

Entrepreneurs: Take Back 10 Hours a Week by Outsourcing These 7 Peripheral Tasks

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As an entrepreneur, are you struggling with this mental block: “If you want it done right, do it yourself?” If you’re a small business owner, you might think that outsourcing is something only bigger companies need to do, or that the risks are just too great.

That kind of thinking could be holding you back. The internet has changed the way we think about making money. Many highly professional people have been forced to leave the corporate environment, and now make an income online by offering their advice and skills at reasonable rates. It’s quicker and easier than ever to find people with just the skills you need.

Online entrepreneurs are making use of this opportunity. Outsourcing makes sense in a lot of ways, despite the risks (which you can minimize).

This post reveals seven tasks that are most likely peripheral to your core business. By outsourcing some of them, you’ll free up a great deal of time to concentrate on what really matters – boosting your income.

1. Bookkeeping

Keeping track of receipts and bills calls for a lot of attention to detail, and it takes time. Mistakes happen when you’re in a hurry or when your mind is focused on something else – like reeling in that new client, for example. Hiring a good bookkeeper for a few hours a week is a strategy that has helped online businesses become more successful, particularly during that crucial startup phase.

What will it cost? Eileen P. Gunn, [writing for Entrepreneur](#), estimates as follows:

The rates for hiring a bookkeeper on a part-time basis in the U.S. can range from \$15 to \$60 an hour, depending on location, the workload and whether work is done at the company's office or from home.

Consider what you would be able to earn during the hours you spend on basic bookkeeping. Also keep in mind that someone who specializes in this kind of task should be able to get it done in a fraction of the time.

2. Taxes and Accounting

Is it better to hire a bookkeeper or an accountant? Chances are you may need both. A bookkeeper can handle the basic daily or weekly tasks, but you might also need some expert advice when the tax year comes to a close.

The majority of online entrepreneurs use the likes of [QuickBooks](#), and while many solutions like this have functions that simplify doing your taxes, it's still a complex task. Tax laws can be more intricate than a Chinese puzzle.

Forbes recommends: "[Consider outsourcing all of your accounting and finance function](#), which could include using a "fractional" CFO who would spend a few hours a week as your company's finance executive."

Finding just the right person for the job will take a bit of trial and error, and it's a risk you'll have to weigh up, but the benefits make the effort worthwhile. One way to narrow the search is to use your social networks, particularly [LinkedIn](#), to get a referral from someone you know and trust to find a good accountant.

3. IT Support

Your network and your IT equipment are probably your most important tools if you're making a living online. Downtime often means a loss of income. Unexpected repair and maintenance costs can hurt your cash flow.

The benefits of outsourcing include being able to predict, limit, and control your costs to a set monthly fee. You'll also free up the time it would have taken you to figure it all out on your own.

One risk to consider is getting locked into a contract with a vendor, and another is that you'll have to allow access to your private network.

Finding the right IT partner can be tricky. The IT Donut shared some [good advice on how to narrow down your options](#) and figure out exactly what you need.

4. Social Media Management

Your online reputation is vital, and you can't trust it to just anybody. But count the hours you've spent curating your social media updates, and think about all the legwork that goes into it. On average, mid-sized companies spend [32 hours per month](#) on social media management.

While you'll still want to keep a watchful eye on what gets posted, outsourcing this aspect of your marketing makes sense. You don't need to outsource the entire task, either. You can get someone to [set up and launch all your accounts](#), or pay someone to create content for you, or merely reply to comments.

5. Administration

Those dreaded administrative tasks can seem never-ending. There are emails to reply to, appointments to schedule, data to be entered – the list goes on.

Many of these tasks can be taken care of by a [\(Virtual Assistant \(VA\)\)](#). The beauty of doing so is that you don't need to hire someone full-time, and you don't need to buy another desk, another computer, or add an extension to your phone line.

Hiring one is easy on platforms like [Guru](#), [Upwork](#) or [Freelancer](#). Having said that, working with people comes with its fair share of challenges. Make sure you know [exactly what you need](#) before you decide to outsource your admin.

6. Payroll

Even if you employ only one person, managing payroll takes time, and it needs to be done right. Employees, as well as federal, state, and local tax collection agencies need to be paid in full, on time, and in the proper manner. Usually, late payments mean penalties.

The *good* news for you is that payroll administration is a competitive market. Your [costs](#) could be as low as between \$0.80–\$2.00 per check, plus a base account fee.

The downsides are that you'll be sharing financial and sensitive information with an outside party, and ultimately, your company will still be responsible for processing deductions correctly, even if the fault lies with the service provider. You'll need to weigh up your approach accordingly.

7. Sales and Marketing

Social media marketing has made sales accessible to just about everyone, but it's still a time-consuming process, and isn't as easy as simply putting your company name out there and watching the sales roll in.

The online sales process can be like a rabbit hole – the more you learn about it, the more there is to learn.

Fortunately, help can be at hand. For example, Forbes lists [15 areas of marketing](#) that are ideal for outsourcing, including responding to comments, submitting to directories, syndicating content, conversion rate optimization, and creating marketing reports. You don't have to outsource your marketing wholesale; outsourcing simple, discrete tasks can save you a great deal of time.

Conclusion

Outsourcing makes sense when it saves you time and money, and yes, there are of course risks. You'll need to weigh up exactly which tasks and sub-tasks you're willing to hand over, and which you aren't.

Unless your core business is bookkeeping, accounting, IT support, administration, social media management, payroll, or sales, there's really no reason not to hand over some or all of these functions to an expert. What takes you two hours might get done by someone else in one, and it might get done more professionally too. Best of all, it frees you up to dedicate yourself in the areas of your business where you offer the most value.

Have you experienced the pleasures and pains of outsourcing? What worked for you and what didn't? Share your thoughts in the comments section below – we'd love to hear them!