

By Ronan Keane and Rieva Lesonsky

STARTUP SUCCESS

Boost Your Chances for Business Success With Web 2.0



**Use Google, Twitter, Skype, Facebook, LinkedIn, Basecamp, Technorati
and More to Start and Grow Your Business for (Almost) Free!**

www.SMBSavvy.com

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Introduction

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There's never been a better time to start your own business. I say this as someone who has been involved in the world of entrepreneurship for nearly 30 years – and as the founder of a startup business myself. In my former life as Editorial Director of *Entrepreneur Magazine*, I helped millions of readers launch their own companies. Now, I'm putting what I learned into practice as the founder of GrowBiz Media.

Why is now such a great time to become an entrepreneur? Because, as this book will show you, there are more technological tools available than ever before to make starting your own business fast, easy and practically free.

Thanks to Web 2.0 technology, anyone can start a business from anywhere at any time. Collaborate with thousands of other people all over the globe, get instantaneous feedback on new business ideas, and spread your marketing message around the world – it's easy.

Worried about finding financing? With the Web 2.0 tools in this book, you can start a business for almost nothing. Stressed about hiring employees? With Web 2.0 solutions to make work faster, you may not even need them – but if you do, we'll show you where to find them. Wondering how you'll spread the word about your new company? With Web 2.0 technology, all it takes is the click of a mouse. Considering how you'll afford office space? Thanks to Web 2.0, you and your team can work virtually from anywhere and never need to spend a dime on rent.

Throughout this e-book, we've included links to every site we mention so you can quickly check them out. You'll notice that some sites are mentioned more than once. That's because many Web 2.0 tools – Twitter, for example - have multiple uses. So if you want to dip into Chapter 9 on Sales and Marketing without reading the whole e-book, you'll find out how you can use Twitter to market your business. If you read Chapter 4, you'll learn how you can use Twitter for market research. And so on.

This e-book is only the beginning, of course. In order to get the most from the Web 2.0 tools we're suggesting to you, you'll need to do some exploring on your own. Not every solution is suitable for every business, so take some time to investigate all the options. We're confident that with the plethora of Web 2.0 tools out there, there truly is a solution for everyone – and a solution for every need a startup business could have.

Perhaps the greatest advantage of Web 2.0 is the way it enables you to collaborate with others – from co-workers to freelancers to strategic partners. Using Web 2.0, my co-author Ronan Keane, online marketing expert and president of UpClick Marketing, and I were able to write, design and create this e-book without ever meeting in person. As Ronan and I have discovered for ourselves, Web 2.0 can open the door to a world of new opportunities. We hope this book opens your eyes to the possibilities Web 2.0 has to offer.

–By Rieva Lesonsky

Chapter 1:

What Business

Should You Start?

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The spirit of a true entrepreneur looks for the opportunity in everything he or she sees, touches, hears and learns. If this describes you, then your next step is merely narrowing down your options. If you believe you haven't quite found the perfect opportunity, maybe you need to do a bit more searching.

Would you rather provide a service or sell a product? Maybe a retail concept is your cup of tea? Or is it an actual cup of tea, coffee or other food concept? When researching what's hot, you need to determine the difference between a fad and a trend. Trends can last for generations, while a fad can be really big for a short time (think Cabbage Patch Kids), but is destined to fizzle in the long term.

Can you anticipate a trend before it happens? Yes - by reading everything you can get your hands on and keeping your eyes open for new ideas. First, look for trends in your local area. Regularly read your local newspaper, and pay attention to what your friends, family and co-workers are doing. Are all the moms you know talking about some new kids' clothing store? Are all your teenage nieces and nephews avidly using some new technology? Are all the twentysomethings you work with into some new extreme sport? Pay regular visits to your local shopping malls, retail centers and tourist areas so you can see what concepts, restaurants and fashions are popular.

Then look nationwide. Are there trends happening in the big metropolitan cities like New York and Los Angeles that haven't hit your area yet? Usually, big cities are the first to latch on to a new concept. Would that new concept translate to your region? Maybe, if there are enough people in your town that fit the demographic. Subscribe to newspapers like *The New York Times* (either the print version or online) to stay tuned in to the trends.

And don't think, "Well, it's already been done; I'm too late." Not necessarily. Hot trends can also give birth to successful spinoff businesses. How could you take a specific trend to the next level? What other products or services might fans of that trend be interested in? Or what would help them take part in the activity or use the product?

Last but not least, think global. Worldwide and societal issues can lead to business ideas. Consider how your business could help solve the water shortage, help consumers deal with the recession, or help combat global warming.

Consumers are always looking for ways to do something faster - unless, of course, they're looking to slow down. Possibilities like this are called *countertrends*. When one consumer group is obsessed with a concept (portable food you can eat in the car), you can be sure there's another group of consumers who will rally against it and want the exact opposite (slow food that's locally grown). As a small-business owner, you can profit from small niches built on countertrends.

Look at demographic changes for clues to future trends. What are the baby boomers (born between 1946 and 1964) doing today? Some are hitting retirement (maybe they're in the market for travel). Some are part of the sandwich generation, still raising children at home while also taking care of their elderly parents (and seeking time-saving solutions). Some are planning to work for the next 20 years (and want anti-aging products to help them look young). Other generations worth watching, too: Generation X (born between 1965 and 1979), Generation Y (born between 1980 and the mid-1990s) and even Generation Z (born

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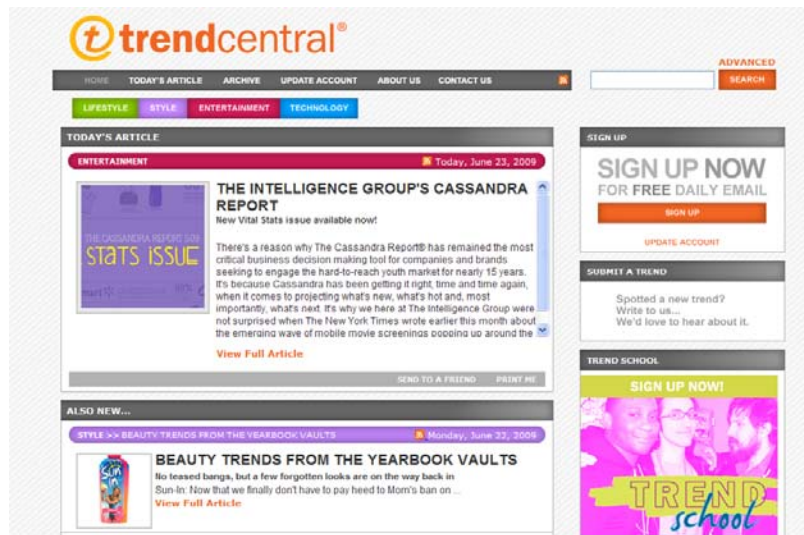
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in the late 1990s to today). And in 2007, the total number of births in the U.S. exceeded the record number of baby boom births - meaning that, whatever this generation ends up being named, it will wield some pretty influential buying power.

Thanks to the Internet, it's as easy to keep up on trends across the globe as it is to follow those in your local area. Following are some sites to help. While not all of these sites are fully Web 2.0, all have some Web 2.0 functionality – and all can help you pinpoint the perfect business idea for you.

Trendcentral.com

Trendcentral.com breaks trends down into four categories: Lifestyle, Style, Entertainment and Technology. Lifestyle covers everything from food trends to recreation to art. The Style category examines fashion trends including designers and “seen on the street” looks. Entertainment covers books, media, music and more. Technology includes video games, Web sites and other cool tools. A new article is uploaded daily; you can also sign up for a daily e-newsletter. Plus, if you've spotted a trend, you can submit your own.

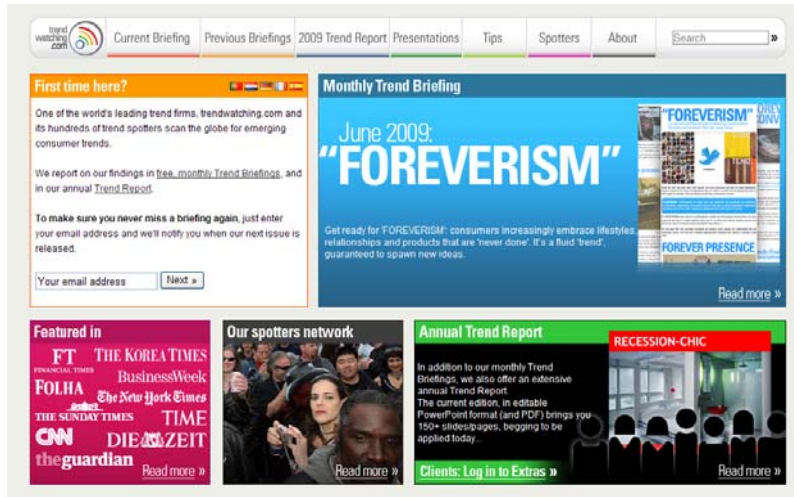


Trendwatching.com

Trendwatching.com keeps tabs on trends around the world via its trendspotters in more than 170 countries. The site offers a free monthly Trend Briefing which is sent to over 160,000 business professionals. Trendwatching.com's insights help researchers, marketers and entrepreneurs. The thought-provoking site is especially strong on analyzing the big picture when it comes to trends.

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Springwise.com

Trendwatching.com's sister Web site, SpringWise.com, is more focused on business ideas. The site is broken up by industry, such as Green (Eco), Beauty, Food and Beverage, Gaming and more. SpringWise.com claims to have over 8,000 trendspotters scanning the globe for smart, new business ideas. Sign up for a free weekly e-newsletter to keep up with it all.

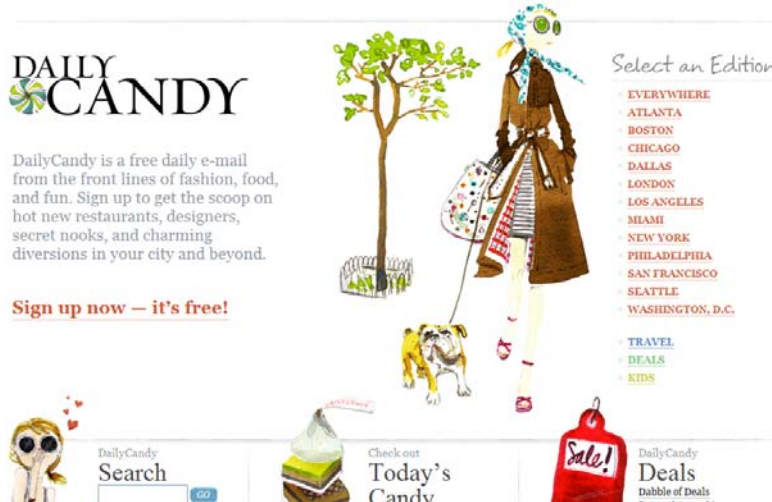
Personalised, hand-woven wedding runners

DailyCandy.com

DailyCandy.com spotlights trends that affluent, successful women would be interested in (think the "Sex and the City" gals). The site has 12 city-specific editions (such as Daily Candy New York and Daily Candy San Francisco) and sends daily e-mail newsletters. Expanding beyond women, the site also offers picks for travel, kids and deals of the day.

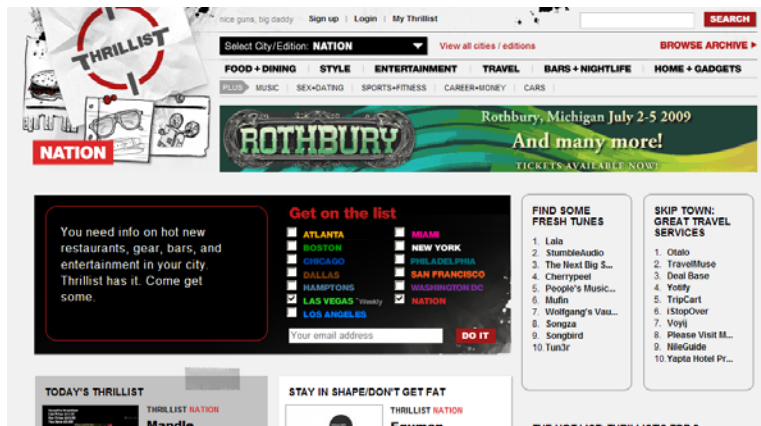
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Thrillist.com

For a daily dose of trends that appeal to the male gender, subscribe to Thrillist.com. They have a national edition and also 12 city-specific editions, so you can see what new shops, restaurants and events are happening in the nation's major metropolitan (and trendsetting) cities. With a spotlight on food and dining, bars and nightlife, entertainment, travel, careers and style, Thrillist prides itself on presenting not just reviews but also recommendations on the latest "under the radar" trends.



Google Trends

Google Trends works differently than the other trend sites mentioned here. You can see the top 100 Google searches in the U.S., and also search the topic or trend you are interested in and see how often it has been searched, how often the topic has appeared in Google News stories, and even the geographic locations of the people who are searching that topic. Google updates this information hourly.

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Tip: Use commas to compare multiple search terms.

Examples

[poetry](#)

[girl scout cookies](#)

[new years easter halloween](#)

[washingtonpost.com_drudgereport.com](#)

[bbc.co.uk](#)

[monster.com](#)

Today's Hot Trends (USA)

- [ed mcMahon](#)
- [johnny carson](#)
- [perez hilton assaulted video](#)
- [jon and kate divorce papers](#)
- [phyllis busansky](#)
- [linda pizzuti](#)

AgingHipsters.com

If you are doing generational research, be sure to visit sites specifically for the age group you are targeting to see what their interests, needs and hobbies are. AgingHipsters.com is the site for trends, research and personal discussions on the baby boomer generation. You'll find music and culture info, in addition to discussion of health issues facing this generation.

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