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SBI! Purchase date: August 2004

How did you discover SBI?

A mentor on a goal setting forum I had been visiting suggested SBI! to me. I was seeking a direction at the time with an idea that I had been working on.

How did you come up with your site theme(s)?

The idea for a hair book had been brewing for a year and a half before I was introduced to SBI! I'd been working on a proposal for a publisher, trying to sort through the ins and outs of corporate publishing, editors, agents, etc...

My travel site was born a year after the first site and is still very young. I've got grand plans for it and the fact that I'm building a site about one of my favorite places to visit (and daydream about) is a thrill for me.

What was your motivation for starting an online business?

My initial motivation wasn't to start an online business, actually. It just turned out to be the best vehicle for me to bring my vision to fruition. Had I known about the possibilities, I'd have considered a website long before 2004. My main motivation is twofold, first of all, I want to be self-sufficient, have my own money and contribute to the household so my husband isn't solely responsible for the finances. Secondly, I want to live a full life, discover and develop my individual talents, and become the best me possible through challenge and hard work.

How long was it before you found success with your site(s)? Please define what "success" means to you.

I achieved some measure of success after about 6 or 8 months with my first site. Started receiving monthly cheques from my monetization strategies and regularly increasing traffic. It was also at this point that my site was discovered by the Editor in Chief of a publishing house in New York that produces hairstyle magazines. She'd been surfing the net, had discovered my site, and was "very

impressed” with my work. She offered me the opportunity to write freelance articles for their magazines.

So, in the space of 8 months from the day I embarked on my SBI! journey, rather than researching potential publishing avenues and learning about jumping through hoops, I was in the enviable position of being approached by them. The internet has been dubbed “The Great Equalizer” for good reason, but success hinges on getting your site seen, and many millions of them never are. I feel as though I’ve been blessed with a secret treasure having found SiteBuildIt!

What is your average monthly income?

At this point in time, I’m around \$1000.00 per month from my hair site. The other one is very new (2 months) and not earning yet.

What monetization models do you use?

Mostly Google AdSense, which I have great success with. I’ve also recently implemented a new pay per click advertising program. And I earn regular income with affiliate marketing as well.

With my travel site, I’ll be implementing paid advertising and referral agreements once the site has grown to a certain extent. I have Google AdSense on that site as well, and will be adding select affiliate programs in the future.

How many hours per week do you work on your site(s)?

20-30 hours per week probably.

What is your pre-SBI work experience? Include both WAH and outside experience.

Most recently, I’ve operated a salon in my home, working in the evenings when my husband was home to look after the kids. Before that, 5 years working in salons, beginning with an hourly wage, then commission, then chair rental, which required me to “start a business.”

Before hair school, I worked in insurance claims, reception, clerical and administrative positions.

What “sold” you on SBI? What would you change?

It was the down to earth quality that “sold” me on SBI!, no question. The authentic feel to the content, no hype or pitchy stuff, just solid information about what I could do with the product. Plus all the behind the scenes technical stuff that I wouldn’t have to do, or even spend valuable time learning about. I’d just get to drive the beautiful machine, I didn’t have to learn how to assemble it myself, which meant I could focus on the aspect of my project that interested me the most, building and creating something to be proud of.

I also did a lot of research, browsing successful SiteBuildIt! websites and reading their stories. It really fuelled my drive to get going and find a way to purchase SBI!

If you could go back, what would you do differently with your website(s)?

It’s all been necessary. As cliché as that may sound, it’s true. Sure I’d like to have done everything perfect to start out with, but that’s just not reality. I’m so proud of all I’ve learned, of how far I’ve come, and it’s been through my mistakes that I’ve gotten here. No regrets at all, looking forward to more learning, more milestones, more growth.

How do you “do it all” (i.e. childcare, housework, meals, play, etc.)?

Ummmm...housework? Well in truth, I was never really much concerned with a pristine environment. Seriously though, it all balances out. That’s the beauty of working on your own time. A meal and a quick story, then some time for Mommy to work, then a snack and clean-up, nap-time for the youngest, a movie for the oldest, throw in some laundry, and set to work for a few solid hours. I do what needs to be done the most at any given time and the nature of website building is such that I can stop or take a break at any point and carry on when time allows. I can work in my pyjamas and fuzzy slippers and switch from work mode to mommy/caretaker to silly dance partner whenever the mood strikes. And I’m here to answer all my kids’ questions, kiss their boo-boo’s and hear their newest words or discoveries. It’s a beautiful thing.