Crack Open the Secrets to Amazon's Success:

One Dozen Tips to Running an Online Business like Amazon

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WebStores Ltd

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Disclaimer

I have some amazing great news, are you ready? You're in total charge of your destiny!

That's right, you're in the driver's seat. I am not responsible for your success and I'm equally not responsible for your failures.

By reading and applying the material in this ebook, you agree that you own your success. You agree that you own your failures. I am not responsible for either.

For some, this may be the most powerful section of this entire ebook. It's that instant realization that the chains are off, that first feeling of freedom, that feeling of controlling your own destiny, that feeling of unlimited potential. If Jeff Bezos can do it, then maybe you can too.

I wish you success in your journey.

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Introduction

- Amazon has sold more than 426 items per SECOND!
- Last year (2014), 96% of consumers said they purchased something from Amazon.
- Do you think you could learn something from the world's largest ecommerce company?

Success leaves clues!

- *"If you want to be successful, find someone who has achieved the results you want and copy what they do and you'll achieve the same results."*
  – Anthony Robbins
- *"We watch our competitors, learn from them, see the things they are doing for customers, and copy those things as much as we can."*
  – Jeff Bezos

It's as simple as following a recipe. The fact is, anyone can bake cookies – all you have to do is follow the recipe. The first time, your cookies may not be as good as those by someone who has baked lots of cookies, but you will achieve success simply by following the recipe. Here then is a simple recipe for copying Amazon's example:

- Open the carton (ebook)
- Crack open each egg (read the tip)
- Cook the eggs (apply the material)

We've had three big ideas at Amazon that we've stuck with for 18 years, and they're the reason we're successful: Put the customer first. Invent. And be patient.

The quote above, as well as others found throughout this ebook are from Jeff Bezos, as quoted in my book, **"What Would Jeff Do?"** (ISBN-13: 978-1511783842, June 2015, http://www.amazon.com/What-Would-Jeff-Greg-Jameson/dp/1511783842).

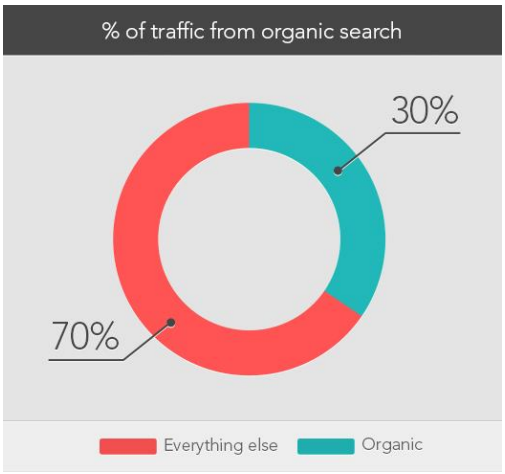
You will also find that the insights offered in this ebook are expanded upon in more detail in my #1 best-seller, **"Amazon's Dirty Little Secrets"** (ISBN-13: 978-1630472764, August 2014, http://www.amazon.com/Amazons-Dirty-Little-Secrets-Others/dp/163047276X)

A Dozen Secrets to running your ecommerce business like Amazon:

#1. Be seen everywhere!

"The balance of power is shifting toward consumers and away from companies… The right way to respond to this if you are a company is to put the vast majority of your energy, attention and dollars into building a great product or service and put a smaller amount into shouting about it, marketing it… In the old world, you devoted 30% of your time to building a great service and 70% of your time to shouting about it. In the new world, that inverts."

Amazon has an incredible knack for being in the news all of the time. This is not luck or an accident. The company is fully aware of how to get other people to talk about them. And as a result, everyone knows about Amazon. Think about it: do you go to Google to search for Amazon? Of course not – you just go to Amazon. So why do you think someone will search for your company by name? Most likely, they won't, which means that unless you are selling a widget and someone is searching for that particular widget, the bulk of your website traffic will come from sources other than Google. And that is the case. Consider this graphic from a study that analyzed over 18,000 ecommerce websites:



What many “gurus” don’t tell you is that 70% of traffic to your site comes from sources other than search engines. In fact, according to Alexa, only 9.7% of Amazon’s traffic comes from search engines – the rest comes from other sources such as affiliates, press, and direct visits. Concentrate on this 70%, not the 30% that comes from Google. If you do, Google will tend to take care of itself.

So how do you get seen everywhere? Post regularly to your blog and social media. Make your content shareable, especially the graphics. The more frequently you post content, the more opportunity your friends and customers can share your information with others. Here are a few places you will want to post:

- Social media sites like Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn
- Photo sharing sites like Pinterest, Instagram, Flickr
- Video sharing sites, especially YouTube
- Press release sites like PRLog.org and PR.com
- Also send your press releases directly to TV and radio stations as well as targeted sites.
- Responding to blog posts by others
- Your own blog
- Guest blogging on other’s sites

Remember, 70% of your traffic will probably come from sources other than search engines, so make sure you are visible everywhere.

2. But don't ignore Google!

We're taking no chances in marketing this holiday season… Real estate is the key cost of physical retailers. That's why there's the old saw, location, location, location.

Of course it would still be nice to end up on the first page of Google for the items you sell. Which is why Amazon is the #1 spender on Google ads in the retail world, spending more than $55.2 million on Google ads every year. But you don't have to outspend Amazon to get your pages ranked on Google. And that is the key – Google ranks individual pages on your website, not the website itself. If you are selling "fire roasted salsa", you want to get that page to rank on Google. Here are two key things you can do to rank for specific keywords:

A. Use the keyword phrase as many times as possible on the page you wish to rank for - this tells Google that this page is all about those keywords. For example, if you want to rank for "fire roasted salsa", use "fire roasted salsa" in the description of the product at least 3 times. For example:

> *The ultimate **fire roasted salsa** came about because I couldn't find a **fire roasted salsa** that reminded me of what I had in Mexico. We fire roasted three different kinds of peppers to create a smoky full flavored **fire roasted salsa** that can be used as a soup base, chili base and with corn chips. You'll enjoy the bright flavors of cilantro and lemon that you'll find in this hardy **fire roasted salsa**. This **fire roasted salsa** is addicting!*

Yes, it looks retarded to do keyword stuffing on your content, but it insures that Google knows that this page is all about "fire roasted salsa".

B. Get other sites to link to that page and use those keywords in the anchor text. For example, if someone is writing an article about you or a blog post about you, don't just have them link to HarvestFreshFarm.com, but instead, create a link like this:

> *We have found that the fire roasted salsa from Harvest Fresh Farm is the best on the market.*

The more external links you have pointing from other websites back to your website, the better - this tells Google that you are really important when it comes to those keywords. Obviously, if 50 people link back to your site for those keywords, and your competitors have only one or two links back to their sites for those keywords, then you must be more relevant they are. (Who the site is, is also important - getting a link from Oprah counts more than a link from me).

In my book, "Amazon's Dirty Little Secrets", I list all 200+ variables that Google uses to determine what sites get ranked for what keywords when determining search engine placement. The 2 listed above are a couple of the most important.

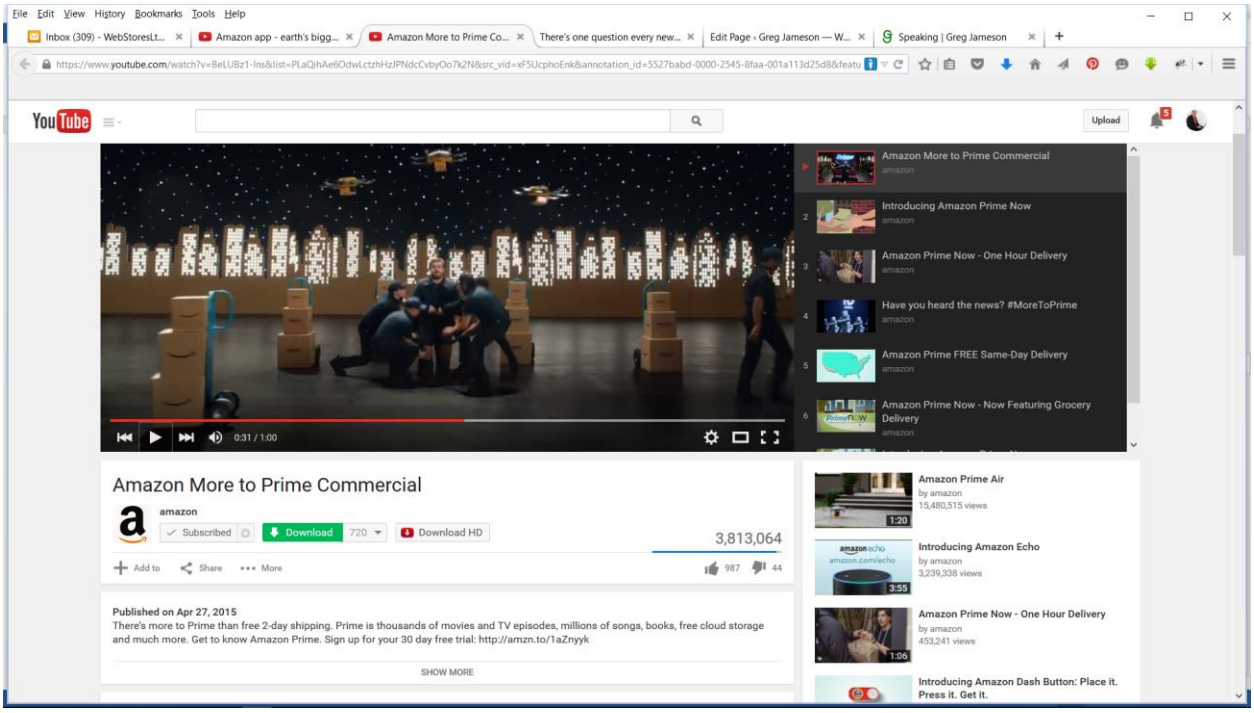
3. Use videos

Our point of view is we will sell more if we help people make purchasing decisions.

You've heard the phrase, "Content is king." Product descriptions and specifications play an important role in everything sold on Amazon. Give people enough information that they can make a buying decision. One of the best ways to do this is through the use of video. Create a YouTube video for each and every one of your products (YouTube is owned by Google). In the description of the video, insert a link back to that product page, using the complete URL including "http://". For example, this might be included in your video description for fire roasted salsa:

> *You can find fire roasted salsa from Harvest Fresh Farm at: http://harvestfreshfarm.com/product/the-ultimate-fire-roasted-salsa-16-oz-mild/ ...*

You can see that Amazon has done this in this video about Amazon Prime:



Your videos may not get 3 million views like those from Amazon, and it turns out, it doesn't have to! Just by linking the video back to your website with the http://DomainName/Page, you will rank better on Google.

Repurpose your content whenever you can. In this video, Amazon is poking fun at itself about drone delivery. Once you have the video uploaded, be sure to embed that video on the product page itself, so you can provide a better explanation about the product to your visitors. This is one of the best things you can do for both search engine placement and for providing valuable information to your customers.

4. Get others to write reviews for you

When we pioneered customer reviews, it was incredibly controversial. I got letters from publishers saying, 'You don't understand your business. You make money when you sell things. Take down those negative customer reviews.' We've never done anything of real value that wasn't at least a little bit controversial when we did it. But if you want to be a pioneer, you have to be comfortable being misunderstood."

Reviews are one of the key ways that Amazon gets others to market and sell for them. Study after study reinforces the fact that people believe others before they believe you. When a complete stranger leaves a review on your website it is like one customer selling another customer on why they should buy your products or services.

Actively try to get people to write reviews for you. Amazon sends out emails after you purchase a product asking you to write a review, and you should do the same. When people post reviews about your business on Yelp, Trip Advisor, Google+, Angie's List, etc., you should grab those reviews and put them on your site where people can see them. There is a site called Review Me marketing that will actually take those reviews from various other websites and post them on your website with a small piece of JavaScript code. Here is an example of what you will see when this is installed on your website:

http://zoes-coffee.net/reviews/

Notice that it shows the site from where the review is posted. This is powerful – visit https://www.secureinfossl.com/affProgram/Review-Me-Marketing/90499 for more information.

5. Create an Affiliate Program

Amazon Associates is one of the first online affiliate marketing programs and was launched in 1996...When website owners and bloggers who are Associates create links and customers click through those links and buy products from Amazon, they earn referral fees. It's free to join and easy to use.

Amazon gets others to market and sell their products by paying them a commission. You need to do the same for your business. Invest in affiliates and JV (joint venture) partners to get them to market on your behalf!

Here is a quote from Jim Cockrum: "The companies who have the offers you are promoting sit back and love it because YOU are taking all of the risk to build their businesses!"

Affiliate programs (also known as reseller programs, associate programs, etc.) are an opportunity for you to get hundreds, even thousands of web sites all driving traffic to your site and making sales for you...

And the best part is you don't pay until AFTER they make the sale!

Here's the secret: the companies that are paying affiliates are the ones making money (not the affiliate who is getting paid)! This may seem

counter-intuitive, but even today about 40% of Amazon's revenues are derived from affiliates driving traffic to their site.

There are several ways you can run an affiliate program. You can use a third-party site like CJ.com, Clickbank, JVZoo, or Linkshare. Or you can manage it yourself with a plugin such as Affiliate Royale (https://www.affiliateroyale.com/WebStoresLtd/royale). However you decide to do it, you should have some sort of a referral program like Amazon does.

6. Multiple Revenue Streams

Ebooks had to happen. Infrastructure web services had to happen…. A few big successes compensate for dozens and dozens of things that didn't work. Bold bets – Amazon Web Services, Kindle, Amazon Prime, our third-party seller business – all of those things are examples of bold bets that did work, and they pay for a lot of experiments.

Amazon makes money in lots of different ways, not just from selling products. In fact, that is why their prices are often so low. They make money from ads, products like Kindle, Echo, and FireTV, ebooks and other digital files like music and movies, third-party sellers, payment processing, cloud services, Amazon Prime subscriptions, cross-selling, etc. Significantly, Amazon looks to make money when people use their products rather than when they buy their products, which creates even more income diversity.

There are "gurus" out there that tell you to keep your site simple with a single call to action – don't confuse the customer they say, tell them exactly what you want them to do next. Well, that isn't how Amazon has become successful – they have lots of calls to action on every page, and you should too. If you think your page should only have one call to action, ask yourself if the gurus that told you to do this are as successful as Amazon – if not, then copy the successful model instead. Think of as many different ways as you can to monetize your site, not just selling

products. For example, my website www.CyberBaseTradingPost.com uses the following ways to monetize the site:

- Google AdSense
- Online store
- Paid directory listings
- Classified ads
- Monthly subscription / certificate maker program
- Amazon affiliate links

Almost any business can (and should) create a membership or continuity program. As mentioned above, Cyberbase Trading Post offers a monthly subscription program to the premium certificates (classic certificates are still free). WebStores Ltd. offers a membership program that includes tutorials and software downloads. Membership programs like Amazon Prime make it easy to bundle services, such as streaming videos, free shipping, streaming music, photo storage, Kindle lending library, and more. Think of the types of services your company offers that can be bundled into a membership program.

7. Measure Everything.

"The great thing about fact-based decisions is that they overrule the hierarchy. The most junior person in the company can win an argument with the most senior person with a fact-based decision."

Amazon is notorious for measuring and analyzing everything that can be measured. Bare minimum, add Google Analytics to your site and review your stats at least weekly.

Integrate your data with your other systems – does your CRM program talk to your ecommerce platform? Does your accounting program talk to your ecommerce system? You can bet that everything at Amazon is automated based on the data they get. Hire someone to do this for you. I can be reached at 877-924-1414 or greg@gregjameson.com if you need an ecommerce systems integrator.

8. Great Customer Service, Not Just Lip Service.

If there's one reason we have done better than of our peers in the Internet space over the last six years, it is because we have focused like a laser on customer experience, and that really does matter, I think, in any business. It certainly matters online where word of mouth is so very, very powerful. If you do build a great experience, customers will tell each other about that.

Amazon has the highest reputation of any corporation even higher than Disney or Apple.

You don't get this kind of reputation by accident. Jeff Bezos and the team at Amazon work extremely hard to make sure that customers are not just happy, but ecstatic about the experience they have with Amazon. Follow their example and always put the customer first.

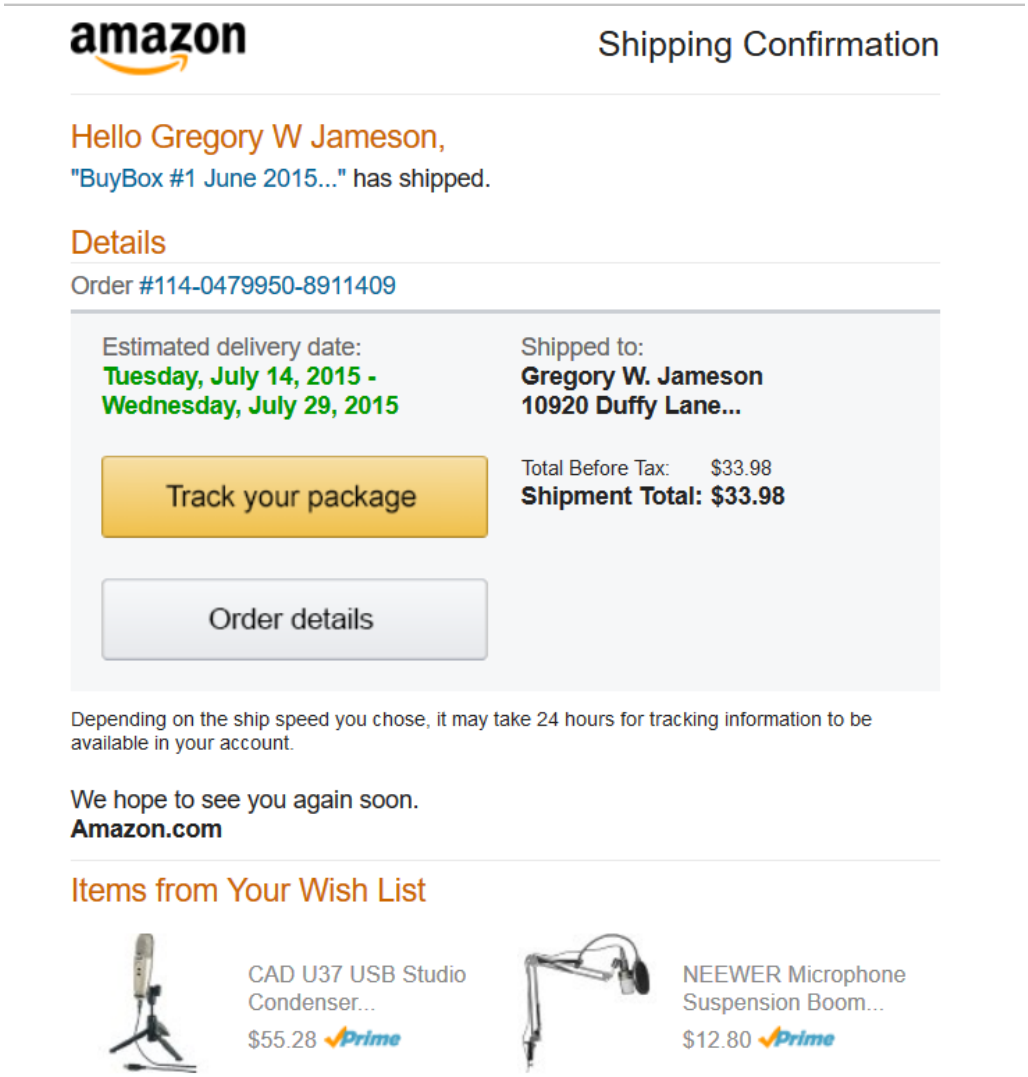
9. Regular Emails

People forget already how much utility they get out of the Internet - how much utility they get out of email, how much utility they get out of even simple things like brochureware online.

Email is still perhaps the best marketing tool available. Not only can you send very targeted messages to your customers, but you can analyze every aspect about it to see what is working. Emails can be personalized, yet totally automated. Email is inexpensive, so use it liberally. Here are just a few of the types of emails that Amazon employs:

- Confirmation email when a sale is made
- Confirmation email when an order is shipped
- Thank you email for your purchase.
- How did we do? Please rate your experience.
- Please review your product purchase.
- Cross-sell emails; we thought you might be interested in X since you purchased Y.
- Sales and Promotions
- Deals and New Releases

And here's the thing about all of these emails that they send: even though there are lots of them, you don't feel like they are spamming you or sending you things you don't want, because they are targeted and personalized just for you. For example:



amazon

Shipping Confirmation

Hello Gregory W Jameson,

"BuyBox #1 June 2015..." has shipped.

Details

Order #114-0479950-8911409

Estimated delivery date:
Tuesday, July 14, 2015 -
Wednesday, July 29, 2015

Shipped to:
Gregory W. Jameson
10920 Duffy Lane...

Track your package

Total Before Tax: $33.98
Shipment Total: $33.98

Order details

Depending on the ship speed you chose, it may take 24 hours for tracking information to be available in your account.

We hope to see you again soon.
Amazon.com

Items from Your Wish List

CAD U37 USB Studio Condenser...
$55.28 Prime

NEEWER Microphone Suspension Boom...
$12.80 Prime

This is a shipping confirmation email, so you can see that it has my name on it. But Amazon also takes this opportunity to try to sell me something else, even though this is a "utility" email, they turn it into a sales piece. Follow their example and do this for your business.

10. Make it easy for the customer to do business with you

We see our customers as invited guests to a party and we are the hosts. It's our job every day to make every important aspect of the customer experience a little bit better.

You aren't in business to make it so things are easy for you, but instead, so things are easy for the customer. That's why Amazon invented one-click checkout. You should offer multiple payment options, including both PayPal and credit cards – it should be convenient for them! It doesn't matter if you prefer a certain payment method – what matters is how the customer wants to pay you. Period. Your "Terms of Service should be written as to why they should do business with you, not why they shouldn't. Here is a good example: http://webstoresltd.com/company/customer-policy/

Every future interaction that you have with Amazon is based on every past interaction. Amazon completely personalizes the shopping experience – they don't use avatars like "30 year old soccer moms", but instead create a custom experience just for you. This is all done through marketing automation. And the purpose is to make it easy for you, the customer, to do business with them.

While we're talking about making it easy for the customer to do business with you, follow Amazon's example and offer free shipping. The number one reason for shopping cart abandonment is the cost of shipping – you can overcome this by building the cost into the product cost and offering it for free.

"While free shipping is expensive for the company, it saves our customers tens of millions of dollars each quarter, and we plan to keep it in place indefinitely."

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11. Think long-term.

"We know the energy we put into it today will still be paying off dividends for our customers 10 years from now. When you have something that you know is true, even over the long term, you can afford to put a lot of energy into it."

Amazon is known for having started out with using doors as desks – the company was and remains frugal because Bezos wasn't interested in being flashy, he was thinking long term. Even though Amazon is a public company, they are known for investing in the future and looking at a return on investment in terms of years, not weeks or months. Your ecommerce business is not an overnight get-rich-quick scheme, but an investment that takes time to nourish and grow. It will require experimentation along the way. You will have to change and evolve, implementing new strategies as you go. Be prepared to work your ecommerce business for an extended period of time before you see results.

If you think about the long term then you can really make good life decisions that you won't regret later.

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12. Hire an expert.

I'd rather interview 50 people and not hire anyone than hire the wrong person… If you're the right kind of person and you like to invent, you like change, and everything you see as you move about the world you think how it could be improved, that's just fun and at Amazon over the last 18+ years has attracted a bunch of people like that and we have a ton of fun doing it.

Like most successful companies, Jeff Bezos doesn't try to do everything himself. Amazon hires experts to build both its website and its products.

If you've downloaded some free legal forms on the Internet, that does not make you a lawyer. Of course, having a copy of QuickBooks doesn't make you an accountant and having a copy of AutoCAD doesn't make you an architect or engineer. And getting WordPress and building a single site doesn't make you a web designer. Like Amazon, you should hire a pro to do both your design work and your Internet marketing. If you are serious about your online business, give me a call at:

Greg Jameson
877-924-1414

greg@gregjameson.com

Bonus Tip #1: Innovate

My view is there's no bad time to innovate.

Amazon claims to be “the world’s most customer-centric company,” and it actually lives up to that reputation well. But many have labeled Amazon as the world’s most disruptive company, and the reason is because they continuously innovate. This is the secret that is going to make you a lot of money. If all you do is sell other people’s products, you will never be seen as a leader in your field – you need your own product(s). The best-selling item on Amazon is the Kindle, Amazon’s ebook reader. This is followed by the Amazon Fire TV Stick. And the Amazon Echo comes in at number 6.

Truly innovative products, services, and even delivery techniques attract the attention of the press and influential customers. Amazon is Amazon because they refuse to use current paradigms as their starting point. Most of the time we use the well-worn phrase “Think outside the box.” The problem with that type of thinking is that the box is still our point of reference. It is better for an organization to innovate, even if hurts your existing products or services.

Regardless of your niche, there are huge opportunities for you to innovate. Many people have been talking about the “Internet of Things” - the network of physical objects or "things" embedded with electronics, software, sensors, and connectivity to enable objects to exchange data with the manufacturer, operator and/or other connected devices. This includes cars that drive themselves, refrigerators that restock themselves, machines that diagnose their own problems, and other innovative gadgets. Forbes magazine asks these questions: What if your alarm clock wakes up you at 6 am and then notifies your coffee maker to start brewing coffee for you? What if your office equipment knew when it was running low on supplies and automatically re-ordered more? How can you use this concept to innovate for your business?

The other area that will provide huge opportunities for business is 3D printing – the process for making a physical object from a three-dimensional digital model, typically by laying down many successive thin layers of a material. Amazon is already experimenting with installing 3D printers in delivery vehicles to insure faster delivery. Perhaps your industry will be able to simply sell the digital model and let people print their own products in their home of business, greatly increasing your margins. Think of ways that you can innovate in your business.

"Frugality drives innovation, just like other constraints do. One of the only ways to get out of a tight box is to invent your way out."

Bonus Tip #2: Be Passionate About What You Do!

One of the huge mistakes people make is that they try to force an interest on themselves. You don't choose your passions. Your passions choose you.

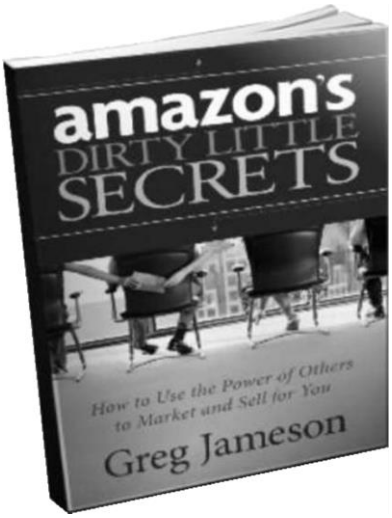
It is now time that you apply the material you've read about in this ebook. Mix these 12 secret ingredients together and blend it to fit your business. As you use this recipe to mimic Amazon's success, remember to be passionate about what you are doing. Passion is one of the key elements in being successful in business. If you truly believe in what you are doing, you will share that enthusiasm with others. I leave you with the words displayed on the corporate walls of Amazon:

Work hard.
Have fun.
Make history.

Special bonuses

Thank you for reading this short ebook. In appreciation, I would like to offer you a physical copy of the companion book, my best-seller, “Amazon’s Dirty Little Secrets” for free. All you do is pay a small shipping fee and I will send you an autographed copy when you visit:

http://webstoresltd.com/freebook



Make a Statement!

Tell the world that you believe in the wisdom of Amazon's business model. Logowear is available at http://www.cafepress.com/gregjameson

About the author

Greg Jameson has been involved in the computer industry since the mid 1970's when he was still in high school. He published his first commercial software program in 1985. After successfully taking his first company public, he has been developing internet applications since 1995 (essentially the beginning of the Internet). He has been creating ecommerce websites since 2002.

Greg has been named "International Developer of the Year", "Colorado Small Business of the Year", and listed on the Inc. 500 of America's Fastest Growing Small Companies. Today, Greg helps businesses through his company, WebStores Ltd where he provides Internet marketing services and builds customer-centric websites. Most recently, Greg's book, "Amazon's Dirty Little Secrets" has become a #1 Amazon Best-Seller.

Greg is available for keynote speeches, workshops, training, and seminars. Please visit www.GregJameson.com for details.