

Finding Your Niche



How to Avoid Mistakes When Searching for a Niche

Real-World Articles with Overlooked Lessons for Creative and Entrepreneurial Idea Seekers



Dee Adams

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Searching for a Niche**

*Real-World Articles with Overlooked Lessons for
Creative and Entrepreneurial Idea Seekers*

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Real-World Entrepreneurial and Creative Lessons

The following articles were initially posted on Medium.com or the NicheCreativity.com blog. The stories underscore some of the essential themes noted throughout the chapters of *Finding Your Niche: Discover a Profitable Idea for a Business at Home – or Elsewhere*.

This collection of multi-cultural articles highlights stumbling blocks and successes. Also included are a mini-book outline and an answer key.

Photos: Unsplash

How Overlooking Facts about Race & Culture Led to Disaster for Some Aspiring Entrepreneurs



Three European women launched a startup based on their critique of the traditional Chinese game of Mahjong.

But they produced a poorly designed pricey product, angered many members of the Chinese culture, and were forced to take down their Facebook page.

Their experience is a lesson for anyone venturing into business with a plan to sell to another culture or base an idea on another culture's traditions.

Whether or not the women's actions were based on racism or cultural ignorance there were huge fact-gathering missteps in the plan to offer for sale a neon version of the traditional game.

Well before launching, the women should have contacted a specialized library for advice about the culture and Mahjong.

Before spending money on the production of an ill-conceived impractical product.

Source

<https://bettermarketing.pub/three-white-women-erased-200-years-of-chinese-culture-with-their-425-neon-mahjong-sets-a9dde5ee6e6a> — Three White Women Erased 200 Years of Chinese Culture with Their \$425 Neon Mahjong Sets: The gentrification of Mahjong teaches a valuable lesson on the importance of professional copywriting.

The Business of Animal Behavior: 3 Amazing Cases



Secretive creatures engage in activities many humans know little about, say animal behavior experts (PBS).

In the real world, a gorilla can communicate with humans, according to the Gorilla Foundation and Project Koko, the only interspecies communication study to date. And Border Collie pups as young as four weeks old can work as herders.

So, it was only a matter of time...

Scientists would discover evidence that certain animals have been starting niche ventures and have been doing so behind the scenes for some time.

At the recent International Zoology Business conference in Davos, Switzerland, some conference members began comparing notes and reached an astonishing conclusion...

Consider:

St. Bernard pups in a monastery in Geneva, Switzerland, operate a company that brews an energy chocolate elixir based on a century-old recipe handed down by monks. The pups ship the drinks in tiny barrels to college students all over the globe.

Meanwhile, in the US, Vermont state police have been flooded with persistent calls from residents who have reported sightings of grazing cows dressed in what callers described as "Hip and colorful winter woolens."

There is a strong suspicion that the stunning colorful designs result from a collaboration of a nearby butterfly kaleidoscope. The design firm reportedly staffed entirely by butterflies landed a six-figure contract to produce scarves for wedding guests at upscale resort hotels.

But perhaps the most incredible account takes place in Namibia, where hippopotami, a bale of turtles, and a herd of giraffes have set aside their differences and formed a

partnership, successfully operating a five-star safari hotel. The turtles wait tables as the giraffes practice their culinary expertise in an incredibly tall kitchen. Meanwhile, the hippopotami ferry guests on wild river rafting trips.

Disbelief rippled among many conference attendees until a park ranger from Australia stepped forward with a strange tale that provided an important clue and corroborated these fantastic accounts of animal entrepreneurship.

Four years earlier, the ranger had come across a mob of roos hopping across the preserve one night. He grabbed his night vision binoculars to get a closer look, but the animals had scattered before he could reach his jeep. And he had blinked hard because he could have sworn that several of the roos were carrying book bags.

He thought nothing more about the incident, attributing his hallucination to a eucalyptus leaves overdose. But then a year passed, and an article in the Melbourne Business Journal caught his attention...

A feature about a mysterious up-and-coming startup specializing in children's first-aid products made from harvested Rainforest herbs: herbs are found only in the same part of the country where the preserve is located.

According to the article, UPS would come to the edge of the preserve each week, and hundreds of small packages were piled neatly for outgoing delivery. But no one was there, only written instructions and a check.

The ranger's story provided an essential clue because animals were spotted with their nose or snout near an unidentified book in each of the cases uncovered.

So, some of nature's finest are reading entrepreneurial books, thinking critically, and taking an active role in business development. And one pre-startup guide is being shared by enterprising animals, notes a highly placed source at the IZB.

But one mystery remains unsolved: what guide did the animals read for inspiration? How did they learn how to pick a unique niche? Plans are underway to identify the title ASAP.

Meanwhile, agents are tracking reports of elephants selling dance classes based on African and Indian techniques and some Zebras have started manufacturing unusual hard-to-find T-shirts.

Questions

- There is an essential underlying takeaway to this article. What do you think it is? See mini-answer key.
- What kind of business would you be inspired to start if you were your favorite animal?
- What kind of business would you be inspired to start if you were your favorite animal in the wild?

Sources

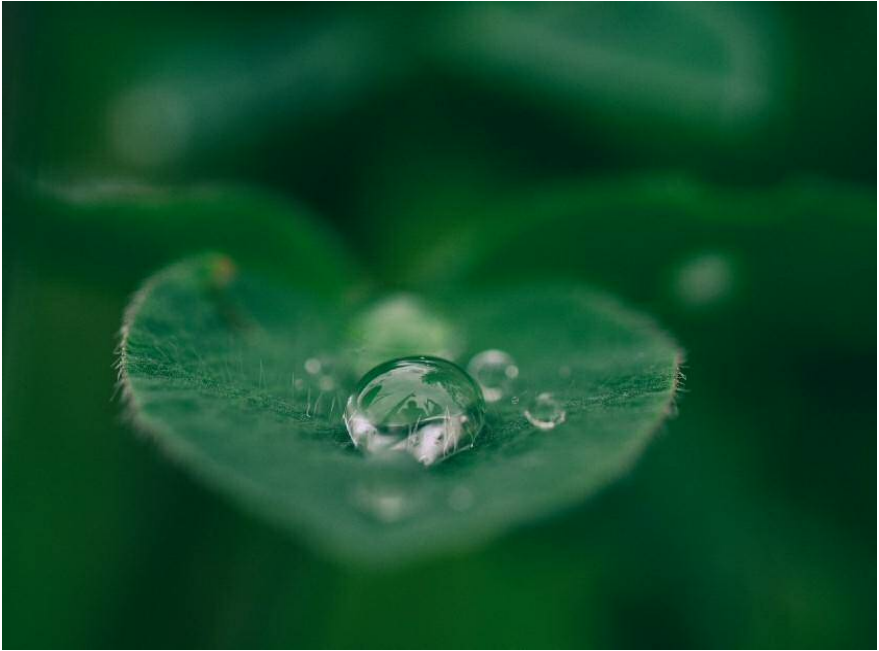
Border Collie pups at four weeks

<https://youtu.be/48lvIMUrB74> 9:00 Min

Border Collie pups working at 6 weeks

<https://youtu.be/PC51WMprbu4> January 4, 2013, 23:00 Min

How a Factory Worker Uncovered Hidden Talent



On the outskirts of a cornfield in a South Carolina neighborhood, it was midnight.

Neighbors saw spotlights flickering from a yard in the neighborhood.

Spotlights from the three-acre backyard of a factory worker named Pearl Fryar.

Years earlier, while house-hunting, Fryar learned neighbors did not want him in their neighborhood. The reason: Racist stereotyping about African Americans not keeping up their yards.

Indignant, and determined to prove the stereotype wrong, Fryar bought a home in the neighborhood and set a goal to win Yard of the Month honors from the local garden club.

So, after a full day of work, as a beverage can factory worker, Fryar would work in his yard till late at night. Three years later, he won honors from the local garden club. But how he won inspired many people and baffled industry experts.

Fryar had no gardening knowledge or formal training; only a 3-minute pruning lesson from a nursery owner and inspiration gained from replanting discarded nursery plants (Weigel).

“I don’t follow the book. I break all the rules. I didn’t know I was not supposed to do what I do. For one time in my life, ignorance paid off,” said Fryar.

Patience, precision, and dexterity are undoubtedly some of the skills Fryar transferred from his factory job, but it does not explain the sophisticated level of artistry he created.

Pearl Fryar’s story underscores the mystery of innate ability and hidden aptitudes.

Fryar’s artistic ability may have come, in part, from the ability to see images in 3-D. It’s an aptitude called Structural Visualization, and not everyone has that innate talent (Johnson O’ Connor).

People have traveled from all over to see Fryar's so-called yard. And he has been interviewed by Oprah, featured in national magazines, and invited to speak at Harvard University.

Fryar's challenge of a specific racial stereotype uncovered a tremendous hidden talent, and that is amazing.

Sources

Edward Scissorhands could learn from this 75-year-old bush-chopper — https://www.pennlive.com/gardening/2015/06/edward_scissorhands_could_lear.html

Structural Visualization, by Johnson O'Connor — <https://www.biblio.com/book/structural-visualization-oconnor-johnson/d/1427937315>

Band Lady A Versus Singer Lady A

How racial protest exposed a costly slip-up by artists in the music industry



Last year, the Grammy award-winning country band Lady Antebellum, announced a name change to show support for BLM, and that's when the trouble began.

Decades earlier, the band had registered the name Lady A to sell their merchandise and were known by their fans as Lady A.

But Anita White, a Blues singer from Seattle Washington known as Lady A for more than 20 years, had also trademarked the name Lady A as a self-distributed artist.

According to the BBC, the band Lady A was unaware someone else was using the name. .Apparently, Google and uspto.gov, the government's free trademark database, were overlooked.

After a Zoom meeting broke down between the band and Anita White, the band filed a lawsuit over the disputed name but did not ask for money or legal fees. The band, formerly known as Lady Antebellum only wanted to ensure their right to use their brand, Lady A, along with Anita White.

Anita White counter-sued.

“Internet and social media searches for Lady A, which had readily returned results for her music, were now dominated by references to Lady Antebellum. Ms. White’s Lady A brand had been usurped and set on the path to erasure,” according to court papers filed by White’s lawyer.

Several key issues are underscored in this conflict. For example, failure to choose a name by fact-checking its history through a multicultural lens, regardless of the social climate. And failure or misunderstanding of how to monitor a mark to ensure it is clear or not infringed upon.

Questions

Who followed or overlooked the confusing rules and regulations after registering the trademark? The band or the blues singer? Or maybe both?

Lady A versus Lady A is a sobering reminder for a solo self-distributed artist of the importance of the internet and social media.

Sources

'Lady A' lawsuit makes the band look terrible (CNN.com)

An Entertainment Lawyer Explains the Finder Points of the Lady A Lawsuit (NYPost.com)

Public Search Facility (uspto.gov)

Reuben Paul: Cyber Security Expert



In 2018, Reuben Paul and his younger brother traveled to security conferences around the world and earned thousands of dollars in speaker's fees because of Paul's skill at hacking into everyday technology products.

“It is important that we reinvent cybersecurity because obviously what we have invented is not working. If a 12 - year -old can do it then why could not a skilled cyberterrorist do it [hack]? — Reuben Paul.

Paul's statement three years ago is unfortunately as current today as the day it was spoken, even more so. And he demonstrated within seconds during a CBS News interview how quickly the reporter could be hacked.

One key lesson from this informative and delightful video is underscored by the discussion of the Cloud Pets security breach: Internet-based products should not be launched unless tested for safety issues. Having someone like Paul test a product before launching, instead of after a major breach is a common-sense strategy.

Questions

What safety issues could be involved in the creation or use of internet products?

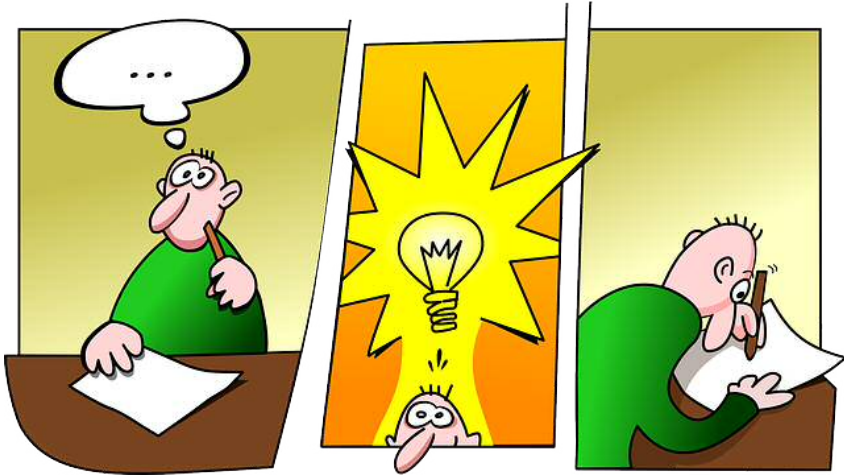
Why is Paul's niche evergreen?

Source

Meet a 12-year-old hacker and cyber security expert (CBS Mornings, <https://youtu.be/7TpsYofbAPA>)

What Aspiring Inventors May Overlook: A Valuable Resource

Wisconsin Innovation Service Center



Having a good idea for a product is only the beginning, failure to gather all the relevant facts and evaluate the marketplace puts the aspiring inventor at a disadvantage and an easy mark for questionable business services.

A recent *Steve Harvey* show underscores the point: three aspiring inventors and one woman, in particular, stood out because she had paid an invention company \$12,000 to create a prototype of her brainstorm. A new idea for women who wear high heels.

Unfortunately, what the hopeful inventor got back was useless, she admitted, and she felt duped. The financial mistake could have been avoided with expert feedback from the Wisconsin Innovation Center.

Some could argue that her lack of tech and design skills hampered her ability to execute a workable prototype independently.

The aspiring entrepreneur could have saved more than 90% of the \$12,000 lost with an honest and comprehensive evaluation from WISC.

Established more than 35 years ago, the center has seen it all, including cutting edge technology in medicine, tools, and food products.

WISC has a database of 1100 industry experts who offer honest product evaluations—experts who have signed a confidentiality agreement, which all staff members at the center must also sign.

A thorough overview of a product's potential in the marketplace from development to distribution and hidden pitfalls are WISC reports' focus.

So why instead waste life savings?

Aspiring entrepreneurs may not know about the organization. Without an advertising budget, the nonprofit service relies on word of mouth and its reputation with satisfied clients found around the globe.

When applicants apply for WISC fee-based services, illegal products, risqué adult products, or other dubious ideas are not eligible for consideration.

Question

What other resources or issues might potential inventors overlook?

Sources

Steve Harvey.com/Passion Projects — Takeaway includes myths about marketing to mass markets channels

<http://www.steveharveytv.com/passion-projects>

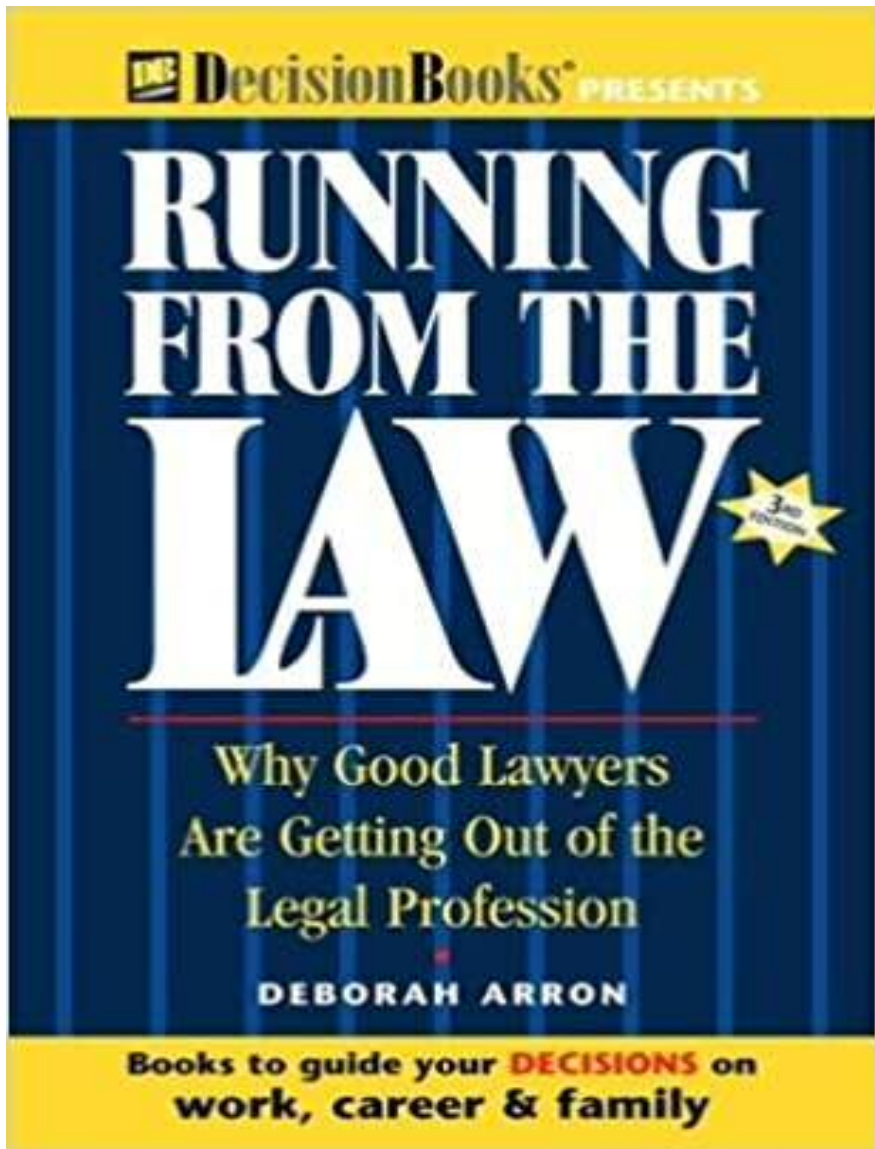
Wisconsin Innovation Service Center —

<https://uww.edu/wisc> and Click the Research tab

Invention Promotion Firms Consumerftc.gov/articles —

<https://www.consumer.ftc.gov/articles/invention-promotion-scams>

**Why Some Lawyers Leave the
Profession and Become Entrepreneurs**



Four Profiles...Excerpt

According to business journals, the niche bank is often used to describe the successful City National Bank. A CEO with a law degree heads the firm. A CEO with a law degree heads the firm. Music mogul Clive Davis and the founder of Southwest Airlines and The Sharper Image (Arron) are companies with founders who were lawyers before turning to the business world. Music mogul Clive Davis and the founder of Southwest Airlines and The Sharper Image (Arron) are companies with founders who were lawyers before turning to the business world.

The Johnson O'Connor Research Foundation says specific innate abilities found in many successful lawyers include Ideaphoria and Inductive thinking, which can detect patterns in facts and ideas. These talents fit into the entrepreneurial arena excellently.

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Career changes include cartoonist, cake baker, author, blogger, career counselor for lawyers, surfboard champion and instructor, and commercial airline pilot.

The late Deborah Arron was a pioneer. She wrote the first book that exposed the professional turmoil a segment of the attorney population experiences. Before the late 1980s, it was

not a topic that lawyers dared to speak openly about, according to the Seattle Times. Arron later closed her practice and became a lawyer and counselor for lawyers who wanted to change their profession.

Arron's work is as relevant today as ever.

Several years ago, I found a copy of *Running from the Law* on the shelf of a law library. I later bought a copy. Free of legalese, it's a great read, and an insightful and valuable resource, despite the 2004 copyright. Research shows that many of the issues addressed by Arron are still current. Ten Lawyer Types are featured. Examples include the Lawyer-Entrepreneur, the Lawyer-Superwoman, and the Lawyer-Peacemaker. Academic, Entrepreneurial, and Corporate, paths are addressed.

A section on how former lawyers have capitalized on hobbies through creative and unusual ways, such as jewelry pin design and channeler/psychic, is included along with a resource appendix.

Question

Why do you think good lawyers leave the profession?

Other Examples Found Online

Allworth Press

Starving artists often lack financial knowledge and know little about protecting their rights in the business world, which spurred a teacher with a law degree to develop a way to educate and empower the artistic community. Allworth Press was the solution. Founder Tad Crawford might be classified Attorney-Crusader or Attorney-Altruist. He has been called an artist rights' advocate.

With a background in economics, Crawford started his company with one book of legal forms and checklists for photographers. Today, Allworth Press specializes in titles for artists in many areas, such as theater, Webb design, photography, and crafts.

And check out the account of the criminal defense attorney who left law to make chocolate:

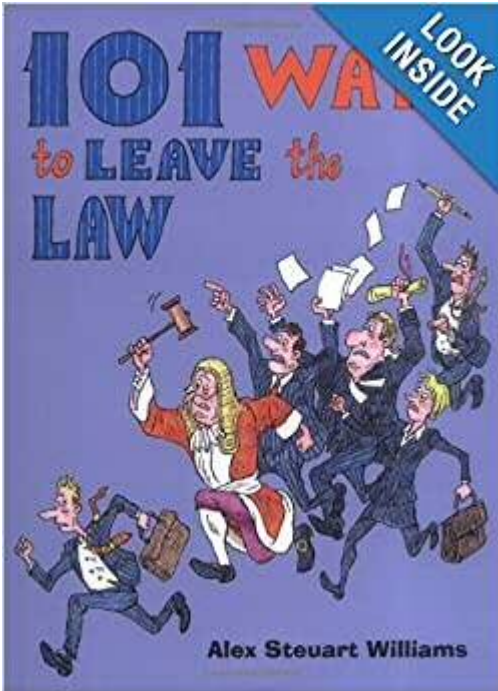
<http://www.askinosie.com/pages/our-story>.

For legal professionals thinking about the entrepreneurial path. "Consider whether you would be *happy* with the choices and responsibilities that would be yours as an entrepreneur," says Crawford. Book Tip: *The Secret Life of Money* is a good choice because money is often more about emotions, psychology, and spirituality than quantity."

Question

Why do you think good lawyers leave the profession?

101 Ways to Leave the Law, by Alex Stuart Williams —
From barrister to animator and cartoonist extraordinaire.



Cakelove, by Warren Brown

From trial lawyer to baker with a chain of locations, classes, and award-winning books. Entrepreneur, educator, youth mentor, small business champion, and speaker.

The Cakelove Story

An insightful, humorous, touching, and remarkable account of discovery from a lawyer turned baker who conquered his "fear of flour."

An essential tip for legal professionals thinking about the entrepreneurial path: “Don't be afraid to leave your law career... there is a world of opportunities outside of the legal arena,” says Brown. (cakelove.com)

Sources

Johnson O'Connor Research Foundation — <http://jocrf.org>

Career Enjoyment — <https://www.careerenjoyment.com/career-test-free-aptitude-test-and-quiz>

Deborah Arron helped lawyers solve career crises — <https://archive.seattletimes.com/archive/?date=20020418&slug=arronobit18m>

Alex Williams' website — <http://www.alex-williams.com>

The Cakelove Story — <http://cakelove.com>

Cookbook cover illustrations from Abrahms: The Art of Beautiful Books — http://www.abramsbooks.com/Books/Pie_Love-9781584798958.html

How an Academic Used the Creative Arts to Transform Dry Anthropology Topics into Interesting Reading for the Public



Do not be fooled by Infrastructure, the less than exciting title of a panel discussion at this past weekend's Los Angeles Times Festival of Books.

And though rust was the riveting ad copy used to lure in droves of viewers, the forum of three authors offered funny insightful, thought-provoking sometimes alarming bits of information about rusty weapons, soda cans, donkeys as transportation back in 1000 BC, ponies used in mines in modern times, supertankers, sailing, Google cars, drones,

the environment, gender, the engineering profession, pets, and trends in transportation.

One author featured on the panel, a former anthropologist and retired professor, Bruce Fagan occupies a unique niche. As the writer of more than 40 books, Fagan is one of few who specializes in his field.

Questions

How do you think creative arts can be used to transform a subject you find boring?

What do you think are some ways teachers can use creative arts to make dull subjects interesting?

Sources

Los Angeles Times Festival of Books Panel Discussion on Infrastructure — <https://www.c-span.org/video/?407593-6/panel-discussion-infrastructure>

Bloomsbury.com/Bruce Fagan, The Intimate Bond; How Animals Shaped Human History — <http://www.bloomsbury.com/us/the-intimate-bond-9781620405727>

Book Questions

Name: _____

Date _____

What three topics in this book interest you most?

Why?

What business are you inspired to learn more about?

What is the best way to learn more about the business of interest?

What would it look like if you were going to test a creative idea or side hustle concept, such as a pop-up?

Instructions: Write replies to questions by writing short or detailed answers or creating a collage or drawing.

Mini Answer Key

Book Question

What industry or business are you inspired to learn more about?

Q. What is the best way to learn more?

A. Read top industry publications. Gather information from a cross-section of people operating and supplying products and services for your field of interest.

Article Question

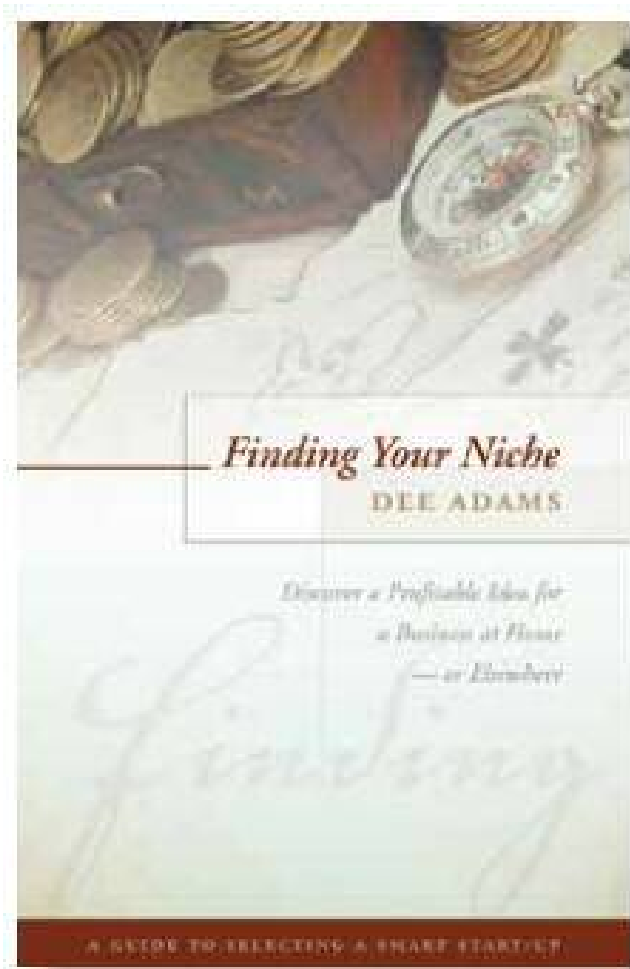
The Business of Animal Behavior: 3 Amazing Cases

Q: There is an essential underlying takeaway to this article. What do you think it is?

A: Although it is an example of PR humor, the article illustrates fact and fiction woven into one piece and is a humorous reminder of the importance of fact-checking all elements of information uncovered.

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Plus a bonus download of interesting articles with Q&A lessons.

148 pages, 7.5 x 9.25 inches, \$14.95, PDF

Praise for *Finding Your Niche*

“Solid, invaluable resource!” — *Midwest Book Review*

For a book excerpt and full review, click here:

<https://nichecreativity.com/the-midwest-book-review>

“In my opinion, the information in *Finding Your Niche* would be suitable for adults and students in high school as well. It’s a huge database of resources which should speak to all kinds of would-be entrepreneurs—to anyone who’s thinking of doing any kind of business startup, whether from home or not.”

— Walter L. Kleine, award-winning journalist and editor

A Multicultural Blog

According to a veteran industry professional, the ranking for the ad-free *Finding Your Niche* companion book blog is unusual because most author blogs are ranked in the multi-millions via Alexa. But the Niche Creativity blog ranks below 400,000 (lower number is better). Check it out here: <https://www.nichecreativity.com>. You will find useful content posted weekly.



Educators and students will find useful overlooked information and resources on social justice topics at <https://nichecreativity.com/racial-profiling-and-social-justice-blog>



A GUIDE TO SELECTING A SMART START-UP

How to Be Happily Self-Employed

A million new businesses will start each year in North America and 60 percent will begin at home, according to government statistics. However, experts agree that the long-term success rate tends to be poor — only two out of every 10 will succeed.

Entrepreneurs often copy products and services already in the market. And many people choose the wrong kinds of self-employment: ventures that don't fit their true skills or talents. According to Richard Nelson Bolles (author of *What Color Is Your Parachute?*), 90 percent of workers are unaware of their actual abilities.

Now a new book has been developed to address these issues. By reading it, budding entrepreneurs will learn how to answer such crucial questions as: "Which business should I start?" and "What business is most likely to thrive?"

Finding Your Niche: Discover a Profitable Idea for a Business at Home—or Elsewhere offers tips on how to avoid the common mistakes and pitfalls that confront would-be entrepreneurs. Articles by industry and academic veterans are featured. The book, written in a seriocomic style, includes overlooked and offbeat concepts that will help you to uncover a winning idea or plan a specific start-up.

You'll save time and money.

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The Business Plan That Ate Chicago

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Appendix C: Resources & Websites

Selected Bibliography



About the Author

Dee Adams researches overlooked aspects of business and consumer practices. Involved in start-ups for more than 20 years, she has counseled new business owners, written and published business literature for consumers, and her work appears in more than 70 university, community college, and public libraries across the country.

Her collection of ideas for finding a niche has been featured in the *California Job Journal*, the Simply Hired blog, and the Teachers Net Gazette website.

Excerpts

A cow sitting service, designer trash bags, and a baby proofing company are just a few of the unique moneymaking ideas created by Americans during the last two decades. However, many would-be entrepreneurs face a big problem when they think about starting a sideline or full-time venture: they may have a hard time finding an idea with enough profit potential...

The Unexpected... When a New England candymaker began making chocolates in his home-based kitchen, the room temperature rose to soaring heights. The chocolate wouldn't cool properly. The candymaker was forced to carry heavy, searing hot vats of mixture down steep stairs to the basement area for cooling and storage. Since the house was considered a landmark, it couldn't be remodeled under zoning rules, so the owner had to relocate the business....

... A practice run through of actual working conditions can spot problems in a work setting before you open for business.



To learn more about
Finding Your Niche, visit
www.nichecreativity.com