



HOW TO

SELL ONLINE

**A GUIDE TO STARTING AN ONLINE
BUSINESS**



How to Sell Online

Learning how to sell is the most important part in any business. As great sales equal great profit.

You can have a great idea, product, or service you render, but if you are unable to convince anyone to buy your product or service, then all you will have at the end is wasted time and resources.

I have come to learn from experience, that selling online is very similar to selling in the physical world. The secret is simple, people do not buy products or services, people buy trust. Now you might be wondering, what do I mean by 'people buy trust' ? People will only buy from you when they trust you. So, it is very important for a business to build trust before it goes full force into selling.

I remember some years ago when I went out to buy my first phone. I went to the market looking for a new phone but did not know anyone, or who to buy from. So, I became very scared because I had the money to buy a phone, but did not know who I could trust to buy the phone from.

So, I began thinking until I remembered a shop, I had heard my friend speak of that sold good phones, and it was there I finally went to buy my phone.

Now the lesson behind this story is very simple, you will always lose, or might never have a customer as a business until you learn to gain trust!

Now this book is set to teaching you how to build that trust. As without trust you will not be able to sell anything, let alone sell online. By end of this book, you will have an idea and the mindset it takes to sell anything online.

Chapter 1: Build an Online Presence

Now, many rush into selling without first having any form of presence online. Having an online presence is the same as having a physical store. Your physical store is your physical presence. Your physical store is what gives your customers the confidence to trust and buy from you.

Have you ever walked into a barbing shop or hair salon that was properly tiled, ac tight, and had beautiful chairs, mirrors, and staff that were nicely dressed. Before speaking with anyone, you will already feel that your hair will be properly taken care of in that salon.

The same thing online, you will need to have an online store or presence, that when people find you for the first time, they will feel you already have the solution to their problem before even speaking with you.

You can build your online presence either by having a website or a social page. The difference between the two is one is free while the other is not.

You can start a social page for free but you will need some start-up budget to have a website.

Now, I will be talking more on building an online presence via social media in this book, as I will like keep everything as simple as possible, as I am assuming that whoever is reading this book is still in the starting phase of their online business.

Now, having a social media page is very simple, you could easily create one on:

Facebook

Instagram

Twitter, or

YouTube

You can create any of these accounts in minutes and all for free. Now, some businesses create these accounts and just end there, and do nothing else. This is a mistake I see a lot.

Coming to someone's Instagram page and seeing just 3 posts, and the last time they posted was 3 months ago. And I am like 'Wow... Does this business still exist?'

One must realize that their social media page is their online store. If you walk into a physical store, you will expect to see a show-glass or shelf which displays the products that the store is selling.

The same also with an online store. If I come to a social media page, I expect to see a display of what that business is selling. I also expect to see a couple of different posts on that page, and see the first post being very recent also.

This is the first step to building trust.

For example, let's say you sell and make hair for ladies, and you then wish to take your business online to reach more potential customers. You then create an Instagram page where you post the hair products or services you are selling. Your Instagram page will then serve as a display to your customers about your business.

Now, this also works for every other business too. Having an online store where your customers can come to and interact with your business is the first step to selling online.

Chapter 2: Build your Store

Once you have set up your online store (your social media page). The next thing to do is build your content on your page.

Your posts are your content!

You will have to post content that is relevant to your business. Content is important because your content controls how people see your business. What you post on your page can either make someone buy from you or walk away from you. So, not posting at all or posting irregularly is a really terrible mistake.

If you sell clothes, post about it on your page. Put in the time and effort to post eye-catching content. Do not just post half-heartedly, have high quality posts that will make your ideal customer know your business is the solution they have been looking for.

They say, you should always dress the way you want to be addressed. In the same way, let your online store, be dressed the way you want your customers to address it.

Now, making high quality posts is very easy. You can either do it yourself or pay someone else to do it for you, but either which way, it should always be done. Now, I don't really advise paying someone except your business has grown to the point that you no longer have the time to do it yourself.

With your smartphone you can create high quality posts, flyers, videos, and even logos with apps like Canva and Inshot. You should also have a good phone camera to take nice pictures and videos with. Take note I did not use the word 'own'.

Currently the best phone as regards camera is Apple's own iPhone, although some debate it with Samsung's Galaxy phone. Whichever one you prefer, you can use.

Now you do not need to go and buy an expensive iPhone, if you do not already have one. You can simply start by using the iPhone of your friend or colleague.

You might be shocked to believe, though you might not have an iPhone or a good camera phone, you might actually know someone who does. You can then meet up with that person, and ask them if you could use

their phone to take some pictures. You can then take the phone and make use of it in minutes, return it back, and collect your pictures. That simple!

If what you want to take a picture of is in a different location, you can always ask your friend or colleague to meet you up there. You be kind enough to pay their transport and buy them something to eat for all the stress, in the end you will save yourself a lot more than going to buy a new phone just to take pictures, if you do not already have one.

So, with that, you will have everything you need to get your social media page to look good and amazing.

Now, as regards creating flyers, you can always use Canva for that. It is a very easy app to use. So do ensure to build your online store to look amazing.

I personally use Facebook and Instagram for my online stores, and connect it to WhatsApp for further marketing.

Chapter 3: Run Ads

Now, what keeps every business going is consistent sales. Without reoccurring sales, it won't be long before a business could fold up.

Now, this is where some business owners get it wrong. As a business you must know who your customers are, because every business has an ideal customer. Some businesses sell best to youths, while some businesses are meant to sell to the elderly, and some businesses can only sell to a particular gender. So, it is very important you know who your customers are - their age, demographics, and location.

Also, as a business it is wise not to put all your hopes in getting your customers come from your friends and family, or the people on your contact list. Your daily customers will usually come from people who you are yet to meet. People who do not know you yet. In marketing, they are called 'Cold audiences'.

You can still sell to your friends and family, though many times they will majorly buy from you just to support you in the beginning, as they do not really have the plans of making it a long-term business relationship. So,

when you ask them to buy from you again, it will not be long before they start avoiding you.

So, always have the wisdom to go after people who do not know you. Now there are two ways to do this, either organically or with paid ads.

Organically simply means the algorithm makes your post visible to more people if your content is naturally engaging, making more people able to find you.

Then you have paid ads, this is when you pay for your content to appear in front of as many people as possible within a specific agreed daily budget. With this, you can get a lot of people to start interacting with your business if they like and click on your posts.

Now, you can reach out to new potential customers either organically or with paid ads. I personally advise every business to use both strategies. Organically for long-term goals, and paid ads for short-term goals.

So, we will currently be speaking in the scope of short-term results in this book.

Now in the previous chapter we spoke about DIY when it came to creating content, but under running ads I will not advise on DIY. As running ads can be very technical, and if you do not know what you are fully doing, it could get your account banned.

So, this is the part where you will finally need to bring out money. Up until now, we have have spoken about having everything at low cost or barely paying anything.

But when it comes to running ads, you will need to put some money on the table to hire a trusted digital marketer, and to have a budget to which you run your ads with.

Now, you can start running ads on Facebook for as little as N450 a day (that is a minimum of \$1 at CBN rate), this N450 is outside VAT. And in a day, N450 can get over 1,000 Nigerians to see your ad.

Do note that the price of running ads in different countries varies. With N450, running a Facebook ad in Nigeria, 1,000 people could see your ad, whereas in the US running a Facebook ad with N450, could get you only 11 or 20 people to see your ad throughout the whole day.

You can also run ads on Instagram, Twitter and YouTube.

Currently Facebook, Instagram, and WhatsApp are all tied to one Company, which is Meta owned by Mark Zuckerberg. So, running ads on these platforms are very connected.

I personally run ads for my business using the platforms of Meta. I make use of Facebook, Instagram, and WhatsApp to the fullest.

Digital marketing is very important in every online business. But I will not be able to explain much on it because it will go beyond the scope I intended for this book.

But I am currently working on another book where I will talk more on digital marketing and teach in depth on how to run ads, but in the meantime, you can be running ads for your online business by hiring a digital marketer of your choice.

Chapter 4: WhatsApp Marketing

Now, WhatsApp is a very powerful platform and the last step you need for selling online, as it is great platform for engaging with and messaging your customers.

The app comes with two types that can easily be downloaded on your device, the personal WhatsApp and the Business WhatsApp. If you are doing anything related to business, my advice is to use the business WhatsApp as it has the tools you need to succeed in engaging and selling to your customers effectively.

P.S. if you hire a digital marketer, tell your marketer to set your campaign objectives to generate your leads or sales on WhatsApp

So, the first thing you want to establish when someone messages on WhatsApp is trust, because this person does not know you. So, you must bear in mind, you have to establish trust if not, you might lose a good and potential customer.

This is where your online store comes into play, as it will show your customers proof of your business, and provide them with the assurance that you will deliver great and quality services to them at the end.

Like I said in the earlier chapters, if your social media page looks great, it will make establishing trust a lot easier.

Then once you have established the trust, you move on to negotiation, and close the deal with your customer.

You can choose to either collect your payments before or after you've delivered your service, or in pieces, it depends on which one works better for you and your business.

Please note if you actually run a product-based business which involves shipping and delivery, you should actually receive your payments first. Getting paid before or after, is more of a choice for service-based businesses.

Now coming to the end of this book, I have given a little formula for you on how to sell online. I use this formula personally, and it has helped me in growing my business greatly, in fact it is from this formula that I believe

you came in contact with this book or maybe from a friend who bought it, and shared it with you.

I wrote this book specifically to give you a roadmap on how to sell online, and though I did not dive fully into the running of ads, and the tactics I use in my WhatsApp marketing, but I do believe anyone who follows through what has been written in each chapter of this book will have the right foundation on how to sell online.

And lastly, I pray that the content of this book will bring great help to you and your business, and may the Lord be with you always.