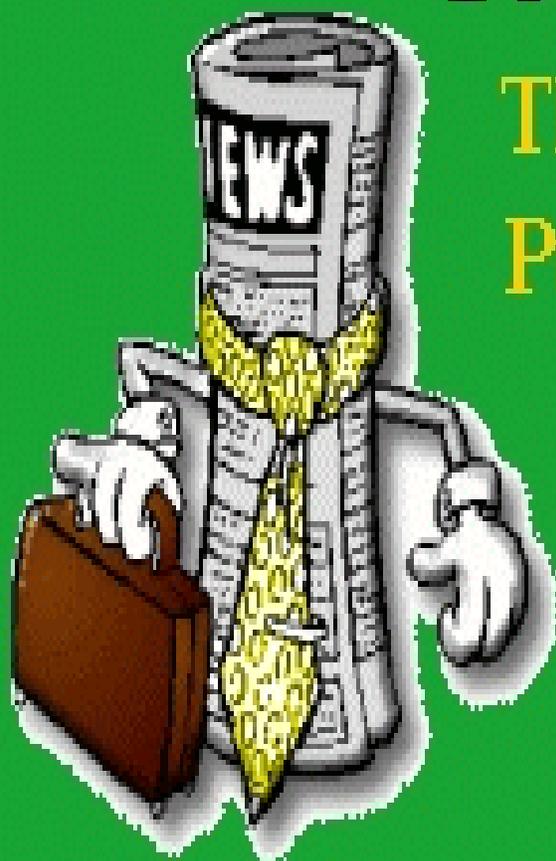


777 Questions & Answers To Ezine Success

The Ultimate Ezine
Publishing Manual



Irena Whitfield
theCassiopeia.com

77 Questions & Answers to Ezine Success

The Ultimate Ezine Publishing Manual You Should Definitely Have if You Want to Succeed in Ezine Publishing

Irena Whitfield, theCassiopeia.com

Introduction:

In this brief introduction I would only like to say several sentences about the reasons why I wrote this little report. There are mainly two:

- Since Pathway To Success Ezine started to grow into a success, I've been regularly giving interviews about various list building strategies, publishing and marketing tools etc. However, the information contained there is quite obsolete now because Pathway enjoys unbelievable boom and I want to update it all.

- Related to the boom I have been receiving hundreds of help and advice requests, questions and interview requests and I find it easier to publish one report answering most of the questions and problems, giving all the ezine publishing details, secrets and strategies than respond individually.

This report compiles all the various questions related to ezine publishing I have ever received and explains and describes how I do ezine publishing including the tools and strategies I use, and any person can, of course, use the same strategies or some of them BUT it's necessary to realize that no one can guarantee that you will have the same results or you will feel comfortable using the same tools as I consider superb.

Still, I can recommend it and hope that this report will help you make your Ezine a real success supporting your business and making it profitable.

Also, I would like to mention that answering the questions I describe my own experience, express my own opinions without any hype and some of them may be shocking for you, especially because many of the so called gurus keeps telling you different or even opposite stories but my experience clearly shows that whenever I go against the main stream I am right. And this is no exception.

I have made this report a simple design, so it is easy to print it out and use offline as well.

Enjoy.

Sincerely

Irena Whitfield, Your Publisher
Wishing you all the best in your life and business.



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Main Part

Questions and Answers

1. Why and when did you start your Ezine?

Before I launched my first commercial site package I studied all the materials, courses, strategies I could, watched the experts.

The conclusion was clear: I launched my site, made it rank #1 on all the main search engines (within 14 days!) and launched Pathway To Success Ezine as part of the package.

The idea behind it was that as soon as my site can be found on the Net, my site will get visitors and the visitors must receive a reason to stay, come back and buy from my site.

I am all against direct selling to anyone against their will which is done all over the Net all the time. I strictly stick to a principle that I never force anyone into buying anything they don' t want or they do want but not at the time they come to my site.

So, if I offer only products for sale, there is not much chance my visitors will buy anything the first time they come and there is even less chance they come back without giving them any reason for it. And many people don' t even know what they need for their business, so they must get the chance to learn more.

The answer was (and still is) an ezine providing valuable, unique and fresh content regularly.

2. How did you decide how often to publish your Ezine?

In fact, at that time (ie when I started) I was not very keen on the idea that I should publish an ezine. Also, I saw quite a lot of people start an ezine and within a short period of time, close it, or publish stale content. I wanted to be sure I would get it right, so in the first issues I stated that this was an irregular ezine assuming the next issue on The first issue, Issue 0 was published in December 2000 and Issue 1 on 21st Jan 2001 and then Issue 2 on 15th Feb 2001 and this way I arrived at 14 days which I keep until now.

I considered a month too long and a week too often, that was why I picked up 14 days.

3. How did you choose your content structure? Your target audience?

I analyzed real world magazines which I buy and analyzed why I enjoy them and why I don' t enjoy and buy others. This gave me reliable answers.

Then, I decided that I would target people interested in online home business plus having hobbies: this outlined the basic content structure. The details were tuned on the subscriber feedback.

In fact, this targeted audience is my expert field: it means I can provide professional advice, content, recommendations,... based on my personal experience, mistakes and success, use of special tools, resources, strategies, and everything I consider vital for a profitable online home business.

4. How did you get your first subscribers?

Basically, there were three ways to do this:

- use the current client base and announce them that I plan to start sending them an ezine and wait whether they jump at it. I myself would be horrified... if only I imagine that whenever I buy something, they will be sending me an ezine even every day, even several times every day, I'd be scared to enter a shop.

or

- start to collect email addresses from my site visitors

or

- start to publish the ezine and collect subscribers wishing to subscribe on the basis of the first issue.

I did it the last way. Frankly, I didn't know how long I would publish my ezine without subscribers but I tried to make the first issue very attractive. I remember I included a fresh interview with Corey Rudl, it was in December 2000. It worked.

My ezine received almost 50 subscribers on the first day. I couldn't believe it. My second issue went to almost 150 subscribers but then, it took a bit of time before I reached 500...

5. Did you change your content structure and publishing frequency?

No, not much, I tuned the form, the structure but not the publishing frequency nor the content and length.

6. Would you say there are special assumptions necessary for becoming a successful publisher?

I would say not very special but certain qualities are necessary if you want to publish a successful ezine.

I am going to mention at least 7 basic character streaks:

- you should be able to create a vision and follow it
- you should be able to plan your publication, create strategies and stick to them
- you should be able to organize the publication and its publishing the way it supports, enhance and helps your business
- you should be able to technically manage all the many related tasks
- you should be disciplined, organized and credible, a long-runner
- you should be an expert in the field of your ezine scope
- you should be able to write, a clever combination of a salesman and a newspaper person: not a pest, have something attractive to say to your audience, make them read your publication repeatedly, long-term, trust you, buy from you...

(Remember if you have nothing valuable to say to your audience you shouldn't talk to them at all and not think about hype strategies to seduce them into buying rubbish.)

7. Your Ezine website: do you think a website for an ezine is necessary?

Yes, definitely. For many reasons. The primary:

- promotion
- archives

Other: online reading possibility, permanent source of quality content, business source and support.

All of these give stickiness to your business website and credibility to you and your business (however, only if your ezine is a quality publication).

You can check my Pathway To Success Ezine Portal page here:

<http://www.thecassiopeia.com/Portal/>

And my visitor ezine version home page here:

<http://www.thecassiopeia.com/Portal/Newsletter.html>

8. A home for Your Ezine website: are there any specific needs?

It depends mainly on whether you are going to broadcast from your server or using third party services. The larger the subscriber base, the greater demands on the hosting services if you use your own mail server to broadcast your ezine.

As to the ezine Archives I myself don't need anything too extra: only as your ezine grows you need a large, fast site and a big bandwidth to manage all of your visitors and downloads.

For years I keep recommending Readyhosting services and can only say the same again: it' s the best hosting around and for a very affordable price on top...

<http://www.readyhosting.com>

Note: if you want to get a discount, let me know. Only serious business owners' requests please.

9. What are the essential elements of an Ezine website?

I would say there are three main parts within the Ezine website core:

- current issue
- archives
- admin

PLUS of course,

do not forget essential parts like

- subscription form
- tell a friend form
- recommend this ezine form
- feedback
- article, ad submission possibilities

PLUS

advertising space if you want to take part in reciprocal and/or subscriber advertising and/or JV/Co-op advertising

PLUS

all other resource pages related to your ezine.

It should be easy for your visitors/subscriber to orientate within your site and find items: the larger the Archives grows the more important this is. Site Maps are vital part of an Ezine website.

I organize it from the Ezine Portal index page: every page within my site is easily accessible from here:

<http://www.thecassiopeia.com/Portal/>

10. Do you think it is necessary to track the results of Your promotional efforts?

Yes, it' s vital. You should distinguish two main strategies:

- ' Be Seen' promotion: bringing free publicity, not always direct sales or not so many as with
- selling promotion: bringing sales

It' s vital to track both for optimal results.

11. Can you name three main methods you use to promote Your Ezine website?

- Ezine Directories
- Syndication
- Search Engines

12. Do you submit this site to Search Engines and Directories manually or automatically?

Yes, I do, regularly and manually.

13. What about Reciprocal Linking?

Yes, it' s efficient but you should know how to do it right. You must be careful whom you link to to enhance the value of your site and not the other way round.

Also, your site shouldn' t become a link pool.

If you want to learn more, subscribe to the Link Popularity Masters Course - a free 5 day email course on how to improve the link popularity of your site and get top 10 rankings in the search engines.

<http://www.thecassiopeia.com/Portal/FREELinkPopularityMastersCourse.html>

14. What do you think about Recommendation Forms on your pages within your site?

I consider these vital for free publicity. I use many different ways, for instance, I recommend joining Cumuli Ezine service and use this simple two-line recommendation:

If you like our Ezine, please rate it at the Cumuli Ezine Finder
<http://www.cumuli.com/ezines/vte.html?ez=pathto>

15. Can you recommend using Thank-You Page Joint Ventures?

Yes, I do. Excellent idea if done right.

16. What about Announcement Lists?

I used these when I started Pathway.

17. Do you use Ezine Reviews?

Not much. Consider introducing it on a broader base for my readers.

18. Do you submit to Ezine and List Directories automatically or manually?

I submit Pathway to Ezine and List Directories PLUS Search Engine Directories PLUS RSS and Blog Directories, all manually. The reasons behind it are mainly three:

- I know what happens to my submissions
- I learn more about the site, learn new resources which I may need
- Avoid spamming directories

I have made a rule to submit to at least 5 directories a day, it' s not much, it doesn' t take up much of my time (unless I dig deep :-)) and it' s a steady grow.

19. Do you use Co-Registration Services and why?

No, I don' t, I have tried some when I started and wanted people to learn about Pathway. But stopped this later because people nowadays receive many email items and co-registration services steal your audience reading time.

In other words, the more ezines people receive the less time they have to read yours.

20. What can you tell us about linking strategies?

I am very cautious about this one. Generally, I don' t swap links.

Just to mention two main reasons:

- I receive too many link swapping requests to check all of the links offered and I am against automatic linking because I want to have full control over the content within my site incl external links.
- It may easily end up with search engine spamming.

21. Ad Swapping?

Yes, I like swapping ads but not all publishers are honest. You must know with whom you swap the ads. But basically, I do recommend ad swapping.

22. Do you accept Articles? Free, paid? What kind of articles do you accept?

Yes, I accept Articles for publishing but only free. This is the only way I retain full control of the content. As soon as you decide to accept paid articles, you must make compromises OR you may have problems either with the paying article author or your ezine content OR both, which I wish to avoid.

23. Do you use Paid Online Advertising?

No, I don't.

24. Do you market your Ezine Offline?

No, I don't.

25. Do you use Press Releases?

Yes, from time to time when I have something very special to announce. I don't recommend to misuse press releases ie to use a press release when you don't have a special event to announce.

However, if you have a valuable piece of information to share I recommend you use it because it's very efficient and free. It brings you free publicity which is important.

Also, before you send out one, study carefully the guidelines and learn how to write a good PR which is accepted and which brings you the results you wish.

You can check the one I sent out before this report was published:
<http://www.thecassiopeia.com/Portal/EzineSuccessPressRelease.html>

26. Do you use Your Own Affiliate Program to promote and market your Ezine?

No, my affiliate program serves my other business items but I am considering it.

27. What Incentives do you use to encourage people to subscribe, promote your Ezine etc?

Many, many, many different Bonuses: books, software, puzzles, courses, tools and gadgets plus permanent and unlimited free Pathway Archives containing hundreds of free tools, books and resources.

The best way to learn it is to subscribe and explore :-).

Seriously, you can explore and get the Bonuses below:
<http://www.thecassiopeia.com/WebLions/Pathway/Links.html>

As to the promotion, content syndication works the best for me.
<http://www.thecassiopeia.com/Syndication/>

28. Publicity is the Key: what do you do to keep your Ezine on your audience mind and in front of the eyes of your targeted group?

Generally, I use every viral technique I can think of and come across which is of benefit to Pathway but I am quite careful about reading time sharing/stealing techniques.

To be more specific, I really like RSS, free ebooks, promotional JVs, partner promotion swaps, ad swaps, content syndication BUT I don' t like and don' t use subscription sharing forms, list building programs and the like.

29. Can you recommend Content Resources?

There are many sites offering free content for ezine publishers which you can use. I recommend a balanced mixture of your own, original content, your subscriber contribution and external content.

However, be careful before you use someone else' s content. Read all the Copyright Clauses and Terms of Use before you do. If in doubt send the author an email and wait for their approval.

Just now a new site opens that promises to provide their members fresh, unique content. Once you join, you should have unlimited access to their rapidly growing, fully searchable database of exclusively written, private label articles covering over 40 of today' s hottest niche topics. Definitely an interesting project, especially if you start and want to proceed fast and during their starting period.

Click here to check the site:

<http://www.thecassiopeia.com/inforesources.html>

Note: If you subscribe free to their Info Go Round Newsletter you will receive the Following 5 Articles:

- 1) "Understanding Your Auto Insurance"
- 2) "How to Boost Your Traffic and Profits with Content!"
- 3) "Metro-Sexual Man and Proud of It!"
- 4) "Is Your Marriage on Auto-Pilot?"
- 5) "Fun Fitness Tips!"

What I strongly recommend is personal research. It enriches you as a Publisher and definitely your subscribers.

30. Can you tell us about Other Promotion Techniques you use?

Now I can highly recommend a new promotion possibility:

Google SiteMaps: I create Site Maps of my websites PLUS when Google introduced their RSS Site Maps I created special xml sitemaps for each of my website folders, so Pathway has its own Pathway xml sitemap on Google.

However, you mustn' t forget to update it regularly.

You can check it up and set up at:

<https://www.google.com/webmasters/sitemaps/>

<http://www.xml-sitemaps.com/>

31. What software do you use to deliver and manage your newsletter and why is this the most effective for you?

Basically I tried almost every email software available like Eudora, Advanced Mailer, Easy Mail, Email Finder, Mailman.

Now I use mainly 3: Eudora for broadcasting all the full text Versions, Easy Mail for sending out the HTML Version and MailMan for broadcasting Digest/announcement Version, all this using my own mail server plus additional little software gadgets to complete the system, keeping my list clean

(no bounces, no duplicates...) and divided into several groups sorted by the mail domain the subscriber uses which makes the broadcasting faster, systematic and clearly showing who gets the issue and who doesn't.

You can get the Easy Mail here:

<http://www.glocksoft.com/em/index.htm>

To answer why: I tried and tested almost every existing possibility and this crystallized as absolutely the best solution for me in relation to optimal time management, list management and broadcasting, response evaluation and subscribers' privacy.

Recently I started to use cPanel hosting which includes Mailer suitable for broadcasting the digest to thousands of subscribers. I can recommend this hosting very much:

<http://www.thecassiopeia.com/hostingresale.html>

32. Why did you decide to manage your Ezine with an in-house/third party solution?

I broadcast myself and would not change. When I started to publish my Ezine, I used online broadcasting services, both free and paid and can say that it was one of my most valuable experiences and definitely the worst I ever had on the Net: whether free or paid, the services were a nightmare:

I lost my list a couple of times, I didn't have the slightest idea of who really received the issue, the companies sent their advertisements to my people without my permission, were selling my subscribers etc (even if it was a paid service!). I didn't know this until my subscribers complained. Luckily, I quickly realized that I had to manage my list and broadcast myself.

Since then, I don't even store my subscriber list with any third party and can 100% guarantee privacy to my subscribers.

33. Do you use single opt-in OR double opt-in (= ie confirmation) and why have you selected to go with this technique?

I use a single Opt-in and my reason is simple: I myself would never join anything where I have to double confirm. It bothers me so much that I would never dare to handle this way people who want to receive my Ezine.

I want Pathway To Success to be a true business publication comparable to offline magazines. I can't imagine that I subscribe to an offline magazine and they send me a letter asking whether I mean it...

34. How often do you clean your mailing list of bad subscribers and email addresses, how do you do it effectively and why is this important?

I clean the list and backup before every Issue. To have a clean list is a necessity for many obvious reasons - to name at least two basic:

a) to be able to have a profitable business it is necessary to know your performance data as precisely as you can. And if you don' t know how many people actually receive your ezine in the first place, you can' t learn much about your ezine performance.

b) it is a waste of time and sources to broadcast to people=addresses that never receive your ezine or twice, three times... to part of the list.

35. How often do you backup your mailing list and how do you manage your backups so you're protecting your most valuable asset?

I backup my list, the Issue Versions and updated archives regularly, before every new Issue is out. (Note: I archive all subscription requests incl IP addresses ie all record and submitted ads for ever.)

Technically, I have 1 original on my data hard disk plus 3 backups: 1 on my other hard disk, 1 on a floppy and 1 on a CD.

36. How do you deal with spam complaints from subscribers who forgot they opted in to receive your newsletter?

I received only two and these were solved very quickly because I immediately sent the persons the copies of their subscription requests. Both apologized and it was settled.

I think the reason is that I advertize the fact that I archive all subscription requests incl IPs.

BUT I had a nasty experience with the new hosting company to which I moved my other domain and who hosted my mailer:

Suddenly one morning I found out that my site is down and I received a message from one of my partners that my account was suspended because I sent out a spam, which I didn' t!

Those people didn' t bother to send me a word of what was happening and simply stopped my site for no good reason.

So, it' s extremely important before you pick up a hosting company, especially for your Ezine.

Another nasty experience was when my mail server was hacked and a person was sending out messages in my name.

The thing is that the Internet presence also requires tolerance and experience because these things simply happen and the person affected can't do much about it. When I receive a message like that, I simply trash it and that's all. But not all people take it alike this, they don't realize that something exactly like this can happen to them any minute.

37. What has been your biggest mailing list management disaster to date and how did you overcome this to ensure it doesn't happen again?

I made a stupid mistake: Since my house is very far from my City and a bit too tough winters are there, I spend winters in the City. At about the time I started my Ezine, I wanted a bigger apartment, so I purchased one in a newly built area and didn't ask about the Internet connection possibilities there. I used to be on a satellite and it didn't occur to me there could be a problem. But it showed there was and a big one. There was only a 56k dialup, slow, dropping more than frequently and I had to work at night when the connection was more stable - the connection was absolutely unsuitable for broadcasting an ezine and horrendously expensive on top.

So, I had to use online broadcasting services, both free and paid and as I said above it was the absolutely worst experience I ever had on the Net. So, the first item I had to solve was the connection.

I had to sell the apartment because the local cable company started to dig and promised two years for a cable connection. I got another apartment with a very fast and reliable 2Mb optic-fibre cable connection and my problems were all solved. This way I started to broadcast myself, still do and wouldn't change.

38. Do you have any additional mailing list management tips you care to share.

Just a little note to new ezine publishers: if you are an ezine subscriber and start to publish your own ezine, do not spam your publisher by sending them your ezine without their request. It spoils your image at the very start; do not think that publishers are messy people not remembering what they subscribe to and what not.

It is much better to send a letter to the publisher asking them whether they can check your ezine and subscribe. You are immediately in a different position as a professional and most publishers will subscribe and help you promote your ezine on top.

**Succeed in Everything You Touch:
Get Entrepreneurial Bible and Start Now!**
<http://www.thecassiopeia.com/ePublishing/New.html>

39. How to build a subscriber base into the thousands - at minimum cost and in minimum time.

Pathway has always had a steady growth in a natural way ie

- I have never bought a single subscriber
- all subscribers subscribe
- I have never sent out a single spam message

a) I have created a subscription- and subscriber-friendly environment, publish quality ezine regularly, not bothering people with solos, never publish anything in between the issues, never force subscribers to buy something just to make a couple of dollars at their expense, never publish any hype, give quality resources, tools etc, and people appreciate: subscribe, read, use, apply and stay. What more: they even promote, forward and recommend Pathway.

I would like to stress that the quality of an ezine is not in numbers but in the list responsiveness. I consider much more important to devote my time to publishing a quality publication to a smaller readership impatiently waiting for every new Issue than chasing hundreds of thousands of ' subscribers' not bothering to open the thing.

b) When I started Pathway and want to get subscribers quickly I used to join Ad co-ops. This was quite demanding because it was based on publishing lots ads but I solved it publishing Pathway in two Parts: 1: content and 2: ads.

Gradually as Pathway was growing I stopped the Ad co-ops.

c) A little comment related to the way which contributed to the immense growth of Pathway:

At the time I started to publish Pathway there was literally no one offering personal help. There was no one to turn to for help, advice. All you received was an autoresponder message.

I started to offer personal help ie I myself read and answered the help and advice request personally, I personally provided courses for beginners, nothing automatic, it was me who wrote the messages, analyzed the person' s situation and offered specific help. And people appreciated.

Nowadays it' s very different: everyone offers personal help and it' s a bit too much. That' s the other extreme. A beginner can' t tell the quality and paradoxically, what the person gets is again only autoresponder messages and the result is the same.

As to the cost: I have never spent a penny to acquire subscribers. When I started I was creating minimum 5 different subscription pages linking to my site daily. I was placing these on every big server offering free web space.

d) I also use ad swapping with other ezine publishers. I find it very efficient especially for getting free publicity.

40. How large is your mailing list at the moment and at what rate is it growing on a weekly basis?

Pathway To Success is over 135,000 subscribers at the moment, growing by some 80-100 people a day ie 500-700 a week.

Again, I must repeat that I tried and tested every possible tactic and solution, this growth is not the fastest but I am satisfied. It' s steady and doesn' t cost me a penny...

Recently, I decided to stop subscriptions to Pathway To Success. The only thing I am not sure about yet is the timing: whether to do it now or when we reach 150,000 and then from time to time open for some 30-50 new subscriptions...

And another point that delays it is the impact that it could have on my site because I have hundreds if not thousands of subscription pages all over the Internet and now I would have to do something to them to make them continue working for my site (with new content) and not against it as dead links. So, I will see.

41. What would you consider to be the THREE most effective techniques you've used to increase your subscriber base?

I try everything I learn about, test and carefully watch all the results and effects. Plus I add items of my own, test and watch the results the same strictly.

The most successful techniques:

a) special subscription pages on every big free hosting servers, rotators and exchanges: regularly I make new subscription pages of different design, different content optimized for different keyword phrases and place them on every possible large free hosting servers. These pages are linked to my site but not from my site to them. An example is below:

<http://www.thecassiopeia.com/WebLions/>

b) subscription boxes on the pages within my site: various subscription boxes, text links etc to make it easy for visitors to subscribe.

c) syndicated Pathway issues: very efficient - I started to use this quite recently and it shows to be the most efficient and fastest.

42. What other techniques are you currently using (AND/OR have used in the past) that you would happily recommend?

d) free Bonuses and gifts like free ebooks, puzzles with prizes - especially the puzzles are very

popular; all the time I receive requests for more. You can check one of the puzzles with prizes here: <http://www.thecassiopeia.com/WebLions/JoinWebLions.zip>

e) subscription email header: all my letters I send out contain a two-line header inviting the recipient to subscribe. I use this since I started to publish and still consider it very efficient

f) search engine and ezine directory submissions

g) some of the ad co-ops: it' s necessary to pick up the right ones.

43. What techniques would you recommend avoiding so publishers are not wasting their time and why?

a) multiple ezine subscription exchanges, co-registration pages: these are stealing reading time of your audience.

b) anything automatic like autosurfing exchanges, screensaver ads

c) some of the ad co-ops: you will end up publishing only ads with nothing in return

44. What tips can you share on using co-registration list building services so publishers can maximize their return on investment?

There is only one way to make them effective ie to bring quality subscribers: you must be the owner of the co-registration service. It' s a robbery for everyone else and I know what I' m talking about.

45. How do you encourage your existing readers to let their friends and associates know about your newsletter?

I simply ask them to. But I don' t want to be ungrateful: many readers do that on their own.

46. Do you have any additional list building tips you care to share.

a) I don' t recommend buying (or selling) subscribers.

b) Pathway has grown from some 25,000 into over 135,000 subscribers within less than a year. I receive lots of questions asking specifically about this immense growth, so I will say several words about it here:

It was a very lucky opportunity: tens of money doublers, triplers and multipliers started to jump all over the Net. As one of the first, I started a Money Multiplier Watch to offer my users all of the hot opportunities in one place and profit the most effectively. I updated this several times a day and thousands of people were subscribing daily. Then, the multipliers slowed down, it was not necessary to update so often and the subscriptions slowed down - but still, it remained much higher than it used to be.

You can check the Watch here:

<http://www.thecassiopeia.com/ProfitOpportunities/MoneyDoubler.html>

And one more important point: the people stay with me because I have proven myself to be credible: they know I really want them to make money because I provide real, sincere money recommendations.

47. What are some of the techniques you use to convert more of your website visitors into actual subscribers and how effective are these?

Basically, I offer my subscribers 3 different sorts of advantages I advertize so they know when they are making their decision whether to sign up or not:

- a) free bonuses ie reading bonus, sales bonus, free resources and tools like software, books, special free services, gifts, free promotion for their businesses, special deals...
- b) all the possible ezine versions and formats for everyone to pick up the best for them to feel comfortable using and reading Pathway.
- c) absolute privacy: it goes without saying that I keep their addresses private but I also never publish any help or advice request including specific personal/business data of the person.

48. What impact does this have on the quality of subscribers?

As everything in our world also the above has its advantages and disadvantages: it definitely attracts freebie-seekers, and lots of them, but also since I provide special free services and guarantee 100% privacy for my subscribers, it makes the communication easier and also, it gives me the possibility to show them that I am here for real, I can and actually help them, for instance many try my free service and become my clients very fast.

The big disadvantage is that I can hardly manage all the correspondence, not talking about the services. So, lately I started to severely cut this and orientate more on the automatic performance.

Generally, my readers are very responsive and the longer I publish the more responsive they are and the easier it is. They know I always offer top items, ahead of any competition and they can rely on my recommendation.

But to build the responsiveness was one of the toughest tasks online. As most other ezines, the problem was the already mentioned tyre-kickers and freebie-hunters. I had to clean the list several times which reduced the subscriber number quite a lot and I regularly implement techniques to eliminate these and increase the revenues.

Don't get me wrong, as I already said, I, of course, provide my subscribers with loads of valuable and unique free resources of all kinds but time is very precious and I can't - actually no one can afford to spend quite a lot of time on people/items not producing any income and every task you perform must pay for itself.

Yes, of course, you can accept your ezine as a promotional tool only and provide it completely free but I don't recommend this. Every ezine must pay for the overhead at least plus a profit.

Sales coming from the ezine is a different side and you shouldn't use this cash to cover your ezine overhead when calculating your ezine performance.

This was also the reason why I changed Pathway into donation-ware: it is a compromise between a subscription ezine and an ezine full of ads.

I will appreciate if you find this information useful and donate here. Thank you:
<http://www.thecassiopeia.com/Donate.html>

49. What ONE technique has had the biggest impact on increasing your conversion ratio of visitors to subscribers?

My free services: whatever I do, I am trying to do my best, even if it is a free service. And as I learn from the feedback, people appreciate the quality the most. Mostly they say that the free service they received from me was much better than a service they paid for somewhere else.

Many visitors to my site first ask me for advice or a service and after that they subscribe. The relationship is much better this way.

A little trick worth trying: I tried to display my photo on the index page and then to take it off and I notice that when I don't display the photo, the subscriptions drop. I have a similar feeling when I get to a site I like to see the owner, it says quite a lot.

50. What lead conversion tactics have you tried that were complete failures AND why do you think this is?

I know of one though I never tried this and never would: to start to sell right from the issue no 1, no matter what it is, not even advertisement.

51. Do you have any additional lead conversion tips you care to share.

With all the hype around, information and offer overload, it is very difficult for a newbie to differentiate between the good and bad, and appreciate the quality they receive. It takes time, efforts and discipline to regularly deliver quality, to regularly promote your publication to get into people' s minds as a reliable, quality and lasting resource. It doesn' t happen overnight but it works. And it' s exactly what I recommend.

52. How often do you publish your newsletter, what day is it sent on, and why have you chosen this delivery schedule?

I publish every other Sunday. Everything I do, I do for the comfort of my audience based on my own preferences. Let me explain:

I represent a certain section of consumers and subscribers with their own preferences, needs, wishes etc; I closely know all of these, I know what I like and know what bothers me, what I can tolerate, what I can' t, what I want and what I don' t. And this is my starting base.

A little example: I am a very busy person, and I mean busy, I have to strictly organize my time to manage all I have to and want to. I don' t have time to read my magazines, books and newspapers during the weekdays but I love to read them on Sunday mornings, which allows me to enjoy the information I receive. And this was the idea behind my Sunday publishing.

The feedback proves that my readers have the same preference in this and also, most of them stay with me, I have an extremely low unsubscription rate, of course, not only because of this. This is just one item in the whole system.

53. How often do you send messages to your readers outside of the normal publishing frequency and how do they react to those messages?

My answer is short: NEVER.

This is another of my preferences: I would never read any publication that bothers me with solos and various announcements between issues, several times a day on top. So, I would never dare to annoy my audience by this.

On the other hand, since I am committed to provide my subscribers with everything top quality and fresh the minute I learn, so they can profit, I have special solutions leaving up to my subscribers whether they want to get the information or not. I have several ways in which they learn everything from me the minute I publish it within their section (ie Subscriber) - eg News Express, Smartie, my Netscape Version, theCassi Toolbar, Pathway To Success Portal RSS Custom Reader, they can also

subscribe to my site updates, IE and Netscape InBrowser blog, Important Info page published through theCassi Toolbar and RSS Feed, etc....

PLUS a great service: pingomatic. You build your custom ping-o-matic URL and then whenever you want to let the RSS world know that you just add new content to your feed, you only click this special URL. Check the service here, it' s free:

<http://www.pingomatic.com>

Another service of the kind, even a bit better because this one is automatic for you once set up:

<http://www.kbcafe.com/rss/blogomatic.aspx>

54. What formats do you choose to publish your newsletter in and why do you use these formats?

I publish all possible versions and formats and people can choose the one that suits their wishes best or swap any time they change their mind or use several/all of the sources:

- a) full email Version, plain text, containing special reading Bonus
- b) shortened email Version, plain text, containing special reading Bonus
- c) tips email Version, plain text, containing special reading Bonus
- d) full email Version, rich text/HTML, containing special reading Bonus
<http://www.thecassiopeia.com/Issue0514.html>
- e) email announcement, plain text
- f) autoresponder issue - full Version, containing special reading Bonus:
ptsissue2005@thecassiopeia.com
- g) 20-page printable zipped .pdf Version, containing special reading Bonus:
<http://www.thecassiopeia.com/WebLions/Issue0514.zip>
- h) Visitor and Subscriber online Versions:
- i) Visitor' s:
<http://www.thecassiopeia.com/Portal/Newsletter.html>
- ii) Subscriber' s, enhanced Version, containing special reading Bonus:
<http://www.thecassiopeia.com/WebLions/Pathway/>

· h) Archives:

i) Online visitor' s:

<http://www.thecassiopeia.com/Portal/Archives.html>

ii) online subscriber' s:

<http://www.thecassiopeia.com/WebLions/Archives/>

· i) syndication Version: you can check below what it looks like:

<http://www.thecassiopeia.com/PathwayIssue.html>

· j) RSS/XML Feed: you can check below what it looks like:

<http://www.thecassiopeia.com/RSSFeed.html>

<http://www.thecassiopeia.com/PathwayToSuccessRSSFeed.php>

<http://www.thecassiopeia.com/xml/thecassiopeiaweb.xml>

My Yahoo:

<http://www.thecassiopeia.com/MyYahoo.html>

MyMSN:

<http://www.thecassiopeia.com/MyMSN.html>

Pathway To Success Ezine Portal RSS Custom Reader:

<http://www.thecassiopeia.com/WebLions/crsetup.zip>

· k) I also advertize on WAPs

· l) Subscribers can also reach the new issue directly from my Netscape Version, IE, Smartie - a desktop helper, my special motivational Calendar or the direct Subscriber URL

The full Syndication possibilities are here:

<http://www.thecassiopeia.com/Syndication/>

A couple of words to the basic organization: every subscriber first gets a plain text (email) announcement only. After the first issue they can decide which of the Versions they want to receive and read and change later, of course. I even have a growing number of mobile telephone subscribers.

As to the HTML Version: I don' t force anyone to receive it because I myself hate it and trash almost all the HTML I receive automatically. I receive over 5,000 emails a day! and just imagine all of it was HTML, mostly of a spoilt or crazy design. That' s why I first send out the easiest Version to receive and it' s up to the personal preferences which Version the individual subscriber feels most comfortable to read.

Although, my subscriber preferences show that email HTML is still the least popular of all the forms I publish, the number of subscribers using it is growing very fast and I consider introducing the

HTML Version as one of the best steps I took in Pathway publishing: HTML has a much better response. However, I strictly send it only to the people who have asked for it.

<http://www.thecassiopeia.com/Issue0514.html>

55. What type of content do you include in your publication?

Do you accept article submissions, do you write your own unique content, do you publish interviews, run resource columns... and why do you use these different types of content? Would you recommend publishers avoid including certain types of content and if so why?

Before I started to publish Pathway To Success, I designed it in a big detail incl the content and its structure. I should say it proves right because the basic structure is the same, only larger. I again based it on my preferences and experience: I like publications giving me varied content and rich resources in the fields of my interests.

To give you the facts: I promise my audience to constantly bring top quality resources, tips, tools and services incl advice and recommendations based on my rich, long-term entrepreneurial experience and vital for building and growing a profitable business the easiest, cheapest and fastest possible way and I am committed to complying.

I never wanted Pathway To Success to be an advertising publication. I do my best to be a professional online home business ezine.

I publish content my readers require and need to make their online home business profitable or increase the income their online home business earns them:

- a) business articles and educational sources of long-term usability, now called webucation
- b) subscribers' articles bringing their experience and tips, making my subscribers familiar with the situation/experience of our fellow netpreneurs, and giving the author exposure needed for their Internet presence (- I also publish the online Subscriber Corner and Article Library to give them an even greater exposure and more resources):
<http://www.thecassiopeia.com/SubscriberCorner/>
<http://www.thecassiopeia.com/Guide/Articles.html>
- c) motivational reading that is much valued: building an online business is a great bit different from building an offline business mostly because an isolated non-entrepreneurial individual tries to build their online home business, not always supported by their family, fighting with many new items, new environment, obstacles, a strict discipline must be developed and permanent motivation is necessary.

My readers feedback says that this is one of the most difficult problems even for many offline business professionals.

- d) tips: promotional, useful everyday advice, marketing, special opportunity
- e) free, low cost or special deal books, software and tools
- f) product and service reviews, recommendations, important Internet issues, items and events, announcements...
- g) specials to make the issue colourful, business tests, gifts, even relaxation and training games

As to the content to avoid:

I strongly recommend to avoid anything degrading subscribers, mentoring, directing them, shouting, whining, unconstructively complaining - simply anything unprofessional plus publishing stale, old and rubbish or hype content, or anything just to make a couple of dollars at the expense of your subscribers.

Everyone publishing an ezine or even starting an ezine should fully realize that subscribers are grown up people, educated and/or experienced in a field about which you don' t know anything, so you definitely have reasons to respect your subscribers.

You also have a new resource to learn from, new fields for good business co-operations, even if not all of your subscribers are entrepreneurs they know something unique, and even if they don' t know how to manage their computers or businesses yet and you do doesn' t mean you are superior; you would be surprised how much you can and should learn.

And except for that, all of us are in the same boat fighting the same spam, the same hackers, robbers and scammers, smaller and bigger problems, working for our goals, so why not co-operate in a cheerful, positive and supportive atmosphere that every publisher has an excellent and unique chance to create and maintain.

So, every publisher should respect, value and appreciate their subscribers and do their best to create every issue with the same or better care and responsibility than their first. In fact, since there is so much information offered all around people are not very tolerant and you should consider every issue you last chance.

Every publisher should also follow the advancement in their branch=niche, learn and improve and watch their competition. In spite of so many years in business and on the Net, I feel very nervous when I don' t learn something new every day. Many new publishers stop learning and watching their environment the minute they start to publish their ezine.

Also, I consider very unethical to publish any private advice request, a site review or profit increasing help request without an express permission from the subscriber.

As to my unique articles, columns: I regularly write several sentences as the introductory editorial to every issue, sometimes articles (- quite rarely because I hate to repeat what all the other people repeat, and if I find the topic I want to publish in an excellent article written by someone else, I have no problem to use this person' s article and give the person exposure they deserve. They appreciate it, I save time and my readers receive valuable information they need), quite regularly a ' Useful Tip' column and my recommendations related to useful software, tools, books, sites, resources, services, special deals, marketing and promotional tips etc.

56. What type of content do your readers seem to appreciate the most and why do you think this is?

I can' t name just one item. In fact, I have never received a feedback saying that I should not publish something. I publish a fixed structure, tightly targeted, avoiding any foreign item. The truth is that the everyday recommendations are the most appreciated and re-published, and money-making opportunities, then marketing and promotional tips.

57. Other than writing your own unique content, can you provide any useful tips for finding 3rd party content AND/OR making the newsletter content compilation process easier?

I don' t think publishers should try to spare time on this one. Everything technical can be and should be fully automated or even automatic but not the human part on the issue. Readers recognize this very fast and leave. I must always repeat we live in a highly competitive environment and only the best can survive and should survive.

Of course, you should make your work efficient: for instance I have a folder into which I collect resources for the individual issues within the fortnight and when I start to actually write the issue I have everything I need at my hands and can pick up the best items fitting the theme of the issue.

It' s easier the longer you publish: when I compare my situation now with the situation when I started, it was much more difficult because people didn' t know me and I had to look up every piece of information and content myself.

Nowadays I receive tens of requests for publishing articles a day together with various JV requests, advertising, ad swaps, tips... However, I still look up further resources myself for my own use which I test, evaluate and can then recommend to my subscribers. I also help starting entrepreneurs getting exposure for their businesses.

One more important issue related to the software I recommend to my subscribers: I guarantee it' s clean. Even if I get it, find out that it is useful but not clean, I clean it and only then give it to my subscribers. Many a time I receive a download recommendation from a publisher and the software is a sheer disaster for a computer.

The Internet is huge and an infinite source of top quality items for improving business, increasing profits, developing and improving products, services, marketing strategies etc. The only thing necessary is to commit yourself. Regular work and proper homework bring the best results.

As to the technique of finding resources: I use a method I call ' deep manual digging' : I receive a reference, see a source on TV, come across a site, need information on something and come to a site offering a good information source, so I dig in the site which leads me into another and yet another opening new fields, new scopes, products, services, items... I then try and test the ones I pick up for possible use and recommendation.

Actually, all the time I look at everything with the eyes of my subscribers: what they need, what would be useful, what they would like to have, make their work easier, business more profitable... You should love publishing your ezine...

58. Do you have any newsletter formatting tips tricks and techniques: how do you format and structure your newsletter, layout the various content components, and how well does this work for you.

Technically I made templates for all the Versions I publish and every new issue is just the previous one edited. It' s very fast, flexible and easy. A couple of good editors do the trick. I use ConText, EditPad, WordPerfect and PdfPrinter and Editor for the individual tasks.

To add more details: I use ConText for writing/editing the plain text issue which is the base for all the other Versions.

You can download and check ConText below:

<http://www.thecassiopeia.com/WebLions/ConTEXT.zip>

EditPad: I use this one for editing all the HTML Versions. You can use Lite Version comfortably, download EditPad here (scroll ddown the page to download):

<http://www.editpadlite.com/editpadlite.html>

WordPerfect: (I can hear many people say now that this is not the best in the world but I started to use it when it first appeared on my very old 486-computer, it was full of bugs but I liked all the possibilites it had; it developed since then and it' s simply marvellous now :-).) I use it to create/edit all .pdf Versions. You can check/get it here:

<http://www.thecassiopeia.com/wordperfect.html>

59. With thousands of online newsletters being published these days, what are you doing to separate yourself from the masses and make your publication more unique?

My basic principles are the same as I apply to my services: I am always ready to help and actually do everything to help people to achieve what they imagine. I know what my audience really needs and requires for a profitable business and render that, and also know what they don't like about other services and products and try to avoid these. I always do my best to provide top quality on time.

Pathway To Success Ezine:

- a) constantly brings top quality resources, tips, tools and services incl advice and recommendations based on my rich long-term entrepreneurial experience and vital for building and growing a profitable business the easiest, cheapest and fastest possible way
- b) regularly provides exposure for my readers and their businesses - except for advertisement incl Ad Centre, I publish subscriber articles, tips and special section of my website 'Subscriber Corner' .

Also, every year I publish Insider Tips ebook containing all Subscribers' Articles published during the elapsed year accompanied by motivational reading. You can download this year's volume is below.

Note: this Volume is exceptional because it contains all the 26 free reading Bonuses:
<http://www.thecassiopeia.com/WebLions/InsiderTips3.zip>

- c) is available easily: as I said above, I publish all the possible formats and forms so my readers can choose the one most convenient for them and keep permanent Archives.

You can check the online Visitor Version plus Archives here:

<http://www.thecassiopeia.com/Portal/Newsletter.html>

<http://www.thecassiopeia.com/Portal/Archives.html>

<http://www.thecassiopeia.com/Portal/Issues.html>

<http://www.thecassiopeia.com/Portal/Issues2002.html>

<http://www.thecassiopeia.com/Portal/Issues2003.html>

<http://www.thecassiopeia.com/Portal/Issues2004.html>

<http://www.thecassiopeia.com/Portal/Issues2005.html>

To check the Subscribers' Version and Subscriber's Archives please visit:

<http://www.thecassiopeia.com/WebLions/Pathway/>

<http://www.thecassiopeia.com/WebLions/Archives/>

<http://www.thecassiopeia.com/WebLions/Pathway/2005PdfIssues.html>

d) is reliable: I publish on fixed dates scheduled the whole year ahead in my special motivational Calendar published also in two online Versions plus a zipped .pdf. You can check the online Versions below and download the full luxury Version which I also customize for subscribers:

<http://www.thecassiopeia.com/Portal/2005Calendar.html>

<http://www.thecassiopeia.com/WebLions/Pathway/2005Calendar.html>

<http://www.thecassiopeia.com/WebLions/2004Calendar.zip>

<http://www.thecassiopeia.com/WebLions/2005Calendar.zip>

bringing exactly the content my audience requires and expects

e) provides absolute privacy for my subscribers:

- I never share any information my subscribers tell me

- I never share their data, do not even store my list on any third party server, exclusively on my computer and my storage means

f) never spam or annoy my readers: it' s very easy to become a pest by sending out unwanted Solos for instance, publish too often, write about items readers are not interested in, eg your subscribers need business resources but they may not be interested in your personal events and problems. So, I never waste my readers' time by unrelated items.

g) never publish anything about which I am not hundred per cent sure it' s valuable for my subscribers and their businesses, never recommend anything I myself don' t use or tried, never participate in any JV just to make money at the expense of my subscribers.

h) brings special deals, Bonuses, gifts, free software, tools, ebooks, puzzles, courses etc. Eg Web Lions' Library, site reviews, analysis and recommendations related to creating and/or increasing profits.

You can check Web Lions' Library below:

<http://www.thecassiopeia.com/WebLions/Library/>

i) Subscriber Map: this is a special opportunity for people to get more exposure by submitting an article about their city/country. This article is included in the Subscriber Map: <http://www.thecassiopeia.com/WebLions/SubscriberMap/>

j) Sales Bonuses: recently I started to give special Sales Bonuses to every Subscriber who buys any item from any of my sites. The Bonus is valid for a fortnight between two issues

k) Important Info: when I have a special/urgent information for my Subscribers I put the following page online, it is also displayed in theCassi Toolbar and Pathway Custom Reader.

This way my readers have direct access to every top opportunity:
<http://www.thecassiopeia.com/ImportantInfo.html>

60. How do you ensure (if at all) that your newsletter gets past the spam filters ISPs have implemented?

I installed several spam filters myself and before I send an issue I always run it through the filters first and edit the issue as per the result. Also, I know the most obvious traps, so avoid these in the first place. And, then: there are several servers that regularly filter all ezines, so when the full issue returns as undelivered and the subscriber is valid, I send out announcements on Wednesday to inform these readers the issue is out.

Many readers know this themselves and collect the autoresponder issue without me telling them. Some of them even know that I put the new issue into the autoresponder on Saturday night and they collect it before the new issue is out the following Sunday morning.

Except for the direct tools I mentioned above, I also publish a teaser and reminder informing about the new content on my site, so the subscribers can collect the new issue even if the email fails.

Also, with the growing number of direct tools, ie the ones I already mentioned like Pathway To Success RSS Custom Reader, the CassiToolbar, Smartie..., and more and more subscribers interested in actually getting every issue and changing to a mail server which delivers their ezines, the ISPs spam filters are getting less and less important.

You can download and install any/all of them: theCassi Toolbar:
<http://www.thecassiopeia.com/WebLions/theCassi1.zip>

You can have a toolbar of your own here:
<http://www.thecassiopeia.com/toolbar/>

Smartie:
<http://www.thecassiopeia.com/SmartieGoodies.html>

Pathway To Success RSS Custom Reader:
<http://www.thecassiopeia.com/WebLions/crsetup.zip>

AddBlog to your browser:
<http://www.thecassiopeia.com/AddBlog.html>

For full Syndication possibilities, please click here:
<http://www.thecassiopeia.com/Syndication/>

61. Do you have any additional newsletter content, creation and delivery tips you care to share.

Only a little note again: I recommend people who are not fully prepared on publishing several Versions not to do it. It' s better to publish fewer Versions of better quality than all of poor or unacceptable quality or content. The same applies to frequency: if I am not ready to publish twice a month, I won' t. It' s better to start small and grow, develop and improve than start big and fail. You can' t expect you will ever be perfect, you will always make mistakes, stupid blunders but you should try, again and again... step by step, stage by stage...

62. What techniques are you currently using to develop your relationship and build your credibility with your readers?

Only one: top quality service, reliable and permanent.

63. Out of the techniques you're using, which seems to be the most effective and why do you think this is?

To say more about the above: though there are millions of sources, trillions of gurus, hundreds of millions of products, there is still little quality, most of it is hype and/or people just trying to get some money out of you. Very little changed in this compared to the situation in which I started. I was one of the first to provide my personal individual services, most of what was available were autoresponders or some rubbish stuff. In spite of the fact that more/all people now offer personal help there' s still too little real help around. Too few people are actually making the money they imagine and they need. So, if you provide a reliable and credible publication people find useful, actually helpful, you must succeed. It won' t happen overnight but it will come if you persevere.

And if you develop a working and efficient system to manage your list and broadcasting, it will not be a chore, it' ll be fun and you will enjoy it.

On the other hand, if you publish your ezine with the sole goal to make money from it you never will. People are sophisticated, learn and grow fast, orientate themselves and recognize quality and your intentions very quickly.

64. What techniques do you use to encourage subscriber feedback so you can work to improve the quality of your publication?

I ask my subscribers to provide me with tips, their wishes, their experience, comments, am always open to good JVs, co-operations but do not force people into anything. Sometimes, I receive over 200 messages, sometimes 10, sometimes I can use all the 12 pieces I receive, sometimes I cannot use a single one out of hundreds,.. that' s the way it goes. I don' t over-organize or over-market anything.

It' my subscribers' publication and they must feel free using it, I am the one to ensure they are satisfied with it the way it is. If they are not, they can write to me and tell me or unsubscribe. In every Issue I do my best to provide the most attractive, useful and helpful content I can manage to encourage positive feedback.

65. Do you have any additional relationship building tips you care to share.

Just a note: I don' t have any exceptional experience with contests - not as a publisher, not as a subscriber elsewhere.

66. Do you have proven revenue producing techniques for maximum profit?

What methods are you using to generate revenue from your mailing list and which technique has proven to be the most profitable?

All of my entrepreneurial life I build my business relations on top quality, professional, reliable and credible services and products. And I apply exactly the same attitude in my Internet presence.

I always provide only services and products about which I am 100% sure that my clients/subscribers will benefit and profit from them. I would never recommend nor provide anything just to make a couple of dollars at the expense of my client/subscriber. I myself continuously learn and improve, watching and testing competition to be able to comply with the requirements and needs of my audience.

This is also my method I use in publishing Pathway To Success. I use personal recommendations, my own experience, negotiate special deals for my Subscribers, develop special items etc... I test, try and use every single item before I recommend it to my readers and, of course, watch closely the results, looking for ways to improve. And it definitely pays me.

67. Can you briefly describe the most profitable mailing/campaign you've done to date and why you think this out pulled the others?

Pathway To Success is not an advertising publication, it is a pure business newsletter, so I don' t run mailing campaigns.

I always provide content issues. Of course, some issues bring more revenue, some less. Now I receive pretty steady results but it took me quite a time before this happened.

If I look back now, I can see about three main stages:

- i) I started, began developing a reliable, working system, building the subscriber base, developing content, promotions, building credibility, feedback - no revenue at that time.

ii) credibility strengthened, feedback growing, subscribers flowing, promotion working - variable, but not yet steady revenues.

iii) system developed, improving, feedback growing, automatic promotion, steady grow of subscribers, optimal relationships with subscribers, JVs - steady revenue.

I shouldn' t forget one important point: I mentioned I changed Pathway into ' donation-ware' ie subscribers don' t have to pay any subscriber fee, no fee to get into archives, no fee to download Bonuses, software, books etc BUT invited to pay a small donation if they like the issue or any item. And they do. Again, the percentage varies but it' s about 11.5% on average, which is excellent.

68. Can you briefly describe the least profitable mailing/campaign you've done to date and why you think this was a disaster?

Since I don' t run mailing campaigns, I can' t talk about this. Of course, some issues are more successful, some less, the response to some issues and feedback are huge, with some issues it' s smaller. I always closely watch the results, all the time test various forms in detail, develop new items and always do my best to get better results with the new issue than I received from the previous. ' Pathway' is my only manual and live promotional tool, all my other traffic and promotion tools are fully automatic, impersonal, and at the same time it' s the easiest way for me to communicate with such a large community of targeted people willing to listen to me, trust me, buy from me.

I should also say that most of my long-term clients recruit from subscribers. It' s not so much important whether they buy exactly the item I recommend today but that they hire me when they need a service, a help, a product... It' s my permanent stream of targeted leads and that' s exactly where the true treasure lies and why publishing ' Pathway' deserves my absolute efforts and why it is worth the time I devote to the creation of every Issue.

69. Do you include paid advertising in your publication and why?

Yes, I do. I have two main reasons:

a) to enable people to promote their business without waiting for free advertising and get a prominent spot within the issue

b) to get additional revenue

But I limit it more and more. For instance, I never publish Solos, no Top Sponsor Ads etc.

70. What techniques do you use to ensure you achieve high response rates to the offers you send out to your mailing list?

Using my knowledge of the entrepreneurs' needs I recommend only top quality items for building and growing business, creating and increasing profits and building reliable incomes.

I don't use any specific technique; in fact, it's not me who loses if a reader doesn't get the item I recommend, it's them.

71. How often do you send offers to your readers and why do you choose to do so at this interval?

As I already said above, I don't send out offers, I publish a business publication containing items and special offers vital for a successful home business. I don't run an advertising agency. It's upon my readers whether they get an item or not.

And I never send out any follows-ups or any timed mailings.

72. Do you have any additional revenue producing tips you care to share.

Just another little note: I watch the mistake I want to mention in many new ezines. Publishers, mostly because they don't have any other income, start to publish an ezine and from the issue No 1 they send out offers, solo ads, even several times a day.

For a long-term successful publication, I strongly recommend to carefully plan the purpose, form, strategies and promotion for the ezine, build publisher's credibility, image and reliability, collect a decent subscriber base and then start to sell advertising and include occasional offers (- I would stress occasional), though I would avoid these with a content publication. I would never subscribe to an offline magazine if they sent me offers between issues.

You must first build your offer and then you can sell. Not the other way around. Then, many publishers complain they failed. I must admit I would be very surprised if they didn't.

73. What benefits does subscription to your Ezine bring to your subscribers?

I mention most of the advantages above, just to sum up:

- top quality content of permanent use
- Free publicity: permanent links
- easy, comfortable delivery
- plenty of top quality resources, tools, books, software...
- free advice, help

74. Which do you think is more successful: an ezine written in personal, conversational tone - personalized or strictly professional impersonal publication?

I wouldn't put it this way: both forms can be the same successful, it depends on the audience ie your target.

Since I publish for webmasters, home business owners ie entrepreneurs I strictly stick to a formal business publication. I myself would never subscribe or buy a magazine that would call me by my name and talk to me as if we went to school together. So, I don't use this form in Pathway. And my Subscribers seem to appreciate, otherwise they would unsubscribe.

75. Can you tell us how much time you have to devote to your Ezine weekly?

I don't count the time I spend by my manual digging and collecting the material because I don't do this only because of Pathway, and I don't spend any time working on Pathway the week I don't publish, also I don't count the time I spend personally communicating with individual subscribers.

So,

- writing and compiling the Issue 3 days before I publish: 2 days about 4-6 hours
- technical preparation, creation of the individual Versions: 1 day about 3-4 hours
- technical preparation of the broadcast incl the actual broadcast, backups etc about 4 hours
- subscriber advertising about 2 hours

Together: 13-16 hours plus collecting the material let's say 2-4 hours, to sum up about 15-20 hours every other week.

76. Have you got any tips how your subscribers can make use of such a big community, not talking about the resources they use for their businesses?

The main benefit is articles/ads/tips with permanent links: every item I publish for my subscribers are placed in the permanent Archives and my audience do read the Archives, so if you submit a quality article and use your permanent link, you will profit long-term. (And if you include your photo, the response is even much better.) While if you place a link that cease to work within a couple of weeks, your exposure is limited.

77. What are advantages/disadvantages in having a large/small list? What's the comparison?

Definitely, both have advantages and disadvantages:

To have a large list is mostly about advantages but there is a disadvantage because usually with small subscriber bases the subscribers are more responsive because it' s easier for you as the publisher to establish personal contacts with more people individually which is quite difficult with large numbers of subscribers and the volumes of mail you receive are huge. To cope with it is quite demanding.

Bonus Questions:

78. Finally, what do you love most about ezine publishing and why?

Basically I love all the individual tasks related to ezine publishing, it' s a creative work, every Issue is an original and it is a unique opportunity to be in a regular contact with a like-minded community of people, to have the possibility to communicate with them.

And it' s a very easy way to regularly update my site, to follow the trends, the Internet advancement, to stay on top.

What is the best: to know that you are useful, you actually help people succeed in what they wish for themselves. And when the people tell you they appreciate your work, it is the best reward.

79. All about numbers: Can you sum up your main numbers like opening rate, reading rates, unsubscription rate etc.

Yes, let' s start with the subscriber number: 135,000+

No of countries: 68 with the main 5 portions in:

USA: 48%

UK: 16%

Canada: 9%

Australia: 5%

Europe: 9%

Averages:

Bounces: 2,300 which is 1.7 %

Unsubscriptions: 20-30 which is 0.0185 %

(Note: the actual ' dissatisfaction' unsubscriptions are even lower because most people unsubscribe for many different reasons.)

Opening rate with the pure HTML Version: 99.99%

Opening rate with a combined text announcement and a clickthrough to HTML: 80%

Main Email Versions Popularity:

Digest: 64%

Full text: 25%
HTML: 11%

Others: eg
autoresponder: 21%
eBook Version Popularity: 16%

Direct Revenue: donations, ads plus direct sales: 8.5-11.8%

A bit of Site Stats:
Monthly Average Visitor No: 118576.16
Monthly Average Hit No: 450289.75
Daily Average Download KB: 531016.80
Session Average Time Spent: 551.57 s

Basic facts about Pathway To Success Ezine:

Newsletter Title: Pathway To Success
Published since 2000
Subscriber Number: 135,000+

Description: Published every other Sunday, our Ezine helps Subscribers to succeed in their online business, providing them with top webmaster resources, hot marketing tips, profitable business opportunities, FREE advertising, articles, motivational reading, FREE Web Lions' Library, Subscriber Corner, Bonuses and more.

Main visitor pages:

<http://www.thecassiopeia.com/Portal/>

<http://www.thecassiopeia.com/Portal/Newsletter.html>

**Internet publications are much more powerful than offline
in their massive reach, immediacy and interactivity.**

**I don't know whether it is good or bad
that so few people realize and make full use
of it to their advantage.**

Irena Whitfield

About the Author:

Irena Whitfield is an Internet Business Consultant helping people to succeed in their online home business providing them with webmaster resources, business, e-publishing and webmaster services, books and tools vital for every successful small business. She says:



' I have been in business for over 15 years and I use my rich experience to help people in the main three stages:

- people starting online: to help them identify their needs and possibilities, set up and build their system and make it profitable within an acceptable period of time even on a limited budget.
- people having online experience or even a presence of a kind but not satisfied with the income they make, either not yet making any or not enough: I help find the problem and its solution - the most popular service and my great strength
- online people experiencing various problems: this is a wide scope ranging from mastering one's own computer through discipline, entrepreneurial and motivational problems to setting up and running individual tasks like starting and improving an ezine, a shop, an agency...

All my services are based on the analysis of the individual situation - human and financial. You can find more about me, my services and products here:

<http://www.thecassiopeia.com/>

<http://www.thecassiopeia.com/InternetBusinessConsultant.html>

<http://www.irenawhitfield.com/>

My bestselling ebooks are excellent self-help tools:

<http://www.thecassiopeia.com/ePublishing/7Stars.html>

<http://www.thecassiopeia.com/ePublishing/TheSuccessSeeds.html>

<http://www.thecassiopeia.com/ePublishing/SuccessTips.html>

You can contact me directly at:

<http://www.thecassiopeia.com/WebLions/Pathway/Feedback.html>

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