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FIND YOUR
NICHE



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Find Your Niche

Some people know exactly what business they want to start. Their main reason for wanting to start a business at all is because they want to start that specific business. Perhaps it's related to a college degree they've earned, or maybe they simply have an idea they are particularly excited about.

However, others of us have some issues deciding what business we want to start and what niche we want to be in. Our motivation for desiring to start a business isn't focused on a specific industry. This puts us in a hard situation! Whether you have **too many** ideas or **not enough**, choosing what niche to start a business in can be tough.

Start with WHO

Maybe you know exactly what you want to sell, but if you don't yet know, don't worry! Everyone starts somewhere, and if you don't know what you want to sell yet, it's much better to start with **who you want to help**.

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Once you figure out who, then you can determine what they need. If you try to do it the other way (start with a product, then try to find an audience), you may discover that NOBODY really needs what you're trying to sell.

So, start with who. Ask yourself these questions: Who do you want to help? Who would you enjoy working with? Who could benefit from knowledge you already have?

Don't worry too much about *how* you'll be able to help the people. You are an intelligent person who can figure out solutions for any group that you would like to work with. Every market has problems, and many people will be happy to pay for a solution to their problems.

Of course, there are certainly some markets that would be easier to help than others. More technical fields tend to have more complicated issues that might take you a long time to be able to solve. So, as you're thinking about who you would help, do take into consideration what problems you *might* be able to solve for that group.

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Pick Your Niche

So how, exactly, do you go from some vague ideas about who you might like to help to actually choosing a specific industry? Here's a simple exercise to help you pick your ideal niche:

First, create two lists. Title one, "My Skills," and the other "My Interests." On the list of your skills, write down everything you're really good at. For example, your list might include:

- Cooking
- Writing
- Child care
- Social media
- Marketing
- Customer service

The other list will describe topics that you find very interesting, such as:

- Fitness
- Mystery novels
- Baking
- Hiking

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Once your lists are complete, it's time to create intersections. Now, there might be some obvious ones, such as: you are skilled at cooking and passionate about specifically baking. Or, maybe you love writing and you're really good at it too. However, you can also **create** intersections by creatively figuring out ways to combine what you are truly good at with what you love the very most. For example, if you are very skilled at graphic design, and you love planning parties, your niche could be designing beautiful party invitations.

Your Unique Combo of Skill and Passion

Where do YOUR lists intersect? With these example lists, intersections might include: healthy cooking, marketing for mystery novel writers, marketing for fitness companies, social media review of movies, helping people learn to hike, or writing about any of the interests.

Once you find the intersections of your list, determine which of these "industries" is most appealing to you, and which would be the easiest for you to help. For instance, social media for mystery novel writers might be rather difficult. However, teaching moms about healthy cooking for their kids might be a great fit.

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The Most Appealing Niche

To decide which of these unique industries would be the best fit for you, you must figure out which one you would enjoy working at the most. Your enjoyment (or lack thereof) will depend primarily on how much you appreciate your audience.

Once, I started a new business in an industry that I was extremely passionate about. I was really good at solving problems in that industry, and I had a lot to offer. However, after everything was up and running, I discovered that I really did NOT enjoy working with my “ideal” client. The type of person who needed my help the most was downright DIFFICULT.

Now, of course, I continued to try to help those people, because I could see that they were really benefiting from the information and service that I was providing them. However, I really wish that I had done this little exercise before I ever set foot in that niche in the first place.

Here’s what to do: For each of your unique “intersections” that you created above, write 1) a description of exactly who your ideal customer would be, 2) what problems you would be helping them with, and 3) what challenges you would have in helping them.

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For example, for the “Marketing for mystery novel writers” niche, my answers would be:

1. My ideal client would be an author who has recently completed their first (well-written) mystery novel and needs help finding readers.
2. Their struggles: finding readers, inability to profit from their passion, lack of personal branding, no knowledge of how to advertise effectively.
3. My challenges: author clients might lack a budget to be able to appropriately compensate me for my time; authors might be more interested in the creative process of writing and unwilling to make necessary decisions required to move their brand forward; even though I know a lot about marketing, I don't know about the unique challenges of the publishing industry.

One by one, write such a description for each of your unique niches that you are considering. For some of them, you might need to do a little bit of research to discover what challenges that particular audience *does* face. If you're already pretty sure that you don't want to work with that group of people, then just move on. However, if it's an industry that you are seriously considering, then be sure you take the time to fully explore exactly what they need and you would be dealing with.

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Completing this exercise will help you to narrow down your ideas. In fact, at this point, there might be an obvious winner! However, if you still have a few different options that you are considering, know this: you are considering each of these options because they are all GOOD ideas. They involve things you are passionate about, good at, and benefit people who you'd enjoy working with. I encourage you to simply pick one "randomly" and move forward.

"But..! But..!" I can hear you now: What if you pick the wrong niche?! What if it's not your ideal business to start?

Well, first of all, it's not as though there's one perfect, "soul mate" idea here, and all of the rest are wrong. They are all potentially good ideas, some of them better than others. This simply isn't a black and white issue.

Secondly, you don't have to "marry" the idea you select, and you don't have to stay with it forever! Choose an idea to just "date." Go steady with it for at least three months. Really pursue it. For those three months, learn everything you can about the industry and the audience. Start building a tribe, developing products, and putting out content. But, know that you have an out. Know that at the end of three months, if you aren't loving these people or you're really sick of this topic, then you can move on to something new and find a niche you enjoy more.

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Giving yourself that permission to back out allows you to choose an industry and whole-heartedly try to create something, even if you're not 100% sure it's the perfect fit.

Testing Your Idea

Once you've chosen an idea, it's time to test it out — whether you think it's perfect or not. Even if you think your idea sounds amazing, it might turn out to not actually be the dream that you think it would be. Testing your idea can save you much wasted time and money, and definitely should never be overlooked!

There are many, complex ways to test out your business idea, and entire books have been written on the topic. However, here's the basic idea to get you started:

Find your potential audience and connect with them. Ask them endless questions about their biggest struggles and what they've already done to try to solve these problems. Figure out what really keeps them up at night.

Craft sample offers and test them out. Based on what you learn about your audience, imagine possible solutions. The solution could be a service, product, or information (video course, book, etc). Ask your audience about their thoughts on this possible

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solution. Spend a little bit of money on Pay-Per-Click advertising to discover how eager people seem to be for your offer.

Here are a few resources you can check out for more information about how to validate the ideas you're considering pursuing:

Business News Daily: How to Test Your Business Idea

<http://www.businessnewsdaily.com/6540-how-to-test-your-business-idea.html>

Start Up Bros: Three Steps to Validate Your Business Idea

<http://startupbros.com/3-steps-to-validate-your-business-idea-for-free/>

Entrepreneur: How to Test Your Business Idea

<https://www.entrepreneur.com/article/217563>

Summary

List your interests and skills, and figure out how they can intersect to give you a unique niche. Consider who you'd be helping, what you'd need to help them with, and what challenges you'd run into.

Choose an idea that sounds good, but don't worry about it being perfect. Then, take that idea for a test drive! Give it at least three

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months of serious effort and attention so that you can see if you enjoy it and it will be profitable.

Above all, don't stress! We start businesses because we want to. It's fun to plan and create. Designing our ideal company to work for is an amazing blessing and a unique opportunity we have at this time in history. Picking a niche, even if you pick the "wrong" one, is all part of learning and growing as an entrepreneur.

