The Non-Techy Survival Guide to Online Business

Real-Life Lessons From Someone Who Learned Everything The Hard Way

by Terri's Earn From Home Journal

Introduction

So... How Did I End Up Here? 😄

If somebody had told me a few years ago that I would eventually be building websites, creating digital guides, running email newsletters and selling products online... I would have laughed.

Quite a lot, actually 😄

Because the truth is, I never saw myself as a "business person." I certainly didn't see myself as a tech person. My background was in criminology and psychology, not websites, sales funnels, automations or online marketing.

In fact, for a very long time, most technology seemed to have a personal grudge against me 😄

Buttons disappeared.
Pages vanished.
Settings moved.
And every time I thought I understood something, the internet politely introduced me to three new things I had never heard of before.

Then I discovered the world of online business.
Like many people, I was drawn in by the promise of flexibility. The idea that it might be possible to build something from home. Something that could fit around real life, health challenges and the many unexpected twists life likes to throw at us.

I eventually invested in a course that promised to teach me everything I needed to know.

It cost nearly £1,000.
And to be fair, I learned a lot.
I learned about websites, email marketing, funnels, digital products, lead magnets, automations and a whole collection of business words that initially sounded like they belonged in a NASA training manual 😄

But I also discovered something else.
A lot of online business advice didn't feel like me.

The pressure.
The urgency.
The constant focus on selling.
The promises of huge income in impossibly short timeframes.

It simply wasn't the way I wanted to build my business. So somewhere along the way, I quietly started doing things differently. I kept the useful parts. Ignored the bits that made me uncomfortable and slowly began building something in a way that felt more honest, more sustainable, more human.

This guide is not written by a millionaire. It is not written by a technology expert. It is not written by somebody claiming to have all the answers. It is written by someone who has learned almost everything the hard way 😄

Someone who has spent hours searching for missing buttons, accidentally broken things, clicked the wrong settings, lost files, sent duplicate emails and occasionally questioned whether launching a laptop into the garden might be a perfectly reasonable solution 😄

But despite all of that...I kept going.

And if you're reading this because technology feels overwhelming, online business feels confusing, or you're worried you're "not techy enough" to do any of this...I promise you're not alone.

This guide is simply the collection of lessons I wish someone had given me when I started.

No hype.
No pressure.
No pretending everything is easy.
Just honest advice, practical tips and a few laughs along the way.

Because if I can figure this stuff out...
There's every chance you can too 💛
Let's begin.



Chapter 1- Nobody Knows What They're Doing At First 😄

I want to begin this chapter with some very reassuring news. Nobody knows what they're doing at first.

Absolutely nobody.

Not the people running successful businesses. Not the people with fancy websites. Not the people posting confident-looking videos online. None of them were born knowing what a sales funnel was 😄 At some point, every single one of them sat staring at a screen, wondering: "What on earth does that mean?"

Because that's exactly what I did.
When I first joined the online business course, I genuinely thought I was about to learn how to earn a little money from home.

Simple enough, I thought.
Then, within approximately ten minutes, I was being introduced to:

- niches
- domains
- lead magnets
- landing pages
- sales funnels
- automations
- email sequences

And several other words that sounded vaguely important but made absolutely no sense to me whatsoever 😄

I remember sitting there thinking, "I have no idea what these people are talking about." Not a clue. Honestly, they may as well have been explaining advanced rocket engineering.

The frustrating thing is that many online business courses forget what it feels like to be a beginner. People throw around terms as though everyone already understands them. Meanwhile, you're sitting there wondering:

- Am I supposed to know this?
- Have I missed something?
- Why does everyone else seem to understand except me?

The answer? They don't.
Or at least they didn't when they started.

The Myth Of The Naturally Techy Person

One thing I used to believe was that there were two types of people.
Type One:
The naturally techy people. The people who somehow understand computers, websites and software without effort.

And then there was:
Type Two:
Me 😄
The person who would repeatedly open the wrong menu and wonder where the button had gone.

But over time, I realised something important. Most "techy" people are not born knowing these things. They've simply spent more time learning them.

The same way someone becomes good at gardening, cooking, driving or playing an instrument. Technology is a skill, not a personality trait.
And that was a huge relief to discover. Because it meant I wasn't failing, I was learning.

Why Feeling Confused Is Actually A Good Sign

This might sound strange, but confusion is often evidence that you're growing. Think about it, if everything feels familiar, you're probably not learning anything new.

But when your brain starts saying: "Hang on... what does THAT mean?" You're stretching beyond your current knowledge. That's uncomfortable, but it's also progress.

The problem is that many people mistake confusion for failure. They assume: "I don't understand this, therefore I must be bad at it." Absolutely not.

The reality is: “I don't understand this YET." There's a huge difference.



My Favourite Business Strategy 😄

People often imagine that building an online business involves some grand master plan.

Mine looked more like:

- Google it
- Watch a YouTube tutorial
- Still don't understand it
- Watch another tutorial
- Click a few buttons
- Accidentally break something
- Fix it
- Learn from the mistake
- Repeat 😄

That process may not sound impressive. But honestly? It's how a lot of real learning happens. Not through perfection, through persistence. One confused click at a time.

A Little Reminder Before We Continue

If you're reading this and feeling overwhelmed by business jargon, technology or all the things you think you're supposed to know... Please remember this: Nobody starts as an expert. Every person building something online started exactly where you are now, confused, curious, slightly overwhelmed and wondering if they'd accidentally signed up for a course written in a foreign language 😄

The good news? You don't need to understand everything today. You only need to understand the next step.
And that's far more manageable 💛

🌿 Let's Make This Less Scary

What is a niche?

A niche is simply:
👉 whom you help and what you help them with.

It sounds far more complicated than it is 😄

Examples of what your niche may look like:

- Working from home
- Allotment gardening
- Budgeting
- Meal planning
- Cat owners
- Parents of young children

You do not need a perfect niche on day one.
Most people refine it over time.

What is a lead magnet?

A lead magnet is simply something free you give people in exchange for their email address.

Examples:

- a checklist
- a quiz
- a guide
- a planner
- a resource list

Despite the fancy name, it's really just a helpful free gift 😄

Chapter 2
Websites, Buttons & Mild Emotional Trauma 😄

There comes a point in almost every online business journey when somebody casually says, "You'll need a website." And just like that, your peaceful little idea suddenly develops seventeen new layers of complexity 😄
Most people hear the word "website" and imagine something quite simple, a page, maybe a couple of photos and a bit of text. How difficult can it be?

Then you actually try to build one.
And suddenly you're being asked about:

- domains
- hosting
- navigation menus
- headers
- footers
- landing pages
- integrations

And approximately 47 other things you've never heard of before 😄

I remember watching tutorial videos where everything looked incredibly easy.
The instructor would calmly say, "Just click here."
And somehow they'd immediately find the correct button.
Every time. No hesitation. No confusion. No wandering around twenty-seven menus wondering where the button I was looking for had gone.
Honestly, I became convinced they were using a completely different version of the internet 😄

🌿 Tiny Survival Tip

If a tutorial makes something look easy, remember:
The person recording it has probably used that platform hundreds of times.
You are seeing the polished version.
Not the three hours they originally spent trying to find the same button 😄

Choosing A Platform

One of the first decisions you'll face is, "Where should I build my website?" This question alone can send people into mild panic. There are so many options.
Everyone online seems convinced their favourite platform is the only sensible choice. And before long, you're reading comparison articles that somehow make everything feel more confusing 😄

In the end, I chose Systeme.io.
Not because I conducted months of detailed research.
Not because I possessed advanced technical knowledge.
But because it was free.😄

Honestly, that was a major factor.
As someone trying to learn while keeping costs sensible, it felt like a good place to start. Despite all the confusion that followed, it turned out to be exactly what I needed.

Sometimes "good enough" is better than endlessly searching for "perfect."

Why Buttons Move When You Finally Find Them

I don't know if this is scientifically proven.
But I remain convinced that website buttons have a habit of relocating themselves the moment you learn where they are 😄

You finally work out:

- where settings are
- where pages are
- where designs are

Then you log back in the next day, and everything appears slightly different. Or at least it feels different.
At which point you find yourself staring at the screen, asking: "But where did it GO?" This is a perfectly normal stage of learning.
The important thing to remember is that most technology feels confusing until it becomes familiar.
And familiarity comes through repetition.
Not magic.

🌿 **Tiny Survival Tip**

If you find a setting you'll need again, take a screenshot.
Future You will be extremely grateful 😄

My First Website Disasters

Like most beginners, I assumed creating a website would be a straightforward process. Instead, it involved forgetting where certain pages were, clicking the wrong buttons, and questioning my life choices on multiple occasions 😄

There were moments when even tiny changes felt overwhelming.

Adding a page.
Changing a heading.
Moving a button.
Everything felt bigger because it was unfamiliar.

But gradually something interesting happened. The things that once took an hour started taking ten minutes. The things that once felt terrifying became routine.

Not because the technology changed.
Because I did.

What Actually Matters

This may surprise you.
Most beginners worry about the wrong things.
We obsess over colours, layouts, fonts, and tiny design details
Meanwhile, visitors are usually asking:
👉 What is this?
👉 Who is it for?
👉 How can it help me?
That's it.

People do not visit your website hoping to admire your box placement 😄
They want clarity.
Keep things simple. Make it easy to understand.
And remember, a helpful website beats a perfect website every single time.

🌿 **Tiny Survival Tip**

If somebody can understand your website within a few seconds, you're already doing better than many large companies 😄

What Doesn't Matter

Let's save ourselves some stress.
You do NOT need:
🚫 the perfect logo
🚫 a luxury website
🚫 expensive software
🚫 expert design skills
🚫 endless pages

You need something that works.
Because your website isn't a museum exhibit. It is a tool, and tools do not need to be perfect. They simply need to do their job.

The biggest lesson I learned was this: websites become easier in the same way everything becomes easier.
By using them.
By making mistakes.
By fixing mistakes.
And by refusing to give up when technology temporarily tests your patience 😄

One button at a time 💛

🌿 Let's Make This Less Scary

Do you actually need a website?
Not necessarily.
But if you plan to:

- sell products
- collect email subscribers
- build a long-term online presence

It can be useful.

What Is A Domain?
A domain is simply your website address.
It's the name people type into their browser to find you online.
For example: www.yourwebsitename.co.uk
Think of it like your business's online home address.
It sounds far more technical than it actually is 😄

Choosing a business name
Before you get attached to a name, check whether the domain is available or if it has already been taken.
You can do this on websites such as:

- Fasthosts
- GoDaddy
- 123 Reg

Domains are often very inexpensive for the first year.

💛 Tiny Tip
Don't spend weeks choosing the perfect name.
Most people care far more about what you offer than what your website is called.

Chapter 3
Email Lists Without Crying Into Your Tea 😄

At some point during almost every online business course, somebody starts talking about:

- automations
- campaigns
- broadcasts
- segments
- funnels
- subscriber journeys

And suddenly it feels less like starting a small business and more like preparing for a space mission 😄

I remember reaching this stage and thinking, "I have absolutely no idea what these people are talking about."

Everyone in the tutorial videos was confident and seemed to understand, but I did not. At all.
They were explaining things like charts, flow diagrams, and various arrows pointing in important directions.
Meanwhile, I was sitting there wondering, "But where does the email actually GO?" 😄

One thing I've noticed about online business is that the internet absolutely loves fancy names. Very often, something that sounds incredibly technical turns out to be surprisingly simple.
For example: An automation?
Usually just an email or a series of emails sent automatically once people have joined your email list
A campaign? Usually just an email like a weekly newsletter.

Suddenly, things become a lot less frightening when translated back into normal human language 😄

My Brevo Learning Curve

I use Brevo for my email marketing. And when I first started? It felt overwhelming.
There were so many options. So many settings. So many things I was convinced I would accidentally break.

At first, I couldn't tell the difference between:

- automations
- campaigns
- broadcasts
- segments

To be completely honest... I still don't use some of them 😄
And that's actually an important lesson. You do NOT need to master every feature. Most people only use a small percentage of what these platforms can actually do.

Repetition Creates Confidence

One of the biggest breakthroughs came when I stopped trying to understand everything at once. Instead, I focused on learning one thing.
Then repeating it again, and again, and again.
The first newsletter felt terrifying.
The fifth felt slightly less terrifying.
The twentieth felt normal.
Now? I can create and schedule newsletters without needing an emotional support biscuit 😄
Not because I suddenly became a technology expert.
Because repetition made things familiar. That's all.

The Great Brevo Maths Incident 😄

When my email list started growing, I realised something quite exciting.
People were actually signing up to receive my newsletters.

Unfortunately, I also discovered something else.
The free version of Brevo allows you to send up to 300 emails per day, which is brilliant when you're starting. But eventually I reached the point where I had more than 300 subscribers.
Not a bad problem to have. 😄

Fortunately, there was a simple workaround.
I could send the first 300 emails in one day, then duplicate the campaign, adjust one small setting so it sends only to the remaining subscribers the following day.
It worked perfectly.
Well...
Usually 😄

One week, I carefully looked at how many people should receive the second email.
According to my calculations:
👉 around 266 people.
According to Brevo:
👉 301 people.

Where did that figure come from?! 😄

At that point, I stopped trying to understand the maths and simply pressed Send while quietly muttering, "Well... let's see what happens then." 😄

Thankfully, the newsletter went out perfectly.
Nobody panicked.
Nobody complained (even if some people on my contacts list may have received the newsletter twice!).
And civilisation remained intact.

What I learned from that little adventure was this: technology will occasionally do things that make absolutely no sense.

Sometimes you'll understand why.
Sometimes you won't.
And that's perfectly alright.
You do not need to understand every number on every screen to build a successful little business.
Sometimes you only need enough confidence to click the button and keep moving forward.

What Actually Matters

Here's the thing.
Email marketing isn't really about software.
It isn't about statistics.
It isn't about dashboards.
It isn't about trying to become an automation wizard.

It's about communication.
It's about building trust.
It's about staying connected with people who have chosen to hear from you.
That's all.

The technology simply helps deliver the message.

🌿 Tiny Survival Tip

Focus on helping people first.
You can learn the technical bits gradually.
People remember how your emails made them feel far more than they remember which platform you used 😄

I never became a technology genius.
I simply became less confused than I used to be.
And honestly? That was more than enough 😄💛

🌿 Let's Make This Less Scary

What Is An Automation?
An automation is simply an email that gets sent automatically after someone joins your list.
For example, someone downloads your free guide.
Your welcome email is sent to them automatically.
No magic. No panic. Just technology doing the work for you 😄
What Is A Campaign?
A campaign is usually a one-off email you send to your subscribers.
Think:
📧 newsletters
📧 updates
📧 announcements

Do I Need To Understand Everything?
Absolutely not 😄 many videos on YouTube can teach you the basics!
Most online business skills are learned one confused click at a time 💛

Chapter 4
Funnels Sound Much Scarier Than They Actually Are 😄

There are certain words the online business world absolutely loves.
Passive income.
Automation.
Scaling.
And...Funnels.

Honestly, when I first heard people talking about "building funnels," I imagined something so complicated that I would probably need:

- three computer screens
- an engineering degree
- and somebody from MENSA supervising the whole operation 😄

Instead...A funnel is simply a journey.
That's all.
Imagine somebody walks into a little shop, they browse, they decide they like something, they pay, and they leave with their purchase.

Congratulations.
You've just imagined a funnel.

The internet simply spreads those steps across different web pages.
That's it.
Nothing mysterious.
Nothing magical.
No secret handshake required 😄

My First Funnel

The first time I tried building one, I honestly thought I'd never understand it.
People kept talking about:

- opt-ins
- sales pages
- order forms
- thank you pages

Meanwhile, I was quietly wondering, "Where does the actual guide go?" 😄
Everything felt connected by invisible strings I couldn't see.
Move one thing...something else stopped working.
Suddenly, nothing made sense.
There were definitely moments where I questioned every life decision that had brought me to this point 😄

The Truth About Funnels

Once somebody explained it simply... everything suddenly clicked. A funnel is really just a sequence of small steps.
For example:

Somebody sees your Facebook post. or advert
↓
They download your free guide.
↓
They receive a welcome email. (or a series -automation)
↓
Later, they might decide to buy one of your paid guides.

That's a funnel. Because it gently guides somebody from one step to the next. No pressure. No trickery. Just clear directions.

🌿 **Tiny Survival Tip**

Whenever somebody explains funnels using complicated diagrams full of arrows...
Ignore the arrows 😄

Instead ask yourself:
👉 "What happens first?"
👉 "What happens next?"
👉 "What happens after that?"
Suddenly funnels become much easier to understand.

One thing nobody had mentioned on the £1,000 course I had invested in was that every platform has limits on its free plan. Which would have been useful information before I'd enthusiastically started building absolutely everything 😄
Suddenly, pages wouldn't fit. Funnels were full. Assets had limits. And I found myself thinking, "Well... now what?"

At first, I assumed I would simply have to start paying for everything. But then I realised something.
Before spending more money... I could become more organised.
I deleted things I no longer needed and reused pages. I combined guides into bundles and used tags instead of creating extra funnels.

And somehow...I managed to squeeze far more out of the free plan than I ever thought possible.
Looking back, I'm actually glad those limits existed; they forced me to simplify.
And my business became much better because of it.

The Biggest Mistake I Made

I kept thinking I needed to build the whole thing perfectly before anyone ever saw it.
The:

- perfect website
- perfect emails
- perfect funnel
- perfect pages

Honestly? Nobody starts there.
My own funnels have changed countless times.
I've added pages, deleted pages and moved things around.
Accidentally connected the wrong things and then fixed them again.

Your first funnel is not your forever funnel.
It's simply your starting point.
And that's perfectly enough.

🌿 Let's Make This Less Scary

What Is An Opt-in?
An opt-in is simply a page where somebody enters their email address to receive something free.
Usually this is:

- a guide
- a checklist
- a planner
- a printable
- a quiz

They then usually join your email automation series or newsletter contact list.

What Is A Sales Page?
A page that explains:

- What you're offering
- Who it's for
- How it helps
- And how can somebody buy it.

What is an Order Page?
Literally just that! Where they order your product and pay for it!

What Is A Thank-You Page?
Exactly what it sounds like 😄 A page that thanks someone for signing up and tells them what happens next. For example, if they have purchased a digital product, they can download it on this page.

Do I Need To Pay For Everything Straight Away?
Usually... No 😄 Most platforms offer generous free plans that are more than enough to get started. You may eventually outgrow them. But don't feel pressured into paying for lots of subscriptions before you've even made your first sale.
Use what you have first. Upgrade later if you genuinely need to.

What Happens When Someone Wants To Buy?
Once someone reaches your Order Form, you'll need a way to accept payments. Many people use Stripe, which lets customers pay securely by card. I also connected a PayPal Business account so people could choose their preferred payment method. You don't need every payment option; start with one that you're comfortable setting up.
You can always add more later.

Chapter 5
Canva Isn't Trying To Ruin Your Life 😄

If I had to choose one piece of software that has made me question my sanity... It would probably be Canva.
Not because Canva is bad, quite the opposite, it's actually brilliant.
The problem was... I had absolutely no idea what I was doing 😄
When I first opened Canva, I was convinced everybody else somehow understood:

- resizing
- spacing
- fonts
- layers
- alignment
- uploads

Meanwhile, I was staring at the screen thinking, "Where has my text box disappeared to now?" 😄

Everyone Starts Here

One thing I've realised is this: people who are good at Canva were once completely confused by Canva too.
The difference is... they kept clicking. They kept experimenting. And eventually things started making sense.
Nobody wakes up magically knowing where every button lives.
My first ever design was a banner for my Facebook business page. Let's just say it was, well, basic!!! 😄A Big yellow rectangle with one headline text box stating my business name! 😄

Canva Doesn't Need To Be Perfect

This is probably the biggest lesson I've learned.
People often spend weeks trying to make everything look absolutely perfect.
Meanwhile... nobody has actually published anything.
Done beats perfect. Every time.
Your first design won't be your best.
Neither will your second.
Or probably your tenth.
But every project teaches you something new.

Tiny Wins Matter

One of my biggest breakthroughs wasn't creating beautiful designs.
It was learning tiny things like:

- duplicating pages
- changing line spacing
- resizing text properly
- uploading images
- finding where Canva had hidden my work this week 😄

Every tiny thing made the next project easier.

The Missing Guide 😄

At one point, I somehow managed to lose an entire Canva guide. I searched, I refreshed, I questioned reality.
The guide simply refused to exist.

Fortunately, I'd already saved a copy on my computer. So, although it was frustrating... nothing was actually lost.

Looking back, I'm strangely grateful. Because rebuilding it made me realise... I didn't even like it anymore 😄
Instead of recreating the same guide... I created a completely new idea. Sometimes what feels like a disaster quietly becomes an improvement.

🌿 Tiny Survival Tip

Always download a copy of your work.
Technology is wonderful... until it decides not to be 😄

You Don't Need Fancy Designs

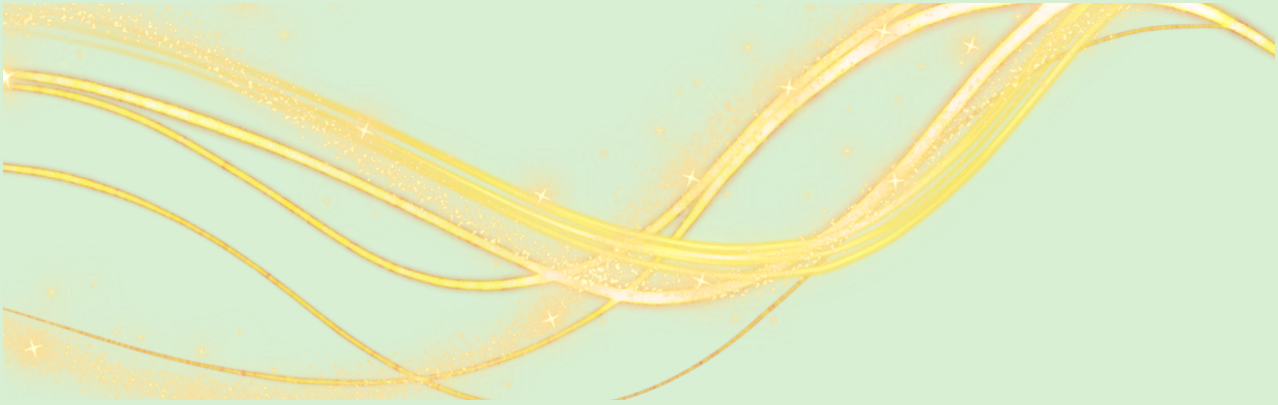
Honestly? Simple usually wins.
Readers don't remember:

- complicated graphics
- Twenty different fonts
- animated sparkles

They remember whether your guide actually helped them.
That's what matters.

The Real Secret

I don't think I became "good at Canva."
I simply stopped being frightened of opening it.
And that's a surprisingly important difference.



🌿 Let's Make This Less Scary

What Is Canva?

Canva is a free online design program.
You can use it to create:

- guides
- planners
- social media posts
- presentations
- worksheets
- and much more.

You don't need graphic design experience to get started.

Do I Need Canva Pro?

No 😄
The free version is more than enough for most beginners.
You can always upgrade later if you decide you need extra features.

What If I Make A Mistake?

You will 😄 Everybody does.
The good news is...most mistakes can be undone.
And every mistake teaches you something new.

Should My Designs Look Perfect?

Definitely not. Aim for:
✅ clear
✅ simple
✅ readable
Helping people matters far more than impressing them. 💛

Chapter 6
Selling Your First Digital Product

If you're reading this chapter hoping I'm about to tell you the exact moment I became an overnight success... I'm afraid this isn't that sort of book 😄

At the time of writing, I'm still waiting for that exciting notification to tell me someone has bought one of my own guides.
And honestly? I'm perfectly OK with saying that.

Because social media is full of people pretending every day is wildly successful.

Real life usually looks much quieter.
Most days involve:

- improving products
- fixing websites
- creating listings
- writing newsletters
- learning something new
- and quietly hoping today's the day somebody discovers what you've built.

That's business too.

Building Before Selling

One thing I've realised is that selling doesn't begin with the sale.
It begins much earlier. Long before anybody clicks "Buy."

It starts when you:

- create something genuinely useful
- make it easy to understand
- present it clearly
- and slowly build trust.

That part takes time.
And that's perfectly normal.

My First Product

Technically... the first digital product I ever sold wasn't even my own work 😄
It came from the original course I'd purchased. which gave me full resale rights of the guide.

It taught me a lot, but it also taught me something unexpected.
I didn't actually want to build my business the way they suggested.

The pushy sales techniques.
The unrealistic income promises.
The pressure to constantly chase the next sale.
It simply wasn't me.

So instead... I started creating my own guides.
Written in my own voice.
At my own pace.
For people like me.
Looking back, I think that was one of the best decisions I made.

Etsy Changed Everything

One of the biggest turning points was opening my Etsy shop. Suddenly, my guides weren't just sitting quietly on my computer. They had somewhere to live. Somewhere people could actually discover them.

No... I haven't built an empire overnight 😄
But every new listing feels like planting another seed.
The more seeds you plant...
The more opportunities you create.

Waiting Doesn't Mean Failing

This is probably the lesson I most want people to hear.
Just because you haven't made your first sale yet... doesn't mean nothing is happening.

Every guide you finish...
Every product you upload...
Every page you improve...
Every newsletter you send...
Every tiny thing is building momentum.

Sometimes the work happens quietly before the results become visible.

🌿 **Tiny Survival Tip**

Don't judge your business after one week.
Or even one month.
Most genuine businesses grow much more slowly than the internet would have you believe.

The Day I Finally Sell One...

When that first notification arrives... I'll probably:

- check it's real 😄
- read it three times
- phone my husband
- celebrate far too enthusiastically
- and possibly frame the email.

Not because of the money.
Because somebody I'll probably never meet decided something I'd created was worth buying.
And I think that's rather wonderful.

🌿 Let's Make This Less Scary
What Is A Digital Product?

A digital product is something people download instead of receiving in the post.

For example:

- PDF guides
- planners
- journals
- checklists
- printable worksheets
- templates

Do I Need A Website To Sell?

Not necessarily. Many people begin on platforms like Etsy.
Others sell directly through their own websites.
There isn't one "correct" way.

What If Nobody Buys Straight Away?

That's completely normal.
Building trust takes time.
Keep creating.
Keep improving.
Keep learning.
Sometimes your first customer simply hasn't found you yet.
💛

Chapter 7
Technology Will Break (And You'll Survive Anyway) 😄

I would like to begin this chapter by reassuring you of something. At some point...technology WILL let you down.
Not might.
Will. 😄

Your internet will disappear.
A page won't load.
A button will mysteriously stop working.
Something you've spent three hours creating will suddenly decide to behave as though it has never met you before.
And for a few glorious moments... you'll wonder whether throwing your laptop into the nearest hedge is a reasonable business strategy.
(It isn't.) 😄

It Isn't Just You

One of the biggest surprises when I started working online was discovering that even experienced people regularly have technology problems.

The difference is... they don't usually post about them.

Social media shows:
✨ polished websites
✨ beautiful businesses
✨ perfectly organised workspaces

It rarely shows somebody sitting at their kitchen table whispering:
👉 "WHY HAS EVERYTHING MOVED AGAIN??" 😄

Trust me.
That version exists too.

The DKIM & DMARC Mystery 😄

There are certain moments when technology makes you wonder whether you're secretly studying for a degree in Advanced Alphabet. This was one of them.

I was simply trying to connect my email properly. According to the instructional video, "It's just a quick copy-and-paste job. Five minutes." Easy. 😄

Three days later...
I was still staring at error messages that looked like somebody had dropped alphabet spaghetti onto my screen.
DKIM.
DMARC.
DNS.
TXT records.

Honestly... I had absolutely no idea what any of it meant.

The customer support team became my new best friends. I'm fairly sure every time my name appeared in their inbox, they quietly sighed and made another cup of tea 😄

Eventually... everything worked perfectly, but not because I suddenly understood mysterious internet abbreviations. Because I kept asking questions until somebody explained them.
Looking back... that was probably the biggest lesson.
Not:
👉 "Know everything."
But:
👉 "Don't be afraid to ask."

The Mystery Of The Black Pages 😄

Then there was the week I became convinced Canva was quietly deleting random pages from my guides.
Every time I downloaded a PDF... different pages appeared completely black.
Not always the same pages.
Just enough to make me question my sanity.
Naturally, I did what every beginner does. I assumed I'd broken something 😄
So I spent hours:

- checking margins
- removing emojis
- changing layouts
- resizing images
- downloading again
- staring hopefully at the screen...

Only for a completely different page to turn black instead.

Eventually, I discovered... nothing was actually wrong.
The basic PDF viewer on my computer wasn't displaying the file properly.
When I opened the same document in Adobe Acrobat Reader... every single page appeared perfectly.
I have never felt so relieved... or so slightly annoyed 😄

Sometimes the problem isn't your work.
It's simply the software you're using to look at it.

The Super Tag Incident 😄

Etsy asks you to add tags. Perfectly sensible.
Terri reads this instruction and thinks, “Excellent."
"I'll save time by putting all thirteen tags into one box." 😄
Etsy, understandably, did not share my enthusiasm for this highly innovative approach.
Apparently... Tags are supposed to be added...One at a time.

Who knew? 😄

It turns out there are quite a few moments in online business where the problem isn't intelligence. It's simply discovering the oddly specific way a website expects you to do something.

🌿 **Tiny Survival Tip**
Whenever something goes wrong... pause before blaming yourself.
Sometimes the software is broken. Sometimes the instructions missed a step. Sometimes you're simply looking at the file using the wrong program.
Not every technology problem is your fault.

My New Favourite Question

I've noticed something interesting.
Whenever technology confuses me now... I no longer think:
👉 "I can't do this."
Instead, I think:
👉 "What have I missed?"

That tiny shift has made an enormous difference.
Usually the answer is:

- One hidden setting
- One forgotten tick box
- One button I didn't know existed
- Or one YouTube video away.

The problem is rarely me.
It's usually just something I haven't learned yet.

Google Became My Colleague

I honestly don't know how people learned technology before search engines existed.
Google has patiently answered questions such as:

- "Where has my button gone?"
- "Why won't this page publish?"
- "How do I connect to Stripe?"
- "What is this error message?"
- "Have I broken the internet?" 😄

And between Google, YouTube and a rather patient AI assistant... most problems eventually became solvable.

Not instantly.
But eventually.

Technology Is Allowed To Be Annoying

This might be the most important lesson in the chapter.
Technology doesn't need to behave perfectly for you to build something worthwhile.

Websites break.
Emails glitch.
Software updates move everything around.
Facebook decides today's buttons should live somewhere completely different.
None of that means you've failed.
It simply means... you're using technology.

Welcome to the club 😄

🌿 **Let's Make This Less Scary**
What Should I Do When Something Stops Working?

Before assuming you've broken everything:
✅ Refresh the page.
✅ Log out and back in.
✅ Check your internet connection.
✅ Search the exact error message online.
✅ Walk away for ten minutes if you're getting frustrated.
Sometimes the solution appears much more quickly after a cup of tea.
Should I Panic?

No 😄 Almost every technology problem has happened to somebody else before you.
That's the good news.
The answer is usually already waiting somewhere online.

Tiny Survival Tip

Whenever you successfully solve a problem... write it down.

Future You will be incredibly grateful when exactly the same thing happens again six months later. 😄

Technology has taught me something unexpected.

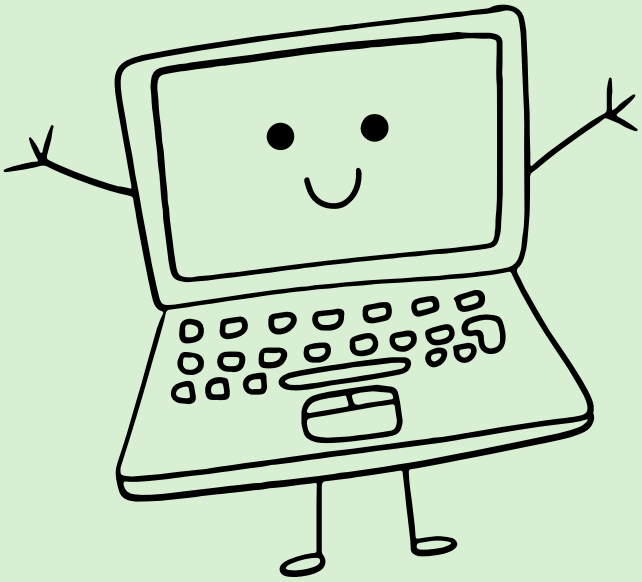
The first explanation I come up with is rarely the correct one.

My first thought used to be:
👉 "I've broken it."

Now my first thought is:
👉 "There's probably a perfectly sensible explanation... I just haven't found it yet." 😄

If you're waiting until technology stops confusing you before you start your business... you may be waiting forever. 😄

Start anyway.



Chapter 8
Progress Counts More Than Perfection

One of the biggest mistakes I nearly made was believing I needed to become "ready" before I started.

Ready.
Confident.
Knowledgeable.
Professional.
Perfect.

The trouble is... nobody ever reaches all of those things before they begin 😄
If we waited until we felt completely prepared, very few businesses would ever exist.

My Business Didn't Begin The Way I'd Planned

If I'm honest... this wasn't the life I'd imagined for myself.
I never sat down one day and announced, "Right... I'd like to spend my future learning websites, writing guides and talking to AI about missing buttons." 😄

Life took an unexpected turn.
Because of health reasons, a traditional full-time job was no longer realistic.

That wasn't easy to accept. Like many people, I had to rethink what working might look like. Working from home wasn't my original plan; it became my new plan.
And sometimes life does that.

Looking back now... I'm incredibly grateful that working online exists.
It has given me possibilities I wouldn't have had otherwise

Please Don't Quit Your Job 😄

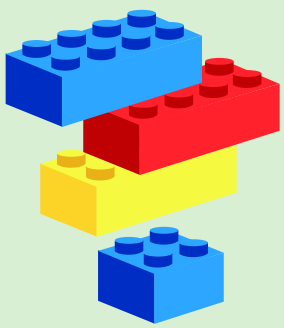
If you're reading this while dreaming about replacing your full-time income overnight...
Can I gently offer one piece of advice?
Please don't hand in your notice just yet 😄

When I first started learning about online business, I was told stories about people making six figures in their first year.
Apparently, all I needed to do was follow the system... and financial freedom would appear shortly afterwards.

Real life turned out to be rather different.
Building something genuine takes time, it takes practice, it takes mistakes, and most importantly... it takes patience.
If you already have a job, I honestly think the best approach is to build slowly alongside it.

Remove the pressure. Allow yourself room to learn.
There's nothing wrong with creating your business during evenings, weekends or spare moments.

In fact... I think that's often the healthiest way to do it.



Tiny Businesses Are Still Businesses

I think social media has accidentally convinced us that a "real business" must involve:

- huge offices
- massive teams
- endless meetings
- impressive turnover figures

Personally...
I don't believe that at all.
If you create something that helps people...
And somebody chooses to buy it... That's a real business.

Even if your office is your kitchen table.
Even if your assistant is your cat.
Even if your biggest meeting today is with your washing machine 😄
Every business starts somewhere.

Comparison Is Exhausting

One of the quickest ways to lose confidence is comparing your beginning to somebody else's middle.
There will always be somebody:

- earning more
- selling more
- posting more
- looking more successful online

The problem is...you rarely see the years that came before.
You only see today's highlight reel.
Meanwhile...you're watching your own behind-the-scenes footage. Of course, it feels different.

Confidence Doesn't Arrive First

This surprised me more than anything.
I assumed confidence would come before I started.
Instead, confidence arrived because I started.

Every newsletter.
Every guide.
Every Etsy listing.
Every technology problem I eventually solved.
Every chapter I finished.
Each tiny step quietly built the next one.

Confidence wasn't the starting point.
It became the result.

Learning Never Really Stops

Even now... I'm still learning.

There are still platforms that confuse me.
There are still buttons that disappear.
There are still moments where I quietly mutter, "Well... that's new." 😄

The difference now is.. I no longer expect myself to know everything.
I expect myself to keep learning.

That feels much kinder.

🌿 **Let's Make This Less Scary**
How Fast Should I Build?

Slower than social media suggests 😄
Build at a pace that fits your real life.
Your business should support your life... not completely take it over.

What If I'm Still Learning?

Good.
So is everybody else.
Learning doesn't mean you're behind.
It means you're moving forward.

Tiny Survival Tip

Every time you're tempted to compare yourself with someone online...
Compare yourself with where you were six months ago instead.

That's the comparison that really matters. 💛

So... How Did We Get Here?

If you've reached this page...
Firstly...
Thank you.
Genuinely.

Because somewhere between Chapter One and here, we've travelled through quite a lot together.

Technology meltdowns.
Canva confusion.
Funnels.
Websites.
Email systems.
Missing guides.
Black pages.
Mystery buttons.
The occasional emotional support cup of tea.
And hopefully... A few laughs along the way 😄

When I first started trying to build an online business, I honestly thought everybody else knew some secret I didn't. They all seemed so confident, so organised, so incredibly sure of themselves.
Meanwhile...
I was Googling, "Where has my button gone for the 15th time?" And wondering whether I'd accidentally broken the internet for everybody else 😄

But over time, something changed.
Not dramatically, not overnight. Just quietly.
I stopped expecting myself to know everything.
I started expecting myself to keep learning.
And strangely enough... that made all the difference.

One of the biggest lessons I've learned is this: You do not need to become somebody else to build something worthwhile.
You don’t need to become louder, pushier or more salesy.
Or pretend to have all the answers. You just need to become a slightly more confident version of yourself.
One small step at a time.

This guide has never really been about technology.
Technology just happened to be the obstacle standing in the way. The real story has always been about confidence.
About believing that ordinary people can learn extraordinary new skills.

Even if they begin with absolutely no idea what they're doing.
Especially if they begin with absolutely no idea what they're doing 😄

If you're still feeling overwhelmed...
Please remember something.
You don't need to build:

- the perfect website
- the perfect guide
- the perfect business
- or the perfect life.

You need to build the next small piece.
That's all.
One page.
One idea.
One lesson.
One product.
One customer.
One tiny step.
Small things grow.

At my allotment, tiny seeds eventually become vegetables.
In business, tiny ideas slowly become guides. Guides become bundles. Bundles become shops.
And one day... If you keep going... You suddenly look back and realise just how far you've travelled.

Will there still be frustrating days?

Absolutely 😄

Technology will still have the occasional tantrum.
Buttons will still disappear.
You'll still wonder why something isn't working.

But I hope, after reading this guide, you'll have one new thought instead of the old one.

Instead of thinking:
👉 "I can't do this."
I hope you'll think:
👉 "I just haven't worked it out yet."
That single word...
Yet... can change everything.

Finally... I want to leave you with this.
Please don't wait until you feel ready.
Because I honestly don't think that magical feeling ever arrives.

Start while you're still learning.
Start while you're still nervous.
Start while you're still wondering if you're doing it properly.
Because confidence doesn't usually appear before action.
It quietly grows because of it.

And who knows? Perhaps one day you'll be writing your own guide... smiling at all the mistakes that taught you the lessons you're now passing on to somebody else. I truly hope so.

Until then...

Keep learning.
Keep creating.
Keep laughing when technology behaves like it has a personality of its own.

And most importantly...
Keep planting tiny seeds.
You never know which one will quietly grow into something wonderful.

Warm wishes,
Terri 💛

Thank you for reading!

Contact me if you have any questions.

email ; terri@timetogrowathome.co.uk

Next Steps & Resources

If you are interested in taking a free quiz to find a WFH income that suits you, and receiving free weekly newsletters:

https://www.timetogrowathome.co.uk/free-quiz

Or have a look at my website:

https://www.timetogrowathome.co.uk/