

Information Brokering a Recession-Proof Business

Innovative Mentoring Program for Prospective Entrepreneurs



Members of this profession use high-level skills to find, manage, and communicate information in a multitude of niche industries, according to the Association of Independent Information Professionals (AIIP). Industry members may refer to themselves in a number of ways, including info-entrepreneur or information broker.

Despite the economic downturn over the last several years, the industry has prospered, with some reporting that these past few years have been their best ever.

For instance, take a look at the website of Amelia Kassel. The San Jose University instructor is the owner of a highly successful company, MarketingBase, an author, and member of AIIP.

Kassel offers a comprehensive fee-based mentoring program for prospective entrepreneurs who want to start a business.

Kassel's website and publications provide an insightful field trip for anyone considering joining the profession.

You'll also find useful information on the AIIP site on how to

enter the field.

References

Description of the Mentoring Program

<http://www.marketingbase.com/mentor.html>

Frequently Asked Questions about Information Brokering

<http://www.marketingbase.com/faqs.html>

Researching the Industry

<http://www.aip.org/resources/Documents/Public/GettingStartedAsAnIIP.pdf>

The Pitfalls of Free Information on the Web



7 Things You Should Know about Searching the Web

How to find, evaluate, and apply information found on the Web are important steps in the investigation process. However, the average computer user believes that putting search terms into Google is the primary skill necessary for successful Internet research, but this is a common myth.

Despite an endless supply of material on the Web, it is far easier to find faulty data than reliable information.

Search engine indexes are often months behind in revealing recent data.

Contrary to popular belief, not everything is available on the Web. There's a tremendous amount of superior content, known as the deep Web, which is typically hidden from the Internet search public.

The deep Web is believed to be about 500 times the size of the visible resources on the Web, yet the search engines, don't access the material, according to Bright planet's CEO Michael Bergman.

The number of search engines on the Web is estimated to number 25,000.

Did you know?

If two people are seated side by side, on two different computers and both are using matching search terms for the same topic, they both will likely get different answers because of algorithms used by the search engines, according to a reference librarian.

References

The Deep Web: Surfacing Hidden Value
Bergman, Michael K. (2001).

<http://quod.lib.umich.edu/cgi/t/text/text-idx?c=jep;view=text;rgn=main;idno=3336451.0007.104>

(2012)

The Deep Web: Surfacing Hidden Value

<http://www.brightplanet.com/category/publications/>

Q&A Unauthorized Copying

Q. What can I do to prevent others from copying original material from my website?

A. You have at least five possible avenues:

1. There have been cases in which a web hosting company forced the offending party to remove the material.
2. Consult a lawyer about Intellectual property violation and have the attorney contact the offending party to cease.
3. File a lawsuit (usually not worth the expense).
4. Contact the regional or national trade association for ideas on how others have handled similar situations.
5. Poll members of a forum of business owners for their ideas.

References

Owner of Van gogh website sues for infringement

<http://chnm.gmu.edu/digitalhistory/copyright/3.php>

<http://www.out-law.com/page-1670>

Career-Changers Find Their Niche in Strange Ways

2 Unusual Cases that Resulted in Entrepreneurship.

Strange Cases...

View Free Press Release.com

<http://tinyurl.com/pz2h99x>

How Career-Changers Literally Dream Ideas...

PR Web

View Press Release 2011

<http://www.prweb.com/releases/2011/03/prweb5208434.htm>

New Book Promises to Help Career-Changers
with Entrepreneurial Streak

Choose the Right Business

PR Web

View Press Release 2010

<http://tinyurl.com/nfelfqu>

Self-Employment Niche Q & A

How to Search for a Unique Home-Based Business*

Q. With a background in management in the restaurant and retail industry, and as a daycare owner, with experience in website design, video editing, and tourism, what unique business could I start from home?

Hobbies also include sewing and scrapbooking.

A. The vocational choices show a pattern of interest in technology, management, travel, crafts, and a people-person orientation, but the conclusions may be misleading. Why these previous career paths? What were the likes and dislikes about each occupation?

To find a home-based business idea begin by converting previous experience into a checklist list of acquired skills, specialized knowledge, and aptitudes used in each job. Be clear about those tasks or activities enjoyed versus those

disliked in each working environment. Perform the same examination of your leisure time activities.

Research the industries in which you have experience and knowledge.

Identify the industry in which you would like your home-based business to belong.

Decide on how you would like to gather information. For example, attending trade shows, talking to industry professionals, or searching through databases on the Internet for trends and statistics.

As you research industries, look for problems experienced by people who work within the field, unmet needs, and make note of shoddy and costly services and products offered to customers/clients.

*Question adapted from a forum inquiry

Self-Employment Q & A

Budding Entrepreneurs & Government Red Tape

Q. I applied for help in starting a business through the Department of Rehabilitation (DOR) after suffering a major injury. My application was accepted, but it's been four years of delay.

I have an advocate, but every time we solve one problem the vocational counselor assigned to my case finds another way to delay progress. I have done everything required of me, but nothing seems to work. What can I do?

A. Your story is not unusual, according to professional

insiders. Although the agency has provided funds for some applicants to start businesses, DOR bureaucracy can be horrific. For instance, one applicant is enrolled in an acceptable design course, yet couldn't get approval for the Apple software necessary to begin the course.

Some counselors deliberately withhold information about the availability of resources, according to a client advocate. Despite the law, there are government officials who dislike seeing entrepreneurial programs funded. Making a complaint up the chain of command is often futile and may result in retaliatory measures for the applicant.

Contact your congressional representative with a written outline of what you have experienced and what you'd like to see happen. They may assign someone who can resolve the problem. Consult a qualified and experienced advocate and consider reapplying in another district.

In his book, *Job-Hunting for the So- Called Handicapped: or People Who Have Disabilities*, career guru Richard Nelson Bolles, discusses good and bad vocational counselors and strategies to avoid pitfalls. <http://www.amazon.com/Job-Hunting>

How Vincent van Gogh Pursued His Talent Despite Major Obstacles



Vincent van Gogh

60 Minutes recently rebroadcast a segment on the life of the Dutch impressionist painter. The poignant and tragic life of the great artist underscores a number of important lessons. One could argue that van Gogh's vocational journey illustrates major tenets of aptitude science and the importance of recognizing and following one's innate abilities, despite family drama.

Consider the ups and downs of van Gogh's vocational choices. As a young child, he learned how to draw. He was obviously talented and enjoyed the activity. However, as an adult, art was not the field he chose. van Gogh believed his destiny was to become an evangelical preacher, but it was a disastrous choice for a number of reasons, and to make matters worse, he flunked his theology exam.

van Gogh later worked in a bookstore, but was bored and spent a lot of time doodling.

Although he found other work in Paris with an art dealer, van Gogh disliked the crass commercialism applied to paintings. After he decided to become an artist, he began rendering portraits of individuals, and, he had no problems passing the top level exams at the Academy of Fine Arts.

van Gogh was his harshest critic and never felt he'd amount to much as an artist.

Lessons: 1. van Gogh's innate artistic ability appeared early in his youth but was not immediately valued. Instead, based on misguided fervor and belief, he decided to become a pastor as his father before him.

2. Aptitude experts would probably have described van Gogh as a subjective loner, but in order to achieve success as a pastor, an objective or outgoing personality would have been necessary. Portrait painting was more compatible with his personality traits and innate ability.

3. As a bookstore employee, van Gogh's primary aptitudes were useless, so he resorted to doodling to ease the stress. *An inability to use one's innate talents creates restlessness, according to aptitude researchers.*

4. van Gogh's *Starry Night*, which he painted based on recollection of a prior visit to a sanatorium, indicates a tremendous aptitude for memory & design. And although, he flunked theology, he had no problems using his skills to pass the educational requirements for the Art Academy.

5. Not only van Gogh's skill but his values determined his vocational choices.

References

The Van Gogh Gallery. July 31, 2012. Templeton Reid, LLC.
<http://www.vangoghgallery.com/>.

Starry, Starry, Night by Don McLean

Lyrics and back story of the hit song based on van Gogh's life.

<http://www.vangoghgallery.com/painting/starrynightlyrics.html>

Amazon.com

60 minutes: The life and death of Vincent van Gogh

<http://tinyurl.com/ohbofmg>

Johnson O'Connor Research Foundation

<http://www.jocrf.org/>

How a New Orleans Baker Became a Film Star

Making Beasts of the Southern Wild

There are several cases in which indie films achieved success using bootstrap methods, but *Beasts of the Southern Wild* has an interesting entrepreneurial slant in that one of the actors in the film was running a cafe in New Orleans before his acting debut.

2012 Benh Zeitlin: "Beasts of the Southern Wild"

Video: 5 Minute

Benh Zeitlin describes the unique way he went about making his remarkable new film, "Beasts of the Southern Wild," in US Dramatic Competition at the Sundance 2012 Film Festival.

Dwight Henry, the New Orleans baker/businessman turned actor knows how to leverage his newfound fame with his passion and business sense for food.

<http://www.pbs.org/wnet/tavisismiley/interviews/actor-dwight-he>

Self-Employment Q & A

Relocating for Opportunity



Q. I am considering a move across country. Which states would be best for self-employment?

A. It depends on your goals. Some states might not be on a fast track for self-employment growth, but will offer resources that you can't find elsewhere. For instance, only a few states, such as Maine and New Jersey offer qualified job applicants the option of starting a business while receiving unemployment benefits.

Create a checklist of pros and cons for each place on your

list of possible choices. Research opportunities as well as the impact on lifestyle and family responsibilities.
Updated with five related articles.

References

[List Of 12 Fastest Growing US Cities When It Comes To Self ...](#)

The Houston-Sugar Land-Baytown area with 245,643 self-employed workers ranks number one in self-employment growth followed by Riverside-San Bernardino-Ontario, CA and Phoenix-Mesa-Glendale, AZ...

[Nightly Business Report.com](#)

Minnesota 2015

Nerd Wallet.com/blog

Best Cities Freelance Workers

<http://tinyurl.com/k2a4gf3>

CollegeChoice.net

50 Best U.S. Colleges for Aspiring Entrepreneurs

<http://tinyurl.com/lbrgo3x>

Spartan Daily.com

Self-employment and entrepreneurship becomes student trend after recession

<http://tinyurl.com/nv3cejx>

Louisiana among the most entrepreneurial states, says CNN Money

<http://tinyurl.com/khkb5sy>

Michigan's entrepreneurial climate goes from 41st to 6th ranking in nation; venture capital grows.

<http://tinyurl.com/p2dbgla>

Dee Adams is the author of *Finding Your Niche: Discover...*

<http://wp.me/P3Kr4S-Uz>

New Product Ideas

One Way to Profit from Consumer Complaints

People with disabilities couldn't find the entertainment books they wanted to read through public libraries, such as cookbooks, thrillers, and romance novels. The publishing industry routinely offered bibles and health-related subject matter for that market segment.

A large print publisher decided to solve the problem and profited handsomely by producing the wanted materials.

Lesson: Stereotyping or making assumptions about consumers can be a costly business mistake.

Reference

**Self-Publishing Manual: How to Write, Print, and Sell Your Own Book*, 11th edition. Dan Poynter, ParaPublishing, 1999.

*There is a more recent edition.