

From Opportunity to Overwhelm

How To Deal With Information Overload



By Colin Arthur Wiebe

How To Deal With Overwhelm and Information Overload.

Is too much information hitting you all at once?

Do you feel like your life has become complicated. Have you actually read your manuals to learn how to use your new laptop, your cell phone, your DVD player, your big screen TV, your video camera? If you are like me, the answer is no.

There used to be a time when you wanted the gadgets with the most features. Now, you look for the ones with the least amount of features that are simple to use. Do you have stacks of books, DVD's, CD's, magazines, courses and workbooks?

Are you trying to find the secret sauce to making money online?

Are you feeling overwhelmed and exhausted just thinking that you might not be able to keep up? Are you feeling like you are not really on top of your game.

Are you afraid that you don't know - what you really need to know?

I'm writing this report because I went through a serious bout of information overload myself. I don't want *you* to make the same mistakes I did. Don't skim this report and leave it to collect digital dust. Try to really comprehend this lesson.

I'm a singer/songwriter and have played professionally since I got out of high school. When the music business took a hit a few years ago I turned to the internet to help me finance my recording dreams. I have to admit that I got caught up in the hype. I got consumed with buying stuff from gurus and never made the effort to implement the true "basic" fundamentals.

Information overload caused me to feel stressed out and exhausted and the more I searched for the secret sauce, the more it eluded me.

We're all being hit with too much information and it's hard to know which information is valuable and which information is not. It's hard to know which information is most applicable to us and which information we can ignore.

It's hard to know who we can totally trust and who is just trying to sell us something. (Please read the last page to get some valuable ideas.)

We thrive on information and with an online business, things change so fast we must stay on top of it. We must be able to sift through the information and make decisions as to what information is applicable to our unique circumstances.

If you are not making choices based on any kind of planned criteria then odds are you are not getting the best information because you are being overloaded with too much information to sift through.

80 percent of health related problems are caused by stress-related issues and information overload is a major contributor to stress and tension. Anxiety, stress, poor decision making, reduced attention span, tiredness, and difficulties in memorizing and remembering.

Psychologist, David Lewis calls these symptoms “Information Fatigue Syndrome”. IFS is like drinking too much. You can’t do anything except lie down and take a nap. Your mind is clouded with data smog.

*“The competitive advantage we gained from getting **more** information **faster** is starting to disappear; now, it’s how do we get **more relevant** information.”*

So what we all need is a plan.

We need an understanding of the role that information plays in our lives and in our business. We need to have the knowledge of what we need, in order to move to the next level to reach our goals and objectives. We also need to understand that there will be a lot of information that we will simply have to say no to.

Yup, just say no.

Think of information like a buffet. We are all uncomfortably full and yet there is so much more to try and taste. You want eat everything but you physically can’t.

What we need is to have clarity as to what information we really need, what would be optional, and what we should save to learn later.

If you are just starting out, you are in a great place because so much of the trial and error work has been done. Other successful entrepreneurs have been able to weed through mis-information and come out with great strategies you can piggy back on. Finding which ones will work for you is usually the challenge.

The first thing you will need to learn is, how to pick which system is the right approach for you. You must be crystal clear on what to do and what you need to do next. Then, when you get offered a shiny new tactic or you read a sales letter that gets you all excited and tempts you to shift your business model, you can politely pass on the offer and stick to your game plan.

Are you taking on too much..

When you take on too much you lose your focus. You need to be focused to grow a business and to be successful online. When your eyes are bigger than your stomach, you know what happens when you enter the buffet.

I've played many concerts in Las Vegas and in many of the casinos along the Mississippi. The food buffets in those places are spectacular but the amount of food that's wasted everyday is shocking. People would load their plates and then not eat even half of what they took. Then they would leave the plate half full and go get a clean plate and start over! Are you doing this with information?

How many books and courses are on your shelf? How many e-books are collecting digital dust choking your hard drive. How many reports go unread?

I love to collect information and it wasn't until I found an old coaching outline from the late Corey Rudl that it dawned on me that I had never really studied the fundamentals properly. Nothing has changed in almost a decade. Sure we've seen advances in technology but just like reading, writing and arithmetic, the basics of online and offline marketing have remained constant.

For example, I didn't just pick up a guitar or sit down to the piano and play songs when I was starting out, I had to learn the basics. Once I understood "how" to play, then I could concentrate on "what" to play.

When you are scattered and spread thin, you really don't have the expertise in any specific area. If I tried to learn 10 or 20 songs at the same time I would become overwhelmed and give up. Instead I learn one song at a time and add it to my repertoire. Over time I have developed an extensive song list that continues to grow. Remember, I had to learn basic chords and music fundamentals first. Please apply this metaphor to your business.

Your focus determines your success. Information overload destroys focus. You can never know everything there is to know about internet marketing or marketing in general. Nobody can. You need to know, what your business needs you to know. That's a simple model you can follow.

In other words, you don't have to learn Pay Per Click advertising until you have something to sell. Everything changes so fast. Learn what you need to know to get to the next step of your plan.

The good news is that other people are spread thin as well. This means that if you do focus, if you concentrate your energy on your specific business, you will stand out above everybody else.

Your attention is a precious asset. If you focus your attention on the wrong things your chances for success are slim. If you focus on too many things you are unlikely to be successful. You will want to focus only on those things that will drive your business forward. You must start to understand how valuable your attention really is.

When I book a studio to record a song or an album, I block book it. This is a term for locking out all other sessions so the entire focus of the studio revolves around my project. It's amazing how the energy shifts forward and the momentum picks up when there are no distractions. Time actually slows down and creativity is the byproduct.

You've most likely experienced this if you've worked on something with complete, uninterrupted focus. Think of weeding the garden or cutting the lawn. You don't take calls while mowing, you don't check your email. You simply follow the pattern that you have designed to get the job done.

Like a recording studio for hire, block book your projects.

I set a timer when I work for a two reasons. First, I like to have a beginning and an end to my work session, and second, I like to get a good idea of how long things take. By knowing how long things really take I can plan my time better.

During the writing of my first album I learned to get rid of time wasters. I cut out television, video games, web surfing, chatting on the phone and anything else that didn't serve my governing purpose which was to get pre-production finished

for my record. I had to make a lot of sacrifices that were tough at first, but ultimately ones that were worth it, and ones I'd do again in a second. I began to reclaim time because I had "purpose". When you have a project, when you have purpose, you can find time.

My friend and mentor Steve Chandler, compares it to having a plane to catch. If you know you have a flight booked tomorrow and you have to be at the airport at a certain time, you will be there. If you get a call or a request from a customer or client, it's easy to tell them that you have a flight to catch. You are confident in asking to re-schedule the call or meeting, and you then proceed to the airport. You have purpose, you have a clearly defined goal (the flight to catch) and so you arrange your schedule to accommodate.

You have this precious resource that if you use it wisely you will be rewarded more than you can imagine. If you put your attention in the wrong place, it doesn't matter how hard you work, how many hours you put in, how many people you know, your chances of success are slim to none.

Information overload is a symptom. There is something that is making you reach out for more when you already have enough. Like the food waste from the buffet, you're not even going to take action on the information you already have on your plate. You need to have a knowledge management system. You need to have a place where you park good ideas.

I have an idea jar. I used a hammer and nail to put air holes in the lid to keep the ideas alive but I write my ideas on a piece of paper and drop them into the jar until I am ready to revisit them. They will always be there until I return. This frees up mental space allowing new ideas to germinate.

The symptom of information overload must have a root cause. What is causing you so much fear and doubt? Is it insecurity? Is it confusion? Are you worried about missing something? What is the root cause of your lack of success? Here is a perfect question to ask yourself, This question can cut through the fog.

What's the one piece of information that would move my business forward faster?

Ask yourself the tough questions and take the time to write down the answers.

You will need to know your objectives. You'll need to determine what decisions and actions you'll need to take in order to achieve those objectives, and then, (only then) you'll need to understand what information is required to make those decisions and take action.

This process reveals the gap. The gap between where you are and where you want be. This is where you'll want to focus your attention.

Work backwards from the end result you desire.

For example if your goal is to have a website that earns \$1000 a month on autopilot then simply fill in the gap. I may offer my case study as an example another time because that is exactly what I wanted to achieve in the beginning. My goal was to build a site that would pay my car payment and pay for my online tools and subscriptions.

Once you know your objective, there is no reason to be checking out every commercial offer that comes into your inbox. When you are a ready for something, there are ways of finding it. Most products you can get for free when you are perceived as a peer. Don't waste your precious energy and attention watching someone else's commercials. It will only overwhelm you even more.

Just stay focused on your chosen path.

If you wish to study a marketer's sales process then by all means do that but only after you have a product ready to sell. Don't put the cart before the horse.

Your inbox is not your to do list. The distractions you allow into your inbox, become nothing more than cash grabbing, infotainment. it's targeted intellectual entertainment designed to extract cash from your wallet. It's like watching late-night infomercials during your work day. Stop doing this.

Develop a knowledge management system. For example, I needed a way to capture ideas and trap the types of information I thought would benefit my business during it's various stages. I designed a pipeline for information. I learned to process, digest and implement information as I needed it. I set valves to monitor and crimp the steady stream of irrelevant information.

The reticular activating system is the part of the brain that is responsible for processing all the information that is coming into it and feeding your conscious

minds what it deems to be important. By identifying what information I required to complete a project or task, my brain found a way to filter out and serve up what I needed. this works with people too. You will be amazed at who will help you when you know what you need.

Use this information to break away from the crowd. Here's a simple breakdown.

- Set a specific goal, let's say it's to earn \$5k a month online
- What are your earning online now? Even if it's \$0 that's OK.
- Identify the GAP - The Gap from \$0 would be to make \$166 in sales per day.
- Most niche sites set up properly should bring in \$20 to \$200 a day or more
- Maybe you need 4 sites bringing in \$40 a day or two bringing in \$80

So what other knowledge would you need to know, to reach that outcome?
Make a list.

- You'll need to pick a proven system that shows you how to do this
- Identify the time, resources, people and budget needed.
- Use VEO tactics to drive traffic
- Move from an input to an output mindset.
- Celebrate when you have achieved your objectives

I can tell you that when you begin to break things down all fear will go away.

When I finally showed my spouse the thousands of dollars coming into my PayPal account she became a believer. I became a believer!

Once you achieve a small milestone, you'll have such incredible momentum that you'll want to work night and day. When you can teach others the process (like I'm doing) you will feel a sense of value and contribution.

You can achieve your dreams if you focus on your purpose.

I'd be remiss if I didn't extend to you what I think is one of the greatest training opportunities on the internet... <http://freeoutsourcingcd.com/colin.html>

I learned the basics of getting free traffic from working with Colin McDougall, however, I realized that unless I had a system in place that I could follow step-by-step I didn't have the patience to use that traffic without a clear path to revenue.

Luckily, I met a former Youth Pastor, now a millionaire, who has identified 8 models that can make you money in 2010. he uses these methods himself.

I have a booked a call with him on Monday, February 1, 2010 to walk me through the 8 models. I challenge you to pick a model, put a stake in the ground and make it work! Make more money this year! You deserve it.

Now I ask you to "risk" some time and put faith in me to help you with your goals.

Seriously - get on this call. You'll thank me for years to come.

<http://freeoutsourcingcd.com/colin.html>