DROWNING IN DEBT, DRINK & DREAMS

BY MICHAEL CHENEY



BASED ON A TRUE STORY







I'm going to tell you a powerful true story.

It's the real-life story of how I got started online, how I lost it all (multiple times) and what finally helped me to break through.

You will laugh, you will cry and you will discover how to finally succeed online.

Chapter 1:

The story starts in 1998...

I graduated from university and took a job with an oil company in Scotland.

It was sold to me as the opportunity of a lifetime.



When the plane landed at Aberdeen airport I felt sick with nerves.

This was my first-ever job and here I was, 500 miles from home not knowing a single person.

The cab driver had such a thick accent I couldn't understand a word he said.

I just nodded at everything and hoped he wouldn't notice as he drove me to my new future.

I was a carefree, long-haired, free-spirited, music lover at university so working for someone else didn't exactly fill me with excitement.

But society had impressed upon me the so-called importance of getting a job and earning a crust.

It didn't take long for me to realize the B.S. I had walked into...

The office politics drove me demented.



People bitching behind each other's backs, people doing as little as they could to try and get paid as much as they could.

I was living in a huge conspiracy.

It was like The Matrix - I saw right through the illusion.

It hit me hard when I was asked to cover for a woman who went on maternity leave.

This was supposed to be a higher position of some importance.

She proceeded to train me for months in a role that, as it turned out, was completely fabricated by herself;

Nothing she did was required by the company.

I smelt B.S. and blew the whistle.

How on earth could anyone swallow all this crap for 40 years of their life?

One day, my 57-year old boss took me aside and said;



"I'm just holding on until I retire, so I can do something I enjoy."

Screw that.

I looked at everyone in the office differently after that.

I noticed a strange look in their eyes.

They had no sparkle, no joy, no life.

The lights had gone out.

They were all just slaves to their job - doing the bare minimum to take home the minimum pay and try to survive another month.

There was no way this was going to be my life.

No way.

During this I was drinking a lot of alcohol to try and cope with living a lie.



I hated the job with a passion.

It gave me nightmares.

My boss was an utter power-hungry bitch who loved nothing more than putting people down and throwing insults all day.

I would often go back to my one-bedroom apartment after a day's slog and fall fast asleep for hours.

My body was breaking down due to the stress.

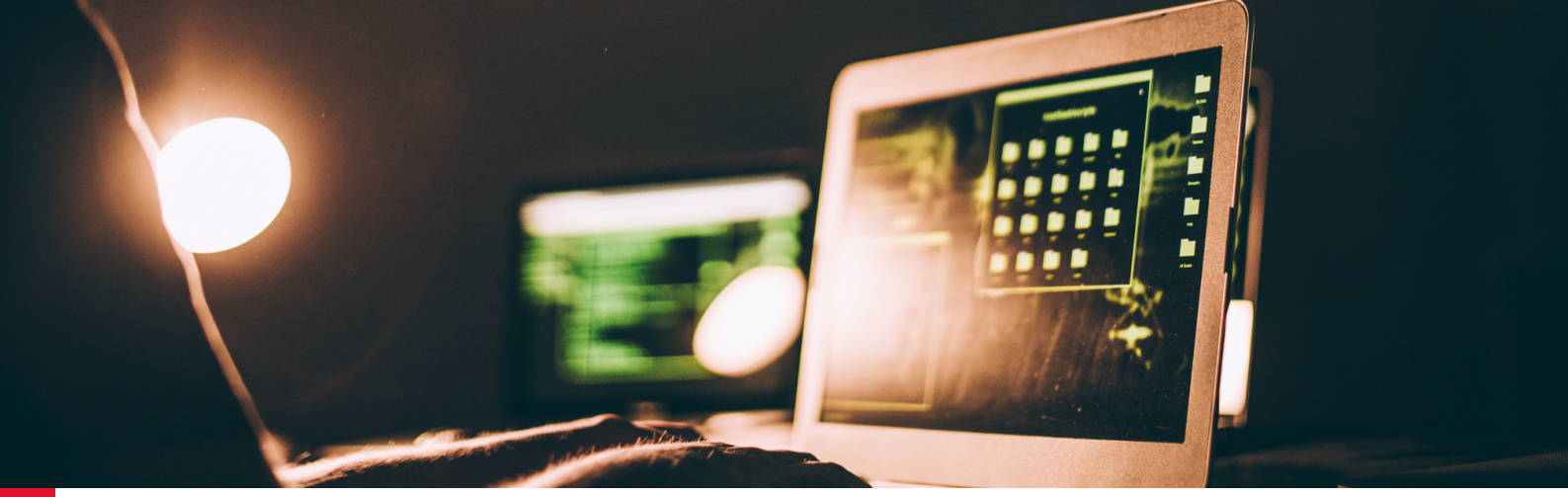
I couldn't handle it.

At around this time, the internet was really taking off and that DID excite me.

Ever since 1995, I'd been creating websites, and I saw it as a possible way out from the corporate hell I was stuck in.

I just didn't know HOW...

So in 1999 I entered those five little words into the search box on Google;



"**how to make money online**"

If only I knew then, what I know now (and will share with you in the next chapters) - I could have saved myself the next two years of hell.

You see...

What started out as a passing interest, turned into an addiction.

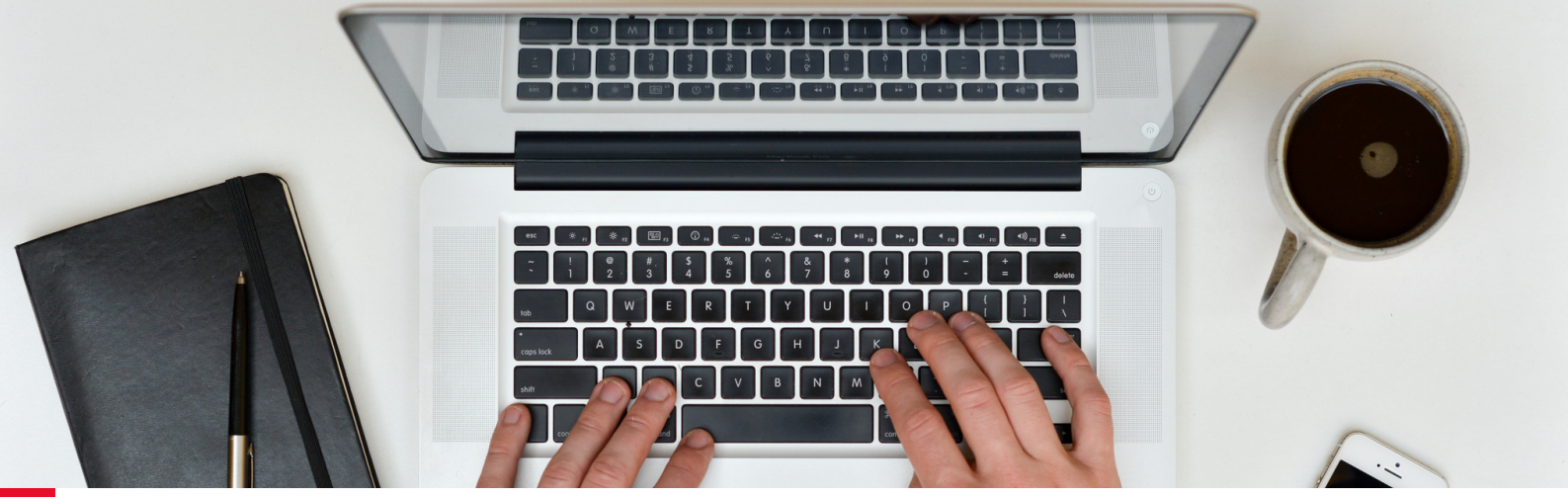
An obsession.

I threw all my time and all my money at it.

This was a recipe for disaster because I was already deep in debt.

Due to an admin error, the company I worked for had put me on the wrong tax code.

So I was taking home more money than I was supposed to, and a big tax bill (unbeknownst to me) was heading my way.



Even with the inflated salary, it wasn't enough to make a dent in all my debts - racked up with years of student loans and drinking heavily.

It soon became clear to me that making it online was no longer a nice-to-have, but a MUST-HAVE.

I threw everything at it for two years straight;

During every lunch break, I would literally run back to my little apartment, just to spend 45 minutes online trying to crack the code.

After work I would throw some quick junk food down my neck and then from 6pm to midnight I would feverishly work away online trying to work out how to make money online.

I would often wake up exhausted, still in front of an old-fashioned monitor, and have to run to work without breakfast.

I was desperate.

Everyone was laughing at me;



My friend and also my colleagues at work thought I was living in cloud cuckoo land trying to make money online;

The dotcom bubble had just burst and they thought the internet was a passing fad.

"You're wasting your time."

"Why don't you come out any more?"

"Just stick to your job mate, at least it pays you something."

They didn't understand.

A fire had been lit in my belly and there was no extinguishing it.

At least so I thought - but I'll save that for a later chapter.

I was drinking lots to try and deal with the stress, but it only made things worse.

How my girlfriend put up with me back then, I'll never know.



There'd be times where we'd have these huge heart-wrenching bust-ups over how much money I'd spent online with nothing to show for it.

And how I was never there for her because I was always "stuck to that bloody computer!".

I hated myself;

"Maybe I should just cower down, bend over and accept a life of 9-to-5 slavery like everyone else?", I thought to myself.

Were my friends right?

Was this just some stupid pipe dream that would never come true?

Just as I was starting to feel down about it all I got a kick to the stomach I never saw coming...

I got home one day and there it was on the doormat;

An envelope from Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs.



Never good.

I opened the envelope and started cautiously reading the letter;

"*We regret to inform you, that you have been under-paying tax and, as a result, now owe $10,000 in unpaid taxation. You have 30 days to make payment or face fines and/or penalties.*"

My hands started trembling, my vision went blurry as tears filled my eyes and the dusty hallway started spinning as I slumped to the ground.

I was done.

How the hell was I going to get myself out of this hole?

THE BIG BREAKTHROUGH?





Last time we spoke about how I was stuck in the job from hell, had just got hit with a big tax bill, and was wasting thousands trying to crack the internet marketing code.

This time we're getting into how I managed to get a big breakthrough and turn everything around.

But first, let's talk about the biggest decision I ever made...

You see;

Once I'd had the epiphany (I'll come onto that in a second) I faced a choice;

Follow my heart, or follow my head.

I'm sure, like me, you've faced many similar situations in your life.

I can honestly tell you - if I had decided to follow my head on this one, I would still be broke living in a one-bed apartment and hating myself and my life.

The problem is;



We get taught that listening to your head and mind is what matters.

This is bullcrap.

Logic, reasoning and over ANALysis are major dream-killers.

You think Bill Gates, Jeff Bezos or Elon Musk listened to logic and reasoning when making their dreams come true?

You need to listen to your heart and to your gut.

I'm no different;

Call it divine intervention or whatever you like -

When I was faced with the YES/NO decision I'm about to share with you, I went with my heart and it made me millions.

So going back to this epiphany then...

There I was - crumpled on the floor of the hall, staring at this $10,000 tax bill, up to my eyeballs in debt and hating my job.



I was drinking my own bodyweight in alcohol every week and still couldn't crack the internet marketing code;

The internet was supposed to be my ticket out of this mess.

I'd poured everything into it for two years straight.

Then it struck me;

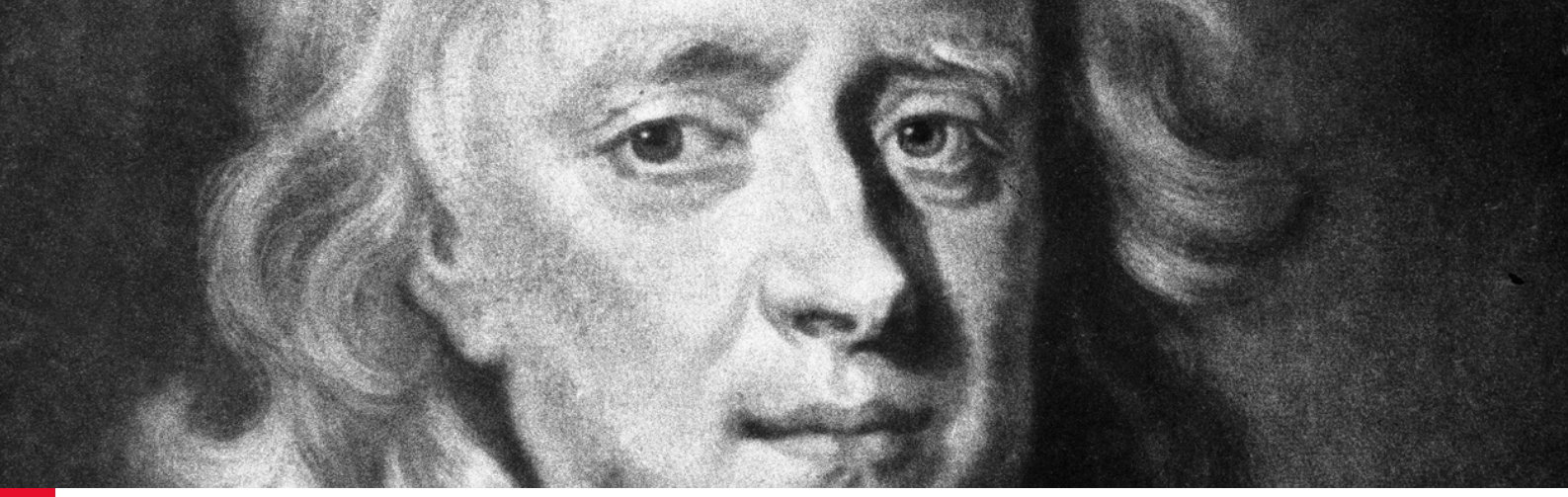
"Someone else must have been through this. Someone else must have got through this situation and survived."

I felt the cold floorboards underneath me and the weight of the world pushing down on top of me.

Gravity had forced me to my knees.

At that very moment it sparked a memory of a lecture I'd had at university.

It was about the scientist who discovered gravity - Isaac Newton.



Newton was one of the most successful and brilliant scientists of all time...

Although he lived 350 years ago - the formulas he devised for calculating gravity are used to this very day to help satellites and spacecraft navigate through space.

Incredible.

But he was a humble man.

In 1675 he wrote a letter to a fellow scientist.

In this moment of desperation, his words came back to me in a flash;

"If I have seen further, it is by standing on the shoulders of giants."

"That's it", I thought.

"Standing on the shoulders of giants."

I don't need to do everything my own way.



I should stop trying to reinvent the wheel and stop trying to come up with my own way of doing things online.

I should just find someone who has done what I want to do and get them to SHOW ME THE PROCESS.

Find a process that works, Michael, find a giant and stand on their shoulders!

In an instant, a seemingly endless barrage of ideas started racing through my mind;

- I could just model a proven process used by an online "giant"
- If I find the right giant they can help me get to where they are
- I could finally quit my job
- Maybe I will be able to pay off all these debts
- I can't wait to see the looks on people's faces at work when they see me finally succeed
- I just need to find the right person and establish contact
- How soon can I find someone?
- Maybe there is a giant living close-by to me right now?



It didn't take long for me to find the giant.

It was someone I had been following online for a long time.

I reached out to him with my desperate plea.

He said he could help me but there was a problem;

The only way to meet him was to take a 952-mile flight to London.

I didn't have the money.

But I had to get there and he only had a 2-hour window where he could meet me.

I searched for a plane ticket online and my heart sank...

The ticket was going to cost $1000.

My stomach tied itself in knots thinking about it.

This was rent money I couldn't really afford to spend.



It would put me even further in the hole...

But then my heart took over the decision-making process;

If I was going to dig myself out of this mess and finally break through, staying home wasn't even an option.

The decision had already been made for me.

I needed to stand on the shoulders of giants.

I bought the ticket...

A week later I was climbing up the steps of the plane, with my hopes and dreams hanging by a thread...


WE'RE GOING TO NEED
A BIGGER BANK



In the last Chapter we got to the point where I was just stepping onto the plane.

I was full of excitement and nervousness, to go and meet the giant who would hopefully change everything for me.

It would turn out to be a pivotal moment in my life - we'll come onto it in a second...

But first -

Let's talk about the expectations I had before embarking on that fateful journey.

All I wanted was a PROCESS that worked.

I wasn't looking for miracles, for millions or even for an easy way to the top.

I was just sick of wasting all my time and money online and not having anything to show for it.

I just wanted something that worked which I could copy.



There must be someone who has cracked this code and can show me, step-by-step, exactly what I need to do.

I knew I was missing some key piece of the jigsaw.

The thought of having to "work for the man" for the rest of my life, thoroughly depressed me.

Back then I used to drag my feet on the way to work, feeling heavier and heavier with every step.

Things got so bad I actually had an "Escape the 9-to-5" soundtrack on my MP3 player.

It included the tune from the movie "The Great Escape".

You know the one?

Where the prisoners of war secretly tunnel their way to victory under the unknowing Nazi guards.

This is what I felt like;



A prisoner, held against my will, in a system I could not escape...

When the plane touched down at Heathrow airport a sickening feeling overwhelmed me.

Rather than excitement I was now filled with palm-sweaty dread;

"Have I just wasted my last $1000 on this ticket?"
"Is this guy a scammer?"
"What if this doesn't work?"

My mind was racing and so was my pulse.

I left the airport and headed to the hotel nearby, where the giant said he would meet me.

I'd only ever seen him online, so I couldn't be sure exactly what he would look like in real life.

After what felt like an eternity waiting in the hotel lobby, the elevator finally pinged, the doors slid open and there he was -



A real life internet marketing "giant".

I nervously shook his hand with a sweaty palm and introduced myself.

I felt like a nobody.

I WAS a nobody.

We took a seat in the lounge area of the hotel and he began talking.

I wanted to take notes, but the bombs he was dropping were so amazing I didn't have chance.

My mind was spinning with the possibilities and potential of what he was sharing with me.

He mapped out an entire process I could follow directly to the money.

The funny thing is -

I wasn't that far off with what I'd been doing;



There were just a few tweaks here and there.

I had been missing a piece of the puzzle and now it was filled.

As it turns out -

This internet marketing celebrity was flying back to the States that very same day.

But I wanted to spend as much time with him as I could.

I knew this was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to spend a few hours with a super-successful and wealthy internet marketer.

There was no way I was going to pass this up or miss out.

I had to take full advantage of every minute I could get with him.

So I escorted him to the airport and we even stopped for a quick McDonalds on the way.



I was in awe - I couldn't believe I'd been lucky enough to spend time with this guy.

That day changed me forever.

I'd learned so much, but the incredible thing was -

I'd only spent 2 hours with this guy.

Insane.

On my flight back home I took pages and pages of notes.

I tried to capture everything I'd learned about this new process so I could get to work on it ASAP.

I barely slept that night and I think my girlfriend thought I was crazy, because I was ranting and raving about how our lives would never be the same again.

The very next day I set to work applying what I'd learned.

The money wasn't instant but the feeling of clarity, focus and relief of having a system that worked definitely was.



When you have a clear plan and system to work to, everything is much easier.

You don't take any wrong turns.

You know what you need to do every step of the way.

No more wasted time.

No more wasted energy.

And no more wasted money.

The first signs of success came shortly after.

Over two years of failures and only seeing money go out and then, finally, I got my first ever sale online.

What a feeling!

I stared at the screen in disbelief yet there it was, as clear as day;

"Sale: $9.95"



I couldn't believe it.

It felt like a million dollars.

There was a rush of adrenaline up my spine and my head tingled with the sensation.

I had made money online.

I whooped, hollered and punched the air.

My neighbors will have heard me through the thin walls of the crappy apartment block - they probably thought I'd won the lottery.

But in a way - it was even better than that...

It was a repeatable system.

Someone on the internet (over in Utah, USA as it happened) had just paid me $9.95.

Wow.



This is real.

This really is happening.

I am on my way.

Now I had a system that worked. I was unstoppable.

I ran home from work every day and worked the system, it was easy;

The more time I put into it, the more sales I got out.

It wasn't all for nothing any more.

It wasn't trial and error any more.

And then, things really started to take off.

The sales just grew and grew.

I decided to quit my job to grow things even faster.



What a feeling it was to walk into work that day with my letter of resignation in my hand.

I was smiling ear to ear as I handed it over to my boss.

Take that.

She would be stuck there, chowing down on corporate B.S. for the rest of her sad life - and I was free.

I walked out of the office that day and whistled the tune to The Great Escape movie;

I had made it.

I was no longer a 9-to-5 slave.

But I wasn't done yet...

Not by a long shot.

As each day passed I worked the system more and more.

The sales were coming in faster than I could count them.



It was time to take things to the next level.

I followed a process the expert taught me and made an eye-watering $250,000 in a week.

Yes, a quarter of a million dollars.

This was unbelievable to me.

My girlfriend and I literally danced around our new (much bigger) apartment as it was happening.

The dream of financial freedom was becoming a reachable reality.

I remember holding her hands, looking into her eyes and saying;

"We will never have to worry about money ever again."

(Little did I know what would happen a short time later however, but I'm getting ahead of myself here, you'll find out about that disaster in a later chapter).



I now had an internet business with thousands of paying customers, an email list of 24,000 people and a workable system to keep growing and getting more sales.

But this wasn't even the best part...

I soon learned the most unexpected benefits about having an internet business.

I had entered a totally new world which was alien to me.

As an outsider I wasn't sure I would be accepted at first.

It didn't take me long to realize the world of internet marketing had key players, certain ways of operating and some dark, shady characters too.

There are lots of things they don't tell you until you're on the inside.

Secrets.

Things only those inside the "internet marketing mafia" know.


SECRETS OF THE
INTERNET
MARKETING
MAFIA



The last time we spoke, I shared with you how I finally got a working system to make money online.

I was making more money than I'd ever seen in my life.

It felt like being strapped to a rocket.

Exhilarating and unstoppable.

But at the same time all this was going on, something strange was happening...

I began to feel like I was part of a new, underground world -

A strange, alien place I didn't even know existed before.

Without knowing it, I had been thrust into the "Internet Marketing Mafia".

Deep within its ranks there are some closely-guarded secrets which are never discussed.

But all that changes today because;



I'm going to share these little-known secrets with you in a second, but first...

Let's talk about the hidden benefits of having a successful online business.

You see;

Like most people, I started out online to get money, lots of money.

I thought that was really the number one benefit to doing this.

I needed this thing to work, so I could pay off my debts, quit my job and live the life of my dreams.

But the bizarre thing is, as amazing as all that money was (and I would soon lose it all anyway, as you'll discover in the next Chapter), there were things happening to me which had an even greater impact...

I'd heard this phrase from my coach;



"The most valuable thing about becoming wealthy is not what you get, but who you become."

I didn't get it.

How could anything be more valuable than the money itself?

But now it was starting to make sense...

I started getting emails and messages from my students, telling me how I'd changed their lives for the better.

There was Shannon - who quit her job, bought her dream house and moved to Hawaii.

Then there was Dan - who made so much money, he could stop selling cars for a living and be at home with his family.

And there was a 15-year old kid called David, from Manchester - who made so much fast money, he paid for three years studying at an expensive university in one single week while he was still at school.



Yes - something BIG was happening, something more important than money...

I was making a difference.

I was leaving a legacy.

I was changing lives.

You start out in this game trying to help #1 - yourself.

And that's only right -

You won't get out of the starting gate unless you have that attitude.

But then it dawns on you;

This is all much bigger and much more important than you could have imagined.

Having a successful internet business gives you the power to change the world.



Woah.

And here I was -

Thinking this was just about putting money in my bank account.

Other surprise benefits started popping up as well;

I was forming lifelong connections and relationships with like-minded people.

Friends for life.

By pushing on to ever greater heights I also found myself, as my coach told me, "becoming more and giving more".

I was turning into a very wealthy person, despite myself.

And the money was merely the cherry on top.

Every area of my life started improving one by one;

I quit drinking.



I started exercising every day.

My diet went from junk to healthy.

The realization that I was now shaping the lives of thousands of people all over the world gave me perhaps the biggest prize of them all...

Something worth even more than a few million in the bank...

PURPOSE.

I finally found my purpose and drive in life.

Having that fire inside your belly which gets you up early, keeps you up late and gives you goosebumps of excitement every day of your life is, well, PRICELESS.

So those were just some of the hidden benefits I'd started to enjoy.

And these came on top of all the things you would expect to happen when you get wealthy online;



Money, vacations, toys, houses etc.

In addition to these hidden benefits I realized I was now privy to some insider secrets being part of the "Internet Marketing Mafia"...

I was being invited to private events left, right and center.

In any given week I'd be masterminding with the biggest names online in 8-figure condos, and the next I'd be rubbing shoulders with multi-millionaires in Vegas.

It was insane.

I was jet-setting all over the world, spending time on yachts, brainstorming in penthouses and chewing the fat with some of the richest marketers on the planet.

And here are the 3 biggest secrets I learned;

Secret #1. The richest people have all been coached to success



None of the "geniuses" and rich marketers you see, invented the entire process.

I used to look up to these guys as superhuman Gods.

The untouchables.

As if they were born with some innate ability to know exactly what to do.

But the truth is;

Nobody gets there on their own.

You cannot succeed without a coach or expert to show you the right process and the right way to do things.

I learned this one the hard way.

Secret #2. Every overnight success story you see has been years in the making

I didn't realize this at first and it hit me hard.



Whenever I'd see one of these success stories online, I would beat myself up;

"Why can they do this and I can't?"

"How come they're making all this money, and I'm working harder, but not making anything?"

You drive yourself demented.

The truth is;

This takes time and work.

And most people don't have the balls or determination to stick to it long enough to succeed.

But worse still -

They are doing the WRONG stuff or trying to make it on their own.



The only way to dramatically shortcut to success is by getting a proven system and a coach to guide you through it.

Otherwise, you're just alone in the internet marketing wilderness, fighting everything on your own.

Secret #3. Hard work does not equal success

I was in denial about this one for the longest time.

"Surely if I put in longer hours than everyone else I will make more money?"

"If I work harder than anyone else won't I succeed quicker?"

Bzzzzzzt.

Wrong.

Hard work only pays off, if you are working on a system that works.



If you're scrabbling around like a blind man, in a dark room, making stuff up as you go, then NO amount of work will lead to success.

You need a system that works.

Then, and only then, will putting more effort into your venture actually pay off.

These were just some of things I quickly learned once I'd been accepted into the inner circle.

You start to spot trends...

From the guy I spoke to who was sailing his yacht round Europe, to the adrenaline-junkie I met who booked his flight on the first tourist rocket going into space;

You need to be coached by someone who has gone before you, and is already successful.

And BELIEFS are critical in this...



When I got into internet marketing I had a set of FALSE BELIEFS which limited my capacity to be successful.

In fact -

These dumb-ass beliefs stopped me from making money for years.

I'm sharing them with you here in the hope you avoid this happening to you.

Dumb-Ass Belief #1

I believed that I needed to spend tens of thousands of dollars to break through.

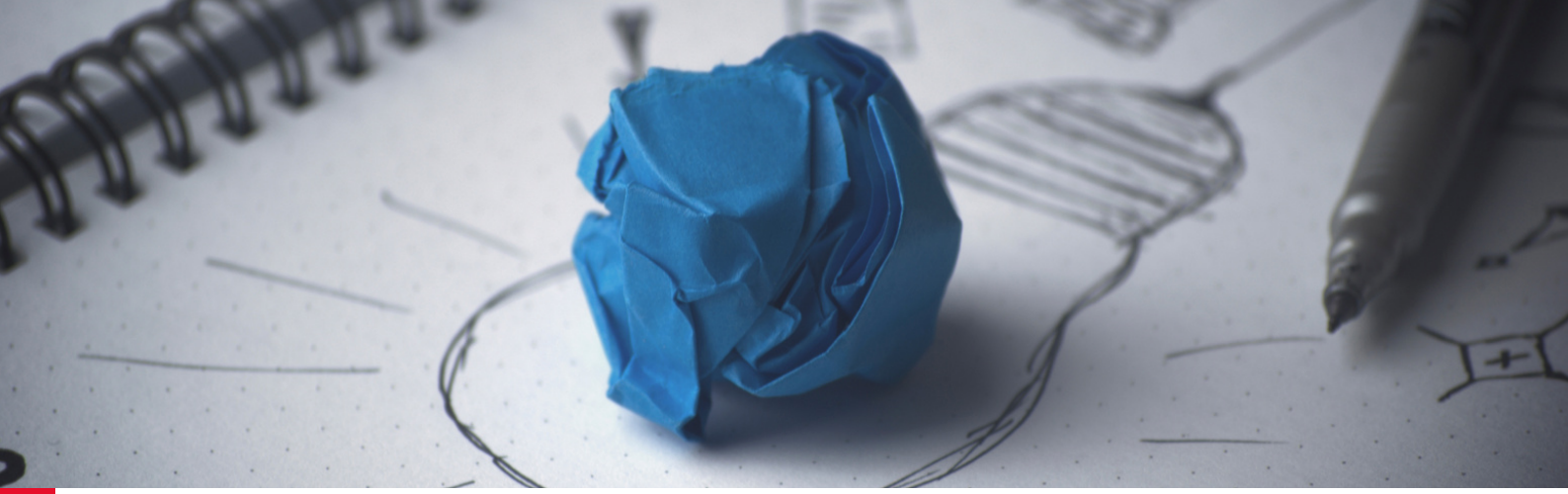
Not true.

In reality - all you need is;

A system that works and a coach to help you implement it.

Dumb-Ass Belief #2

I also believed there was no "secret sauce".



I thought the people who made it had just been doing it for longer.

The truth is;

Hidden amongst all the rehashed advice out there - there is a nugget of information - a NEW way of doing things, that actually works.

To be blunt;

If you're not successful online yet it's because you don't have this nugget.

You don't know the right process, you don't have the right system.

Unlocking the right system makes all the difference.

And it IS out there, waiting for you.

So you'd think - now I knew all these secrets, and now my business was flying high, that everything would be easy from now on, right?



Sadly not.

As you may have experienced yourself in life;

It's often when you least expect it, that life punches you in the gut...

This is what happened to me.

I never saw this coming.

Not only did it cripple my business, it nearly led me to ending it all...

THE DAY I NEARLY ENDED IT ALL





In the last chapter we spoke about all the unexpected benefits of having a successful internet business;

- Making friends for life
- Discovering your purpose and passion
- Truly helping people around the world
- Leaving a legacy and making a difference
- Becoming a better person

I also hinted at the fact, despite my business going great guns at this time, there was an imminent disaster looming over the horizon...

It was the biggest sucker-punch I've ever had and we'll come onto that in a second, but first...

Let's talk about eliminating MISTAKES.

I've actually lost track of all the mistakes I've made in the 20+ years I've been running an internet business.

But there are 3 Key Mistakes which are forever burned in my memory.



Let me help you by sharing them with you so you can avoid making the same mistakes I did.

The first two come courtesy of another of my coaches.

I was sitting pretty after making $250K in a week.

My head was still spinning from seeing all the sales and digits rushing into my account.

I felt unbeatable.

It felt like an indestructible shield surrounding me - nothing was going to stop me now (or so I thought).

I called one of my coaches up to try and get some praise for the astounding result I'd just pulled off.

But rather than congratulate me, he gave me a warning.

It took the wind right out of my sails.

But he was right.



He shared two mistakes to avoid at all costs...

Mistake #1. Pissing people off

I thought he was stating the obvious when he told me this.

"Of course I'm not going to piss anyone off, why would I?", I thought.

But the point is - success can blind you.

It inflates your ego until you feel you're untouchable.

And despite my coach's advice -

I've made all these mistakes multiple times until I finally learned my lesson.

Don't be stupid like me.

Now let's move onto the next one...



Mistake #2. Losing momentum

My present-day coach (a speaker at the famous 10X event) says it best;

"You lose 10% momentum every day you don't take action."

He's right.

This means if you go 10 days you have lost all your momentum.

You can lose momentum in days and it can take years to get back.

I know this from painful experience as I've lost momentum multiple times through complacency, laziness and dumb bad luck.

When you've lost momentum you feel you're having to wade through thick syrup.

Everything feels like hard work.



You have to muster up all the energy you can, just to get out of bed.

It's the absolute pits.

And if you're not careful it can be the end of you.

The trick is;

Never stop taking action.

Don't lose one iota of momentum.

Once you have it, just keep pushing forward as if your life depends on it (because it does).

Don't rest on your laurels or take your foot off the gas.

You need to go to bed tired and wake up hungry.

Every day.

Sometimes you just don't feel like it -



A coach gives you the fire in your belly to break through this feeling.

That's why I value having a coach as the most important thing in my business.

I would still be broke without one.

It's THAT important.

Now let's discuss the third mistake...

Mistake #3. Thinking internet marketing is about technology or products

I remember the first day I saw a web browser.

It was the mid 1990s and I walked into the computer room at university to see a row of six computers - all showing the same logo on their screen;

"Netscape"

I instantly fell in love with the internet.



I felt like the hero of a movie, able to roam the world from the comfort of my seat, and have the most powerful brain at my fingertips.

This is what hooked me in at first...

So like most people I thought the internet was all about technology.

I started immersing myself in the technology of the internet -

How web pages were made, the code, the HTML and so on.

Soon after, I started creating my own websites.

This was back in 1994.

It was like the coolest toy in the world and it was all free.

Later on, when I started my internet business, I changed from focusing on the technology, to focusing on products;

"If I create the best products, I will get rich online," I stupidly thought.



And so started the big mistake of thinking the internet was about technology and products.

Nuh-uh.

The internet is about PEOPLE.

It gives you a way to communicate with and connect with other people.

Once you realize that, everything changes.

Once you go from "product-seller" to "people-helper" - everything changes for you.

So these are the 3 biggest mistakes I made.

Hopefully you can avoid them now I've laid them bare for you.

Now it's time to move onto the part of the story where all hell breaks loose.

This is hard for me to write about.



I rarely even speak about this because it's so painful, but here goes...

Things were going very well, too well, you might say.

My wife and I had moved out of our big apartment in the city and bought a farmhouse with land, in the countryside.

It was idyllic.

Views of the Scottish hills, just a few other farmhouses dotted around the place and amazingly peaceful.

The business was going from strength to strength.

Then it happened...

A call from the accountants;

"Have you seen the notice from the Tax Office?"

My heart sank.

Oh no, here we go again...



Not the tax man to torpedo my future, surely?

"No I've not seen the notice, is there a problem?", I asked with a dry mouth, knowing full well there was.

"It turns out because of the bumper year you had last year, you owe quarter of a million pounds in taxes." (Back then this was around $500,000)

I gulped.

The blood drained from my face and I was instantly transported back to that dusty hallway a few years' earlier.

Not again.

Please no.

If we had better accountants I would have been given warning about this.

But I wasn't.



And if I knew more about business I would have been prepared for this.

But I wasn't.

I had been spending money hand over fist;

Vacations, the new house, trips to Vegas, hiring supercars, you name it;

I'd burned through all the money, because I was certain there was no end to it.

Shit, shit, shit.

My voice starting breaking as I replied, nervously;

"How long have I got to pay this?", I asked.

What seemed like an eternity passed until the accountants finally answered, matter of factly;

"Six months."

F*ck.



I tried to remain calm and hung up the phone.

But inside I was screaming.

At first I was annoyed at the accountants for letting this happen.

And while they could have predicted this, I had to admit - this was my own my fault.

I hadn't put money aside and I was naive about how much the government would take from me.

Now I had to make half a million dollars in 6 months.

Not to mention;

Even if I DID manage to make half a mil in half a year, I would also be hit with another whopping tax bill on THAT income in another 12 months' time.

Sure;

I'd had the rip-roaring success the year before but I couldn't repeat that.



Not in the space of six months.

Plus I had the costs of running a growing business and a huge mortgage on my new country farmhouse to take into account.

But I had no choice;

I had to put all my skills and experience to the test and grind out half a million dollars in six months, after costs.

As it happens, I'd already started work on a new, big project which I was hoping would really put me on the map and take me to the next level.

But now it had even greater significance;

It had to be something which would massively over-deliver, put me on the map, but most importantly;

Pay off my $500K tax bill.

I spent the next 6 months slaving my ass off to make this launch the best it could be;



I travelled around the world shooting pre-launch videos.

No stone was left unturned.

This had to be next level and I was pulling out all the stops;

I shot prelaunch videos in Las Vegas, Paris, at Manchester United Football Club and in Amsterdam.

As things started to take shape, I was certain I had a winner on my hands.

Once all the videos were in the bag I watched them back and knew this was going to blow people away.

There was nobody else out there putting this much into a launch.

This was next level.

As the launch date approached I knew this thing had to succeed.



I had poured a year's worth of blood, sweat and tears into this thing.

I had lived and breathed this for an entire year.

The taxman's guillotine was hovering above my head, but this was my escape route -

If this thing went half as well as I thought it would, I was going to be okay.

As the days ticked down to launch, I got more and more nervous.

The coders I was working with were still putting the finishing touches to the payment processing side of the launch.

They'd done it before for someone else, and were confident everything would work as planned.

But like many coders - they were running late.

I didn't get any sleep the night before the launch.



I was too busy texting the coders the whole time requesting updates.

(20 minutes to go...)

Finally, with literally MINUTES to spare, they gave me the green light.

Everything was ready.

It was time to go live.

Hundreds of big name affiliates and joint venture partners had mailed their lists for weeks.

Thousands of prospects had gone through all the pre-launch videos and opted in to be notified of the launch.

We were ready to rock.

Now I just had to make this thing live.

(60 seconds to go...)



I was exhausted, nervous and excited.

I took the live version of the salesletter and dragged it from my computer up to the server...

Drag. Drop.

We are live.

At first - nothing...

Not a dickie bird.

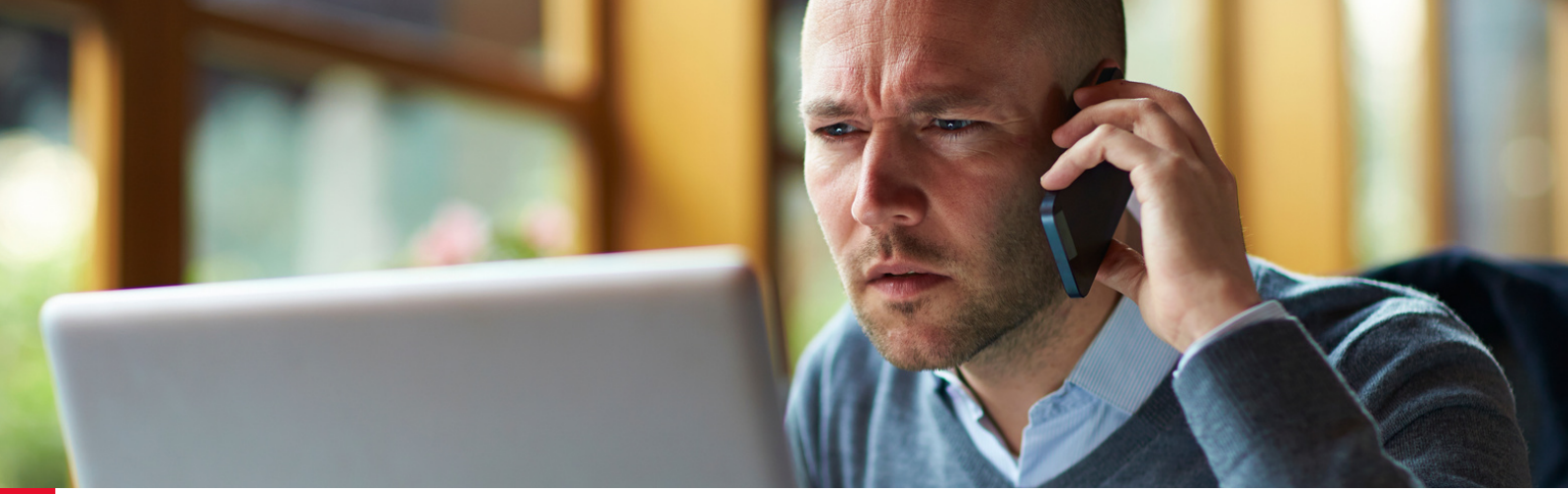
My heart started pounding out of my chest;

"Has something screwed up?"
"Do people not want this?"
"Have the coders let me down?"

And then, with huge relief, the sales started flooding in;

It was INSANE.

We're talking multiple sales PER SECOND.



"Woohoo. All my hard work over the past year is paying off. People are loving it. This is it. We have a winner!"

Then it hit me.

Harder than anything has ever hit me before;

At first it was a flurry of support tickets on my help desk;

"Just paid. No access!"
"Where's my product?"
"REFUND NOW!"
"Scammer"

Oh shit.

What the hell is going on?

I rushed into the customer database to see what was happening;

It was frickin' carnage...

People who had NOT ordered were being given access.



People who HAD ordered were NOT being given access.

Customers were being randomly assigned to different product levels and payment details were being added to the wrong customers.

All the affiliate tracking was haywire too;

Some affiliates were getting credit for sales they didn't make.

And affiliate who'd made tons of sales weren't being paid.

It was literally as if thousands of customers, affiliates, emails, tracking IDs, payment details and access levels had all been thrown up into the air and just landed in one huge pile of crap.

It was a complete, total and unmitigated DISASTER.

The coders had let me down, I'd already paid them, and there was nothing I could do.

I couldn't believe it.



I kept hitting refresh on my screen to check I was seeing things properly.

Every time I did, another bucketload of customers got dumped into the database with the wrong details, the wrong access, the wrong payment info and the wrong affiliate credit.

And all the time my inbox was pinging every second with a new support ticket of someone complaining, demanding a refund or calling me a scammer.

I froze.

My mind started racing uncontrollably to all the things I'd done over the past year to get this product ready.

Flying over to Las Vegas.

Staying at a hotel in Paris and shooting a video in front of the Eiffel Tower.

The weeks spent writing the salesletter.



The late nights spent editing the videos.

And then my mind turned to the affiliates and joint venture partners;

They were going to hate me.

I'm done.

I'll never work in internet marketing again.

Credibility - ZERO.

Then there was the tax bill, of course.

The same moment my internet business was tumbling down around me, I just got up and walked away.

I walked out of my house, stepped over the wall into the neighboring field and into the middle of the grassy expanse.

I laid down on the grass, stared at the sky and just cried.



This was the end for me, for this business, and for my internet dream.

There was no way back from this.

And in that moment I thought about ending everything.

My identity had become so connected with my business that a failure of this magnitude was a personal failure too.

Clouds passed, tears fell, I closed my eyes, sinking into the dark abyss...

How was I ever going to find a way back from this?

THIS ONE THING

WILL GIVE YOU EVERYTHING YOU EVER DREAMED OF





Yesterday we got to the part in the story where everything went to sh**.

I was lying in a field, crying my heart out.

I truly felt it was the end of the road.

So what happened next to turn everything around?

I'll reveal all that in a minute, but first, let's talk about what I call the "magic money formula".

People think information = money.

But they're wrong.

There's something missing here;

Information ==> [--?--] ==> Money

What is it?

The key step that turns information into money is ACTION.



The internet marketing graveyard is filled with tombstones of newbies who died from INACTION.

Learning is not earning.

Buying a course is not earning.

Watching a YouTube video is not earning.

Reading a Facebook post is not earning.

Sure;

You can do all that stuff, and maybe it helps you know more than 99.9% of people on the planet about making money online.

But unless you TAKE ACTION on what you learn - you will stay broke.

I know plenty of people like this.

They are addicted to learning and addicted to buying training.



They treat every course like a brick in the wall of their collection of greatness.

I call B.S.

There comes a time in everyone's life where they have to stand up and be counted.

A time when you realize it falls on your shoulders to take action.

A time when you finally roll up your sleeves and do what has to be done.

I was at that moment.

Lying down and crying in that field, a memory popped into my head;

It was a younger version of me.

He was posting a handwritten envelope into a mailbox to send to America.



Inside that envelope was a letter of thanks and condolences.

You see;

Some years prior I used to study under a famous internet marketer, who sadly died young.

I was so affected by his teachings (because I took action on them) and by his death, that I wrote a personal letter to his wife.

I told her how great a person he was, how his teachings had changed my life, and how he'd helped me become successful and become a better person.

As I lay there in the field that day, feeling sorry for myself, I realized;

"I am lucky, I am alive."

But not only that -

"People are counting on me. I can't go out like this. They are looking up to me for guidance."



It was at that moment that I slowly stood up, wiped the tears from my face, took a deep breath and strode determinedly back to my house.

"I'm not going out like this. I'm NOT going out like this," I repeated this mantra of intent to myself over and over..

I got into the house and grabbed my phone.

There was only one thing to do at a time like this;

Call my coach.

I needed his help - he'd gone through more than I had, and would have some answers for me on how to dig myself out of this hole.

It went straight to voicemail.

He texted me back;

"I'm in a meeting with my lawyer, is it that important?"

"Yes", I replied.



He called me right back.

I laid everything bare for him;

I offloaded the weight of the world, the 12 months I'd spent working on this, the disaster of the lost sales, payment information, angry customers and pissed off affiliates.

"What should I do?", I asked.

"Pull the launch", he answered.

Deep down, I'd known this all along, but to hear it from him gave me the confirmation and closure I needed to do the right thing.

I had to pull the plug on this disaster.

So I set up a camcorder in my living room, sat down on the couch and recorded the hardest video I've ever had to record.

I deeply apologized to all the customers, to all the affiliates and to all the joint venture partners.



I promised to make good on whatever transactions had been processed, refund all customers and give everyone who had tried to buy, access to all the products.

Then I set to work getting the message out and clearing up this mess.

Before I could even start to think about getting back on my feet, I had to tidy up this disaster.

It took months.

Hours and hours of dealing with banks, credit card companies, customers, chargebacks and more to finally draw a line under the whole sorry mess.

At this point I swore blind I would never do anything in internet marketing again.

I downed tools and took several months off.

And what became of the tax bill?

Thankfully, due to begging, pleading and loans I managed to buy myself some time with the taxman.



I licked my wounds, dusted myself off and RE-CREATED myself from the ground upwards.

Better, stronger, more prepared and more resilient than ever before.

I re-emerged.

I had survived this and there was no way on Earth I was going to let it happen again.

Nothing could stop me now.

I hadn't come all this way, just to be knocked down at the final stage.

During these dark days I was guided forwards by the words of my coaches echoing through my mind;

"What doesn't kill you, only makes you stronger."
"What you become is more important than what you get."
"You can do this."
"It's your duty to share your voice with the world."
"Don't let your dreams die."



I became The Phoenix.

Rising from the ashes.

Renewed.

Recharged and reinvigorated.

The time out had worked wonders for me.

I focused on PEOPLE and not TECHNOLOGY.

I focused on HELPING OTHERS and not SELLING.

And I realized having the right process is only half the battle.

You need the right process AND the right coach by your side, to help you implement it all (and pick up the pieces if things go wrong).

I went on to make over $10 Million online.

TEN. MILLION. DOLLARS.



Like I said at the start of this Chapter;

The gap between information and money is ACTION.

If I'd stayed paralyzed by fear and inaction - I wouldn't be talking to you today.

And I hadn't TAKEN ACTION all those years ago to board that plane and meet my coach - I would still be broke, in debt, and living in a one-bed apartment.

Lack of action is slowly killing your dreams.

You can try to convince yourself, that buying software is action, it's not.

You can trick yourself into thinking that getting a course is action, it's not.

It's only when you get a workable system and TAKE ACTION to apply it, that you get results.

A coach helps you do this.

But you need to take action.



It's what separates winners from losers.

Take action and you get to failure quicker - strangely this is actually what you want, because it teaches you the lessons you need to learn, to grow and get better.

If you don't take action, because your fear is bigger than your desire for success, then you will stay STUCK.

You need to make your desire for success bigger than your fear.

You need to step up, strike fear head on, and TAKE ACTION.



Michael Cheney

>> Guaranteed Success