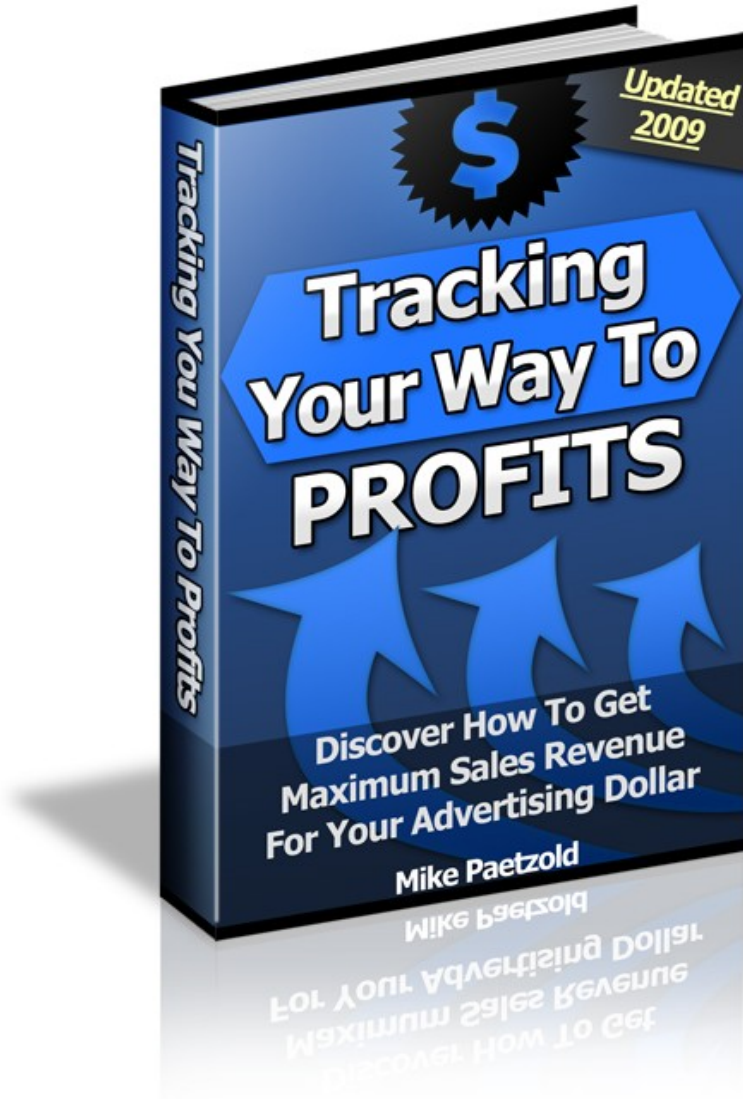


Tracking Your Way To Profits

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by Mike Paetzold



Tracking Your Way To Profits

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Why track your results?

Most people that I talk to always ask me why I take the time to track my results. Their biggest question is “Doesn't that take too much time?”.

Well, it does take some time but the difference in performance makes it time well spent. For example – I recently did a promotion in 3 ezines. It cost me \$110.00 to buy the ads. Now it was a successful campaign in that I received new subscribers and turned a \$50 profit on the venture.

Now if I did not track my results I would just rerun the promotion again and again after all turning a 45% profit on my advertising is something I usually want to repeat. The problem came when I looked at exactly where the sales were generated.

The first ezine ad cost \$30 but generated no sales but sent 55 visitors. The second ezine ad cost \$35 but generated \$100 in sales with 57 visitors and the third ad cost \$45 and generated \$60 in sales with 103 visitors. Now the tracking will allow me to repeat the promotion but be more effective the second time through. Making the assumption that the results will be the same and we all know about assuming things, I could spend \$80 instead of \$110 and get the same \$160 returned or effectively make a 100% profit instead of a 45% profit.

Notice the difference though between visitors and sales. If I just tracked visitors I would feel that all three were effective and that the highest priced ad produced the greatest results. That is why it is important to track everything through to your thank you page. After all the final number that matters is how much money each ad generated.

Now there is no guarantee that your results will stay the same and they usually don't. In my case I would run the promotion a second time in all three but if the results were the same (or close to it) then the first ezine would no longer be an option for promoting that product.

The third time that I ran the promotion I would try a different ezine to substitute for the first one that despite generating visitors was not sending me buyers.

It is not enough to know the profit and loss from a campaign but by tracking you can refine and improve your efforts just by taking the time to track your results.

Using tracking to split test your ad copy

Our initial example showed how tracking can improve your results by knowing where your sales are coming from. Lets discuss how to improve your ads themselves.

First a couple of rules for testing your ads.

1. Only change one thing at a time.
2. Make sure you are comparing apples to apples and not oranges.

For this example we will discuss using safelist ads. First and foremost you need an effective headline. Our promotion for this example will be an ebook.

Now just for a quick aside -Personally, the best use I have found of safelists is to use them to create subscribers and sell your products on the back end after you have created a relationship. For this example though we will use an actual product.

You go ahead and create your ad and 3 headlines.

The reason for the multiple headlines is that first and foremost in safelist advertising the headline is the most important piece of the puzzle. You can have the absolute greatest ad copy ever written and if the headline sucks and nobody opens the email it is absolutely worthless.

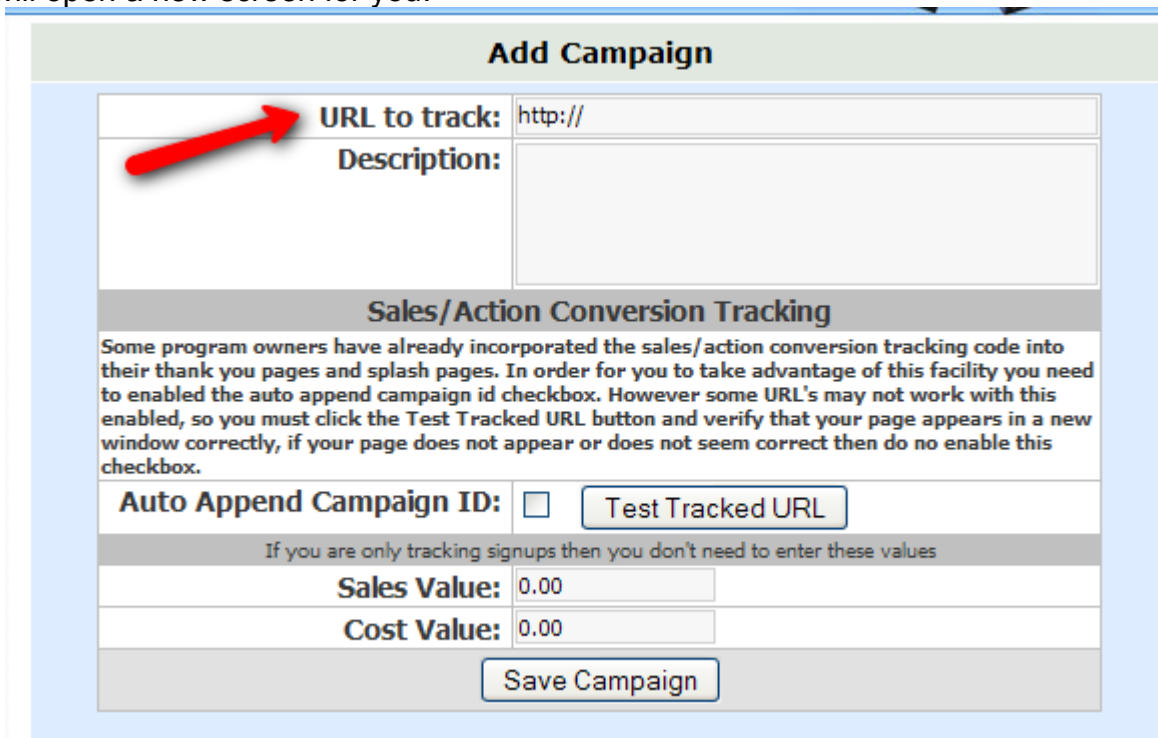
Now we will create a separate tracking link for each one. Each tracking service will have different ways to do this. In these examples we will use the methods that are used in [Hits Connect](#) which is my personal choice for all of my tracking.

First you will login then click My Campaigns – then click Add a campaign



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This will open a new screen for you.



The screenshot shows a web form titled "Add Campaign". At the top, there is a header bar with the title. Below it, there are two input fields: "URL to track:" with the value "http://" and "Description:". A red arrow points to the "URL to track:" field. Below these fields is a section titled "Sales/Action Conversion Tracking" with a paragraph of text explaining the feature. Underneath, there is a checkbox for "Auto Append Campaign ID:" and a button labeled "Test Tracked URL". Below this is a note: "If you are only tracking signups then you don't need to enter these values". There are two more input fields: "Sales Value:" with the value "0.00" and "Cost Value:" with the value "0.00". At the bottom of the form is a button labeled "Save Campaign".

URL To Track is where you will enter the URL you wish to send your visitors to and the description is for your convenience so add in what ever you would like to add there. For example if I were going to promote Affiliate Funnel I might use Affiliate Funnel squeeze page 4 so I would know exactly what the page was for without looking at the page from my campaigns.

Sales/Action Conversion Tracking comes into play if you are promoting a program that is a partner program with [Hits Connect](#). This allows you to track through to conversion even when you do not control the ultimate result page but only if you check the box and the program you are promoting has added the special code from [Hits Connect](#).

The final section is useful if you are using PPC to set your cost and the value of your completed action to give you an easy look at your profit or loss on a campaign.


Clicking the "**Test Tracked URL**" button will allow you to see the page your tracker is pointing to and make sure that you have not made a mistake. It opens in a new window and once that is good just click "**Save Campaign**"..

Now that this part is done you will get a trker.com link that you will use.

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Campaign added successfully.!

The HitsConnect tracker URL for your campaign is:

<http://www.trker.com/go/41551> 

[Click here to view your Campaigns](#)

Sales/Action Conversion Tracking

To track the sales/action conversion you need to add the following code into your Sales Thank You Page or Action Completion page

```

```

User Defined Parameters

The code in gray is what you use on the page that is your ultimate goal if you control the page. For example – I set up a simple 3 page system for collecting email addresses. A squeeze page, a verification page and a thank you (download) page.

Because I am using a double opt in process the real result for me is when they click the verification link and are taken to the thank you page. That would be the page that I add that code to so I know how many people completed the whole process. The subscriber is only valuable to me if they complete the steps and I have the right to send them more email.

You can add a parameter to the end of your tracker URL. It can be up to 10 characters.

Now here is how we would use that to test the headlines in our split test.

Headline #1 we would use <http://www.trker.com/go/41551/h1> for headline 1

Headline #2 would be <http://www.trker.com/go/41551/h2> for headline 2

and so on for as many as you wanted to test. (You will need to keep a note of what headline goes with each number.

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Total By User Parameter		
Parameter	Hits Tot/Unq	
h1	3/1	
h2	2/1	
h3	1/1	
mpr	1/1	

12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23

[View Detail](#) | [Downl...](#)

When you go into your [Hits Connect](#) account you will see exactly how many times each was clicked.

This way you can see how many clicks each headline gets. If you run them in order to the same safelists you will quickly see which headlines are generating more clicks.

Keep the best and test new ones against the winner. Each time you run the tests you keep the winner and try to beat it.

You could do the same with each safelist by using a different parameter such as <http://www.trker.com/go/41551/adth1> if I were running the ad in AdTactics. This way I would not only see which headlines were working but which safelists were doing best at the same time.

Once you have generated 3 – 5 good headlines that are working then you could test the body copy of the ad. It would be done the same way just use a different parameter. If we wanted to test the body copy in AdTactics it might look like this.

[Http://www.trker.com/go/41551/adtb1](http://www.trker.com/go/41551/adtb1)

Continuous testing will improve your results and allow you to see which of the safelists are working best for you.

Tracking in the traffic exchanges

There are several things that tracking will allow you to check when using trackers in the traffic exchanges. First, is the volume of hits you are receiving. Are you actually getting what you have earned or bought from the various exchanges. The other thing you should use tracking for is to tell how effectively your page is working. (*You are using a splash page and not a generic affiliate page , right?*)

The other big advantage of using a tracking link is the ability to change your promotions at all of the traffic exchanges you are using without logging in to each and every one of them. Now much as you and I would love to have every site that we own or promote always be available we do realize that is not possible or feasible. Servers break no matter how good the host and what happens when you find out that the hard drive on your server just went kaput (*one of those technical terms <wink>*) right after you just assigned the credits you had been saving for your big promotion of the next latest and greatest thing. You can hurriedly log in to each of the 30+ traffic exchanges and change your URL or you can just log into your tracking account and change the destination of your tracking code.

The most important thing that tracking can do for you is with your splash pages. When you create the splash page always use a tracking link for you click here now reference. This way you can designate the page it came from and use the same techniques described for safelists to split test your splash pages.

It always amazes me what can happen with your results from a slight change in a headline or even in the background color. If you are not tracking the clicks and split testing your pages you will not be able to find out what is improving your results or causing your results to decline.

Using tracking on pay per click campaigns

Now if you are using pay per click advertising like Google Ad Words it is even more important to be tracking your results very closely. It is very easy to run up a large bill if you are not aware of which ads are converting into buyers and which ones are not.

Here is where the features we glossed over earlier can be quite helpful in keeping track of exactly where your ppc campaigns are specifically for your own products where you can control the thank you page.

You need to have the pixel image we discussed earlier in your results page. So lets explain exactly how to add the pixel image.

Sales/Action Conversion Tracking

To track the sales/action conversion you need to add the following code into your Sales Thank You Page or Action Completion page

```

```

User Defined Parameters

You need to make sure that you add that image to your page between the body tags.

It will look like this

```
<html><body>
Thank you for purchasing etc

</body>
```

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Trker Ref	http://www.trker.com/go/3917		Total	
Link	http://myebook.com		Hour	Hits
Total Hits	4		00	0
Total Unique Hits	1		01	0
Total By Browser Type			02	0
Browser	Hits		03	0
MSIE 6.0	4		04	0
Sales/Action Conversions			05	0
Parameter	Sales/Actions	Profit	06	0
ppc1	1	26.9	07	0
Total By User Parameter			08	0
Parameter	Hits		09	0
	Tot/Unq		10	4
ppc1	4/1		11	0
			12	0
			13	0
			14	0
			15	0
			16	0
			17	0
			18	0
			19	0
			20	0

Here is an example and you can see that you will get the stats for both the User Parameter (the number of times the initial link was clicked) and the Sales/Action Parameters (the number of times the image was shown or people got to your ultimate result page) and it will show you from what original source..

If you had added in a sale price it will also show you a profit value for that action.

Split testing your sales page

A rotator can make split testing a sales page quite easy. A rotator is nothing more than a single URL that will show pages in a consecutive order. The first time it is clicked you get page 1 and when it is shown the next time it will show page 2, etc. This allows you to send traffic one place and split it equal between 2 or more pages..

This will allow you to constantly test changes in your sales page for any product. Now you do have to make sure that just like in the section on ad copy that you only change one thing at a time.

For an example you can use two different headlines for the same page. Send the traffic through the rotator and track your sales. Keep the headline that works best for you. Next change a piece of the ad copy. Follow the same rules. Always keep the best performing page and test it against the new page with one change on it.

This is an excellent way to improve your conversion ratio over time. How much extra can you profit from a page that converts at 2.5% versus a page that originally converted at 0.8%? Depends on your traffic volume but for an example if you are selling a \$47 product and send 1000 hits that difference can be substantial. This would net you an extra 17 sales on the same traffic which would mean almost \$800 extra to your bottom line.

Now a 3 times increase is huge on your conversions but even if you had only changed the conversion from 0.8% to 1.2% which is not at all unusual that would still work out to almost an extra \$200 per 1000 visitors.

Here is how you can use the rotator in [Hits Connect](#) to do it.

Create two sales pages with the change you wish to test. For this example we will call the pages index1 and index 2.

Create 2 tracking links one for each page.

Click on My Rotators in the left menu.

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My Rotator

You are currently modifying Rotator Number 1 whose URL is:
<http://www.trker.com/rotate/68/1>

[View Statistics for this rotator](#)

Your current membership level allows you to have 10 rotators.
Which Rotator would you like to modify: [1](#) [2](#) [3](#) [4](#) [5](#) [6](#) [7](#) [8](#) [9](#) [10](#)

User Defined Parameter's

This will show you a list of all of your tracking links. Click the validate URL box to the right and check the pages. Once they are validated you can click the box to the left and click update rotator.

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	http://www.trker.com/go/23725	http://www.mikepaetzold.com/reports.html	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	http://www.trker.com/go/24878	http://affiliatefunnel.com/?rid=3	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	http://www.trker.com/go/41551		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

You can now use the rotator link and add any parameters the same way. So I could test my page while checking the safelist headline and the various safelists by using parameters on the rotator URL like this <http://www.trker.com/rotate/68/1/adth1>

It is definitely worth taking the time to split test your pages. Using the rotator provided in [Hits Connect](#) makes this extremely easy and definitely a way to add dollars to your pocket.

Tracking Banners

Banners are often over looked by people but you can get good results with some banners and really, really bad results with others. Where they are shown makes a difference.

You can track your banners too and you should.

Click My Banners in the side bar menu then click add a banner.



The screenshot shows the HitsConnect.com dashboard. At the top, there is a header with the logo and the text "HitsConnect.com" and "Takes The Guesswork Out of Tracking Ad Campaigns". Below the header is a sidebar menu with buttons for "My Account", "Edit Profile", "My Campaigns", "My Rotators", "My Trker", "My Banner", "My Banner Rotators", and "Thankyou Ad Rotator". A red arrow points to the "My Banner" button. The main content area is titled "My Banners" and contains the following text: "You are currently tracking 2 banners and can add 98 more", "Your banner's have received 0 impressions today", and a link "Add A Banner". Below this is a table with the following structure:

No.	Trker URLs.	Banner (Not shown in actual size)
1	Image URL: http://www.trker.com/banner/256.jpg Target URL: http://www.trker.com/click/256	

This works just like the regular tracker with a difference. Your Banner Image URL will be the URL to the banner image itself. This is normally a jpg, gif, or png file. The Banner Target URL is the website you want someone to go to when they click the banner. All other aspects are the same as discussed earlier.

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Add A Banner

Banner Image URL:	<input type="text" value="http://"/>
Banner Target URL:	<input type="text" value="http://"/>
Description:	<input style="height: 40px;" type="text"/>

Sales/Action Conversion Tracking

Some program owners have already incorporated the sales/action conversion tracking code into their thank you pages and splash pages. In order for you to take advantage of this facility you need to enable the auto append banner id checkbox. However some URL's may not work with this enabled, so you must click the Test Tracked URL button and verify that your page appears in a new window correctly, if your page does not appear or does not seem correct then do not enable this checkbox.

Auto Append Banner ID: <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="button" value="Test Tracked URL"/>
--	---

If you are only tracking signups then you don't need to enter these values

Sales Value:	<input type="text" value="0.00"/>
Cost Value:	<input type="text" value="0.00"/>

You will get two separate URL's for submitting your banners to various site named the same. You can add any extension to the target that you want so you can test the source the same as a regular link.

No.	Trker URLs.	Banner (Not shown in actual size)
1	Image URL: http://www.trker.com/banner/256.jpg Target URL: http://www.trker.com/click/256	
	Today's Impressions: 0 Total Impressions: 0	View Statistics Edit Delete

Your statistics will be viewed the same as the regular links and will give you the same information based on your use of preferences and whether or not you add the image code to your goal page.

Trying different banners and setting up a rotator to split test can help you improve your results from your banner advertising. I recommend you go to Instant Banner Creator and create multiple versions of banners and test them to find what will give you your best results.

Tracking your mailing list sign ups

The better auto responder services will allow you to add a tracking code to the forms that you create and the email addresses that you create for getting subscribers. Each uses a slightly different method and we will use [Aweber](#) in this report.

Every direct email signature that you place in an ad, article, or signature file can be tracked quite simply there. You just create a new list with a different prefix.

In this case one of my auto responders there is a list for promoting [Affiliate Funnel](#). The normal link is afseries@aweber.com but I can duplicate the list and create a special link for this book called afseries1@aweber.com. Now I didn't but that is how easy it is to create a second list. You just import all of the emails from the other series and you are done. Now I can see exactly how many people clicked through on that ad or article.

Now if you are using a squeeze page with a form [Aweber](#) allows you to create multiple forms and will track how many come through each form for you. Create a form for each squeeze page version and you can tell how many use the form and this will allow you to track your completions.

If you are getting a lot of people at the form but a high percentage are not verifying you can keep changing your verification page and know when your results are improving or falling.

Add in the best delivery in the business and you know why I like [Aweber](#).

Conclusions

Taking the time and effort to track your results can have a serious effect on your bottom line. Just small changes in a sales page or an ad can make a huge difference over time in your income.

Tracking will allow you to stop wasting time and money that are not producing results for you. It is great to get recommendations from friends and up lines on what works for them. Knowing whether or not they work for you though is what is important.

Our initial example of the ezine ads I ran is a perfect example. I am always happy to get a 45% return on my advertising dollar. However, I am even happier to be able to double that return because of my tracking. If you are not spending the time and money to properly track your results I can guarantee that you are losing money in your business. The increase in time and money to you and your business from the improvements you make because of tracking your results will be many times more than the time and money that you spend to do it.

Recommendations

Different tracking services have different features. There are a few things that you need to effectively track your advertising.

1. You need the ability to tell how many page views you receive from each source.
2. You need the ability to track the customer through to your thank you page. (Traffic stats of and by themselves don't help you improve your results they just tell you how many visitors came from where.)
3. You need a rotator for split testing.

I have used [Hits Connect](#) for a few years. They have all of the above features, a great up time track record, and very responsive support. If you are looking for a tracking solution they get my highest recommendation.

To build a list you need a good mail management system. [Aweber](#) is definitely my recommended service. Their delivery rate is exceptional.

Other Resources

Here are some of the resources I have tested and tracked for getting results for me. They are broken into categories. There are plenty of others but I have kept each category to a max of 5. See despite the fact that there are many other good resources in advertising I have found that concentration of resources brings better results.

If you are working in the work at home market my first resource is [Affiliate Funnel](#). It is a great training resource and will show you the way to build a sustainable business.

Traffic Exchanges

[I Love Hits](#) - one of the oldest traffic exchanges online, and remains a strong leader in the industry. The 'no-frills' traffic exchange with great delivery.

[Dragon Surf](#) - a well run exchange that has really performed well. A fun theme combined with an excellent owner makes this one of the best new exchanges on the market.

[Traffic Splash](#) - The original surf rewards exchange where you get more credit for your click. Go surf with the dolphins and watch your results multiply.

[Advertising Know How](#) - an awesome program with a co-registration service, article directory, and a traffic exchange all in one

[Traffic Witch](#) - widely advertised outside traffic exchanges so brings in fresh eyes to see your sites

Safelists

[Ad Tactics](#) - One of the very first credit based safelists and still one of the best.

[Got Safelist](#) - a credit-based safelist with very large and active membership. The unique jackpot links ensure you get plenty of traffic.

[Elite Safelist](#) - a top quality new safelist. Fast growing and very responsive.

About The Author

Mike Paetzold is an avid blogger and social media user. He has been marketing on line since 2000 and is the go to guy for information about WordPress and is known through out the marketing community as The WordPress Guy.

Below are a few of the products that can help you.

WordPress Made Easy – Easily Install The Ultimate Targeted Traffic Magnet... In Less Than 1 Hour! Even if you can only use email at this very moment...

Now you can get your hands on a proven, step-by-step system to self-install a customized, search engine friendly, WordPress blog on your very own hosting account in mere minutes that attracts hungry, targeted visitors to your website like flies on honey...

7 Tips To Make Your WordPress Blog Search Engine Friendly - This report will show you step by step exactly the changes to make within your dashboard, where to get the plugins that allow the changes, how to install the plugins - step by step and all the little forgotten but very necessary steps that the plugin creators forget to tell you about (not on purpose but these creators are programmers and sometimes assume knowledge you don't have)

Power WordPress Users - Not for everyone but a great service for those that are consistently adding new blogs to their network. A great time saver for those people.

15 Minute Blog Traffic - A step by step plan to get more traffic to your blog in written and audio form to start generating you traffic quickly and continuously.

Twitter Effect 2.0 – The perfect starter tutorial for using Twitter. Covers all of the basics and will get you up and running.

Twitter Time Saver - How You Can Become An Authority To Your Twitter Followers In 30 Minutes Or Less A Day. The Key To Building Authority Status On Twitter Or Any Other Social Media Is Providing Cutting Edge Information!

Niche Affiliate System - Discover an easy way to test any niche before you create a product so you know it will be profitable. Creating a product takes time and effort so test the niche before investing your time and eliminate the losers quickly