.

I don't have any formal writing education and the reason I mention this is to show you that anybody – I repeat ANYBODY with a love of writing can do what I did.

It's all to do with your passion. If you want it hard enough, you will make it happen!

You cannot tell your heart what it wants. Your heart will tell you. - Barbara Sher

Introduction

In case you don't know this already, information products are sizzling hot. They always have been and they always will be. Why?

Because people are looking for solutions to their problems all around you. Just open any newspaper, switch on the TV or surf the Internet and it soon becomes apparent that we all need fixes for our smaller and larger problems.

By creating your own eBook you too can be part of this wave and if you think the market is already saturated, think again.

There might be a LOT of content online, but most of it is actually useless, doing nothing to help solve people's problems. If you can come up with your own formula to solve a common problem, then you are already half-way there. The other half is marketing your content so that it will be found by others.

This eBook is going to show you what you need to do if you are totally clueless about information product creation. You can see this mini guide as a step by step approach to writing your very first eBook. Best of all, it won't cost you a cent – unless you want to pay someone else to do your graphics.

You will learn how to:

- Research your target market.
- Write your content with the reader in mind.
- Combine your information into a high quality eBook.
- Market your eBook.

I'm excited to show you how you can create something from nothing without spending thousands of dollars online. In fact, this is why I chose to give this eBook away free of charge. It is my present to you and **if you find it useful, please feel free to pass it on to your online friends.**

I also value your feedback and if you have questions, feel free to contact me. Please bear in mind that I am busy and sometimes non-urgent emails will take a little longer to answer, but having said this, I usually answer all emails within 48 hours.

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**We cannot discover new oceans unless we have the courage
to lose sight of the shore. - Denis Waitley**

You must do the thing you think you cannot do - Eleanor Roosevelt

Your Legal Rights

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How to Pick Your Market

Picking the right market is one of the hardest things you will learn to do online because it will determine the results of launching an eBook successfully or not. In fact, anything you ever do online and its outcome relies on your initial market research. Regardless whether you intend to sell or give away your eBook, you need to have a ready-made audience of readers and buyers if you ever want your eBook to become popular enough.

Therefore you need to spend a good amount of time on this part of your eBook. Take whatever time you need to do your market research.

A word on procrastination: We all do it. I do it, you do it and your friends do it. The only way you manage your time is by monitoring it. If this means you need to work with an alarm clock and set 30-minute intervals to keep your concentration levels high, then by all means do it.

If on the other hand you prefer to keep an online scheduler, feel free to use some of the ready available software on the net. Whatever it takes, try your hardest to keep going – step by step – and remember we are all humans who make mistakes and experience setbacks!

Researching Ideas, Hunches And Trends

It really pays to pay attention to your ideas and hunches. Gut feelings are often a good indicator that you are on the right track and should rarely be neglected. If it wasn't for me following my gut feelings, then I would still be slaving away in a hot kitchen as a chef.

You will need to brainstorm ideas and trends and to do this look at my suggestions below. At this stage you just want to take a lot of notes and write down everything that comes to mind, regardless how silly it might sound to you. The idea is to create a raw business plan for your eBook if you so wish – a plan that will slowly grow into a full blown marketing strategy.

Researching – First Steps

- Talk with a trusted friend about your eBook idea. If he/she is an outsider to your industry that is great, because a pair of fresh eyes/ears can be worth a fortune.
- Visit forums to see what people need and want. You often get the best flash-bulb moments.
- Read newspapers, watch the news and search the net for people's common problems that need fast solutions. If you think you can provide a solution with words and pictures, then you found yourself an eBook topic that works.

While you do your research, write down notes, scribble, doodle, collect web clippings and do all you can to create a rich research file to give you the basic frame for your eBook.

The more snippets and ideas you collect, the easier it will be when you get to assemble your eBook. However, if you are not strong on preparation, at least make sure to get your topic (niche) right. You want to find a niche to write about. One that has enough monthly searches on Google to guarantee a certain level of interest in the marketplace.

The best tool to do this free of charge is called [Google Adwords Keyword Tool](#). Below is a screen shot of how many people searched for information on “eBook creation” and “how to create eBook” in January 2009. Pay close attention to the keywords in the screen shots.

How would you like to generate keyword ideas?

Descriptive words or phrases (e.g. green tea)

Website content (e.g. www.example.com/product?id=74893)

Enter one keyword or phrase per line:
ebook creation

Use synonyms

[Filter my results](#)

Choose columns to display: [?](#)
Show/hide columns

Keywords	Advertiser Competition ?	Approx Search Volume: January ?	Approx Avg Search Volume ?
Keywords related to term(s) entered - sorted by relevance ?			
ebook creation		40,500	14,800
ebook creation software		40,500	14,800

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how to create ebook

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[Filter my results](#)

Choose columns to display: [?](#)
Show/hide columns

Keywords	Advertiser Competition ?	Approx Search Volume: January ?	Approx Avg Search Volume ?
Keywords related to term(s) entered - sorted by relevance ?			
how to create ebooks		480	390
how to create ebook		1,600	1,300
how to create a ebook		210	170
how to create an ebook		880	720

As you can see, there is plenty of demand out there to get this eBook read by hundreds if not thousands of people.

Researching Trends

What are trends and how can we research them? If you look around you and keep your eyes and ears peeled to what is going on in the world you'll soon discover trends you never even contemplated before now.

Think of the increasing trend of gadgets, home renovations and the ever lasting need to stay slim, look good and feel sexy. Trends are all around us at any given time. The secret here is to look beyond the obvious and to dig deeper to find the golden trends.

Visit [Google Trends](#) and use the previously mentioned **Google Adwords Keyword Tool** to find those smaller, yet more promising niches. For now you want to stay away from the classic and timeless trends unless you are prepared to do a lot of marketing. Writing about topics like:

- How to lose weight fast.
- How to stop snoring.
- How to quit smoking.

Is going to be harder to market due to the sheer competition. Instead try to pick a smaller niche, also called a long tail keyword (consisting of several keywords to form a search string).

Niches (trends) such as *“how to backup your iPod”* or *“easy ways to makeover your home”* have higher chances of being sold or read because they are less saturated and can therefore be promoted with less effort than a highly competitive niche.

Once you have a niche that lends itself to eBook creation due to its demand and lack of available online content you are well on your way to create a fantastic information eBook.

Keeping Organized

Now that you have a rough road map it is time to take it and hunt for available information. Use Google, your library, blogs and websites to find as much information as you can on the subject. If you need to, peruse books, videos and anything else that gives you the full picture about a certain niche.

Collect all snippets and keep them in one handy location. I suggest you create a simple spreadsheet to organize all your URLs and stick them into a folder called *“research”*. Also use this folder for any images, screen shots, etc. subject to the matter.

Do the same for all your offline research snippets. Use a shoe box, a drawer in your office table or a special space in your home to keep everything together and neat.

Being organized now will stop you from wasting valuable time later on.

Must Have Tools

Tools are good, especially if they are free, right. (Note: to sell your eBook you need to invest a small amount of money, see below).

Here is what you will need to complete the next few steps:

- **Open Office:** [Open Office](#) is the number one software when it comes to eBook creation. I love OO and actually prefer it to Microsoft Office because it allows me to create everything I need for my business, including Word documents, Excel spreadsheets, PDF documents and Slide Show Presentations.
- **GIMP:** If you want a great image manipulation software that is absolutely free you can't look past [GIMP](#). You can resize and manipulate any images you intend to use for your eBook and even create your own graphics.
- **FireShot:** If you use Firefox to browse the web (and you should), then this nifty addon will allow you to take screen shots of web pages and parts of them at will. A great tool to have if you ever want to show your readers something in more detail. [Download FireShot](#) here.
- **An e-junkie account** if you want to sell your eBook: Unless you already have your own web site setup you need a payment gateway to upload your eBook to and collect payments. E-junkie is by far the best value for money and for a measly \$5/month you can't really complain at all.
- **A PayPal account** to collect payments: If you use e-junkie, [PayPal](#) will automatically be integrated into the transaction process but you still need to sign up with them beforehand. PayPal is free by the way.

Here is the thing many people get confused about. If you already have your own self-hosted website/blog, then you don't need to get an e-junkie account because you can place a PayPal "*buy now*" buttons directly onto your site.

Alternatively you can also setup a free blog on Blogger.com and use the site to push your eBooks for zero cost.

So in effect you have three options to sell your eBook, assuming you are intending to sell and not just give it away:

1. Setup a free blogger blog and place PayPal "*buy now*" buttons on the site.
2. Use PayPal buttons on your self-hosted site, e.g monthly hosting costs and domain purchase.
3. [Sign up with e-junkie](#) for \$5/month and sell your eBooks fuss-free.

Assembling Your Notes

After you have prepared yourself well it is time to get all your notes into order. The easiest and fastest way to do this is by trying to work out a logical sequence to the information.

Most often this is something like – introduction – table of contents – legal rights – step one – step two – step three – etc. - final notes.

If you look closely into any eBook you have purchased in the past you will see a common structure to most of them. As long as the information in your eBook makes sense to your readers it doesn't matter much how you structure the lot. Be creative and use your imagination.

I always use a rough draft on a piece of paper to help me keep organized with the book's sequence. I start by jotting down the main pointers and then assemble them into a logical order. Then I use this draft to write the actual eBook.

Creating Your eBook

Your next step is to write your eBook. To do this open up a new document in your Open Office writer by navigating on your computer to *Start – All Programs – OpenOffice – OpenOffice Writer*.

Hint: Format your eBook from scratch by inserting headers and footers with page numbers and any information you want to use like a link to your website. A very good tutorial to show you how you can setup page styles in OO is [situated here](#). Just follow the instructions step by step and you should be on your way within the next 30 minutes.

Once your page styles are set, start writing. Use common fonts like *Arial* or *Times New Roman* and a *font size of around 12*. Doing so will make it easier for people to read your eBook.

If you really struggle to format your eBook outsource it to a service provider.

Don't forget to incorporate helpful screen shots to help guide your readers. Depending on whether you sell your eBook or give it away for free you need to pay more or less attention to this chapter.

The most valuable part of your eBook will always be the actual content – the information!

Converting Your eBook Into PDF

If you use Open Office to write your eBook, then converting it into PDF is as easy as clicking the PDF button in your document. It takes a mere few seconds. Best of all you can always go back and re-convert it if you find typing mistakes or visual errors.

This is one of the reasons why I love Open Office. Plus the software works on Microsoft, Apple and Linux, allowing pretty much all computer users to use OO free of charge.

Using OO has another benefit. You can write and create your own eBooks in no time at all. I usually don't spend more than one day on creating an eBook of this size including research, and if I was to sell it, it would continue to pay me for years to come without any major effort.

I call this true residual income!

That's it! If you expected this part of your eBook creation to be more complicated then I can't help you. :)

Marketing Your eBook

Besides eBook research and the actual content creation, marketing is the most time consuming part of information product creation. While marketers with big mailing lists often make thousands of dollars in a single day due to the sheer size of their list, most of us have to start from scratch. In marketing everything comes down to numbers - the more people know about your product – the more will buy it.

The common saying “*It's a numbers game*” certainly applies.

Therefore you need to get creative and market your eBook to as many people as you can. You can do this in many ways – free or with a monetary investment.

Here are some ideas on how you could market your eBook to get your creative juices flowing, just note that this list is by no means all exhaustive and includes ideas to market free and sold eBooks:

Forum marketing, eBay (note their TOS), blogging, blog commenting, free downloads with website subscription box, Squidoo, HubPages, Craigslist, squeeze pages, OTOs on existing product downloads, social media, JV marketing, PPC advertising.

Final note: I want to leave you by saying thank you for taking the time to read this short eBook. If the book helped you, then I'd love to hear from you. If it didn't, I'd also love to hear from you. You can contact me on *monikamundell [at] gmail.com*

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