

Choose Your Niche

A successful toolbar depends on a successful niche. Being focused on a specific target market (what marketers refer to as segmentation) is key in making money from your toolbar. Choosing a niche that you're passionate about is a great way to start the process. I believe it's crucial to come up with ideas that play to your interests and strengths. This is the most important phase in the process, so put some time and thought into it.

What's a toolbar niche?

That's the area you'd like to devote 100% of your efforts toward a segment of a market, instead of the whole market.

Choose a toolbar niche that's perfectly suited to you. Basically, it's where you'll be able to succeed and thrive.

Think of your potential users when you look for a niche. A toolbar targeted at "Camel Shepherds in the Sahara Desert" won't get much downloads, regardless of your efforts to update the useful links. Not even if it could help any camel shepherd, anywhere...

How do you begin?

It's actually easier than you might think. Look within you: what are you absolutely passionate about? What do you find interesting enough to share with others? For me, music is a passion, always has been. I chose to make it the focus of my toolbar business. If you're going to deliver something, it should be something you know well and that you're good at. Do something you love doing. It might be a cliché but it's true nonetheless. If you do what you love, you're more likely to be good at it.

Here are my tested and proven methods for choosing a niche that will online profits. Follow them step by step to build your own money-making toolbar.

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Start a little research

List all your know-hows, professional skills, hobbies, interests. This could have something to do with your profession, your studies or hobbies. After you look within, look around. Ask your friends and family to share with you their opinions on how good you are at the things you listed.

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Search for keywords

Type your keyword (skill, hobby, profession) in Overture's Keyword Tool and check-out the results. How many searches have been conducted during the last month on that particular subject? How many on related topics? This is a great way to see what's in demand on the market.

Another recommended site to check out is Google Trends. There you can find the hottest, best selling topics of the hour. Check out your passion: is it trendy?

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Take a reality check

The next step is to check what the world says about your passions. Are they in demand? How many people will be ready to download your toolbar? Remember, you have to create something the market is interested in. Spending a month building a toolbar nobody cares about is a complete waste of time and energy.

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Join forums

Find the groups on the internet discussing the topic you're passionate about. Join their forums to see what they're discussing.

By addressing like minded people you'll soon find out what kind of issues need to be tackled. Ask them what kind of questions they think need to be answered. Listen carefully to what they say: these are your potential customers. You are just discovering your own niche. While you're at it, why don't you make a habit of writing down your ideas? Get a notebook, keep it within arm's reach and jot down your insights and ideas real time.

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Collect and grade your findings

Compile all the info you collected and start grading it. Use any scale you wish and just grade it as per your desire to be

involved in this kind of project. I found this method very easy to do and very effective.

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Think of the toolbar as a web portal
If you could build your own web portal in 24 hours, what would it be about?

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Remember: Usability = Downloads
Usability is key to online profits from your toolbar. The more value-adding it is to your users, the more downloads you'll get. Make yours a killer toolbar by including popular components such as search box, a radio component and useful links related to your niche. Build it so that it would be hard for your users to give up such a great service.

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Address a wide niche, but not too wide
Select a niche that would attract as many users as possible. There are plenty of wide niches in which the chances of success of an effectively built toolbar are close to 100%.

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Choose a universal niche - Your toolbar theme could attract users from all over the world.

My universal niche is torrent search. Like 80% of the surfers, I too download TV series or a new movie. I saw the need for a tool to help me efficiently and quickly search for torrents on the web. I built the Torrent Search Bar which consists of 27 top Torrent Search engines. My toolbar is very useful for the huge file-sharing community, which immediately embraced it. The toolbar enables to download fresh Torrents as soon as they're released. The RSS box (which has 9 feeds) provides new Torrents with tons of seeds, a very attractive feature to the users. The Torrent search bar enjoys global success, while writing this over 650,000 people downloaded it!! At first I predicted it would get around 80 daily downloads, but it's getting tens of thousands and the numbers growing rapidly. The constant flow of great feedback helped me realize that I came up with the right toolbar at the right time. It's as if people were waiting for this kind of toolbar.

Check it out: <http://www.torrent-search-bar.com>

Recently, a friend from university saw my toolbars and decided to build one himself. He rightly estimated the buzz around youtube and google videos and came up with another great universal theme – online videos. His ILoveVideoz toolbar brings this much sought after content directly to the users' browsers and allows to search over the best video sharing sites.. The links he added are constantly updated for the hottest video content and software. The ILoveVideoz users get RSS feeds on new stuff and the option to distribute videos to the major video content sites is just a click away. This toolbar already has thousands of downloads a day and a constantly growing user-base. And yes, he's making money from the affiliate program in his niche. <http://www.ilovevideoz.com>

You can also win locally
Enjoying the sweet smell of success in a country-based niche is possible as well. I built unique toolbars for users of different countries and nationalities. This concept was a hit in every country I built a toolbar for.

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Deutschland Radio

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Israel Radio

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Radio Russia

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Radio UK

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Radio Netherlands

If you follow use these methods, you'll probably come up with 3-4 potential niches. Once you're there, it's easier narrow down your list and find your toolbar concept. Choose a topic and go ahead. Start building a money-making toolbar of your own.