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Business & Economics

How to Start and Operate an Internet Used Book Store, without spending a fortune
Laura Peterson
Gemini Books
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"You will not get rich overnight via the Internet. Your personal computer will not become your personal cash machine, as opposed to what you may have read or heard," says Peterson. Her no-nonsense guide to opening an Internet used bookstore will appeal to avid readers who want to turn their hobbies into businesses.

Peterson, who has a B.S. in Marketing, an MBA and more than fifteen years of business experience, begins the book with an interview of Internet bookstore owner Steven C. Bernard. Then she tackles the basics: getting funds and accumulating inventory. She also takes readers through a crash course in identifying first editions, offers instructions on cleaning and storing used books and discusses terminology. Next Peterson outlines the initial set-up: who to contact for getting a reseller ID, how to register a business name and what type of software is needed to create a database.

While website design, hosting services and domain registrations are briefly mentioned, Peterson extensively covers how to utilize many Internet resources, such as e-mailing lists, websites, e-zines and listserves. She also provides numerous hyperlinks to websites as well as phone numbers and mailing addresses of businesses, contacts and agencies.

Almost half of the book is devoted to marketing and publicity. Peterson discusses how to get free publicity, build a loyal customer base, participate in link exchanges and banner ads and supplement income. Her chapter on affiliate programs is especially good, offering such advice as, "Some Web masters sign up for dozens of programs and clutter their site with them so much that it's difficult to see the theme of the site… If you want your visitors to keep coming back, your site needs to have an obvious, memorable reason for its existence."

In some places, Peterson relies heavily on quotations from other sources, but the writing is straightforward and the information valuable. The book includes everything a novice needs to know about opening an Internet used bookstore. (March)

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