

# Procrastination Busters

25 Ways to Beat Online Distractions & Stop  
Procrastination in Your Day-to-Day Business Activities

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Working online can be one of the most difficult types of jobs to have. It doesn't matter if you're running your own business, or doing freelance work for clients or a boss. Being distracted is one of the most frustrating things there is about working online. There are so many things to do, so much more to learn, and so many websites to visit. It's very easy to just click away an entire day.

Many of us actually use these online distractions as a way to procrastinate. We simply don't want to do whatever work it is we have to do, so we avoid it by surfing around and playing. Sometimes we even convince ourselves that we're working, because we're reading studying and learning about things related to our business. In reality of course, we're just wasting time and putting off whatever work it is we want to avoid.

This report is designed to give you 25 powerful ways to help stop procrastinating, and avoid some of the most common online distractions. Some of these you may find thought-provoking, insightful, or even motivating. Others will be practical tips that you may find you can put in use today.

**Tip #1: Look at your bottom line.**

Procrastination can be a very expensive habit, particularly where your business is concerned. If you are a freelance service provider, the more time you waste in a day, the more money you lose. This is because you're paid either by the hour, or by the project. If you're paid by the project, then of course the faster you can get a project done, the more projects you can do, and does the more money you can make. If your business is based on creating products to sell, or websites which generate advertising revenue, the problems are the same. The more time you waste procrastinating with various online distractions, the less money you will make.

Decide how much money you would like to make per hour. Then either estimate, or track how much time you waste just surfing around unproductively online. Multiply that time wasted, by the amount per hour you'd like to be making. This is how much money procrastination is currently costing you.

**Tip #2: Try taking smaller steps.**

Sometimes we procrastinate because the project in front of us seems too large and overwhelming. We simply don't know where to start, or were not looking forward to how much time we actually have to put in. An easy way to fix this problem, it simply break the project down into much smaller bites.

If you're planning to create a brand-new authority website for example, it may look too large and intimidating if your task is listed as just "create an authority website with 1000 articles". To make this much easier to do, you simply break it down into more manageable chunks. "Plan website design", "write five articles", and so on.

**Tip #3: Be more specific about your plans.**

Just like having your projects in too big of a chunk will make you want to avoid doing them, the same problem can occur when your goals and plans are too vague. If for example, you'd like to find new affiliate products to promote one day, you might write on your list "find new affiliate products". This of course is not overly helpful. And since it's fairly vague, there's a very good chance you will simply avoid doing it. By being more specific however, such as writing "find new productivity affiliate products", or "find golf clubs to promote on golf website", then you know exactly what it is you need to do to accomplish this task.

**Tip #4: Remember that you control your world.**

If you waste time looking at the latest and greatest product, don't blame the great copy writing for your unproductive day. You control your world, you control you, and you make your own choices. It is not someone else's fault. And as a business owner, it is not someone else's responsibility either.

**Tip #5: Try changing something.**

Sometimes procrastination comes from simple boredom. And by changing something, whether in your daily routine or your environment, you can break out of the procrastination routine and make really solid progress. You can start by changing small things, or you can try bigger changes right start. If you normally look at e-mail when you first wake up for example, try looking at your goal and project lists first instead. Many of us who work from home actually go straight to the computer as soon as we roll out of bed. And this can become a mundane and boring routine. So you might want to try changing that completely, and instead walked to a nearby coffee shop or newsstand before ever settling into your desk and looking at your computer in the morning.

**Tip #6: Ask Other People for Their Honesty.**

If you simply ask your family, close friends, or even work associates about the ways they see you procrastinating each day, you can learn quite a lot about yourself. It may be difficult to hear their feedback, and they may try to be vague and general and their statements. This will be the most helpful for you however if you can get them to give you specific details. If you also take note of what each person tells you, you might even start to see there are patterns in common threads to your daily procrastination habits. Armed with this knowledge though, you can then start to make corrections and instill better habits.

**Tip #7: Make a "reality check" list.**

If you're completely honest with yourself, you'll already have realized that you have lost a lot of money and many opportunities because the procrastination. Sit down and make a list of everything you've lost so far. If you always pay your bills late for example, write down how much money you've spent in late fees and charges. If you've avoided finishing a moneymaking project, right down how much money you could have made in all the time that you have put off finishing it. Say you have an e-book about 90% completed. And you'd planned to sell that e-book before at least \$27. If that book has sat unfinished on your hard drive for even one month, you have lost at least \$27. In one month time though, even a poor selling e-book would probably sell three to four times. And a good one might get a sale every single day. By not finishing your book so, you have robbed yourself and your family of anywhere from \$108-\$810.

A reality check list is simply a list of the things you have honestly lost by procrastinating and wasting time. It doesn't just have to be money though, it could be missed opportunities, special time with your family, or even getting tickets to a special event you wanted to attend.

**Tip #8: Close Your E-Mail Application.**

This is one of the hardest things for an online marketer to do, but it can be one of the best ways to avoid procrastination with important projects. E-mail is a huge distraction in our daily lives, and it can waste much more time than it needs to. By leaving your e-mail application open all day long, you are allowing it to control your time. Likewise, you are giving permission for everyone else to control your time too... even spammers. Every time e-mail comes in to your inbox, regardless of whether it's junk or something important, it distracts you and eats away your time.

Resolve to get your e-mail under control. Make a schedule for when you will actually look at, and deal with your e-mail. If you feel the need to look at e-mail frequently, then do so three to four times each day. In most cases though, e-mail can wait. There is nothing wrong with addressing your e-mail just once or twice each day. Keep e-mail closed when it's not time to deal with the e-mail. This way it will not distract you from the projects which are most important to your business.

**Tip #9: Close Forums and Message Boards.**

Just like e-mail can distract us the entire day, message boards and forums will do the same thing. If you are using message boards for a legitimate project of course, such as information gathering or marketing, then by all means use them during the time you're working on that specific project. More often than not though, most of us will go to a message board and quickly become up sore. The next thing we know hours have passed and we have actually gotten nothing done.

Schedule forum and message board time. If you enjoy participating in forums for fun, try using it as an incentive to yourself. Make yourself a deal which says if you complete task A, or work on project B for one hour, then you're allowed to visit the forums for X amount time as a reward. Alternatively, allow yourself to use the message boards as part of your end of the day unwinding routine.

**Tip #10: Stop Obsessively Checking Stats.**

Similar to the previous two points, checking sales and traffic stats online can become very addictive, and it wastes tons of time. Checking your sales stats every 15 minutes will not change them. And checking your website traffic every 15 minutes won't change the results there either.

The only valid reason for doing these two things, is if you were monitoring a specific ad campaign. If you start a Google ad words campaign for example, you may need to watch the results closely for the first couple of days to ensure you're not breaking your budget too badly. Likewise if you're advertising campaign is based on a hot trend, you'll need to monitor closely to know when to stop the campaign.

For general day-to-day business management, checking your stats just once or twice is usually more than enough. You can check them first thing in the morning to review how your campaigns did the previous day. Or you might check them at the end of the day before leaving the office.

One thing to keep in mind with the above three tips though, is something that not everyone seems to understand about the Internet. As immediate as it all seems, most of it isn't. Some affiliate programs for example, update their sales statistics just once every 24 hours. Google adwords and adsense stats can be delayed anywhere from 15 minutes to several hours. Even e-mail is sometimes delayed by several hours, and in rare cases several days.

So if you spend too much of your time watching your statistics, you're not only wasting time but you also risk making yourself discouraged and depressed too.

**Tip #11: Limit Phone Calls.**

Not all online business people actually work with a telephone. Most of us still have them somewhere nearby while we're working though. And more often than not, those phones proved to be a huge distraction. It doesn't matter if it's a houseboat or a cell phone, or whether you get phone calls from friends and family, colleagues and associates, or prospects and customers. When those phones ring, they take a big chunk out of your time.

The best way to avoid this problem is to simply turn your phone off. This is not a viable solution for many people though, but thankfully there are other tips and tricks that can help. If you must be available by phone for your family for example, make sure to lay some ground rules with them. Let them know that you have specific work hours, and you must get work done. During these hours, they should be trained to not call unless it's extremely important.

Phone calls from colleagues and associates can actually be handled fairly easily. Just requires that they be scheduled in advance, and they should be limited to a specific amount of time. It won't help you much if you agree to have a phone conversation with someone at 3 p.m. only to find yourself talking with them for several hours. Instead, when you make the schedule for 3 p.m., also state that you will be available for no more than one hour. Or 30 minutes, or however much time you want to limit the phone call to. Make it public knowledge that you will not accept unscheduled phone calls.

A similar policy can be set up for prospects and customers as well. Simply decide that you will answer telephone calls from prospects and customers during certain hours only. Then make those hours known.

In all cases, train yourself to refuse to answer the phone if they fall outside of your personal telephone policies. The one exception of course being, if the phone shows the call is coming from a family member, since they should only be calling for something very important.

**Tip #12: Create and Maintain Lists.**

If you find yourself constantly being distracted by new ideas, then you need to start keeping a list. Create and ideas lists for example, or even a list called someday/maybe for projects you might like to do in the future. You can create lists for products you'd like to create, websites you'd like to build, ad campaign ideas, niche research you try to do, and so on. Any ideas that come up during the day which might distract you from your current projects should be written onto these lists. This way you can revisit the ideas when you have some downtime, but you're not allowing them to distract you from your current priorities.

**Tip #13: Celebrate Your Success.**

Sometimes, despite our best intentions we get very little done in a day. Try not to beat yourself up when that happens. Instead be happy that you actually got something done, even if it was just a little something. Making even the smallest progress on important projects should be considered a success. In fact, creating a success journal and updating it at least once each day is a wonderful way to keep yourself motivated, and keep you from procrastinating excessively.

**Tip #14: Just Get Started.**

Sometimes when we're actively avoiding getting started with a project, the only way to get moving in to simply do it. Don't tell yourself you're going to do the project though, instead decide that you will spend just five minutes on it. More often than not the simple act of just getting started is all that you need. If you do find you're unable to work on the project more than five minutes, then simply accept that and stop when your five minutes are through. You may want to consider why you're having such a problem though, and whether you need to break it down into smaller chunks or hand it off to someone else. If on the other hand you find that simply starting is all that you needed, you may actually end up working on the project much more than five minutes and making substantial progress too.

**Tip #15: Declutter, simplify, and streamline.**

Sometimes procrastination is caused because your life is messy. If your desk is a mess and you can't find anything, or your desktop as files and icons scattered all over it, this can create a heavy weight on your shoulders. And the heavier your world feels, the more likely you are to try and avoid it.

The simple act of cleaning up your desk can make you feel much better than you might think. Likewise, straightening up your computer desktop, and even organizing your files on the computer, will make you feel much more in control and able to move forward.

**Tip #16: Organize Your Life and Your Business.**

Along the same lines as the previous tip, getting yourself organized can make you very productive. If you don't know where certain files are for your project for example, you're more likely to put off doing that project. The same problems arise when you can't find research material, an agreement for a supplier or partner, or even how much cash is coming in or out on a daily basis.

Take some time to organize all of this information. Create a system for both physical and computer files, which will help you keep track of customers, partners, prospects, websites, projects, and anything else your business might deal with. Also take some time to organize your web browser's bookmarks. Putting them into some sort of order will make them much more useful for you.

And last but not least, get a handle on your cash flow. Cash flow is the lifeblood of any business, and it's even more critical for a small business. Create a system which will tell you at a glance how much money is coming in, when, and from where. This system should also track any outgoing cash. This includes subscription fees, business expenses and bills, and any personal expenses which must be covered by your business profits.

Being able to see at a glance that your expenses exceed any income expected soon is an excellent tool to stop procrastination and get you very motivated instead.

**Tip #17: Think First, and Say No More Often.**

A common problem that many Internet-based business owners have, is that they try to do too many things at once. They either get distracted by new ideas, or excited by them, or they don't think something through before they jump into it. If you take time to think about something first though, and consider everything involved in the commitment before you make it, you may actually realize it's not something you can do at this time. And in these cases, simply adding that to your idea list would be the best move to make.

**Tip #18: Make Realistic Assessments.**

It's easy to be optimistic about an exciting new idea or project. This unfortunately can cause you to become overwhelmed and overcommitted. Each time you decide to take on a new project though, is a realistic way first. Try to honestly estimate how much time do you think this project might take, as well as how many resources and what type of resources it might take. If you know that you are normally overly optimistic, then double your estimate numbers. Once you have these honest estimate numbers, and then decide whether or not this project can fit into your schedule at this point in time. If you try to add a project which adds too much to your plate, it will only cause you to procrastinate more on every project you have.

**Tip #19: Except That Consistency Usually Wins over Speed.**

Sometimes we procrastinate by jumping around from one project to another. And sometimes we jump around, because we feel that the new project might make things happen much faster. Unfortunately we usually find it doesn't happen overnight either, so we end up jumping to the next project instead. And does the cycle continues. In most cases, consistency will always win over speed. And the sooner you can make yourself accept this fact, the more productive you will be.

**Tip #20: Listen to Your Body.**

Whether we like it or not, all of us have different energy levels at different times of the day. Some of us may be at our best during the early morning hours, while others may be super productive late at night instead. Knowing which times of day are the best for you can help you stop wasting time and start getting things done. If you know for example, that you don't work well at 4 a.m., but you try to force yourself to get up and work then any way because it's what society expects, you'll simply to twiddle away your time instead of getting anything done.

Don't try to make yourself work during low energy cycles. Instead, result to do the bulk of your highest priority work when you have the most energy. Use the low energy time for browsing message boards, reading, or catching up on e-mail.

**Tip #21: Tackle Your Hardest Projects First.**

Once you know when your highest energy level time of day is, then resolve to tackle either your hardest project, or the most unpleasant project first. By taking care of the biggest thing first, you get it out of your way and you feel wonderful for the rest of the day. Everything else seems very easy to do if you've the worst things finished right from the start.

**Tip #22: Get or Hire Help.**

As we said already, many times we procrastinate because we simply have too much to do. If we've found that breaking our projects down into much smaller pieces, and we've even tabled some onto our idea list for doing in the future, and it isn't really helping much, it may be time to get some help. Whether you get volunteer help from friends or family, or you hire or some freelancers to do part of your work, getting help is often essential for the forward growth of our business.

**Tip #23: Plan Some Play Time.**

If you find yourself still procrastinating no matter what you try to do, the problem might be that you're trying too hard. We all need downtime. In fact, we all need to play time. When is the last time you took some time off? When is the last time you took an actual vacation? If you try to work seven days a week, 365 days a year, you will burn out. It's difficult for new business owners to accept this, but taking time off to have fun and play can actually improve your productivity, and make you much more successful at a much faster rate.

**Tip #24: Assess Your Priorities.**

If you stop and think about it for a moment, can you explain to anyone why you are originally started your own business? In many cases, men and women alike have started their own business so that they could have more time for their family. If you waste so much of your time procrastinating though, you're actually wasting the time you could be spending with them instead. So stop and think about things for a minute. Is it more important for you to surf around reading message boards, or should you get things done so you can go outside and play with the kids? It all boils down to this: what's the point of having a business so that you can spend more time with your family, when all you're doing is wasting so much time that there's nothing left for them?

### **Tip #25: Are You Dreaming or Doing?**

This almost speaks for itself. If you are wasting all of your time surfing around, reading, talking to other people, and generally not getting anything done... you need to honestly ask yourself if you truly do have a business. Or are you simply dreaming about having a business? If you're just dreaming, then it's absolutely fine to waste all of your time doing a lot of nothing if that's really what you want to do. If on the other hand you want to truly have a business, then you need to start doing instead.

### **Bonus tip: Stop Trying to Be Perfect!**

As you can see throughout this report, there are many reasons all of us procrastinate. One that is not mentioned often however is perfection. Perfection can kill any business. Why? Because nothing is ever perfect. If you try to make something perfect, it will never get done. And anything that never gets done, can never make any money.

One of my favorite quotes is from Mike Litman: "you don't have to get it right, you just have to get it going".

Think about this seriously for a minute. If you get something in good enough shape, you can start selling it and then improve upon it as you go. Now don't misunderstand me, I'm not saying you should release crap. I am saying however, that perfect will not get you anywhere. So get something done, get it out there, let it start making you money, and if need be improve it as you go.

I hope this report has inspired you, and I hope these tips have given you some excellent ideas to beat your own procrastination habits and become more productive today.

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