



**Yaro Starak**

# **OUTSOURCING ONLINE**

**How To Grow Your Online  
Business, Free Up Time And  
Make Your Life Easier By  
Hiring Virtual Workers**

# Outsourcing Online

***How To Grow Your Online Business, Free Up Time And  
Make Your Life Easier By Hiring Virtual Workers***

**Written by Yaro Starak**



[www.entrepreneurs-journey.com](http://www.entrepreneurs-journey.com)

**ALL RIGHTS RESERVED**

*No part of this publication may be reproduced, transmitted, or sold in whole  
or in part in any form, without the prior written consent of the author*



---

# Table of Contents

---

<b>Introduction.....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Is Outsourcing Exploitation? .....</b>	<b>6</b>
Challenging Accepted Practices .....	6
What Do People Think About Outsourcing? .....	6
Counter Arguments.....	8
Here's How I See The Problem.....	9
How Can We Speed Up The Process? .....	10
Make Your Own Decision.....	11
<b>When Is The Right Time To Begin Outsourcing? .....</b>	<b>12</b>
What Are Your Goals? .....	12
Break Down The Components To Find Constraints.....	13
Take Action.....	14
<b>Cash-flow: How To Pay For Your First Contractor .....</b>	<b>15</b>
You Need Cash.....	15
1. Say No To Full Time Work .....	16
2. Create New Income Sources.....	16
3. Selling Online Assets.....	17
4. Government Grants.....	17
5. Fewer Projects and More Focus.....	17
Finally Help Arrives .....	18
What Does This Mean For You?.....	18
<b>Create A Pro-active Recruitment System.....</b>	<b>20</b>
When Do Most People Outsource?.....	20
What's The Alternative? .....	21
The System: An Email List.....	22
What If You Can't Create Email Lists?.....	23

Go Apply This Idea Now .....	23
<b>How To Manage Customer Service As A One Person Enterprise ...</b>	<b>24</b>
Growing Pains As A Solo Business Owner or Blogger .....	26
Can You Still Deliver Personal Service When You Can't Personally Do To It All Yourself? .....	27
Next: A Practical Tour of My Customer Support System .....	27
<b>Yaro HQ: The Evolution Of Customer Support.....</b>	<b>28</b>
In The Beginning.....	28
My First Taste of Success.....	29
The Empire Starts To Grow .....	29
A Fundamental Business Strategy: Outsourcing.....	30
Outsourcing Customer Service .....	31
Drowning In Attention.....	31
Filters: Focus On The People Who Matter Most .....	32
Reply To Mike.....	32
Set Up A Forum To Handle Advice Questions .....	33
Divert Email Queries To Help Lighten The Load.....	34
Set Up A Help Desk or Support Email Account.....	35
<b>Inside My Business: The Mechanics Of A Customer Support System.....</b>	<b>36</b>
<b>How To Find A Good Customer Support Person (Or Any Outsourced Staff) .....</b>	<b>38</b>
Start With A System.....	38
How I Find Good People.....	39
Outsourcing Sites.....	40
Treat Good People Well.....	41
Encourage Free Thinking.....	42

# The Legal Section

---

For the sake of clarity and brevity here are the two most important legal considerations regarding this book, in plain English -

1. **You can't use the content in this book unless I grant you permission.**
2. **I'm not responsible for anything that happens to you as a result of following the advice in this book.**

I don't mind if you quote small sections, a paragraph or two, within your own writing, and appreciate a link back as credit if you feel appropriate.

Here is the slightly more complicated way of saying the same thing.

## **Copyright Notice**

Any unauthorized reproduction or transmission of any aspect of this book is prohibited. You may not resale, repackage or give away any part of this book by any means, electronic or mechanical, without permission from the author, Yaro Starak.

This is NOT a free book and should not be freely distributed. You can only purchase this book from the websites [www.entrepreneurs-journey.com](http://www.entrepreneurs-journey.com) or [www.ejinsider.com](http://www.ejinsider.com). If you purchased or downloaded this book elsewhere please contact me immediately.

## **Legal Notice**

This book is not intended as legal, financial or investment advice. The purchaser of this book assumes all responsibility for their outcomes as a result of following the advice and materials in this book. Yaro Starak and the Blog Mastermind Partnership assume no responsibility or liability for the actions of any reader of this book.

# Introduction

---

At some point during the course of growing your online business you will hear some advice:

*If you want leverage, you need to hire people, it's the only way to really make significant money online.*

I agree with this advice, however I like to think about outsourcing to other people as a way to make my life **less stressful** more than anything else. It's not just about the money.

Primarily, I hire people to do the jobs that I personally don't want to do, I am not good at, or most importantly, to remove the jobs that are in the way of me doing what I love.

I begin this report with a hefty discussion of whether outsourcing overseas for cheap labor is exploitation. You don't have to read it, however I include it because a lot of people are concerned that outsourcing overseas is slave labor, and that we are farming all our jobs overseas, potentially hurting our local economies.

The main outcomes I want you to have as a result of reading this report are –

- 1. You identify the first task you will outsource to someone else**
- 2. You take an action to find a person to complete that task**

Most of this report talks about how I went about very slowly dipping my toes into the outsourcing pool, and then once I became comfortable with it, what main jobs I hired other people to do and how I found them.

Money is also a big deal when it comes to outsourcing, as you need some to pay people. That is why I include a chapter on **how you can pay for your first contractors** and an explanation of how I funded my helpers before I was making much money online.

I wish you luck in your outsourcing endeavors. Enjoy this guide and if you have any feedback, please pass it on.

**Yaro Starak**

yaro@entrepreneurs-journey.com

# Is Outsourcing Exploitation?

---

For a long time I was comfortable with my stance on outsourcing, comfortable enough to recommend it and promote outsourcing-related products, and profit from the affiliate commissions.

But over time I've received blog comments, emails, and queries from friends that have all challenged my views on this topic. I have to thank these people for prompting me to scrutinise my own attitudes more closely, because I am better off for it.

## Challenge Accepted Practices

The basic premise behind the type of outsourcing we are talking about here, is hiring people from other countries where labor is cheaper than hiring from your local country.

This is only true if you reside in a country with a strong currency and comparably high average salary, like the USA, Canada, Australia or countries in the European Union. People from wealthy countries outsource to people in poorer countries in Asia and Eastern Europe, where there are plenty of skilled individuals willing to work for a fraction of the cost of hiring locally.

When I first heard about this concept many years ago it sounded like a great opportunity for me as an Australian earning money online in US or Australian dollars. But when challenged by other viewpoints on the matter, I realised that I didn't understand how people could be paid only \$2 an hour and that not be considered slave labor. I started to wonder myself if this was a form of exploitation.

## Do People Think Outsourcing Is Wrong?

When my business partner [Gideon Shalwick](#) hired a full time Filipino at around \$400 US a month, I had a long discussion with him trying to understand why it's okay to do this and why it's not exploitation. We agreed that the inequalities between different countries are not ideal, but on an individual basis, we are helping the people we outsource to.

I spoke to some of my other friends to get their opinion on the issue, and have interviewed successful entrepreneurs who rely heavily on overseas outsourcing. I

also have the feedback emails I've received from people in response to my articles and emails about outsourcing, as well as feedback in the form of blog comments, including comments from several Filipinos who explain what it is like being an outsourcer living in their country.

After all of this I can see that clearly the issue is not *black and white*. So let's look at both sides of the argument, beginning with the arguments against it...

Firstly there are issues related to nationalism:

- Outsourcing overseas means you are **not hiring locally**, which results in fewer jobs, or even lost jobs in your country.
- Outsourcing results in a **flow of cash out of your country** into another, potentially having a detrimental impact on your economy, causing local businesses (who employ locally), to lose business to cheaper overseas groups and possibly even close up shop completely.

This nationalism comes from a sense of separation of peoples based on geographical borders (the "us" versus "them" mentality). This is a belief that if you give to one nation (in this case hire people overseas), you are causing a loss to another nation (your country, because you don't hire locally).

The second issue is fair pay for fair work:

- Paying \$2 an hour (or similar) is **slave labor**, even if workers are happy with their pay. People should be paid a fair wage based on the benefit you gain from them, not what the fair wage is based on the standards in their economy.
- If people work for you at pennies on the dollar, and you reap massive profits because of that (in other words, they do the work and you keep the money) it's simply **not fair**. Why should one group do most of the work for enough money to survive, while another group becomes stinking rich?

This issue is subjective and exists within every country, because we "value" certain roles greater than other roles. Sometimes this value is justified, whether because of a requirement for specialized knowledge (which could take years of study and practice to accumulate - e.g. doctors) or because the role is responsible for large and important outcomes and therefore worthy of higher remuneration (e.g. the extreme salaries of CEOs compared to their employees).

Other times it's the value society as a whole has decided to attach to certain roles, even if the justification seem out of whack. Often debated examples include the earnings of movie stars and sports stars compared to teachers and nurses.

## Counter Arguments

### Nationalism

There are a bunch of reasons why outsourcing to another country might not be such a bad thing:

- If outsourcing helps you to earn profits, then there is likely more money coming in to your country (to you) than going out to your employee. This is particularly true of online businesses, which can have customers all over the world.
- Outsourcing can help a business to grow into a larger company, which is in turn more able to afford local employees and investment in the infrastructure (offices etc) required by larger businesses.

### Fair Pay For Fair Work

- Even though \$300 USD a month may not seem like much to someone living in a developed country, it's above the average wage in Thailand, or Romania, or the Philippines, or India. Sometimes as much as three times the average wage in that country, meaning this person is actually very well off when compared to others in their country.

If \$2 pays for a fantastic meal in Thailand, and the same meal costs \$50 in Australia, you could make a case that a \$2 per hour wage in Thailand represents good value for the employee.

- This money affords the worker a quality lifestyle in their homeland. Throw in a few bonuses, some extra incentives for good work, and you have a situation where you feel like you are empowering someone and saving them from a situation where they might otherwise be earning half that money doing something like washing dishes.

That's great right? You can't argue against improving the quality of someone's life, and in exchange you get a hard worker for your company?

In isolation, no, I don't think you can argue there is anything wrong with helping people in a relationship where everyone benefits.

## Here's How I See The Problem

I look at it like this: On a micro level, outsourcing is helping the individual and those around him or her. It improves their lives, which is great.

On a macro level however, what we are looking at is one group of people who live in a richer country taking advantage of a situation that exists only because another country is poorer.

This begs the question – *does outsourcing help a country move away from developing world status and raise the standards for everyone in that country?*

I think the answer is yes it does, but it's terribly slow.

If enough money flows from one country into another, then the country receiving the money becomes wealthier. As it becomes wealthier the value of its currency becomes stronger and wages increase, thus outsourcing becomes less viable because it's no longer "cheap labor" – it starts to move towards parity with developed countries.

This outcome may be a pipe dream, or even if it is not, we are not going to get there *quickly*. Why? Greed.

If people and companies prefer to hoard profits (which don't forget is the purpose of a publicly owned company – to maximize profits for shareholders most of whom live in developed countries) and this profit is made off the back of transactions based on inequality such as outsourcing to third world countries, then change is slow and one group benefits exceedingly more than the other.

## How Can We Speed Up The Process?

The simple solution to this problem is to **not be greedy**.

That is such an easy statement to write, but such a challenging concept to embrace fully and make part of your life. I'm greedy almost on a daily basis, yet I know I want this to change.

One way to speed up this process is to take it on board as your responsibility to help the third world countries you outsource to. To raise their standards by reinvesting in and supporting organizations that help people in that country.

The challenge is deciding what proportion of the profits (that you reap from outsourcing), do you consider fair to return in support when it comes to helping people in other countries?

Some would say that simply choosing to outsource to a specific country is enough help. If a team of three full time outsourcers that cost you \$1,000 a month helps you to make \$20,000 a month in return, that's just called good business right? You deserve to keep the profits and of course, your main focus is to make more.

But of course, once you make \$20,000 a month, you want to get to \$50,000, and then a million a year, then ten million and so on. There's always more money to be made, and thus your profits should be reinvested towards continued growth.

Can you see a problem with this treadmill? There's no endgame here and eventually the only purpose behind making more money is to make more money. Once you reach a certain amount, adding more millions really doesn't matter, unless of course you are using it to help those in need.

### **Bottom Line**

The standards of living are not the same, and we should be doing everything we can to ensure all human beings on this planet have basic standards like food, shelter and health.

## Make Your Own Decision

In my case, I now commit to contributing a larger chunk of the profits I make (in part thanks to outsourcing), to directly support the countries I outsource to. I want to do more than just offer employment to a few people in that country, I want to help the entire population benefit in thanks for the benefits I gain.

I realize many reading this might be struggling to get by in the first place, and even finding \$300 a month to outsource to just one full time employee is challenging enough. My intention is not to discourage you to outsource. On the contrary, whatever you can do to get yourself more quickly into a situation to help others is a good thing.

The point of this section of this book is to remind you why you are able to source labor at a low cost in the first place. If you share my belief in giving back, make the choice to help people when you reap significant profits.

How much you give back is up to you and there is no right or wrong amount. The important point is that you are putting the welfare of people before your profits. If this means increasing how much you pay to your outsourcers, or perhaps supporting aid groups in their country, or just investing some of your profits into a charity organization like Oxfam that works in the countries you employ from. It's entirely up to you.

Just remember why you are in the situation you are in. You can afford to hire people to work full time overseas for a fraction of the cost of hiring someone full time in your country, because their country is not as rich as yours. This is inequality that you reap rewards from, but can also help to change by giving back some of those rewards.

# When Is The Right Time To Begin?

---



You understand that outsourcing is an important key to success in online business, but you don't really have cash flow to afford it just yet. Should you outsource now or wait?

## What Are Your Goals?

Start by considering **WHAT** you want to outsource first.

For people just starting a business, the very first projects are focused almost entirely on establishing **cash flow**. Cash flow is the blood of your business, granting you freedoms that are critical for success.

Cash flow can give you the power to:

- Quit your job.
- Make outsourcing decisions that grow your business faster.
- Enjoy many personal life freedoms (how about not worrying about where the money will come from next time you plan a trip overseas?).

## Break Down The Components To Find Constraints

Once you know the project you are working on, you can look at the components that go into that project and decide what needs to be done immediately in order take the next step towards completing the project.

For those new entrepreneurs reading this, your first goal could be to create a blog that generates \$3,000 a month and part of that process (certainly an early part!) is to install [WordPress](#) with a partially customized theme, which is what you can outsource first. That's a fairly straight forward outsourcing process.

Unfortunately most situations are not that black and white. Often you need to take a look at what you are currently doing and how that is stopping you from doing what you should be doing, and then take steps so you can stop working on the activities that are not moving you forward.

Think in terms of immediate constraints (or hurdles) as well as “time consuming tasks”. Either can stop you from getting your most important tasks done.

I find it effective to review what I do during a working day given normal conditions, and consider how much of my output was relevant to finishing a project.

During my pre-outsourcing days, I would spend whole days just dealing with emails and tweaking elements of my website design, which would not take me a single step forward. I had to remove these two tasks from sucking my time in order to be able to focus on completing tasks for new projects.

For those of you still working full time, you can't do much about the time you spend at your day job, so unless you are prepared to quit or reduce the amount of time your job takes from your life (perhaps take a pay cut and work three days a week?), it's what you do during other hours where you can look at how you use your time and where outsourcing may help.

Don't forget outsourcing can help with your personal life too to create time to work on projects that move your business forward. You can hire people to help mind your kids, or clean your house or plan holidays or parties for you. If these are changes you can make right now to help move your business forward, they should be listed as things to outsource in your immediate future.

## Take Action

With the clarity that hopefully comes from reviewing your present typical working day and your entire life if necessary, you will begin to see tasks that need to be outsourced immediately.

This might be outsourcing simple technical tasks like installing blog plugins, to critical activities like locating a person to write the copy for your sales page or set up the system to manage your membership site, or any manner of things in your personal life.

From there you need to take action, begin the outsourcing process and use the freedom it generates to devote more time to those moving forward activities so you can create more cash flow to hire more people to help you expand to the point you have met your goal.

You might be thinking than none of this outsourcing is possible without having some income to begin with. I couldn't agree more, and the next chapter is all about establishing an income stream to make it happen.

# Cash-flow: How To Pay For Your First Contractor

---



## You Need Cash

The one major problem that faces new start-up businesses, especially small enterprises launched by solo entrepreneurs, is a lack of **cash flow**.

It's a *catch-22* situation - many entrepreneurs must take jobs to generate "living" money, which drastically reduces the amount of time available to work on the business.

*How can you turn your new start-up into an income stream if you are too busy working a job to pay the bills that you can never work on your business?*

Unfortunately there is no easy answer to this question and every person faces a unique situation, but what I can do is explain how I made money during the times when my business was not able to support me.

## 1. Say No To Full Time Work

While at university, I landed a part-time job at the campus library. That part time job at the help desk would become an income stream I relied upon for many years. I used it as the foundation for moving out of my family home and renting for the first time, and I also relied on the income from that job to pay for the very first requirements an Internet entrepreneur has – a connection to the Internet and a place to host your website.

“ The reasons I never took a full time job were many, but the key point was that I knew I wanted to run my own business and be my own boss, I just wasn't sure how that would work out. In order to figure it out you need time, so I was content to keep casual work while I figured which business would be my ticket to independence. ”

I was prepared to only work a job for as many hours as I needed to and say no to any extra work that might hinder my chances of starting a successful business.

You might have a family, or commitments that demand more than 15 hours a week of casual labor income, but I expect you probably can downsize in some shape or form, or find ways to get more work done in less time (working your job from home for a few days for example). Maybe work four days instead of five or start work earlier so you can finish earlier and have the late afternoons and evenings to work on your business.

Whatever is the case, you need to find a balance between making a living from a job that is just enough to keep you going, leaving the rest of the time available to build your business or, as was my case, experiment with business ideas until something worked.

## 2. Create New Income Sources

Although it was never enough to live off, I did establish a *cash-cow* income source online, my very first successful project. I've talked about it a lot on my blog, so I won't go into too much detail, but the income source was a community website called MTGParadise.com, a site dedicated to the tournament playing scene in Australia of the [Magic: The Gathering](#) card game.

Eventually, I made anywhere from **\$300 to \$1,000 a month** from the site. The income fluctuated dramatically and never became a stable income, but the cash further helped me to stay out of full-time employment.

### 3. Sell Assets

It was one day while catching a train to the city that I had the idea of selling MTGParadise.com. Although the sale did not occur until many months later, I walked away with **\$13,500**, which was about how much I was earning per year at the time from my part time job.

Although I lost my reliable cash cow income source, I did gain enough money to live off for a year, assuming I didn't change lifestyle habits.

### 4. Government Grants

I took advantage of an Australian government funded support service for small businesses, called the *New Enterprise Incentive Scheme*, and after completing an application process that included writing a business plan and attending a panel interview, I qualified for a full 12 month's worth of income support

This income – about \$200 a week – was certainly helpful and became another dependable income stream.

### 5. Fewer Projects and More Focus

By this stage I probably should have begun some outsourcing, at the very least have someone else handle website creation and maintenance, but I didn't. I was, and still am in many ways, addicted to saving money and preferred to work harder and watch my bank balance inch up slowly, rather than work smarter and get leverage from the money I had by using it to hire help.

Eventually I discontinued many projects, including an offline English school, and community websites focused on trading items and social activism. All of these projects were commercial failures. I would also frequently start pay per click marketing projects after being lured by new information products promising quick riches, but would shortly after give up because I hated the process.

I ended up narrowing in on the one project I had that was making money at the time, a proofreading business called BetterEdit.com. This focus meant my cash flow became more stable, **my business grew** and with the income I started to invest in assets that didn't take much time to manage – I purchased websites that made money from advertising.

## Finally Help Arrives

Finally, after six years of working online, I hired a customer support person and I started to outsource to contractors for website design, installation and maintenance of websites, had other people edit and create my sales copy, and hired a manager to look after my website investment portfolio.

This did not happen all at once of course, but with each contractor I brought on, although I took a hit in my profit margin to pay the fees, my business growth skyrocketed because I was able to get more done of what I was good at.

Cash flow was crucial at every stage of this process as I used the money the business was making to hire people to either take a job away from me or complete a crucial component of a new project. This in turn led to *injections* of new cash flow sources. I found that with practice you start to experience the benefits and become comfortable with **spending money to make money**.

## What Does This Mean For You?

Here are the key lessons to be learned from this short story:

- **When the situation requires stability of income and you have no money and no people to support you, a job is the answer.** The risk is turning that job into a career or worse – *a trap* – when you should view it merely as a temporary cash flow source, a stepping stone, to help fuel your business growth or give you the stability to test business ideas if you don't have one.
- **Capital is a powerful thing.** Selling websites to build capital is one of the best ways to pave the way for a successful business because the cash can give you breathing room, even if it is not consistent.
- **Capital is a powerful thing, *again*.** Many people are sitting on assets right now and until you see them as something you can sell, you don't realize you have a source of untapped capital. For years I looked at my first website as a hobby that made a few hundred dollars a month. Then one day it dawned on me that **something that makes money can be sold**, and a few months later I had made as much money as I usually made in a year in one big injection of cash. What assets are you sitting on right now that you could sell?
- **The time to hire help is usually earlier than you think.** Us misers tend to look at our cash flow and would prefer to see it go into the bank account and

just keep working our butts off to grow, when a much smarter and profitable path is to take that money and hire people, even if it drops your business profit to zero temporarily. It won't be like that for long and very soon your cash flow will be exponentially greater than the money it cost to hire help.

What you eventually want out of this process is a real business with real scale and big profits, but not every project is going to get there. If something is making money but it's not the big dream you want to follow, let the site carry you forward to create some time freedom and use that time to work on the next project.

# Create A Proactive Recruitment System

---



I am often asked how I hired quality contract editors when running my previous business [BetterEdit](#). Let me walk you through the system I used...

## When Do Most People Outsource?

The most common reason to begin outsourcing is because of growth. Perhaps you require someone to take on the extra administration responsibilities, new talent to deliver the services your company provides, added customer support, maybe a project manager or a new tech person to help handle increasing technology demands.

But, if you are hiring *reactively*, then every stage of growth is hindered significantly by each new hire you have to make. Why? Because you don't hire anyone until it's hurting you *not to*.

For example you have to turn down work that you would love to take on, simply because you don't have the capacity to deliver the results due to limited resources.

That's VERY frustrating for an entrepreneur.

In my proofreading business I had to hire new contract editors once or twice a year to fill gaps in the roster and meet demand. Thankfully, BetterEdit.com was receiving a steady stream of organic traffic, some of which was coming from editors looking for work.

But (as in all industries), it's tough to know the good people from the not-so-good, so a hiring process is necessary to weed out the unqualified and find the gems.

At first I handled the whole process manually. Any emails I received from prospective editors were responded to via a written email from yours truly. I kept a folder in my email client where I stored all editor applications, and when it came time to hire, I'd email them one by one about job openings.

Unfortunately by the time it came to hiring new editors, most of the applicants who had contacted me had found work already, or changed email addresses or thought I was spamming them or turned out unqualified. I spent a lot of time emailing people who would never respond or getting the hopes up of people who I would never hire.

## What's The Alternative?

The alternative is to be proactive, rather than waiting until you can't handle the workload any more and then look for a solution. I will now show you my system for recruiting proactively. But before I do, I'd like to plant the seed in your mind for a next-level approach to outsourcing:

“ Successful entrepreneurs take things a step further. For them, outsourcing is about offloading the everyday tasks so that you CAN grow the business. In this situation the workload is still within the entrepreneur's capabilities, but he or she will outsource early to allow him or her to focus on growth-related activities. This outsourcing strategy then is aimed at growth specifically, not simply handling the tasks created by growth. ”

## My System: An Email List

One day it dawned on me – instead of manually processing email applications from random out of work editors finding my site through search, I'd direct them to a page on the site specifically for people looking for work – a “Jobs” page. On that page I would put an email list capture form and create a new list of all the people who came to my site looking for work.

I set the jobs page up within a day and immediately the list started to grow. A few months later when it came time to hire, I sent out one email to the list with details about the job openings and the application process used and then proceeded to hire people using the hiring process I had established.

### This was a great solution for many reasons -

- I only had to send **one email** when it came time to hire new editors
- Only the people in a position to apply and qualified would reply to me (I had clear criteria on the jobs page for what type of person we were looking for)
- I no longer received as many random emails from editors and when I did, I used a template response email to send them to the jobs page to fill out the form and get on the waiting list
- I created another **business asset** – a list of potential editors to hire from whenever the business needed them (this was a big deal when it came time to sell BetterEdit because it made managing the business that much easier for the new owners, they knew where new editors would come from)
- It made hiring people much **quicker** because it completely eliminated the search process – all I had to do was the filter process – pick the best from the people already available in my database

Applying this idea to your business isn't hard. Create a new email list for potential hires, place a “jobs page” on your site outlining the type of people you are looking for with an opt-in form to join the job openings notification list, and when it comes time to hire, just send out an email.

This advice should be applied to your prospect and customer lists too – don't be afraid to email all your lists when you have a job opening, you never know who is listening.

## What If You Can't Create Email Lists?

Of course if you don't have a good email autoresponder yet, you should know I have used [AWeber](#) for my email lists for years now and recommend them to anyone serious about their online business. You are not really in business until you have a list.

For more on email autoresponders, read [my review of AWeber here](#).

## Go Apply This Idea Now

Why not take this advice and apply it to your website now? Even if you are not sure who you need right now if you are working hard on your business you are going to need someone soon enough. The sooner you start building your potential employee list, the larger a pool of talent you will have to draw from when it comes time to hire.

1. [Sign up for AWeber](#) and create your jobs email list.
2. Create a "Jobs" page on your website and place the AWeber optin form on that page so you can capture the details of any person looking for work. If you can be specific about the roles you have or might have in the future, list the details on the page so you get the right people on your jobs list.
3. When you have the funds to hire a person, send an email to your list stating a job is available.

It really is as easy as that. Depending on your industry you may end up having an over supply of people, which was my experience, so your main hiring role is filtering and testing to find the good people.

Even if you don't have a lot of people in your industry, being proactive about your hiring process can make your life a lot easier as you grow, because trust me, finding good people will become the hardest part of running your business.

# How To Manage Customer Service As A One Person Enterprise

---

For a small business with a limited marketing budget, good customer service that results in an above average reputation in the market, leads to acquiring new customers through client referrals – people like you so much they recommend you to their friends. This is a “free” form of marketing.

During the start-up phase you have limited funds and one of the best strategies to *survive* this period of business growth is to use your **existing clients** as a marketing tool to bring in new clients (this is a good strategy at *any* stage of business growth).

The cornerstone of achieving that outcome is **good customer service**. Your existing clients will not be willing to help you, nor will they feel compelled to talk about you and refer you to others, unless they are very impressed by their interaction with your business.

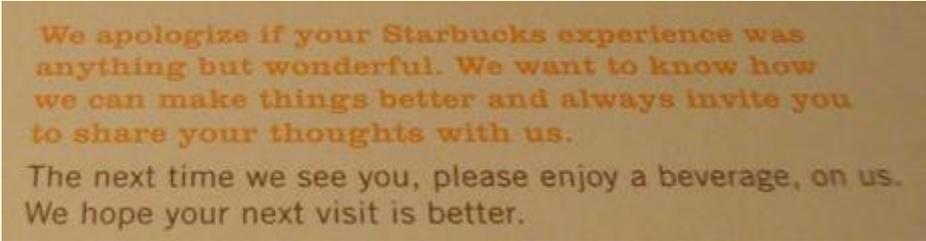
Good customer service combined with a superior product can evoke a sense of reciprocity from your customers. They genuinely want your business to succeed, so much so that they go out of their way to endorse you. People like to spread things they consider valuable because in turn they enjoy the perception of being valuable as well. If you can loop your business into this motivation you have tapped the secret of word of mouth marketing.

If you need any convincing that this is the case, take the following example of an experience I had at Starbucks a few years ago in downtown Toronto Canada:



I ordered a tea and an oat brownie from Starbucks, and the brownie was delivered instantly, but the tea wasn't, so I walked over to the delivery end of the cafe and waited. The customers just before me received their order and I expected mine next. The customers who ordered after me then walked up and collected their coffees. Then the next customer received their drink. Clearly my tea wasn't coming.

I walked back around to the cashier section and spoke to the barista who took my order. He immediately realized that he had forgotten about the tea and in two seconds flat, I had my tea, a verbal apology, a written apology, and a voucher for a free beverage.



We apologize if your Starbucks experience was anything but wonderful. We want to know how we can make things better and always invite you to share your thoughts with us.

The next time we see you, please enjoy a beverage, on us. We hope your next visit is better.

A free beverage might not be much to get excited about, but I only waited an extra minute longer for my tea than I should have, and certainly not long enough for me to get angry. Plus I was served very quickly once I notified them that my tea was missing.

I walked away impressed not because of the beverage itself, I was impressed with the **customer service policy** I just witnessed.

Starbucks did not diminish in my eyes as a result of this incident. In fact they impressed me, so much so that I went away and wrote a blog post (that is read by thousands of people) proclaiming good things about Starbucks service (that's some good word of mouth).

## Growing Pains As A Solo Business Owner or Blogger

Any time you interact with a prospect, reader, client or customer is an opportunity to deliver good customer service and enhance your public reputation.

When you start out, you don't have contact with many people, but assuming you do something right (land your first client or make your first product sale) then you begin to interact with customers.

Over time, what begins as something exciting and new, becomes a daily occurrence. Suddenly you find it takes several hours a day just to respond to email and moderate and reply to blog comments. Eventually, if you excel at what you do, there will come a time where you simply cannot keep up with the communication you are required to do every day to just respond to people who contact your business.

### **It's at this point customer service problems tend to happen.**

The solo entrepreneur, who used to love talking to his or her readers and customers, suddenly hates the idea of looking at the inbox. There's too many emails, too many blog comments to reply to and moderate, social media to respond to - everyone is vying for his or her attention!

Simply put – everything magnifies in volume yet you don't get any more **time** to handle it. You have to try and maintain good customer service with an ever increasing pool of people **demanding your attention**.



When this happens the first thing that usually suffers is email replies. Response times drop, you start ignoring anything but the most critical emails (and even that can be difficult at times). You certainly do not have time to reply to comments made to your blog, or respond to forum posts, or Facebook messages, or Twitter tweets or people just asking basic questions via your help desk or public email.

In short – you have lost your ability to provide **good customer service** at all points of contact with your business.

So what can you do?

## Can You Still Deliver Personal Service When You Can't Personally Do To It All Yourself?

I can vouch for the scenario I just painted because I've been there.

I started small with a part time business, then added a blog. The blog became a business itself and I added more blogs to it. I created a membership site, bought and sold websites, started an email newsletter, attended events, travelled and began new projects as quickly as I dropped or sold others.

It all just got out of hand and naturally as expected, I wasn't able to keep communicating like I had when my business was smaller. What made it worse, I stopped enjoying the process of communicating with people online, which is not a good thing.

It is important for good customer service that you keep it as **personal** as you can. People want to feel the *person-to-person* connection, not "corporate outsourced robot" or "automatic email response" communication that is so prevalent in the corporate world.

If like me, your business brand is your name and face, people especially appreciate it if you personally make yourself available. Close contact with customers also gives you intelligence direct from your market, which is something that is fundamental to successful entrepreneurship and business growth. You don't want to lose touch with the group of people that matter most.

## A Practical Tour of My Customer Support System

In the next chapter I'll take you behind the scenes of my customer support system and show you how we manage communication at Yaro HQ.

My system is not perfect, and I'm still not responding to as many things personally as I would like to, but it's a lot better than it was.

What I can show you is how I deal with the queries I receive, how I can maintain personal communication with my top constituents and how things have changed compared to what it was like when I was the only person in charge of customer support.

# The Evolution Of My Customer Support System

---



## In The Beginning

To fully put this into perspective we have to take a trip down memory lane way back to the beginning of my [Internet business timeline](#).

My first true success online was my popular Magic card game site, MTGParadise.com started in the late nineties. I created that site as a true newbie. I learned how to FTP, code HTML, create basic graphics and spent countless nights changing my website.

To start with I wrote content for the website myself and learned some basic Internet marketing techniques to bring in traffic, which pretty much amounted to link exchanges and regular participation in popular Magic newsgroups.

My site grew slowly, but with no benchmarks to really compare against I was happy enough with my few hundred daily visitors, adding another ten or twenty new readers per month, treating the project purely as a hobby.

Eventually I started to receive guest articles from other people who played the card game, which helped reduce my writing load. I spent most of my time back then struggling to make HTML do what I wanted it to do and did not write nearly as much as I do now as a blogger and information product creator.

## My First Taste of Success



Within a few months the forums began to really take off thanks to the increasingly active card trading community.

If you can create a site that is based on user generated content fuelled by a strong **hook** – *a reason for people to come back to the site every day* – then you have struck gold in Internet business terms. Many multi-million dollar web business today are based on this principle (think eBay, Facebook, YouTube).

My Magic site did not become a multi-million dollar business, but it did carve out it's own little corner in a very specific niche. As a result my traffic grew to over a thousand visitors a day, and I made my first real online income thanks to advertising sponsors on MTGParadise.com.

If you are interested to learn more about how I made money with my Magic site, see – [How to make money from your website using advertising.](#)

## The Empire Starts To Grow

Once my forum began to take off I suddenly found myself in charge of a little business. As a result of my site's success I found myself for the first time, running out of *time* when it came to dealing with all the demands placed on me online.

I wore "all the hats" when it came to my early web projects (I couldn't justify the financial cost of hiring help – to be honest, even when I could I still didn't – it took a while to learn the value of hiring help), so I was upgrading scripts, writing content, marketing, handling sponsors, moderating forums, replying to emails – basically doing *everything* myself.

This became an impossible range of activities for one person to do and for the very first time I realized that my Internet business was not really a business – *it was a job* – and something had to change.

A concept I learned around this time had a profound impact and started me down the path towards the customer service and overall business structure I use today – The 80/20 rule. It was thanks to grasping this principle that I realized I had to find ways to free up my time to do what I did best. This made sense to me not just because it could help my business grow so I could make more money, but also because what I really wanted was to spend less time on jobs I didn't like. The 80/20 rule could deliver both outcomes.

If you have never heard of the 80/20 Rule, please read my primer here – [What Is The 80/20 Rule And Why It Will Change Your Life](#)

## A Fundamental Business Strategy

As discussed already, outsourcing is simply the act of having other people do things for you.

The first time I did this was when I recruited writers (and later forum moderators) for my Magic site (for free at first - I needed content, they wanted a little fame from writing about a subject they loved). Outsourcing these two tasks made my life a little easier.

It was because of this experience, my newly formed 80/20 attitude, my ongoing study of the what made for a successful online business (one that granted the owner certain freedoms), that I looked for new projects based on a business model that leveraged outsourcing.

As a result, my next successful project, [BetterEdit.com](#), was structured to rely on outsourcing, in this case, a proofreading business that delivered a service entirely provided by other people.

## Outsourcing Customer Service

BetterEdit, although built on the skills of a team of professional editors, still depended on me to provide **customer support**. Although I was becoming better at outsourcing and freeing up my time to focus on my core strengths and tasks that I enjoyed, I still invested a lot of time on communicating with my clients and providing superior customer service.

It would take many years before I finally bit the bullet and invited a good friend, Angela, to work with me and take over the customer service role at BetterEdit. Angela was trained in my systems and slowly over a period of months replaced me as the main source of customer support and continued to do a great job until I sold the business.

This experience was a real revelation for me. Seeing that someone could actually replace me and perform as good and sometimes better customer service than I did was a quantum leap in my attitude to business outsourcing.

This one change eventually led to a rapid business growth period as I began to take on people to help me with all aspects of my Internet empire. From installing scripts to designing graphics, managing servers and creating templates, to writing copy – I had people helping with everything.

## Drowning In Attention



One of the main reasons I hired Angela to help with BetterEdit was so I could devote myself even more to blogging. Then, as my blog grew in exposure I found myself unable to keep up with all the people emailing me asking for help or a link to their

website. Some queries were left unanswered as I busied myself creating my next post (actually I'm doing this right now – I've always had the philosophy of "create new content" before doing anything else).

Around this time I also began buying websites, starting with a second blog called [SmallBusinessBranding.com](http://SmallBusinessBranding.com), and later two forum based websites on miniature motorcycles.

Throughout this period everything I was working on was growing and bringing me into contact with more and more people. By then I had well and truly lost my ability to respond to every person who contacted me and my customer service performance was a victim of my business success.

It was time to make some changes to my customer service system, and I began by filtering the messages that came through to me.

## Filters: Focus On The People Who Matter Most

If you run a popular website or blog then you already know from experience that many of the contacts you receive come from people either too lazy, apathetic or just so new to the subject, that they can't figure out how to find the answers they want by themselves. In their eyes, it's much easier to just send an email to a blogger they come across who already offers so much great free info, even when the answers to their questions are already in your blog. They want the easy solution rather than doing the work to find it.

What you need is a system that requires people to take an extra step or two in order to ask their question. The *tire kickers* are too lazy to do this – they only have enough energy to send an email, anything more and it's too much for them. This helps to filter away the people who will likely waste your time.

## Reply To Mike

It was around this time that I began studying some of the materials of **Mike Filsaime**, in particular his [Butterfly Marketing package](#).

One concept that I really liked was his system for handling communication with his customers and the general public.

Mike set up a website called [ReplytoMike.com](http://ReplytoMike.com) (this now directs to his Facebook page), which acted as a central point of contact for his business. It was a very simple

page that guided people to his help desk, his guestbook and provided instructions for what to do depending on your reason for contacting him (for example, joint venture requests).

What I loved about Mike's system was it allowed you to handle most types of queries with a tailored option – it could **filter people** for you. If a person wants to give you some feedback, they can leave a comment in the guestbook. If they are a customer or prospect they can query your help desk (which of course is manned by an outsourced customer service person).

I used Mike's set-up as inspiration for my own support system. I went and bought myself [ReplytoYaro.com](http://ReplytoYaro.com) and created a simple webpage, which I still use today. Incidentally, now might be a good time to go see if ReplytoYOURNAME.com is available.

## Set Up A Forum To Handle Advice Questions

I decided to make use of the forum I had already set-up for my blog readers and created a section to function as a guestbook. The guestbook is for any person who wants to pass on their thanks and doesn't require a reply. The added benefit of this method is you create a public archive of all guestbook comments, which make for great testimonials.

Most of the queries I get are people asking for help or feedback on their personal project. I don't want to let these queries go without a reply of some kind because I like to be accessible, but I can't let this get in the way of my core activities like writing new blog posts, product creation and supporting my existing customers. I also prefer to help more than one person whenever I offer advice, so a personal email reply is not a good solution.

When I create content I want it to go to the public to help more than just the person asking the question, so again I decided to use the forum as the main question and answer support group.

Whenever an email is sent asking a question people are guided to ReplytoYaro.com and eventually the forums (sometimes the forums directly). What's great about this is that most *tire kicker* types won't go to the trouble of creating a forum user account to ask their question. The people that do, are usually genuine and have a good question, since they are prepared to put in a little effort.

I much prefer to build a community of people who can support each other, which frees up my time to support the most important people to my business – my paying customers. It's nice to be able to help people for free too (that's what blogging is about), but there are time limitations you can't avoid.

You need to prioritize different groups of people based on your relationship with them, but be careful not to ignore any group because a “free” question you take the time to attend to can convince that person to become a paying customer. It's a fine balance, but with a simple system like my ReplytoYaro.com page combined with a forum, you can get it done.

### **How To Become Friends With An Expert**

If you ever want personal contact with an expert, a good option is to **buy their product**. As a customer you are immediately elevated into a higher status group in their world, which makes it more likely they will respond to your queries.

Sometimes it's worth buying products just to help foster a relationship with a person you want to know, especially if that can lead to contact with people who can help you make money – like joint venture partners.

## **Divert Email Queries To Help Lighten The Load**

I started using an extension for Firefox and Thunderbird called [Clippings](#), that let me create snippets of text I could use as templates.

I created a template response to reply to any personal queries sent via email that directed people to go to the forums or ReplytoYaro.com. Most people I reply to in this manner never make it to the forums, they just disappear, hopefully because they found an answer in my blog, but unfortunately more likely because they are too lazy to set up a forum account.

This one change significantly reduced the amount of time I spent responding to general query emails. All that was left was a way to promptly support my paying customers.

## Set Up A Help Desk or Support Email Account

After [divesting myself of BetterEdit](#) leaving me to focus only on blogging, my next project was [BlogMastermind.com](#). This meant I would have a new group of paying customers, and I wanted to be sure that I used a system for customer support that other people could run for me.



I decided to install a help desk script, which I would direct my members to if they had any issues regarding Blog Mastermind. Initially I used the help desk script [Perldesk](#) as my help desk, staffed only by me to start with.

The help desk acted as a filter just like the forum. Many people decide filling out a help desk form is too much for them, so queries tend to only come from genuine customers or people who are committed enough to take a minute or two to get in touch with me.

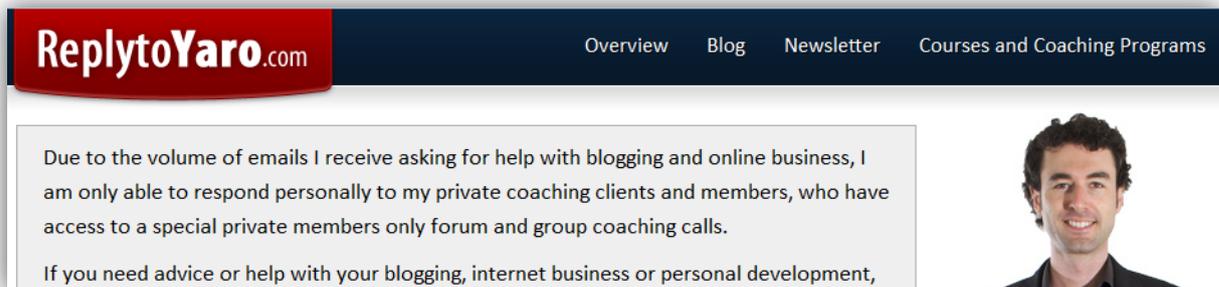
The help desk was later switched over to a simple Gmail email account. This was done because Gmail is brilliant. It has all the features you need to run a help desk style support system, can filter spam better than anything I know, contains flagging so you can assign queries to different people and have multiple support staff maintain the one account, is globally accessible and perhaps best of all, it is free.



I invited Angela back to help run my customer service email for my blogging business and she's been great as always. If you have contacted me then chances are you have been in contact with Angela. She makes use of clipping templates to quickly deal with common queries and I look after anything that she can't deal with, which is around 20% of the total queries we receive.

Whether you use a help desk script or Gmail account is up to you. There are pros and cons to both options, so make the choice based on your needs. If you want to research different help desk scripts, try the [PHP Resource Archive: Customer Support Scripts](#).

# Inside My Business: The Mechanics Of A Customer Support System



Here's a summary of how my customer support system currently operates.

1. All general public messages and customer service queries are directed to [ReplytoYaro.com](http://ReplytoYaro.com) as a first point of contact. This includes people contacting me as a result of reading my blog, one of my email newsletters, or any content I have published online. [In some places, such as inside my membership sites, members are directed directly to the customer support email account.]
2. Angela is head of customer service and manages the Gmail email account that is the central support area for all customer queries. Messages in Gmail are flagged for my attention when appropriate, which I log in and respond to about once a week. We also use the Gmail flagging system to manage and file common queries.
3. Any general questions that ask for advice related to blogging or Internet business are directed to my blog articles.
4. Feedback comments that do not require a reply are sent thank you notices and saved for possible testimonial use later in a folder (after asking for permission of course).
5. Angela makes use of the [Clippings add-on](#) to quickly respond to common queries and direct people to the appropriate resources using templates.
6. Emails sent to me personally are directed to the support email for Angela to divert to the appropriate resources. I respond personally only when the message demands my personal attention.

I still personally reply to a lot of email, especially when it's important that it's me sending the message (for example certain customer issues and to maintain relationships with key people).

What this system does well is filter away people who are time wasters and allows the more common and system related queries (e.g. where's this resource? my download link didn't work, etc) to be quickly dealt with without involving me.

As a result, I receive only about 50 new emails per day, most of which are Internet marketing newsletters or spam, which do not require a reply. I only receive about two to five emails I have to respond to each day. Most of the time (unless timing is critical), I do not reply until the end of the week, when I batch process them.

This system has helped free up time so I can comfortably write blog posts, create product content and support my paying students, without worrying about everything else falling apart. I would definitely not be able to travel as much as I have, if it was not for this system.

Gmail really is a powerful tool for customer support. It's simple, is cloud based so you can access it anywhere and on your mobile device, and it is free. Angela and I access the same account and there is no greater feeling every day than to just watch all my email disappear without me responding to any of it – she filters it all for me.

I personally have run my entire business fine without a help desk or anything more than a Gmail account for years. You might want more tools, but I believe simplicity is best, it helps to reduce my stress.

It all comes down to prioritization and the 80/20 rule in the end. My system is not perfect, but it's granted me the most important thing – freedom of choice and the option to spend most of my time doing what I like and still build a solid Internet business at the same time. I hope you can use parts of my strategy to help you achieve the same thing.

# How To Find A Good Customer Support Person (Or Any Outsourced Staff)

---



None of my system would work of course, without the help of Angela. Your customer service person or people have to possess a few key skills, both technical and interpersonal. It's not a position you can fill with just anybody.

## Start With A System

It's likely you will begin by providing customer support yourself, especially if you work your way up as an independent operator. Along the way you can install a help desk or set up a customer support email account. You may go as far as replicating the [ReplytoYaro.com](http://ReplytoYaro.com) support system I have used in the past, or just a Gmail account like I use presently.

The previous chapter looked at a several technology options available to you to implement a system for online customer support. I suggest you use my story as inspiration to build your own support system, and while you do, think about how eventually another person (or people) can run it for you.

Most help desk scripts are built for multiple users and as I explained, a Gmail email is a great basic solution to get started and can also handle multiple users through the use of message flagging (we had three people use the one Gmail account at one stage).

Once you have something set up, your next task is to find a customer support officer.

## How I Find Good People

Most advice you read about outsourcing suggest you go to freelancing sites and submit a job to find someone. I give this advice myself and I will suggest it again in this guide, but not quite yet.

I'm going to be completely straight up with you regarding how I find good people to work for my business. I have **never** used a freelancing site to hire an outsourcer. To find good people I always rely on two resources:

1. **My social network (mostly offline networks)**
2. **My blog**

Your email newsletter is also a good option because it's very similar to your blog in terms of the relationship you build with your subscribers. I don't include it above because I haven't used my own list to recruit people – *yet* – I'm sure that will change in the near future.

Every person who has ever worked for me came after I met them through shared friends or colleagues, or because I advertised on my blog that I was looking for help.

Angela who runs my support email, is a friend from university. Many of my friends studied information technology at university (I studied Business) and the people I met after university work online too, either as freelancers or running Internet businesses. As a result, whenever a need has come up I've had several local contacts I could query to find good people for web projects.

**Local networking** is by far my favorite method for finding good people. I prefer to work with locals, even though it costs significantly more than outsourcing overseas, because I like that we can meet from time to time in person. Personal contact helps for certain jobs and it also helps to cement a long term relationship when you find good people. Given I work mostly alone at home, I appreciate the social contact, even if it is often work related.

When my social network hasn't delivered a person for a job, I next call on my blog. Robert Kingston, who helped manage several website acquisitions I made during 2006 and 2007, first volunteered for a job writing for [SmallBusinessBranding.com](http://SmallBusinessBranding.com).

[Mick Real](#), who currently does design work for me showed up after I posted on my blog looking for a graphics person.

The great thing about advertising on your blog when you need helpers is the people who apply already know you. They understand what your business is about, what

your personality is like, what kind of work you do for other people, etc. This is a huge advantage and yet another benefit of blogging.

Don't underestimate the power of your blog to find familiar people. It's this closeness and familiarity with what you are about that can be a huge asset. You don't need to train them about your operation – they already “get” what you do online.

## Outsourcing Sites

Any of the following sites offer *possibilities* to find a good customer support officer – and this list is far from comprehensive – you can find plenty more resources through Google search.

- [Elance](#)
- [Odesk](#)
- [Freelancer](#)
- [VWorker](#)
- [Guru](#)
- [GetFriday](#)
- [LinkedIn](#)

The problem with all of these options is the randomness of the people you come across. You can find great people who you end up working with for years, or you can stumble from person to person, struggling to find support staff who do a good enough job.

There's no guarantee of course, but in my experience referrals and/or fans of your blog are more likely to be suitable than a random stranger from an outsourcing site.

Sometimes though, these sites will be your best option, so here are some steps to take when hiring through outsourcing sites to help find a good customer service person.

1. **Review the job descriptions** other people have used to hire a customer service person to get ideas for your own job template. See the [Customer Support category](#) in Elance for examples.
2. Create a **thorough description** of the role: the time required, the hours of the day work is to be done, communication methods, skills and experience

necessary, technology used, type of people they will have to support, pay scale, payment method (PayPal/Direct Deposit/Check?) – be as specific and detailed as you can.

3. **Submit the job** to one or several outsourcing sites. I recommend you include a keyword or phrase within each job post that applicants must mention in their application. This confirms they actually read the job details and helps filter away people who are not taking your position seriously.
4. **Trial several people at once** on a test job. In the case of customer service, take three or four of the most common queries your business receives and give them to the applicants to respond to. The person who responds promptly, with the best responses, gets the job.

Look for the best communicators, because customer service is all about an ability to communicate and empathize with your customers.

You can repeat this process for every outsourcing job you have and ALWAYS test multiple people at once so you can compare results and really see who is best.

## Treat Good People Well

When you find someone who fits well, do whatever you can to keep them happy. People are replaceable, but it's a time consuming process to hire new staff and much easier to accommodate good people who already work for you.

In my experience, one of the best ways to keep staff happy is offer consistent work. Outsourcers are usually freelancers, going from job to job – an ambiguous income source for sure. If you can offer them stability through consistent hours, chances are they will reward you by staying loyal.

If business is going well, pay bonuses. Share the wealth and foster a team environment built on personal relationships, not just performance.

Business is business, and you have to look after your bottom line, but that doesn't mean you can't treat people well. You will always get the best work from people who care about you as a person first, not just how much you are paying them.

## Encourage Free Thinking

What I love from a person working for me, is when they do a better job than I could do and find ways to improve on the system I created.

When a person who works for me functions autonomously and improves my business at the same time, well, that is gold. It's rare to find people who do this because it takes talent, skills and self assuredness, but when you find it, definitely encourage it. Don't get stuck in "your way" of doing things, there is always room for improvement.

Customer service is an area that should eventually become entirely *hands off* for you. Once the system is in place and you have trained your support person, your job is done, at least until the next unusual circumstance comes up.

If you find a good person they will be able to think on their feet, learn how you do things the way you like it, know what sort of outcomes are desired by your customers, and be capable of solving a problem without even contacting you.

In short, a good customer service person will **improve your business** by helping to enhance your reputation. This can spread to become part of your public brand, encourage word of mouth and bring you new customers.

Clearly, finding a good customer service person is a top priority.

# Start With One Task

It's so important as you begin this process of outsourcing that you do not get discouraged when a person doesn't perform well. Chances are you will have to go through a few "bad apples" to find the person who fits well. Once you do though, you will be amazed and wonder how you could previously run your business without them.

I suggest you keep things simple to start with and just contract one job or one task. You don't have to hire a person full time until you know they are good.

One thing I have noticed about outsourcing is that certain countries are better for certain tasks.

- The Philippines is known for high quality workers, with solid English and fantastic demeanour. You can find someone to do virtually anything from this country, however tasks that require good communication skills, like customer service and administration seems to be their strong point.
- If you want to develop software, Eastern European block countries like the Ukraine and Romania seem to be a good spot. India and Pakistan can be good too, but the language barrier and cultural differences can sometimes cause problems.
- What India does do particularly well is organization. You can often find rather than go to one individual, you can hire an entire Indian outsourcing service and deal with your own project manager, who will then coordinate the work for you with other members of his team.

Bear in mind all of this advice is very general. Every country has good people at pretty much any job you can think of, but based on talking to people about outsourcing, the breakdown above seems to hold true.

Note also that for some roles, like customer service and admin, you can find people for \$500 USD a month full time, where for the same in a good software developer you will pay about \$1,000 USD per month for full time (40 hours a week).

I hope this report has given you a few insights into when and why you would consider outsourcing, and guided you to a few places where you can find your first contractor.

You can run your entire business yourself, but that will limit your ability to scale and gain time freedom. My business was created to be something fun to do and also as an income stream to fuel my life. It is not meant to be a source of high stress due to needing to do too many tasks.

I believe at the very least every online entrepreneur should outsource customer support and email, and technical requirements if you are not technical yourself. You can obviously go a lot further than this and build an entire company around yourself made up of virtual workers.

I personally still prefer as few moving parts as possible, so I'm not looking to build a huge team. This really depends on how big you want your company to get, and I will leave that up to you.

Good luck with your business and I hope you find the right people to help you. If you have a particularly good outsourcing case study, please get in touch via email ([yaro@entrepreneurs-journey.com](mailto:yaro@entrepreneurs-journey.com)).

Yaro Starak  
Entrepreneurs-Journey.com

