

## SPI Podcast Session #21 - Q&A Session - Domain Names, Do You Need an Audience, YouTube Blackboards and Adsense Earnings

show notes and links: <http://www.smartpassiveincome.com/session21>

Hey everybody! What's up?!

Welcome to the 21st session of the Smart Passive Income Podcast. I'm your host, Pat Flynn, and today we're going to do something a little different. I don't have any guests on the show, however I will be answering a number of YOUR questions that have been sent to me via email, on my Facebook page, on Twitter - everywhere, and the reason I'm answering these questions on the podcast is because I'm getting asked the same questions over and over again, and to follow some of my own advice and do things the "smart" way, I'm using the power of podcasting to answer some of the more commonly asked questions, which may be questions that you may have as well, and as a result I'm able to help and reach more people at the same time.

Additionally, I'll probably decrease the number of emails, and anytime someone does ask me a question I've already answered on the show, I can simply point them to the podcast episode where that question was addressed.

There's a wide range of questions, both for beginners and more advanced online marketers and bloggers, so hopefully you'll come away with some new information, or at least confirm your own knowledge and answers to the questions you'll hear on the show today.

And just for future reference, if you have any questions of your own that you'd like answered, feel free to drop me a message on my Facebook page at <http://www.patonfacebook.com> - even if you don't have a question and you just want to say hi - that's cool too. I love interacting with the SPI community there, and we're quickly approaching 10,000 fans so you'll definitely be in good company.

Ok - let's get to the questions.

This first question is from Rebecca, she says:

***Hey Pat! I hope you can answer this one for me. I have read and listened to everything I can get my hands on for the past few months... and the more I know, the more apparent it is to me that I don't understand some of this stuff. For example: I want to purchase my domain names for my new businesses online and all of the formulas I have read about it are confusing and scary to me even though I have dived in and tried to figure it out. Is there a***

## ***super simple formula that a newbie can use for finding the "perfect" domain name?***

Thanks for the question Rebecca.

This is something a lot of people who are just starting out worry about because it's really one of the first, sort of "official" things that you do - you know, you're BUYING a domain name, so you really want to make you pick the right one, so first of all, I applaud you for being concerned about your decision, because it's definitely something that's very important, so I will be a little over-the-top with my answer here.

The *formula* will depend on the actual type of website you're trying to build.

For example, if you're building a "niche site", a site that is very specific for a smaller piece of a larger market, then the formula is very simple. With niche sites, the whole idea is to pick a market and a keyword related to that market that people are searching for that is not too competitive, with the whole goal of building a site and getting to the top spot in Google - typically the top 3 is where you want to be. And the "formula" is this:

After you've chosen your keyword, you want a domain name that matches exactly, 100%, what that keyword is.

If my keyword is backyard hammocks, I want my domain to be backyardhammocks.com. That's called an exact match domain, and it gives you a lot of extra weight in Google. I've seen sites with an exact match domain rank on the first page with only 1 or 2 pages of content and no backlinks (or links from other sites), so an exact match domain with a .com is the best. If you can't get the .com, then .net and .org are next best.

If you cannot get an exact match domain, which is often the case, then you can add a modifier to the keyword. So, if backyard hammocks .com, .net and .org are already taken, I could add a letter to the front of back of the keyword, which is the next best thing for the search engines. So for example:

ebackyardhammocks.com  
ibackyardhammocks.com  
backyardhammocksx.com

And of course, if the .com's are taken you can go with a .net or .org as well.

But the thing is, although niche sites are generally built to please the search engines, and I really want to emphasize this point here, it's the people who visit your website, ultimately, that matter. If you build a site and it ranks high, but it's not interesting, there are too many ads, it's slow to load

- people are going to leave and then really, what's the point of ranking at the top of Google if you don't please your readers.

We're building sites for people here!

For people...

The reason I bring this up is because although ebackyardhammocks.com is second best, it's second best for the search engines - not necessarily for people. It doesn't really make sense and if I saw a site that was e this or keyword x .com, I'd probably be a little turned off by it. Maybe it's just me because I'm in this business, but to me if you cannot get an exact match domain with a .com, .net or .org, just add one modifier that **makes sense**. Each letter makes a difference (it decreases the "keyword density" of the domain name), but that doesn't matter quite as much as people make it out to be, so pick something that makes sense:

qualitybackyardhammocks.com  
backyardhammocksdepot.com  
bestbackyardhammocks.com  
backyardhammocksreview.com

So, I hope that makes sense as far as niche sites are concerned - it's a pretty simple formula.

Now, if we're talking about a more authoritative site, something that's going to be bigger than a niche site and you're planning to build a brand around it, then the formula is a little different.

eackyardhammocks.com isn't very brand-able, and neither is backyardhammocksreview.com, so some creative thinking has to be done to get it right, depending on where you'd like to go with it.

If possible, I always love to see domain names that have whatever the site is about in the domain name, and I love this for two reasons:

1) New visitors will immediately know what your site is about, even before they get there. Some companies have weird names that you hear for the first time and you're like - what's that about? One website that comes to mind is Squidoo.com, which is a type of blogging / article writing platform, but you wouldn't know that unless I told you. Now, that site is successful (and it's sort of a cool, memorable name, which is why it works for them) so you don't have to use the name of whatever it is your site is about, but I always encourage it. Some examples are:

ProBlogger.net  
SmartPassiveIncome.com  
Entrepreneurs-Journey.com  
VirtualStaffFinder.com

PodcastAnswerMan.com

2) Another reason I love including what the site is about in the domain name is because it helps with search engine optimization, big time. Let's take my site for example, Smart Passive Income. Passive Income are in the domain name, so it helps me there (sort of like with the niche sites), but in addition to that, when other websites or people link to my blog, they'll use the words Smart Passive Income to link to me, typically. That "anchor text" as they call it, is another thing Google looks at for ranking website against each other, so automatically I have targeted, optimized anchor text links coming to my site with a keyword in it as well. As a result of this, without knowing much else about SEO, I was able to get the Smart Passive Income blog to #2 in Google, and it brings me nearly 5000 visitors a month, which is awesome.

Another perfect example of this is Sterling and Jay's Internet Business Mastery, at InternetBusinessMastery.com.

So that's one option - including what your site is about in your domain name. Another thing you can do is make your name the domain name. This is for those people who want to build a website where THEY will become the brand, so you have something like:

ChrisBrogan.com  
GaryVaynerchuk.com  
JohnChow.com

Now, a few things to consider when using your name. First of all, you're using your name! So the site is going to be about you and you're going to have to be somewhat transparent about what you do in your business if you want to succeed - and if that's something you're not comfortable with you may want to take a different route.

Also, it will be nearly impossible to sell the site, if you have, for example, an exit strategy. It'll be hard for John Chow to sell his website to anyone because, well - HE IS his website, and without him it's not really going to work.

Another option is to just pick something catchy, that really isn't going to explain what the site is about, but it's unique and memorable enough that if it does gain any exposure, that's not going to matter and people will understand what it's about. Again, you're trying to create a brand here - so I already mentioned one website, Squidoo.com - that's a good example, and Seth Godin, reknown author and marketing extraordinaire is the creator of that site, so you know he knows what he's doing.

Other examples are Google.com, Yahoo.com, Amazon.com - those are probably the most well known ones that I can think of right off the top of my head.

And to finish off this question, here are 5 things you should also consider when choosing a

domain name:

1. It shouldn't be too long. It's harder to remember and the more letters there are, the easier it is to mistype.
2. Try to stay away from numbers. Why? Because if you tell someone your site is at 241hammocks.com, is that two written out, is it the number two? How about the 4? F-o-r or F-o-u-r? It gets a little confusing, so I always tell people to just stay away from numbers all together. Of course, there are exceptions to these rules - but I'm just giving you some stuff to think about.
3. Don't use dashes in your domain name. A lot of people add dashes to get an "almost" exact match domain, but really they don't do any good, if you're explaining your brand to someone you have to say "dash" everytime, which gets annoying, and it just looks a bit awkward too.
4. There are other domain extensions out there, like .info, .cc, .biz, .tv, etc - I'd just stay away from them all together. The reason is because .com, .net and .org are more popular, it holds more weight in Google, and Glen from Viperchill.com told me that one day Google just dropped all of the .info sites out of their index by accident one day - which is really scary to think about, but that is something that would never happen to a .com, .net or .org site.
5. And finally, just use common sense. If you write it out and you feel it's going to be easily misspelled when people hear it, or just too difficult to type in or it doesn't fit your brand well - keep searching for one that works.

Generally speaking, the way to think about it is this:

What if your site became hugely popular, and you were invited to Good Morning America, a national television show that millions of people watch, to talk about your brand and your website. You're going to want a domain name that makes people remember who you are or what your brand is about - easy to remember, not mis-type-able, catchy, purposeful - everything we talked about.

Great question Rebecca, thank you. There's a lot to it, but like I said it's a really important step for anyone wanting to make a difference online.

Okay, second question, we have Brent, and Brent asks:

***Pat - I have an eBook idea but I don't have a blog or any type of online presence yet. What can I do to make my eBook successful?***

First of all, I think it's great that you're ready to publish something online, Brent. An eBook is really what changed my life, and for those of you who don't really know my story, I had a blog for a while, got laid off, decided to monetize it by writing an eBook study guide for this exam that the

blog was about, and after writing the eBook and selling it online, I grossed about \$8000.00 that first month, and then it just took off from there.

To be honest with you though, and I'm going to speak from experience here, it's going to be much more difficult to succeed with an eBook, or any type of product you create for distribution online, if you don't already have an existing audience or presence online.

If you have an audience, or a following it's going to make things much much easier for you.

People are always asking me - Pat - how did you make almost \$8000 the first month you went online, and the truth is that I didn't - I earned that much the first month I sold my eBook, but I had my blog where I was building a community, establishing myself as an authority, for over a year, plus tack on an extra two months to create the eBook, and as you can see it didn't really happen overnight. Nothing usually does, unless you win the lottery or something.

If you have the time and patience to build a community - maybe by starting a blog like I did, or maybe a podcast or maybe a YouTube channel, and getting your name out there by providing **real value** and **extremely useful content** to people so they become a part of your tribe, follow you everywhere you go, spread your message across the entire world for you, giving you signs that they would buy something from you or invest in something you've created, then you've pretty much succeeded already, and all you need to do is take action and write the book. But like I said, it takes time and patience - things don't happen right away.

To me, this is the best way to do it. It's the way I've done it since the beginning - with [greenexamacademy.com](http://greenexamacademy.com) and with [smartpassiveincome.com](http://smartpassiveincome.com) too!

Now - if you're read the 4-Hour Work Week by Tim Ferriss, one of my favorite books that was a huge inspiration for how I passively run my businesses today, you'll remember that there's a chapter in there called **Income Autopilot II, Testing the Muse**, and within that chapter there's a part called **Step Three: Micro Test Your Products** (page 180 in the 2nd edition, in case you're interested), and in this chapter Tim reveals a strategy to see how successful an idea can be.

An idea.

This is good stuff here, so you don't have to actually create your product before it goes on the market, and this is something - just to clarify - that you'd do if you don't already have an audience.

Now - there is a little bit of money involved to invest in pay per click advertising, but that's the price you pay when you don't already have an audience to test a product out or survey. But to Tim and to me, it's well worth the investment because we'd rather spend \$250 to \$500 to know my product isn't good based on hard cold numbers, as opposed to A) never doing anything in the first place and wondering "what could have been" and B) spending 60 hours creating a

product only to launch a website and have your product sell to nobody.

I'm not going to go into the details about how that testing works, but it's basically setting up a sales page, driving pay per click advertising to it, and tracking how many people click the buy now button and how much time they spend on the site. I have step by step details about how to do this in a blog post I wrote, which is a post that has been passed around quite a bit on StumbleUpon and Twitter. You can find a link in the show notes, which if you're listening to the podcast you can find directly at <http://www.smartpassiveincome.com/session21>, or just visit the blog and hit the podcast tab at the top.

(link for transcript readers:

<http://www.smartpassiveincome.com/how-to-test-your-online-product-before-its-even-made-part-1-making-sure-a-market-exists/>)

It's called How to Test Your Online Product Before It's Even Made. It's a Part 4 Series that helps you understand if a market exists for your idea. Then, after all this, if you happen to run the numbers and it looks good, you know you have a winning product and with PPC (pay per click), it's basically spending \$10 to earn \$25, for example, or trading dimes for quarters, as many internet marketers like to say.

So, my first part of the answer is - become an authority in the niche that you're writing a book for, and don't worry if there's already competition out there. I love competition and competing websites, because they tell me exactly what they're doing wrong, and what I should do instead. You know what I mean? Plus, it's a sign there's a market for whatever it is you're looking to get into, so now it's your job to put yourself in that market, take what everyone else is doing wrong and show all of those customers or people within that market that you're the go to person, or you have the go-to product.

Of course, gaining a following and establishing yourself in an existing niche is easier said than done, and it takes time, but it's not impossible, and the rewards can be very fruitful. I mean, I wasn't the first person talking about making money online, but here I am today.

The second part of my answer is - if you don't have time to do become an authority or "tribe leader" then you can use PPC campaigns on Google AdSense or Facebook to test your idea first, and then if it's a greenlight really start to trade your dimes for quarters there. Put in \$10, get back \$25. Adding zeroes on the end, put in \$100, get back \$250. Put in \$1000, get back \$2500, etc.

Our next question is from about 6 different people, but I'll paraphrase for you:

***Pat - how do you make YouTube videos with the blackboard with your logo on it, and you writing live on top of it?***

This is actually my most frequently asked question, which makes me feel really good because it means I'm really engaging my audience with my videos and it's a technique that not a lot of people are doing. It's probably part of the reason my YouTube channel has over half a million views and counting. And if you're interested in learning more about how I use YouTube and tips and tricks to maximize your efforts there, definitely check out SPI Session #19: Everything You Need to Know About YouTube for Online Business and Blogging.

(link for transcript readers:

<http://www.smartpassiveincome.com/youtube-blogging-online-business>)

Anyways, if you haven't seen one of these videos before, I'll put a link up on the blog so you can check one out, but basically when you hit play, there's a screen that looks like a blackboard, it has my logo on it and some color to match my website on the side, plus my url - and during the video you can hear me talk in the background while I write on the screen, sort of like a teacher would in a classroom.

It's much more engaging than something like a powerpoint presentation where text just pops up on the screen, you can actually see me, in real time as I talk, write on the screen. I draw diagrams, graphics, charts and other things to help explain whatever it is I'm trying to explain.

The way this is done is actually pretty easy, and I'm happy to share this technique with you because like I said, it's a great way to engage your audience and stand out from everyone else who is making videos in your niche, and I really want you to succeed so feel free to take this technique, and if anyone asks you you can tell them it came from me, but don't feel like you need to link to me or whatever everytime you use it.

What I do is, I'm basically using screen capture software such as Camtasia, and there's also Screenflow for Mac (and there's a free one that I heard was pretty good, but I haven't tested it myself, Called CAM STUDIO - you can get it at <http://www.camstudio.org>), to record myself writing on top of a blackboard I created in Photoshop. I'm actually in the photoshop program, using the pen tool to draw on a layer on top of a blackboard in the background. Now, if you don't have photoshop, there is some open source software out there you can use that will accomplish the same thing - one is called GIMP, at <http://www.gimp.org>.

That's it! Although I also have a pen and tablet so that I can write legibly - it's really hard to write with a mouse, as I'm sure many of you know. The particular tablet that I have is called the Bamboo Fun Tablet, and I think it was only \$69 or something. I've since converted a couple people to this system - Cliff Ravenscraft who is already doing some awesome things on [podcastanswer.com](http://podcastanswer.com), and also David Risley who is using it in some of his membership site programs, I believe.

So, good luck with that. If you have any additional questions about how that works, just quickly



head on over to <http://www.patonfacebook.com>. If you'd like an affiliate link for the Bamboo Pen and Tablet that I use, it'll be on the shownotes for this podcast episode on the blog.

This next question was actually sent to me just a couple of days ago, in back to back emails from two different people, which is quite a coincidence. The question, coming from J.D. and Anthony is:

### ***How do I increase my Adsense earnings?***

I don't care what anyone else says, I love Google AdSense. It provided my very first dollar online way back in 2008 when I first began to monetize GreenExamAcademy.com, before I wrote my eBook, and today it's the income vehicle for my security guard training niche site at <http://www.securityguardtraininghq.com>, which is now generating over \$1000/month in AdSense revenue alone.

It's pretty incredible, and the cool thing is that if you have a website that has traffic or visitors, all you have to do is put Google AdSense on your site, which is done by just dropping a little piece of code into your site - within your posts, pages, in your sidebar, wherever you'd like - and ads are automatically generated and appear in those areas that relate to the content on the page that they are on.

Now, I understand that a lot of people don't like advertisements, and that's totally understandable, but if done correctly, AdSense can actually enhance the quality of your site because the ads should be relevant to whatever it is you're talking about, so it's more like a resource instead of an ad - you just get paid everytime someone clicks on the advertisement.

AdSense is great for starting out because, like I said, it's easy to setup, it's free and you can begin making money right away, however there are three things that we need to look at to give ourselves the best chance to make the most money with AdSense.

**1)** The first and probably most important thing to understand is the kind of content on your site - and primarily, the target keyword of what your site is about. You see, your earnings from AdSense actually don't come Google, although they are the ones that cut you the check, or directly deposit into your Bank Account.

The money originally comes from those who are paying Google a certain amount of money per click. If, for example, a particular keyword an advertiser is targeting costs \$1.00 per click, and that ad gets clicked, they give Google \$1.00, and you get a small piece of that for hosting the advertisement, if it was on your site.

Sounds simple enough, but **not all keywords are created equal**. Some keywords are worth way more than others. Some keywords, such as [securityguardtraininghq.com](http://www.securityguardtraininghq.com) have a cost per

click in the Adwords market of about \$2.50, although I've seen this go as high as \$4.00 at one time. Other keywords - keywords that aren't very competitive on the advertising front, may only cost \$0.20 per click, in which case in the end you wouldn't get quite as much money for that keyword, and this is why some sites that get thousands and thousands of hits a day may not make as much with AdSense than a site with less traffic, but with a better / or a more commercially viable keyword.

So, part of the work needs to be done BEFORE the website or topic or niche is even selected, and this is where keyword research comes in. You can use the Google Adwords Keyword tool to not only see how many people are searching each month for a particular keyword, but also how much the average Cost Per Click is for that keyword for an advertiser, which will give you an idea of how much you may potentially earn per click.

**2)** This one is sort of obvious, but in order to make money with AdSense, you need to have some kind of traffic coming to your site, and the more traffic that comes to your site, the more money you can make, obviously. Also, the more targeted your traffic, the more you can make as well, since those particular people would be interested in your topic more so than if you bought 2000 visitors to your site on Fiverr.com, which you CAN do, but I wouldn't recommend it. The traffic from sources like that are not very targeted.

Search engine traffic, however, is very targeted, and that's where most of the traffic for these little niche sites come from.

I could talk for days about traffic generation strategies, but we'll talk more about that in a future session. I may have my buddy Corbett Barr from ThinkTraffic.net come back for that particular session, we'll see.

And lastly,

**3)** You need to have optimal placement and settings for your particular ads.

Although there are certain strategies in regards to ad placement and stylization and settings for your AdSense Ads that tend to work better than others - the truth is that every website is different and it's your job to take action, test as much as possible, and see what works for you and your website. The optimal settings I once had on GreenExamAcademy.com, for example, are not the same as they are on my site at securityguardtraininghq.com.

The overall strategies that tend to work for me are:

A) Place one medium or large rectangular block of ads in the first part of your posts and pages. You can easily add ad blocks anywhere by using a Wordpress plugin called:

Advertisement Management.

This particular ad placement earns me the most income, and I actually have it so that the ad is justified to the right, and the text of the post or page wraps around the ad block on the left hand side. There's a little bit of coding involved to make this happen. I'll post a small text file that you can download which will give you the code you can use to make text wrap around either side of your adsense ads. It'll be on the transcript too:

```
<div style="float: right;">ADSENSE SCRIPT GOES HERE</div>
```

By the way - a quick shout out and thanks to Spencer from NichePursuits.com. He helped me optimize some of the ads on my security guard training site, which I immediately saw results from, so check him out if you have the time. He recently just posted his earnings and I saw that he generated over \$15k in Adsense last month, which is insane! I think my best month ever from adsense was over \$4000.00 back in 2008.

B) Another strategy is to use link text ads - primarily the long horizontal ones that can span across an entire site. By placing one of these near the top of my page, I was able to increase my click through rate quite a bit and earn even more.

C) Like I said, it's different for each site, but for me when I style my ads to have the same shade of color and font style as the text on my page, they always get a higher click through rate. The reason I say "shade" of color, is that I don't make it *exactly* the same, but just one or two shades off, usually darker, so that the ad stick out, but it doesn't make the page ugly. I mess around with the sizes of the fonts too, which I'm actually inconclusive on because I'm still testing that particular variable as we speak.

D) When setting up your ads, you have the option to show picture advertisements in place of the text link type advertisements, and whenever I've enabled the images I have **always** seen a dramatic drop in click through rates and income. Again, this is something you'll have to test out for your particular niche, but for the educational type sites that I've had really good success with, the text advertisements work best, by far.

So the big lessons here are, to increase your adsense earnings, do your homework and pick a niche that will give you ability to earn more with each click; optimize and do everything you can to maximize the amount of targeted traffic coming to your site; and test test test - try different patterns and settings to get the best ads up on your site, because even just an extra half a percentage increase in click-through rates can make a DRAMATIC effect.

So, I know I've only hit 4 questions so far, which is pretty crazy because I thought I was going to get through 10 or 12 of them - I guess I just got a little too detailed with my answers, but I think that's a good thing - you can never learn too much about these types of things, and hopefully you came away with some answers and tidbits of information you can use on your site and in your online business.

I would love to do more of these, maybe every 8 to 10 episodes, so if you have any questions you'd specifically like answered on the podcast, I'm collecting a database of questions so head on over to PatonFacebook.com, come say hi and shoot me a question. I may answer it right away for you anyways, and if it's a good question I feel a lot of people need the answer to, I'll include it in my database for later use in the podcast.

Thank you so much for your support, everyone. We're up to 149 5-star reviews in iTunes, and I would love for you to be 150 if you have the time. Of course, please leave an honest review and if you have any criticism, please keep it constructive so I can continue to improve this show and help you even more in the future.

You guys totally rock!

Cheers, and here's to your success in online business, in blogging and in life.

Peace!

For show notes, please visit: <http://www.smartpassiveincome.com/session21>