

# *Take that plunge!*

A SHORT STORY ON MY HALF-BAKED ENTREPRENEURIAL JOURNEY



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# The journey

A short story on my half-baked entrepreneurial journey

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No, this is not a novel...

This is a **short, fun-filled story** about:

1. **my half-baked entrepreneurial journey,**
2. **the invaluable lessons** I learned along the way and
3. **a challenge for you** (that I will share in the end of this ebook).

(The Journey – part 1)

I always wanted my own business so I could be the "boss" and have the "freedom" to do whatever I wanted. From time to time, I would think of starting on my own – but either I was scared of taking the plunge or business idea did not appeal to me for one reason or another.

My entrepreneurial journey started after I quit my job somewhere in August 2007.

The initial period of 3-4 months after the resignation was not good. Nothing concrete materialized. Got frustrated. Started disliking the world and blah blah...

But somewhere I had to start.

So with no knowledge of the business world (what & how it works) -- I took that plunge and started a software development company from my balcony.

Somehow got one lead from a local scaffolding company. They wanted me to develop a small software application for their accounting purposes.

I was not good at programming the software (for which I was appointed) but I knew how to create the architecture (the blue print) – so I asked my friend, who is an expert in programming, and promised him I would give him some money to do the coding for me once I had drafted the architecture, database design etc. My friend agreed and started coding during his off time. I gave him company on Saturday & Sunday nights.

... very briefly, that project failed. I did not get my money.  
(a lesson was learnt that “don’t promise what you can’t deliver”)

## **I was back to the square one, once again - in my balcony.**

For coming days I did nothing because I avoided giving presentations, meeting new people etc. (was sort of disappointed with the first failure...)

After that failure I concluded that software development was not my cup of tea.

Then I decided to go for something that I could do by myself – website designing and email marketing.

After few weeks I got two small website projects and made loss in them (because at that time I had no idea how to charge for my services – as a result I undercharged).

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(The Journey – part 2)

## **After few more knock-out sessions – I finally got a break.**

I was approached by the director of designer wooden flooring company for email marketing services for his company.

Bingo!!

I was just looking for something like this... (thing which I could myself)

I scheduled a meeting and met him and gave presentation with my “ok-ok” knowledge about web 2.0 world..

Post that meeting I was given a small work on email marketing.

The service delivery was a hit – the client was happy and gave me a monthly retainer assignment.

## **My first business contract was made.**

Since it was my first retainer client – I gave my super-duper best. I maintained high availability. Always delivered far more than what client expected.

The director was really impressed and delighted with my services – so he introduced me to his businessmen friend >> there also I started with email marketing.

Eventually I became an outsourced agency for all web related works.

Today it's more than 2½ years since I have been working with them – my billing has increased 5x since the time I started with. And now they are more than a client – they are a friend – a mentor (whenever they get an opportunity they guide me on how to do better in my entrepreneurial endeavour).

And during these periods of exploration I did some PR assignments, teaching etc. - made some quick money (as it was needed to provide oxygen to my business).

Since these two clients I have added more retainer clients (few big names also).

Looking at my repeat business - I can proudly say that my client-satisfaction rate is more than 90%.

Apart from these retainer clients, in 2008 I also launched, probably the world's first full Social Networking Site in Hindi, “Mitwaa.com”. The project could not take-off due to lack of funds and proper planning.

Then I launched a national news portal, IndiaNewsPost.com – it is doing better than Mitwaa.

Today I am making more money than I would have made had I continued working in a company (as an employee). I enjoy my lifestyle. I can be with my parents when I want. I choose work. I choose work location. Taking that plunge was really a fun-filled adventure. (O yes – it was not easy – but it was worth plunging).

## **Now my business seems to be ready for the next level.**

I will write another ebook on my fully-baked entrepreneurial journey and new lessons learnt (after some more worthwhile milestones are achieved).

And I must share that >> through this short write-up I am not trying to brag about my so-called “heroic” works or my “struggles”. No - that’s not the idea.

This ebook is about that:

- **I took that plunge and made it** (and am trying for the next level)
- And **want to encourage you to take that plunge and make it.**

You may have many reasons for not starting your own (which is also fine) - but I feel everyone should taste the adventure of taking that plunge.

More than you, I will be happy if you take that plunge and make it.

In your success,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Akshar". The letters are cursive and fluid.

Akshar yadav

P.S.: if you want to know what I do & how I do it - visit my company website [www.centronicssupport.in](http://www.centronicssupport.in)

P.P.S: I definitely need more business to move on to Level 2.If you can refer somebody who I can work with, I will be thankful to you.

# What is not in this ebook

Don't expect some magic money-making formula from this ebook

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This ebook will not tell you how to:

- **Makes \$10,000 per month from the Internet**
- **Attract over 1,000 visits to your tweets**
- **Generate a million sales by using SEO** (Search Engine Optimization)

I am still trying to figure out how to make millions from the Internet :)

As I make my first million dollars from the Internet – I will write another ebook sharing the lesson.

(( ( this ebook is to push you – inspire you to taste the spirit of entrepreneurial journey )))

# The 5½ whys

Why you should take that plunge now

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Here are my top 5 ½ reasons - **why you should take that plunge now**:

1. Starting own business is easier than ever. In the times of Facebook and Twitter your business is open to the whole world. And lots of success stories, support groups, blue-prints, etc. are available to launch your business safely.
2. When you work for yourself – you are the architect of your business (and life). You have the complete power & choice to design it the way you want (...this opportunity is rarely available in the 9-5-job world).
3. If you choose to do the business of something you love the most – you will be happy the most (even in bad times).
4. You can make far more money by doing your own business than you could ever make on your job. Actually there is no limit to how much money you can earn. It's upto you how well you manage & expand the show.

5. All of us have come with a unique talent. By starting your own you will do your karma for which you came here (if you don't know how to discover your karma – email me I shall share the technique to discover that – atleast that will give you some thinking points and you can take it forward from there).

5 ½ Taking that plunge will give you lots of Freedom (all kinds of).

“The world needs our dreams now more than ever.  
And you're never too old to make a dream come true!”

- Marcia Wieder

# Survival tips

25 invaluable lessons learnt & suggested for taking that plunge

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1. **Don't sleep in the afternoons** (even if you don't get business and your life seems to be stuck).

Sleeping in the afternoon will never get you business (I slept in the afternoons because I had no work – this kept me behind for many months).

2. **Have your visiting-cards ready.** And proudly write CEO or Director or Founder or whatever inspires you.

Why feel shy about telling that “I am the owner... – I started my company yesterday and I need some business... can you help?”

Don't worry about the design of your visiting card in the beginning – I never got business because my visiting card was sexy.

3. **Have small-chunk goals.** Don't spend life defining your long-term business goals, vision & mission statement (that can be defined & re-defined as you achieve Level 1).

Set goals that can be easily achieved (this will keep you motivated and keep you

moving). Once your game gets better & bigger try setting better & bigger goals (if possible try to keep an organizer – I am also trying to use organizer ;)

4. Don't be shy about **asking for referrals** from your neighbour or old-colleague. I never did that, and consequently, wasted many months without new business.

5. **Watch the movies, The Secret & The Shift**

Do this at the earliest – taking that plunge will be little easier then.

(( ( both movies left a major positive impact on my life )))

6. Don't cut off your community or social circle – even your life & business is not working the way you had intended. Its normal tendency to withdraw from circle if one is doing well (as expected out of him/ her).

**Share your failures and defeats with your friends.** Some of them will help you. And those who will not help you will make you strong.

7. **Acknowledge “that” fear** (of unknown).

That's natural. It shows you are a human – not a robot.

I still have “that” fear.

Act as if you don't care – fear will fade away slowly.

8. What is your product or service? Can you explain it to an 8-years old kid?

If not – then **clearly define what are you selling...** what benefits (not features) and results it will give to your clients...

When I started I had no clarity about my product. I was confused. What am I selling and what is my product... was not clear.

After playing the game – I have gained decent clarity about myself – my business & my product.

9. Also, **define your customers** – without it you will keep selling right product to wrong customer and keep thinking Akshar didn't emphasize much about defining that customer thing in this ebook...

10. Understand that whatever you sell, **you are in the business of marketing.**

Learn some solid tips on marketing. Ask your friends who are marketing champions themselves. Google. Dive into Wikipedia. (Along with these I recommend reading Duct Tape Marketing by John Jantsch).

11. Even if you don't like reading – still **make a habit of reading books**, reference materials, articles and blogs from industry – otherwise prepare to perish.

More than your formal degree, your self-education and a commitment to lifelong learning are vital to overall success in business (& life).

Should you have any difficulty in reading – pls do a small course “Learning How to Learn” by L. Ron Hubbard (this is a very powerful technology that reveals why we don't understand or comprehend what we read and what to do about that...).

12. **Open a personal Facebook account.** And don't try to sell anything from it.

Open another Facebook account for business purposes (this is an important tip a Facebook marketer will ever give you – and charge \$\$\$ for it – ha ha ha – that's also how young champs make money on the Internet).

13. **Get a decent-looking “content-rich” website for your business.**

Email me for assistance – I will guide you. I know what works (for start-ups & small businesses) and will suggest you the best of best advice (but at a cost).

14. Pay less attention on the fact that your English is not good or your presentation skills are not upto the mark. **Focus on your good areas and continue to give basic presentations in basic English** – you will soon learn both of them (as I have learned).

This point applies to your blogs as well. So start writing that blog which you have been thinking for a long. There will never be perfect time for that – write your first draft tonight...

15. **Keep fine-tuning your product / service** (i.e. always be in the mode of improving the quality of your product or service).

16. Tell your customers you don't know how to do it – but you can get it done somehow.

The point is >> **don't promise what you can't deliver and tell the truth that you can get it done and you will do it because you have confidence in yourself**, and

you want to grow & move ahead with this business.

17. **And it's fine to lose clients.**

That's life.

There must be a reason you lost that client. **Check with your inner self – what lesson you needed to learn...** you will get an answer.

18. **Exert that extra discipline on yourself.**

PLEASE DONT FALL INTO THE TRAP OF BEING IN A COMFORT ZONE – this has affected me the most.

19. **Do something regular to sharpen your mind** >> I recommend yoga, prayer, meditation, reading self-help books...

20. Bluntly **reject the philosophy of NEEDING FUNDS FOR BUSINESS** – every business in the world started small - with no money (I also started with almost no money).

21. **Get business on the merit of your work** – not by luring clients with gifts/ booze... This will not work for long.

22. **Be in touch** with your friends, relatives, customers, associates and everybody else. Use Twitter, Facebook & Email marketing – it will pay you in the long run.

23. **Discover your niche.** Increase knowledge in your domain.

24. **Above all the points mentioned above – more than anything else – your DESIRE (your inner fire) to start your own is important.**

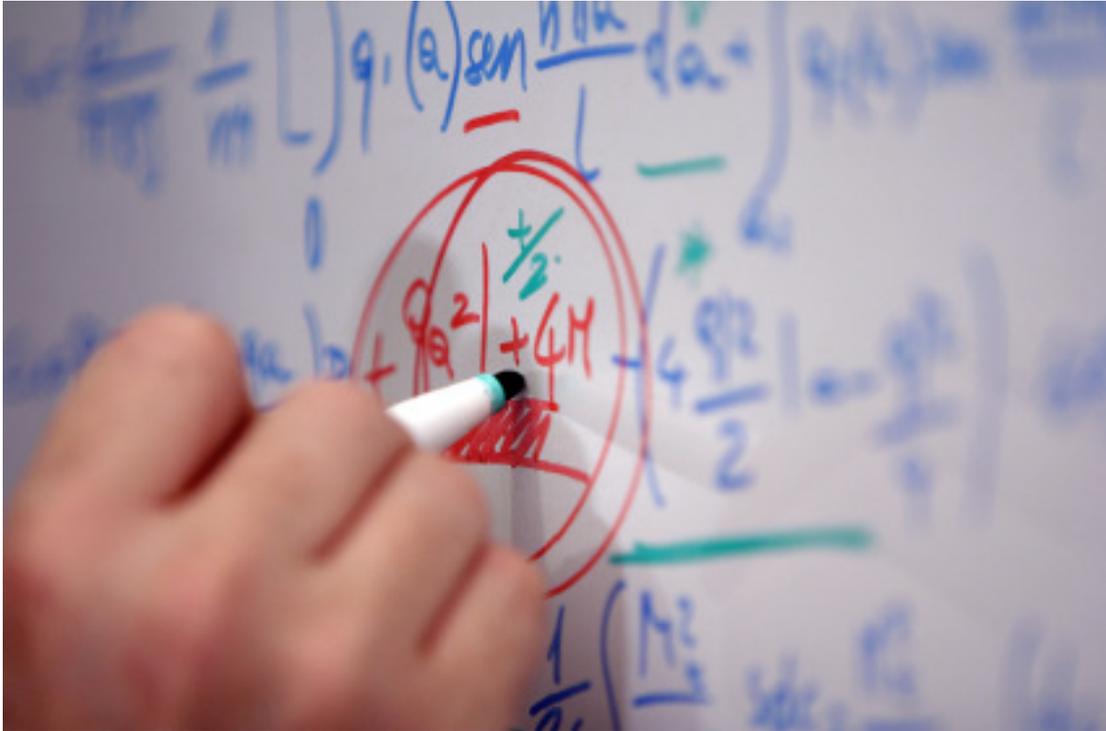
**If you are starting your own business thinking that you will have to work less and you will make more money – then you are leaning against the wrong wall. Don't make that mistake – pls be safe in that job or wherever you are.**

25. **And be patient.** It takes time to become something worthwhile.

# sure-shot The <sup>^</sup> formula for success

An important tip that gave me most business

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“If you continue to deliver what your customers want – you will continue to get what you want.”

This worked very well for me.

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Just focus on >>

**DELIVERING WORLD-CLASS SERVICES AT A REASONABLE COST.**

Clients / new work will follow (don't get into the logic of this but it will follow – at least it worked for me)

# My challenge to you

Don't die with your music still in you

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The main reason of writing this ebook is to dehypnotize you – to challenge you so that you too can take that plunge.

It's not as difficult as it seems.

I know many friends who want to start their own. And they have far more resources than I had when I took that plunge – but they are still riding the same old bike with the same old excuses.

What they don't want to confront is that they can always come back to the job-world when they want (they will get another job in another company - if not in the same company).

Another reason I have found that people who have not started the adventure is that they have some false information about starting their own. If that is your case – I would encourage you to study only those people who made it – study them and do what they did – you will get some success (if not the super-success like them).

You may talk about recession times – you may talk about uncertainty of getting clients – you may also talk about risk of failing etc – whatever are your “buts” & “ifs”– i will still push you to take up the challenge and plunge.

Do you know the greatest percentages of millionaires were created during the Great Depression. The new Internet-driven economy is about to produce similar success stories.

So my challenge for you is to

**Start that company you always dreamt of...**

But start.

And take that plunge!



# Why I am mad about you...

Reasons why I want you to take that plunge

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In case you are thinking why I am mad about you starting on your own – it's because

1. **One day somebody had inspired me to take that plunge and my life changed for better.** I am grateful for that person... by writing this ebook I am paying a tribute to that person...
2. Second reason - I have written this small ebook as a means to **give back what I've learned in past 2-3 years from my entrepreneurial journey.**

Somebody taught me that if you give away your knowledge selflessly, your brain becomes wired to learn more. It's also nice to receive a thank you email from friends who were stuck and took that plunge (after this ebook).

Isn't it exciting?

**Why don't you also write an ebook like this** or totally different from this, on what you know - about your life - your wins/ losses - your story...

And I would certainly love to quote some of the quotable quotes from your ebook in my forthcoming ebook...

# The traveller

A quick note about me...

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I am an internet entrepreneur.

A self-starter, who believes that everyone should taste the adventure of starting his/ her own business (at some point in their life – earlier the better).

Starting own business is not monopolized by some rare breed of people. They are just like you & me.

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I do web stuffs.

My company Centronics Support specializes in Website Re-designing & Email Marketing services for start-ups & small businesses.

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My aim in life is to become rich – enjoy life – do something remarkable for the planet earth.

Photography, Internet surfing and reading self-help books are my hobbies.

# Free resources to help YOU succeed

## FREE EBOOKS –



1. **Emailicious** (my free ebook on Email Marketing – a real world story of how an entrepreneur turned around his small business completely by implementing a kick-ass email marketing strategy formulated by yours truly) -- <http://www.centronicssupport.in/emailicious.php>
2. **Website Talkies** (a free ebook on how an enterprising business owner turns around his business by being proactive and redesigning his website) -- <http://www.centronicssupport.in/website-talkies.php>
3. **Take That Plunge!** (a short and inspirational read on my own half-baked entrepreneurial journey) -- <http://www.centronicssupport.in/take-that-plunge.php>

## FREE E-COURSES –



1. **How to Build a Website that Works** (Learn all the finer points about building website that really works) -- <http://www.centronicssupport.in/ecourse-how-to-build-website-that-works.php>
2. **Beginners Guide to Email Marketing** (an introductory course on permission based email marketing) -- <http://www.centronicssupport.in/ecourse-beginners-guide-to-email-marketing.php>
3. **Hot Response Email List Building Secrets** (an unique course revealing secrets known to professional email marketer on how to build email database fast) -- <http://www.centronicssupport.in/ecourse-hot-response-email-list-building-secrets.php>



See all here <http://www.centronicssupport.in/free-resources.php>



The place where your greatest fears live is also  
the place where your greatest growth lies.  
Why would you not visit that place?

~ ROBIN SHARMA ~