

THE GOLDEN TOILET

Stop Flushing Your Marketing Budget
into Your Website and Build a System
That Grows Your Business



STEVE BROWN

THE GOLDEN TOILET



COPYRIGHT © 2019 STEVE BROWN

All rights reserved.

THE GOLDEN TOILET

*Stop Flushing Your Marketing Budget into Your Website
and Build a System That Grows Your Business*

ISBN 978-1-5445-0631-9 *Hardcover*

978-1-5445-0629-6 *Paperback*

978-1-5445-0630-2 *Ebook*

INTRODUCTION

Back in high school, I ran for senior class president. One aspect of the process required the candidates to give a speech to the student body on the day of the election. For obvious reasons, a copy of each speech was required to be submitted and approved beforehand. Let's just say I turned in an abbreviated blah-blah version of my speech.

My problem was, I wasn't the most qualified candidate as far as academic performance goes. I was only above average if you factored in my acne.

On the day of the speech, I arrived a little early and discreetly tucked a roll of toilet paper into the back of the podium and took my place.

When it came my turn to give my speech, I told the assembly that I struggled for weeks about what I wanted to say.

Finally, the inspiration came to me, and I wrote it down on the closest thing to me, and I was proud to share my thoughts with them.

I pulled out the roll of toilet paper and begin to unravel it, letting it fall off the podium and roll down the front of the stage as I dramatically searched the two-ply paper for my “missing speech.”

I paused, and as I tossed a dismayed glance back at the other candidates, I claimed:

“Hey! Some *wisecrack* stole my speech.”

The students howled with laughter, I got in trouble with the teachers, and at the end of the day, I won the election.

If there were such a moniker, I probably would also have been elected “Most Likely to Write a Book about a Toilet,” and here I am. You might be wondering why *you* are here. Good question. Let’s talk.

JUST A GUY SCROLLING THROUGH YOUR WEBSITE, THINKING ABOUT A TOILET

If you’re like most of the clients who show up to ROI Online, the online marketing agency I started, you’re on the hunt. You’ve been bombarded by salespeople telling you what

your business “needs” in this modern era of marketing—to get to the top of the results for a search phrase, to run the right social media ads, to run email campaigns and have keywords, and to fix your damned website already. You don’t need convincing on any of those points, either. You know that what you have isn’t moving the needle, which means it doesn’t work, which means there must be *some* truth to what they’re telling you. So, you try it on your own or you hire someone to do it. Sometimes you even come to an agency like mine, or you pick up a book like this.

Actually, let me pause there. There’s *not* a book like this. That’s really why it’s in your hands. See, all of those voices telling you what you need are all trying to sell you something. I know, because that’s what I used to do, too. I had a quota to meet, and to meet that quota I had to convince people to let us make their new website. But “quotas” are exactly what is wrong with the sales profession in general. Quotas inherently put salespeople at odds with the prospect. As a salesperson, if all I’m focused on is meeting my quota, then I’m not really interested if what I’m selling is the best thing for my target or not. I just want to make my quota, collect my commission, and go party. But all of these great sounding solutions coming at you are someone else’s quota. They aren’t you, the entrepreneur, which means they don’t worry about the same things that worry you. Getting a yes from you moves *their* needle, regardless of what it does for you.

What's worse is that most of these agency-based models use a pretty outdated method of marketing. Think about how life looked twenty years ago. We weren't scrolling through our phones every day (or minute). We were barely scrolling the internet at that point. So advertising was about finding where people were, interrupting what they were doing, and making sure they knew about your great solution. Billboards, print ads, mailers, commercials, pop up ads...it all worked for a while.

Fast forward to today, and everything in our world is designed to repel those interruptions. We will do everything we can to consume entertainment and information without interruption. (Honestly, not one person wants to have to answer their four-year-old when they ask daddy what a "four-hour election" is because the latest family flick blared out a Viagra commercial over dinnertime! "Well sweetie it's a way to pick a winner real fast. In fact, if the election lasts longer than four hours you call your doctor.") We are the generation that created Netflix, do-not-call lists, and spam filters. We are the generation that rejected old marketing models.

So why, as business owners, are you still expecting those outdated models you avoid in your personal life to be effective for your business?

This book is different because it isn't about me or my

quota. It's about you. You picked up this book because you know in your gut that you've been flushing your marketing money away. And you are. We've all been there. Here's the piece that you might not want to hear and the thing that I tell everyone who comes to ROI Online looking to appease the Google-bot salespeople who call every day telling them they need better SEO: you don't need a website.

That's right. The last thing you need to invest in is yet another website rebuild. In fact, that fancy website of yours is nothing more than a beautiful, brand new, solid-gold toilet.

So let's talk about the title of this book. Did you make the same face my dad did when I told him what the title of this book was going to be? Seriously? What does a golden toilet have to do with how a progressive business owner should look at their online marketing challenge?

I'm glad you asked.

WHAT IS GOLDEN TOILET MONEY?

Golden toilet money is money wasted on something that doesn't improve the functionality or user experience. It's money that drug lords, rock stars, and Saudi Kings happily spend on absurd iconic things like solid gold toilets.

Who do you know would never ever buy a golden toilet even if they had the money to waste on something so absurd? I'm betting it's you. Most of the hard-working smart business people I know would never even consider wasting money on a golden toilet when they could be putting that money to good use in the rest of their house like in the kitchen, etc. And yet I've seen many of those same smart business people make the mistake of throwing away good money on their website when they could have been putting that money to good use on tools and systems and getting more of what they really want, to grow their business better. They weren't trying to be wasteful, they just didn't know exactly what they needed and why.

Well that stops now.

If you had more money than you knew what to do with, would you even consider buying a toilet made out of pure gold to put where everybody could see it and or use it? At least for those who this book is written to, I'm pretty sure the answer would be *hell no and I'm offended you even asked*. But here's the rub: most of you already feel you've spent an embarrassing amount of money on your website and have put it where everybody can see it. And what's worse, it didn't help your business like you hoped it would.

You feel frustrated, uncertain, and know it still needs

something more. But you're not sure where or who to turn to, to avoid wasting your time and money like the last go around.

This is the reason for this book. You're thinking about the problem all wrong. You're thinking website when you should be thinking system. As an entrepreneur, you would never waste your hard-earned money on a solid gold toilet when a porcelain one would serve your needs just fine. You naturally understand the rest of the money you saved could be spent on sinks, tile, lights, etc. to create a space that provides your visitors and employees a refreshing place to take care of business so to speak, to complement their overall experience with your brand.

Don't be too hard on yourself. You're not alone; in fact, you're in good company. Starting today, you will start seeing "golden toilet" websites almost everywhere. Pretty little sparkly websites that are useless and unhelpful for both their visitors and their business owners simply because the business owner didn't know they could expect way more out of this asset.

Don't get me wrong. A website itself is necessary, but not in the way most of us think. It's necessary in the same way that we all need somewhere to go do our business. It's less about the look and more about an effective experience, if you catch my drift.

Which means if you've been worried about web marketing for as long as most of us have, you've sunk a lot of money into your website with not a lot of return. If I may be blunt, some asshole stole your marketing budget and flushed it down a shiny new shitter—and for many of us, we're that asshole. We did it to ourselves.

LINT SUCKERS AND SALES PUSHERS

I know this isn't an easy sell. It's not fun to face hard truths, and there are a lot of voices running counter to what I'm going to tell you in this book. (Their quotas depend on it, remember?) So, let me step back and give you an example—and tell on myself a little bit in the process.

Not long ago, my fiancé became concerned. She became concerned about a problem that I would never think twice about. She was worried that dryer lint had backed up into the main vent and was going to start a fire, likely in our sleep or in some other tragic scenario. Now, I know the stats. (Okay, I believe *her* that there are stats.) I just don't want to give them credence, because that means I'm going to have to do some work. I'm going to have to set some weekend time aside, get into a cramped space, pull out the dryer, disconnect the exhaust tube, clean it out, or replace it, which invariably means trips back and forth to the store to get all the right pieces. Some guys are really into this sort of thing, or so I'm told. I'm a computer

jockey. I am decidedly *not* into this sort of thing. It's a cumbersome chore, and one that I'm not entirely sold on doing.

There I was, scrolling Instagram (guess where I was sitting) instead of doing the chore I was supposed to be doing, and something caught my eye. In the time it took me to slide my thumb from the bottom to the top of my smartphone, I saw enough of a video to know my world was about to be rocked, so I stopped. I saw a lady's hands attaching this green, anteater-shaped thing to the end of a vacuum cleaner hose, and sticking it into the front of a dryer, right where you remove the lint after every load, while stats about dryer lint fires scrolled below. Then a second later, the video flashed to all the lint that came out of that anteater thing in the vacuum cleaner chamber.

Listen, I know we all type "lol" all the time now, but I really did laugh out loud. I laughed as I clicked that video and it dropped me right into a shopping cart, I laughed when I saw there was a discount, and I laughed as I checked out right there from my phone. Here Carli and I had just been talking about how I needed to do this thing—and here Instagram was showing me just how *she* could do that thing herself! Problem solved, day saved, chore simplified. I finished my paperwork, stood up triumphantly, and flushed with pride!

Now, back to your website.

Let's pretend you sell those lint suckers and know that I'm out there, in dire need of your revolutionary product. Did I know about you when Carli was concerned about our lint emergency? Not at all. I could only think of one way to solve that problem, so I wasn't looking for you specifically. I wasn't asking Siri about another way to clean out lint. I certainly wasn't going to my desktop computer, opening Google, and searching for "best lint sucker thing that keeps me from pulling the dryer away from the wall." And when I found them and clicked through, there's no way I was going to read pages of information about child resistant packaging or flexible hoses and technical jargon. A misplaced focus on any one of those detours and I would have gotten distracted and went on scrolling through Instagram, leaving the anteater people still sitting there with unsold lint suckers and me pulling the whole dryer out on a sweaty Saturday afternoon.

Imagine you've got that stash of lint suckers waiting for all the Steves out there to get desperate enough to find you, and someone comes to you to coach you on how to make that happen. You probably don't have to think hard about that scenario, because every entrepreneur has been there. You've got an idea, it meets a need, so you design a product or service over a couple of years. You work through prototypes, make sure it works, and are ready to sell it. Now what?

The team behind the Lint Lizard—that’s the anteater lint sucker I got, by the way—didn’t make a website, an about-me page, a bunch of blog posts littered with keywords that they hoped I’d type in, nor a bunch of Google ad spends most of us ignore to make sure they showed up first. They thought about who their user was (a female), what she was worried about (those damn fires), and why their product was special (simplicity). They understood Carli and, in a foundational, healthy way, decided how to convey what they knew in just seconds. If she had been scrolling through, it would catch her eye and meet her need directly. Because I was scrolling through, showing that they understood her meant that I knew they met a need too—and, by proxy, that I could get off the hook for this chore that wasn’t my personal priority.

Carli, when you read this, I love you dearly and am glad you’re thinking about our lint.

It didn’t stop at the ad, either. I could have clicked through to find a swipe-left experience. (That’s a Tinder reference, for anyone else my age. My team keeps me young.) Instead, I found a well-thought-out user experience. They knew how I was going to purchase and what I wanted to see each step of the way. It took half a second to catch my eye, and once I was hooked, they reeled me in without a hitch.

BUILDING A BUSINESS ISN'T FOR THE MEEK

In some ways, the kids starting businesses from scratch right now have it pretty easy. You can set up a YouTube channel, direct it to a simple, mobile-friendly shopping cart, and call it a day. I think of the developing countries that missed the days of AT&T sinking utility poles and running phone lines to every home in the country. They were able to jump right to cell towers and high-speed internet and cell service, while we spent years trying to figure out how best to utilize all of those copper phone lines that technology had outpaced.

If we're honest, most of us are feeling outpaced.

We've survived the shift from the marketing of the '80s to the rise of the internet to today, but by the skin of our teeth, trying to figure out how to make the most of all of the old infrastructure we spent so much time on. Why do you think the Yellow Pages still try to call about getting you on their web platform now that their books are long gone? Never mind how outdated they are—they still want to be relevant, dammit!

The Yellow Pages folks never thought they'd be struggling to have meaning outside of a pop culture museum. They were going to be around forever. Today, we're just sure websites and Google are going to be around forever, too. What if they're not? What I want you to get out of this

book should last even if websites aren't around in five years. You're still going to know your messaging, your strategy, and how to build a good user experience, even when the tools and platforms change.

Here's the thing: you don't owe a thing to the Yellow Pages, or to me, or to anyone else except your target customer and yourself. You don't have to reinvent the technological wheel like AT&T and all those phone lines. Google and Amazon spent years and billions of dollars on developers to make the technology that could simplify all of this for us. If we can let go of that sense of sunk-cost and allow ourselves to start over with the tools available to us, then our proverbial Lint Lizards stand a much better chance of making it to their Steves. Your business stands a chance of surviving in a culture that will do anything it can to ignore obnoxious interruptions like Viagra ads at family time.

This isn't about the tools. This isn't about what you do. This is about who you are as an entrepreneur and where you're going in this world. And that's something that no mud-slinging sales calls or tech trends should distract you from.

YOU'VE MADE IT THIS FAR

Still with me? Good, because I promise I'm not out to get you. In fact, I'm right where you are. I'm an entrepreneur,

running a business, trying to make the right decisions for my team and my customers. As business owners, we have to remember that our top priority is growing. Period. Growing the value of our business.

In fact, it might be worth pausing here to step back and remember why you're running a business in the first place.

In this book, I don't want us to get tripped up on how to run ads or show up in searches or get in front of people. I know those things sound important, but they're minor steps along the way. Without focusing on how you can grow the value of your business, none of those details matter.

You haven't picked up just another book about marketing. You've picked up *this* book because you're tired of wasting your precious time and money. That tells me a whole lot about who you are. You're a real-life hero.

Let that sink in.

You had the audacity and the courage to step out from societal norms and create something new, whether you're a creator or a plumber or a trainer or an accountant or just really great at figuring out what people want and need. You stepped out, at great risk, knowing that nine out of ten startups fail. You might still be at the beginning of the gauntlet of early days, wondering how you're going to pay

your first employee next month. You might be down the line, with a whole team relying on you for their livelihood from week to week. You have a vision and a mission and are carving out your place in this world, and no one gave you a lick of permission to do it.

I'm writing to you.

Not the know-it-alls, SEO experts, skaters, doubters, or millennial-haters. Not the IT guys or corporate giants with huge marketing teams. You, the entrepreneur who's out there just trying to do what's right for you and your people as you drive toward a dream the world didn't want you to have and yet needs what you have to offer.

This book isn't a sales pitch. It's a system. It's a way for you to understand the framework that makes someone go from not knowing you're out there to clicking through to purchase in the swipec of a thumb. It's a way for you to sit down with those marketing folks and understand what the hell they're even saying—even more than that, to know what you need, ask for it, and regain some control of the conversation.

You're building an entire house for your customers, clients, and users to experience and feel at home in. Let's spend some time together building that experience, and

less time bejeweling in the bathroom. I can't wait to see what you create.



PLUNGE INTO THE GOLDEN TOILET

Want to learn more? [Buy the full book](#) from Amazon!

In *The Golden Toilet*, you'll learn how to create a holistic marketing system based on the strategies used by high-growth brands you love.

It's everything you need to know about marketing your business with none of the bullshit.



“You’re never going to win with “just” one piece—the system is the name of the game, and your systems need to work together toward growth.”

- Steve Brown, *The Golden Toilet*

GET YOUR COPY NOW FROM AMAZON