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Ebook Business Essentials - How To Write An Ebook The Goal-Oriented Way

Writing can generally be a fluid creative process but it is easy for this process to spiral off track and out of control. It is fine to allow creative license but this should be contained within the overall process and overall goal of the eBook you are writing.

It is far easier to treat your eBook business like creating a tangible product (such as a car). In doing so, the 'product' should have an early prototyping phase where ideas, ideation (the creation of more ideas) and innovation (the commercializing of inventions) can be nurtured. Prototyping eBook ideas can include activities such as creating mind-maps, drawing up story line arcs, writing rough drawing storyboards (high level chapters or stages of your book), etc.

Once you have focused in on core ideas for your book it is time to move on to the implementation phase - writing your ebook. The following goal-oriented stages define a project plan for how to write an ebook to schedule while never losing sight of the book's goal.

Define the books goal/objective.

Set the goal or goals for your book. Don't try to muddy the waters with a multitude of goals. Think of any of your favourite books and they probably have a small amount of objectives and one central goal.

Specify all the tasks involved in writing the book.

Starting with the chapters to complete is a good starting point. Add in tasks for design, proof-reading, research, interviews, etc. Define rough estimates for how much effort each will take (down to a minimum of a half-day). If a task takes over 5 days then split it into smaller chunks (it is easier to track this way).

Highlight those jobs that require external help; source and schedule their time early on.

Using external researchers, book designers and arranging/completing interviews for your book all take time and are dependent on other people's (busy) schedules. Contact these people early on and get this work progressing ahead of time.

Sum up the level of effort and add in contingency time.

Add an extra ten to twenty percent to the overall duration of your project for those unforeseen things which may arise. The percentage will vary and only experience can guide the individual into knowing their own contingency level.

So by this point, you have all the tasks and some idea of how long they will take. Next you wish to schedule these out in your diary, wall calendar, spread sheet or project plan (e.g. using MS Project). What method you use is up to you. The very action of planning what work gets done, on which days, lets you visualize the volume of work and how each day's work incrementally progresses the books completion.

Keep on top of things as you implement your plan so that you always know if you are on track.

Writing ebooks involves the daily graft of putting in the work producing X words per day. Revert back to your plan each evening to establish how the day went, any contingency that was used up, unforeseen issues that arose and the plan for the following day.

Report milestones.

Any project plan should have natural minor and major milestones. These can be chapters/sections/paragraphs. Work each day with a goal of the next milestone to keep motivation levels up. It is easier to think of only have 1,000 words to an end of chapter milestone, rather than the ominous prospect of 20,000 words to the end of the book. Track these milestones in a simple report/document.

Pat yourself on the back for a job well done. Last thing to do is a post-mortem.

You're done! Now you have completed your plan, take a look back at what was done right/wrong and how accurate your estimates were. Note down items you had not planned for which affected your time-lines (delays with research/other work commitments/etc.) so that your next eBook will have more predictable time-lines of delivery. Gauge what direction your own eBook business is taking and if there are smarter ways of creating your content.

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