

Productivity Challenge 2015 Begins!

I thought I would begin my fifth annual Productivity Challenge (2015 promises to be the best ever!) by sharing a post from the Invoca Blog. Invoca is a software company in Santa Barbara. They develop inbound call technology that generates phone numbers for telemarketing, then routes and tracks the calls and sales that result. In a recent blog post they outlined [11 Easy Tips Guaranteed to Prevent Productivity Burnout](#) and I have to say this list is an excellent article.

Tip #2 discusses the concept of ‘talking out loud’ and they state: “Getting your story right takes practice, and it’s not going to come out right the first time. The best way to hone your message and your story is to verbalize it and talk it through with people.” This continues to work well for me in all situations.

Tip #11 is to be proud of what you have accomplished and they write: “Don’t forget to be proud of your work. If you aren’t excited about your work, no one else will be, and it will suck the motivation right out of you for future projects. Take pride in what you did well, and know that you always have another chance to improve. Perfectionism is your enemy! It’s amazing how much your productivity will change with the right mindset.”

With this we begin year number five of my annual Productivity Challenge. 2015 can be your best year ever if you set and achieve the goals you have designed for yourself. If you would like to participate in this 30 day challenge please leave a comment below, along with a goal you will be working on. The community is where you are encouraged, ask questions, and take action on what you want to do while sharing it with others who are reading this blog.

Day 2 – Take an honest look at your online business to determine what you have in place and what you still need to set up. These are some things you will need in order to get started:

- Hosted WordPress site – If you need hosting, I recommend [A2 Hosting](#); if you need domains, I recommend GoDaddy.
- Separate optin page(s) – You want to attract people from a variety of demographics.
- Free Giveaway – Put together a short report or audio that will be irresistible to people searching for information on your niche topic.
- Something to sell – In the beginning this will most likely be an affiliate product, then after you learn more you will want to begin creating your own line of products and even a coaching/consulting/mentoring program as a part of your inventory. Take it at your own speed and know that everything is possible when you continue to take action on a daily basis.

Day 3 – Content Marketing is the fastest way to making a name for yourself online and for getting your message out to the world. With your blog being your ‘Home of the Internet’, blogging regularly becomes the method that will allow you to find your voice and get people interested in you and what you are doing. This has led to [authorship](#) for me, which has helped me to grow my business exponentially over the years. You may also create content with videos, audios, and by speaking and presenting in person. I continue to engage in all of these strategies to grow my business. What are you doing to create content regularly? (*On Day 18 I go into*

greater detail as to how you may create fresh, relevant content on your blog to grow your business quickly and effectively, while also increasing your credibility over time.)

Leave a new comment here to tell us more about your blog and your niche topic.

Day 4 – Mindset is the most important part of entrepreneurship, yet few people are taking the time to get their heads around this. I like to have quiet time each morning and evening to reflect upon my goals. Some people call this prayer or meditation, but I find it is all quite similar as we ask for guidance in our daily lives. Understanding your purpose in life and expanding that to include your business goals and aspirations is crucial to your success, in my honest and humble opinion.

Remember Tip #11 from the post I curated on Day 1 from Invoca – ‘Perfectionism is your enemy!’

I also read inspirational, motivational business books and listen to books on tape. The book I am reading right now is called [*The Lean Startup: How Today’s Entrepreneurs Use Continuous Innovation to Create Radically Successful Businesses*](#) by Eric Ries.

What are you doing to improve your mindset? What are you reading?

Day 5 – Let’s Get Social! The world has changed since I came online back in 2006. Now we have access to the world every moment of the day through social media, and it’s an excellent idea for you to be connected everywhere for maximum results. Here are the sites that I find most helpful in growing my business:

Twitter – I’m [ConnieGreen on Twitter](#)

Facebook – I’m [ConnieRagenGreen on Facebook](#)

LinkedIn – [I’m ConnieRagenGreen on LinkedIn](#)

YouTube – I’m [ConnieRagenGreen on my YouTube Channel](#)

Instagram – I’m [ConnieRagenGreen on Instagram](#)

Pinterest – I’m [Connie R Green on Pinterest](#)

It is now easier than ever to stay connected with your prospects, customers, and clients on a daily basis through social media, without having to actually be there in person every day. At his very moment someone is watching my videos on YouTube, reading my latest post or tweet or photo, or perusing my profile over on LinkedIn. When people tell me I am everywhere, this is typically what they are referring to. You can increase and enhance your visibility exponentially through the appropriate use of social media channels.

Where can we find YOU on social media? Let us know so we can friend/follow/connect with you.

Day 6 – How and why have you come to be in the niche you have chosen? If you’re still deciding on a niche, how may I help you with this? I started out by helping others to write, edit,

and market eBooks online, because my experience as a classroom teacher made that an obvious choice. Within a couple of years I was confident enough to move into the online marketing niche.

Visualize a three circle Venn Diagram, where the upper left hand circle is for your passions, the right hand circle represents your life experiences and education, and the bottom circle stands for the marketplace. Where these three circles come together is your ‘sweet spot’, which means that what you love and what you have knowledge about meets the market to sell your products, ideas, information, and training. This will serve as a guide to help you get started off in the niche that will serve your needs as an online entrepreneur.

Let’s have a discussion on this topic in the comments area.

Day 7 – What’s for sale? This may seem like a rhetorical question, but your answer is telling when it comes to online entrepreneurship. If you are in business you must have inventory to sell. I have almost forty of my own products, courses, books, and trainings, as well as my ongoing Mentoring. What do you have for sale. Without including any links, give me an idea of what potential clients are able to purchase from you directly or through your affiliate links right now.

Day 8 – Affiliate Marketing is the business model of recommending what you use, benefit from, and love to others. Which affiliate platforms do you prefer, and are you an affiliate for my [Really Simple Podcasting](#) course?

Affiliate marketing continues to account for almost half of my income each month. What do you need to know about this excellent business model?

Day 9 – Your Mission Statement defines the reason you are in business. Mine is that I help new online entrepreneurs to choose a niche and a business model based on their interests and experiences where they will be able to serve others who are looking for solutions to their problems in this area. Think about the people you wish to serve and how you will help them to achieve their goals, based on your own interests and experiences. Share your Mission Statement with us in the comments below.

Day 10 – Becoming a local celebrity is something that I’ve taught for years now. I did this inadvertently when I first came online, and now I do it intentionally to build my credibility and increase visibility. This is what I recommend:

- Reach out to the local newspaper and magazines in your city and offer to write a regular column on your topic.
- Contact the local radio station(s) to see if you could be a guest on one of their shows.
- Connect with local business owners by attending meetings of the Chamber of Commerce, service organizations, and non-profits.
- Volunteer with at least one non-profit whose Mission Statement resonates with you.

This is how I got started in Santa Clarita, California nine years ago, and now I’m doing the same thing in Santa Barbara. This has led to massive exposure in both cities, and opportunities to be a

part of groups and projects that continue to help me build my business. You can do the same thing if you're willing to take the time and make the effort on a consistent basis.

Day 11 – Leverage your voice when it comes to building your list and increasing your credibility and visibility. When we simply write email messages and social media posts to our prospects we remain flat and one dimensional. By allowing others to hear our voice, with all of its inflections and mood, this fleshes us out and we are perceived in a much different way. I use [Instant Teleseminar](#) for this purpose and have done more than ten thousand hours of recordings over the past nine years. You may hear my most recent recording at [Ask Connie Anything](#). I also host two podcasts that are available on iTunes.

Let us know where we may hear your voice, whether it is on your podcast, a teleseminar, a webinar, or somewhere else.

Day 12 – Attending live events is the fastest way to make a name for yourself and your business. I host two of my own live events each year, as well as three or four smaller ones in Santa Barbara that I refer to as 'retreats'. I also speak at and/or attend anywhere from five to ten other events each year to connect with people and keep current with my industry.

In the very beginning I was reluctant to spend the time and money to go to live events and workshops because I thought it was cost prohibitive; soon I found out that it was well worth the cost of the event, the airfare, the hotel, and the other expenses because my return was so great.

Are you attending live events to grow your business? Give us some details about the events you attend and what you look for before you decide to commit to attending someone's event.

Day 13 – Working with a Mentor changes everything and shows you are serious about growing your business. I continue to work with Mentors and know that I will always have much to learn and improve upon as an entrepreneur. I also run a successful Mentor program of my own.

Are you working with a Mentor currently? What does that look like in your business?

Be sure to leave a comment and let us know where we may find your blog or website. And I promise to answer all of your questions personally. Please introduce yourself!

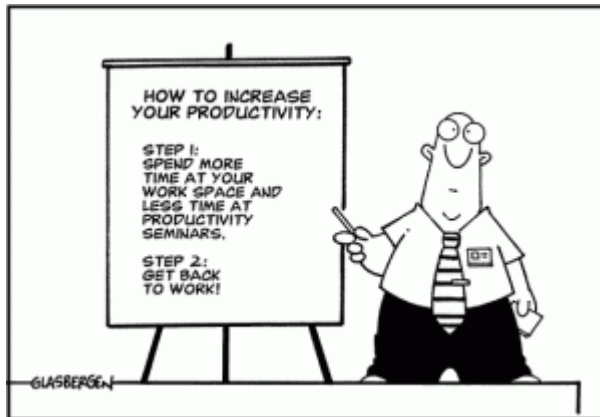
Day 14 – Writing a book on your topic has become a necessity as the Internet and online entrepreneurship gets more and more competitive. I continue to teach people how to do this as a part of my [Write. Publish. Prosper.](#) course and bestselling book, and you can do this successfully when you know how. Creating a focused and organized outline is the key to success with this, and I now have eleven books to my credit.

What questions do you have for me in the area of authorship for entrepreneurs?

Day 15 – Creating information products does not have to be a difficult process. Simply interview people on a topic of interest to your niche and sell the recordings; write a short eBook or report that teaches one aspect of your topic; or host a webinar where you teach people who to

do something of benefit to them. These are three ways to create your own information product quickly and easily. Later on, as you progress as an online entrepreneur and become more sophisticated, use these first products as bonuses for your newer ones.

You have now made it to the halfway mark of the 2015 Productivity Challenge – congratulations!



Day 16 – What are you reading? I first mentioned this on Day 1, but now I'd like to discuss that further. When I was first online I made the conscious decision to give up reading fiction to focus on business books. The idea was that I could give myself a business education by reading books written by some of the thought leaders working online as entrepreneurs. The results continue to pay off as I learn from some of the best minds working on the Internet. My first recommendation is [*The 10X Rule: The Only Real Difference Between Success and Failure*](#) from Grant Cardone. I have now read this book three times and learn something new each time I do so.

What are you reading?

Day 17 – Reaching out to Mentors and thought leaders in your niche is an excellent way to rise to the top in your business. It used to be that people like I am describing here were very hard to reach, but with the advent of social media you are now able to reach out to almost anyone you can imagine.

Make a list of people with whom you would like to have a conversation about what they are doing in their business and how they were able to achieve their goals. Offer to interview them orally or through written communication for your podcast or blog. This can be the first step to connecting with someone who could help you to grow your business and change your life.

Day 18 – Back on Day 3 I referred to your blog as being your 'Home on the Internet', something I have believed in strongly since coming online in 2006. I had said that posting to your blog was one way to use 'content marketing' as a viable strategy to build your business. Let's take a closer look at the ways you can make sure that you always have enough content for your blog, and at the benefits of pushing out relevant content on a regular basis.

The most desirable way to create content for your blog is to come up with your own original ideas and to then write a post about them. This will become easier with practice, as does anything we do with regularity and purpose. Your goal is to compose a post of approximately three hundred to five hundred words *at least* once a week, and preferably twice each week. Periodically, write a longer post (something I refer to as a ‘flagship’ post, comprised of seven hundred fifty to a thousand words) where you refer to and link back to one of more of your previous posts. These posts could be about your thoughts and opinions on your topic, a review of something you are using and benefiting from, your life experiences (as related to the topic of your post), or a written interview with someone who is known in your field. I highly recommend that you create a blogging calendar and schedule for yourself so that you will always know what you are writing next.

Another strategy for content creation on your blog is to ask others to write guest posts for your site. The idea here is to have others create content for you while also giving them a platform and exposure to your audience. You decide what the topic should be, the length of the post, and other details pertaining to what you would like for them to write on your behalf. At the end of their post your guest blogger will write the equivalent of a resource box where they will include a link back to their own blog or main site, information on how to connect with them via social media, and anything else you have agreed upon mutually before you asked the person to write for you. Nicole Dean created a very helpful training that you might want to pick up at [Guest Blogging Secrets](#).

Curation is yet another way to add valuable and relevant content to your blog. I modeled this strategy here in this post on Day 1 by linking to and curating a post from the Invoca blog on productivity. If you are reading blogs in your niche and on topics you are interested in, as I believe we should all be doing, then you will have an almost endless supply of content to refer to and use on your own site through the process of blog curation.

The fourth way to create content for your blog is to use PLR (private label rights) content. There are several sources for this that I consider to be the highest quality available, and this includes content created by [Coach Glue](#), [Alice Seba](#), and [Ronnie Nijmeh](#). You can use this content ‘as is’, or slightly rewrite it so that it is in your voice. I find this content to be so complete that I seldom do more than just a slight rewrite before posting it to one or both of my blogs.

Now that you see how easily you can have fresh content on your sites regularly, make it a point to schedule out what and when you will do so. Google and the other search engines will love your blog, and you will soon find that your list is growing and your business is taking off in a way that you may not have previously experienced.

Day 19 – What’s Your Plan? Every successful business starts out with a plan, and as an online entrepreneur you must know where you would like to go before you start running enthusiastically in the wrong direction. We’ve touched upon this briefly in this Productivity Challenge, but now I’d like to go more in depth to give you a better sense of what I mean by this.

Your business plan will include the following things:

- the target audience you will be speaking to
- your niche market
- your revenue model
- your day to day operating procedures

We tend to go after a target audience that is very similar to ourselves. For example, when I began online I was reaching out to people who had left a job that no longer served them in favor of having a business they could run from home.

Your niche market will be one in which you have a strong interest, some experience, and that has a viable market, meaning that people are already selling something that others are purchasing.

Your revenue model may be that of selling information products, affiliate marketing, coaching/mentoring, consulting, helping small businesses, sourcing and marketing physical products, authorship, or any combination of these. I recommend starting with no more than two revenue models and becoming skilled at them before adding additional streams of revenue.

What I am referring to with your day to day operations is how your business will accomplish its goals. I worked all alone during my first few months online before adding a webmaster to help me a few hours each week. I now have about a dozen people from around the world who help me with various aspects of my business. This includes booking my travel, creating and rewriting content, technical assistance, help with graphics, customer service, and overseeing my longer range projects. This frees me up to do the things I am best at doing, such as writing, teaching, presenting, and mentoring others.

Leave a comment to let us know what your plan is for your business as an online entrepreneur.

Day 20 – Positive Thinking for Entrepreneurs – On **Day 4** I discussed mindset, and the importance of staying inspired and motivated as you build your online business. Today I wrote a blog post on the topic of [positive thinking for entrepreneurs](#) that I would like for you to read and comment on. If this concept is crucial to your success, then why isn't it a part of your daily routine?

Day 21 – Web Sales Copy is copywriting for the Internet. I've made a study of this over my nine years of selling products and courses online and love sharing some of the principles with those who are new to the life of an online entrepreneur. Let's start with a discussion of headlines. One of my favorites uses this formula:

“They Laughed When I _____, But When I _____ They All Took Notice.”

The most famous version of this one is:

“They laughed when I sat down at the piano, but when I started to play...”

Fill in the blanks for this one to suit your own niche, and share a favorite headline of your own in the comments section here.

Day 22 – Focus and Clarity – The idea of multitasking is just that; it’s an idea that does not exist in reality. You can prove this to yourself by simply trying to hold a conversation with someone while watching a television program. It is just not possible to do both with any level of proficiency. Maintaining focus and clarity as you build your business will be crucial to your success.

Make room in your life for the new tasks and activities will be required of you as an online entrepreneur. What must you give up in order to achieve your goals? I gave up all television and going to most films during my first year online. I also gave up reading all fiction books in favor of reading business books to educate myself in areas where I was lacking knowledge.

Choose just ONE thing to become an expert in for your business. By becoming single-minded in your focus and efforts you will be able to achieve great things. My ONE thing was writing during my first three years online. Since then I have added additional goals, but I never work on more than one goal at a time and only three during any given one year period. This strategy works!

Share your thoughts and experiences with us here.

Day 23 – Your Reason Why – Typically I would start my *Productivity Challenge* with this topic, but this year I wanted to make sure everyone was focused and taking action before coming back to this. Having a powerful reason why you are risking so much to have the life of an online entrepreneur is important, and you will be much more successful if you know why you are doing it each day. My ‘Reason Why’ includes my desire to have time freedom and financial freedom to live the life I love and deserve, wanting to give back to my community, family, and friends in a variety of ways, and to help new entrepreneurs get started with a lucrative business they can run from home, or from wherever they have an Internet connection.

What is your ‘reason why’? What are you risking in order to start and grow your online business, and what rewards are you expecting as a result of this process?

Day 24 – Take action now for best results. I was speaking with one of my mentees today and we were discussing how the same things that worked when I came online in 2006 still work today. It seems that people are searching for a way to make easy money online, but you must remember this is a business like any other and requires hard work and dedication. If you are willing to do that then you will be successful.

When I was just starting out I committed to working seven days a week on my business, even if that meant only spending fifteen minutes on a Sunday, holiday, or special family occasion. This kept my business top of mind so that I could expand my thinking, learn more, and take action and implement quickly. It worked out very well, and now I am enjoying the fruits of my hard work back in the beginning of my career as an online entrepreneur.

What are your thoughts on this?

Day 25 – Create an E-Course for your existing list, or to start an additional list on your niche topic. An e-course is a series of very short (two or three paragraphs is fine) lessons to educate people on a specific aspect of the topic you are an expert in online. Choose an area where you could break it down into about seven daily lessons. Have a call to action at the end of each lesson. On day three or four offer prospects a link to the PDF of the entire e-course, in case they miss a day or two during the time they are going through it. An e-course actually becomes a new product for you that you may sell or offer as a bonus in the future.

Day 26 – Copywriting is the single most useful skillful you can cultivate as part of your journey as an online entrepreneur. On **Day 21** we touched upon this, but now let's go into greater depth. Here are some of the most important elements of sales copy for the web:

- **Headlines (including your pre-headline and sub-headlines)**
- **Teaser**
- **Reason Why**
- **Scarcity/Urgency**
- **Features and Benefits**
- **Storytelling/Case Studies**
- **Guarantee**
- **Testimonials**
- **Bonuses**
- **Cost Comparison**
- **Recap**
- **'Columbo' Technique**
- **P.S. and P.P.S.**
- **Call to Action**

Writing sales copy for the web was taught to me long before I had anything of my own to sell. I spent many an hour hand writing my copy and going through it with a fine toothed comb to make sure I had included all of the elements I have listed above. I recommend that you do the same thing, and this will pay for itself many times over as your business grows.

I have outlined all of these and gone into greater detail in my now well known 'Copywriting Checklist'. Leave a comment here if you would like to receive a copy of this as my complimentary gift to you.

Day 27 – Your business model will be the most important part of how you choose to build your business as an online entrepreneur. There are a variety of ways to monetize what you are involved in online, including:

- Information Products and Online Courses
- Books (eBooks, Kindle, paperback)
- Affiliate Marketing
- Local Business Marketing
- Physical Products (private label, retail arbitrage, wholesaling)
- Mentoring/Coaching/Consulting

Please share your own strategies with us here, and ask any questions you would like for me to answer on this topic.

Day 28 – Your work ethic will determine the level of success you are able to achieve, and how quickly you can change your circumstances via your online business. Remember that this is a business like any other, and that you must stay focused and dedicated to creating an online business as an entrepreneur. Once I became more disciplined in my approach to working from home and making things happen in a way that served me, everything changed and my income grew exponentially.

What are some things that you do regularly to stay on task and avoid ‘Bright Shiny Object Syndrome’?

(Download a [Complimentary Course on this topic by clicking here](#))

Day 29 – Become a Problem Solver – Choosing just one activity to implement each day will enable you to become a problem solver and successful online entrepreneur.

Dennis Becker offers an inexpensive course on achieving [ten challenges over a 10 day period](#) that you will benefit from greatly. Once we understand that solving problems for our target market is what makes our businesses worthwhile, we are able to move forward quickly and profitably.

Day 30 – This is the last day for the 2015 Productivity Challenge, so I’d like to challenge you to continue building your business based on what was shared here over the past thirty days. I have always planned my business at least one quarter in advance, so here are just a few of the things I have planned for the remainder of 2015:

- An Online Marketing Incubator where entrepreneurs can gather to learn and share their best practices and strategies. I’ll be opening this up at the beginning of September.
- Additional courses in my ‘Really Simple...’ series, intended to focus on one strategy at a time to help new online entrepreneurs grow their businesses.
- New book entitled *Book. Blog. Broadcast. – The Trifecta of Entrepreneurial Success.*
- A series of chapter books geared to children ages eight to twelve. I’ve wanted to do this for some time and now intend to publish these books under a pen name.
- A live event for online entrepreneurs based upon my new Incubator. This three day event will be held during October in Los Angeles, California.

What are your business goals and plans for the remainder of 2015? Do you have a Mentor and Mastermind group to help you stay on track and achieve what you what you intend to do with grace and ease?