

+ partnering **PROFITS**

**How to Succeed in Online Business Using
Joint Ventures, Creative Collaboration and
Other Smart Partnering Strategies**

By Jon Morrow With Brian Clark

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CHAPTER ONE

You Can't Do It All (and the Truth about Making Money Online)

So... let me guess.

You've been trying to figure out this Internet thing for a while now. You've bought a bunch of books, subscribed to a bunch of blogs, and spent a bunch of time tinkering around on the web. You probably even have a killer idea, one that you *know* is going to make it big.

Now all you have to do is make it happen. Except... that's kind of a problem.

Oh, you're going to do it. That's for certain. You just can't afford to spend 15 hours a day on the computer. You've got school or a job or social life to consider. It's going to take time to get things rolling, but you're going to get there, slowly but surely.

Besides, you haven't quite got everything figured out yet. You're still learning about search engine optimization, pay per click advertising, social media... you know, the marketing side of things. It's not that you're procrastinating. You just want to give your idea the best possible chance of succeeding.

Or so you think.

The truth is, the web is full of people like you, people with tons of good ideas that never quite get around to achieving them. It's not that you're lazy or lack goals. It's just that you're busy, and the web is evolving too fast for you to catch up. Every time you think you're ready to start, the landscape of the Web changes, throwing your plans into disarray. All you can do is keep going, hoping it'll all come together.

Somehow though, it never does. You end up three years later with a bunch of domain names that you're not doing anything with, half finished websites on a cheap hosting account, and a bunch of folders on your desktop with plans and outlines for what you're going to do.

You might start to think that there's something wrong with you. Do you lack commitment or focus? Are you not as smart as you think you are? Or were you even built for this in the first place? Maybe you don't have what it takes to be an online entrepreneur.

Right?

Well... not necessarily. The truth is, succeeding online is more difficult than it was a decade ago. The Internet isn't just growing up; it's becoming a vastly more complicated organism than most of us ever imagined. Expecting to manage it all yourself is a little... insane.

Let me share a quick story to show you what I'm talking about.

The Colossal Cave Adventure and the Evolution of Video Games

You can hardly lump video games into the category of a toy anymore. They're closer to movies, featuring stunning computer animation, voiceovers from Oscar-winning actors, and theatrical trailers aired on primetime television. They have seven-figure budgets, employ hundreds of developers, and can bring in revenues ranging in the billions, such as with franchises like Madden, the Sims, or Warcraft.

But it wasn't always that way.

Colossal Cave Adventure, the first computer adventure game, was created by two guys in their spare time. Granted, the game didn't have any graphics or sound effects. In fact, the entire game was written in text, almost like an interactive novel. You had to type commands like "get sword" and "kill monster" in order to interact with the world.

It sounds hokey, but at the time, people thought it was really cool.

Constricted by the computers of the 1970s and 80s, games remained fairly simple for a long time, and developers distinguished themselves through creative gameplay and story lines, not the graphical extravaganzas we see today.

Anyone could do it, too. For years, some of the biggest game publishers had less than a dozen employees. Many games were developed by a single individual, creating all of the code, graphics, and sound effects themselves. Lots of creative people became millionaires that way.

Of course, it didn't last. As computers became more powerful, people started to expect better and better graphics. Developers could no longer distinguish themselves on the strength of their gameplay or story; they had to wow the audience with better effects than everyone else. Eventually, topics like artificial intelligence, multiplayer modes, and other more complex features also came into play.

And it drove many small game publishers out of business.

Sensing the demand and the inability of small publishers to meet it, big companies like Sony and Microsoft started entering the game development business, putting hundreds of millions of dollars behind their titles. Small game publishers couldn't compete, and many of them closed their doors. It wasn't that they were producing bad products. The expectations of the marketplace just rose to the point where they could no longer serve it.

The Lifecycle of Innovation

If you think about it, it's a story that we hear with every type of new technology. Everything from movies to automobiles to computers have gone through the same lifecycle, where the technology started off relatively simple and then became drastically more complicated, requiring companies to evolve with it in order to stay successful.

Could it be possible that the same lifecycle is now occurring with the web?

Back in the 1990s, anyone that knew HTML could call themselves a web developer. You just typed in a few tags into an editor like Notepad and then uploaded it to the web. If you were *really* fancy, you might throw in a few pieces of clipart and some MIDI background music.

Fast forward a decade, and we laugh at websites like that. To call yourself a web developer now, you need to know PHP, MySQL, Photoshop, Flash, Illustrator, JavaScript, and Ajax. They have actual degrees in web design, and students *still* don't know everything they need by the time they graduate.

Plus, design is only a piece of the puzzle that makes up the web. You also have to think about optimizing for search engines, buying advertising, planning social media campaigns, managing your merchant account, signing up affiliates, and dozens of other tasks.

It's the lifecycle of innovation all over again.

Just as increased processing power drove innovation with games, broadband Internet connections are changing people's expectations of the web.

Just as gamers began to expect slick graphics and smart AI, Web surfers expect multimedia content (think YouTube) and an interface that anticipates what they want to do next (think Amazon).

Just as small, independent game publishers faded away, so will small web publishers who refuse to evolve.

The Future of Online Content

Have you noticed that blogs aren't really blogs anymore?

Years ago, a blog was kind of like an online journal. You'd go there to write down some thoughts every now and again, but nobody took it too seriously. Writing a blog was something you did for fun.

Not anymore. Now blogs are becoming more and more like online

magazines.

Look at Techcrunch, Lifehacker, and Engadget, three of the biggest blogs on the web. They have entire staffs of writers, editorial calendars, and advertising salespeople. They're businesses, run not only for fun, but also for profit.

You may have noticed that Copyblogger is going the same way. In April of 2007, Brian brought in the first batch of guest writers to give him a little breather, and then decided it was the way to go. We've had multiple writers ever since, and now Copyblogger is growing faster than ever.

Did you think that was by chance? Or is it possible that this is the future of blogging?

The honest truth is that building and maintaining a popular blog is a lot of work. Every day, you have to publish a piece of insightful content, figure out how best to promote it, respond to comments and e-mails from readers, and dozens of other small tasks. It's too much for one person to do.

But that's only for a top blog like Copyblogger, right? If you're just starting out, you can do it all yourself, can't you?

Right now, maybe. If you're willing to put in at least 20 hours a week into your blog, you might be able to make it successful on your own.

In the future though, that might not be possible. As blogs continue to evolve into full-fledged media properties, the expectations of readers are going to continue to rise.

Eventually, your audience isn't going to be happy with a daily post, written text. They're going to want streaming videos, podcasts, private membership areas, and all that the web has to offer. Sooner or later, it's going to be too much for one person to handle, regardless of how hard they work. You'll have to work as a team.

Still... why wait until you're forced to make the transition?

The real benefits of teamwork don't come from being the last to jump on the bandwagon. They come from being the first, where the synergy of your team gives you an unfair advantage over people trying to do everything themselves.

The Ultimate Unfair Advantage

We've all heard of synergy. It's the idea that the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. Put the right group of people, businesses, or software together, and you'll have an entity that can outperform all of the pieces by themselves.

The idea sounds good. So good, in fact, that synergy is one of the most overused buzzwords in the history of business vocabulary. Everywhere you turn, professors, managers, marketers, and even stockholders are touting its importance. Synergy is the ultimate competition crusher.

Except... it doesn't work like it used to.

Teamwork has become so commonplace in the business world that teams no longer have a competitive advantage. Everybody is on a team. You don't have a team of people competing against individuals anymore. You have teams competing against each other. Everyone is using synergy, and as such, the benefits largely disappear.

But here's a little secret: the opposite is true online.

For the most part, Web publishers are still trying to do everything themselves. The dream of the Internet isn't to build a high-performance team that dominates the web; it's to work from home in your underwear, never having to interact with anyone you don't like and keeping all the money for yourself. It's hugely individualistic.

It's also a huge weakness. As the Web becomes increasingly more complicated, teams that can manage that complexity are going to have an unthinkable advantage over individuals that insist on doing it all themselves. A high performing team will be able to move into an

established niche and take it over with ease.

Teamwork is the ultimate unfair advantage.

The future of the web doesn't belong to genius whiz kids designing the next great online app; it belongs to teams of normal people that serve an audience better than one individual possibly could, no matter how gifted. The next generation of Internet millionaires won't be computer nerds; they'll be entrepreneurs that build a business spanning the world.

And the best part? Teamwork -- or partnership -- makes it easier, not harder, to get started right now.

The Easiest Way to Get Started Online

Remember how I said that getting started online is harder now than it used to be? Well, I lied... sort of.

You see, it's only hard to get started online if you're doing it all yourself. It's all about time. It takes *years* to learn everything you need to know and become proficient enough to build an online business. Plus, the web keeps changing. By the time you think you have it figured out, there's more stuff that you have to learn.

The solution? Teamwork.

Instead of trying to learn everything yourself, focus on one area and partner with other people to do the rest. Now, don't get worried. I'm not talking about hiring employees. I'm talking about forming strategic alliances -- partnerships where other people fill in your weaknesses in exchange for a cut of the profits.

Here are some examples:

- Not an expert in anything profitable? You can partner with an expert, producing a course and then using their credibility to sell it
- Have a great product, but you can't get anyone talking about

it? Partner with a celebrity in the field, getting them to set up joint ventures with other celebrities for you to build buzz and create instant sales

- Does trying to write a sales letter make you feel... dirty? Copywriters love to partner with entrepreneurs for a nice slice of the profits
- Are you an expert, but you're having trouble building your credibility? Partner with the biggest name in your industry, helping them expand their empire and becoming a celebrity yourself.
- Struggling to make it as a freelance web designer? Offer to redesign the theme of a popular blog or create the interface for a new website guaranteed to get tons of traffic, and in exchange, ask for a public endorsement and a link at the bottom of every page

By forming partnerships, you not only allow yourself to move forward faster; you remove excuses for hesitating to act. Suddenly, you no longer have to know *everything* in order to start building your online business. You can get started right away, helped along by people that know what they're doing.

But... Aren't You Giving Away the Farm?

Hold on a minute.

Yeah, there are lots of great benefits to forming partnerships, but what about the downside? If you give away a portion of the profits to get started, couldn't you be losing millions of dollars down the road, when your idea really takes off?

Well... sure, that's one way to look at it. If you make \$1 million, and you've given up 50% ownership to your partners, then you could say that they cost you \$500,000.

But that's kind of a "glass half empty" way of looking at things.

The other perspective is that you gave up 50% of nothing to make

\$500,000. After all, where would you have been without your partners? It's only by working together that you made that stock valuable. So, you traded stock worth zero dollars for stock that eventually became worth \$500,000.

Sounds a lot better when you put it that way, doesn't it?

The honest truth is, partnerships aren't always the answer. Sometimes, you're better off hiring someone to do a few things, and paying them cash for it. Employees are popular for a reason. Frequently, they are the lowest cost way of getting something done.

The only time a partnership is obviously the right choice is when:

- You don't have a budget to pay for employees and contractors
- You only need a small group of people to complete the project
- Each person in the group contributes to the project over the long-term

If you think about it though, just about every fledgling Internet entrepreneur is in that exact situation. That's why partnerships are so powerful for beginners. They allow you to get started without having a ton of money or doing everything yourself. It's the perfect "bootstrap" business model.

If you're just getting started, and you're struggling to figure out how to get it all done, the question isn't "if" you should form partnerships to build your online business; it's "how" you should do it. After all, you're pretty much a nobody online, right? Why would anyone want to partner with you?

To understand the answer to that question, you need to understand the different pieces that make up the partnership puzzle. Let's talk about that next.

CHAPTER TWO

The Partnership Puzzle: A Framework for Understanding Partnerships

Let's assume I've convinced you. Contrary to what you initially thought, you're not a superhuman genius that can build an Internet business from scratch in your spare time. You're going to need the help of other people.

The question is, why would anyone want to help you?

If you're reading this e-book, chances are that you're a nobody online. You don't have thousands of followers, a profitable product line, or even any demonstrable skills to offer your partners. You can't imagine anyone of worth wanting to partner with you, and you're certainly not going to risk the sanctity of your idea by partnering with losers.

So... how does all of this partnership stuff apply to *you*? It's a justifiable question. Partnerships are the obvious way to go for people that have something to offer, but what about the people that have nothing to offer? You know, the beginners?

The answer is, it has to do with core competencies, the merits of outsourcing, and the way value is calculated in groups. If you're anything like me though, theoretical discussions like those put you to sleep. Instead, let's take a look at a metaphor that does a pretty good job of explaining how partnerships work and might even help you understand how to create your first.

I call it the Partnership Puzzle.

Introducing the Partnership Puzzle

Imagine, for a moment, that you've been invited to appear on a new game show. You're told that, on this show, 50 contestants compete to see who can put together a jigsaw puzzle the fastest. The winner gets a million bucks.

Sounds too easy, right? I mean, we're talking about a million bucks here! Surely you've got to do something more than put together a simple jigsaw puzzle. Still, all you're risking is a part of your afternoon, so you figure it's worth a shot. You go anyway.

It's only part of the way into the show when you realize the catch. You're working away, assembling the pieces to your puzzle, and you realize that it's becoming gradually harder to put them together. You have holes that none of your pieces seem to match, and you have pieces that don't appear to fit anywhere. You struggle for a while, trying to figure out what's wrong, but you can't seem to make it work. Just as you're about to give up, it hits you:

You don't have all the pieces.

Your first reaction is that somebody's made a mistake. Here you are, given a chance to make a million bucks for doing nothing more than putting together a puzzle, and some dumb show producer blows it by giving you a defective box. You've got to tell somebody. So, gathering up all of the pieces, you get up and work your way through the other contestants to find a producer

That's when you notice something. Every other contestant you pass appears to be having the same problem. Some of them are getting mad, wildly pushing their puzzle pieces about. Others are just staring stupidly at the box, trying to figure out where they went wrong. And then there are a few people like you, beginning to mill about and see what the other contestants are up to.

Slowly, a smile crosses your face. You realize what you've got to do next.

One at a time, you stop by each of the contestants around you, taking a careful look at the pieces they've managed to put together. You

also hold out your own fragments in front of you, seeing if they match. None of them do, but you keep at it. There's got to be *someone* amongst all of these contestants that's got the missing pieces to your puzzle.

"Excuse me," a voice says behind you. "Can I take a look at your pieces?"

You turn around, and a young woman smiles at you, holding out her own fragments for you to see. You glance down at them, and instantly, you realize that you've found your match. The few fragments you've both managed to put together fit perfectly. All you've got to do is assemble them, and you'll be a millionaire.

You look up at the young woman with a big grin on your face, and she grins right back. "We'd better hurry," she says. "Let's put this together before anyone else figures out the secret."

"I couldn't agree more," you say, taking a fragment from her hand and fitting it to one of yours. And with that, you both launch into action, working as a team to assemble the pieces. What was a painstaking struggle alone becomes suddenly easy. *It's amazing what a difference it makes to have all of the pieces*, you think to yourself. You look up at your partner, and she seems to be thinking the same thing.

Within a matter of minutes, you complete the puzzle. As you slide the last two pieces together, a siren goes off and confetti fills the air. "We have a winner!" booms a voice over the loudspeaker. Television cameras are suddenly all around you, and you see the show host walking towards you with two gigantic checks for you and your partner.

"Congratulations," he says, handing you your check. "You've just completed the Partnership Puzzle."

Breaking It down

Okay, so I know it's not realistic. No network in their right mind is going to produce a show about putting together jigsaw puzzles, and

even if they did, they wouldn't have a big enough budget to offer \$1 million to each winner.

If that's what you're thinking, I hear you. Just realize that the Partnership Puzzle isn't meant to be a perfect simulation. It's a metaphor, designed to make understanding partnerships a bit easier.

You're probably already beginning to see some parallels between the Partnership Puzzle and building your own online business. That's good. Now let's break it down together.

What, exactly, does the Partnership Puzzle teach us?

If It Seems Too Good to Be True, It Probably Is

The promise for every Internet marketing product is the same: buy this product, and you'll become a multimillionaire without doing hardly any work at all. Sure, it sounds too good to be true, but you just keep getting case studies and free reports and testimonials, *proving* how easy it really is. Eventually, curiosity gets the better of you. You're still a little skeptical, but you think maybe, just maybe, this is the system that'll work for you.

Hmm... sounds familiar, doesn't it? Like putting together a jigsaw puzzle and winning \$1 million?

Still, it's only a few hundred bucks. Even if it only gives you a few good ideas, it's easily worth that. There's always the money back guarantee too. If you don't like it, just let them know and you'll get a complete refund. Your purchase is risk-free... kind of like competing in a game show on your afternoon off.

Only after receiving the product do you find out the truth. No, the product isn't a hoax. If you do everything they tell you to do, you *can* make money. The problem is finding all of the time, motivation, and energy to do it all. Most people don't even try, and the rest just never seem to get anywhere... almost like they're trying to put together a puzzle without all of the pieces.

And you know what? It's not their fault.

Stop Blaming Yourself (or Anyone Else) for Your Failures

Remember those people in the Partnership Puzzle that were pushing their puzzle pieces around or staring stupidly at all of the fragments? Yeah, well, lots of people in the Internet marketing community are doing the same thing. They know building an online business is supposed to be as easy as putting together a puzzle, and they wonder what's wrong with them.

The truth? Nothing is wrong with them. The game is just a little more complicated than they thought it was.

Just as contestants were brought into the without being told they were missing some of the pieces, you were brought into the Internet marketing business without being told that you can't do it all yourself. You're not stupid or lazy or incompetent. You're just learning the hard way that, if something sounds too good to be true, it probably is.

"If it's not my fault then," you may be thinking, "then whose fault is it?"

When they realize how the Internet marketing game really works, lots of people blame the gurus that sold them the products. They don't necessarily ask for refunds or cause a scene; they just become jaded, believing that the whole "get rich quick" promise of Internet marketing is just one big scam. If they were really trying to help you, they would tell you how hard it really is.

Maybe it's true... to a point. Because you see, the people that get mad at Internet marketers usually never end up going anywhere. They end up wasting all of their energy blaming other people, when they should be pouring that energy into building their online business instead.

It's the equivalent of getting up in the middle of the game show and getting into a fight with one of the producers about your defective

puzzle box. You can if you want, but while you're creating a scene, the smart contestants are figuring out that other people have some of their pieces, and they're looking for a partner. Every moment you spend mad at someone else, you're just falling farther behind.

So stop.

You're Not the Only One Having Trouble

It's also important to realize that you're not the only one having trouble. One way to look at it is, if everyone else is struggling too, then maybe you're not doing so badly. But in my opinion, there's an even more important lesson:

If everyone else is struggling too, then they're going to be just as motivated as you are to figure out what's wrong and start doing what works. It makes everyone in the Internet marketing community a potential partner.

Do you realize what an opportunity that is?

Imagine if you were the only contestant in the Partnership Puzzle without all of the pieces to your puzzle. No one else would be interested in letting you see any of their pieces, would they? They'd do everything they could *not* to talk to you, thinking you were trying to mess them up. Whenever something is working, people get protective.

The opposite is true whenever people are struggling. They get desperate. It's like they have a massive headache, and anyone that walks up to them with an aspirin isn't just a friend; they're a gift from God. If you walk up to them with their pieces of missing puzzle, they're going to embrace you with open arms.

The only difference is, instead of 50 contestants, where only one of them has your pieces, there are *millions* of people interested in making money online, and any one of them could be a potential partner. That makes it *exponentially* easier for you to find a partner to help you complete your business.

If you understand what I'm telling you, then you'll realize that you're not alone anymore. In fact, the Web is bursting with resources to help you make your online business successful. There are people that are literally waiting for you to come and ask them for help.

Exciting isn't it?

Well... let's not get carried away *too* fast. While the Partnership Puzzle shows us the opportunity, it also uncovers the cost. If you want other people to help you complete your puzzle, you need proof that you can help them complete theirs too.

You've Got to Focus on the Problems of Others

Let's go back to our Partnership Profits story for moment and change one of the details.

Instead of being approached by someone who has the other half of your puzzle, you find a partner still trying to put their own puzzle together. And they're spitting mad. They're doing all of the right things, and they're exercising lots of self-discipline, but they're not getting anywhere, and it's pissing them off.

What do you think what happened if you walked up to them and said, "Could I take a look at your puzzle?" Do you think they would realize that you were the answer to all of their problems?

Probably not. In fact, they'd probably say something along the lines of, "What puzzle? All I've got is a bunch of pieces that don't match up! This game is rigged!"

Most people that are mad are also pretty irrational, so if you tried to explain your theory that you need to work with other contestants to complete the puzzle, they'd probably resist the idea. It would mean that they've been wasting their time, and that would make him feel pretty dumb. Like most people, they would do what was easiest: vent their frustration.

The thing is, you can't just sit there for hours and wait for them to cool down enough to see reason. Every minute you wait makes it more likely that someone else will finish first. You've got to convince them fast. How are you going to do it?

My advice: don't argue with them. Just take one of your puzzle fragments and fit it to one of their puzzle fragments. Start putting together the puzzle. They might get upset at first, but once they realize what you're doing, they'll become much more cooperative. They'll realize they're about to become a millionaire.

People go through the same process when they're building an online business. A lot of times, the person that has the rest of the pieces you need isn't looking for a partner. They need one, but they don't know it yet. And if you're going to convince them to partner with you, then you've got to be persuasive.

The best way to do that? Proof.

Instead of talking about the holes in *your* business, describe the holes in *their* business. Then show them how your business fills in all of those holes. If you can do that, they'll instantly be able to see that, together, you'll be able to win the game. More on this later.

The point is, you've got to convince them fast. Because the clock is ticking.

The Clock Is Ticking

We've already established that the idea of a puzzle game show is a little strange, but as you may have guessed by now, I chose that metaphor for a reason. You see, lots of people will try to tell you that business is not a competition, that you can develop yours on your own schedule and everything will work out just fine.

But that's a lie.

The Internet is evolving so quickly that, if you move slowly, everything you're doing becomes outdated and useless. Most of the

time, a competitor will come along and fill the void you're planning to occupy in the marketplace. Or even if they don't, the needs of your customers will change, and you'll no longer be in position to fill them.

If success online is about one thing, it's about speed of implementation. And the speediest companies aren't individuals building a business in their spare time; they're teams of people committing every ounce of creative energy they have to accomplishing a creative goal.

The fact is, if you don't find your partners fast, you're going to get beat by someone who does. There aren't any guaranteed rewards for coming in second, either. Sometimes you'll be able to scrape together some "winnings," but lots of the time, you'll just go belly up.

The Show Is Just Beginning

The good news? The show is just beginning, and you're the only contestant that knows how it works. Everyone else thinks they're coming to put together a simple puzzle. They think their box has all of the pieces they need to win.

You know better. And that gives you a huge advantage.

Instead of wasting time trying to build your online business by yourself, you can put together a few fragments and then start hunting for the person that has the rest of your pieces. By the time everyone else figures out what you're doing, you'll have already found them and completed the puzzle, making yourself the winner.

Just watch out for one mistake. After reading all of this about how partnerships are the ultimate unfair advantage, you might be tempted to go out and partner with your best friend or spouse or something, just because you're itching to get started.

Don't.

Before you go trying to find the person that has *your* puzzle pieces, you need proof that you have *their* puzzle pieces. Otherwise, why would they listen to you? They're trying to win the game, just like you are. If you want to interrupt them with *your* ideas, you'd better have proof that they're good ones. You'd better be holding the missing pieces to their puzzle in your hand.

To do that, you have to put together a least a few fragments of your puzzle first. You need to build a little prototype for your business. That way, when the perfect partner comes across your path, you're not standing there empty-handed, blubbering about how much money you can make together. You've got something to show them - something that *proves* you're not just another bozo, wasting their time.

Proof is the biggest difference between a nobody and a somebody online. It's so important, in fact, that we've dedicated an entire chapter to the process of creating it. Turn the page to find out how.

This is the Partnering Profits Preview of the first two chapters of the manual. Make sure to stay tuned to the Partnering Profits Newsletter for information about how you can purchase the full course.