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## Interview with Yanik Silver from Surefire Marketing



**Adrian Bye:** Today I am here with Yanik Silver and Yanik runs a lot of different, quite intriguing direct response business models. I've known about Yanik for quite a few years. I think a few of you will find Yanik's story quite interesting. He's been around on the Internet for quite a while and works in a different way to a lot of the ad:tech community, so maybe it's better if Yanik explains it, himself.

Yanik, do you want to just tell us a little bit about who you are and what it is that you do?

**Yanik Silver:** Yes, absolutely! I kind of say I live the ultimate Internet lifestyle and my business has been run pretty much with my wife. She's not really an integral part of it anymore. We have two young kids – a two-year old and a four-month old.

I started back in 2000, literally woke up 3:00 in the morning with this idea for a website called Instant Sales Letters and that pretty much took off. It's just little sales letter templates for small business owners that they could copy and paste for whatever business they were in. That really took off and then people started asking me how I did it, what I do online and that's when I started teaching Internet marketing to other people specializing in how to sell content, how to sell information. That's really what I've been doing in one way, shape or form from everything from little e-books for a couple of bucks, all the way to a \$20,000 mastermind program that I run. So, I've been around the block there – everything in the information marketing world.

Just the last couple of years, we've gone over \$3 million in revenue with like I said, a company my wife and I, we have a couple of virtual assistance for customer support and one tech guy on retainer. I'm a total non-techie, as you know, Adrian. I can't even put up my own website, if you guys had a gun to my head.

**Adrian Bye:** So, let's take a couple of steps back to the instant sales service and that's [instantsalesletters.com](http://instantsalesletters.com), right?

**Yanik Silver:** Yes.

**Adrian Bye:** That was your first Internet product, but you were actually doing direct response before then, weren't you?

**Yanik Silver:** I was, yes. I studied direct response for a while, kind of fell in love with it – just the whole aspect of knowing that you could put out X number of dollars and see X+Y come back.

My family is Russian immigrants and we came over when I was two and a half in 1976. My dad, one of my heroes, came over with like \$256 in his pocket and not really knowing the English language. He built up a medical equipment sales and service company. Like with any family business, you pretty much do odd jobs here and there, working in there.



I started when I was 14, telemarketing for latex gloves, calling my own leads, following up on them, sending samples and so on, and hated it, but it was great sales experience at a really early age.

Then, when I was 16, I was out cold calling on like, 50 year-old docs and I'm this little 16-year old punk. It was pretty interesting that anybody would even talk to me.

So, I got a lot of experience early-on in sales and then one of my doctor clients gave me a Jay Abraham tape and my eyes were kind of wide-open to it. I was like, wow! This is pretty amazing stuff. I literally went on a tear, reading, listening, learning as much as I could about direct response and I started using this in my father's business where we'd put out these full-page ads, selling a pretty complicated piece of medical equipment that previously, we only really sold direct, face-to-face through sales reps. We're having people send us their credit cards, signing up for appointments and essentially, generating a lot of interest for these really complicated pieces of medical equipment, from EKG machines to handset vedascope...so you know where those go...fetal dopplers and all kinds of stuff – bone densitometers. So, I really got my feet wet there just applying everything I was learning in a real-world environment.

So, I've been doing it a while before then, yes.

**Adrian Bye:** What were the price points on the medical equipment that you're selling?

**Yanik Silver:** Pretty high. There was anything from fetal dopplers, which were maybe \$600 or so, that we're selling really well. I actually remember one ad I wrote, it was getting like 1800% return of investment for those things, all the way to like, \$10,000 pieces of equipment.

**Adrian Bye:** So, you've been selling \$10,000 pieces of medical equipment just through a sales letter, where you'd send out the letter and then people would give you their credit card number.

**Yanik Silver:** We did regenerating for those. The highest price that we did straight off of an ad I think, was around \$4,000 for an EKG machine that measures your heart rate.

**Adrian Bye:** Even that in itself is pretty interesting. Is there a cut-off where you'd say that the price is too high or the equipment is too complex where it does need to move from being a sale to a lead?

**Yanik Silver:** I think that's probably more the case with the complexity of the equipment. EKG machines are pretty much standard fare for most doctor's offices, so they know what they're getting and what the deal is. For something more complicated that they don't necessarily know like bone densitometer, which is essentially for osteoporosis and so something a little more complicated for some of the doctors that would require probably in-office visits. But, we're getting people that raise their hands and they could follow-up on them. It's pretty amazing to see that work.

My dad, like I said – Russian immigrant, so I'd walk in with this ad full of copy, full of texts, like, "Nothing is going to be out of this." I'm like, "Dad, let's just try it. Let's see how it works."

**Adrian Bye:** So, you've been doing that stuff for a while and then, it just naturally led to, hey, why don't I try doing something like this online.

**Yanik Silver:** Yes. The transition was like I said, I worked with a lot of doctors. The one transition was I started actually doing a little bit of consulting on the side with some doctors. So, that took-off and they were starting to see results. I was helping them get more cosmetic patients. Well, actually I was working with another doctor, a urologist, helping him get more patients. So, I saw that working out and what I decided to do was package up what I was doing with them into a \$900 three-ring binder type course, so I could leverage my expertise, instead of just working with doctors one-on-one and essentially getting paid for my time. I then packaged it up and started selling a course to dermatologists – is where I started, and then I moved on to cosmetic surgeons, ophthalmologists and other doctors who wanted to get more cosmetic patients.

**Adrian Bye:** Yes. How did that then lead over to the Instant Sales Service product?

**Yanik Silver:** Since I used this stuff in my dad's office with sales letters and did this stuff for the docs for their sales letters, it was late '99, literally, I didn't even have an e-mail address. A lot of guys that you interview, Adrian, they were online from like '93, '94. A lot of my friends were on there then and doing all kinds of cool stuff. So, I got on what I felt was late, which I guess it wasn't that late. Now, I still feel like we're still at the beginning of something really huge.

I saw people were selling digitally delivered information. I thought it was a great model. I remember people like Kenny Boy, Marlon Sanders and a couple of other people that were selling just e-books. I'm like, wow, that's a great model. You don't have to pay for shipping. You don't have to pay for product creation. People just give you their credit cards and they just download your material. I'm like, I want to do that.

So, I literally asked myself a question. I think the questions that you ask dictate the kind of answers that you get. The question was put along the lines of, how can I create an automatic money-making business that makes me money while I sleep, provides a great value to people and wasn't just an e-book. I wanted to do something different than just an e-book, so I wanted a differentiation point. Like I said, literally, at 3:00 in the morning, I woke up, got the idea for Instant Sales Letters.

**Adrian Bye:** Yes and how did you start testing that? Was it by Pay-Per-Click traffic? What was there to test with back then? Obviously, you knew how to write a sales letter since you'd been writing a lot of sales copies.

**Yanik Silver:** Right.

**Adrian Bye:** How did you do the rest?

**Yanik Silver:** Yes, the first way that I got sales actually was from Joe Vitale. Actually, I have to give him a little nod here. I had hired him to help me with a press release. As he's helping me with the press release, he checked up the product. He was like, "This is pretty good." He was like, "I'll put a little mention in there for you and can you do like a monthly newsletter..." or a weekly. I can't remember. I think, a monthly newsletter. He said, "I'll just put a little mention in there for you."

I wasn't even ready. We didn't even have our credit card authorization stuff set up to integrate automatically with anything we were doing. I remember waking up and there were orders in there for \$29.95, just like the

infomercial it tells you, “Making money while you sleep.” So, I woke up and had these orders in there. Not many, at first, but still, it’s enough to get you excited. I don’t know. It actually comes together. When you think about it versus when you actually do it and you see that it’s real – it’s a big difference. I still remember the very first customer that we had and what state he ordered from, so it was pretty exciting to see that.

Then, what I did is I bought traffic because I didn’t have any other ways at that point to leverage it. I put out like a press release – this one that Joe helped me with. I don’t think we got much coverage, at all. Then, I started buying some Pay-Per-Click and bought from ezine ads, just slowly built it.

The first month, I did \$1,800. This is for a \$30 product, remember? Then, the second month, it went up to about \$3,600 or so, it’s approximately doubled and then it went up to about \$7,400 the third month. By the third month, we had so many people asking about an affiliate program, so we opened up an affiliate program by the third month or fourth month. In the fourth month, it was somewhere around \$9,400 or \$9,600 in revenue coming in. So, pretty quickly built it up to a nice six-figure business. The funny thing is...that’s seven and a half years ago, I guess, more than that and every year, it just chugs along. It’s pretty crazy. I haven’t touched the thing in like years. Last year, we did like \$220,000, \$240,000 on there.

**Adrian Bye:** Really? So, it’s building like \$20,000 a month.

**Yanik Silver:** Yes, approximately.

**Adrian Bye:** Cool!

**Yanik Silver:** Some months are a little better than others, but yes, it averages out to about that. I’ve raised the price. It’s a \$40 product and now, there’s definitely some upsells in there, which I think are really important and something that most people overlook. If you want to talk about that, we can for a couple of minutes.

**Adrian Bye:** Let me think about it, then we’ll come back to it.

**Yanik Silver:** Okay.

**Adrian Bye:** No, maybe we should because I imagine that’s something that made a huge impact to this business and the revenues behind it, didn’t it?

**Yanik Silver:** It did and let me look it up real fast because I think they’ll be pretty illustrative of what the difference is.

I originally started just doing an upsell on an intermediary page, so they would click, “I’m ready to buy” or whatever that link was. Then, up would come another page, and opt-in order form, it would say, “Because you’re ordering today, you can get the special gold version of Instant Sales Letters for just \$15 more and here’s what it includes.”

We have, on average, about 66% of people will fill up upsell, so it’s all free money. When people got their credit cards out, it’s all free money and I think a lot of times, we overlook that. It’s such a simple thing, but it can mean a huge difference impact-wise.

The infomercial companies are great at this. They’ll keep upselling you and upselling you, cross-selling, adding bumps and so on, until you say, “Okay, that’s enough.” because it’s all extra revenue.

**Adrian Bye:** Some of the guys that are doing it like \$1 million, \$2 million or even \$3 million, \$4 million a month – in some of their order processes, I don't see upsells in there. I see continuity programs, but I don't see that in-between page.

Obviously, you tested it with that in-between page and it did cause your overall revenues to stay up, didn't it? So, it was worth keeping it there.



**Yanik Silver:** Absolutely, it's well worth it. Then, we don't stop there. I did stop there originally, but now, once they get to the actual order page, there's a checkbox that they can add for something else – a piece of software to create headlines. About 20% or so, people would take that, too. So, the price could go up from \$40, which they originally thought they were getting in for to all the way to about \$91, I think.

So, I'm just looking at stats real fast. If we have people who took just the plain

version, if I didn't add an upsell... Let me do a quick calculation. This is pretty illustrative. I don't want to take up too much time figuring this out, but I think it's pretty important. It's all extra revenue. I've got to track what the regular price would be. Alright, so I would have missed out on an extra \$40,000 for the last couple of months of pretty much pure profit, except for affiliate's commission. Affiliates get paid on the upsells, too.

**Adrian Bye:** So, could we average that out to \$10,000 profit a month?

**Yanik Silver:** I went back to January, so we've lessened the...

**Adrian Bye:** So, it's \$40,000 this year?

**Yanik Silver:** Yes, \$40,000 this year since through October.

**Adrian Bye:** Right. So, not gigantic numbers, but for an upsells product, it's worth it. That actually effectively adds revenue generation for you. It's huge.

**Yanik Silver:** Exactly, yes. If you're doing big numbers, the upsells are enormous to add that in there.

I might have miscalculated. That seems kind of off.

**Adrian Bye:** Alright, if you find out the numbers, you can e-mail me those and we can make sure we get those in there.

I'm interested in your business, in general. You have a bunch of different segments to your business. You run a seminar. You have your mastermind group. Maybe, can you talk about some of the backends you have and then I'm interested in understanding how your lead generation works to drive people into those backends because I think you've followed someone who we both are pretty interested in – a guy named Dan Kennedy. You follow a lot of Dan Kennedy's stuff where he talks about build a herd.

So, you've built a herd and you're building products around that herd to sell to that herd. Does that sound correct?

**Yanik Silver:** Yes, that's pretty much correct. I definitely follow Dan Kennedy's model to a certain extent, where I'd rather work with a smaller number of customers than try and go for the mass market and only make a couple of dollars on each person that comes in and has to deal with the infrastructure and the headaches that come with that. So, I'd rather sell more premium priced things. Actually, I just had a workshop on that – how to sell high-priced products and services, just because to me, the lifestyle preference and business preference, as far as keeping it small, it makes all the sense for the way I do it.

So, we have a couple of front-end products that the Instant Sales Letters could be one of them and then a couple of other e-books and smaller, downloadable products that are Internet marketing related. I have other stuff in other various niches, but the backends aren't really fully developed on those.

**Adrian Bye:** Alright, another front-end would be you have a viral e-book. At least, you had a couple of years ago. I remember seeing it.

**Yanik Silver:** Yes, that was a couple of years back, which I'm surprised that it still makes sales and people still come in on that. *Million Dollar e-mails* and *Autoresponder Magic* were just two experiments where I let people have resale rights to it after they've bought it. It kind of got out of hand and then I lost control of where those things are. The value of those things really tanked, but it would still get sales every month for those products, which I think is kind of funny.

**Adrian Bye:** In this case the value is not necessarily in the revenue you generated for those products, but just the fact that they're still out there, being sent around all over the place, it's branding you and driving people towards your other stuff. Would that be correct?

**Yanik Silver:** Yes, that would absolutely be correct and if I knew what I knew now, I would have done a much better job of integrating name capture into all the books and making sure that people came to us to download it instead of other people being able to distribute it. Regardless, you're right. My name is on each of those books and so my name gets branded more, and my company. For good and for bad, it's really revolved around me as a person, the personality, of the business. So that gets my name out there a bit and people advertising us through the backdoors – they're distributing this e-book

So, the backends, what you were originally asking about, I have a couple of various backends. One is a seminar, that Underground Online Seminar that we run once a year. There is also my newsletter that I write every month that's an \$87 a month newsletter called Underground Secret Society. Then, I have my Mastermind Groups that I run. I have two groups – a six-figured group and a seven-figured group and there are small, intimate groups that we meet three times a year. I do the usually one little workshop a year, like a small 20-40 person workshop. Some of those workshops we'll create workshop-in-a-box products. So, the



DVDs, manuals and so on will go into a product and then get sold. That's pretty much our main backend I'd say.

**Adrian Bye:** So, put all of those you have different things generating leads for you. You have the viral e-books that you did years ago that you don't spend much time on. You did the Instant Sales Letters. What would you say is the primary source of leads into your business now?

**Yanik Silver:** Well, it's hard to say if there's one. It's such a multitude of open doors that we get people in through and we have a pretty large affiliate network of about 43,000, 44,000 affiliates. Obviously, not all those are active affiliates, but they do generate a significant amount of traffic and a nice amount of revenue coming in. So, if you're going to pin me down and say, "What's the one single thing?" I'll have to say it's our affiliate network.

**Adrian Bye:** So, this is your own affiliate network that's closed and it runs only Yanik Silver products.

**Yanik Silver:** Correct.

**Adrian Bye:** Do you want to talk a little bit more about your seminar and some of the other things you're doing in that area? I know you've got some interesting stuff going on.

**Yanik Silver:** Yes, I think the seminar is kind of cool and as I mentioned, an Underground Online Seminar. It's a once a year thing. What I think is interesting about it is, I designed it to go the opposite way of what other seminars were in the Internet marketing space. There's definitely no shortage of Internet marketing seminars right now, as you know. In that kind of marketplace, you really need what I call a big hook or a big idea. One of the ways of creating a big hook or big idea is going the opposite direction of everyone else.

So, the big idea for my Underground Seminar is that I bring in people who are for the most part, unknown or kind of under the radar. They're average guys and gals, but they're making extraordinary amounts of money online and you would never really know it. It's through connection of friends, friends of friends, neighbors, there are my students at the primarily match my group – whatever the case is. However, by hook or by crook, I can get these guys and girls in there to present what they're doing and it's been really well-received. It's sold-out weeks in advanced, it's not a cheap ticket by any stretch but it's also a very good value, normally between \$2,000 and \$3,000 per ticket depending on when you get in. Like I said, it's always been sold-out and we've been fortunate to be able to get a great number of people in there.

I try to have a whole lot of fun with it, too. For most part, pretty much anything that I do, I like to have a lot of fun with it because otherwise, it's not really worth it to me. So, for this week, we do a spy theme and we try and play that up. So, every year it's a different spy theme. Last year, it was Mission Impossible and I brought in Peter Graves from Mission Impossible, from the TV show. The year before that it was an Austin Powers theme and I brought in Mini-Me to do that. I really try to have a good time as well as make it really educational and worthwhile for people to show up at this thing. I think people really appreciate that, too, not just the educational aspect because at the end of the day it's also about entertainment.

**Adrian Bye:** That's an interesting point. So, you try to build that entertainment in everything then.

**Yanik Silver:** I try to and I don't do it in a fake kind of way. People, they come up to me in my sphere of influence or my funnel or whatever the case is. They pretty quickly realize that Yanik, the guy who writes his blog about going off on a zero-G flight or something is the same guy that you would meet in person. I don't

stretch what I'm about. Really, it's what I'm about and I think you can really bring your personality into your business more than most people do.

A great example of that in a bigger company, it doesn't necessarily have to be a smaller company like mine, where it's the difference between small and large – bring your personality in – it's one or the other. Look at Virgin. Perfect example – Richard Branson has his personality stamped pretty much all over each one of the companies that he has, on all his different subsidiaries.

That's one of the reasons I signed up for his spaceflight, the Virgin Galactic deal, because I love that kind of stuff, all those adventures and unique experiences. Just his brand, that personal image, that personality shines through and it's really attractive.

**Adrian Bye:** What is the deal that you signed up for with Richard Branson?

**Yanik Silver:** It's Virgin Galactic. It's his space deal. It's a suborbital spaceflight, hopefully, going off in 2009. I'd probably make a bet for 2010. I am number 152 on the spaceflight and you've got to put in a pretty hefty deposit to secure your space there.

**Adrian Bye:** Can you tell us how much you had to put down?

**Yanik Silver:** Yes, sure. The flight is \$200,000. You have to put down \$175,000 to be in one of the second hundred group. The first hundred's already sold out.



**Adrian Bye:** You had to put down \$175,000 to reserve your spot?

**Yanik Silver:** That is correct, sir. You don't get any interest on it or anything.

**Adrian Bye:** You're number 152, so there was rather quite a few signups.

**Yanik Silver:** I'm 152, yes. So, like I said, the first hundred slots are closed, so I'm number 52 of the second hundred.

**Adrian Bye:** Not bad.

**Yanik Silver:** You know, what's interesting, one of the ways they sold me on it...it was something I've talked about, too, at that little workshop that I did on selling high-priced products because this is I'd say a pretty high-priced products...is that all the same stuff applies. It's just a different way of using it.



So, they got me with the bonuses. There's going to be parties for Virgin Galactic astronauts. Richard Branson's going to be there and you can meet him. There's always special things going on. You can put a \$20,000 deposit in, but then you're like number 1,000+. So essentially, it's the bonuses that got me to step-up to that other level.

**Adrian Bye:** So, you could sign up at a different level in the program depending on how much money you put down, is that right?

**Yanik Silver:** Correct, yes.

**Adrian Bye:** What did you have to be, to be in like the top 10 or the top 50?

**Yanik Silver:** That was already closed. You put down the full amount, but that was like two years ago.

**Adrian Bye:** How much is the full amount?

**Yanik Silver:** \$200,000.

**Adrian Bye:** Okay, that's fascinating. I can tell you one little side-story on that. Did you hear of a guy who paid \$20 million to the Russians to go into space about maybe a couple of years ago?

**Yanik Silver:** Yes, there's a couple of people that have done it. Is that the Dennis Tito or...?

**Adrian Bye:** Mark Shuttleworth – he's actually a friend of mine.

**Yanik Silver:** He's a friend of yours, really?

**Adrian Bye:** Yes.

**Yanik Silver:** Okay, cool. Yes, there's a couple of people that have done that and that's kind of a different deal as you go up to the space station. That's pretty exciting.

**Adrian Bye:** That's a little more high-priced. He talked to me a little bit during when he was negotiating it and it sounded like it wasn't that easy to work it out with the Russians. He told me at one point, it's like 50-50 whether it was going to go forward, but it did and I think he had fun with it. I'm hoping to getting an interview with him. In fact, he's promised me to do an interview. We'll get one at some point, but I don't know when.

**Yanik Silver:** That would be awesome! He sounds like a fun guy.

**Adrian Bye:** I think yours sounds like a little bit more reasonably priced; \$20 million for that stuff is pretty...

**Yanik Silver:** Well, it's all relative-basis. If I had \$20 million to spend, I might consider doing that one.

**Adrian Bye:** I guess.

So, back to direct response. Now, you're a direct response guy. You like to measure metrics. You like tracking and monitoring numbers and all that sort of, good stuff. So, what I'm interested in is, once you have a customer in your business, do you measure how that customer does?

For example, could you say, “Well, Adrian, I know that my average customer in a year spends with me \$350 – across all of my customers.” or do you just have front-ends that are out there that are generating leads for you and then you’re doing JV stuff that drives other leads? That goes into your business, then you just put reasonably attractive things in place in the backend and you aim to make those as profitable as possible? Do you have metrics across it or is it just kind of serendipity?

**Yanik Silver:** Well, it’s kind of funny. I’m not the total numbers guy, so I don’t track all the way back like that. It’s really hard. So, I guess the answer is no.

**Adrian Bye:** It’s important for you to run what you call a lifestyle business but what does it really mean? It’s obviously easy to say, “Well, yes, I’m doing Tim Ferris’s 4-Hour Workweek and all I ever do is sit in the sun” and all that sort of stuff. But what it really comes down to is I know you do actually work pretty hard. I’m interested to know what kind of hours do you actually work and how hard do you really push things?

**Yanik Silver:** That’s a good question, actually, I just saw Tim yesterday at a conference he was speaking at right around the corner from me and we were talking a little bit about this. A lot of people misconstrue what he talks about in the 4-Hour Workweek of how you should just work four hours a week and that’s it, go lounge around for the rest of the time. That’s not exactly what he’s saying and it’s not quite what I scribe to either.

The hours I put in, I’ll typically work a handful of like maybe, two hours on the weekends and then during the weekdays, I’ll be lucky if I got maybe five hours in a day.

But then again, if there’s something going on, like if we’re doing a product launch or something like that, then... You found me on IM before, Adrian, at 2:00 in the morning or whatever the case is, so there are certain times when I’m definitely pushing to get stuff done because there are deadlines and things have to happen. Other times, let’s just chill-out a little bit more, enjoy things going on, work on some new projects and get those going and let the other stuff pretty much run itself.

**Adrian Bye:** When you’re not like before a conference or you’ve not got some other stuff, something going on, that you’re doing an average of five hours a day to maintain things or is that five hours a day and then also a couple of hours a day building new stuff.

**Yanik Silver:** The five hours, definitely not just to maintain. That’s way too much. I mean, as far as maintaining, I’d say about an hour a day maybe, sometimes two hours a day to maintain stuff. So, the rest of that time might be writing content. I have a monthly newsletter, so could be spending a day and a half or two days writing my newsletter or could be working on e-mails for the promotions for stuff that’s going out. So, it’s more proactive stuff.

**Adrian Bye:** One of the things that some of the guys getting a lot of volume get burned-out and it’s stressful. They want to have a more relaxed lifestyle they can disconnect from, at times. How long could you disconnect for them. If you wanted to go live in the jungle in Brazil, could you be offline for three months and things will be fine?

**Yanik Silver:** No, I don’t think I have it totally wired in where I could do it like that, just because we don’t have the support staff that I need to be able to do that. I can definitely go off for a couple of weeks with no problem and things would get handled, but I think three months probably wouldn’t work out as well.

I'd like to have it down to that point, hopefully soon it'll be great. Creating a few more systems and things in place that people can handle without me here. Since it's smaller, leaner company, I'm still probably involved in a handful of things that I don't really need to be involved in and shouldn't be involved in. Trying to think of what it will take to go on a sabbatical for three months and go hang out would be a really worthwhile exercise. Probably for most people, even if you never did it, to see what it would take and get those systems in place. So that would be a really worthwhile exercise that I'm going to seriously consider.

**Adrian Bye:** So, with the way you're working now, let's say if you were allowed to get online and let's say you were going to move to this jungle in Brazil. You had Internet access twice a week for an hour each time, so you get two hours of Internet access a week. How long do you think you could keep things running with those two hours a week?

**Yanik Silver:** That would be a lot easier. I think we could easily run at 75%, 80% capacity for that time for pretty much indefinitely.

**Adrian Bye:** I mean things like your seminar – you wouldn't be able to do new product launches and things like your seminars, but you could keep most of the other stuff just still up and chugging along. Would that be correct?

**Yanik Silver:** Exactly, yes. I'm trying to think if I could promote a seminar or whatever in just twice a week. I possibly could. I think I possibly could do it because a lot the pieces that are already written and so on that it wouldn't be rewriting it. I would give it a good 85%, 90% chance of being able to get some new stuff out there, too, at the same time.

**Adrian Bye:** You're talking actual extra work time. This is like the two hours a week to get to work. I'm not talking about actual connected access.

**Yanik Silver:** So, I can't even touch my computer, aside from those two hours you're saying. Okay, that makes it a little more difficult. Yes, it probably wouldn't. I'd give it maybe a 50% chance now that I could launch anything. Yes, it would be a lot tougher, I think.

**Adrian Bye:** But, you could keep your current systems running with those two hours a week, is that correct?

**Yanik Silver:** Absolutely, yes, that would be easy.

**Adrian Bye:** So, would it be a correct answer to say then with the income that you have generated right now, you've decided for whatever reason that you don't want to live in the US anymore. You want to go and just backpack through third-world countries where there's no real Internet access, you could indefinitely and potentially...so we're saying now, potentially for the rest of your life...keep all of these things up and running to some level? Obviously, business changes, but you should be able to keep them generally running by checking in two hours a week and maybe, every year or two, you're going to have to recalibrate things, but in general, am I off-base or is this...?

**Yanik Silver:** I think you're pretty close. I definitely see some dips in revenue, no doubt about it. If I don't have access to a computer, then I wouldn't be able to write my monthly newsletter, so that's a nice chunk of the revenue. I wouldn't be able to put on a seminar like we were talking about. But, I'd say we might be running at 60%, 70% of what I'm doing.

**Adrian Bye:** So, you think you can be doing that in half a year by doing something like that?

**Yanik Silver:** Yes, I think so. I think that's pretty reasonable.

**Adrian Bye:** If you're going to move off to like Kazakhstan, China or someplace, that \$1.5 million happen a year you could probably buy half the country with that.

**Yanik Silver:** I could probably do okay, yes, for somewhere else. I don't think Missy, my wife would want to go off with me there.

**Adrian Bye:** That's obviously practical. Practical thing behind. Well, just theoretical that's interesting as to how disconnected you can get because that's one of the key points that most of the guys I interview couldn't do that even for a minute. They can barely leave their businesses for a day, whereas you've got everything set up where you can.

**Yanik Silver:** I wouldn't say everything, but most part of it, yes.

**Adrian Bye:** But, I am realistic in saying that two hours a week is enough to keep the things running along. Am I correct?

**Yanik Silver:** Yes, I think so, yes.

**Adrian Bye:** Okay, so another area you've spent a lot of time in, one of your areas of forte is your copyrighting and it's an area both of us find interesting. A lot of the mass market guys aren't that strong in copy. They just throw out pages and put some words on there that's written by their technical guy who's a programmer, barely gets out of his basement and still lives with his parents.

But, copyrighting is a strength of yours and being able to craft the words that really get people's attention – maybe we just want to talk a little bit about what got you into that, who some of your major influences are and some of the benefits you've seen from being able to write strong copy that convinces people.

**Yanik Silver:** Yes, absolutely. I mean, to me copy is one of the leverage-able activities that you can do. That's why I started studying it, applying it and really trying to hone it because I can write a sales letter from wherever, direct mail or whatever the case is and do that work one time. But then, I can call on one person. I can literally call in millions of people that come visit our website or millions of people that we can reach via direct mail or whatever the case is. So, I figured that's one of the skills that I can really develop that would help me increase my income and revenue tremendously beyond the hours that I work.

There's definitely a whole art and science operating that we're not going to be able to cover in the couple of minutes that we've got left. But, some of the people that I really learned a ton from...believe it or not...are like the old mail order people who didn't have the benefit of the Internet, e-mail or fax machine and they had to get responses from people. So, they had all these things against them and those people really knew how to create the words that elicited action, that persuaded people to give them money, sight unseen for something.

That's really what we're doing on the web, that we've got a whole lot of other tools at our disposal now, like adding video or adding audio to our sites and making our sites come alive and so on, even user-generated content and so on, interactions that can help create more sales.

But, when it comes down to it, to me, copyrighting is about psychology and understanding the human psychology. My favorite book on that is Robert Cialdini, *Influence: The Psychology of Persuasion*. It's a book

I've read about nine times. The old mail order, direct response guys are people like Claude Hopkins. John Caples had a really big background in this. Maxwell Sackheim, who's the guy who founded the Book of the Month Club in I think, the early 40s, if I'm not mistaken, somewhere in that area, John E. Kennedy. These are guys that lived and died by the results of their advertising.

**Adrian Bye:** Let's say I'm generating \$1 million worth of leads every month and let's say they're mortgage leads. It's working great. I'm making tons of money and frankly, Yanik, I'm making more money than you, so who are you to tell me about copy. I mean, I just have one of my tech guys design the pages really quickly so they look nice. How is what you're talking about help me?

**Yanik Silver:** Well, there's a saying, "Little hinges swing big doors." Probably, a lot of the guys who are going to be hearing this are probably pretty good at testing and if they're not, they should get better. I'm not the most avid tester, unfortunately. It's just not my forte, but I've been seeing some really interesting results when I've done it. It's always asking yourself how much higher is high?" and what can you get to by little tweaks, by adding even little more psychological nuances would probably be even more valuable than learning all there is to know about copy. Having little psychological tweaks like using a reason why in your copy. So, if you're trying to get someone to do an action or to do something, what's the reason why you're asking them for that? If people read the book by Cialdini, there's a really fascinating experiment on that or trying to create a commitment-consistency type ongoing process.

**Adrian Bye:** I ask that in a direct way but I ask that because I know that's what's going to be on people's minds. I see that a lot of these guys do quite a lot of testing, but they don't use testing with a lot of finesse. So, they'll discover something, for example, in the debt space a few years ago, it was just originally debt leads and then it became women's dead leads. Then, Christian debt relief, so that was a good hook, but that's the only thing they do on it. The landing pages, in my opinion, is pretty poor.

It seems to me that using some of the stuff that you're talking about here with copy...I know because I've tested some of this...it can dramatically improve conversion rates – dramatically. Take a debt page that's doing a 10% conversion rate per lead and double that to 20%. Still, it'll be delivering the same quality of leads, just because it's more persuasive in getting the leads to sign up. That then, is very strong...

**Yanik Silver:** Yes, I totally agree. Even something as simple as headlines, if somebody just dashes-off something. Like you said, they got their tech guy to write up their landing page. The headline – that's critical. In direct mail, there's a term called above-the-fold and I think it carries over for the online world. What we have in our first screen that the visitor sees is so critically important. One of the biggest things is your headline. Just working on a new headline can have a dramatically different affect on your bottom-line, in conversions, in lead generation and so on.

**Adrian Bye:** Yes, alright. So, we talked a lot about your stuff and I know we're running out of time. Is there anything else that you would like to talk about that we haven't covered?

**Yanik Silver:** No, that's probably about it, I think, Adrian. I don't know. We can talk about a couple of different headline ideas that might help people and maybe wrap up with.

**Adrian Bye:** Yes, it sounds great.

**Yanik Silver:** Like I said, the headline is super-important. Sometimes maybe people have heard different stats about headlines – 70%, 80% or 90% of the ad. I pretty much say, who cares what the percentage is. It's a huge part of it and you've got seconds online. There's no doubt about it. You've got milliseconds sometimes



to capture your ideal prospect, pretty much stop them dead in their tracks and get them to read what's next on the page, so it's got to answer the "so what," "who cares," "what's in it for me" and then, "why are you bothering me?"

So, there're six big basic headline ideas that I use a lot is offering a big promise or self-serving benefits to reader. So, a how-to headline would be a perfect one there. It's funny. Sometimes people don't want to go to the old tried-and-true headlines, like how-to has been used forever. But, how-to forces us to create something that's benefit-driven to the user. So, "How to..." whatever. "...Get from Under the Pile of Debt that You Have." Another basic headline idea is flagging your ideal prospects like, "Attention: Arthritis..."

**Adrian Bye:** Like in a mortgage example, that could be like, "How to Buy Your Dream House Through a Really Cheap Mortgage."

**Yanik Silver:** Yes, exactly. Yes, how-to is easy. The flagging stuff would be "Attention..." whatever. "...People Looking for New Mortgages" or "...People Looking for Their New House." Like you said the christian debt relief space so it would be "Attention: Christians with Debt Problems" or something like that. So, a flagging headline really works.

Another basic headline idea is giving people news – announcing something or a new discovery. People are always looking for what's the new thing. If you offer a quick and easy solution, that would be number four. Asking a provoking question. That one's really interesting and it's especially better if you can't answer "yes" or "no."

One of the longest running headlines by someone I mentioned is Maxwell Sackheim, he was selling a course on English and his headline was, "Do You Make These Mistakes in English?" The keyword there was "These" because people had to look at it and look at what are these mistakes, not, "Do You Make Mistakes in English?" because that could be pretty easily brushed-off as no big deal or my grammar's perfect. Just getting people to engage with a forbidden question is really good.

Then, the other last big idea is your headline should make your reader or visitor inclined to keep reading, keep scrolling, keep going through your sequential sales process. You can use curiosity, but it's really dangerous if you use curiosity only by itself.

One of my favorite examples of this done right, so curiosity with a benefit, is from my friend, John Carlton. He has a headline, "Amazing Secret Discovered by One-Legged Golfer Adds 50 Yards to Your Drives, Eliminates Hooks and Slices and Can Slash up to 10 Strokes from Your Game Almost Overnight!"

So, it's a big benefit, really a specific benefit tied in with this curiosity of the story of the one-legged golfer.

**Adrian Bye:** Right. So, when you're writing a headline, you'll try to use at least one or more of those, as you're doing the headline.

**Yanik Silver:** Exactly. A lot of times, I'll combine several of them and see what I can come up with. I will write 75 to 100 headlines in fact, when I'm writing a sale book. So, it's another thing that most people don't want to put their time into. They might write five or ten headlines and think they've got it. In most cases, your best headlines are going to come from further down in the bubbling up creative process.

**Adrian Bye:** So, you'll just sit down, you'll work on it for a couple of days and come up with another 10 or 20 everyday. Is that how you do it?

**Yanik Silver:** Usually, it's been one or two sittings and I've got a bunch of swipe files that I might use that are successful headlines from past promotions that other people have done. Yes, just kind of jumpstart your brain, a little bit and then you start going-off on tangents based on what you've written there.

**Adrian Bye:** So, you'll take your 75 or 100. How do you decide which one to run with?

**Yanik Silver:** Well then, it's a different part of your brain that kicks in and it's more of an analysis, looking at which one has the most powerful impact and which ones are the ones that are worth testing. So, you can pretty much boil it down to 10 good ones from those 75 to 100. The other ones that I don't end up using as the main headline, they also don't get wasted. They get used for subheads throughout the copy. They get used for opening sentences, paragraphs. They get used for a PS on a sales letter. So, they don't get wasted.

**Adrian Bye:** That's really interesting. That's something I've noticed in your copy that I've seen – you have very good headlines. You really do. Your headlines are very to-the-point and they really have gotten my attention. Cool!

Is there anything else you want to add in closing?

**Yanik Silver:** No, I think we've kind of covered it. It's a really, really exciting time to be part of the Internet and be able to build your business around your lifestyle, around what you're passionate about and excited about. To me, that means everything.

**Adrian Bye:** Yes, there's good stuff going on. Well, Yanik, thanks very much for your time.

**Yanik Silver:** Adrian, yes, I appreciate it. Thank you.