

The Marketing Blog Book



MARKET

George Philip Birney

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by

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Welcome to this Marketing BlogBook. As the title may suggest, this book is a compilation of a series of marketing blogs on a business consulting website that I do not have anymore. The most read articles have been preserved and are now presented to you.

The structure may seem a bit at random, just like in the real world of marketing where everything is unexpected. But there is a definite line here. To become a very good marketer, you'd have to read, understand and apply everything in this book anyway. So, sequence is not an issue.

Enjoy! And happy marketing to you!

Content Marketing: How To Be Cautious And Successful In Affiliate Marketing

Affiliate Marketing is a great program. It provides those who want it with the means to set up their own home business. As an affiliate, you do work for another but you are rewarded for your work. The money you make is based on your individual performance not an hourly or yearly salary. Affiliate marketing provides many incentives to work harder and more efficiently. The harder and better you work, the more monetary success you are likely to see. Affiliate marketing also reduces the amount of risk. The main company handles the advertising and creation of the product allowing you to move the product in what ever way you think best.

One does need to be cautious in the field of affiliate marketing. For every great, legitimate opportunity out there, there are more ready to con. The internet has made it quite easy for these con artists to operate and even thrive.

Before you Plunge head first into the field on affiliate marketing you should do some checking. A general rule of thumb is to never do business with anyone that doesn't have a fixed address and telephone number. If all they have to offer is an email address then look for another company. Doing business only by email is very dangerous. It makes it far too easy for these con artists to slip away and never be heard from again. Unfortunately, when they slip away it is likely with your money or earnings.

If you find a company that you are interested in then check the start up costs. These should be minimal if any at all. Ask is there is a way to pay back the start up costs through your sales commission. Most are willing to do this. However, if there seems to be a lot of initial money that needs to be paid by you then find something else. The chances are good that they will take your money and run, leaving you with worthless product.

Finally, ask what support you will receive if you agree to become part of their affiliate marketing plan. There should be someone there to guide you through the process and answer any questions that you have. They should also offer you advice on how best to market their product. It is up to you in the ends but they should offer you some stat up ideas. If their legitimate company they should want to help you all they can. They more you are able to sell the greater benefit for them as well.

You should keep in mind that affiliate marketing takes a of work. It is like any other business except that the risk to you is much lower. Ignore companies that promise huge salaries with little effort, it just wont happen. Many people make great successes with affiliate marketing programs. However, they do work incredibly hard. However the rewards come when the hard work pays off. You're the one that will reap the rewards, not your boss.

Affiliate marketing is a great way to start working for yourself. With lots of hard work and creativity you could be well on your way to great earnings doing something that you enjoy. It wont be easy and in the beginning you'll have to work harder then you ever did in a full-time job. But if you're driven it will all be worth it in the end.

How To Avoid That Affiliate Marketing Scam

You have finally decided that the 9-5 day job isn't for you. You're tired of your work being undervalued and under-appreciated. You would like to work when you feel you are most productive, not when some boss or manager feels it is so. You are also tired of working hard with no incentive or reward scheme in place.

Affiliate marketing is a great opportunity for those who want to venture out on their own. The minimal risk and zero start up costs make it an attractive option to many. Affiliate marketing programs are perfect for those people who are motivated and self starters. They are also great for those who want to set their own working hours.

The internet has helped up change so many aspects of our lives. We can study and work from home with the help of a computer and high speed internet access. However, there are unfortunately lots of scammers out there ready to take either your money or your work to use for their benefit. Many of these email scam programs and work at home schemes have little hope of amounting to any kind of living.

Unfortunately, these scammers have made their way into the world of affiliate marketing as well. There are some excellent affiliate marketing programs to get involved with; the trick is how to spot the scammers.

The face and manner of the internet and affiliate marketing is constantly changing. This makes it very difficult to produce a definitive list of dos and don'ts. However, there are some signs that one can look for. If your company displays any of these signs it does not mean for sure that they are con artists. However, it should warrant further investigation.

An affiliate marketing program should always provide you with some support. This can include an agent that you can contact with questions or problems. A legitimate company should want you to do well. The better you do the better they do. It should at very least contain a toll free phone number, email address and fixed street address. If your company is an online affiliate marketing program, the lack of an email or web page should definitely raise some red flags. Other things such as no phone or address do not mean necessarily that they are trying to scam you. However, you need to investigate them with a fine tooth comb.

A good test is to send the company an email with some basic questions. If it takes them weeks to get back to you then you need to give this venture careful consideration. Again, they may not be out to con you but if they are poor at communication, this could be a sign of other internal problems.

If the company has no website then you should consider something else. Legitimate affiliate marketing programs generally have a detailed website with all the information you need. One should be suspicious of companies that operate only by email. A website is fairly easy to create so why hasn't this company invested the time to do so? Also, a website leaves a bit more of a trail to a company. If they do end up scamming you, the chances of tracing the

people via a website are much better than tracing them through masses of email addresses.

Many of us would love the opportunity to work for ourselves. We would love to chuck in the day job and start our own businesses. However, the costs of starting a business combined with the risk involved stop most of us before we even get started. Affiliate marketing is a great way to make some money by working for yourself. The costs are none and the risk minimal. One needs to use some caution when signing onto a program. Make sure there is adequate support available to you. Make sure the company is contactable and that they answer queries in a timely fashion. Be incredibly cautious of companies that have no website. These factors do not always mean that the company is out to scam you; however they should be looked at carefully.

Marketing: Two Steps

2 Step Marketing

Do it Right.

I receive postcards all the time. The other day I received a postcard trying to sell me a copy machine. It had tiny, tiny lettering slathered all over the front and a large portion of the back of the card.

It was extremely hard to read, so hard in fact that I threw it away.

Several days later I received a postcard with 32 words on it telling me that I could get complete information on unrestricted long distance telephone service for 5.5 cents a minute with no additional monthly fee by calling the 800 number on the card.

I did call. I got the information, had my questions answered and ordered my long distance service changed.

The company who offered me the long distance service was using a time tested 2 step selling process:

Step 1. Generate a lead – Get me to call their 800 number.

Step 2. Provide the requested information – Provided to me on the phone by one of their sales representatives, who was able to answer my questions and make me feel confident that I could save quite a bit of money on my long distance bill and that the service would be as good or better.

What's So Good About 2 Steps?

It is much easier to create interest (a lead) than it is to get a person through an entire buying process (a sale).

You aren't getting the prospect or existing customer to part with any money just yet.

You can use postcards to inexpensively promote to your target prospects and customers and generate leads (inquiries about your products and services) to then be followed up on and converted to sales.

This 2 step process also helps you to create a list of people who were interested enough in what you offered to contact you.

You can then recontact the one's who you didn't complete a sale with when they first inquired, preferably until they do buy from you.

IMPORTANT: Be sure to get the information you will need to recontact the people who responded to your postcard offering.

Repetitive follow-ups with the people who contacted you will result in increased sales. Make it a company policy to follow up with those people who contacted you about your products and services.

The Most Effective Use of Postcards:

The purpose of your postcard's message is to generate a sufficient level of interest in the mind of your prospect to get him/her to contact you to ask you about your offer.

You are generating interest, not collecting their money (not yet anyway). That is what the 2 step marketing process is about. Generating interested prospects and customers who contact you for more information.

Your message needs 3 parts to be most effective:

1.A clear statement of the biggest benefit of your product or service (in the long distance example, it was cost savings).

2.A good reason for them to contact you NOW.

3.A simple, easy way for them to respond (an 800 number for example).

Your message should be short and to the point. Short messages on postcards produce more leads than long ones.

For example:

Call 800-555-1234 for Your Copy of Our Free Report:

What 99% of Business Owners Don't Know and Will Never Find Out About Using Postcards to Explode Their Profits

Offer ends 5-5-01 (Print a date 3 weeks from your mailing date to create some urgency)

Lots of people will respond to find out what they might not know. Don't forget, they responded, which is least some interest in the information you have created a curiosity about.

This method works and is sure to produce a large number of inquiries if sent to your proper market.

This 2 Step Marketing Process Works.

Use the tips you have read here to create your next postcard's message and see what happens.

You will generate a bunch of leads from people who are truly interested in your products and services.

2 Sure-Fire Methods Proven To Convert More Customers

If you're a marketer your number one concern is customers. You've probably read and heard a million and one ideas about how to build relationships, retain customers, create a list of potential customers, and inspire consumer loyalty. But the tough question is, "How do I convert prospects into customers?"

There are a lot of people out there who see your ads, think about them, and maybe even say, "I ought to..." They're just waiting to be convinced to do something about it. There is something you can do to get them moving!

1. Improve Your Offer

No one can pass up the deal that's "too good to resist." Think about it... how often do your customers want your product, but just want something else a little more? That leaves you with a long list of "almost sales" that have the potential to be converted into real sales and profit. Sweeten the deal. Make the offer so good they can't resist it.

Now, I'm in no way suggesting that you drop your prices to sweeten the deal. You can just as easily load it up with bonuses to increase the perceived value without cutting away at your profit. Bonuses motivate sales, maybe even more than cut prices.

Don't let them lollygag. Yeah, get them into the store pronto with a deadline. They may have to put a competitor's purchase on hold to get your deal, but hey... what's wrong with that?

2. Follow Up

How would you like to increase your sales by more than 50 percent? Yeah, it sounds good!

There's really a very simple tactic that you can implement... follow ups.

Chances are, prospective customers aren't going to buy your product the first time they see or hear about it. Maybe it'll be the third or fourth, but they have to hear from you that third or fourth time before they actually become a customer. Do you have a follow up system in place?

Simply contact the "almost customer" every month with a new offer, or give them more information about the product they are showing interest in. It doesn't have to be an intricate process. Keeping the contact there goes a long way toward building trust... the key to finding life-long customers.

Internet Marketers experience a high number of customers who browse their site, then click away. You can't follow up without some form of contact information. A great way to gather the info you need is to offer a free ebook or informative report that consumers will find of interest. Once they've given you the information to email them the product, you have what you need to keep in contact, and work on converting them into loyal customers.

Personalize as much as possible. If you can get the first name of your customer... great! Personalized messages have greater appeal than "addressed to occupant" messages.

Marketing: Affiliate Marketing Businesses VS Sole Ownership

Being in the affiliate marketing business is not that hard now with the internet at your disposal. It is much easier now compared to the days when people have to make use of the telephones and other mediums of information just to get the latest updates on the way their program is coming along.

So with technology at hand, and assuming that the affiliate is working from home, a day in his or her life would sound something like this

Upon waking up and after having breakfast, the computer is turned on to check out new developments in the network. As far as the marketer is concerned there might be new things to update and statistics to keep track on.

The site design has to be revised. The marketer knows that a well-designed site can increase sign ups from visitors. It can also help in the affiliates conversion rates.

That done, it is time to submit the affiliate program to directories that lists affiliate programs. These directories are means to attract people in joining your affiliate program. A sure way of promoting the affiliate program.

Time to track down the sales you are getting from your affiliates fairly and accurately. There are phone orders and mails to track down. See if they are new clients checking the products out. Noting down the contact information that might be a viable source in the future.

There are lots of resources to sort out. Ads, banners, button ads and sample recommendations to give out because the marketer knows that this is one way of ensuring more sales. Best to stay visible and accessible too.

The affiliate marketer remembered that there are questions to answer from the visitors. This has to be done quickly. Nothing can turn off a customer than an unanswered email.

To prove that the affiliate is working effectively and efficiently, inquiries would have to be paid more attention on. Nobody wants to be ignored and customers are not always the most patient of all people. Quick answer that should appear professional yet friendly too.

In the process of doing all the necessities, the marketer is logged on to a chat room where he or she interacts with other affiliates and those under that same program. This is where they can discuss things on how to best promote their products.

There are things to be learned and it is a continuous process. Sharing tips and advices is a good way of showing support. There may be others out there wanting to join and may be enticed by the discussion that is going on. There is no harm in assuming what opportunities ahead.

The newsletters and ezines were updated days ago, so it is time for the affiliate marketer to see if there are some new things happening in the market. This will be written about in the marketers publication to be distributed to the old and new customers.

These same publications are also an important tool in keeping up to date with the newly introduced products. The marketer has put up a sale and promotion that customers may want to know about. Besides, they have to keep up with the deadline of these sales written in the publications.

It is that time to show some appreciation to those who have helped the marketer in the promotions and sale increase. Nothing like mentioning the persons, their sites and the process they have done that made everything worked.

Of course, this will be published in the newsletters. Among the more important information that have been written already.

The marketer still has time to write out recommendations to those who want credible sources for the products being promoted. There is also time to post some comments on how to be a successful affiliate marketer on a site where there are lots of wannabees.

Two objectives done at the same time. The marketer gets to promote the product as well as the program they are in. Who knows, someone may be inclined to join.

Time flies. Missed lunch but is quite contented with the tasks done. Bed time.

OK, so this may not be all done in a day. But then, this gives you an idea of how an affiliate marketer, a dedicated one that is, spends the marketing day.

Is that success looming in the distance or what?

Today, many of us want to back in our jobs and go to work for ourselves. However, the difference between those who want it and those that actually do it is staggering. Those that do make the attempt have two options open to them. Create their own sole proprietorship or create an affiliate marketing business. Both can be quite productive if they are successful.

Business requires a great deal of work despite the avenue you take. The more you're put in the more you are likely to get back. However, the sole proprietorship requires much more time and commitment and a much greater degree of risk. Creating your own business is extremely difficult. Unless you have a unique idea that is marketable you are going to have competition with other businesses. You have to create strategies to attract customers away from the already well known businesses in your area and over to yours. If you succeed the rewards can be immense but if you fail you could lose everything.

Affiliate marketing businesses provide several advantages in this area. First, you are marketing products that are already in existence. Fairly known brands are not so hard to sell especially if they have a good reputation. Good and trusted products will attract customers much faster than something new and unknown. Affiliate marketing takes care of all of this for you.

Being a sole proprietor is incredibly risky. If your business fails like the vast majority do your source of income has ended. Depending on how much debt your business had and how you financed the venture, you could lose much more than income.

Affiliate marketing takes the risk away. You are paid according to how well you perform. You do not need to worry how the business is performing overall. You get your commission based on what you sell. Affiliate marketing businesses are usually well established so you don't have to worry about them folding up at a moment's notice.

Advertising is a huge part of any business. If you're a sole proprietor, advertising depends on you. You have to have enough in your budget to hire someone or devise a campaign yourself. The first costs money and the latter requires a great deal of time.

With affiliate marketing, the advertising is taken care of for you. You're usually given all you need in the form of leaflets, catalogs and other product information. You are also likely given good advice on how best to sell the products. Affiliate marketing programs should try to help you as much as possible. They better you do the better they do.

Finally, many times you need support and advice when you run a business. If you're a sole proprietor, you'll have to hire out professionals for this. This runs into extra costs for your business. With affiliate marketing, there should be a representative on hand that you can

contact for support and advice. This service is usually free to all members.

Business is tough no matter how you slice it. Either route you take will require hard work and dedication. However, if you want to work for yourself, why not join a program where most of the work is done for you. With affiliate marketing, the risk is taken away. This allows you time to concentrate on what needs to be done. Making profits and creating your business.

Marketing: Affiliate Marketing Resources

Many of us would love to venture out on our own and work for ourselves. However, two major factors tend to get in the way. The first being money and the second being risk. These two factors should not be taken lightly. Even small businesses need a substantial amount of capital to get them started. The risk factor is even scarier. Up to 90% of all small businesses fail within the first year.

Affiliate marketing takes the risk away. It can also be started with next to 0 money. Affiliate marketing can be quite a lucrative venture. If you have a natural knack for sales or marketing and are self motivated and prepared to work hard then an affiliate marketing scheme could be a wise move for you.

Almost daily, you see advertised, courses and seminars that claim to hold the secret of instant wealth. By attending this course you will have all of the tools you need to get your business off the ground and become a millionaire. Those who want to start their own affiliate marketing business often attend these thinking that they will help their business thrive.

Courses and seminars more often than not, disappoint. First, these courses and seminars are usually quite expensive. You have the course or seminar fee. Plus any travel and hotel costs. Most of these are held in heavy tourist destinations around the country. Second, the person giving the seminar or course is usually on some kind of a promotional tour. While they do give out information at the course or seminar, their true goal is to sell you their latest book or software. The truth be told, everything you learned from that seminar was probably written in their book. You could have saved thousands if you had just bought their book and read it rather than shelling out for this course.

While it is true that you should educate yourself in affiliate marketing, the best resources are not courses. However, books are. By simply reading up on affiliate marketing, you can gain wonderful insights and save loads of money. By simply looking on retail sites such as Amazon or EBay, you can get hundred of titles on the subject. There are loads of step by step guides available on how to get your affiliate marketing business going and how to build it up.

Another great resource for affiliate marketing is the internet. Simply by typing affiliate marketing into any major search engine, loads of information comes up. There are plenty of free courses online that you can take on the subject if you are determined. Read through the information available to you for nothing. Chances are a course or a seminar won't teach you anymore than what you can learn online for free.

Magazines and news letters are fantastic resources for affiliate marketing. Newsletters are generally free and contain good, valuable information about particular programs. You'll hear account from people who are working in affiliate marketing. Their advice is worth having being that they are doing now what you want to be doing in the near future.

Finally, one of the advantages of joining an affiliate marketing program is the support that you receive. Any legitimate company should want you to succeed. The more profit you make, they better for them. They should have their own advice and support network that is available to you. This could be in the form of an agent whom you can contact or advertising materials. They may offer a wide variety of things to help you build your business. They can be one of the most important resources for you to rely on.

If you are considering a career in affiliate marketing, then you should find out what you are getting yourself into. Don't waste money on expensive seminars and courses. Look for books, newsletters, online information and the companies themselves. Some of the best information is available to you for free.

Affiliate Marketing Options

Have you been wanting to give your current job the shove for quite some time? Do you have the tune, take this job and shove it as your cell phone ring tone? Would you love to get into your own business but you're afraid of the risk? Well the fears of risk are nothing to be laughed at. The vast majority of small businesses fail within the first year. There are a variety of reasons but the financial risk is incredibly high. To minimize the risk many look into the field of affiliate marketing. This takes about 90% percent of the risk factor away and allows you to set up a business for yourself.

As an affiliate, you do actually work for another company or merchant. You sell either products or services depending on your particular skills and talents. Affiliate program are great for those that are creative, self motivated and not afraid of hard work. When you become an affiliate, the corporation takes on the risk. You can sign on to sell products or you can sell services. You can work to increase website traffic to other sites and receive referral payments, or you can create your own sites ad make money through ad revenue. The choice is entirely yours.

IF you are just starting out, you may want to join an affiliate program that has been established. You wont be competing with other internet giants and you'll gain some necessary skills and experience. One well known affiliate partner ship is the one that exists between Biz-rate and shopzilla.

Both of these two sites exist as separate entities. However they have combines their resources to make an excellent affiliate program. Biz-rate functions as a comparison shopping site. If someone wants a certain item they can search for it via Biz-rate. The site will tell you where to purchase it and how much it charges. They will give you a complete item description

as well. Biz-rate also lets the consumers know who is offering particular items for the lowest price and who offers the best value for money. Biz-rate gives consumers a chance to check out merchant reviews as well.

Shopzilla functions as an internet shopping site. They sell goods in several different categories and promise low prices with quality service. You can purchase nearly anything you like via the shopzilla site. If you have a credit or debit card the item will be delivered directly to you.

Shopzilla offers people the chance to join their affiliate marketing program. As one of their affiliates you are welcome to place sales content onto their site. You can place products that you might be selling for another affiliate company that you are working for; or you can work to increase the sales and revenue of the content already listed. Each method can result in sales commission and more money for you.

One great advantage of the shopzilla affiliate marketing program is that it works with the bizrate site. Even though shopzilla runs the affiliate program it has the support and backing of another major retail site. Your content can be posted on shopzilla and then reviewed on bizrate. If you're a good seller and offer a quality product this can be highly advantageous. By becoming a good reliable merchant, you can get the bizrate high rating which will make customer trust you over others.

If you are creative and have sales savvy then perhaps you should consider a career in affiliate marketing. This will allow you to work for yourself with very little risk to you. It is easy to get started and the costs are next to nothing. If you have a computer and internet then you're all set. By taking advantage of the shopzilla-Bizrate partnership, you can maximize your earning potential. By placing your content on shopzilla and having it rated on bizrate, you can gain a high level of exposure and internet traffic. If you offer a quality product and conduct yourself as a good merchant, there is no reason why these two sites can't make you a lot of money.

Marketing: Affiliate Marketing and Pay Per Click

Do you want to make more money? Do you want to turn that computer you spent so much money on into a cash cow? Well it is possible. It won't happen overnight but with time and hard work you'll soon be working from home if you choose.

Do you currently have a website? Do you wonder why it isn't making you any money? You keep posting great content, wonderful writing samples and articles but still your balance is zero. Well perhaps you need to expand your horizons. By signing up for pay per click affiliate sites you can soon see cash going into your account simply by maintaining your site.

One of the most popular Pay per click programs is Google AdSense. Google AdSense will take care of the advertising for you. When you sign up, your site will have new advertisements and banner places in the open spaces. If anyone visits your site and clicks on one of the ads, you get a referral payment. Again, Google takes care of the ad placement allowing you to

concentrate on increasing the traffic to your site.

Joining a scheme such as Google adsense is a good idea. They will help to promote your site and advise you on how to increase your traffic.

If you have been maintaining your website for a while, you probably know that one of the best ways to attract traffic is through the use of keywords. The right keywords will have them flocking to your site. The wrong words will have them running in droves. Sites such as Google adsense can help with this as well. They operate Google ad words. This will help maximize the key word usage and help get the correct one for the most traffic. Google does charge for this service so you need to be sure it is worth it before you buy. You don't want all of your profits ate up by the ad words scheme.

When you sign up for Google adsense, you can be assured that page appropriate ads will be places on your webpage. If you have a pet care site then things related to that topic will be placed. Obscure and ads that have nothing to do with your page are not likely to impress your reader or increase your earnings.

Google Adsense is only one example of search engines that offer a pay per click money making service. There are hundreds of others. One of the most notable is Yahoo publisher. It functions in much the same way as Google adsense and offers a similar style of service. Which one you choose will largely depend on you. If you have several sites, you could try both schemes. See which one is better and go with that one.

If you have a or several web pages that just seem to be doing nothing, then look into a pay per click program. Sites such as Google adsense and yahoo publisher will do most of the hard work for you. They will place the ads and decide which ads will be best for your site. This will leave you time to do the most important thing; increase your site traffic and eventually your ad revenue. If you have websites, look into pay per click. The service is free so you have nothing to loose.

Easy Profits Using PPC In Your Affiliate Marketing Business

PPC is one of the four basic types of Search Engines. PPC is also one of the most cost-effective ways of targeted internet advertising. According to Forbes magazine, PPC or Pay Per Click, accounts to 2 billion dollars a year and is expected to increase to around 8 billion dollars by the year 2008.

Let us take a quick look at how PPC Search Engines work.

These engines create listings and rate them based on a bid amount the website owner is willing to pay for each click from that search engine. Advertisers bid against each other to receive higher ranking for a specific keyword or phrase.

The highest bidder for a certain keyword or phrase will then have the site ranked as number 1

in the PPC Search Engines followed by the second and third highest bidder, up to the last number that have placed a bid on the same keyword or phrase. Your ads then will appear prominently on the results pages based on the dollar amount bid you will agree to pay per click.

How do you make money by using PPC into your affiliate marketing business?

Most affiliate programs only pay when a sale is made or a lead delivered after a visitor has click-through your site. Your earnings will not always be the same as they will be dependent on the web site content and the traffic market.

The reason why you should incorporate PPC into your affiliate marketing program is that earnings are easier to make than in any other kind of affiliate program not using PPC. This way, you will be making profit based from the clickthroughs that your visitor will make on the advertisers site. Unlike some programs, you are not paid per sale or action.

PPC can be very resourceful of your website. With PPC Search Engines incorporated into your affiliate program, you will be able to profit from the visitors who are not interested in your products or services. The same ones who leave your site and never comes back.

You will not only get commissions not only from those who are just searching the web and finding the products and services that they wanted but you will be able to build your sites recognition as a valuable resource. The visitors who have found what they needed from you site are likely to come back and review what you are offering more closely. Then they will eventually come back to search the web for other products.

This kind of affiliate program is also an easy way for you to generate some more additional revenues. For example, when a visitor on your site does a search in the PPC Search Engine and clicks on the advertiser bidded listings, the advertisers account will then be deducted because of that click. With this, you will be compensated 30% to 80% of the advertisers bid amount.

PPC is not only a source of generating easy profits; it can also help you promote your own site. Most of the programs allow the commissions received to be spent for advertising with them instantly and with no minimum earning requirement. This is one of the more effective ways to exchange your raw visitors for targeted surfers who has more tendencies to purchase your products and services.

What will happen if you when you integrate PPC into your affiliate program?

PPC usually have ready-to-use affiliate tools that can be easily integrated into your website. The most common tools are search boxes, banners, text links and some 404-error pages. Most search engines utilize custom solutions and can provide you with a white-label affiliate program. This enables you, using only a few lines of code, to integrate remotely-hosted co-branded search engine into your website.

The key benefits? Not only more money generated but also some extra money on the side. Plus a lifetime commissions once you have referred some webmaster friends to the engine.

Think about it. Where can you get all these benefits while already generating some income for your site? Knowing some of the more useful tools you can use for your affiliate program is not a waste of time. They are rather a means of earning within an earning.

Best know more about how you can use PPC search engines into your affiliate program than miss out on a great opportunity to earn more profits.

Marketing: Affiliate Marketing And Home Business

Many of us dream of being our own bosses. The lure of big money and flexible work hours is quite attractive. However, many are afraid to venture out on their own. They fear that they do not have the capital required to get a business started or they don't want to lose the security of their day job.

The solution could be starting a home business. The truth of the matter is that you can start your home business with no money at all. Ask yourself this, do you have a spare room or space in your house. Do you have a computer with an internet connection? Do you have a phone line? If you have these three things you have the essentials of an office from which your home business can be made.

Affiliate marketing can be a great way for you to get started in your home business. Affiliate marketing will provide you with the opportunity to sell either a product or a service. With low capital and little space you may want to concentrate on services.

Once you have made the decision, you need to evaluate your skills. What services can you offer and what skills can you bring. Many people start off with affiliate marketing programs from major search engines. If you're good at website design, you could register your page with someone such as yahoo publisher. This way your site will get traffic with the help of the search engine Yahoo. If yours is a sales website, your traffic could translate into increased sales. The more exposure to your site the better.

The other thing you can try to do is attract traffic to other sites. Retail sites such as Amazon and EBay have affiliate marketing programs. If you can generate traffic and increase sales then you make money. Both programs offer ways to increase revenues through links and blogs. These are usually free and worth using. Remember, the more you make the more they make.

Finally, your site can make money in another way. When it is posted on sites such as yahoo publisher or Google ad sense, there will be ads placed. Whenever a visitor clicks on an ad you make money. The more clicks the more cash. The operators take care of all the advertising costs and placement. They also try to place appropriate ads to your page. If you're

selling rare books ads for fish food are not likely going to get clicked.

If you want to start working for yourself but feel you don't have the money then you're wrong. If you have a computer and space to put it then you have all you need. You can also start your home business and work it around your job. You can gradually commit more time as your home business grows.

If you're tired of your job and really want to work for yourself then stop making excuses and do it. Though affiliate marketing programs and selling services you will find that having your home business is easier than you think. All it takes is time and a commitment to succeed. By taking advantage of the affiliate marketing programs that are currently available, you can make money and improve your own marketing skills. Remember, you can always expand into other areas and venture out totally on your own later. Right now, get marketing and get clicking.

How Affiliate Marketing Can Enable You To Work From Home

Most of us are incredibly comfortable in our own homes. It is where all of our comforts are kept. Part of the daily grind of a job is having to leave the home. The task is much more difficult if you have children to consider. Many of us would love to be able to work from home. We are more comfortable and can be much more productive. However, very few regular jobs offer this type of flexibility. They want employees on site where they can be watched and monitored.

If you would like to make a living working from home, the affiliate marketing business could be the answer. If you have a computer, with internet access there is no reason your home office cannot become your new home business.

Affiliate marketing means that you work on behalf of another company. You help to expand a company that already exists. This provides you with several advantages. First, your marketing brands or products that are already on the market. You don't have to create new product and present it to the public. If the brands are fairly well known then attracting customers should not be too difficult. It is much easier to sell something that has an established reputation than break in with something new.

Second. The advertising of the product will already be taken care of. The main corporation will have some suggestions and equipment available to help advertise the product or product line. This can include pamphlets, catalogs or posters. They will also make samples available at no cost to you. This minimizes your investment so the risk is nothing. You just need to concentrate on selling the product and maximizing your earnings.

Third, Affiliate marketing can be done in the comfort of your own home. As long as you have adequate storage space for company product there is no reason you cannot set up shop in the comfort of your own home. You can put as much or as little into the venture as you like. You are paid according to how well you perform. If you have an off month, it is reflected in your

commission. You don't have to worry about a boss coming down on you. How much you do is entirely up to you.

Finally, running this business venture from your home presents very little risk for you. You have the perfect location and you don't need to invest any of your own money. You are also not subject to work or sales targets to break even. What you produce is what you are paid for.

Running an affiliate marketing business is hard work. You'll want to make the most of your skills and talents and that means working some very long days. Don't be fooled by affiliate marketing companies that promise the world for very little effort. You'll have to work very hard promoting the products that you decide to sell. However, if you are willing to work hard and use all of your abilities, there is no reason why your affiliate marketing home business cannot be a huge success.

If you want to work from home then an affiliate marketing scheme is the perfect way. With minimal risk to you, you will be able to employ your skills to your own benefit. You'll have to work very hard but there is everything to gain and very little to lose.

Marketing: Affiliate Marketing Rules

So you have been wanting to get into affiliate marketing, and want to know the rules. You have your website and or blog all set up and ready to go. You have chosen your niche and market that you want to promote and make money off of. You just need links to start making money. Promoting others' services and products is not something that is difficult to do. However, you will find that with all of the many companies that offer affiliate programs, and referral options, they all have their own rules that you must follow.

Affiliate marketing is pretty easy to follow, that is unless you have many different programs that you are a part of. When you start getting so many that you cannot remember the rules, or the guidelines that you have to follow, you might have a problem. This is because the rules for affiliate programs are as different as the companies. Each company is allowed to make their own rules. However, you might see many similarities. That does not mean that they are copying one another, or cloning their affiliate program so to speak, but yet it means that they have the same rules.

Affiliate marketing rules can be so very different. They can range from not mentioning the brand names that they sell anywhere on your website, to not having that particular market in your website URL. Because they are so different for each program and company that you promote, you are going to have to be sure that you read each one well and make sure that you understand it fully. If you already have your URL for your website, you may not be able to participate in some of the affiliate programs. This is because you will not meet the requirements for the rules.

Another rule that you are going to see often when you are into affiliate marketing is the page rank rule. Some of the companies that will allow you to promote their services or products will

not want you to have a higher page rank than they do. Nor will they allow you to have a website that is higher in the search engine rankings. For example, if you were promoting coffee, and you wanted to become an affiliate for Folgers coffee. Your website would not be able to come up above the official Folgers coffee website in the search engine results when coffee, or Folgers coffee is used as the search term. The companies that have this rule in place for their affiliate marketing programs feel as if your website were higher than theirs for the product that they are selling, that it would hurt their business tremendously. And, it just might. They would rather have the straight sales any day, than the commissioned sales. Who wouldn't?

Keeping a spreadsheet of the affiliate marketing programs that you are a part of and their rules is a great idea. This way you are never confused and know just where you need to stand to be a part of that program. This is the best thing that you can do for your affiliate marketing business. Not only that, you will also find that some of the sites that have broken rules and have been caught have resulted in law suits. Cover your tracks and make sure that you are following the rules that are set by that company for the best results.

You will also find that there is a thing that is called affiliate marketing software. If you can find a program that fits your needs and will help you keep everything straight, you may not have to worry about keeping track of them yourself. Use your software to keep track and make sure that you are doing your affiliate marketing the right way. Your efforts will pay off eventually, and you will be glad that you went by the book and followed the necessary affiliate marketing rules.

Affiliate Marketing: Staying Away From Scams

Many of us are upset and frustrated with our current jobs. The low pay and sense of being undervalued drive many of us to dream of our own businesses. However, the costs combined with the risk factors stops most of us in our tracks. Affiliate marketing is a way for people to work for themselves with no risk. There is no cost to you and you're paid on performance. However, today one has to be careful. There are plenty of scammers and con artists out there that are more than happy to take your money and hard work off of you. Unfortunately, affiliate marketing is not immune to these scammers. Daily, people are taken in by promises of big money with relatively little effort. In this article we will teach you some of the signs to look for and tell you how to spot a scam.

When you join an affiliate marketing scheme, you either go to sell a product or a service. With products, you usually have a choice and range to sell. How you decide to do this is largely up to you. You could also sell a service. Web page designs as well as increasing sales and internet traffic are all examples of services offered by affiliate marketing programs.

How many times have you seen an ad on the internet promising huge earnings? Things like Earn 1000\$ a day or Join our program now and become a millionaire. If you look closely at these ads they are not actually selling anything. Any company that is just selling the opportunity to make money is likely a scam. True, some affiliate marketing companies will

have attention grabbing headlines like the ones mentioned above. However, if you go on to read the ad and information, there will likely be a detailed description of what the company sells. They will also have a disclaimer and terms and conditions listed.

These companies that offer the opportunity to make money are likely pyramid schemes. The only people paying money in are the ones actually joining. There is no income being created, just money being passed from person to person. Not only are these scams and you'll lose what you invested, they are also illegal and you can face prosecution.

Another thing to watch out for is no free participation. If you have to pay to join then you may have stumbled upon a scam or what is known as a multilevel marketing program. Multi-level marketing programs are completely legal and some people make good livings out of them. However, if you're not successful you may end up purchasing a bunch of products that you cannot sell.

True affiliate programs are free. That is part of their attraction. There are no costs to you and they should also be risk free. Any affiliate marketing programs that demands your money is not an affiliate program. You should ask yourself why they are misrepresenting themselves this way if they are legitimate.

Many of us dream of being our own bosses. We would love to be able to take control of our lives and careers. The attraction of answering only to you combined with setting your own working hours and committing what you choose bring loads of people into the affiliate marketing schemes. Affiliate marketing can be an excellent way for a highly motivated, creative person to make an excellent living. There are some wonderful programs out there just waiting to be joined. However, for every great program there is likely one that is fraudulent. Con artists operate in many areas and unfortunate affiliate marketing is not immune.

Before joining, check to see what the company is selling. If they are not selling goods or services then they are likely an illegal pyramid scheme. If they require your own money to get started then they are what are known as a multi level marketing program. Affiliate marketing can be a great opportunity but you need to do your homework.

Affiliate Marketing Tips

Today, many of us want to pack up our jobs and be our own bosses. The idea of working for you attracts many. However, the reality of making it happen soon stops most. In fact the vast majority of us cannot get a business off the ground due to 2 main factors; the first being money and the second being risk.

Starting even a small business takes a fair amount of money. You need to buy or rent premises, purchase your stock and equipment and pay staff if you have them. You will also have other outside expenses such as advertising.

Risk is the factor that kills most businesses off. Even if you're lucky enough to get the capital

to start, nearly 90% of all small businesses fail in the first year. If yours is one of the lucky ones, you have to keep reinvesting your time and money to build up the businesses reputation. It could be anywhere from 5-7 years before any significant profit is seen. Most of us cannot wait that long which is what makes affiliate marketing such an attractive offer.

Affiliate marketing involves you, working as an affiliate for a merchant or company. You sell either goods or services and you're paid on how much you produce. There are no costs and no risk. You put in what you choose and are rewarded accordingly.

Running an affiliate marketing business is challenging. You'll have to work very hard to build it up. However, you'll be rewarded for your hard work not someone else. Getting an affiliate marketing program going may seem difficult. The truth is it is down to you and how much you want to put in. There is no sure fire way to success but there are some good tips that you can follow to make you affiliate marketing scheme as successful as possible.

There are literally thousands of programs for you to choose from. However, to get started you may want to choose something that you are familiar with. This product or service may not be the hottest thing on the current market or make you a millionaire, but you will come off more confident and sincere with something you know and believe in.

This will also help when it comes to creating your site. Something familiar will allow you to be personal and creative. Trying to create a site around something you know little about will soon become boring and tedious.

Working with something familiar will also give you the some experience in the program. You can always expand at a latter time when you are more familiar with how things work.

Another good piece of advice is to watch the number of banners that you put up. A site full of banners will make the site look ugly and put off potential buyers. Carefully place your banners and use them to accent your site. Stuffing it full will not help.

Remember, in the world of affiliate marketing there is no such thing as the perfect program. Any particular program will be stuffed full of varying testimonials. Some will be great will others will have not done so well. You need to decide for yourself and not be put of by a few bad experiences. In the end it is down to you and how much you want to put in.

Affiliate marketing is a great way to make money and work for you. The risk to you is minimal and there is no start up cost. There are many great affiliate marketing programs out there and choosing the right one may seem like a daunting task. When you first start out remember to stick to what you know. Find something you know about and have an interest in. Make your site attractive to others and resist the urge to fill it with banners. This may end up having the opposite of your desired effect. Finally remember, there is no perfect program. Some will have success where others have failed. It is all down to you. Don't give up.

Marketing: Super Affiliate

Many people have taken the plunge and joined the world of affiliate marketing. Affiliate marketing allows you to work for yourself and put your skills, hard work and independence together for you. Success in any business will not happen over night. It still takes time and effort to get your affiliate marketing scheme up and running. However, if you are persistent, determined and willing to give it your all, affiliate marketing can be the perfect career opportunity for you.

To become the so called super affiliate, you should really follow the advice of other successful affiliates. They have been through what you are and know what they are talking about. One of the first pieces of advice they give is to concentrate on a niche. Don't try to sell everything but the kitchen sink. Concentrate on one thing in the early days. Work out the best way to sell it and get going. Once you have some strategies worked out you can always expand.

Once you have built up a store house of affiliates, you need to know how to promote. Search engine and the web is usually the best way. If you are confident then you could try pay per click. However, make sure you understand this well. Many affiliates have gone for this option only to find that their profits have been eaten up.

You should take time to know your product and who you're aiming it for. When you understand both well you begin to build up credibility. People will begin to trust you and what you offer. They will feel much better about giving their business over to you rather than others. This will result in higher sales revenue for you and a much stronger business.

Don't be afraid to diversify. Sign up with more than one merchant. Beware of any merchant that wants you to sign up with them exclusively. By using several merchants you get much more exposure. You are also protecting your self if one merchant goes under or does not pay.

Keep on top of current trends in the market. Be prepared to change if you need to. The world of internet marketing is continually changing. By staying flexible and having a willingness to change you can make these changes work for you rather than against you. Remember, what was working last month may not be this month.

Finally, don't give up. It is true that many of these affiliate marketing schemes do fail. However, the reason isn't due to poor products or ideas. It is because people give up way too soon. It takes time to build any business. Just keep at it. Try to do something everyday to promote your business. If you keep it up you will eventually start to see results.

Affiliate marketing is a great way to make money and work for yourself. You can put your skills and creative knowledge to work for you and not others. Affiliate marketing does take work. You need to build it up like any other business. However, if you stick to the advice in this article and don't give up, you'll soon find that your business is booming. Affiliate marketing is a great career opportunity. With hard work and determination you will be well on your way to becoming the super affiliate.

How To Become A Super Affiliate In Niche Markets

Over the past years, web hosting has grown bigger than it used to be. With more companies getting into this business and finding the many benefits it can give them, the demand for web hosting has never been higher. These seem to be the trend of today.

38 million people have put up their very first websites online this year 2005 alone. It is estimated that by 2008, the internet sales industry will top then dollar bank. And to think, majority of those sites will be offering different affiliate programs for people to choose and participate into.

This only means one thing. It is easier now to find the right web host for your application. The possibility of quality web hosting companies separating themselves from the rest of the industry is anticipated. If this is done, the unprofessional and incompetent ones will suffer.

Support will be the number one consideration for people when choosing a web host. It will be obvious that traditional advertising will become less and less effective. Most people would rather opt for the web host based on things that they see and hear. Also based on the recommendations by those who have tried them and have proved to be a successful.

This is a great opportunity for web hosting affiliates and resellers alike. There would hundreds of web hosting and programs to choose from that the difficulty in finding the right one for them is not a problem anymore.

How does one become a successful affiliate in the niche markets using web hosting?

If you think about it, everyone who needs a website needs a web hosting company to host it for them. As of now, there is really no leading hosting industry so most people choose hosts based from recommendations. Usually, they get it from the ones that have already availed of a web hosting services.

With the many hosts offering affiliate programs, there is the tendency to find the one which you think will work best for you. Think of the product you will be promoting. Pattern them to the site and see if they are catering to the same things as you are.

When you have been with one host for quite some time and seem not to be making much despite all your effort, leave that one and look for another. There is no use in trying to stick to one when you would be before off in another one. Things will only have to get better from there because you already have been in worst situations.

Try this out. If you are quite happy and satisfied with your web host, try to see if they are offering an affiliate program you can participate on. Instead of you paying them, why not make it the other way around; them paying you. The process can be as easy as putting a small powered by or hosted by link at the bottom of your page and you are already in an affiliate business.

Why choose paying for your for your web hosting when you do not have to? Try to get paid by letting people know you like your web host.

Always remember that when choosing a web host, choose the one that is known for its fantastic customer support. There are also many hosting affiliate programs. Residual affiliate program is also being hosted. This is the program wherein you get paid a percentage every month for a client that you refer. This can allow you to have a steady source of income. With perseverance, you can even be quite successful in this field.

There are a lot of niche markets out there just waiting for the right affiliate to penetrate to them and make that dollars dream come true. Knowing which one to get into is being confident enough of your potentials and the good results you will be getting.

Web hosting is just one affiliate market you could try out and make some good and continuous income. Just remember that to be successful on your endeavor also means that time, effort and patience is needed.

Nobody has invented the perfect affiliate market yet. But some people do know how to make it big in this kind of market. It is just knowing your kind of market and making the earnings there.

Getting the Most From Affiliate Marketing

Affiliate marketing is nothing new on the internet. However, it sure is something that many come and go after. When you are looking to start your own website or blog and add some affiliate marketing links to it, there are some things that you should know. Affiliate marketing is not for everyone. It is not for anyone that is looking to make money fast, nor is it for the impatient. You have to have two things in order to be successful with affiliate marketing, and those two things are patience, and determination. When you put those two together, there is no stopping you or what you can do with your affiliate marketing business.

Affiliate marketing can be done a few ways; it can be done through email, newsletters, websites, or blogs. By using any of these things, you can be successful if you are marketing to the right audience. Finding your readership, and catching them with good content is what it is all about. To do so, you need to know where they go and what they look for. Try starting with message boards to begin with. However, use some patience and don't come off as the newbie know it all. Take some time and peak others interest. Add the link to your website or blog in your signature line at the message board that you are visiting, and most importantly, make sure that the message board is relevant to your market. If you have a website that pertains to a market that has to do with gardening, you will not want to be visiting a message board that is all about pregnancy. It is really quite simple to understand how these two things must be relevant to get results.

So, once you have found a busy message board that will allow you to include your link to your website in the signature of your posts, you are in business. Just start off by posting and chatting, and when someone asks a question that you know all about and answer to, answer

it. This will peak their interest and before you know it, they will be clicking on the link in your signature and checking out your site. While doing this can be quite time consuming, it will pay off. Gain the other members trust, and you cannot go wrong.

The next thing that you should know about getting the most from affiliate marketing is that you should be writing articles. Writing articles on the market that you are promoting and then submitting them to article directories or ezines is a great way to get the most from your affiliate links and programs that you are a part of. Be sure that you include a link in the articles that you are submitting that will lead the readers back to your website. Doing so will get your site more traffic, and will pay off in the end. However, you will not want to submit the same articles that you have on your site to these directories. You will want different variations of the articles to be used in the directories. This is because when you submit these articles to the directories, you are going to see that by checking your back links, there are other webmasters using your articles. Which is also great because they will in return give you a back link to your site. However, they are depending on you to have a different article on your site than the one that you are submitting.

Affiliate marketing is something that takes work. You can not just set up your site and let it go. You have to work on it consistently to see a good amount of revenue come from it. However, make sure that you are doing everything that you can to get it seen. Use the best free tools that there are available to you, and pay for the ones that really work. You will find that you can get the most from the resources that are out there and available.

Marketing: Free Internet Advertising

Free internet advertising is one very important method for promoting your products and services to thousands of free classified ads.

Most of these free classified ads web sites give you the power to facilitate marketing with features such as classified ads submitter forms. Features like this give free Internet advertising an extremely fast way of getting your products or services on line.

It is accessible 24/7 allowing you access anytime, it's very effective and efficient and most of it comes free. No downloads. No sign-up fees. No hidden charges. No annual or monthly fees. No sales fees. It is absolutely free.

Free internet advertising makes it easy for you to put free ads on several of the premier quality web sites whenever you want, for free. This kind of benefit you get from free internet advertising can only do, to say the least, miracles for your business. Most of these free internet advertising companies give you 3 slots to advertise any product or service for free.

Free internet advertising is the perfect way and best way to make your products or services known to the millions of prospective consumers in the Internet and make your web site start producing money. There is an enormous audience for free internet advertising that is present in the Internet, that the probability of anyone needing your services or wanting to buy your

products is very high. There are free services out there that may suit your services, products and web site. Browse the internet for the best free internet advertising for assessment on their amenities and features how to advertise or join your web site for free internet advertising.

Most web sites promoting free internet advertising have features like classified ads submitter where you can get a enormous exposure with instant results and expand your sales by large volumes over night, opt-in email lists non spam bulk emailing program, guaranteed 100% legal. Opt-in email lists are created by people who have volunteered or opted-in their email addresses to these lists. These lists are very effective for creating personalized email to prospective clients.

Free internet advertising provides a great technique for building traffic. People constantly search on online free internet advertising ads for specific services or products. Free internet advertising target clients inclined to buying a particular kind of product or service in mind.

And the best reason to advertise in free internet advertising is because it is absolutely free.

Free Internet Marketing Methods that will Save your Internet Business

Best things in life are free, as many would say. This especially holds true with efforts in advertising one's products or services. With free Internet marketing services, one can save a lot. Instead of shelling out for the marketing aspect of your product or services, that chunk of money could be put to other important elements of your business since many information websites now offer knowledge regarding Internet marketing services that comes with no price tag at all.

This is not to tell you that better focus on plain Internet marketing. It still will do your business a lot good if you mix traditional advertisement efforts such as traditional and new marketing media.

Here are few of the free methods that you could employ to make your products and services be in their most visible, thus salable, form.

1. Promote your business through free search engine submission and optimization.

Submit your website to various search engines monthly. This will make many more people know that your website actually exists. Aiming for the top search engines will help a lot in this endeavor.

2. Improve your articles.

Remember that information on articles with good content as traffic-bringer of websites? This time it's about making these articles serve your website better by using keyword suggestion tools that are offered for free. Update your web site's content by regularly checking the standing of your keywords with the current market.

3. Acquire free content.

If you have no time to increase the SEO or search engine optimization-friendliness of your articles, you can look for free content from article directories. All you need to do is retain the resource box of those write-ups.

4. Avail of free comprehensive web traffic analyzers.

These are tools that you can make use of without costing you a cent. Your website's hits statistics will be produced by this kind of Internet marketing tool for your own analysis.

5. Learn to manipulate web design templates.

You don't have to be too techie-geeky to be able to design your web site. Oftentimes, web design templates or custom-made layouts are available for the Internet marketer to use.

6. Monitor your website's visibility.

Tools such as search engine position trackers may be used to see your website's standing.

These processes are very convenient to use as long as you keep in mind that you use and try to master their use for your own benefit. Just don't get obsessed with your achievements when you finally learn how to use them and incorporate them in your Internet marketing feat.

How to Acquire Free Web Site Promotion

You have finished making your own website. You have introduced your company and presented your products and services. You have added propositions and promos to catch your target audiences attention. You have achieved the dos and donts of building a company web site. But why isn't your website a major success?

Maybe you're not planning the key to the best promotion of your web site. Here are some guidelines on how to acquire free web site promotions for your company's success.

If you have started to promote your web site, keep it constant. If you promote your site with persistence, it will catch your audiences attention.

Be patient. Try each method in promotion until you acquire the best, free promotion there is. You have to accept trial and error for your web site to reach the top.

There are many ways for your web site to be seen. Here are some free web site promotions you could try until you find the most effective.

*Free promotions such as search engines and directories would give your web site the

deserved traffic you always wanted. Make sure to check your web sites ranking to know whether or not this type of free promotion is right for you.

*Make a deal with other web sites on trading links which could help both web sites. Make sure to use words that could easily interest the audience.

*Find free classified ads that could boost the promotion of your web site. These ads could be seen by other people who you are not targeting for, but may as well be interested in your services.

*Free and low-cost internet banners are spread all through out the World Wide Web. Banners that pop-up at the top of a page or in a separate window would automatically catch your target audiences attention.

If your web site and its free promotion did not work even after accomplishing these methods, analyze your web site. Track down all visitors, advertisements, and transactions. Then locate errors in your web site. Upload new files to your web site continuously for audience to return for new products and services. Monitor your own web site if its up in the market or down.

Then be ready to try the methods again and surely it will work.

It has always been said that the best things in life are free. Yes they are. And as soon as your free web site promotion proves to the audience its worth, then you'll believe its true.

Three Traffic Tactics that won't Cost You a Cent

Are you constantly banging your head in frustration on not receiving all the internet traffic you would like to get to your web site? Are you tormented from information overload listening to all the latest free website traffic tactics and not being able to understand any of it? Are you dejected of people trying day and night to harassing you to max out your credit card and get loans for Google clicks, and in the process loose your credit score? Are you stupefied by the way your website just dropped out of the Google search results? Or are you just too broke and all you have to rely on is getting some free website traffic tactics?

You can employ website traffic tactics without spending dime. However, knowing how is the real deal. Here's the score:

1. Link it

Of all the effective website traffic tactics that can get you best results, linking to and from other websites is the one of the most widely-used method. Just make sure that the Internet business you are exchanging links with is relatively if not utterly related to your own business. And of course, don't overkill as this might ban you from search engines.

2. Meet Meta Tags

Another way of to acquire your desired traffic for your website is through having your Meta tags contain usually used keywords that target your business. Meta tags help search engines in describing your web page. If you're quite adept with the HTML aspect of your web pages, manipulating your meta tags would be a breeze.

3. Keyword-rich AND sensible content

Writing or acquiring articles that provide solid information regarding your business is one of the best ways. Making use of free keyword suggestion tools such as Overture will help you on which keyword or phrases to work on to better lead more traffic to your website. Making these write-ups very readable and genuinely informative will make you many repeat visitors to subsequently become repeat clients.

Submitting these articles to various article directory listings will provide more visibility for your business as long as you keep your resource box in tact to create for yourself numerous back links.

These methods, if employed properly, will not only make your web site popular but will make you achieve your most desirable result – higher conversion rate.

Marketing: Low Cost Advertising & Scams On The Internet

People opt for internet advertising methods because practically half of the world's population knows HTML. If you have your own business, you have to decide on what internet advertising method works for you. Ask yourself what are you going to avail of: the expensive internet advertising methods or the cheap ones? Others will pipe in "expensive!" immediately, but they don't know cheap internet advertising method attracts great benefits as well.

Here's the lowdown and a comparative look on the cheap and expensive internet advertising methods:

The Expensive:

1. Pop-ups. Not only is this expensive, but also outright annoying that visitors close pop-up windows without even bothering to know what they're all about. This is an internet advertising method that you can do without.

Fly ads are derivatives of pop-ups which are also equally irking to the visitors.

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2. Pod casts.

Broadcast is to TV as pod cast is to internet. It's one sophisticated internet advertising method that can somehow hamper your budget. But if you're thinking results, pod casting is worth the money.

3. Paying the search engines.

How does this one work? When someone types in a keyword related to your site, your URL is automatically included in the first page of the top results. Fixed payment for the search engine allows just that. Expensive, yes, but if we're talking about Google and Yahoo search engines here, then don't give it a second thought.

This is associated with another internet advertising method: the pay-per-click system.

The Cheap:

1. Blogging.

Go along the bandwagon and blog about your website. This is an internet advertising method that is popular as of the moment, so you never have to worry that this will never spur outcome. All you have to do is sign up for a blogging account, post and voila! You don't even need to pay!

2. Submit to not-so-big search engines.

This is cheap and dependable. If you submit your site to smaller search engines, you have bigger chances to get bigger results. Remember that the search engine giants can dwarf and overlook your site easily, so this internet advertising method might just be the right one for you.

3. Text links.

This is not just cheap...this is virtually free! Let someone text link your site and return the favor.

Cheap versus expensive, that's always the question that hounds on whenever we're trying to get something. In the field of internet advertising, just be wise enough to figure out what will suit your needs. Go for what you want as long as there are visible results.

A business without a sign is a sign of no business. This is an advertising banner or quotation that can be seen in large billboards along the roads and on the side or top of buildings that is vacant. Television and radio would say, This program would not be shown or be heard without advertisement. It is true since most of us are watching the free television channel and

programs are produced by payments of advertisements.

Business owners understand how important an advertisement is. It is in this manner that they would tell to everybody that they are selling products and offering services. They would not have sales, which in turn give them profit, if people would not notice and buy their products and avail of their services.

However, it is not happy to note that there are people who would try to steal money from advertisers and business owners by offering cheap advertisement packages and not delivering the agreed service. Business owners and advertisers should be informed of this because they would become victims of a scam.

The scam here is when the advertiser paid for these different kinds of services but none or some of them are not really even performed. The main point to consider here is to whom is the advertiser transacting with. To avoid being ripped off doing a background check by knowing the following will help.

The pay-per-click ad campaign is when an advertiser would pay a certain agreed amount by the search engine developers every time a user clicks on that banner. This was a good idea before it was not touched by hackers who developed a certain program to automatically click on that banner which increases the amount to be paid by the advertiser. The next paying scheme was the pay per action, which is harder to hack since the advertiser would only pay the search engine developers an agreed amount every time a sale would be done on that customer.

One thing is for sure, advertising in the Internet is not easy but it is fun, especially when one understands fully the power of the Internet. It is not a unidirectional means of advertising like the television or radio, but it is an interactive avenue for both the advertiser and the prospective clients.

Marketing: Maximum Exposure Low Cost Internet Advertising

Low cost internet advertising agencies are the ideal way and most recommended means to make your product or service known and for your web site to earn money. There is such a very huge range of affordable internet advertising agencies that are now found in the Net.

There are various Internet advertising agencies according to the kind of product or service they provide. Here is a list of a few of these kinds of online marketing agencies.

1. Web design agencies

These are focused on building web pages for a website. Many web developers are now offering affordable services if you just know how and where to find them.

2. Logo services

Production of web site logos is the main concern of these agencies. Hundreds of pre-designed logos could be purchased or even customized to complement your website better.

3. Copywriting Agencies

In adjunct to search engine optimization, these agencies provide quality content that targets the attention of the market you intend to tap. Looking for the best deals with copywriting services will be a cinch if you know where to look. If you prefer freelancers, they are often found with their own websites.

4. Search engine optimization companies

These companies analyze and modify websites in order to achieve the highest possible search engine ranking. They improve your website's design and content to better attract more traffic. Link building could also be employed by these e-marketing agencies to benefit your business. They are actually a combination of all the services mentioned above. Sometimes they also go by the name of Internet marketing consultancies or something of that sort.

5. Domain registration companies

Your business's name in the web is the business of these companies. Looking for the best amongst a wide array of these agencies is like looking for a needle in a haystack. But if you are determined enough to do your homework with these marketing services, results would be more than rewarding. Just make sure that you don't register with those whose only intention is to rip off those who can't afford the most reputable domain registration agencies.

These are just a few of the Internet advertising agencies that a web marketing newbie could turn to. Examining your needs first will better your chances in getting in touch with the cream of the crop of these Internet marketing agencies minus the hefty price tag.

Advertising had long since been a major determinant of a business' success. This would include the presentation of the product / service to the consumers. What really matters is how it is presented to the target market to be able to capture it.

Whatever the package, the ad media also plays a great role in determining the success of the product or service awareness.

What may be its advantages over other proven medium like the best-selling TV ads?

Advantages

1. Low Cost

Even though the Internet ad might be viewed as "classy" or far-reaching, as compared to other

medium, this is far cheaper than most. Internet Ad Packages are offered for as low as \$29.99 for a one-month run-time period.

2. Capture market

Should your product / service aim to cater to the younger generation or the corporate-oriented ones, Internet ad would be best since they would always be “hooked-up” into the net surfing sites that might have a link to your very own. Result, a great number of “hits” on your site!

2. Hassle free

All you would ever really need is a PC (and some knowledge and bright ideas in forming your site) wherein you could open your site, search for the best Internet Ad package, and check / update the status of your ad. You may actually never have to leave your home to advertise!

3. Updated ads

Unlike the TV ads that need to be updated on a regular basis, Internet ads may run for quite some time without the need for change. If so, change in the site is very minimal and may be done easily at home.

Disadvantages

1. Scope

Limited market may be captured if one would solely use the Internet Ad for advertising. Although most people now are into the use of technology, i.e. surfing the Internet, still, majority of the average consumers still relies on the old form of advertising as a means of gathering information about certain products / service.

2. Additional cost

If one would enlist the help of another professional or establishment to produce the site for their product or service, this would entail additional costs on the part of the entrepreneur.

Given the stated list of advantages and disadvantages about low-cost Internet Ad, an entrepreneur may now weigh in its applicability to his / her product or service.

The aim of Internet ad is to offer the widest range or “Maximum Exposure” of the brand at the least possible cost. Now, does that not sound good or what?

Two Basic Parts of a Low Cost Web Site Promotion

Anybody could own a web site. Anybody could up sell their own products and services to their target audience. Anyone could try to promote their web site with a low cost. But there are not

many web sites that have a truly successful web site with traffic all day through. What these individuals or companies lack is the most essential factor of success a low cost web site promotion that really works.

If you have been trying to promote your own web site and you have received traffic every hour, my hands are down for you. But for those people who need assistance, who does not have the patience to promote their own product and services, and lacks knowledge to properly advertise themselves, here are some guidelines to help you achieve success with a low cost web site promotion.

Search Engine Submission and Ranking are the two basic parts to a low cost web site promotion. Both of the parts have the same effect on the market of the web site for your products and services presented in your web site catches the peoples attention.

The first inexpensive method of web site promotion is the search engine submission. This first part is the act filing information and submitting your web site to search engines. There are two types of Search engine submission manual and automatic. For a low cost and effective web site promotion, automatic submission is ideal because after filling up the information, a software program would forward this information to other search engines.

The second money-saving web site promotion is ranking. This refers to the numerical position in which your web site appears on a search engine, based upon the web sites criteria. Some search engines rank the order in which your search results appear primarily by how many other web sites link to each page. The leading web sites on this order would eventually fulfill a low cost web site promotion.

Other types of inexpensive web site promotion you could use to boost up traffic on your web site are banner advertising, classified ads, text links and section sponsorship. Banner advertisements pop up above and below web pages, and sometimes in another window. Text links and section sponsorship may cost more, but these methods helps in promoting to your specified target audience. It wouldn't harm your web site to try these methods.

Always remember that the effects of your not so costly web site promotion hits are increasing significantly each day. Don't waste time; find an effective and affordable web site promotion of your choice today.

Marketing: Becoming An Affiliate

Many of us dream of packing our jobs in. we would love to tell our bosses to take this job and shove it. Many of us are frightened of doing what we most desire. The fear of leaving that secure source of income stops most, those who get past that fear that don't have the capital to get a business up and running.

A home business does take money if it is run as a sole proprietorship. However, starting a home based affiliate marketing business is a completely different kettle of fish. Setting up a

home based affiliate marketing business is relatively easy and there are several factors that make it very attractive.

One of the most desirable factors is the privilege of being able to work from your own home. Your home is your most comfortable surrounding. Everything you want and need is right there. If you have small children, a home business is even better. You can work and still be home with the children. You also don't need to worry about commuting and work wardrobes. You can work when you want and schedule your jobs around your other commitments. Working from home does provide people with many wonderful advantages.

A home based affiliate marketing business builds on that even further. A home business, if it is run as a sole proprietorship will need a significant amount of start up money. Even small businesses need a fairly large amount. Most people rely on banks for the financing which puts them at further risks. When you sign on as an affiliate, the risk level drops by about 90 percent. When you sign up as an affiliate, you are either selling goods or services on behalf of another company. You are paid according to how well you perform. You don't have to worry about sales targets and making a certain amount every month. The company you work for worries about all of that. You concentrate on selling the goods and services that you want and increasing your earnings.

A home based business that is run as a sole proprietorship has to worry about competition. Unless you really hit upon a niche market you are likely going to have to attract customers away from already established businesses in your area. This can be difficult because customers tend to trust what they know is good. If you do manage to do it you will be creating some bad blood between you and other businesses. By working through a home based affiliate marketing program, you'll be selling products that have already been on the market. You can actually check the saleability of these products with the company. If the products you choose are well known and trusted then you won't have a problem attracting customers. This takes the stress off of you.

A home based business that is run as a sole proprietorship can take years to get established. On average, nearly 70 percent of small businesses fail in the first year. Those that do make it still have many hurdles to get past. It usually takes 5-7 years to realize any significant profit in a sole proprietorship. During this time the business owners have to continually promote their business just to keep it afloat. A home based affiliate marketing business is much easier to manage. You will have to work hard to promote yourself but most of the start up work will be done for you. You'll have your line of products or services and ways to advertise them. You'll also have support from a company representative. They will be on hand to answer questions and offer advice on how to increase your sales. Remember, the better you do the better they do.

Running a business as a sole proprietorship can be extremely rewarding. If you are one of the lucky ones that makes it the financial rewards can be tremendous. However, the odds are stacked against you when you take this option. A home based affiliate marketing company minimizes the risk and offers you support when you need it. You will still have to work

extremely hard but the rewards will be well worth it.

Have you ever thought that your skills and expertise were being wasted? You apply all of your creative know how and ability for your boss and their company for very little reward. Have you ever considered taking those skills and making them work for you instead of someone else? Have you looked into your own business enterprise only to realize the capital you need is way beyond what you can raise? If you have answered yes to any of these questions then becoming an affiliate could be the answer you are looking for.

Many of us would love to start our own businesses but two things generally stop us. The first being money and the second being risk. You need a significant amount of capital to start even a small sole proprietorship. Even though financing is available there is still the risk factor. A fairly large percentage of small businesses fail in the first year. If you make it through that first year then there are still several challenges that have to be met. It could be five years before you see any real profit. Most of us cannot wait this long. We need a constant flow of money coming in to meet our daily obligations.

Becoming an affiliate can get you started on the road to independence with no risk to you. By becoming an affiliate you work to sell or increase the revenues of another company. This can be done in a variety of ways. You can work, selling a particular line of products. The head company takes care of the advertising and creation of the items; you simply work out how to sell them. You are paid for your performance. The more you sell the more you make.

You can also create an online affiliate marketing business. If you're creative and handy at making websites then this could be the perfect opportunity for you. By allowing your site to become an affiliate site with a major search engine, you could make large amounts of profit with ad revenue. Companies such as Yahoo publisher and Google ad sense can help to get you started. They handle all of the advertising costs and placing allowing you to concentrate on bringing traffic to your site. There is no cost to you and absolutely no risk.

People who enjoy independence and flexibility in their work make good affiliates. Those that desire or need flexible working hours can gain the most from being an affiliate. You are paid according to how well you perform, not on how many hours you work. You can schedule your work around other things such as families or other commitments. If you're independent and a self starter then a career as an affiliate is perfect for you.

If you are creative, motivated and driven then possibly consider becoming an affiliate. You can run your own affiliate business from home with no cost or obligation to you. If you are good at working independently then as an affiliate you can't go wrong. You'll have the freedom to work as and when you please and will realize the rewards of your own hard work. Start putting your skills and creativity to work for you rather than someone else. What you receive in return will be well worth it. Consider a career as an affiliate, you have nothing to lose and everything to gain.

Which Affiliate Networks To Look Out For When Promoting

There are many horror stories about affiliate programs and networks. People have heard them over and over again, that some are even wary of joining one. The stories they may have heard are those related to illegal programs or pyramid schemes. Basically, this kind of market does not have real, worthy product.

You do not want to be associated with these schemes. It is obvious you want to be with a program that offers high quality product that you will readily endorse. The growing number of those who have joined already and are succeeding immensely is proof enough that there are reliable and quality affiliate programs out there.

Why participate in an affiliate program?

It allows you to work part-time. It gives you the opportunity to build a generous residual income. And it makes you an owner of a small business. Affiliate programs have already created lots of millionaires. They are the living testimony of how hard work; continuous prospecting, motivating and training others pay off.

If ever you are deciding to join one, you must take note that you are getting into something that is patterned to what you are capable of. This will be an assurance that you are capable of doing anything to come out successful.

How do you choose a good affiliate program to promote? Here are some tips you may want to look over before choosing one:

1. A program that you like and have interest in. One of the best ways of knowing if that is the kind of program you wish to promote is if you are interested in purchasing the product yourself. If that is the case, chances are, there are many others who are also interested in the same program and products.
2. Look for a program that is of high quality. For instance, look for one that is associated with many experts in that particular industry. This way, you are assured that of the standard of the program you will be joining into.
3. Join in the ones that offer real and viable products. How do you know this? Do some initial research. If possible, track down some of the members and customers to give you testimonial on the credibility of the program.
4. The program that is catering to a growing target market. This will ensure you that there will be more and continuous demands for your referrals. Make inquiries. There are forums and discussions you can participate in to get good and reliable feedbacks.
5. A program with a compensation plan that pays out a residual income and a payout of 30% or more would be a great choice. There are some programs offering this kind of compensation. Look closely for one. Do not waste your time with programs that do not reward substantially for your efforts.

6. Be aware of the minimum quotas that you must fulfill or sales target that is too hard to achieve. Some affiliate programs impose pre-requisites before you get your commissions. Just be sure that you are capable of attaining their requirements.

7. Select one that has plenty of tools and resources that can help you grow the business in the shortest possible time. Not all affiliate programs have these capacities. Make use you decide on one with lots of helpful tools you can use.

8. Check out if the program has a proven system that can allow you to check your networks and compensation. Also check if they have it available online for you to check anytime and anywhere.

9. The program that is offering strong incentives for members to renew their membership each time. The affiliate program that provides continuous help and upgrades for its products have the tendency to retain its members. These things can assure the growth of your networks.

10. Be aware of the things that members are not happy about in a program. Like with the ones mentioned above, you can do your checking at discussion forums. If you know someone in that same program, there is no harm asking if there are many downsides involved.

Have a thorough and intensive knowledge about the affiliate program and network you will be promoting on.

Knowing the kind of program you are getting yourself into will make you anticipate and prevent any future problems you may encounter.

Marketing: Change Of Plan

Does Your Marketing Plan Need Changing?

How does “if it ain’t broke don’t fix it” apply to marketing?

Change is good, right? Not always. But when is it bad? Is it a question of good or bad? Sounds philosophical. Maybe it is.

Philosophize on this...why would one take something that is going good – no.. great – and change it? Obvious answer is to make it better. Not!

In business or in marketing, change is not always good. When you have certain promotional actions that are in place making things happen, or in better terms, making you money – don’t change them! Why do I say this? Because I see it time and time again. Someone has a marketing campaign that is bringing in a good return on investment and they up and decide to change their postcard! What?!?!?! Change your postcard – why? “Er uh, we just decided to

do something different.”

And then some three or four months down the road, they call back with their tail between their legs and ask – no demand to have everything back the way it was before. In this latter case – change is good.

I am not just saying that to say that one should always keep their postcard marketing campaign the same and never change it. Quite the contrary. Change your marketing, change your habits, change your way of life when it warrants it. There is really some truth to the old adage “If it ain’t broke, don’t fix it.” Maybe it is human nature to want to change everything once something gets going just the way they planned it. Who the heck knows? All I can say is step outside the human-nature box. Change only when things are drastic or when change is warranted.

Drastic circumstances deserve drastic measures. But how do you determine drastic? Sometimes that is really easy. Your company’s income is crashing. Do something! Change! Or better yet, figure out what you changed and get it back to what was working.

How about a plateau? Does that deserve change? Depends on how long that plateau lasts. I have never seen things leveling off and staying level forever. It either goes one of two ways – up or down. I know an optometrist who had a very successful practice in small town USA. He never really marketed. He never really had to. People knew of him from miles around. Mainly he did PR stuff – a fundraiser here, networking there, etc., etc. His good works made him well known and respected and the community ooo’ed and ah’ed over him so much the paper loved printing it.

But things changed. Malls started opening up. People started shopping out of small-town USA and into the bigger cities. The environment changed. But he didn’t. He still kept a good practice, but you could see something interesting – his gross income started to plateau. And over time – many years – that plateau gradually started to show where it was really going. I actually don’t have to say where – you’ve got the picture.

Now, would that demand drastic measures? Taking into account inflation, cost of living and other factors that are on the rise – yes, I would say that would demand drastic measures. Did he take them? Not until the direness became all too apparent. But yes, he finally did take them. He started postcard marketing his you-know-what off!

I have another client that is just a dream. They have had the same list for the past 5 years, ever since they have been in business – thirty thousand physical therapists they mailed to over and over and over and over and ... They never changed. They figured if it was bringing in the income it was the thing that was working. And it worked and it still works.

So, next time you think about changing your marketing plan, look to see if it needs it. Look at your numbers. Are they improving? Declining? If your income is going up – don’t change one single thing. But if it is going down or flat lining – for heaven’s sake, change!

Marketing: Who Is The Customer

Forgotten Marketing – Who Is The Customer?

I have witnessed a couple of discussions recently, amongst “internet marketers”, that made me recall the real world of offline marketing and how it relates to the world of the internet as it presently stands. Both discussions revolved around Google, which is not unusual; and both led me to believe that many online money seekers, who regard themselves as internet marketers, are a long way from understanding what marketing really is.

As is often the case, there were those who saw Google as a great ogre out to stop them making a living, and these people were the ones stimulating a discussion on Google AdSense.

Google AdSense – Who Is The Customer here?

As far as online advertising goes, Google is a market leader, and deservedly so. Their pioneering approach has always been well ahead of the opposition, although others are trying hard to catch up. However, they have a dual role, as reflected by two products, AdSense and Adwords.

For the purpose of this discussion, I will concentrate on AdSense, as this was where many online “marketers” seem to get confused. For those who do not know about AdSense, this is a partnership product of Google, through which Google and web site owners come to an agreement for the web publisher to show Google ads on their web sites, and share on any income when somebody clicks on the ads. AdSense has given many web site owners the chance to bring in some extra income.

What I found so strange about one of the discussions I mentioned in the first paragraph, was that some people who own web sites see themselves as the customer, and Google as the supplier, when it comes to AdSense. Coming from the real world of magazine advertising, I have no problem understanding that it is the publisher who is the supplier, and the advertiser, or their agent, who is the customer.

Those who seek to attract advertising of any form to a magazine know that, as a publisher, they need first to look after their reading customers. To do that, they seek to provide good quality material for the magazine, and present it in an attractive way that will attract and retain readers. Only when they have done that can they expect to attract good advertising customers.

Ultimately, those who survive in online publishing in the long term, and who will depend on advertising revenue, will recognize that an advertiser is a customer, and needs to be treated like a customer, not a provider of a service. Google may not be a traditional media buyer, but they are the first of a new wave of media buyers who will yield a lot of power for the long term.

For now, though, it appears that many web site owners think Google owes them a living, and that they, the publisher, are the customer. Such people may well benefit from a journey into reality, to a bookstore or magazine stall where they can browse through magazines and see what publishing is about.

Why Should Web Site Owners Write Copy?

The second discussion was, in a way, related, as it reflected the way many internet marketers do not see themselves as web publishers, but people who have to use the latest tools to trick the search engines. That discussion related to duplicate content, and whether using such content will get publishers banned by Google. It rapidly moved on to public label rights articles, and the degree to which, if any, that they should be rewritten.

Some, like I, argued strongly for rewriting to make a web page competitive. There was no notable disagreement on that, but when one individual took the idea on board, the reaction was: "OK, what tools do you use?"

This reflects a tendency, amongst those trying to make a living online, that the solution to any problem is a tool, a piece of software that does the work for you. That's all very well for some things, but for writing an article? Would a genuine publisher want software to do an article rewrite? No, of course not.

In the long run, it is those businesses that understand their market place which will survive and prosper. Recognizing a customer is not a bad place to start; and understanding that they will expect good quality publishing is another.

Marketing: Joint Ventures Success

5 Unbelievable Secret Facts Of A Sure-Successful Joint Venture.

The "Secrets" behind super-successful Joint Ventures finally revealed...If you want to know how they make it, you'll definitely need to know what they're doing.

As you read this article, you'll find that the subject of successful joint venture is certainly no exception.

Joint venturing is the fastest and most preferred way to increase sales and cash flow. It is no longer a secret, business partners are what make a strong company. It is impossible for a person to sit alone and wait for businesses to come, you need to get your influence out there and that is where joint venture partners jump in.

If you have been staying for some time on the Internet, you should know that JV partners are the master key to online success. Here are some reasons of why people are failing to get quality joint ventures:

1. Other marketers will not be waiting for you to reply why they should joint venture with you. Make sure you include the reasons why the other marketer needs to joint venture with you, throw all the benefits in and give a compelling reason why they should.

If you think that giving your product for free to a joint venture partner and expect them to endorse it to their list of subscribers, it won't work. Even if you offer your joint ventures a greater profit than you do, it still works if both of you get to know each other better and have more joint venture plans in the future.

2. Many JV offers are thrown into the trash bin at first sight. Why? The more famous marketers can receive up to 200 JV offers every week, they can't afford to just joint venture with any little beings on earth. Which is why, you need to follow-up. It is important that you don't stop requesting until you are noticed.

Even if they trashed your email for the first time, on the second, third and fourth time, they should be noticing your existence and be urged to open the mail. Be consistent, follow up, and you're half way there.

If you base what you do on inaccurate information, you might be unpleasantly surprised by the consequences. Make sure you get the whole successful joint venture story from informed sources.

3. If you think sending an autoresponder series of template emails to your potential JV partners is a good idea, you're killing your own business. People are very busy and to see that you are not even using your own time to write a proper JV offer, they don't have time for you as well.

Your JV proposals should be more personalized – if possible you will even want to do a research on them so that you can know more about them and include the points in your JV offers. This makes sure that the both of you have a potential of being serious JV partners in the future.

4. JV partners are not affiliates. They are more than just affiliates, they're potential super affiliates. You need to give them more commissions on any sales they've gotten for you. If you offer a 50% of commissions to your affiliates, your JV partners deserve 70% or more.

JV partners turns you targeted customers, they are hungry for similar products. Their subscriber trusts what they endorse, so it is the best way to promote your product. With a list of 10,000, if only 1% which is 100 who purchase your \$97 product, you'll earn \$9700 over night with a single endorsement. 1% is a really low conversion, if the conversion rate increases by another 1% – you've already received \$19,400.

5. Targeting the "big fishes" is not a good idea. You should begin from smaller JV partners, slowly build each other's publicity, and only approach greater marketers when your subscriber lists are huge. This way, the greater marketers will get a more compelling reason in having a

JV with you.

Joint venturing is no doubt the greatest way of getting successful in the Internet online venture, be sure to use it to the extreme and you'll be delighted with the outcome.

To Your Success!

Marketing: Successful Ads

3 Elements That Make Your Ad Successful

When was the last time you bought a car? Did you really NEED a car? I mean REALLY need a car? Chances are the one you were driving was still running when you bought the car you have now. Yep, Americans rarely buy because they need... they buy because they want to experience the feeling that comes with buying.

We enjoy new purchases. Sure, we can convince ourselves that we really needed a new one, but if we're totally honest we'll have to admit that would could've got by without it. What does this mean to your advertising campaign?

1. State The Benefits Of Your Product or Service

Capitalize on the ways a customer will improve his lifestyle by making the purchase. Will he increase his own business profits by 50 percent? Say so in the opening statement of your sales letter, or at the top of your Web page.

Don't obsess with the features of the product itself or your credibility. Frankly, customers could care less. Let's face it... they're a bit selfish when it comes to dishing out their hard earned money. All they want to know is what's in it for them.

2. Paint Word Picture That Let Them Experience the Benefits

"Wake up tomorrow, with no boss! You can spend the day with your family or on the golf course... there's nobody to tell you what to do."

A Multi Level Marketer may want his audience to feel the freedom of having no one to answer to if they become successful in the business. He'll dramatize that desire, and put the listener in the seat to inspire it to take hold until the listener is ready to sign up and get started.

3. Inspire Immediate Action

Hey, let's face it... the longer a customer lolly gags, the greater the chances he'll never take the plunge. Don't let him off the hook that easily!

Set a deadline. Put on the pressure to buy now, or miss out on the deal. Chances are pretty

good that the procrastinator will get with it just to save a few bucks.

What about your sales materials? Have you taken a good look at the things you are advertising? Make sure you are focused on the benefits the consumer will experience from the purchase, and not on the features of the product or service.

Marketing: Print Ad Essentials

5 Print Ad Essentials!

Writing an effective print ad, particularly a classified advertisement, requires that you remember five essential points. Failure to implement these points correctly can cost you much in the way of time lost and a sale missed.

You've just cleaned out the attic and straightened up the garage. You've identified items you no longer need, but they certainly have a cash value to them. You could really use the money, but you don't want to post the information on eBay. What to do? You create a classified ad!

Unlike in times past, the classified advertisement you run with your local paper will more than likely have exposure beyond the printed copy. Smart newspaper publishers, knowing the inroads that the internet has had on their businesses, now allow advertisers to have a copy of their advertisement appear online. This is important as newspaper readership is dropping rapidly as internet usage continues to climb sharply. Still, a printed copy is smart especially if the classified ad section of your local paper is popular.

When designing your ad, you need to come up with an eye grabbing title. The title you choose will help the reader decide whether they want to read more or continue scanning their eyes toward other ads.

List the item you are offering for sale predominately within the name of the title. If you have several items to sell, consider a catchy title such as, "30 Year Contents of Attic" which will indicate to readers that you probably have antiques. If you state, "Assorted Sporting Goods" you will attract people who are looking for a bowling ball, fishing equipment, children's toys, etc. The key is attracting the reader and encouraging them to read your ad.

Beyond the title, the following five points will help you in your campaign:

1. Be descriptive The clearer you present what you have to offer for sale, the better your responses will be.
2. Do not abbreviate Not everyone understands what an abbreviation means. Spell it out and erase all doubt!
3. Specify the price Particularly if you are selling just one item, list the amount you want for that item.

4. Highlights I like ads that stand out. If the newspaper offers decorative symbols, characters, or fonts use them to draw the reader's eyes to your listing.

5. Ad campaign One day listings only work for popular items. Do you believe your item will sell if you list it for just one day? If you list it longer, you can always cancel the ad. Remember to find out what the newspaper's policy is about online ads too. Your buyer may only see the ad online.

Some newspapers will design the ad for you, if you find writing ad copy to be a difficult task. Not everyone is gifted in writing clear, concise copy. If they want your business, they should be happy to provide this service.

Marketing: Three Times Three Tactics

3 Marketing Tactics That Will Send Your Sales Through The Roof

It's difficult to reach your business goals if you don't have the right materials and/or the information to help your business reach the success it's capable of. These 3 insights will help you generate the business you've always dreamed of.

When the tide comes in, all boats in the harbor go up... the tough part is figuring out how to bring the tide in. Booming economies come and go and bring surges of profit increases, then ebb to leave behind shortages and tough times. Regardless, there are some business that just seem to weather the tough times with grace, not really affected by recessions. It's almost as though they have a secret source... maybe they do... customers.

Hey, customers always buy... in the good times and in the bad times. They still have needs and still make purchases. When you understand their needs and wants, you have the keys to keeping your business afloat when others are grounded. Implement these three tactics successful marketers use, and you're set for success.

1. Just One

Customers can be like a two year old in a candy store... they want it all. Yeah, sometimes it's hard to make up your mind about what you really do want when everything looks so good. That's why it pays to promote one product over the others. It spells out loud and clear... I'M THE BEST DEAL. That will be the deciding factor in most cases.

2. Make Them Feel Good

Customers buy because they want to enjoy the benefits of the purchase. A lady might buy a dress because she wants to feel sexy, or a man will buy a saw because he finds pleasure in creating things. Emotions are the key element that drives purchases.

Use word pictures to stir up the emotions that will instigate the sale. Let them "feel" the

benefits, and they'll be more apt to head for the cash register. Put them where you want them.

Selling a riding mower? ... the birds are singing, Easter lilies are blooming and kids are flying kites in the wind... spring has arrived. Yep, it's time to get out that mower and fuel it up for the summer ahead. How many springs have come and gone since you promised yourself a riding mower? ... It's not hard to paint mental pictures that whet their appetite for the product you are advertising.

3. Make Contact

Following up with a customer who didn't buy can be the determining factor between an "almost sale" and a satisfied, loyal customer. Simply contact them afterward and let them know the product is still available or offer them further information they may find valuable.

Internet marketers can offer free newsletters or reports that consumers find useful and marketers find profitable. Not only do you keep your product in front of the customer on a regular basis, you get email information to stay in contact. Both parties win!

3 Must-Have Strategies to Stay on the Cutting Edge

It's difficult to reach your business goals if you don't have the right materials and/or the information to help your business reach the success it's capable of. These three insights will help you generate the business you've always dreamed of.

1. Explore New Advertising Methods

The first sign that you might need to explore new marketing strategies, is a sharp decline in the effectiveness of your advertisement campaign. Yeah, you shell out a lot of hard earned cash to advertise, and the public turns its nose up! Don't wait until your profits are plunging to start hunting for new marketing strategies.

Keep searching for the pot of gold. The whirlwind of change that continuously sweeps through the marketplace offers great opportunity for discovering new advertising mediums. Be on the lookout for one that will set you up for brand new heights of success.

Here's the rule of thumb for advertising: Keep 80 percent of your advertising budget invested in the "tried and true" methods that bring in a steady flow of profit, and invest 20 percent into the exploration of new ways to get your message to potential customers.

2. Be On The Lookout For New Markets

Be alert! Diversification is the key to staying on the cutting edge of an ever changing marketplace. You'll be insulating yourself against the effects of these changes by continuously changing as well. And hey... you never know when a brand new market will translate into millions of dollars in sales!

You don't have to go out on a limb to reach new markets. There are marketing niches within the market you are currently dealing with. Think of it like this...your market can be subdivided into several narrowly defined markets. A Multi Level Marketing company may notice that many of its prospects are stay-at-home moms and retirees. Hey a few advertisements directed at the right people...two additional Web pages targeting stay-at-home moms and retirees linked to their home page...and they've effectively customized their markets and are likely to see a 20 percent increase in sales.

3. Invest In New Products or Services

Have you noticed a continuously progressing slump in the sales and profits of a product or service you currently offer? It's no sweat if you have other products and services to fill the gap. Keep a sharp eye out for new products and services that complement what you already have to offer.

A bridal shop owner may have a humming business that sells gowns and veils, but what about tuxedos? Wouldn't it be easier for the wedding party to get everything in one place? Tuxedos aren't just for weddings...proms and parties call for bow ties and tails as well. The potential is expansive.

Yeah, you don't have to be intimidated by clever competition and new technology when you stay on the edge, and make changes with it. Try these 3 strategies to keep you sales numbers vibrant and climbing!

3 Must-See Keys For Expanding Your Business

It's difficult to reach your business goals if you don't have the right materials and/or the information to help your business reach the success it's capable of. These 3 insights will help you generate the business you've always dreamed of.

1. Team Up

No one knows your market like you! What are the main characteristics of your target audience? Find someone else out there who isn't a competitor, but who reaches the same class of customers that you do. Team up with them to do joint promotions!

We all know that two is better than one. The dramatic end results will be an effective and cost-cutting advertising venture the nets both of you a nice profit.

I once dealt with a veterinarian who promoted a local dog groomer... who in turn promoted the local veterinarian. Yeah, it's kind of a "you scratch my back and I'll scratch yours" set up, but hey it works for both parties. Think about it... customers are going to feel that the dog groomer is in the know about who the best vet in town is, as well as trust the vet to know who is the best dog groomer in the area. Sure, it's a win, win situation for both the groomer and the

vet.

2. Dig Out New Niche Markets

Niche markets are everywhere, right under your nose! Within the customer audience that you serve right now are groups of people who share common traits. Think about it... maybe you have a group who speaks Spanish, a group of teens, and a group of middle class family men and women.

Evaluate these classes of people, and discover the unique needs and desires they share. That will set you up to customize your advertising campaign directly to them. It's not hard to take your current ads, and make a few changes to adjust to the niches. They'll be impressed that you understand THEM, and the increase in your profits will be the best thanks you can get.

3. Hop On The Latest Trends

Get in on the first floor of the latest trend... before your competition becomes aware of it. Be a leader in the industry! Hey, Internet marketing is still profitable all around, but businesses who jumped on the band wagon early in the game got the best proceeds for their insight.

We're not talking about dropping everything and making a mad dash! Wise marketers add to their already profitable businesses when they see the "new and coming" techniques. Keep the customers you already have on board, and add to your existing products and services.

You can quickly and easily strengthen your business and push out the competition by adding new layers to your existing business, teaming up for joint promotions, and discovering new markets to reach.

Marketing: Feedback From Your Customers

9 Secret Ways To Get Valuable Feedback From Your Customers

You can learn many things you didn't know about your business by getting valuable feedback from your customers. Your customers may buy your main product just to get the free gifts. Your visitors may think it's too hard to navigate through your web site.

By knowing this type of important information you can improve your web site, products/services, advertising, and marketing. Below are nine techniques you can use to get valuable feedback from your customers.

-Use surveys and questionnaires regularly to improve your business. Publish them on your web site, e-zine, print newsletter, direct mail material, include them with product shipments or inside product packages. Post them on appropriate online message boards, e-mail discussion lists and newsgroups on the internet.

-Create an online community for your customers. Include a chat room, message board, e-mail discussion list on your site for customers to participate in. You can regularly moderate these communities to see what your customers are saying about your business.

-Give away your products to a group of your customers. Ask them to use and review the product. Ask them to fill out an evaluation form and send it back. Some customers may fill them out, some may not, but the feedback you do get will be valuable.

-Offer your web site visitors an online product or service from your web site at no cost. It could be an ebook, search engine submission, consulting via e-mail, web design, etc. In return, ask them to fill out a short survey about your web site, products or services you're selling, customer service, or your web site.

-Create a customer focus group. Invite ten to twenty of your most loyal customers to meet regularly. They will give you ideas and input on how to improve your customer service. You could pay them, take them out to dinner or give them free products.

-Stay in contact with customers on a regular basis. Offer them a free e-zine subscription. Ask customers if they want to be updated by e-mail when you make changes to your Web site. After every sale, follow-up with the customer to see if they are satisfied with their purchase.

-Make it easy for your customers to contact you. Offer as many contact methods as possible. Allow customers to contact you by e-mail. Hyperlink your e-mail address so customers won't have to type it. Offer toll free numbers for phone and fax contacts. This will make it easy for your customers to voice their opinions.

-You could regularly contact customers on birthdays or holidays. Send thank you gifts to lifetime customers. E-mail them online greeting cards on holidays or birthdays. Call them personally to wish them a happy holiday. You could follow-up with a survey or ask them if they're happy with your business.

-Invite your customers to company meetings, luncheons, workshops or seminars. Create special events for your customers like parties, barbecue's, dances etc. Make a point for yourself and your employees to interact with them at these event to get valuable feedback for your business.

You could use a couple or all of the techniques listed above to get valuable customer feedback. These aren't the only ways, be creative and come up with some of your own.

Marketing: Fishing For Leads

Fishing For Leads – The 5 Steps

If you have a new experience everyday, you will lead a fulfilling life.

I had one during my summer holidays, when I went out fishing for mackerel. After the trip, I had an epiphany – I felt I was now able to explain easily, in 5 steps, how small companies can effectively increase their business.

We start with an anecdote, which captures the essence of the 5 steps, and hopefully will help you land next year's profitable catch.

The first thing that I noticed when I got onto the small boat at the harbor in Enniscrone, Co. Sligo, was the cleanliness and order of the boat. The skipper in charge had all of the rods, upright, with their lines neatly tucked away, in holders. The holders were made out of piping, about 30cm long, which had been welded to the side of the boat.

A simple, inexpensive aid had made me sit up and pay attention. This skipper thought about his customers, and this device left a strong impression. We then got a very short lecture on safety, checked we had our life jackets on, and off we went. About 12 of us!

Finding your target market

About 12 minutes later, the skipper stopped the boat, and told us we should find some mackerel here. He explained that the lures on the hooks looked just like what mackerel wanted to eat. It certainly was not something I would have fancied!

He explained that through his experience and the help of a little sonar gadget on his boat, that he knew there was a shoal of fish below. We all slung our rods over the side and dropped our lines.

Reeling in the sale

Now I don't know about you, but this was totally new to me. I wound up the line frantically, as soon as I felt a tug, and hey presto, there were three fish dangling off the hooks. I started flailing about, one jumped off before I even got it in over the side, and when I was trying to reel it in the final bit I lost another one. The one that I got in, I lost down the gutter when I finally got it off the hook.

The skipper explained to me, that once a fish took the bait, I should give a quick tug on the rod, to make sure it was firmly hooked. I should then take my time, to reel it in. Secure the rod in the holder, with the fish hanging over the bucket and deal with them one by one – I did, and I ended up with 20 fish, which delighted me, as I had set a target of 10, since my friend had caught 9 on his first time

1. So what are the lessons for marketing – if you are still with me, and have not already got most of them, here they are in business speak;
2. Set goals and targets that are realistic, and based on some valid foundation or research.

3. Have simple procedures set up, to make it easy to operate and for your customers to conduct business with you.

4. Speak in your prospects language, about what they want – it's a bit like the fish bait, unlikely that strawberries and cream will catch many mackerel!

5. Once you know what your prospects like, find out where they are, do some research and target them accordingly – as in our example, not much point in putting down shark bait in a shoal of mackerel.

Once you get your customers attention, or have a lead, qualify it, and ensure you follow up at all time to close the sale.

Again the use of a good sales process is essential here.

The bottom line, if you know what problems or desires your customers have, and you can solve or fulfill these, while providing value for money, you will always be a winner.

And if you don't know the answer to that question, go ask the people who have already bought from you – they do!

Marketing: Google AdSense

How Do I Extract The Maximum Money Out Of Google AdSense

Below are some tips to help you optimize your pages to make them more AdSense-friendly. Note that these tips deal with ad delivery rather than ad formatting or placement. While ad formatting and placement may affect ad click-through rates, they have nothing to do with the delivery of relevant ads to your site. Your site must display relevant ads before they have any chance of being clicked on.

1. Avoid too much content on a page

If AdSense does not understand what is your page is about, it cannot deliver ads targeted to its content. Although a human being can easily tell what a web page is about by taking a glance at it, computer algorithms are no so intelligent. If your page contains too much content, chances are that it also contains too many seemingly unrelated keywords. AdSense becomes confused and displays PSAs or ads unrelated to the topic of your page. Try dividing the page into smaller ones, each focusing on just a few related keywords.

2. Avoid too little content on a page

If your page contains lots of graphics and very little text, AdSense may have a hard time figuring out what it is about. This is especially true when the bulk of your content is derived

from graphics and scripts. When possible, use text rather than graphics to display website names, page titles, and headline texts. Make certain to include your keywords in the title of your page and repeat them throughout the page. Avoid hiding your text through sneaky tactics, such as using tiny fonts or making your text the same color as the background. This may be construed by search engines as spam.

3. Repeat keywords that you are targeting

Keyword repetition makes it easier for AdSense to decipher what your page is about. Do this in moderation as excessive repetition may be considered spam by the search engines. Excessive repetition may also make your writing sound awkward to the human reader. Instead of repeating the same keyword more than 5 or 6 times on a page, use synonyms and related keywords. For example, instead of repeating “AdSense optimization” 20 times, you might try alternative phrases like “increase AdSense revenues” or “earn more from AdSense”.

4. Avoid acronyms

I once wrote an article on pay-per-click advertising for one of my sites. When I uploaded the article to my site, I was surprised to find that all of the ads showing on the page were for Apple computer products and had nothing to do with pay-per-click. It later occurred to me that instead of repeating “pay-per-click” over and over in the article, I used the acronym “PPC” numerous times. As it turned out, “PPC” also stands for “PowerPC”, Apple’s line of Power Macintosh computers, which explained why I was getting all the Apple related ads. When I replaced all the “PPCs” with “pay-per-click” and “pay per click”, the problem went away.

5. Choose keywords with commercial value

You may get public service announcements rather than paid ads if your page deals with a subject matter whose keywords no one bids on. A remedy for this is to incorporate keywords with commercial value into your manuscript. For instance, if your page is on some obscure medical condition, you might try sprinkling a few drug names into your document to make it display paid ads rather than PSAs.

Marketing: Advertising Outdoors

Outdoor advertising is very powerful and effective. It has the ability to target consumers quickly and accurately.

To a general advertiser outdoor advertising is worthy of consideration. Outdoor advertising is considered as the oldest form of advertising. Posting bills on wooden boards in the late 19th century led to the birth of the term billboard. Today, outdoor advertising includes not only billboards but also car cards in public transportation, displays in airports, ski areas, and sports arenas and in-store displays among others.

Consider this scenario: you were on your way to the office and without even looking at the

morning paper you found out that your favorite boutique is opening in the neighborhood. Or you were on your way home from work when you find out that a major company you would love to work for is hiring – and this you knew without even having your own radio on. How did all these happen? Through outdoor advertising.

Outdoor advertising is very powerful and effective. It has the ability to target consumers quickly and accurately. Likewise, it can create a strong visual impression that reinforces continuity and name recognition, making your overall marketing campaign even more effective. According to studies, more and more consumers are spending time than ever driving or riding in cars and walking in cities. This means that customers are exposed to outdoor advertising more than ever before. Hence, making use of outdoor advertising can significantly increase your chance of attracting more customers.

Designing and creating an outdoor advertising is like creating a visual storytelling. The expression of an idea can surprise viewers with words or excite them with pictures. Humor is a powerful design choice for outdoor advertising. The character of outdoor advertising requires a clear message, a strong brand identity and a fast impact. Outdoor advertising shares many communication characteristics with other media, but it is the differences that truly determine what will be effective design elements for an advertisement.

So what could outdoor advertising do that traditional advertising can't? Outdoor advertising has better advantage when it comes to a regional or national showing. And outdoor advertising can reinforce the primary message delivered through broadcast or print. Additionally, outdoor advertising requires low active processing because consumers receive its messages when they are in an inactive state of mind. Often, commuters sit idle in their vehicles when outdoor messages are presented so their mood is under stimulated. This is a good opportunity for advertisers because well-presented outdoor designs will grab attention when commuters are deprived of other creative stimulation.

Thus, keep in mind that impressive advertising is essential for the long-term success of any brand, since advertising works best when an individual consumer learns that a product or service is a good choice for them.

Marketing: Why Network Marketing Sucks

There is an alternative to network marketing, even if you are a complete introvert.

On the face of it, network marketing should be very effective. You buy a product, recommend it to all your friends and earn a commission on what they buy. This 'word-of-mouth' advertising is what the big TV advertisers most fear: your product endorsement to your friends actually carries much more clout than an expensive tele-ad.

So, you earn a few pennies or bucks on each sale. But the big money comes (or is supposed to) when you recruit your friend to do as you have done – to recommend the product to all their friends – and recruit them into the network, too. And you get a few bucks on their sales,

and as your network grows exponentially, so does your income. So why doesn't it work? Why do 97% of network marketers fail?

There are two main answers. First, the compensation plan. To earn anything at all you have to shift product. Suppose that you get \$1 on average for each order that flows through your downline. That means that you and your team have to make 100 sales to make you \$100. That's not much. To live the life you dreamed of, to give up your day-job, to spend more time with your family, to pay off your mortgage and car loan and credit-card debts, you're probably going to need \$500,000 (at least!) At \$1 a pop it's going to take you a long, long time.

Which is where the 'recruitment' part of the business comes in. If only you could recruit enough people into your team you could shift all that product and get rich. But you've run out of friends, and anyway, most of them don't want to know or are lousy at networking. So this is the second reason why network marketers fail. To expand your downline you have to go out and recruit strangers. And most people hate doing this. It's difficult, demoralizing and exhausting. So 97 networkers out of 100 give up and fail. The dream withers and dies.

So what's the answer?

Making a fortune \$1 at a time is not the way to go. And cold-calling strangers is about as much fun as pulling your own teeth.

Just forget about the traditional network marketing model: instead look at it from a tycoon's point of view. You'll make more money for less effort if you sell a big ticket item. Instead of making \$1 profit per sale, why not make \$500? And if selling to strangers gives you a pain in the head, why not delegate? Pass the job over to the experts and let them do all the schmoozing, selling and closing. This is what I do and you could do the same.

You can operate this system from anywhere in the world from behind your computer screen. This is not a pyramid, neither is it MLM. And you can do it even if you are a complete and out-and-out introvert.

Most people don't realize that network marketing is a business of marketing and promotion pursued by people who have NO IDEA how to market and promote. This article goes right to the core about why and how network marketing should be used.

Today I am going to talk about something that seems to be one of those things that people either love or hate. What I am talking about is network marketing, also called mlm or multi-level marketing. Right from the beginning I will say that there is no need to have extreme views about this, it is simply a business model that you can use if you wish.

However, it is crucial that you understand HOW the business model of network marketing works.

I think there are basically two reasons that some people seem to be almost electrocuted,

simply by hearing someone mention the word network marketing. Either they have tried it themselves, and because they didn't have a clue on how to do it they failed miserably. Or they belong to the group of people who can't get the idea that mlm = pyramid scheme out of their heads.

This second misconception is easy to debunk. Pyramid schemes are illegal almost everywhere, do you really think large multinational companies could operate year after year on an entirely illegal basis?

Secondly, this view on network marketing shows that the speaker is ignorant. He or she hasn't done an ounce of homework on the various businesses that are available to each of us today, and they are ignorant of the industry itself.

This means they aren't serious. It means they "would like" to make more money, but have no intention of making it happen. They continually "look" for home businesses, which is enough to satisfy their minds that they "did everything they could", but everything they find out there is flawed and are "scams". They are looking to buy "hope", not a business.

There is a Chinese saying that goes something like this: "If you spend too much time thinking about your next step, you will be standing on one leg for the rest of your life". Yes, there ARE scams out there, but mlm is not a dirty word and it is not a synonym for scam. Get over it!

As for the comparison to a pyramid in general – think of any company that comes to mind. The company will probably have a CEO, president, vice presidents, middle management, a sales force, and hourly employees.

It goes without saying that the guy at the top, the CEO, is going to make the most money, and the compensations continue to decrease down the ladder which starts at his cushy leather chair. The only way to get paid more and move up the ladder is to boot someone else out of their spot – and this is what people call okay and normal!

Not to mention the fact that the corporate slave masters seem to have no problem with working people to the limits...and then kicking them out the door before any of the benefits kick in. (As always there are some exceptions, of course). How is this any less pyramid than network marketing? All people in the company work hard, but ONLY those at the very top has "permission" to make a lot of money.

Now, in network marketing the basic idea is that it will be of great benefit to everyone involved to help people who are new reach the top. In fact the whole business idea hinges on this idea – the only way to become really successful in the long term is to help others. Of course there will always be a mathematical limit to how large a network can become, but with today's global marketplace, and a suitable compensation plan, there is usually plenty of room for everybody.

A network marketing company can diversify and find new markets, just like all companies have to.

But what about the miserable statistics of network marketing, the over 90% drop-out rate etc.?

This is mainly caused by the simple fact that not that many people know how to do network marketing correctly. And I must admit that some network marketing companies are responsible for this themselves, by providing useless ideas like making a “100 list” etc.

You see, this is a somewhat unique industry. Most people don't realize that network marketing is a business of marketing and promotion pursued by people who have NO IDEA how to market and promote.

Read the above paragraph once more and let it sink in...

If you are going to be involved in network marketing you need to develop both the right mind set and acquire the right knowledge (no, they usually don't teach this in college).

You must learn that when you do this business right:

- * You don't have to “sell”
- * You don't have to ask people to join your business.. They ask you!
- * You don't have to post “work at home” flyers!
- * People will PAY YOU to prospect them

You should learn that this is not at all about the Vitamins or whatever product your company is selling. In fact, this is one of the single biggest mistakes people make in network marketing.

Marketing: Convert Leads Into Customers

Convert Leads Into Customers, And Customers Into Super-customers!

A simple definition of marketing is “the getting and keeping of customers.” To sell your product or service, you must have customers. To increase your revenues, you must have customers, and you must turn those customers into repeat super-customers.

The easiest way to do this, both on- and off-line, is through a content newsletter. There is no doubt that content sells. Useful content builds trust and credibility, and over time turns your customer from a stranger to a friend.

You can advertise your newsletter on your website, on forums, on your business card, in articles you write, on traffic exchanges, and in your email signature. If you faithfully do these marketing tasks, your email list will grow over time.

You must provide useful and informative content in your newsletter. If you want subscribers to read it and (eventually) buy from you, do not offer them junk. I define “junk” as opt-in spam. Don’t fall into the habit of sending out advertisements veiled as “articles.” Don’t send only solo ads. Instead, research topics for your newsletter and write quality articles. Subscribers who are impressed with your newsletter will buy from you. But it will take time to build trust. Trust is not built through junk.

There are three phases to this process:

- 1) Get a lead;
- 2) Convert that lead into a customer; and
- 3) Convert that customer into a super-customer.

Your newsletter will help you accomplish all three tasks.

If you sell or market a product or service, and you are driving traffic to your website, you typically have only one shot at capturing the interest of a prospect. If I go to your site and click away, I may never come back. You need some sort of follow-up system. A newsletter is the perfect vehicle for follow-up.

If you are sending targeted traffic to your site (any other type of traffic is a waste), visitors will be interested in the content of what you are offering. To keep their interest, and to keep your name in front of them, offer a f-re-e newsletter. Even a simple, once-a-month newsletter will do.

If they sign up, you then have a chance to build a relationship. This is done through your content. Many people don’t buy something the first time they see it, but as they come to know you and your product through your newsletter, they become more willing to purchase. Over time, just by offering a newsletter, you can convert more leads into customers.

You turn those customers into super-customers also through your newsletter. If the product or service they bought from you was quality, you have built even more credibility with them. Perhaps now they will make repeat purchases, or join a membership site you offer, or even become an affiliate for your product or service.

But the key is to offer useful, informative content. If the premier issue of your newsletter is nothing but an ad similar to your site, you will lose that lead. Build relationships through high-quality content, and you will convert leads into paying customers into paying super-customers.

Remember – no list, no money.

Marketing: Cross Promotiion

Cross Promotiion Techniques That Work

Cross promotion is not a new idea. It has been used by businesses for a very long time. For example, a real-estate company may promote a certain lawyer to close a sale. In turn, the lawyer will promote that agency in his firm. The system is somewhat similar to the primitive barter system where people traded items rather than using money. But how can anything primitive fit into the online world of Internet Marketing? Very easily!

A cross promotion is, simply stated, the trading of ad space. Instead of paying for advertising space on a site, you simply place someone else's business ad on your page and your ad on theirs. There are many ways to use cross promotions in your internet business that can equate to effective and cost efficient advertising.

One way is to use link exchanges. This is very effective when considering cross promoting with a company that is similar to yours. However, you should avoid linking to a page that is in direct competition with yours. One of the biggest pluses for using link exchanges is that some search engines are factoring in hits from the sites that are linked to your page when determining the ranking. Therefore, linking to a more popular site can not only increase your advertising and traffic, but also your search engine ranking.

When customers or potential customers subscribe to your ezine, you can use this as an opportunity to use cross promotions. On the same page that the customer subscribes to your ezine, make available the opportunity to subscribe to another company's ezine. You can even exchange ad space in ezines and provide recommendations for those with whom you cross promote. You may even want to exchange column space in one another's ezines.

Writing free articles that inform customers or potential customers with information that is useful and accurate can create a reputation for you and your business. Readers will quickly come to know you as an expert on that subject. In these articles, the author uses a byline to help promote his site. Bylines are yet another way to use cross promotions. You can use part of the space in your byline to recommend someone else's product.

If you have been considering writing an ebook, a joint venture could mean increased profits for you and the person you are partnering with. Cross promotion through ebooks is an excellent way to allow for a wider topic and promote both your business and your partner's business. The ebook should contain information that will benefit both businesses but remain helpful to the reader. A good example of using cross promotions through an ebook is a site selling used video games partnering with a site selling gaming devices: two subjects that would interest the same reader and most likely lead the reader to both sites.

You should keep in mind that the recommendations you make are a direct reflection of you, so choose your' cross promotional businesses carefully. Also keep in mind that it would be nice as a shopper to be able to link from one site to another as a way to "shop around". Also, never link or recommend a site that's in direct competition with you, since this is not usually beneficial to you. Instead, recommend those that are similar, such as health and life

insurance.

Marketing: How To Waste Advertising Money

5 Proven Ways to Waste Advertising Money

It's difficult to reach your business goals if you don't have the right materials and/or the information to help your business reach the success it's capable of. These five helpful suggestions will boost your business to new levels.

1. Yo Yo Advertising

My friend Dottie can precisely predict her sales peaks and plummets accurately...and no, she's not into fortune telling. Experience has proven that March, April, and May will bring a lot of money to her account, while September and January will put her in the slumps

Sound familiar? Have you too been caught in the vicious cycle of high and low sales volumes? Why? Most of us tend to advertise heavily while things are slow – in a desperate attempt to get customers through the door, but back off when things are hopping.

If you're looking for an even-keeled market, develop a steady marketing plan. Steady advertising produces steady growth...and steadily climbing profits!

2. Single Shot Advertising

One shot ads, rarely get results. Most customers are just like you, they don't jump on the band wagon the first time it passes by. They often need to see your sales material several times before they actually make the move to walk through the doors.

Follow-ups are necessary for success. We're not just talking about prospective customers now...even your loyal customers need to be cultivated for sales. How many times have you thought about making a purchase, but just never followed through with it? Sure, we all do it. Sometimes it takes a little pressure to get us to part with our hard-earned money. Make it a point to spend time building relationships with both new customers and your faithful following.

3. MonkeySee, Monkey Do Advertising

How many times have you seen the same advertisement ideas written with just a little different twist? If you're surfing the Web you've come across plenty of the aped ads! Yeah, you can predict what the next paragraph will cover, because you've seen it so many other places.

Sure, copy cat ads can be effective for a little while, but the results will quickly die down as others join in the copy mania. If you're looking for REAL and LASTING results, be original. Do what only you can do, forget about what everyone else is doing. Be you. When a competitor

does have a good idea, improve on it. Don't follow in his footsteps...step out and lead the way to more effective advertisements.

4. Wild Shot Advertising

Ready, aim...yeah aim before you advertise! Don't be caught up in wild advertising that gets your message in front of a lot of people who have absolutely no interest in your product or service.

Target your market...and get better results for your investment. Finding the target market that has a specific need you can fulfill takes a little time and research, but you'll feel the effects when you hit the bulls-eye!

Think about this...there are advertising venues that your competition is overlooking. What about postcards? These high impact marketing tools are often overlooked. Yet, they're the perfect low-cost way to generate prospective customer interest. Keep an eye open for overlooked marketing gems, and get one up on your competition!

5. Me, Me Advertising

What is it that consumers are looking for? ...Exactly, something that is going to benefit them. They really aren't interested in the facts about your product...they want to know how it will impact their life or lifestyle.

Take a look at your ad copy, and ask yourself what are you portraying...facts or benefits. Multi Level Marketers have this all figured out. Rather than tell you they have a business to offer, they spend a lot of time promising you freedom to work your own hours, countless vacations, summer homes and a host of other things you've probably already dreamed about at some point. Hey, don't knock it...the MLM industry is a steadily growing element in our economy.

Don't bore your readers with the facts...attract them with exciting elements that will fulfill their needs or desires.

Are you getting the results you've been looking for? Take another look at your marketing strategy...are you making the same mistakes many marketers unknowingly make. Hey, real success may only be one change away!

Marketing: What You Need to Know About Affiliate Marketing

Well you have finally done it. You have packed in the rubbish job and told your boss exactly what you think. You have taken the plunge and made the decision to begin your own affiliate marketing business. Affiliate marketing can be very lucrative. It provides people with the opportunity to work for themselves with very little risk to them. Those that are sales savvy, good at marketing and are not afraid of a little hard work can often do incredibly well with an affiliate marketing program.

Affiliate marketing sounds easy but you do need to exercise some caution. You want to avoid the affiliate marketing pitfalls that can ruin your business and worse, have you crawling on your hands and knees back to that boss that now knows how you truly feel.

People tend to get excited when they start a new venture. Unfortunately this excitement and eagerness can cause them to miss key things in their agreement. Whenever you sign up for an affiliate marketing program, you will be expected to sign an agreement. The terms and conditions of the agreement for both sides should be outlined. However, if they want to hide something this is where they will put it. It will either be in the small print, so get your magnifying glass out, or they will baffle you with legal language. Either way, you need to read and understand your agreement thoroughly to avoid disappointment and lost earnings.

If you are signing up for a commission based affiliate marketing program then you need to understand how the term revenue is defined. This is one of the biggest pitfalls of the contracts. They may advertise 5-10% commissions but it all fall on how they define revenue. Most affiliate marketing programs will calculate commission on the gross value of the sale. In other words, the amount of money the site will get at the completion of the sale. You may think that this sounds great. However, you need to read this part of the agreement very carefully. The amount of the sale almost always excludes credit card or debit card payment surcharges. They also are likely to exclude payment and delivery charges as well as any gift wrapping or other surcharges. What sounded like a nice commission is soon shrinking before your eyes. Ask these questions specifically before you sign an agreement.

Some affiliate programs are even stricter in their definition of revenue. Your commission may be based on the profit margin of the sold product. For example, if you help sell a book for 20 dollars but the company only makes 10 dollars profit, you'll receive a percentage of 10 dollars not 20. This can make a substantial difference in your earnings. Again, make sure you understand these things and ask specifically what your commission will be based upon. Read your agreement and look out for odd sounding clauses. These could come back to haunt you later.

Something else to beware of when you work on commission is returns. Many affiliate marketing companies only pay commission out on completed sales and then only if the customer keeps the item. If they return the items your commission could be canceled. To really rub salt in the wounds, you could be billed for the outstanding commission if you do not have sufficient commission credit built up. Make sure you understand this before signing on. You cannot expect a company to pay you a commission on an item that is returned but make sure you understand their return policy. Find out your rights in this situation.

Affiliate marketing can be a great way to earn money. If you have good sales and marketing skills then it can give you the opportunity to put them to good use. You'll be able to work for yourself and not someone who undervalues and does not appreciate them. One needs to consider affiliate marketing carefully. Make sure you understand your agreement and exactly what you will be paid for. You don't want to have to go crawling back to your boss begging for your old job back.

Which Affiliate Networks To Look Out For When Promoting

There are many horror stories about affiliate programs and networks. People have heard them over and over again, that some are even wary of joining one. The stories they may have heard are those related to illegal programs or pyramid schemes. Basically, this kind of market does not have real, worthy product.

You do not want to be associated with these schemes. It is obvious you want to be with a program that offers high quality product that you will readily endorse. The growing number of those who have joined already and are succeeding immensely is proof enough that there are reliable and quality affiliate programs out there.

Why participate in an affiliate program?

It allows you to work part-time. It gives you the opportunity to build a generous residual income. And it makes you an owner of a small business. Affiliate programs have already created lots of millionaires. They are the living testimony of how hard work; continuous prospecting, motivating and training others pay off.

If ever you are deciding to join one, you must take note that you are getting into something that is patterned to what you are capable of. This will be an assurance that you are capable of doing anything to come out successful.

How do you choose a good affiliate program to promote? Here are some tips you may want to look over before choosing one:

1. A program that you like and have interest in. One of the best ways of knowing if that is the kind of program you wish to promote is if you are interested in purchasing the product yourself. If that is the case, chances are, there are many others who are also interested in the same program and products.
2. Look for a program that is of high quality. For instance, look for one that is associated with many experts in that particular industry. This way, you are assured that of the standard of the program you will be joining into.
3. Join in the ones that offer real and viable products. How do you know this? Do some initial research. If possible, track down some of the members and customers to give you testimonial on the credibility of the program.
4. The program that is catering to a growing target market. This will ensure you that there will be more and continuous demands for your referrals. Make inquiries. There are forums and discussions you can participate in to get good and reliable feedbacks.
5. A program with a compensation plan that pays out a residual income and a payout of 30%

or more would be a great choice. There are some programs offering this kind of compensation. Look closely for one. Do not waste your time with programs that do not reward substantially for your efforts.

6. Be aware of the minimum quotas that you must fulfill or sales target that is too hard to achieve. Some affiliate programs imposes pre-requisites before you get your commissions. Just be sure that you are capable of attaining their requirements.

7. Select one that has plenty of tools and resources that can help you grow the business in the shortest possible time. Not all affiliate programs have these capacities. Make use you decide on one with lots of helpful tools you can use.

8. Check out if the program has a proven system that can allow you to check your networks and compensation. Also check if they have it available online for you to check anytime and anywhere.

9. The program that is offering strong incentives for members to renew their membership each time. The affiliate program that provides continuous help and upgrades for its products have the tendency to retain its members. These things can assure the growth of your networks.

10. Be aware of the things that members are not happy about in a program. Like with the ones mentioned above, you can do your checking at discussion forums. If you know someone in that same program, there is no harm asking if there are many downsides involved.

Have a thorough and intensive knowledge about the affiliate program and network you will be promoting on.

Knowing the kind of program you are getting yourself into will make you anticipate and prevent any future problems you may encounter.

Marketing: Adsense Essential For Content Sites

3 Reasons Why Adsense Is Essential For Content Sites

To know why Adsense is essential for your content sites is to know first how this works

The concept is really simple, if you think about it. The publisher or the webmaster inserts a java script into a certain website. Each time the page is accessed, the java script will pull advertisements from the Adsense program. The ads that are targeted should therefore be related to the content that is contained on the web page serving the ad. If a visitor clicks on an advertisement, the webmaster serving the ad earns a portion of the money that the advertiser is paying the search engine for the click.

The search engine is the one handling all the tracking and payments, providing an easy way

for webmasters to display content-sensitive and targeted ads without having the hassle to solicit advertisers, collect funds, monitor the clicks and statistics which could be a time-consuming task in itself. It seems that there is never a shortage of advertisers in the program from which the search engine pulls the AdSense ads. Also webmasters are less concerned by the lack of information search engines are providing and are more focused in making cash from these search engines.

The first reason why AdSense is essential for content sites is because it already has come a long way in understanding the needs of publishers and webmasters. Together with its continuous progression is the appearance of more advanced system that allows full ad customization. Webmasters are given the chance to choose from many different types of text ad formats to better complement their website and fit their webpage layout.

The different formatting enables the site owners the possibility of more click through from visitors who may or may not be aware of what they are clicking on. It can also appeal to the people visiting thus make them take that next step of looking up what it is all about. This way the people behind the AdSense will get their content read and making profit in the process.

The second reason is the ability of the AdSense publishers to track not only how their sites are progressing but also the earnings based on the webmaster-defined channels. The recent improvements in the search engines gives webmasters the capability to monitor how their ads are performing using customizable reports that has the capacity to detail page impressions, clicks and click-through rates. Webmasters and publishers can now track specific ad formats, colors and pages within a website. Trends are also easily spotted.

With the real-time reporting at hand, the effectiveness of the changes made will be assessed quickly. There would be time to sort out the contents that people are making the most clicks on. The ever-changing demands would be met while generating cash for the webmasters and publishers. The more flexible tools are also allowing webmasters to group web pages by URL, domain, ad type or category, which will provide them some accurate insight on which pages, ads and domains are performing best.

The last and final reason is that the advertisers have realized the benefits associated having their ads served on targeted websites. Thus increasing the possibility that a prospective web surfer will have an interest in their product and services. All because of the content and its constant maintenance. As opposed to those who are not using AdSense in their sites, they are given the option of having other people do their content for them, giving them the benefit of having successful and money-generating web sites.

AdSense is all about targeted content, the more targeted your content is, the more target the search engines' ads will be. There are some web masters and publishers who are focused more on their site contents and how best to maintain them rather than the cash that the ads will generate for them. This is the part where the effectiveness is working its best.

There was a time when people were not yet aware of the money to be achieved from

advertisements. The cash generated only came into existence when the webmasters and publishers realized how they can make AdSense be that generator. In those days, the content were the most important factors that is taken quite seriously. It still is. With the allure of money, of course.

Marketing: Every Business Needs A Newsletter

3 Reasons Why Every Business Needs A Newsletter

There are many benefits you and your business can reap from publishing your own newsletter.

1. Keeping In Touch — Your customers and clients are the lifeblood of your business. What better way to stay in touch with your existing customers than through a newsletter? A newsletter allows you to add personal touches to your relationship and celebrate milestones, both your own and your client's. In addition to furthering your relationship with your clients, a newsletter can also allow you to introduce new products, offer special sales or discounts to your existing client base, and encourage referrals.
2. Hook In New Customers — Unless they have an immediate need or came to you through a powerful referral, most potential customers won't buy right away. Often they will shop around and compare which means you will likely never see them again. However if you have a free newsletter that offers interested clients the opportunity to learn more about you, your business, and your products for free and they can also learn more about your interaction with your existing customers. A newsletter can be a very simple strategy to turn a one-time visitor into a lifetime customer.
3. Establish Your Expertise — No one knows more about your business than you do which makes you an expert. Likely the construction of your own business has further left you with a great deal of expertise in your field. Share your nuggets of knowledge through your newsletter to deepen your relationship with your existing customers and convince potential customers that you are the answer to their problems.

Now that I have convinced you that you need to publish your own newsletter, I want to go over a few questions that budding editors and publishers always ask.

What exactly is an electronic newsletter?

Just like their paper counterparts, electronic newsletters deliver written messages usually relating to a common theme or topic. The main difference is that an electronic newsletter transcends paper and ink and most likely only ever exists on a computer screen.

Some electronic newsletter are delivered only via email while others are delivered only on the web. Most are delivered in some combination of the two. Most of my ezines and newsletters are delivered via email but also available immediately via web page (or rather blog page) and

RSS feed.

You can choose the method is most suited to you and your audience.

How do you publish an electronic newsletter?

It is much easier to start publication of your own electronic newsletter than it is to start up a print publication. You simply need to decide on a topic, name your publication and start writing. It is easy to find an audience (beyond your own customer base if you choose) through the various ezine and newsletter directories around the internet as well as going directly to the source, for example discussion boards for people interested in your topic.

You will need to determine a delivery method, which means most likely setting up your own web site or page on your existing web site; creating an archive for your issues once they are created, which could mean setting up a blog; and tracking your readers, which likely means setting up a mailing or autoresponder service. However you can use free tools to do any of these things.

Marketing: Stimulate Customer Buying

4 Power-Packed Techniques To Stimulate Customer Buying

It's difficult to reach your business goals if you don't have the right materials and/or the information to help your business reach the success it's capable of. These four insights will help you generate the business you've always dreamed of.

What is it that gives business life and vitality? Yes, sales. Without sales, our businesses will dry up and die. On the other hand, a healthy growth in sales means an increase in profits. Yeah, we business owners spend a lot of time watching for signs of growth, and plotting to make it happen. Here are 5 sure-fire ways to get customers to shell out the bucks before they leave your place of business.

1. Tantalize Their Emotions

When was the last time you bought a candy bar? Exactly what is it about chocolate that makes us waste perfectly good money on something that lasts less than five minutes? Yep, it's the feeling of satisfaction we feel after we've eaten the sweet morsels.

Everything consumers purchase is for one purpose... to satisfy some emotional feeling they are looking for. Don't believe it? Why do we buy cars? ...security, to show off, personal satisfaction? Sure, we all want to look good and know that we'll be able to get where we're going safely.

Take advantage of the emotional pull purchases have on your customers, and dramatize. Paint word pictures that will enhance to pleasant feelings that come with the purchase you are

trying to get them to make.

2.Scare The Heck Out of Them

What are your customers going to lose if they don't buy your product? No, we don't always have to stick with the pretty pictures that leave us all warm and fuzzy. Fear is as effective of a motivator as pleasure... sometimes greater.

Do you have fire alarms installed in your house? A dramatic mental picture of waking up in the night and not being able to rescue you child isn't at all pretty, but will be much more likely to motivate you to invest in a fire alarm system than any pretty picture ever would.

Don't hesitate to use a little negative influence if your product calls for it. Many people fear what they could lose more than they get excited about what they could gain.

3.Keep Buying A Simple "Yes" or "No" Choice

Are you planning a special sale? Take care to promote only one of each type of product at a time. Decisions can make the buying process more complicated and cost you sales. Yeah, the buyer who can't make up his mind often leaves without taking anything with him... that's money out of your pocket!

Do you have several related items you want to offer? Combine them into one package and watch your profit skyrocket!

4.Make It Easy To Buy

Several years ago, I found myself spending my lunch hour in a long line at the nearby fast food restaurant. After patiently waiting for more than 30 minutes, I placed my order only to discover they didn't accept debit cards. Now, there's no feeling of frustration quite like spending the best part of your lunch time waiting in line with a yammering stomach, only to be denied.

Your customers want to be able to pay in whatever way they choose when they walk to the cash register. If you want to attract the most customers, be sure they can pay using their favorite method.

Marketing: Moves For Business Success

5 Marketing Moves for Business Success

Effective marketing can be simplified into five moves – five concrete actions – that you can implement immediately. Your challenge: try one or more of these NOW.

Marketing has traditionally been broken down to a formula known as "the 5P's" – the five

factors that make up an organization's marketing strategy. If these are done consistently, well, and for a long enough period of time, these 5 factors also become part of their brand.

So far, so good. But the problem is that no one can seem to agree on exactly which 5 P's are important, so the list typically includes: people, product, place, process, price, promotion, paradigm, perspective, persuasion, passion, positioning, packaging, and performance.

Wow. Sounds complicated, huh? I'm going to try and simplify effective marketing into five moves – five concrete actions – that you can implement immediately. Your challenge: try one or more of these NOW.

Move 1: Move Up

Want to try something different? The next time you're speaking with a prospect, when the question of price comes up, DOUBLE your normal price and see what happens.

Am I crazy?

Maybe, maybe not. The other side of the coin is that maybe YOU'RE crazy for not charging for VALUE, but instead competing on PRICE. Businesses that compete on price lose. Period.

The easiest thing your competition can do is undercut your price. In fact, the first thing they will copy is your price. It takes no imagination, no creativity, no innovation, no market leadership, and no vision to lower the cost of something. And it hurts all parties involved. Lower prices always mean lower profits. Studies have shown that a 1% drop in price leads to an 8% drop in profit.

What happens when you double your usual price?

Several things. Prospects perceive:

- * An increase in the value of your product/service
- * An increased level of prestige in owning/using your product/service
- * An increased level of trust in you – and all your other offerings (the halo effect)
- * An increased level of confidence that your product/service really works

A marketing consultant that I respect once gave me a very valuable piece of advice. She said, "Be expensive or... be free." Being one of the most expensive providers of a service is remarkable – people talk about their \$200,000 Italian sports car or \$21,000 platinum-plated cell phone. Nobody talks about their \$19,000 GM sedan.

I've helped companies double their prices, with great success, and I've helped independent

consultants double [and in one case triple] their fees. In each of those cases, they got more clients, not fewer. Details on how to do this in Move 3. And perhaps this means you'll lose a few unprofitable clients along the way. If you don't lose some unprofitable clients, you won't have room to serve the more profitable ones when they come along. It's professional suicide to continue focusing on serving a market sector "that can afford" to pay your old (low) prices. Price doesn't find clients. VALUE finds clients. And those clients that value your work should – and will – pay according to that value.

Free is also a powerful price point. And, of course, free is remarkable. Which is another facet to moving up – you move up when you give VALUE first. For free. Got a great idea for a prospect? Great! SEND IT TO THEM. Even better, got a business lead for them? Hand it over! Did you come across an article, a profile, or a piece of research that directly impacts their business? Clip it and mail it to the top person with a brief note. That prospect's door is now open.

Move 2: Move In

Moving in means moving closer to the customer. Live in their world, think about their problems, and think about their clients and prospects. What's the first step? Research. Preparation. Homework. Industry, regional, business, and company news is now at every salesperson's fingertips on the Internet. If you're not intelligently researching your prospect's issues, challenges, and pressures, how can you possibly come in with a credible solution?

Don't like sitting at the computer all day? An even better idea is to hit the street. Visit businesses, talk to your contacts in the fields you serve, get some firsthand information about what's going on in their world – what are their challenges, perspectives, obstacles, priorities; what are their dreams, their "only-ifs," and their biggest aspirations?

Is this a lot of work? You bet. Do the majority of salespeople put in this kind of effort? No way. Which is exactly why YOU should. That brings us to Move 3.

Move 3: Move Ahead

Moving ahead means going above and beyond what most salespeople are doing. It means putting in the work – yes, the real, hard work – that makes the difference between being a peddler and being a partner.

Want to move ahead? Start by avoiding doing things your prospects dislike.

Here are the top 10 things salespeople do that buyers dislike according to a Purchasing magazine survey. See if you (or your sales team) might be guilty of any of the following professional no-no's:

10. Failure to keep promises

9. Lack of creativity
 8. Failure to make and keep appointments
 7. Lack of awareness of the customer's operation ("What do you guys do here?")
 6. Taking the customer for granted
 5. Lack of follow-through
 4. Lack of product knowledge
 3. Over aggressiveness and failure to listen
 2. Lack of interest or purpose ("Just checking in")
- ... and the Number 1 dislike: Lack of preparation.

You can also move ahead by charging more (remember Move 1?) and DEMONSTRATING the VALUE of your product service with hard numbers.

In his insightful book, *How to Become a Rainmaker*, author Jeffrey Fox calls this process dollarizing. Dollarizing is one of the most powerful sales techniques because once you show (with real numbers that your prospect will provide you with) the return on investment – how THIS much spent will generate THIS much savings, or profits, or sales, or new clients, or hours, etc. – you basically shift the conversation from selling what you're selling to SELLING MONEY.

In my seminars, I do an exercise called "The Money Machine" that will help you spell this out in hard dollars, very clearly.

The Money Machine goes one step further because you can use it monetize against:

- * competing products/services
- * the prospect doing nothing
- * the prospect doing it themselves
- * other things the prospect is already comfortable spending money on

Suddenly, your product/service becomes a real "investment": meaning, you can show people the math behind "this much IN" for "this much OUT." There's nothing much easier than selling

money at a discount!

Here's another way to move ahead: stop the ridiculous game of "closing the sale." Closing is not a technique; closing is not a trick; closing is not about magic phrases and looks and power games. Closing should be a natural extension of your conversation, and the two most effective questions you should ask your prospect as you near the end of your value-based discussion are:

1. Does what we've talked about so far make sense?
2. What would you like me to do next?

Answer to Question 1: If you've prepared for the meeting, discussed the prospect's key issues, and monetized the value of your solution, of course it makes sense!

Answer to Question 2: "Let's go ahead" or "Let's do the paperwork." Or if your prospect answers this with "Get Out" or "Drop Dead," you have a pretty good idea that the sale is not ready to close. Seriously, carefully listening to the answer to this question will allow you to address any hidden concerns, hesitations, or issues – right then and there before the prospect would otherwise blurt out an abrupt "No!" to any other traditional "ask for the sale" verbiage that so many sales trainers recommend. Remember, you're not there to sell – you're there to HELP THE PROSPECT BUY. If you need to tattoo that on your forehead, be my guest.

Move 4: Move Aside

Here's another thing that most sales and marketing people have a hard time with: you can't be all things to all people. Move Aside is about finding your niche, and claiming your expertise in a narrow area of specialty. In plain English, this means you want to become the "Go-To Guy" for your specific product or service – the exact opposite of a "jack-of-all-trades and master of none."

The people you speak with will have a very different reaction to these two mental images of your product/service:

* "I think we can make this fit."

* "This is exactly what we've been looking for."

Let me give you an example. There's a real company that lists among its services "Carpet removal, house cleaning, odd jobs, catering." Now, I don't know about you, but when I want a caterer, I'm looking for someone who does catering 24/7. I don't want to have to worry about "Did they wash their hands after the carpet removal job and before serving my guests?" In fact, if I'm looking for a caterer for a wedding, I might even be drawn to "Wedding Bells Catering" much more so than "Sm's Catering" or "Good Eats Catering."

Here's another example. There are lots of graphic design companies that do all sorts of work – websites, logo design, brochures, collateral material, wine labels, book packaging, etc. You name it, they do it. And business is generally OK. (But let's face it, if they were going like gangbusters, they probably wouldn't have sought out my help!) Some of them had a hard time differentiating themselves from the competition and others found it challenging to develop a strong client base and referral network. We've had some good success developing their current business, but when we delve into the possibilities of "Moving Aside" and carving out a real niche, or developing one thing that is their flagship specialty, most of my clients get cold feet.

One company (not my client – too bad for me!) that has done this with fabulous results is MaxEffect. They made a tough call. They moved aside. They could obviously do a wide variety of things with their graphic design and advertising skills, but they do ONE THING: they work exclusively on yellow pages ads. That's it. If you want a killer yellow pages ad with bold graphics, custom or stock photography, clean layout, and a strong, compelling message, these are your go-to people. They've designed hundreds and hundreds of yellow pages ads and they've built a fanatical client base, and they get a steady stream of referrals – not to mention the steady and growing flow of client work.

Move 5: Move Alone

Right now, you are lost in a sea of gray. Me-too rules the day. Everywhere you look, there is more and more and MORE of the SAME OLD THING sold by the SAME OLD PEOPLE in the SAME OLD WAY. Boring. And deadly.

The problem is that people don't buy gray. If you and your company and your offerings blend into the background, you might as well close up shop right now. Let me put it another way: all companies go bankrupt. It's just a matter of time. Want proof? Out of the 100 largest companies of 50 years ago, 17 survive today. And none of those 17 are the market leaders they used to be.

Why? Shift happens. If you're not separating yourself from the crowd, you're blending in – and nobody will even notice you, much less seek you out and tell their friends about you.

Here's an example of a company that really hasn't been doing a bad job – but they're also not the standouts they used to be.

On a recent call to American Express, an executive was straightening out a billing problem. At the end of the call, the operator asked her, "Have I exceeded your expectations for this call?" and the exec flatly answered, "No." She had a billing problem, and the rep fixed it. That's the expectation.

Now, if the rep had offered the executive a \$50 American Express gift check to be used at any

of American Express' online retail partners, THAT would have exceeded expectations, right? That story would be worth repeating to 10-20 people. Can you imagine the executive telling anyone, "Hey, I called AmEx to fix my billing error. Guess what? They did it!" That's not moving alone.

Here's a good test to see if your marketing and sales strategies are in the category of "moving alone" – they are if you're doing something that:

- * is "simply not done" in your industry
- * customers will make a remark about (remarkable!)
- * goes against conventional wisdom (I call this "uncommon sense")
- * others (including your competition) think is "crazy"
- * others (including your competition) will actually be AFRAID to copy

Get silly. Get crazy. Get an attitude. Get noticed.

Author Seth Godin perhaps put this most succinctly when he said, "Safe is risky. And risky is safe."

Let me conclude with a recap of the 5 Marketing Moves:

1. Move Up = Get more valuable
2. Move In = Get closer
3. Move Ahead = Get smarter
4. Move Aside = Get specialized
5. Move Alone = Get noticed

Taken together, these will also help you make the Ultimate Move = Get insanely great.

And remember the immortal words of Jerry Garcia:

"You don't want to be considered the best of the best. You want to be considered the only ones who do what you do."

Marketing: You Hate To Write

How To Write A Great Sales Letter—When You Hate To Write

I can sit here all day giving you tips and hints on headlines and phrases that sell. But none of it will do you any good if you just plain hate sitting down at the keyboard.

If you can't stand writing, you're in good company. Most of us feel the same. I once asked a high school English teacher how many of her 300 students liked to write. "Oh, about 9 of them," she said.

Everyone from Mark Twain to Bart Simpson has faced a blank sheet of paper for hours with no idea of what to put on it. Well let me give you a few ideas from my office of professional writers. In the world of non-fiction writing, being a professional doesn't necessarily mean being a great writer. It does mean you have to be able to conjure up great copy every single day, even when you don't feel well or aren't in the mood.

The first step is just to get something on paper—anything! And I do mean anything. Just start writing down whatever comes to mind. If you can't think of anything, write "I'm sitting here and I can't think of anything to write."

Yes, that sounds pretty stupid. But it's exactly the technique a lot of top writers use to get the creative juices flowing. Next you'll find yourself typing "I need to write a sales letter to promote my new software. It's software to help people get organized. Most people have lots of information, but they can't remember where they put it. This software has people organize their information in a system that makes it super easy to find, in just seconds."

Wow! You're writing, you're telling your story, and best of all, you're not worrying about being bad because you know you can go back later and change it all.

One top writer copies and pastes favorite lines from other sources (like the client's web site.) Then she rewrites those sections in her own words so that they are completely original. That's enough to get her going. Next she fills in additional fresh copy between the blurbs she has already completed. Even on days when she would rather be anywhere but behind a computer, she cranks out first rate copy in record time.

Another method is to just start talking. Talk into one of those little tape recorders you get at Radio Shack. Pretend you're telling your best friend, your mother, or Paris Hilton all about your big idea. Go into all the details. Talk it all out. Later, go back, listen, and take notes. Your notes will be the start of your email message.

Don't type very well? 60 percent of North Americans can't type. Hunting keys often makes writing frustrating if not impossible. Follow in the tradition of a great many very famous writers. Pick up a cheap ballpoint pen and write down your ideas with the good old handwriting you learned in second grade. Then have someone type it up.

The key is to just get something, anything, on your computer screen or on paper. Once you have that, start to edit. The copy will take on a life of its own and the writing will come easier. Or, simply hand your first attempts to a professional writer. Most can churn your notes into

polished copy faster and cheaper than they can write entirely new copy.

How To Write Articles: Get Your Articles Read And Your Bills Payed!

I've seen just about every imaginable mistake when it comes to writing articles for promotion.

It's a downright shame!

Most Internet business people realize that writing articles is an excellent technique for promoting their businesses, ezines, products, and services. Unfortunately, most haven't actually mastered the basics of how to write articles.

Once you master the basics of how to write articles you'll begin to really reap the rewards that writing articles can provide. Your aim is to instantly be able to create articles that will engage readers, give you credibility, and promote your business.

Your first, and possibly the single most important step is to decide what keyword (or keyword phrase) you want to write your article around. If you don't choose the right keyword in this very first step, then it will undermine everything else you do from here on out.

Why is Your Keyword Important? Well, targeted Readers use search engines to find information using keywords. Choosing your keyword will help ensure that you write an article that someone actually wants to read.

Now you're going to have to provide the reader with some useful content. You have to provide high quality, useful content in your article or your targeted readers will simply hit their "back button" and find another source of information. You have to provide them with a solution to their problem. People go on line and search for answers to their problems and for information, not for products... So, all you have to do is give them what they want and relate it to your business.

It sounds easy enough, doesn't it? The key here is not to give them an "in your face" sales pitch. Don't focus on the sale. Put yourself in the targeted reader's uncomfortable chair in front of a dinky computer screen and think about things from their perspective.

Having warmed the reader up with the useful info, now is the time to strike with a profit pulling link, be that an affiliate link that relates to the article or a link to your own website. You do this in the form of a resource box.

Your resource box goes right at the end of your article and provides some information about either you or your business. Ideally, it's a mini-advertisement that makes the reader want to click through.

Now all you have to do is get your article read. This isn't brain surgery but it can be VERY,

VERY tedious. Your first stop should be article directories. That's where a lot of web masters go to find good quality content for their websites and it will give your article a wide viewing fairly quickly.

There are probably hundreds of article directories out there, and new ones are popping up daily.

There are really three ways that you can tackle this awesome task...

1. Search for article directories and submit your article to each of the article directories one at a time.
2. Use article submission software to automatically submit your articles.
3. Use an article submission service.

If there's one thing that can put me off writing an article it's knowing that I had to then distribute it. That's why I was over the moon when I discovered that there are sites that will distribute my article for me, for a small fee.

Therefore my choice is method number 3. Just type "article distribution service" into Google and it will give all sorts of options. Doing it this way is not as expensive as you may think.

So. Just to re-cap on how to write articles:

Step 1: Decide on your keyword to write your article around.

Step 2: Provide useful, keyword rich content.

Step 3: Write a profit pulling resource box

Step 4: Distribute your article and get it read!

Well that's the basic recipe Of how to write articles! Hope it helped.

How To Write Persuasive Subject Lines

Three seconds and 40 characters. That's all you usually have to work with when trying to get and hold the attention of someone reading email. And, with user behavior changing so much in response to overwhelming amounts of spam, the attention spans of email readers are getting shorter. Needless to say, it's vital to make the most of your introduction via the email subject line.

Email marketing powerhouse DoubleClick.com conducts annual surveys with regard to user behavior when it comes to email. A couple of the statistics from their latest findings are interesting. The second biggest motivator in opening email is the subject line. (The first is the "from" line.)

Because subject lines are often truncated at around 40 characters — and because email readers usually have their index fingers poised over the delete button — we're left with about three seconds and approximately six words to make an impression. So what works? Which types of subject lines have proven to be successful? Here are my top three.

Make An Offer

It's an old sales cliché that still holds true in the fast-paced world of cyberspace: Lead with your best offer. Whether a product, a service or a proposal, you want to tell people up front about your deepest discounts, your fastest delivery or your grandest idea. Get their attention right off the bat, and you'll likely have your message read. (It's even better if your offer happens to be time sensitive.) Examples include:

Half Off Leather Boots Until March 1st

Top 10 Reasons to Attend [Whatever]

Your Link on High Ranking Web Pages

State A Benefit

Since the majority of consumer and B2B customers live in the "what's in it for me" world, benefits always make powerful subject lines. Telling the readers what the end results of their actions will be helps them visualize the need for your product or service. Here are a few examples based on the subject lines above:

Wear Fall's Hottest Trends for 50% Off

Learn [Whatever] in Only Two Days

Build Link Popularity & Traffic for Your Site

LEARN TO INCORPORATE KEYWORDS INTO YOUR COPY THE "RIGHT" WAY

Copy that ranks high is great... IF it sells. After all, what good is copy that ranks high but doesn't make you any money? To have great SEO copy that ranks high AND converts visitors into buyers, you need to learn how to incorporate keywords into your copy the "right" way. It's easier than you might think. Visit <http://www.copywritingcourse.com/keyword> today.

Evoke Curiosity

We're all nosey to a point. Our curiosity gets the best of us, and we want to know more. That's not only true when it comes to watching movie previews on TV. It's also true for email as well. Some of the best subject lines hook readers by piquing their curiosity, and then reel them in to read the entire message.

Are You Still Wearing These Fashion “Don’ts”?

The Secrets to [Whatever] Never Before Revealed

Link Popularity Scams You Should Avoid

Of course, the key to writing the best subject lines is knowing your target customers, making the topic relevant and testing, testing, testing.

I mentioned a “couple” interesting facts from the DoubleClick email survey. The second is that relevancy is a major player. Over 55% of respondents said they deleted email that wasn’t relevant because they considered it spam. DoubleClick also reported that the average open rate was 27.5% (for text or HTML messages). That gives you a baseline to gauge your success.

Not every type of subject line will work for every campaign. Testing is vital. And it’s easy enough to do. One of my favorite ways is to set up a Google AdWords campaign and judge the click-through rates. This quickly (and cheaply) tells you which subject lines will work and which won’t. You can also test your subject lines by sending your emails to a smaller test list before broadcasting it to the entire group.

Whichever styles of subject lines you choose, make sure you know your target audience so you can develop relevant subject lines. Then test and test again until you’ve created subjects that are highly persuasive and deliver record-breaking open rates.

How To Write Press Releases That Gets Published Every-Single-Time.

Press releases are one of the effective means of generating “instant buzz”. Although they are typically viewed as short-term traffic generators, they can also be a source of long term traffic when properly optimized.

A well-written press release will send traffic to your site via links from dozens of high traffic news and content sites. Here’s what happens – you submit your press release to a press release distribution network or “news wire.” The “news wire” distributes submitted press releases across a network of subscribers.

These subscribing sites pull in the headlines from that day’s news feed and will display them wherever they want it to be shown.

They may also have filters in place to sort through the news feed, allowing them to choose news content based on relevance. Let’s look at a real world example:

You’ve just completed a press release announcing the launch of your new site that sells blue widgets. You go online to <http://www.prweb.com>, one of the oldest and most trusted sources

for news distribution on the web. This is where you will submit your press releases.

You have a couple of distribution options. The free distribution service will get your press release onto a network of independent web sites which subscribe to the news feed service.

On the other side, the advanced distribution options allow you to submit your press release to an even larger number of sites, including very high-traffic portals like Google News, Yahoo! News as well as major newspapers and magazines.

You pick the option best suited to your needs and within about twenty four hours your release gets picked up, people read it and, if they're curious enough, they follow the links you included in the press release. Instant traffic boost!

Press releases, in general, get indexed more frequently and more quickly by the search engines. However, their ranking depends on keyword optimization. You can through careful optimization, achieve a top ten ranking in the major search engines on targeted keywords within your press release.

This is great because your site effectively gets improved positioning by proxy. You must have targeted keywords. The trick is to optimize the press release with relevant keywords that draw searches, but are not saturated or overly competitive.

One very common error is submitting a press release without first doing a research on the publication. It is literally impossible to provide timely, news-oriented information to a site or magazine if you have no idea what interests their readers have.

Do a little homework before submitting your press release. You can look around the web for some stories each site offers. Buy a copy of magazine or newspaper and see the common interests of readers. By understanding what the publication is looking for, you will be able to fulfill the need and receive much better response from your press release.

To Your Success,

How to Write that Press Release Masterpiece?

Unless you're a seasoned writer, then writing your press release might be your hardest task. If your budget allows, you can always pay some expert to write it for you. Depending on your sites content, product or services, will determine how hard it will be to find something newsworthy to write about. The better the news value, the more chance your press release has of being published.

Unless your business is of great importance or you have a one of a kind website that everyone wants to know about, then a new website launch is not ground breaking news to the rest of the world. The mere fact that a website is open for business happens every minute as you read.

You need to tell the right story. A story with a great 'angle'. Your targeted publication must find it interesting and newsworthy.

Your press release must not become your sales literature. It is used to tell the whole world about your ground breaking news. To tell readers about an event that has or will happen. Having great news to tell is one part, writing it properly and in a certain way or format, is the other.

Press release tips:

Your press release should not sound like a sales pitch or ad. It must sound like news;
It should only be submitted to the media that is similar to the topic of your press release;
Try to wrap your press release around the current news events if possible;
Try to keep your press release to a maximum of one page in length;
Use short paragraphs and double space between them;
The headline, contact info and release date should be found at the top of the press release;
The headline and first paragraph should catch the reader's attention. It should entice them to read more;
Check and triple check your press release for errors before submitting;
The press release should be presented from a third-person view, not a personal voice;
Provide references to any statistics and facts, not general opinion.

Newsworthy press release ideas:

Revolutionary new product launch on your website;
Online seminar or course you're hosting;
A strange or funny story how your business started;
Announce your major sponsorship or contest giveaway;
Online survey results and statistics presented in the form of a press release;
Announce the recruitment of your new CIO;
A major joint venture with another company;
A new book being released on your website;
A fundraising event on your website.

Learn by reading other businesses press releases, especially from press releases that obtain huge exposure. See how they do it and what they do best.

Your headline and opening paragraph should contain some of your best work. It needs to grab the reader's attention quickly. Usually this will determine the success of your press release as to whether it is discovered or not.

When writing your press release, make sure you begin with the date and city in the body then continue by reporting on the facts. It is always good to supply the answers to the common questions like the Who, Where, Why, What, When and How. If you don't have the answers, you should make the effort to find them. These should be answered in the first paragraph.

It is good practice to include quotes in your press release. It increases the chance of your press release being used and picked up by a journalist. It adds credibility and human interest to a media release. The second paragraph is the best place for these.

Make things easy in case you need to be contacted for further information or clarification. Do not forget to include your contact information or your work of art might never see the media lights.

Your press release should end with a call to action. What is it exactly that you want your readers to do after reading your masterpiece?

Marketing: Linked In Blunders

Linked In: Basic Marketing Blunders

Like me, have you received email invitations like these?

> I'm using LinkedIn to keep up with my professional contacts and help them with introductions. Since you are one of the people I recommend, I wanted to invite you to access my network on LinkedIn.

>

> Basic membership is free, and it takes less than a minute to sign up and join my network.

I've received well over 35 invitations like this, worded almost precisely the same way. The senders have acted surprised and offended that I did not leap to take advantage of this invitation.

Let's look at the problems in this invitation from a marketing point of view.

* Almost all of the invitations I received were from people whose names I did not recognize. Why would I want to be part of their network? The invitation doesn't say who they are, who they have access to and how I would benefit from their network.

* What is Linked In, how does it work and what are the benefits of using it? No one has yet explained this clearly in their invitation. You cannot expect that someone receiving this invitation understands what you're asking them to join or how it would be advantageous to them. It would be helpful to have a paragraph or two describing how it works and citing a specific result the person behind the invitation enjoyed from membership. It may be that people assume that since "basic membership is free," the typical recipient of this invitation will go ahead and join. But even if it doesn't cost money, joining would take time. You still need to "sell" people on taking a free action, especially with respect to an activity or organization that may be unfamiliar to them.

* No one took the time to head off possible misunderstandings or objections to this

membership. As a non-member of Linked In, I am concerned that joining would open me up to a lot of email and phone calls in which I would have no interest and that would waste my time. Again, you can't assume that something free is thereby enticing; you need to imagine why someone might have doubts or dismiss the idea and address those objections.

* Using a canned invitation that is almost exactly the same as everyone else's doesn't make a good impression. Even if the text provided by Linked In were effective, which it's not, you'd want to give it your personal stamp.

Other than being irritated that they are apparently encouraging people to send invitations that make little sense, I have nothing against Linked In. Perhaps it's a useful organization. My point is that its members need to use common sense and fundamental marketing principles to encourage busy, skeptical people to give it a chance.

Marketing: Common Misconceptions

Understanding Marketing: 5 Common Misconceptions

Everybody seems to know Marketing. The world is full of Marketing gurus. We all talk about with a remarkable ease and confidence, though most of the times we are not Marketing professionals and not even close. What are the most frequent mistakes in understanding Marketing practices and theories?

1. Defining Marketing

There is clearly a general tendency in employing the notion of Marketing within a confusing mix of Public Relations, Advertising, or Media Planning. Regardless of the degree in evolution and growing of Marketing, many of us still cannot understand what Marketing really is and only see the its extreme manifestations. Many believe Marketing is a useless, fancy field, eating up budgets and giving little in return. Others see Marketing as an artistic field, where all you need is creativity to develop a memorable ad.

2. Marketing is still confused with Communication

This common mistake is, again, the result of sufficient understanding of Marketing. Marketing professionals are often thought to be responsible for creating advertisements, logos, slogans. What people usually see is the mere top of the iceberg, forgetting that there is a product, a price and a distribution strategy to be developed before even thinking of advertising.

3. Under- or overestimating the role of the marketer

On one hand, the marketer is often seen as a must-have within a company, but (s)he has an indefinite role and ends up doing a little of everything (Marketing, Advertising, Public Relations, Customer Care, Account Management etc.) On the other hand we might be faced with the other extreme, where the marketer is an omniscient, all-powerful creature eclipsing

everyone else.

4. Segmentation

In spite of the abundance in resources and consulting services aimed at researching the consumers base, segmentation is still done intuitively at least at small-business level. Large companies might have whole departments assigned to work on segmentation research and strategy, and still not be fully failure-proof.

5. Marketing for the sake of it

This is an attitude I have met in too many occasions not to mention it. People (and again, small-business owners are the usual culprits) do marketing because everyone else does it, because they heard they should do it, because it is a fashionable thing to do.

Surely, the list above is not exhaustive, and it only points at several attitudes leading nowhere on the Marketing battlefield.

Marketing is surely not an art, though it does employ a certain flair and creativity. Marketing is not a science either, but it operates with precise instruments. Marketing is not for everyone and not to be performed regardless of the conjuncture around the business.

We should keep in mind that Marketing operations have a clear objective: increasing the profitability of a business. To bring money, to be more clear. Marketing is therefore just as important as everything else in the company: if a product has functional faults we would blame the production department, but when a product does not sell for reasons beyond production it is usually the Marketing department to take the blame.

Marketing: To Women

Why Market To Women And How Should You Do It?

Even if the decision to buy appears to rest elsewhere, women frequently have a major influence on whether or not the sale is made. It's easy to consider the car industry as predominantly male-driven. The majority of salespersons, journalists and mechanics are male, and published statistics of new car sales are weighted toward men.

For example, in 2002, almost 850,000 new cars were sold in Australia, according to the Federal Chamber of Automotive Industries. It is estimated that sole female car purchases represent between 20 and 48 percent of this figure, but female influence on those same purchases is around 70-80 percent.

This takes us back to the basic marketing concept of remembering that the decision-maker is not always the person who pays the bill, a rule frequently forgotten by administrators of hotel loyalty cards who do not allow points to be collected by guests if the bill is being sent back to

the company.

Another area often considered to be a male dominion is that of technology. Looking at DVD sales, for instance, we find that in 2002, only a third of women claimed to be their family's primary DVD purchaser but by 2004 that figure had increased by more than half.

What is interesting here is not so much the size of the market, but the speed of its increase. Therefore, companies that have traditionally geared their marketing to men and continue to do so because the male market has always been their main source of custom may be guilty of backward thinking.

Another aspect flagged up by the speed of change is how challenging it can be for companies to stay ahead of the game when marketing to women. Factors that affect women's desires and purchasing power such as levels of education, income and independence are all increasing at a more rapid rate than those of men.

What women want that's different to what men want

The lives of the majority of women today are infinitely more complicated than the lives of their male counterparts. It is the woman in the relationship who will generally be looked to when it comes to the multi-faceted operation of the home. The woman is likely to be the one who keeps the environment clean and organized, ensures the family or partner is clothed and fed, shops, irons, recycles, handles the help, ferries the kids and keeps tabs on everyone's social diaries. On top of this, she's very likely to be holding down one or more jobs or developing a business or career.

So the entire running of the household is likely to have the female as the lynch-pin. This often includes the handling of the household finances and yet the majority of financial products, along with cars and technology, are still considered male-gender specific.

How women make the decision to buy

Frequently, when seeking solutions to problems, women will have conducted research online and be extremely well-prepared prior to placing themselves in line for a sales pitch. Any company that does not acknowledge this and insists on wasting a woman's increasingly valuable time is likely to trigger a negative response as she can feel patronized by a "step-by-step, start from the beginning", approach that may be unnecessary.

With such complicated lives, women seek simplified solutions. When looking at your product, consider how your marketing can also be simplified to avoid adding to an already stressful life. Is it possible for your entire product and its benefits to be presented in such a way that it solves problems for over-stressed women? Does your marketing show how your product will support her busy lifestyle?

It is not even as simple as the traditional method of asking questions and identifying what she

wants because she will make purchasing decisions based, not only on her own needs, but also on the needs of her family. The first consideration should always be an acknowledgment of the complications in her life.

So she needs to know that you understand the problems she faces. Can your sales force show that they identify with her?

Women are three times as likely to learn about a new product from another woman. It is likely that women purchasers assume that another woman can more easily understand her challenges than a man. If a woman is presenting your product and is able to show how your product or service makes sense in the world they both occupy, the purchase is a natural progression.

When the sale is made in this manner, your female purchaser feels valued and acknowledged and knows that she has been offered a solution, rather than having been pushed into a sale which she will inevitably cancel.

Marketing: Knocking Out Big Competitors

3 Secrets to Knocking Out Big Competitors

Nobody likes a bully... especially small business marketers. If you've ever felt like the little guy taking punches from a heavyweight champion, you know what I'm talking about. Big business has donned its gloves, and is waiting to put small business down for the count.

I've got good news! Sometimes the little guy wins. Heck, it isn't easy and sometimes it's a close call, but little guys do win and when they do... victory is sweet!

What can you do when you're being threatened by the bully down the street?

1. Take a careful look at the Competition

Every business has its strengths and weaknesses. You need to be aware of both... your competitors strong points, and the places where room for improvement is quite obvious.

2. Be Flexible

Don't expect your competitor to broadcast his next move so that you can be prepared to block it. You've got to think a step ahead, and be ready to outsmart his next maneuver.

3. Use a little Judo

You don't have to be big and brawny to successfully use Judo. Why? It's an art that uses your opponent's momentum to trip him up. So what if you don't have thousands of dollars to invest in a campaign. When your competition has invested tens of thousands in one, you'll be

able to make a quick about turn and counteract quickly with a smaller campaign of your own. He'll either forfeit his investment or continue through, but loose steam.

I'm going to let you in on a little secret about your competitors that might encourage you. Although big businesses often have a wide variety of products filling their shelves, they often don't have depth.

Think about it this way. You may run to your local department store and find everything ranging from make-up to camping equipment. The problem with that? ...chances are they don't have an extremely wide assortment of their products.

This means that if you're an avid outdoorsman, you probably wouldn't be satisfied choosing between two cheap brands of tents when there is an amazing variety on the market. An outdoor related store could get one over on the big department store by offering the widest variety of fewer products in a focused field.

Another asset about being the small guy, is that it's easier to make a quick turn. Hey, how many managers do you have to get okays from to make a quick decision? Think of the weeks it takes for a local department store to send a request from a customer for a certain product to the regional or national management? Yeah, too long!

As a small business, you can have a new product on your shelves within a week. If I were a customer wanting a new tent, I'd prefer to not wait until summer was half over to get it.

There are a lot of benefits to being the small guy. Don't take bullying lying down. You have what it takes to get the best end of the stick and come out a winner.

Marketing: Sale Thieves

4 "Sale Thieves" You Need To Be On The Lookout For

Many successful marketers began their careers as children setting up a lemonade stand or selling newspapers. Years of experience and exposure to more mature and intricate marketing techniques change a lot of things, but there is one aspect that is no different between selling glasses of lemonade and Internet marketing... customers have the power to decide whether or not to buy your product.

Yeah, the products and marketing methods are changing constantly, but the driving force that motivates sales remains unchanged... so do the 4 things that steal sales right out from under your nose.

1. The "I don't need it" attitude.

Let's face it... need has little to do with what people buy or don't buy in the American culture. Want has everything to do with whether they do or don't buy. The most crucial aspect of getting a high number of sales is targeting the right market. It does little good to advertise to

people who really aren't interested.

What are you advertising? Where are you advertising? These two questions go hand in hand. If you're trying to sell hunting gear, it would make little sense to target mothers with small children. Sure a FEW of them hunt, but your return for the cost of advertising is going to be pretty low. Pay attention to what your target audience reads, and invest your advertising bucks wisely.

2. The "I can't afford it" attitude.

In a few rare cases, that may be true, but usually "I can't afford it" can be interpreted as, "It's not high on my list of priorities." We can usually find the money for the things we really want.

Go ahead and **MAKE** your product or service a priority. Dramatize the benefits they'll experience, sweeten the deal until it's irresistible, and put a deadline on it. Make it "too good to pass up!"

3. The "I'm in no hurry" attitude.

Procrastination is criminal in the marketing world. Yeah, procrastination steals money right out of our pockets! The customer comes... he sees... he wants... but when he puts it off, he never does get around to buying!

What happens in the short time after he walks out without the purchase? Time quietly fades the emotions that were driving the sale, and the desire to shell out the dinero for your product soon fades away entirely.

Don't let them leave without making the purchase. Now you can't put a gun to their head and force them to buy, but you can make a deadline on the special. A "take it or leave it" offer just might inspire the procrastinator to act now.

4. The "I don't trust you" attitude.

Buying is risky business, and most people fear making a foolish investment more than they fear never getting the product. You can allay those fears simply by implementing a few tactics that evoke trust and confidence for the buyer.

Offer an unconditional money back guarantee. You'll effectively eliminated the risk factor that holds many consumers back.

Use testimonials to let prospective customers know that you do deliver, and a satisfied customer can say it way better than you ever could.

Be open to communication. Hey, when they know someone is willing to answer any question they have, the uncertainty evaporates.

Don't let these four thieves steal any more of your profits. Deal with them effectively... get them out of the way!

Marketing: Business Names Do Matter

Business Names Do Matter

Here are 10 reasons why coming up with a snappy, interesting and memorable name is worth the business owner's or organization's time and energy.

1. When you call or speak with strangers and mention the name of your company, and the name in and of itself provokes delighted recognition, this can get the business relationship off on a positive footing.
2. A distinctive name can attract the kind of customers you want and keep away those you don't want. For instance, if you can't stand dealing with those who have no sense of humor, a punny name repels such folks. Au contraire, if you want people to know you're serious and weighty, a shrewdly chosen traditional name can impress people accordingly.
3. Cool company names can in and of themselves generate media coverage, either because there's something newsworthy in the name or because many journalists are more attracted to highlight companies with fun names than boring ones. Case in point: Rent-a-Wreck.
4. A distinctive name increases repeat business because it helps previous customers remember it when looking at a list of possibles in the Yellow Pages or elsewhere. For instance, House Husband would jump out of a list of competitors like A-1 Handyman, Acme Home Repair, etc.
5. A wisely chosen name is simple to spell and leads to one and only one possible URL. This enables more people who have heard about a company to find it online.
6. A well-chosen name can embody the #1 benefit you offer customers and make it possible to get across an appealing marketing message in less space.
7. A hastily chosen name can lead to legal troubles or bad PR, both adding needless expenses and needlessly alienating customers. Just ask my friend Andy, who had to change his business name not once but twice in three months because he hadn't done his homework on the name. And just ask the shoe company in the UK that named some new sneakers "Zyklon," which was the name of the gas the Nazis used to kill millions during World War Two.
8. If customers need to find you in the Yellow Pages, a name that's near the beginning of the alphabet makes it easier for them and may make it less crucial to have a huge, expensive display ad.
9. A boring name contains no sparks for getting started on persuasive descriptions of your company's products or services, while a creative name makes it easy to riff off it with inspired marketing copy.

10. The name affects how people who work for the business feel about it. A company name they love to say and that customers respond to positively makes for a more pleasant working environment than does a name that is confusing, hard to pronounce or has some negative connotations.

Marketing: Techniques For Productive Copy

5 Must-Have Techniques For Creating Unbelievably Productive Copy:

Nothing can spell out BORING quicker than bland claims that really say nothing. “My clients make more money!” is a perfect example of poor copy that could use a little life.

1. Get Specific

Nothing can spell out BORING quicker than bland claims that really say nothing. “My clients make more money!” is a perfect example of poor copy that could use a little life. What happens when you change it to, “My clients increased their sales by 23.5% in the first 30 days!” Now that is kicking! It’s specific and exciting.

Be sure that your claims sound believable, no matter how unbelievable they are. People are skeptical of “too good to be true” claims. It’s better to tone it down, and let them be surprised when it exceeds their expectation.

2. Keep It Short and Sweet

Long paragraphs and complex sentences look too much like work to read. Yeah, readers get bored quickly and easily. Chop it up, and break it up. Don’t use paragraphs of more than 7 lines or sentences longer than 18 words. Find ways to shorten it up, and you’ll keep the readers attention.

How many long words are in your copy? Replace them with short common words to create a reader-friendly appeal. Let your copy speak to them in the language they are used to hearing. Well, if your readers don’t like to spend a lot of time reading... it pays to choose your words carefully.

3. Keep it Active

Eliminate dull passive phrases. They do little, except bore the heck out of your readers. Dig them out and replace them highly active words that will motivate the reader to get up out of his easy chair and DO something.

The call to action is the most important part of any advertisement. Call, subscribe, join, order, buy... make them hear the call loud enough that they do something – NOW.

4. Skip the Humor

In the right place, and at the right time, humor is an effective tool. Written sales copy just isn't it. Ads are short, concise and to the point. Humor tends to get in the way and distract.

Real life stories captivate readers. They relate to them. The human interest of these stories draws the reader into the message, whereas humor distracts them for the point.

5. Use A Powerful P.S.

A P.S. can be a powerful way to emphasize your product, highlight the points of benefit, or dramatize effects of the purchase. It's the perfect way to summarize your page.

The P.S. is most powerful on Web pages. Surfers often read the headlines and skim to the P.S. where they look to get an idea of what's on the page, and if it's worth their time to read it. Put some effort into making your P.S. captivating.

Marketing: Product Promotion Strategies

5 Top Product Promotion Strategies

One of the biggest myths of the Internet is the good old line, "If you build it they will come ...". So many people throw up a website and sit back rubbing their hands with glee convinced they are going to become supremely wealthy.

Months later they are wringing their hands with regret wondering why they've had five visitors, four of which were their friends!

A website does not just automatically appear high in the search engine rankings and get traffic, you have to do some work in order to get this traffic and start making sales. There are thousands, or even more of sites competing for the same traffic you want – depending on your niche and keywords, there could be millions of sites!

You need to promote your website and get it noticed – not only in the search engines, but in other places where you will get targeted traffic who are interested in your website.

Strategy 1 – Directories

There are a whole host of directories on the Internet. Just search for your keyword and "Directory" or "Link Exchange" or anything similar and you will find hundreds of places to put your links. Yeah, it is hard work to do this, but you will get links and traffic to your site. If it's too much like hard work for you – hire someone to do it!

Strategy 2 – Articles

Articles are an excellent way to gain traffic and promote your site. Submitting your article to directories will get you backlinks and if they are quality articles, will get you known across the Internet as an expert.

Newsletter and website owners will pick up your articles and use them as content. This will help to promote your site to a much wider audience.

Strategy 3 – Affiliate Program

Running an affiliate program for your product is an excellent way to promote your site. Instead of you working on promoting your site, you have all these affiliates doing the work for you. And the best thing is – you don't pay them a penny unless they make a sale.

Depending on how much you offer as a commission, you could have hundreds of hungry affiliates aggressively marketing your product all over the Internet.

Strategy 4 – Viral Marketing

Viral marketing is a concept that has been around for some time. It's a very powerful method of getting traffic to your site. You have all seen those cute or funny emails and videos that people send to all their friends? That is viral marketing. If you can tap into this through a book, a video, games or anything people will want to pass on to their friends, suddenly you have a whole lot of people promoting your site – for free!

Strategy 5 – Forums

Forums are an excellent way to market your website. As you participate in a forum so you can establish yourself as an authority and trusted expert on your chosen subject, which will make people come to visit your website to find out more information. Be aware though, that if you blatantly promote your business without adding value or spam the forums you will do more harm than good to your reputation and your business.

Promoting your website will get you targeted traffic. It will also allow you to organically move up the search engine rankings through backlinks and the use of keywords. If you are someone who is serious about making money online, then you need to start taking your website promotion seriously. Remember though – spam and other unethical practices will harm your business in the long term. Promote your site ethically and responsibly, and you can be reaping the rewards for years to come.

Marketing: Product Naming

9 Product Naming Tips

A brief overview that will help guide you through the subtleties of product naming. You'll learn the importance of choosing a name that's unique and benefit oriented, without being

confusing or offensive—with some amusing examples of naming gaffes. You'll also learn why fads, abbreviations and tongue twisters should be avoided. And why the name you ultimately choose must protect your company's image.

Product naming is a key aspect of branding. The name you ultimately choose will reflect who you are, your company's personality and vision. But more importantly, it must unforgettably embody the promise of your product's main benefit to your potential customers. It can dovetail generically with your competition, but ideally, it should stand out from the crowd. Where to begin? Here are some basic guidelines.

If the field's too crowded, be unique

MSN Search, Netscape Search, AOL Search, they all stayed in the same category, so you could play it safe and go with Stupendous Search or Super-Duper Search. This works for a time, but as soon as the field gets too crowded, you'll be lost in the mush of sameness with ever diminishing name recognition. If you're in it for the long haul, better to break away from the crowd with a name like Google, Yahoo, or even Dogpile (though I'm not a fan of going into the scat category just to be unique). Even Kinkos—the founder's nickname (he had kinky red hair in school)—is different enough to be memorable.

Avoid tongue twisters

There's a little part in all of us that hates to be embarrassed. When we ask for a product or talk about it with friends, we want to sound literate and not fumble over pronunciations. So be kind to your potential customers and avoid tongue twisters, or any name that's unusually long or foreign sounding. If you can't find a single-word name, don't go over two or three syllables.

Alliteration can help with longer names

Okay, so the president of the company likes all the longer names on your list. You can make them more memorable and/or easier to pronounce by using alliteration. Consider Circuit City (originally, the incredibly bland, monosyllabic, Wards). Or Downtown Disney, Or the most famous brand in the world, Coca Cola. All four syllables, yet they roll off the tongue with surprising ease.

Avoid abbreviations

Abbreviations lack personality and communicate very little in terms of benefit or brand character. Sure, IBM, MCI and ABC have big recognition and identity, but they also spent years and millions in virtually all media to promote their image—using images of people and situations that were warm and fuzzy. Even billionaire Bill Gates chose Microsoft over MS (which has some undesirable connotations).

Convey an implied benefit

If you don't have a lot of media dollars to spend on name recognition, try for a name that conveys a benefit or describes content. Snapple started out with a name that combined two of its original flavors: Spice N Apple. Silk—the soy-based milk brand—combines soy and milk. Benefit-oriented names include EasyOff oven cleaner, Miracle-Grow plant food, and Hearthwarmer (a fireplace insert).

Lost in Translation...or worse!

Most of us have heard the story of Chevrolet introducing their "Nova" in Spanish-speaking countries. The car tanked because 'nova' means "doesn't go." Fiat found they had to rename their "uno" in Finland, since "Uno" means garbage in Finnish. Canadian products require labeling in both English and French, which is why on some cookie boxes, the English phrase "without preservatives" has been unintentionally translated into the French "sans preservatives," which means "without condoms." 'Nuff said.

Shun fads

The shelf life of a faddish name is short and sweet. It rises to the stratosphere of recognition then nosedives into obscurity faster than you can say, "radical," "tubular" or "outta sight." Another problem with fads is they're often limited to one demographic or clique. In a market as broad and diverse as the U.S., it's better to be safe than sorry.

Protect your image

If you're like most companies, you worked hard and spent some real money creating the image of your company. So it only makes sense to protect your investment with a product name that's consistent with your existing brands and image. Rolls Royce had to pull the name of its newest addition to the Silver Cloud line, which they tentatively named the "Silver Mist," since in German, "mist" means manure. So build on what you have. A good example: Google's entry into online shopping with Froogle. Incidentally, if you're wondering where "Google" came from, it's a variation on the math term googol, a huge number with endless zeros.

Don't forget legal

Once you've settled on a few ideal prospective names, hire a good lawyer to make sure they're not already being used and not confusingly similar to someone else's in your industry.

Hopefully, this brief overview will help guide you through the subtleties of product naming. Remember, try to be unique and benefit oriented without being confusing or offensive. Avoid fads, abbreviations and tongue twisters. And, by all means, protect your image.

Marketing: Effective Niche Strategies

15 Effective Niche Marketing Strategies.

This article was written to reply numerous of the most regularly asked questions on this topic. I wish you find out all of this knowledge helpful.

1. Making More Cash – Most individuals desire to make more money. They want to keep off not being able to buy all their needs and wants. You could object product niches for employment, home businesses, networking marketing, affiliate programs, employment advancement, etc.
2. Increasing Profits And Sales – Most businesses want to increase their profits and sales. You could goal product niches about marketing, copywriting, advertising, cutting costs, publicity tips, etc.
3. Making Fair Investments – Most individuals want to get high returns on their investments. You could object product niches about investing in the stock market, bonds, futures trading, etc.
4. Getting A Elevate – Employees want to avoid being on a low pay scales at their place of effort and losing their job. You could aim product niches about communicating at work such as asking for a raise, promotions at work, etc.
5. Getting A Promotion – Most employees want to succeed and offer their employer their best. You could target product niches about moving up the ladder at work, career advancement, above or underachieving at work with the consequences of each, etc.
6. Working From House – Many individuals would somewhat work at home. You could target product niches about home business start-up, home business opportunities, affiliate programs, network marketing, etc.
7. Working Less – Most individuals want to work less but smarter. You could target product niches about businesses that require little or no work, automated income streams, part-time jobs that pay the same as 40 hour a week jobs, etc.
8. Eliminating Debt – Most individuals want to manage or eliminate their debts. You could target product niches about money control, debt consolidation, stopping debt collectors from calling, etc.
9. Having Outstanding Credit – individuals want to maintain excellent credit. You could target product niches about improving their credit reports, financial management, how to increase their credit rating, etc.
10. Finding A Bargain – Most people like to find bargains. You could target product niches about being thrifty, negotiating lower prices, where to find fair bargains, etc.
12. Retiring Early – Most people want to retire beforehand or at least have money for their

retirement. You could target product niches about planning for early retirement, investing for the long designation, goal setting, etc.

13. Being Educated – Many want to new their education. You could target product niches about college grants, college ratings, college loans, college living, etc.

14. Save Money – Most people want to save money. You could target product niches about starting a budget, lower bills, stretching their money further, shopping smarter, etc.

15. Being Successful – Most people want to be successful. You could target product niches about advancing and reaching goals, motivational techniques, getting into the right mind set, etc.

I hope you have gotten some acceptable ideas from this article and that you are able to use them.

Marketing: Thank You Ronald Regan

History of Infomercials

It all began in the 1980's. Ronald Regan was president and one of the many controversial things he did in that office was to deregulate the TV industry. Why did he do it? Well, as a conservative Republican he lived and breathed by the "free market rule," which stated that the government didn't belong in business, and businesses should live and die by the success or failure of their own practices and market forces.

At the same time, cable TV was just starting its expansion into the American television marketplace, and that opened up a huge broadcast venue which simply didn't exist beforehand. Anybody with any experience in the broadcast industry was starting his own channel and pretty soon cable channels were commonplace. The most successful channels at the time were religious based channels which were basically used for fundraising purposes. There were literally hundreds of them, from local, small time reverends and ministers with dubious backgrounds, to nationally broadcast spiritual and religious shows, utilizing well-known religious figures.

At this point, two things happened. For one, many of the young, fledgling channels and networks who counted on ad revenue to keep themselves afloat attracted less than stellar ratings and starting going under. And at the same time, the religious channels started to realize that their fundraising efforts were failing miserably in the late evening and wee hours of the morning.

Cheap broadcast space was born! And enterprising businessmen, more like vultures than saviors, swooped down and began to chew on the dying carcasses of the young cable industry, buying up blocks of cheap, late night, off peak broadcast time and running 30 minute or 60 minute, inexpensively produced commercials refashioned as entertainment programs.

Pretty soon there were infomercial superstars. Celebrities, as well as a cast of unknowns, found fame and fortune in the newly created infomercial industry. There was Jane Fonda who captured lightening in a bottle with her exercise tapes simultaneously boosting the video business along with the infomercial business. There was Ron Popeil, who marketed every gadget and device people didn't even know they needed and made the switch from printed contact to electronic contact so successfully he's still doing it today. And there was Kenny Kingston who made the Psychic Hotline into one of the largest businesses in the world without even having anything to sell! Only in America and only in infomercials could such overwhelming success happen so quickly.

Soon, everybody with an idea was trying to come up with the next big thing. As is always the case with any new industry, immediately following the initial success there comes a huge wave of imitators and innovators trying to cash in. And as always happens – most fail. There was such a huge crush of wannabes flooding into the business that production rates skyrocketed and broadcast time became more and more expensive and less and less available. Almost overnight, the infomercial industry went from nothing to today's enviable haul of billions of dollars annually. And that's just in America. Successful infomercials, like Hollywood movies are translated into foreign languages and played all around the globe especially when they are celebrity driven.

The newly created infomercial industry was the precursor to the Home Shopping Network and QVC which are essentially 24 hour mini infomercials, product driven, price driven and celebrity driven. And now we have The Infomercial Channel – 24 hours a day of infomercials. Gone are the days of loud mouthed hucksters, snake oil salesmen yelling into the camera, hawking the latest “it slices! it dices!” home improvement device. Today, infomercials are slick, expensive and if they work, highly profitable.

Marketing: Know If Your Business Card Stinks

How To Know If Your Business Card Stinks

If your business card isn't doing what it's supposed to do – helping the receiver remember you in a desirable way, leaving behind a strong, positive impression of you, your company and your product or service – then it's a failure. It stinks.

And if you're reading this article, it probably does. Stink, that is.

Wonder how can I make that prediction, without ever having seen your business card?

Two reasons.

First reason. People keep business cards that have value — business cards that, in their minds, have information on a person or product or service that they find interesting or that they think they'll need. It only makes sense, right?

In my opinion, such a business card may be ugly — or cheap — or ordinary — but if someone chooses to keep it (for legitimate business reasons, not for scratch paper), it doesn't "stink".

However, the vast majority of business cards are thrown away almost immediately. According to research I've seen, more than 90% of business cards are thrown away the same day they're received. Less than 1% of business cards are kept more than thirty days.

True, some people throw business cards away because they save the information on them in an alternate format (such as an electronic business card scanner), but most are pitched because they're of no value to the recipient.

In other words, they stink. They're crappy. They're literally worthless.

Reason two to believe your business card stinks.

I have no statistical data to back this up, but I've often noticed that many business people seem to be nervous or embarrassed when they're actually at the point of handing someone their business card.

Maybe Ms. Business is having a great conversation with a potential customer. She's really excited and enthused about the newest Wonder Widget her company manufactures, and her prospect is smiling and looking interested. But something happens when it's time for her to hand over the company business card.

She grimaces. She hesitates. Her tone of voice changes. She makes some sort of offhand remark like "Well, here's my business card." Instead of eagerly, confidently giving someone this outstanding example of their company's professionalism and credentials, this awesome, amazing business card — her whole posture and demeanor conveys a sense of embarrassment.

Or maybe you've felt it yourself — a mental twinge, or an inner voice that says "Maybe he won't be impressed" or "My card isn't as good as my competitor's" — when the time comes for you to give someone your business card. Instead of giving someone your company card with poise and assurance, you feel reluctant to actually let someone else see it... and judge it.

After all, that card is your baby. Maybe you were instrumental in the creation of the card. Maybe you've had the business card so long that you've become attached to it. Either way, if someone throws that business card away, or casually stuffs it into their pants pocket without even looking at it, it feels like rejection. If they don't appreciate the card, they don't appreciate YOU.

So... if you're worried that your business card stinks, so worried that you cannot hand it out without fearing that it will be found wanting, and if you haven't had enough positive reactions to reassure you that your fears are groundless... it probably does.

Of course, there are objective criteria to use when evaluating a business cards'... er, "stink factor". And varying degrees of "stinkiness."

For example, business cards that are overcrowded, stink. Business cards that give you no idea what product or service you offer, stink. Business cards that waste the space on the back side of the card may not stink, but they're certainly being underutilized.

And business cards that aren't kept, remembered, and used by your customers or prospects, stink.

Marketing: Seek Out Your Competitors

How To Seek Out Your Competitors

The best way to seek out your competitors is to try and buy whatever product or service it is you're planning to sell. Enter the market as a customer, and find out what options you would have.

Where to Look.

It might be tempting to just use a search engine and go by the results that turns up, but you have to remember that plenty of business still takes place outside the Internet. You should also make sure that you pay attention to more traditional methods of advertising, such as the yellow pages, or your local newspaper. It's worth cutting out and keeping any ads you find, as they can be good to refer to when it's time to start your own marketing.

Do What They Do, But Differently.

Notice that I said 'differently', not necessarily 'better'. Don't assume that you'll be able to improve on established businesses if you're doing the exact same thing as they are – they have years of experience, after all. What you're trying to do is distinguish yourself in the marketplace, so that people who are looking for something specific in your chosen industry will come to you.

There are a number of tried-and-true ways of altering existing products to make them succeed in the market.

The Price-Quality Line. You may find other businesses that only offer a very high-quality service, and accordingly charge a premium price – or you might find ones that only offer heavily-discounted rubbish. Consider taking their products to the opposite end of the market. If you can offer a product of only slightly worse quality at half the price, then people will jump at it – and, likewise, there are always people willing to pay the most to get the best.

Provide a Service. It is perfectly possible to sell products of the exact same physical quality

while providing a better service – to the customer, quality and service are almost the same thing. There are companies out there who can sell computer software that their customers could get almost for free, simply because the customers like to have the support services that they get with their purchase.

Likewise, if service is all you do, then it should be pretty simple to provide a more attentive and personal service than your competitors. ‘One-on-one business’ gives you a great opportunity to become friendly with your customers, and that’s often worth its weight in gold to them.

Make it Simpler. Many businesses offer great products, but they’re pitching them to very technical customers. If you’re an expert in your field, you will very often find that you can build a great business simply by selling the same thing as your competitors, but going to some trouble to explain and market it to a wider section of the public. Anytime you start using some new technology, the chances are that someone along the way had to work out how to make it simpler. Few new technologies or inventions come pre-packaged for consumer use.

Change the Design. Make it smaller, or change the color, or make it easier to open and fix. There are all sorts of ways to subtly redesign a product and give it all sorts of bells and whistles that customers will really appreciate. You might even be able to buy products, modify them, and then sell them on.

Build Alliances.

Despite what the word might lead you to think, you don’t always have to be competitive with your competitors. You might find that they have extra work sometimes that they wouldn’t mind sending over to you, or you might find that they’re willing to give you advice on starting up (if not for free, then perhaps for nothing more than the cost of a few drinks!). Of course, you shouldn’t go giving away all your secrets or giving them any other advantage, but that doesn’t mean that you should keep away. Pay special attention to any problems that they say they’ve had, or anything they do that seems to sell especially well.

Believe it or not, your competitors can be your best allies in this home business game, especially if they’re home businesses themselves – over time, your competitors might even become your friends.

Marketing: Lies About Promotional Pens

The 3 Biggest Lies About Promotional Pens

Pens are a great way to easily promote your business. The truth is a pen is good for branding your business, but it does little to promote your business. Why?

Every time you turn around there’s someone on your phone or doorstep, trying to sell you pens for you to use for promotional items. Every time they show up, you buy a few hundred or

thousand, though more than likely you have a storage closet somewhere that's full of them.

That's because you've bought into lie number one: Pens are a great way to easily promote your business. The truth is a pen is good for branding your business, but it does little to promote your business. Why?

Because it doesn't do any real promoting! A pen with your logo, name, address and phone number just tells people who you are. It does nothing to make them want to use your company's product or service. Worse, it just lies around, waiting to be picked up and used- and mostly it will be used to make a grocery list, not to find your company's name and address!

Lie number two is that pens are a great way to inexpensively market and promote your business. This isn't true, and that closet full of pens should be proof enough. Yes, you can get fairly cheap promotional pens, but you know what they really tell people about you? That you're cheap!

People aren't stupid. They know a cheap item from a more expensive one. And even though they will take and even use your pen, they will not connect you to quality. If you want a pen to do that, and you do or why bother, you're going to have to buy more expensive pens that show you're a class act all the way. This kind of promotional pen costs a great deal of money, so you won't get away, um, cheaply. Quantity and/or quality will, either way, cost you money, so pens aren't really a cheap promotional item after all, are they?

Now, for lie number three. Yes, it's the big one! Because everyone gives pens away as promotional items, you should too in order to compete. Remember being in high school where everyone dressed the same way? Look back at your yearbook and you'll see that everyone pretty much looks the same. Only a few brave souls who dared to be different stand out.

Same thing with promotional pens. There are a gazillion of them out there. And they all pretty much look the same and say the same thing: logo, contact information and website URL. If you want your promotional item to "wow" your customers and potential customers, you won't do it with a pen, most likely, unless it is one killer, expensive pen that does everything a cell phone can do.

The promotional arena is just saturated with promotional pens. So break away from the herd! If you feel you have to use a writing instrument as a promotional item, look into buying some cool mechanical pencils!

They're easily available and are far more effective for promoting your business than promotional pens for two reasons: 1) Not everyone else is giving them away, so they're automatically different, and 2) (and this is a secret!) people want them. Why? They're great for kids to use in school or to do homework. And help one of today's busy, overly zealous parents out by giving them something little Jake or Jane can use, and I guarantee you'll be remembered-and better, called on for your product or service!

Marketing: Friendship Versus Business Decisions

Successful businesses know the importance of building and maintaining good working relationships, whether it is with partners, employees, business or trade organizations, the government, media representatives, vendors, consumers, or the community at large. A business must carefully balance the benefits of these interpersonal relationships and should never allow these relationships to blind their judgment especially when it relates to what is in the best interest of the business's continued success and growth

Buying advertising media based on interpersonal relationships is a common mistake made by many small businesses. This strategy throws the business's strategic marketing plan into the winds of chance in exchange for the warm and fuzzy feelings that come with doing business among friends. However, when the smoke clears the business has made costly advertising expenditures with little or no results and the long term negative effects may not readily be seen. Simply, the marketing / advertising expenditures have been made, the budget may or may not be busted, and the results may be none to little measurable penetration into the business's target demographic market segment.

Is buying media from a friend in the business always bad? No, however in order to choose the most effective media channels a business must first consider the audience or customer it is trying to reach. Developing a strong sense of the target demographics' buying and shopping patterns, interests and hobbies, entertainment and media choices for example will lend itself a tremendous benefit to making informed media buying choices. Once the advertising business has developed a strong sense of what media channels may prove to be the most effective it should try each a little at a time carefully tracking the results of each. Once this is complete the business will be able to make an educated decision on where to invest its marketing dollars, prioritizing expenditures into the mediums that have proven results for the business.

It is true that strong interpersonal relationships skills and the ability to develop and maintain good working relationships with a variety of people, businesses, and other organizations are imperative in today's business environments. However, the importance of a well designed and implemented strategic marketing plan can not be understated and is paramount to the business's development and longevity never taking second seat to friendship.

Marketing: Create Effective Advertisements

5 Must Ask Questions to Create Effective Advertisements

It's difficult to reach your business goals if you don't have the right materials and/or the information to help your business reach the success it's capable of. These five helpful suggestions will boost your business to new levels.

To kick off a marketing campaign that will send your sales to the moon? Whether you're ready to create a Web page, sales letter, or other sales copy, take a moment to ask yourself these

important questions before you dive in. Think before you advertise.

1. Whom Do You Want to Target?

Is your prospective customer an avid outdoorsman who likes to hike? Know exactly who you are talking to before you start. Once you know the characteristics of your ideal reader, it's much easier to create a dynamic sales message that will address their interests and needs. Talk directly to the reader, and watch them respond.

2. What Action Do You Want Your Reader to Take?

Not all advertisements are intended to spur immediate sales. Are you looking for a list of prospective buyers, first time inquiries, or direct sales? Word your sales copy to stimulate the action you want the reader to take.

3. What Do You Have That Your Competitors Don't?

Before you can expect your audience to head out for your place of business, you've got let them know why they need to do business with YOU. Do you provide faster results, a better guarantee, personalized service, easier to use products? What is it that makes your product better?

How important is it to identify your competitive edge? A good rule of thumb is that it should cover about one half of your advertising space. Pretty important, huh? Yeah, you'll want to keep a close eye on the competition and continuously update to KEEP the competitive edge.

4. How Can You Verify Your Claims?

You don't believe everything you hear...especially from someone wanting to sell you something, and neither will your prospective customers. You've got to make them believe that what you say is the gospel truth. Gather testimonials from current customers, dig up some reliable research that will back up your claims, and find someone well-respected to endorse your product or service. Just don't expect blind faith from people who don't know you.

5. How Do You Spur The Readers to Action

Let's face it...procrastination has a good foothold in the lives of many of the people we are marketing our products and services too. Yeah, they're a lot like us. They see the ad, think "Hey, I need to get one of those," and go on about life without every getting around to making it to your place of business.

Deadlines can spur action. Hey, if you know you're going to pay 25 percent less if you buy it by Saturday, you're not likely to wait until Sunday to do your shopping. Put together a list of sales you want to introduce, specify the end dates, and your set to put a little motivation in your copy. Hint: You don't have to have new sales every time – recycle the ones you have

every so often...especially those that bring good response.

Motivating sales copy doesn't have to be written by professional marketers. Implement these questions in your sales page and you'll have high-quality copy that produces top-notch results.

Marketing: Identify Good Ad Agencies

How To Identify Good Ad Agencies

There are 5 critical questions you need to ask to determine if an ad agency or marketing consultant that is likely to produce desired results or waste your money. Ask these 5 questions to save time, money and frustration.

If you operate a small or mid-sized business, marketing is the fastest way to grow it by multiples. Done properly, it can empower any business to dominate their market space. Bar none!

If you agree, but don't have the time or expertise to pull it off on your own, you might consider hiring a marketing consultant or ad agency to help you. But how do you tell who the experts are?

Ask these 5 questions knowing what answers to look for.

Q1 – “What System Do They Use To Create The Messaging For Your Ad?”

To entice you, ad agencies will showcase eye-catching marketing pieces they've done for other clients. Whether it's print, radio, video or web design – for them, their end result is artistic design. These pieces may catch the eye but if the underlying strategy is wrong, they flop. Graphics must support the message – not the other way around. The real result is the number of leads generated, percentage converted to sales, and dollars that flow into your business. Don't be fooled by glitz and glitter – marketing is science, not art. Ask what method they use to develop the message. If the answer is, “We ask the business owner”, walk away. That's not a system.

Q2 – “Do They Know The Top-Ranked Customer Hot-Buttons For Your Business?”

Most ad agencies don't understand what's important to your customers. If they don't know what drives prospects in your industry to buy from one provider instead of another, you can only expect dismal results.

Although you can find your customer hot-buttons by going to their web site, and click on something like “Industries Served” and then select your industry. They're in priority sequence along with the marketing challenges you're likely to face. Compare these answers with the agency you're evaluating, then decide. But if you don't find anything decent, then this agency sucks!

Q3 – “How Do They Measure The Effectiveness Of Your Ads?”

This is especially important if you're running ads through different media. A great ad in the wrong place will produce dismal results. Suppose you're running the same ad in 4 magazines and getting good call volume, you'll probably continue running them, right? What if you learn that 80% of the calls are coming from one magazine? You'll probably cancel the others and use the money for something else, right?

If you can't measure it, you won't know what works and what doesn't. The only way to know is to have an “accountability tag” in each ad.

PS – Don't let any marketing consultant fool you into believing that your receptionist will ask prospects which ad prompted them to call? When they're busy they have no time to ask.

Q4 – “Do You Have A Program That Fits My Budget?”

Cost is always a factor. You'll find that some ad agencies won't return your call unless you are prepared to spend \$15K to \$20K for a monthly retainer. Look for ad agencies that have programs for small and mid-sized companies. In fact, depending on your management style, you might want to hire a marketing consultant that gives you the choice of a turnkey solution or a “shared effort” teaching and coaching program that encourages hands-on involvement on your part. It just depends on your business philosophy and budget.

Q5 – “How Long Before I See Results?”

Excellent results can't be produced overnight, but seriously, should you have to wait 6 to 18 months just for the development phase of your marketing campaign? A typical ad agency can take this long or more. For small companies, this is too long a time period and it could actually be your death sentence. Expect some results within 60 days.

Summary

There is too much at stake to attempt “trial and error marketing” on your own. In this digital age you are better off working remotely with a marketing consultant who can pull it off than a local one that may not produce results.

Find an ad agency that can deliver the right marketing strategy the first time using a systematized development process. Be sure they use “accountability tags” so you'll see exactly how effective (or ineffective) it is. If your budget is tight see if they have a program that allows you and your people to share some of the workload.

Marketing: Your Poster Your Story

Let Your Posters Tell Your Story

The purpose of a poster is basically to present a piece of work in a simple and clear manner. It should effectively present a useful information and food for thought.

Every poster printing is like a book that tells a story. Simplicity is the key to it. A reader would only take a few minutes to look at the poster that is why there has to be few clutters as much as possible. Instead, informative statements and attractive graphics should be included in it. Less detail should be in the poster. Keep in mind that it will be one of the many in the exhibit area so you have to make sure that it will capture the reader's attention.

The purpose of a poster is basically to present a piece of work in a simple and clear manner. It should effectively present a useful information and food for thought. If the details presented in the poster has been described and illustrated better in a paper, consider making the paper available as handout at the poster session. Additionally, the use of colors can be very helpful in maximizing both the clarity of images and making the poster captivating.

There several things you need to know when designing and printing your own poster. First, don't make the title too large or too small. Consider its distance with the audience. Avoid also from making it too large. If it exceeds the width of the poster consider shortening the title and remember that all caps letters are harder to read. Also, use colors in your posters as it helps to convey additional meaning. But carefully select the colors that you will use. Make sure that the colors draws attention and serve meaningful distinctions.

Remember also to give credit when it is due. Include a short acknowledgment in the poster to recognize everyone who helped you in the process. And most importantly, write simply, plainly and briefly. Stress out the key pointers and your conclusions in the poster. Do not focus in little stuff. Effectively communicate the big picture.

Do not also assume that the readers would easily understand your poster. So consider adding helpful tutorial sections to the poster such as an Internet address pointing to an important material or anything else that would help teach your readers what they need to know to understand your poster.

You could also use some gimmicks to catch your reader's attention but make sure that they don't backfire. And use good judgment in everything that you will include in the poster. So make your posters as interesting as possible but remember not to over do it.

Marketing: Get Others to Market Your Product or Service for You

Small business owners are always looking for low cost ways to market. This article gives a tip that anyone can use to get free marketing exposure for their product or service with very little effort.

Marketing can be expensive and most small business owners don't have big marketing budgets. So looking for targeted ways to get free marketing exposure is a great solution. You may have considered public relations as a low cost marketing tactic, but

what if you can't write, or you don't have the time to sit down and create a press kit or even write a press release?

Well, there's an easy way to get publicity that does not even require you to write a press release. Try donating your product or service for an auction or door prize. Very often, associations, groups and charities conduct live or silent auctions at their events. Or they give away door prizes to attendees to encourage attendance. Why not donate your product or service and benefit from the free marketing exposure it can generate.

Typically you will receive promotion during the event, and in the event program. You benefit from the implied endorsement of the group conducting the event, and goodwill associated with giving away your product or service. You may even be able to write off the cost as a business expense. (Please check with your tax adviser).

And, not only will you receive free exposure, you will also gain a new customer. Who could tell a few friends, who could tell a few friends, who could tell a few friends ... you see where this is going. It's a great way to get free exposure for your products or services and start to generate new customers.

Not sure what groups or charities you should donate your auction item or door prize to?

You will want to choose an organization whose members, and event attendees, closely match your ideal customer. Take a look at your customers and prospects. Then try to find groups and associations who service these types of people.

Perhaps there is a health club in your area that is celebrating a grand opening, or a consumer expo coming to town. Do you target middle-aged women with school-age children? How about hooking up with a school or PTA-sponsored event?

Perhaps your local Little League or Soccer organization is looking for auction items to raise money for its upcoming season.

Do you target corporate professionals in high-stress jobs such as finance, advertising and marketing, or technology? Look for the local chapters of trade associations servicing these industries. They typically hold monthly meetings, plus larger annual events.

It really depends on who your prospects are. Your goal with any marketing activity is to gain exposure among your target audience. So select an organization or group whose members match your clients, and odds are they will be interested in your services and your business will benefit from this highly-targeted marketing exposure.

Why viral marketing is sooo important!

Internet marketing gurus always talk about building your mailing list. Mailing lists are important because it is true that the money is always in the list.

Leverage On Other People's List

Internet marketing gurus always talk about building your mailing list. Mailing lists are important because it is true that the money is always in the list.

Most of the time, some Internet marketers will beg other marketers (especially those with a bigger list size) to promote their products, do an ad swap or help them to build their own lists in general.

But what if, instead of relying on YOUR OWN LIST, you can LEVERAGE on other people's list?

You see, in Internet marketing, there is always someone who has a bigger list size than you. These people will always want to sell products.

If you can create products (such as master resell rights or no restriction private label rights products) and give them the rights to sell YOUR products with YOUR ads in it, you will be getting constant advertising for FREE and people are doing it WILLINGLY for you!

After all, when you promote a product to your list, it is still limited in the sense that you can only mail your list once or twice, but having your products being promoted all over the Internet, will take the burden off the lists and give you additional streams of income.

The Power Of Exponential Growth

Many people neglect the power of viral marketing because they have this misconception that it yields very little at the start. They feel that they would rather promote their products by themselves rather than share the product with other resellers.

The same applies with blog posts. (See the chapter on blogs and themes below).

Let's do a little math.

Would you rather make \$100,000 a month or make build a campaign that doubles in revenue starting at \$0.01 a day for every next day?

1 .. 2 .. 4 .. 8 .. 16 .. 64 .. 128 .. 256 MILLIONS!

The power of exponential growth tells us that you will become a millionaire after almost 30 days! (2 to the power of 30!!!)

Do you see the power of viral marketing?

Whether you are getting one new subscriber a day or one sale a day, you will be able to generate lots of traffic just by viral marketing alone!

Now to be realistic, even with the UNLIMITED growth potential on the Internet, there will come a time where there is a saturation point. But it still doesn't dispute the fact that there are millions of customers (and many resellers) that will market for you and expand your efforts FOR YOU!

It is always a good idea to build several viral marketing channels. That way, even when your viral campaign starts to slow down (due to saturation), you will still be able to leverage on many channels and build your list or your affiliate commissions.

In future articles , i will explore a few tools, both free and paid that will enable you to build several viral campaigns and watch as traffic beats a path to your virtual doorstep!

Marketing: Links Building

Effective Links Building Strategy

This article illustrates how can one utilize effective link building strategy to increase Search Engine Ranking Positions. It includes several very useful easy to implement methods.

Organic search engine traffic is often considered to be the holy grail of traffic sources. It is free, plentiful (depending on your niche), and Internet users across the globe use search engines. However, as any seasoned website owner can attest, search engines can be as fickle as a teenage girl.

One day you are Number 1 and the search engines love you. The next day your site has been nonchalantly pushed to page 47. No rhyme or reason or "Dear John" letter. In order to balance out these inevitable downgrades, it is equally important for site owners to master the art of link building.

Link building is defined as locating other targeted sites in your niche, and either exchanging links with them, or having them link to you. The latter of the two – one way links – are considered to be the most ideal option amongst link building professionals.

Obtaining links from other sites basically gives you targeted traffic. And in many cases, links from other sites can last forever. Because of that aspect, it is important to incorporate this tactic into your overall online marketing plan.

The following are some of the suggestions to construct effective link building strategies.

Put some link bait on the hook. Link bait is marketing lingo for – "create content that will absolutely, positively compel other site owners to link to you."

It is typically an article or a blog post that has a definite "WOW!" factor. What creates that "WOW!"? You can put together a huge list of helpful resources for people in your niche. Better

yet, go beyond the name of the site and the URL and include a comprehensive description. Tell why you like the site, or how it is going to help your site visitors the most.

Purchase text links. This is probably the most frequently used link building strategy. This is also one of the fastest ways to generate one way links without breaking a sweat. There are many directories that specialize in matching text link buyers and sellers. These directories are good because you were find a number of sites to choose from in almost any category. Plus, you can read reviews from other text link buyers in your niche.

Obtain blog reviews. A simple way to build links to your blog is to get blog reviews. The concept is basic. Someone reviews your blogs content – you get a link.

Blog reviews are great because someone is actually giving specific details about your site, rather than just one line of text (which is what you will get with text links). If you do a search for “blog reviews” you will find several sites offering the service. Depending on the site, you may or may not have to pay for the review.

As you can see, link building is not hard. It does require time and commitment. But the payoff – increased targeted traffic – makes it well worth the effort.

Getting Incoming Links To Your Website

Most would agree that getting incoming links to your website is one of the most effective ways to get ranked highly with the search engines to bring you more traffic and sales. There are many ways to go about doing this and I will discuss some of them in this article.

First of all, start out with the premise that you must have a high-quality website that provides outstanding content and value to your target audience. You will get much better results with any of your link-building efforts if you have a reputable site that is worth linking to. Good content must be geared towards your site visitors as well as the search engines. For your visitors, make the site clean, clear, easy to read and pleasing to the eye. For the search engines, use your keywords and images appropriately.

One of the most common way of getting incoming links to your website is to submit your site to the thousands of website directories. Some of these are free and some charge per submission. You can post your site (or hire someone to post your site) to as many directories as you can handle but you should chose those that are ranked higher by the search engines so the links these directories generate will be higher quality as well.

You can also write articles and submit them to article directories to get links back to your site. Your article need to be anywhere from 400 to 500 words long and, of course, relevant to what your website is about. Then, it should be focused around a main keyword and a couple of sub-keywords. You will put a link at the end of your article back to your website and tell readers to click on it for more information. One nice thing about publishing articles is that others can publish your articles on their sites so you will be getting links from both the article

directories and other websites.

The final effective link-building method that I will discuss is participating in online forums that are relevant to your niche. Participating means offering answers to people's questions and problems and including a link back to your website for more information. Again, you want to go to reputable forums so that when people link back to you by clicking on your website, it will be considered a quality link.

Remember that getting incoming links to your website does take consistency and time but you will see the difference if you can dedicate yourself to this task. You can also hire services that can do the grunt work for you or those that actually just sell you links. If you go that route, make sure you do the appropriate research and choose your service wisely. There are many types of link-building tools and tracking that can help you in your endeavor.

Whats A Backlink

What's a backlink? A backlink (otherwise known as an incoming link) occurs when another person's site links to yours. If you're trying to figure out the meaning of backlinks, you have no doubt done some research about getting traffic to your website and seen how important having backlinks is to generating traffic.

It works like this. . .first, you build a website. Hopefully you've created your website the right way by using the right structure and keywords so that your site is on the right path to being search engine optimized. If you use the right SEO (search engine optimization) strategies, you will come up high in search engine ranking.

This means that when someone goes into a search engine to look for something that your business offers, you will come up on the first page of the search engine results (rather than your competitor). So, search engine optimization is important and you need to keep it in mind as you are creating your website.

Now we get more into the specific answer to "What's a backlink". While the structure and keywords are important to keep in mind as you create and add to your website, the most important factor of good SEO for the rest of your website's life is adding and maintaining backlinks. The reason is simple.

The search engines use backlinks to rate how worthwhile or valuable your site is. If you have many others linking to your site, that signifies to the search engines that you have a reputable site that is worth displaying high in the results. So you move up in rank. While the quantity of the backlinks contributes to your ranking, it is also important to make sure that you maintain high backlink quality as well. Try to avoid having backlinks from sites that have nothing to do with your site. Also, it is better to have backlinks coming from other highly ranked sites (as long as they are related to yours).

There are many ways to go about building backlinks. You can hire a service to do it for you,

but just make sure that you do the research to insure that you will be getting enough high quality links for what you spend. You can also do this yourself. It is quite time consuming and can be frustrating, but it is crucial to the ranking of your site.

If you decide to go about link-building yourself, you can manually request others to link to you, you can submit your site manually to the most reputable directories, you can submit articles that link back to your site to the many article directories, and you can participate in forums and other social media platforms so that people are constantly clicking on your link. These are just a few of the many ways that you can go about increasing the number of backlinks to your site. Now that you have the basic answer to “What’s a backlink?”, it’s time to start adding them to your internet marketing strategy.

Should You Purchase Backlinks

Many webmasters know the importance of having backlinks to their sites. Many go about the tedious job of obtaining backlinks by themselves which takes time and patience. In the past, it seemed that only big corporations could shell out the cash necessary to actually purchase backlinks. So they were the ones who ended up first in the search engine rankings. But things have changed and there are many services now available to the small business owner.

While these types of service aren’t cheap (especially if they are reputable), they can be very worthwhile. In deciding whether you want to buy your backlinks or continue to do the backlink building yourself, you need to evaluate how important your time is to you and how much you are able to spend in order to free up some of that time. If you do decide to purchase backlinks, make sure that you follow some simple guidelines.

Remember, not all backlinks are the quality that you need. A general mistaken conception in the internet marketing industry is that the more links you can get, the better off you will be, no matter what. More backlinks will raise your search engine ranking only if the links are quality (relevant) links. If the links come from link farms or just poorly ranked, non-reputable sites, then it can actually hurt you in terms of your search engine ranking. So keep that in mind when you are checking out services that sell backlinks. Do your research on where the links are coming from and make sure that you have something that can allow you to track the results yourself.

The decision to purchase backlinks can bring you a sigh of relief. It’s definitely the easiest way to shoot your site up in search engine ranking. But remember, quality links are not cheap. You don’t need to go for the most expensive ones necessarily but try to avoid just getting the most links you can get for the cheapest price. Again, research exactly what you will be getting for your investment. Make sure that your links will not all originate from the same place. This is a big no-no according to the search engines. Also avoid publicly traded link sites. These are more likely to be tracked and flagged by the search engines. Also, do not pay a monthly membership to maintain your links.

You are better off paying a one-time (possibly higher) fee for one link than to continuously pay

month after month and risk losing your position when you don't pay one month for some reason or another. You're much better off buying permanent links. That's fine if you can only afford one at a time. Just add a link every so often and your site will gradually increase in ranking until you can afford to pay for more.

The decision to purchase backlinks is a sound one if you do it the right way, according to the rules established by the search engines themselves. Just make sure you do your research on who is selling them to you.

Will Paid Backlinks Help Your Search Engine Ranking

What are paid backlinks? Incoming links, to your site, are what all of the search engines use as a criteria to define whether your website is worth listing high in their results or not. So, in very basic terms, if you have a lot of backlinks, you will be ranked highly with the search engines (Google, Yahoo, MSN, etc).

A backlink is just a link from another website or web page to your website or your page. The reason that the search engines use this as a measuring tool is because they "feel" that if your site is worth being linked to by another site, then your site must be worthwhile. There is a lot more that could be said about that but again, in a nutshell, it all comes down to this: the more websites that you have linking to your website, and the better quality the links (meaning, the more relevant the links are to your website), the higher you will rank in the search engines.

But building links yourself is a tedious, long and continuous process. So, not too long ago, people were very comfortable with paying a service to provide them with a backlink. But it didn't take Google too long to figure out that this was happening and paid linking services started being penalized.

So now the rules are different. Google does allow you to buy links but they will put your links through the ringer to make sure you follow their guidelines. What this means for you is that you've got to buy links from sites that do adhere to Google's constantly changing guidelines. If you are buying backlinks just for traffic, you will be able to follow the Google guidelines. But if you are buying them to increase the SEO of your sight, then you should probably hold on to your money since the search engines only allow no-follow links.

However, while paid backlinks may not be the way to go, there are a number of incoming link services that you can choose to use rather than just outright buying backlinks. These services will actually do the link-building work for you rather than just selling you the links. Different services offer different features so just make sure that you do the proper amount of research to establish those that are really working the right way and keeping one step ahead of the search engine rules and regulations.

While backlink services will not be cheap, they offer a great alternative to you spending an enormous amount of time trying to learn about backlink-building and then applying it to your business. Choosing the right service allows you to let the experts handle that aspect so that

you can go on to other business building activities. There are several link-building services to choose from and the list will probably continue to grow as long as it is common knowledge that backlinks are necessary for high search engine ranking.

Marketing: Capture Prospective Buyers

5 Keys to Capturing Prospective Buyers

This article is the key to capturing those prospective buyer's attention, and it shows you the ways to turn them from prospects to clients in five easy to follow steps.

Spring has sprung. The birds are singing as they busily build nests and do their mating dances. Yeah, it won't be long before the flowers bloom, and grass starts growing. You know what that means...grass needs mowing. When you parked the riding mower last fall, you knew that it would be a miracle if you could get it through another summer. You're going to need to replace old "Betsy" sooner or later, and start thinking about the features you want the next mower to have.

Well, you haven't tried starting the old mower, but hey, it's raining cats and dogs outside. With nothing better to do, you head for the mall and find yourself among a line of shiny lawn mowers with a wide variety of prices and features. What are the advantages of each one compared to the difference in costs?

Yep, not every customer that walks through your door is ready to make a purchase. Maybe they're still in the "thinking about it" stage. Yeah, when you think long enough, you usually talk yourself into doing it. That's why it's important to treat every customer's question with respect. You never know when a properly answered question will lead to a sale.

Here are some tips to keep in mind for effectively answering customer questions:

1. A Question is the Sign of a Potential Sale.

Yeah, if a customer is taking the time to look you up and ask questions, you're dealing with a high level of interest. Don't take it lightly. A prompt and quick response laced with the added benefits of the product will go a long way toward closing a sale.

2. Make it Easy to Ask A Question.

There's nothing more frustrating than having a simple question and having to move heaven and earth to get an answer. Make it easy for your customers to ask questions. Make your website question friendly and include a phone number with all of your sales material.

3. Organize – Set up a Frequently Asked Question File

What questions have you emailed answers to sixteen times this week? Keep a file with those repeat questions. You'll be able to copy and paste the answers into responses. Hey, your

customer will be happy and you can spend time doing something else. Everyone wins!

4. Get Back – Quickly

How many times have you shopped around while waiting for someone to get back to you? Yeah, it's easier than ever on the web. Customer attention spans are ever shortening with the vast global competition at their fingertips. Don't dilly dally – get back to them pronto!

5. Make Every Question a Sales Opportunity

When someone asks you a question, you've got their attention! They're waiting for an answer that is important to them. Yeah, it's the perfect opportunity to expand your response to include benefits of the purchase.

Questioning customers wear a badge that says, "Buyer on Board!" Read it and pay attention. Often a little nudge will mean a sale to tally at the day's end. Think of it like this...learning to effectively answer customer questions is a low-cost and effective way to boost your profits this year!

Marketing: Mars Men Venus Women

Dear Affiliate Manager, Women Are From Venus

Question: My target market is women, and I'm having a hard time getting them to promote my products. They just seem unmotivated. I don't get it. Does my affiliate program stink or am I recruiting bad affiliates?

Dear Affiliate Manager:

This just goes back to basic psychology. Women and men value different things.

Car salesmen are taught this in their training. When a husband and wife walk into a car showroom, the car salesman will face the husband when he talks about things like ... horsepower and engine stuff. Then, he'll turn to the wife and talk about safety and color options. Is this condescending? Yes. But, it's also effective. My eyes glaze over when it comes to horsepower, but I want to know what I'm going to look like in my car! Sunroof? Radio? Now we're talking.

So, what does this have to do with your affiliate program? Simple. Although I can't speak for all women, obviously, I can tell you the things I value in an affiliate program.

Quality. I value my newsletter subscribers and am building a relationship with them. (According to recent studies, women go online to find relationships and support.) If your product or service is junk, then you could offer me 99% commission with a 99% conversion rate and I'm still not going to sell it to my visitors.

Affordability. I can't promote a product that I, myself, would not buy. If you're overpriced for what you offer, I can not promote your products to my subscribers.

Dollars and Cents. Of course money is a factor. It's just not the #1 factor, as you may be surprised to know. 20% commission vs. 40% — I'm not as concerned about that as I am the other items in this list.

Tools: Yes, tools. This is really big, and so few affiliate managers "get it". I think I've finally pinpointed why this is such a big thing (at least for me). This scenario happens way too often: I find a product I am really excited about and I eagerly sign up for their affiliate program. I log in so I can start telling everyone I know about this great product or service. I can't wait to see what they have in the "links" section. Will there be articles, or a rebrandable e-book maybe? Or even an informative video? It's like Christmas morning... what will I find? And, then the affiliate section opens and there's one measly link and a button.

My initial gut reaction is "They're not even trying!" And now, I don't feel valued or motivated in the least bit. You just succeeded in turning your biggest fan into someone who stuck a lousy button on her page and knows it's not going to sell at all.

I know what you're thinking. It's the affiliate's job to sell. Yes, you're right. As an affiliate, I know that writing reviews and recommendations is the best way to sell a product. No doubt about it. All I'm saying is that you've got to give us at least an indicator that you're interested in building a working 'relationship'.

Is it hokey to want a relationship with an Affiliate Manager? Yes. It is. But, I can tell you that any affiliate program where I get some attention and appreciation is going to get a lot more loyalty from me than an Affiliate Manager who sits on the couch drinking beer and watching football while I'm running around working my butt off... (Hmmm.... did I say that?)

So, yes, women are from Venus. You can decide to embrace it and reap the rewards, or ignore it and wonder why your affiliates aren't motivated. It's your choice. As an affiliate, I'm challenging you to embrace this information and run with it.

Marketing: Information Overload

Information Overload

Starting at New Work a Home Business can be overwhelming. Information overload is a common frustration that leads many new startups to fail before they have a chance to get started. This article provides tips for dealing with this overload.

The good news; at last, you have achieved your dream. You've escaped the traditional, away from home work force and are now self-employed whether it be part-time or full-time. Now, the bad news.

You are now self-employed. It is both good news and bad news. That is, if you are not prepared to deal with the information overload. There you sit, in your spiffy new office – whether it's in the corner of the sitting room or in a converted bedroom surrounded by your equally spiffy new toys...your computer, desk and some strategically placed shelves. Your new multi-function center will print stuff, fax stuff and copy stuff. (It won't hang out the washing, but hey, you can't have everything.)

You've even got work coming-in and the immediate worry about making a living has vanished. Hooray! You really *can* work from home! At first, working at home is pure bliss. Then you get a week when everybody and their dog seems to want your services. After putting in a few late nights, you meet all the deadlines and think; phew...I'm glad that's over! You decide to relax and give yourself a day off. After all, you worked all through the weekend and earned it, right?

Unfortunately, the following week you find yourself off to a bad start trying to make-up for your day off. Before you know it, you find that you are dropping further and further behind. You reflect gloomily that when you were working for someone else, at least at the end of the day you were finished...what didn't get done didn't get done!

Well, it's time to take heart and set a few simple strategies in place that will keep you in control of your time...and your sanity.

=== 1. Do NOT Accept Any New Work This Week. ===

Take a good look at what you have on your plate now, and carefully plan the week ahead. Your aim is to regain control. Tell new clients that you are fully booked, but you can put them on a priority list to be phoned next week. (This will not only allow you to catch up, but make your services appear highly in demand.)

=== 2. Build In Time For Leisure and Rest. ===

Not only for this week, but EVERY week. A half hour walk; a twenty-minute break in the sun with a cup of coffee; a quick swim or a movie outing with friends – all these activities can recharge your batteries. You will find that you can achieve far more when you are rested and alert. (How many times have you sat at the computer staring at the screen, achieving very little, because you're over-tired?)

=== 3. Tackle Urgent Tasks First. ===

If you're behind, your first step must be to contact all clients and arrange firm new deadlines. Make sure you base these new deadlines on what you CAN achieve, not what you HOPE you can achieve. If any existing client needs your services or products urgently, bump them up the queue.

=== 4. Prioritize Remaining Tasks. ===

Scrap anything that is not essential, and delegate what you can. Consider involving family, business associates or friends to handle some tasks. (Warning: do not hand over tasks that must be carried out only by you as the principal of the business. Your reputation is important.)

=== 5. Set Achievable Daily Goals. ===

If you finish a task ahead of schedule, begin the next... but adhere to a definite cut-off time each day. What you are doing this week is establishing a system that will continue to work for you.

Getting out of trouble when your business is in overload is just like getting out of debt. Your business rating is similar to your credit rating – nothing can be gained by denying that a problem exists. Nothing can be gained by slipping deeper into the mire. Call a halt; contact the main players; set workable strategies in place and you can quickly regroup.

Before you know it, your home business dream will be on track once more.

Marketing: Landing Pages

Landing Pages, And Why You Need Them!

Landing pages are just web pages where visitors are directed to whenever they click a result in a web search or whenever they click a web ad. For affiliate marketing, landing pages would refer to the web page where you, as a merchant, would want your potential customer to be directed after clicking your ad on your affiliate's website. Landing pages are, nothing really different from other web pages in a particular website, especially if the website is an e-commerce site

If you want to get something more from your online business, and if you want to bring in a lot of profits, you better create a special landing page for your web ads.

There are a variety of affiliate marketing programs today, but most of these programs let the merchant pay the affiliate in a pay per click basis. Basically, all you have to do is sign up with the program and submit your ad. The program owner would then distribute your ad to various affiliates who would then place your ad on their websites. Whenever your ad is clicked, a visitor would be directed to your landing page and you would have to pay the affiliate for his service.

As a seller, you earn in an affiliate program through conversions-that is whenever a visitor that is directed to your site actually buys a product on your site. Without these conversions, you actually earn nothing from the program.

Now, you sure won't get any conversion if you have posted an ad on your affiliate's site without an actual landing page for the potential customer to be redirected into. It's just like

advertising a product without actually having a store to sell your product. Your advertisement may be enticing enough to encourage people to purchase a product, but without the landing page, how will they know how to purchase the product

It is therefore important to have landing pages for your ads because it is the only way for you to earn something in an affiliate program.

Many people make the mistake of making their website's homepage as the landing page for their ads. The same is true for those who make use of other pages like a "contact us" page or a product page. Homepages are often designed to serve multiple users and contains a lot of links to other pages or to other websites. If you want to be successful in an affiliate program, you don't want your landing page to cater to the needs of various people, most of which may not be really interested with your product.

When choosing a landing page, you must always have the customer directed into that page in mind. Therefore, your landing page must be relevant to the keywords and the contents you placed on your ad. It is important that the landing page can encourage your visitor to take action to purchase your product or at least provide leads for possible customers.

If you get into an affiliate marketing program without actually having a landing page, you'll end up paying too much without getting anything in return. So if you still don't have a landing page for your ads, you should start creating one now.

Marketing: What Is Affiliate Marketing

Affiliate marketing is many things. Affiliate marketing can provide the necessary tools for the creative and hardworking individual to venture out on their own. Affiliate marketing can provide the opportunity to earn money doing what you are good at. Affiliate marketing can allow someone to use their skills and expertise for their own financial gain, rather than the financial gain of another person or entity. Finally, Affiliate marketing can get people started in their own business enterprises with nearly no cost or risk to themselves.

Affiliate marketing can do all of those things and more. First, Affiliate marketing is perfect for the independent hardworking individual. Many of us are stuck in day to day jobs. We work incredibly hard and receive little reward. There is nearly no incentive to work harder. When you work in the field of affiliate marketing, the world is your oyster. You are paid by your performance so the harder you work, generally the better off you'll be. When you work as an affiliate, you are working as a representative of another company. However, your reward is directly linked with what you produce. If you're someone who frequently gets good results at work then this could be a great opportunity for you.

Next Affiliate marketing can provide the opportunity to earn money by doing something that you are good at. Those that have a knack for sales and marketing are perfect for affiliate marketing. Those that are creative and used to hard work can also make an excellent living. Your skills will be used to work for you. If you have a natural knack for these kinds of projects then why not have them increase your bank balance and not someone else's? As an affiliate,

anything that you do to increase sales or traffic if it is internet based will benefit you and you directly. The company won't get rich while you stay poor. You're the one who will reap the rewards.

Finally, Affiliate marketing can get someone started in their own business at nearly no cost or risk to themselves. Many of us would love to work for ourselves. The two main reasons why we don't are money and risk. You need a decent amount of capital to start even a small business. The risk involved is also tremendous with more than half of small businesses failing in the first year. Affiliate marketing can get you started working for yourself. They handle all of the products and advertising and you just concentrate on selling. If yours is an internet based program, you concentrate on increasing traffic. Most of these programs are free or involve very low initial start up costs. You're paid according to how well you do regardless of how the company is performing.

If you have dreamed of working for yourself then affiliate marketing can be your dream come true. You can make money based on your hard work. You are the one rewarded for your efforts, not a boss or a group of shareholders. You don't have to worry about financial risk. The head company will take care of all the detail allowing you to use your skills to the best of your ability. If you're creative, hardworking and want to be your own boss, consider the world of affiliate marketing. Your skills and expertise could be increasing your bank balance, not someone else's.

Your Affiliate Marketing Guide

Affiliate marketing is something that many webmasters know how to do. They know what it is about, and what it takes to be successful. However, if you are new to the webmaster world, you may just be wondering how you can get into affiliate marketing and making an income on the side for yourself. Doing so is not that complicated, and we have created this guide to get you started.

First of all, let's cover just exactly what affiliate marketing is. Affiliate marketing is when you sell or get leads for someone else's service or product. You are going to find that there are so many people that do this. When a company needs some help making sales, and they allow people to sign up as affiliates, they are willing to pay a commission or a flat rate per lead or sale. Depending on the company, this percentage or flat rate will vary.

Affiliate marketing can be used to make a decent income several ways. You can use a website, a blog, newsletter, email, ads etc. The list goes on and on. However, the most popular form of affiliate marketing is done with a website. When you choose the market that you want to promote, be sure that you choose one that you are somewhat familiar with. This way you can become an expert on the topic, and everyone will know that you are the king of that market. Once that is done, it is time for a URL. There are many places that you can get your own domain from. Once you have decided where you will purchase that from, choose a URL that has the topic you are selling in the URL for the best results. For example, if you are wanting to market cat food, you won't use a URL that has dog in it. Make sure that everything

is all relevant.

Now that you have your market and your URL chosen, you will want to determine the hosting that you will use for your website. You need dependable hosting for the best results. A hosting company that has more up time than down time is best because during the down time, your website will not be accessible. So, get some recommendations from others that have tried a few and use the best that you can find. It is worth it to pay for good hosting.

Once that is done, you are ready to get your affiliate links and website set up so that you can market the most effectively. Determine the amount of money that you want to make, and set up an outline of how you are going to make it. There are so many ways that you can get a website out there to be seen, and you will want to make the best decisions. So, finding out the best ways for you to do this is that is cost effective is a good start.

Learning SEO which is also known as search engine optimization is a great idea. Using SEO to get your site higher in the search engine rankings with keywords will pay off in the end. You can learn it yourself, or you can pay someone to do this part for you. It is up to you. However, you should know that learning and using SEO yourself is time consuming. Hiring an SEO guru might be better for you.

Write articles about the market that you are promoting from your website and submit them to all of the article directories. When you include a back link to the site that you are optimizing that will help you as well with the search engines.

Affiliate marketing is not anything that you can make money with over night. You need to be able to build up and keep adding to your website daily or weekly, and keep it going. You can do it, just don't give up.

Marketing: Find More Customers Fast

9 Easy Ways to Find More Customers Fast

Finding and attracting new customers is a tremendous challenge for every business and every salesperson. However, you can drum up all the business you can handle very quickly if you just follow and use these 9 simple techniques. It's not brain surgery and that's why they work! Don't wait. Take action now.

1.Email (opt in)

If you're not sending your own personal email newsletter you're missing a huge opportunity. I don't care if you're an employee of a Fortune 500 company or a self-employed consultant. You MUST develop you own email newsletter.

An eZine will allow you to build your relationship, credibility and trust with the people that subscribe. Provide them useful, unique and pertinent information and watch your sales

skyrocket.

2. Pay-per-Click (PPC)

Pay-per-click or PPC ads are a very effective and cost efficient way to drive prospects to your website. Whether it be a one-page sales letter or a “squeeze page” for them to sign up for your ezine, PPCs are an easy way for you to build awareness.

By using PPCs you can achieve laser like focus on your target market by using specific keywords. Then run ads for only those keywords. The benefit is when the prospect clicks on that ad they are not going to a general site with all kinds of garbage on it they are landing on your specific, targeted site. Niche marketing at its best.

3. Customer Referrals

This is old school. But if you're not asking every single person you come into contact with, “Do you know of someone who may benefit from my services/product/whatever?” Then you don't know what sales is all about. Sorry but you don't.

Sure, most of the time we won't get a referral. But all it takes is one to make it all worthwhile. Imagine if you made one more sale a month. What would that do to your income? Well, that's easy to attain no matter what industry you're in. If you just ask for referrals.

4. Ask Co-workers

Have you ever thought of asking a co-worker for a business referral? Most people don't. It's amazing. They think that since their co-worker works there they would have already talked to everyone they know about their company.

However, over 90% of non-sales employees have top quality prospects sitting in their brain. You just need to ask them for the information.

5. Ask friends, family and neighbors

Same here. Most people do not want to mix business with their personal life. Get over it! Your friends, family and neighbors have a keg of referrals. They're just waiting to be tapped.

6. Joint Ventures

Who do you know in your industry that is not a competitor but that calls on the same customers and/or companies as you? Great! Call them right now and ask them how you can build a mutually beneficial relationship together.

Remember, they're going to ask, “What's in it for me?” Be prepared with a deal they can't pass up.

7.Flyer Distribution

It doesn't matter if you sell to consumers or businesses. Design a compelling one-page flyer and hire a company or a high school kid to deliver them to your target area. This is a great way to get quality leads for very cheap. Try it. I promise you'll be surprised and impressed.

8.Postcards

This is one of my favorite, low cost ways to drive traffic to my websites. The key is to use a simple, targeted message on your postcard. No fancy graphics or fonts. Simplicity is key here.

You can increase your response rate by up to 200% by using the simplicity formula. The message should be in paragraph form and only 2-4 sentences. If you can personalize it that's even better.

9.Cold calling

Ah yes. Good old fashioned cold calling. You may not want to hear it or like doing it but you can't argue with results. When you do it right of course.

You need an effective plan, technique and outline to make it work best. No cheesy scripts with canned responses. You need to sound genuine, caring and be focused 100% on the prospect. If you can change your mindset into one that you are simply talking to a good friend you will experience tremendous results.

Marketing: Power Tips

20 Power Marketing Tips

Use this powerful yet simple checklist of 20 hard hitting marketing tips.

Use these powerful yet simple tips from the national best-seller, "Secrets of Power Marketing: Promote Brand You" – the first guide to personal marketing for non-marketers.

Create and grant an annual award.

Send hand written congratulations and thank you notes.

Send greeting cards for some occasion other than Christmas.

Send postcards when you travel and even when you are at home.

Give a good book to special clients. Always sign it with a positive message.

Build relationships with the media before you need them.

Associate with winners – attend awards functions.

Build and maintain a database of clients, prospects, and key influencers.

Earn certifications and win awards from your associations – and tell everyone.

Ask happy customers to write testimonial letters for you.

Recruit your suppliers as marketing agents. They work for free.

Join and be active in your chamber of commerce.

Write tips sheets for your customers.

Write and send articles to magazines and newspapers.

Send a news release to the media every three months.

Do something crazy and newsworthy at least once a year.

Send photocopies of your news coverage to your clients.

Build and maintain an informative and interesting web site.

Sponsor a cause, event, charity or community group.

Volunteer for your association, charity or community group.

Marketing: Health Care India

Consumer Directed Healthcare In India – A New trend

In post liberalization India the healthcare industry is waking up to the fact that the consumer has to be pursued and enticed into visiting healthcare facilities of a particular brand and to buy healthcare products of a particular brand.

Gone are the days when the maxim that ruled the healthcare industry was “Build it and they will come”, under the impression that that if people knew where services were located they would find their way to the clinics.

In post liberalization India the healthcare industry is waking up to the fact that the consumer has to be pursued and enticed into visiting healthcare facilities of a particular brand and to buy healthcare products of a particular brand. With the government permitting 100 per cent

foreign direct investment (FDI) in the health care industry, there is a deluge of private players in the Indian Healthcare market today. And this has dramatically changed the facade of healthcare marketing and communications in India.

Taking the case of hospitals, there is a wide variety of services (that are not just medical) on offer for the patient. From in-house multi cuisine restaurants, swimming pools, walking tracks, indoor games facilities, libraries and play areas to travel desks that arrange sightseeing tours and shopping for patients, you name it and they have it, all in a bid to woo more and more patients. Hospital promotions take on the form of Public Relations, VIP and visitor hospital tours and walk in exhibitions, loyalty and outreach programmes, support groups etc.

Similarly the pharmaceutical industry is going overboard in its attempts to appease the two routes that they have to reach out to the end consumers- doctors and pharmacists. For retailers it is boom time as they get free supplies of medicines, expensive gifts, holiday trips and also huge margins for promoting and selling particular brands at their outlets. With doctors the gifts, incentives and schemes are getting wilder by the day. The trend is to customize the gift to the doctor so that the pharmaceutical company actually meets a relevant need of the doctor rather than flooding him with things that he throws away or hands over to others. Taking examples of customized gifts it could be admission of a doctor's child to a reputed school or even the reimbursement of shopping bills. All in an attempt to get a better hold on this indirect consumer. For over the counter drugs there are advertisements in all shapes and sizes visible just anywhere. With sponsoring TV programmes to conducting mass consumer contact programmes to free sampling, pharmaceutical companies are trying innovative marketing ideas to get a share of the consumer's wallet.

One look at the statistics and the reason behind this intense competition gets clear. According to a Confederation of Indian Industry — McKinsey study on India's health industry, the country's spending on health care is expected to increase from Rs 86,000 crore at present to Rs 200,000 crore in the next decade. Health care's contribution to India's GDP will increase from the current 5.2 per cent to 8.5 per cent by 2012. The players in the healthcare industry fully realize that these predictions will come true with harnessing the burgeoning purchasing power of the Indian consumer.

Marketing: Business Card That Sells

Create A Business Card That Sells and is Effective

Why does your business need a business card?

Business card is a powerful piece of card handed out to your clients or given to you by someone which has all that information in such a small space. Business cards are an important part of any business and that gives a first impression of your business to anyone. So customize the card in such a way to make a good impression about it to others.

Create a business card that conveys a sense that you are by your name, name of the

business, description of your business and other contact information so that they remember you.

Design steps of a effective business card:- First of all you should be aware of what would you like to have on the business card to convey others about you. You want to focus on the identity of your business right. So you need your name, business logo, email ID, web & postal address and finally the telephone no on it.

Second step is the look of the card – Go around with the cards in your collection which was handed over to you by your friends, relative, clients even strangers and have a good idea which impress you the most. I don't say to clone it or borrow their idea but keep in mind which one stand out and which concept will suit you best.

The third and final step is the style – once you got an idea what you want. Work on the style of your business card for example if you are running a funeral home and having flashy picture on your card it won't convey a good impression. The basic example is to have a simple designed one with information about you and your business is clear and prominent.

Your business card should have the same color and design of what you have on your other marketing materials like, brochure, stationery website. Utilize the space of your card cleverly and display your information which is essential and not any unwanted information which send out a wrong message.

A business card can do more than to improve your business it can also serve as a reminder of an appointment also a direction to your work place. So the key to a successful business card design is sensible design and what you convey on the card.

Marketing: Niche In Niche

Finding Your Niche In Niche Marketing

You know, if you ever took a middle school earth science class, what a niche is. If you didn't well...a niche is an area where a person (whoever the niche is for) is able to survive and thrive. It has many different specific types but the fundamental idea is that is a place specially suited for a thing to not only make it but succeed in it. So niche marketing is finding a particular market where you are able to find success marketing your specific product. Some people have a product and find a market and some find a market and develop a product but the general idea remains the same.

So how do you find your niche in niche marketing? Well the answer is both straight forward and complex. First you need to find an area where the knowledge and/or skills that you possess make it possible to develop a product that is sought after. For example a person who has been raised on a farm in the middle of South Dakota will more likely find his niche in agriculture rather than fashion design. It also must be a place that you have energy for. You must want to get up and work hard on something in order to succeed at it and there is nothing

harder than working hard on something that you despise.

Another important concept in niche marketing that should be kept in mind is that it is helpful to find an area where you can be at the top of the competition. So burgeoning fields where you have the latest and greatest knowledge are natural areas to exploit. The laws of supply and demand in economics are very helpful for finding a profitable niche. That is to say that you need to find an area where the supply is low and the demand is high in order to get the best profit scenario. This is why professional sports players are able to make so much, if you have ever wondered. It's because there are only a few people in the world that are able to play that particular sport at that level (the supply is low) and people absolutely love sports (the demand is high).

The beauty of the internet is that it literally gives you instant exposure to every market that there is in the world. This allows you to take advantage of whatever your particular skill is (for example making surf boards), even if your geographical area would otherwise limit you (for example you live in Siberia).

Finding Your Niche In The Business World

Who am I and what do I love to do? Well, isn't this the twenty million dollar question! A more appropriate question might be "Who was I and what did I love to do?"

As you search to find yourself, and what it is you love to do, you may find the task harder than you thought it would be. Try to think about your childhood. Can you remember what thrilled you as a child? Like many people you've probably forgotten what brought you joy and excitement to your essence.

Children instinctively just "know" what they love. We quickly forget what makes us happy as we grow into adults. External influences eventually diminish the thought of actually "doing what we love to do."

When I was a child I vaguely remember wanting to be a stewardess, a mother of 8 (don't know why it had to be 8, sounds rather ambitious in today's world), and a musician. Well, didn't every little girl who grew up in my world want to be a stewardess? It seemed so. Or, could it have been a clue to what really was the essence of me? Maybe I longed to travel and this was what society offered at the time.

I did have a musical inclination. I seemed to learn to play clarinet fast, and was quite good for a beginner. Never got past the beginning, victim of circumstances, but that's another long story. I could pick a tune on the piano by ear and dreamed of being able to sit down and flawlessly play the most beautiful of compositions. But, that didn't happen.

The mom thing? Don't know where that came from. Maybe the caring side of me. Maybe just that period most little girls go through where they emulate their mother and "play house." Who knows?

But, I did grow up to be the mother of four. I quickly learned that 8 was really ambitious. Some days, I don't know how I survive the four. I'm far from super mom status, but I guess I don't do too bad.

I've found recently, through self searching and pondering, that the question of "who am I?" becomes increasingly difficult with age and life's interference. Yes, life interference can be very damaging to our happiness. Our experiences tend to mold us into the person we are today. By the way, that isn't necessarily who we were meant to be.

Have you ever longed to be able to do something you are passionate about and truly loved as a child. Maybe it's some form of art; painting, drawing, crafting, dancing, or singing. Maybe you enjoyed building things or, taking things apart and putting them back together. Or, were you the mathematical genius in the class? Did you love to play school and teach real or imaginary children?

Childhood is innocence. As children we accept our true essence without question and pursue it daily in our real and imaginary play. It is life and life's external influences that re-route us away from what we love to do. We are too quickly discouraged from the pursuit of happiness.

It is apparent in many happy, successful, adults that there is often a common denominator. Most extremely successful people really love doing what they do. They live their work. They strive to be better and better at it. They never dread going to work and are always thinking about new ways to improve. They simply love the work. They "live to work" not "work to live."

America's most famous billionaire, Malcolm Forbes, reflected this same belief, that you should do what you love to do to be successful, in several of his statements:

"Success follows doing what you want to do. There is no other way to be successful."

"When what we are is what we want to be, that's happiness."

"The biggest mistake people make in life is not trying to make a living at doing what they most enjoy."

These quotes from Malcolm Forbes pretty much sum up the importance of doing what you love to do.

Everyone should pursue what they love to do. Then work at doing what they love. You may say "It's too late." It's never too late to rediscover your childhood passions. It's certainly never too late to start getting some satisfaction and enjoyment out of life. If only for own pleasure, you should pursue what you love to do.

Whatever it is you feel you would love to do, go for it. Take an art, singing, dancing, literature, accounting, computer, home decorating, or mechanic class. Invest in yourself and your happiness. You may find that through pursuing what you love, you will find your best work.

Share your knowledge, passion, or talent with others. You will see yourself become confident and successful at what you love to do.

I found that my favorite thing to do is to simply be a housewife and mother. Maybe it's not "just being a mom." Rather, it's doing the things required to be a housewife and mom. It's not a glamorous career. But, it does require quite a few skills. Moms are usually very talented in more than a few areas; art, organization, accounting, negotiating, and decorating are just a few that come to mind.

My favorite task is saving money. A family of six makes saving money pretty much a requirement of my job but, I've found that I Love IT! I get great satisfaction in getting the most for my money, getting things for free, and managing a household on a very limited income. So, in order to expand on my happiness, I decided to share my knowledge with others. I actually have fun sharing my ideas and money saving tips. And, I enjoy researching and finding more money saving tips for myself and others.

Sometimes, it seems like I can't pull myself away from my work. That's because I love it so much. I love it, I am passionate about it, and I believe in it! Enthusiasm is contagious. If I can get others excited about saving money, then I am happy.

I don't like the way things are looking for family finances today. It's discouraging to see so many families in financial trouble. Maybe, I'll help change that! Maybe you can change something too!

Marketing: Free Publicity

Get Free Publicity: Tips From The Experts

How can you get your story picked up by the media? The best answers to that question come from the producers, editors and journalists who decide which stories get coverage. Here are some of the best tips I have gotten from these experts.

Be familiar with the show/publication. Your pitch should be about how your story will work for them. Don't do a general pitch ("A story about dog training.") but suggest the segment the story would be right for, or what makes it right for them.

Don't take "no" personally. It may be that they have just done a similar story, or they can't fit it in, or it just isn't right for them. If you speak with someone, ask if they can suggest another show or publication where the story might work.

If at first you don't succeed, pitch again. But wait at least a month or two, and come back with a different angle, not exactly the same idea that got turned down.

Many now prefer e-mail pitches to fax. It is fast to review, and can be easily forwarded to several others. Faxes often pile up unread, but e-mail gets read.

Keep your e-mail short and to the point. DO NOT send any attachments, as they will be deleted unopened (if they get through at all). You can include a link to your Web site or online media kit where more information is available.

When you e-mail, make your subject line enticing. Using "Hi!" or something else that looks like spam will get it deleted without being read. Start with QUERY: or PITCH: then give a short, punchy headline.

One national TV show producer said that you didn't need to send video with your initial (mail) pitch, another said if you mailed a pitch with no video you wouldn't be considered. In either case, you will need a video of other TV appearances before you get on a national show, so be on the safe side and send it.

Local media are always looking for local experts to interview on a variety of topics. Send them your bio and credentials and they will keep you on file for the next time they need an expert in your field.

Remember that the media do not exist to give you free publicity. They are there to inform, educate and entertain their readers, listeners and viewers. Help them do that, and you will have many publicity opportunities.

Marketing: Tips For A Successful Affiliate Marketing Business

Now that you have decided to take the plunge and set up a business for yourself, you need to insure that you do all of the right things. Affiliate marketing businesses do take the risk away but you still need to conduct this venture as you would any other business. If it is your sole source of income you'll want to give it your all and make it as successful as possible. In this article, we will look at ways to get your business going and make it successful. By following the advice in this article your affiliate marketing business will get off to a great start and stay that way.

The first golden rule of any business is to identify the demand. With affiliate marketing programs you'll likely be giving a range of products to sell. Check out the demand of these types of things. You should try to stay away from trendy items. They'll sell like mad one minute but you'll be giving them away the next. You want thing that you know people want and need. That way your long term sales objectives will get met.

Next is don't limit yourself to just one product. Try to offer a variety of things. Many affiliate marketing programs offer a selection and it is best to go with these. Basing your business on one product may work in the short term. However, someone will eventually come along with something better or cheaper.

Third, you need to set your business apart from others. You need to establish what makes you and what you offer better from others. What do you offer that sets you apart from other businesses? You should always use tact when talking about your competition. Putting them

down or being rude will only backfire on you. Talk up the advantages that you offer and leave it at that.

Forth, you should definitely insure your home business. Everything can be fine one day but life can always take a funny turn. Accidents can happen to anyone. Ask yourself what will happen if one of your products hurts someone. Today, people can be sued for just about anything. Make sure you are insured in case the worst happens.

Fifth, you should always do your best to ensure fast and efficient service to your clients. However, there will come a time when there is a glitch. You need to keep your customers informed and aware of what is happening. Things happen that are beyond your control. Most customers are very forgiving if they are made aware of this. Keeping your customers in the dark could result in losing them for good.

Finally, keep your customers happy. The happier they are the more likely they are to come back. Offer your customers incentives such as savings on their next purchase. It may cost you more but only in the short term. Keeping your customers happy will result in them referring you to others.

Affiliate marketing businesses are easier in the fact that they minimize risk. Everything else is like any other business. You need to work very hard to keep your customers happy. You need to set yourself apart from others and protect yourself against the worst. By following the advice in this article you will be giving your business the best possible chance for success.

Top 3 Ways To Boost Your Affiliate Commissions Overnight

The ideal world of affiliate marketing does not require having your own website, dealing with customers, refunds, product development and maintenance. This is one of the easiest ways of launching into an online business and earning more profits.

Assuming you are already into an affiliate program, what would be the next thing you would want to do? Double, or even triple, your commissions, right? How do you do that?

Here are some powerful tips on how to boost your affiliate program commissions overnight.

1. Know the best program and products to promote. Obviously, you would want to promote a program that will enable you to achieve the greatest profits in the shortest possible time.

There are several factors to consider in selecting such a program. Choose the ones that have a generous commission structure. Have products that fit in with your target audience. And that has a solid track record of paying their affiliate easily and on time. If you cannot seem to increase your investments, dump that program and keep looking for better ones.

There are thousands of affiliate programs online which gives you the reason to be picky. You may want to select the best to avoid losing your advertising dollars.

Write free reports or short ebooks to distribute from your site. There is a great possibility that you are competing with other affiliates that are promoting the same program. If you start writing short report related to the product you are promoting, you will be able to distinguish yourself from the other affiliates.

In the reports, provide some valuable information for free. If possible, add some recommendations about the products. With ebooks, you get credibility. Customers will see that in you and they will be enticed to try out what you are offering.

2. Collect and save the email addresses of those who download your free ebooks. It is a known fact that people do not make a purchase on the first solicitation. You may want to send out your message more than six times to make a sale.

This is the simple reason why you should collect the contact information of those who downloaded your reports and ebooks. You can make follow-ups on these contacts to remind them to make a purchase from you.

Get the contact information of a prospect before sending them to the vendors website. Keep in mind that you are providing free advertisement for the product owners. You get paid only when you make a sale. If you send prospects directly to the vendors, chances are they would be lost to you forever.

But when you get their names, you can always send other marketing messages to them to be able to earn an ongoing commission instead of a one-time sale only.

Publish an online newsletter or Ezine. It is always best to recommend a product to someone you know than to sell to a stranger. This is the purpose behind publishing your own newsletter. This also allows you to develop a relationship based on trust with your subscribers.

This strategy is a delicate balance between providing useful information with a sales pitch. If you continue to write informative editorials you will be able to build a sense of reciprocity in your readers that may lead them to support you by buying your products.

3. Ask for higher than normal commission from merchants. If you are already successful with a particular promotion, you should try and approach the merchant and negotiate a percentage commission for your sales.

If the merchant is smart, he or she will likely grant your request rather than lose a valuable asset in you. Keep in mind that you are a zero-risk investment to your merchant; so do not be shy about requesting for addition in your commissions. Just try to be reasonable about it.

Write strong pay Per Click ads. PPC search engine is the most effective means of advertising online. As an affiliate, you can make a small income just by managing PPC campaigns such as Google AdWords and Overture. Then you should try and monitor them to see which ads

are more effective and which ones to dispose of.

Try out these strategies and see the difference it can make to your commission checks in the shortest of time.

Marketing: List Building

Secrets Revealed: Triple Your Business With List Building

There are several things that you can do to really boost profits within your business but the real secret is collecting emails.

Several companies have already realized huge profit gains by simply adding one simple step to their business...collect your clients name and email address.

Doesn't sound very profitable until you realize what you can do with that information. No I am not talking about spamming, I am talking about sending emails to your client that they can't wait to receive.

One business that implemented this technique sells video games, hardware, ext. After walking up to the counter to pay for their merchandise the cashier simply asks for their information and includes the email address of the buyer. What better way to get someone back into your store than inviting them. So how do you send your clients an email without their getting angry and yelling spam?

Send them legitimate offers that make sense. If you just email your client to tell them to come back to your store then there is no real reason for that email. In fact the person who received it might think it to be junk mail. How about setting up your system to email a person 3 days after they purchase from you to let them know that when they come back, they have a 10% discount waiting for them. You let them know that all they need to do is bring in a special code that you give them or just let them know to mention the email.

There are several ways to profit from your list, especially if you run an online business. What you have read here is just the tip of the iceberg. What is written here is the very basics. The real aspects come with knowing how to multiply profits several times with other email techniques. Beware that when you start an email list you are going to run into several "road blocks".

One such road block is managing your email list with the right server. Certain domain names get email delivered to your prospects much better than others. This is due to spam blocking by many of the major email companies. Another road block is timing your emails to go out at the right time. Send your email at the wrong time of day, or even the wrong day, and you may not get any responses. Another big problem is managing spam complaints. So what can you do to ensure that you do things right the first time?

There is a new website that is being released that does reveal many of these major marketing

techniques. Many of the secrets revealed have more than doubled profits for several businesses...online and offline. If you are interested in finding out more about the website you will need to see the resource box of this article.

Marketing: Picky When Choosing Affiliate Programs

Dear New Affiliate, Be Picky When Choosing Affiliate Programs

Question: How do you choose an affiliate program to promote? There are so many out there. Which ones are good?

Dear New Affiliate,

There are several ways to determine whether an affiliate program is worthy. Oftentimes it looks like the Affiliate Manager has all the power, but this is a partnership. There really are thousands of programs available. Don't sign up and promote just any of them. If you aren't completely thrilled about the program, look 5 more minutes and you'll find something better.

Here are some questions to ask yourself whenever you find an affiliate program you're interested in.

Are the products something you believe in?

The products better be good. If you're not 100% sold on the products to the point that you'd tell your best friend to buy them – then you've got no business signing up for that affiliate program. Keep looking for something better.

Is their website professional?

Your reputation is on the line every time you promote a product or service. If you're sending your traffic to a website that is on free hosting or just looks unprofessional, then you're going to lose the confidence of your subscribers. Now, many sales letters aren't 'pretty' but they are grammatically correct, and everything is functional, with pictures and testimonials. So, although the website doesn't have to be beautiful, it does need to look 'live'.

Is their website easy to navigate?

If shoppers can't figure out how to purchase, then there's no point in sending your traffic there.

What are the numbers?

If you have two programs you like equally well, you can choose between them or write reviews for each and compare and contrast their benefits. Or, if that doesn't fit into your site, then test both to see which gives you the best results.

Free trial?

Any product that offers samples or service that offers a free trial deserves a look. If you can offer your website visitors a sample of any sort to get them hooked, you'll have much higher results than trying to convince them that the product is good.

Are there any tools to help you?

The best affiliate programs go above and beyond in their tools and resources section. Not only do they provide the standard text links and buttons and banners, but you also have solo mailings, articles, and even product feeds. These are the affiliate programs that 'get it'.

Once you find an affiliate program that you love, it's still smart to continue to test the results. Just because you think it's great doesn't mean you visitors will. Continually look at the statistics to see how much traffic you're sending and if any of it is converting. If you're not getting results and you're sending a lot of traffic, then you might want to look at a new program.

Marketing: Advertising Do & Don't

Do's and don'ts of advertising

Such a lot of people think that advertising and marketing are the same thing, but they aren't at all.

Advertising can turn out to be the fastest way to waste money on your marketing.

There are ways to get the best out of your advertising and today I'm going to share the best of these secrets with you.

To start I need to tell you that advertising is not the best way to effectively market your business, there are many better ways to market. Advertising may be the most popular method, but far too many people stop there. Since advertising is often the most expensive marketing option it's not surprising that many businesses get bogged down over marketing. Wouldn't it be great if there were other, more cost effective ways to market your business?

Well there are, like Direct Mail, Internet, Telephone, Email (with permission), etc, and I'll get to them later, for now, if you are advertising already, here are some important do's and don'ts.

First make a decision to stop any current advertising that isn't working for you. I have to say that first because, although it may seem obvious, many businesses keep on advertising in the same places year after year, whether they know its working for them or not!

Next work out a way to measure whether your advertising is working for you. Far too many businesses use up their advertising budget every year, without testing to see what is working

for them. This doesn't make sense! If an advert is working then fine, you want to keep running it and maybe even expand that particular advert further and spend more on it, but if an advert isn't working you need to stop running it now, and instead allocate the money you would have used on it to other marketing methods, which have a much higher chance of success.

Then you should choose adverts that are designed to bring in a response. That is 'direct response advertising'. There is a lot of talk in marketing circles about 'brand' advertising, but unless your company is a household name, brand advertising will have very little chance of working for you. Those large companies which use this method have spent thousands if not millions establishing their brand. If you are a small business then brand advertising will be a waste of your money.

This means that the purpose of your adverts should be to obtain a response. The bonus of this is that response advertising is easier to measure to see if its working for you.

So how do you put together a direct response advert?

Here is the proven formula for success: –

The most important part of the whole advert is the headline. If you don't have an actual headline then it's the first few words of the advert itself. It **MUST** capture the reader's attention.

Tip if you have been using the name of your company here, stop, you should use this important space to lead with an exciting statement about your product or service.

The main body of your advert should speak to the reader personally and tell them about the benefits they will get from your product or service.

Don't forget to include a call to action. This is where you tell the reader what they should do to follow through and get in touch with you or place an order etc. When you book an advert you should insist that it is placed on the right hand page, which is where people's eyes are drawn first, so statistically more people will actually see, and have a chance to read and respond to, your advert.

Don't book a long advertising run, or a large advert, until you have tested the advert first, and then only re-book if its working for you.

So, don't waste your money on ineffective advertising, you could get much better results for less money using a mixture of other marketing methods. And meanwhile, only use adverts that have proved profitable for you.

Do's And Don'ts Of Emailing Press Releases From A Media Veteran

I'm a big believer in EMAILING press releases. Not only is email dirt cheap, email can often

get you in front of editors a lot faster than regular mail or fax.

Here's why. Media outlets like radio stations, TV stations, and newspapers get a TON of press releases. During my 20 years working in radio and TV, we got bag loads of mailed press releases every day.

Probably 90 percent of them came from politicians and local college athletic programs. Their publicity people are told to send out a release several times a week—whether they have any real news to tell or not. Consequently, media get a release every time a congress person helps someone or an athletic field house gets a new folding chair.

Are these mailed press releases ignored? You bet they are. Most go straight from the mail bag to the trash. Who has time to open 150 envelopes when most of them are pushing some story you will never be able to use? I know I'll get some notes from a media workers who will say "WE don't do it that way at our place." And you can be sure a few news rooms are very organized about opening, reading, filing, and using releases.

Faxed releases work better, but not that much better given the expense. I worked at one station where the manager got tired of the fax machine burning up cartridges printing releases. Faxed releases were routed to the receptionist's computer where she deleted them.

At another media outlet, faxes, ads, and all the other things that get faxed spilled out on the floor. Some were read, others were used for scratch paper, and most were trampled on until somebody bundled them into the trash.

But wait a minute! If nobody is reading press releases, why do studies claim that 75% of the stories you read in newspapers originate from press releases?

The answer lies in email. Email makes it easy to receive a release, forward it to the staff person who covers that particular topic, then store the release in an email "futures" file where it can be pulled up as needed.

It's incredibly easy for newspaper people to import the email release into their writing program, change the headline, tweak a few things, and run it as a story. Editors don't like to admit they do this, but we've seen big city newspapers run our releases as articles with very few changes.

You can't blame journalists for doing this. Media outlets have cut staffs over and over again during the past 15 years. One person now does the work of three staffers.

Here are some tips for making your emailed release the starting point for a media report:

1. Start your subject line with RELEASE. Then follow with the most newsworthy/titillating part of your story.

2. Make your headline the first thing in the body of your email. I like to use two headlines, the second adding more information the first didn't have room to mention. The media person should be able to tell what your release is about just by reading the headlines.

3. Include your contact information after the body of the release. This is becoming the standard way to do things on the Net. Journalists are now used to looking at the bottom for contact info.

4. Keep your release under 400 words. Make sure you have good information the media audience wants, otherwise you don't stand a chance of getting coverage.

5. Take time to send your release to your local media. They are more likely to use your story than out-of-town media. You can find their email addresses by searching for their sites on search engines.

6. Send your release to trade publications covering your field. Even small developments can be of big interest to others in your line of work. One photographer client sent her release to photographic magazines and got coverage in almost every one.

Marketing: How To Waste Advertising Money

5 Proven Ways to Waste Advertising Money

It's difficult to reach your business goals if you don't have the right materials and/or the information to help your business reach the success it's capable of. These five helpful suggestions will boost your business to new levels.

1. Yo Yo Advertising

My friend Dottie can precisely predict her sales peaks and plummets accurately...and no, she's not into fortune telling. Experience has proven that March, April, and May will bring a lot of money to her account, while September and January will put her in the slumps

Sound familiar? Have you too been caught in the vicious cycle of high and low sales volumes? Why? Most of us tend to advertise heavily while things are slow – in a desperate attempt to get customers through the door, but back off when things are hopping.

If you're looking for an even-keeled market, develop a steady marketing plan. Steady advertising produces steady growth...and steadily climbing profits!

2. Single Shot Advertising

One shot ads, rarely get results. Most customers are just like you, they don't jump on the band wagon the first time it passes by. They often need to see your sales material several times before they actually make the move to walk through the doors.

Follow-ups are necessary for success. We're not just talking about prospective customers now...even your loyal customers need to be cultivated for sales. How many times have you thought about making a purchase, but just never followed through with it? Sure, we all do it. Sometimes it takes a little pressure to get us to part with our hard-earned money. Make it a point to spend time building relationships with both new customers and your faithful following.

3. MonkeySee, Monkey Do Advertising

How many times have you seen the same advertisement ideas written with just a little different twist? If you're surfing the Web you've come across plenty of the aped ads! Yeah, you can predict what the next paragraph will cover, because you've seen it so many other places.

Sure, copy cat ads can be effective for a little while, but the results will quickly die down as others join in the copy mania. If you're looking for REAL and LASTING results, be original. Do what only you can do, forget about what everyone else is doing. Be you. When a competitor does have a good idea, improve on it. Don't follow in his footsteps...step out and lead the way to more effective advertisements.

4. Wild Shot Advertising

Ready, aim...yeah aim before you advertise! Don't be caught up in wild advertising that gets your message in front of a lot of people who have absolutely no interest in your product or service.

Target your market...and get better results for your investment. Finding the target market that has a specific need you can fulfill takes a little time and research, but you'll feel the effects when you hit the bulls-eye!

Think about this...there are advertising venues that your competition is overlooking. What about postcards? These high impact marketing tools are often overlooked. Yet, they're the perfect low-cost way to generate prospective customer interest. Keep an eye open for overlooked marketing gems, and get one up on your competition!

5. Me, Me Advertising

What is it that consumers are looking for? ...Exactly, something that is going to benefit them. They really aren't interested in the facts about your product...they want to know how it will impact their life or lifestyle.

Take a look at your ad copy, and ask yourself what are you portraying...facts or benefits. Multi Level Marketers have this all figured out. Rather than tell you they have a business to offer, they spend a lot of time promising you freedom to work your own hours, countless vacations, summer homes and a host of other things you've probably already dreamed about at some

point. Hey, don't knock it...the MLM industry is a steadily growing element in our economy.

Don't bore your readers with the facts...attract them with exciting elements that will fulfill their needs or desires.

Are you getting the results you've been looking for? Take another look at your marketing strategy...are you making the same mistakes many marketers unknowingly make. Hey, real success may only be one change away!

Marketing: Advice & Pitfalls For Affiliates

Today, many of us are growing increasingly tired of the workplace and the daily grind. We are continually overworked and undervalued. Working a traditional job offers very little incentive to produce more. The vast majority of us are paid a wage with very little movement for increases.

Increasing numbers of us want to work for ourselves but this requires money and a great deal of risk. Starting your own business is a risky venture and it may be years before any significant profit is seen. Most of us can't wait that long as our financial obligations need to be met immediately.

To bridge this gap, some are turning to the field of affiliate marketing. Affiliate marketing allows you to work for yourself. Instead of creating your own business, you're working to expand an already existing one. This keeps the risk factor and investment low so you can concentrate on how to make profits.

Many think it sounds easy. Certain aspects of affiliate marketing make it very attractive but it isn't easy at all. There are steps and loads of advice you should follow before plunging head first into an affiliate marketing scheme.

The first thing you should do before committing to an affiliate marketing scheme is to evaluate your skills and expertise. How motivated are you? How many hours are you willing to put in? What business skills do you already have and what skills do you need? Even though the risk is minimal, you want to make the most of the venture. You will need some business and sales skills. If you have none then you need to learn. There are very few products that sell themselves. If they did the company wouldn't need you to do it for them. Your profit will be based on your performance. If you can't perform then your venture will struggle.

The next thing you should consider is a product themselves. You should find something that you know something about. That way you sound much more sincere when you are marketing them. However, you also need to look into how salable they are. You may have loads of knowledge about a particular area but if it isn't something that sells it will be useless. Find out from the company how well these items sell. How much of a return you can reasonably expect. Don't let them dazzle you with the sky is the limit speech, or one of our salesmen hit the million dollar mark. You need to know what you are likely to achieve.

Finally, you need to have realistic expectations. One of the reasons that many work at home ventures fail is that people want instant results. Running a business of any type takes time and hard work. With affiliate marketing you will get out only what you put in. With patience and hard work it will be lucrative. Learn what is realistic and shoot for that. If you make more then great.

Affiliate marketing is a fantastic way to start in your own business. If you're self motivated and independent then this field could be an excellent choice. Before you jump in, research the company. Look up the saleability of the products and ask for reasonable projections. Base your goals on these and build from there. With patience and hard work you will make a success of affiliate marketing.

Pitfalls To Avoid When Starting Your Affiliate Marketing Business

Well, you have left that awful job and now are working for yourself. You have jumped on board your new venture which is affiliate marketing. You're incredibly excited and are working all the hours God sends to make this venture a success. You check up and monitor your site and you see that sales are going quite well. Many of the strategies and things that you put in place have helped your affiliate company sell quite a bit. The end of the month finally arrives and you're waiting for that first large payment. When you check your account you are slightly disappointed. You did make some money but according to your calculations you should have had more. You check your sales figures again and decide to contact the company. They inform you that some of the items sold were returned so those had to be deducted from your commission.

This is disappointing but it does happen. Companies do not pay out commission on returned goods. You need to be aware of this to avoid falling into further pitfalls. No one would expect to be paid a commission on a returned item however; some less than honest affiliate marketing companies can use this to scam some of your profits. You need to make sure you understand their return policy and how it will affect the amount that you are paid.

A return occurs of course when a customer brings an item back. Charge backs can also happen when they dispute an amount on a credit card. Be sure you keep a close watch on which items are being chargeback or returned. See if there are any patterns that are obvious. If you notice that the orders that are charged back are always very high ticket orders then they could be giving you false information. They are doing this to keep your commission down and keep some for themselves. Keep a close eye on returns especially if you think it is happening a little too often.

Charge backs are also indicative of another more serious problem. If you notice that many of these charge backs are happening during an initial trial period, or the money back guarantee time, then there could be further problems. This is a sign that the product or service that you are promoting isn't up to customer satisfaction. It could be misleading or just poor quality. However, it will affect your commission and your future as an affiliate marketer. If this seems

like it is happening a little too often then again, there are problems somewhere in the company. Look to get out and make alternative arrangements.

You also need to be aware of which items are actually commissionable. Make sure you understand which products you will be earning money from to avoid disappointment later. Sometimes the company will offer a selection of products to put on your site, however only certain items may be commissionable. Before agreeing to anything like this check your terms and conditions carefully.

Finally, you also need to make sure that items that are sold don't have any other conditions attached. Some will only pay a commission if the customer fills in the payment details immediately. If they select an item and continue to shop, you may not receive any commission on that item. You can also lose commission if the customer clicks on any other links before completing the order. If they order 30 of an item you are promoting but click on something else then you have lost out on quite a large amount of commission.

Affiliate marketing is a great way to earn money. However, before jumping in head first you need to read your terms and conditions carefully. It may be worth having an attorney look them over for you. You need to be aware of the many pitfalls people fall into when they go into affiliate marketing. Read and understand your terms to avoid disappointment later.

Here's How To Avoid The 3 Most Common Affiliate Mistakes

Affiliate marketing is one of the most effective and powerful ways of earning some money online. This program gives everybody a chance to make a profit through the Internet. Since these affiliate marketing programs are easy to join, implement and pay a commission on a regular basis, more and more people are now willing to join this business.

However, like all businesses, there are lots of pitfalls in the affiliate marketing business. Committing some of the most common mistakes will cost the marketers a large portion taken from the profit they are making everyday. That is why it is better to avoid them than be regretful in the end.

Mistake number 1: Choosing the wrong affiliate.

Many people want to earn from affiliate marketing as fast as possible. In their rush to be part of one, they tend to choose a bandwagon product. This is the kind of products that the program thinks is hot. They choose the product that is in demand without actually considering if the product appeals to them. This is not a very wise move obviously.

Instead of jumping on the bandwagon, try to choose a product in which you are truly interested in. For any endeavor to succeed, you should take some time to plan and figure out your actions.

Pick a product that appeals to you. Then do some research about that product to see if they

are in demand. Promoting a product you are more passionate about is easier than promoting one for the sake of the earnings only.

Mistake number 2: Joining too many affiliate programs.

Since affiliate programs are very easy to join, you might be tempted to join multiples of affiliate programs to try and maximize the earnings you will be getting. Besides you may think that there is nothing wrong and nothing to lose by being part of many affiliate programs.

True, that is a great way to have multiple sources of income. However, joining multiple programs and attempting to promote them all at the same time will prevent you from concentrating on each one of them.

The result? The maximum potential of your affiliate program is not realized and the income generated will not exactly be as huge as you were thinking initially it would. The best way to get excellent result is by joining just one program that pays a 40% commission at least. Then give it your best effort by promoting your products enthusiastically. As soon as you see that it is already making a reasonable profit, then maybe you can now join another affiliate program.

The technique is to do it slowly but surely. There is really no need to rush into things, especially with affiliate marketing. With the way things are going, the future is looking real bright and it seems affiliate marketing will be staying for a long time too.

Mistake number 3: Not buying the product or using the service.

As an affiliate, your main purpose is to effectively and convincingly promote a product or service and to find customers. For you to achieve this purpose, you must be able to relay to the customers that certain product and service. It is therefore difficult for you to do this when you yourself have not tried these things out. Thus, you will fail to promote and recommend them convincingly. You will also fail to create a desire in your customers to avail any of what you are offering.

Try the product or service personally first before you sign up as an affiliate to see if it is really delivering what it promises. If you have done so, then you are one of the credible and living testaments aware of its advantages and disadvantages. Your customers will then feel the sincerity and truthfulness in you and this will trigger them to try them out for themselves.

Many affiliate marketers make these mistakes and are paying dearly for their actions. To not fall into the same situation they have been in, try to do everything to avoid making the same mistakes.

Time is the key. Take the time to analyze your marketing strategy and check if you are in the right track. If done properly, you will be able to maximize your affiliate marketing program and earn higher profits.

Marketing: Mainstream Logos

In this article I am not talking about esoteric logos, but only about the more superficial modern logos used for apps, brands and trademarks.

The logo must be suggestive, but not too open to interpretation. The message that it transmits must be ambiguous enough but without leaving room to wrong interpretations.

In order to discuss the general function of the logo, we must firstly identify and define the environment where this will have to fulfill its function. The environment is called brand and the definition is as follows: the brand is a collection of ideas and images, a collection that constitutes an undivided whole meant to transmit and sustain the values of a company, a product or a service. As you have noticed, this definition has brought into discussion two defining elements: idea and image. I'd like to emphasize that it is important to follow this order: ideas come first and images are born out of ideas to visually represent them. Once we have known the environment and its definition, we can discuss about the functions that the logo must fulfill.

The first function: the logo defines and incorporates values.

The logo must be designed according to the values which we want it to transmit. As the visual impact can mean much more than a description and the logo will [probably] be the most important visual element, it is recommended that it is given its due importance.

The second function of the logo is to communicate values.

The logo does the communication between the company and the consumer and, besides the product itself, it is the first element that presents the service provider.

The third function of the logo is to represent values.

The logo represents a company, an association or another [mainly] legal entity.

Let's recapitulate – we have identified three major functions of the logo:

- it defines values
- it communicates values
- it represents values

The functions of the logo never change; they only exist. In order to efficiently explore them, the logo must be relevant. In the case of a company, it must be relevant both for the institution, the product or the service provider and for the market. In the case of a non-profit institution, the logo must be relevant for the institution and for the socio-cultural environment.

The conclusion: the logo must be suggestive, but not too open to interpretation. The message that it transmits must be ambiguous enough but without leaving room to wrong interpretations.

The functions of the logo can be neither negotiated, nor influenced. They begin to work along with the social exposure of the logo. All we can do is to establish relevant values and constantly sustain them.

Marketing: Effective Internet Marketing

Perhaps that's one of the primary reasons why franchises are so popular. They present a very detailed plan for just about every aspect of running a business. But we are talking about internet marketing, not a traditional bricks and mortar business. So, what you really need for effective internet marketing is a business plan.

Let's be blunt, creating a business plan is going to take time and effort. Without one, however, you will be wandering aimlessly through your business and bringing in money in a way that's too hit or miss. You may do okay without one, but you won't see your full profit potential unless you have a business plan in place. Think of it as the difference between having a hobby and having a real business that makes you money. If you want it to be a hobby, then that's up to you; maybe you don't really need a plan.

Your plan is a sort of road map to help you define and reach your goals. A good way to start your business plan is to think of where you want to end up, then start working backwards from there. What steps will you have to take? How much will you make? How will you make it? How much will you invest? What marketing methods will you use to promote your online business? Answering questions like these will help you make a good plan.

The questions you ask are important. Try to think of as many aspects of your business as you can. And when answering, be as detailed and specific as you can. In fact, if you find you are giving vague answers, take that as a sign that you need to give your business plan for effective internet marketing more thought.

Once you have asked and answered the necessary questions, it's time to start organizing your plan. Try to arrange things in a logical way so they make more sense. Be as linear as possible. You should also divide your plan into short, medium and long term goals. This will help you to stay on track as your business grows.

You should be ready to make revisions to your plan as needed, but don't make those changes lightly. However, your business is going to grow, and you won't be able to predict how things turn out with 100% accuracy. So you need to be able alter your plan if the situation warrants it. Remember, your business plan isn't written in stone and is there to work for you, not against you.

As you can see, one of the keys to effective internet marketing is to have a business plan. IT could be argued that if you don't have such a plan, then you don't really have a business. If you are just doing this for a hobby, that's fine, but if you want to make money like a real business, then you need to treat it like one.

Succeeding With A Home Business Computer Opportunity

The home business computer opportunity is becoming more and more prominent throughout the world. Being able to incorporate online marketing as a way to earn more income, or even substitute your current income, is not only possible, but becoming more and more of a reality for many individuals.

The type of life is appealing. No more waking up early in the morning and fighting traffic to get to work where you make an hourly wage or monthly set salary. A great deal of past-employees have now realized that they can control their time and income more effectively by working for themselves from home. And there are thousands, if not millions, who dream of working from home.

Unfortunately, everyone cannot be successful in a home business computer opportunity. And do not believe for a minute that running your own business from home is easy. It still takes commitment, dedication, hard work and time. But the good news is that you can get so much help (and much of it for free) on the internet itself. If you are serious about being able to make money from the comfort of your own home, then you will be able to do it. It's just a matter of when.

The best home business help programs have a well-documented training and support system as well as a network of passionate marketers for support who sincerely want others to succeed. If you are just starting out, you also need some personal one-on-one help and attention. Your mentor will most likely be someone who has already made all the mistakes and suffered the consequences in order to be able to tell you what to avoid. With an experienced coach or mentor, you have a much bigger chance of success. Many people start a home business without having any real purpose or goal in mind. You need goals, strategies and plans. And a proven system will help you to create your plans and stick to them.

You will put in a lot of time and effort in the beginning. But, if everything works as it should, you will end up with a business that runs almost on its own, with little input from you as the owner. Again, a support system can really help you to get to this point.

Keep in mind that the world we currently live in offers incredible opportunities for individuals—opportunities that were non-existent up until not too long ago. There are infinite ways to make money from home. You may even develop a completely new way to do it. If so, others will surely want to join your bandwagon!

There are so many ways to profit from a home business computer opportunity today. Modern technology has insured that. If you have a positive don't-give-up-mindset, take the time to build your skills and have the possibility to work alongside a proven mentor, you are well on your way.

Marketing: Infopreneuring

4 Methods To Master The #1 Success Secret Of Infopreneuring (1 of 3)

CONTENT IS KING! In the world of Online Marketing, you know that without content, you have nothing. So, are you constantly developing new content? In this article I discuss Methods 1 and 2 of the 4 main strategies for developing fresh new content that will keep your customers coming back to you again and again!

If you don't have good fresh content to use for new products, your momentum comes to a crashing halt and so does your business.

So the question begs itself, how do you consistently create new content?

Here are your four basic options:

- 1) You can continually write your own materials...and you should.
- 2) You can record your thoughts and get them transcribed... and you should.
- 3) You can hire a ghostwriter to write materials for you... and you should.

or

- 4) You can purchase the rights to content that you can resell... and you should do this as well.

Each option has its own positives and negatives but in my opinion you should be doing a little bit of each.

Let me explain...

- 1) You can continually write your own materials

Writing your own original content is important because you don't want to become dependent on other people's thoughts. You want to train yourself to consistently think original thoughts and then capture them. People want fresh thinking. They don't want the same old, same old.

Setting aside regular periods to work on original content is a GREAT habit to form because over a period of time you'll have the necessary ingredients to continually crank out new products for your market.

Just recently I started gathering all of the content that we have developed over the years. We had a MASSIVE advantage when it came to creating new products because he has been diligently working on creating new materials each and every year.

When you have raw content you can always create new things from it. Being disciplined to plan out time and record your thoughts is a FANTASTIC habit to master and can instantly

serve you today and well into the future.

2) You can record your thoughts and get them transcribed

This falls under the same category of capturing your own original thoughts but it has one major advantage... it's a lot easier to do.

Most people forget that the transcripts are a valuable resource in product development. Your audience will have all kinds of different learning preferences. By providing the transcripts you are actually doing your clients a great service and as a result the transcripts instantly increase the value of your package.

If you enjoyed this article make sure to look up the other two articles in the series coming soon dealing with the other 3 methods of creating content: Part 2 – Hiring a ghostwriter and Part 3 – Purchasing The Rights Of Content You Can Resell!

4 Methods To Master The #1 Success Secret Of Infopreneuring (2 of 3)

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Let me explain...

3) You can hire a ghostwriter to write materials for you

Hiring a ghost writer has some major advantages and disadvantages. First and foremost it takes a HUGE burden off your shoulders to create original content. Secondly it frees up a lot of your time. Third, it feels great when you get an email from your ghostwriter and the ebook/book/manual/article(s) are all complete and ready to go – it truly is the magic pill.

There are some downsides however. The first one is the cost.

Depending on your project, it can cost anywhere between \$400-\$3,000 to get an ebook, book or manual created.

This is relatively cheap when you think about the fact that you can now sell that content and profit from it as long as you sell it, but it still costs quite a bit.

The second major downside is the time it takes to communicate with the ghostwriter. If you are anything like me, you don't want to be sending out crappy information. So that means YOU DO have to involve yourself in the process.

Forget what all the "gurus" try to tell you about how easy it is to just hire a ghostwriter and wake up with a finished product.

You tell me if this process is as easy as slapping down a check and receiving a perfect book a few days later:

First you send your initial thoughts and plans for what you want. Then they send back their outline, you make adjustments to the outline, and a few days later they send back the proof for the outline.

Once the outline is completed you give the go-ahead and they write the rough draft. Obviously this takes some time (usually between 1 week and 2 months depending on your project) but once they have completed the rough draft its up to you to read the rough draft and suggest any changes.

You'll want to go over the rough draft with a fine tooth comb to prevent the writer from going in a direction you didn't want. This isn't any small task but its well worth the effort because you are ensuring that the product you are creating is of a high standard.

When you finish the edit of the rough draft the ghostwriter makes the adjustments and then sends you a final draft. You read the final draft and give the final OK.

Phew!! That's a lot more than just placing a bid on eLance and having a book show up on your doorstep ready to sell.

Now, if you care about the quality of the products you create please pay close attention to this next sentence.

You need to actually READ what the ghostwriter has created for you.

It will almost always require you to make some final changes. Make sure you get EXACTLY what you are looking for otherwise it's a product that you yourself haven't even completely read.

Would that make you comfortable selling something with your name on it and you don't know everything contained inside?

I can't tell you how many products I have purchased only to find it was the same old stuff just rehashed. Read what they write for you. Create quality content!!

So although a ghostwriter does save you a TREMENDOUS amount of time, please don't be fooled into thinking that once you hand over the assignment your work is done. It's not... unless you want to create a crappy product.

It still takes work but it's A LOT easier and takes WAY less time once you have the raw materials to work with. Your job is to polish that collection of raw ideas into the high quality product that would make even your Mom proud :)

If you enjoyed this article make sure to look up the other two articles in the series dealing with the other 3 methods of creating content: Part 1 – Writing your own materials and Recording Your Thoughts and coming soon, Part 3 – Purchasing The Rights Of Content You Can Resell!!

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Let me explain...

4) You can purchase the rights to content that you can resell

Purchasing the rights to content that has already been created can be a double edged sword, but, if you do it right, it can be VERY profitable for a number of reasons.

First and foremost you want to review the “legal mumble jumble” to the materials that you have purchased. There are different “rights” and you need to be aware of the differences. I’ll give you a quick break down of the basic ones that I commonly come across for these types of products.

A. Recording Rights: These usually grant you the rights to record the written material in your voice and sell the audio for whatever price you want. They do not give you the right to reprint the materials or transcribe your audio (yes that is the same thing!!) and resell that.

B. Reprint Rights: Reprint rights give you permission to resell the written content. You can’t modify the content at all but you can resell it. Sometimes there are clauses that do not permit you to resell the product beyond a certain price point. Make sure you read all the details carefully

C. Master Resell Rights: With master reprint rights you basically have permission to sell the content AND you have the right to sell the reprint rights. However, you do not have permission to change the content at all. Once again make sure you read all the conditions yourself because every contract can be different.

D. Private Label Reprint Rights: These are basically the grand daddy of them all. These rights allow you to change the content, rebrand them with your own logos, name, graphics, and turn around and resell the finished product. The only thing you don’t have permission to do is resell the private label reprint rights.

So that’s a basic breakdown of the major categories of what you would get if you purchased the rights to any content. I do want to emphasize that I am not a lawyer and every agreement is unique and different. Therefore you need to read over all the legal stuff before you agree to purchase anything and then start reselling it.

So what are the advantages of doing this?

Well you can get access to good quality content that you can sell right away. Obviously if you purchase any of the rights we just talked about you will want to read the content and make

sure that it is a good quality product. You don't want to be reselling crappy products.

Another advantage to this approach, specifically the private label resell rights, is you can use the content for a variety of different purposes. This is where the creative imagination really comes into play.

Here are some examples of what you could use THE SAME content for:

- 1) Break up the written course into 5-10 different special reports
- 2) Rework the content into a mini-course
- 3) Chunk up the content up into a whole bunch of articles
- 4) Break the content up and plug it into an autoresponder series
- 5) Use the content for teaching material on a teleseminar
- 6) Use the ebook as a special bonus for an existing package that you have developed.
- 7) Break the content up into a "tips" series
- 8) Use the content for teaching material in a seminar
- 9) Record the written material into an audio product
- 10) Use the content for a monthly newsletter

These are just 10 quick tips for different ways that you can use this content once you have it.

Are there more? Absolutely!

There really are all kinds of possibilities once you learn what you can do. So purchasing these types of rights can be VERY beneficial in a variety of ways.

So how much do these types of rights normally cost?

Typically they are a one time cost ranging anywhere from 12-15 times the retail value all the way up to 40-60 times the retail value (that's normally for a master resell license). That means if the retail price of the product is \$200 an average reprint license would be between \$2,500-\$3,000.

For a master resell license of the same \$200 product the cost would be somewhere between \$8,000 – \$12,000.

Now that is a lot of money but remember you get to keep all the profits of any sales that you make from that point onwards. So if you sold this \$200 product at a seminar you could potentially make you money back very quickly.

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Marketing: News Feeds On Your Site

5 Steps To Profiting From News Feeds

Looking at News Feeds, you might think they're some of the most complex things to set up. Nothing could be further from the truth. They're actually super-easy to create once you have the system set up properly.

You can break down the news feed system into a fast, low-cost system that you can do once, or several times over.

First I'll answer a few of your questions about news feeds. Then I'll reveal the "secret" steps to setting up and profiting from a news feed.

Common Question #1: What is a news feed?

A news feed is an automatically updating list of the latest news on a particular subject. For instance, the news feed on my Web site is on the subject of small business marketing.

Common Question #2: Why do I need one?

Other than being a really cool thing to have on your Web site, News feeds are also really great traffic boosters. Not only do they make your Web site more attractive to the all-important Web crawlers that view what's on your site, but News feeds also inspire visitors to come back to your site for fresh news.

So the benefits are two-fold:

- new visitors, and
- return visitors.

Please keep in mind there are a few things you need to do to see benefits from news feeds.

1. Choose a subject of interest to your audience. I chose small business marketing news. For you, it could be the latest news on a tough problem gripping your industry. The great part about it is that you don't have to provide answers, just create a forum where your target market can access information about an issue.

2. Find your news feed. There are several services providing news feeds of various pieces of information. In my experience it's best to locate news aggregators based only on your industry.

3. Place the feed on your Web site. This is where I initially ran into problems, but a programmer friend passed on a rather affordable solution that I was able to easily place the news feed on your Web site. The great thing about it is, once you set up the feed, you never really have to touch it again.

4. Make your site profitable. Consider placing advertisements on the same page as your news feed. No doubt the regularly updating news will be a hit with your audience and as more people come to the site you'll be producing passive profits. (Say that five times fast!)

5. Drive traffic to your site. Over the years I've found the best way to drive traffic to a site is through article writing and distribution. It's like an instant shot in the arm for quality traffic.

And that's the "secret" formula to profiting from news feeds. Really, it's no secret. It's all about know which resources to use to make the news feed work for both you and your target audience.

Marketing: Referrals Win Again

Referrals are powerful in business, sometimes even a casual referral is all it takes to make a buying choice. A recent survey shows that most small business customers come from referrals.

I was out Christmas shopping with my wife last week. We were at Best Buy looking for video games for our teenage sons. My wife asked the clerk for his opinion on the best game for teenage boys. He ran through several. He did a good job, but none of the descriptions were compelling enough to make me want to pick one up. As he and my wife went on talking, a fellow shopper came up beside me and said, "Hey, if you want a good game for teenagers, get this one." I was immediately sold. I had never seen him before and probably will never see him again, but he had instant credibility because I knew he had no reason to give me his opinion other than that he really liked that game.

Referrals are powerful even if they come from a person you have never met before. Need more evidence? Anita Campbell of Small Business Trends has just released the results of her recent survey about selling to the small business market.

"The survey established that a whopping 83% of vendors attract small business customers through referrals — more than twice the number that report getting customers through cold calling, direct mail and other traditional techniques."

Business-to-consumer or business-to-business, there is no more powerful way to attract business than referrals. Don't leave it to chance. Give them some good reasons to talk about you and then put a megaphone in their hand. A system like PromoterZ(tm) (<http://promoterz.com>) helps you with both by getting feedback from your customers, asking them for referrals, and giving a way for them to refer their friends and colleagues.

Marketing: Branding Myths And Realities

Branding is easier said than done. Advertising gurus the world over are still mulling over what exactly defines branding. Why does one brand score over others and why does one fail to generate customer confidence despite everything going supposedly right for it?

Is it the logo?

Is it the color?

Is it the design of your ads, your brochures, the packaging of your products/services, the look of your corporate office, etc?

Or is it the promise that a particular product or service conveys – the promise of quality, authenticity and credibility?

Hmm.....actually it is a combination of all this. But primarily, it is the 4th point which matters most – the promise! Why is it that some products or companies are able to build up high brand recall and brand loyalty in the minds of their customers?

Whereas for some others, no amount of big budget advertising and marketing expenditure can help register their product as a brand people may keep coming back to?

Quality + Marketing = Winner

It really depends on two vital things – one, the quality of your product/service and two, the promotional and marketing mix you develop to reach out to your customers.

First and foremost, if you have a good quality product with great performance, coupled with warranties and the right kind of value for money, you have the arms required to win the war. That's step one.

Now for the ammunition, that is the promotional mix that will position it as a brand that assures reliability. It is not enough to have a slick-looking logo, a trendy color combination, a visually appealing packaging and some hip ads splashed all over the TV channels, newspapers and the internet to win over the customer.

You must first know, what exactly is required to build up brand equity for your product. As an internet guru explains, a brand is like the cherry on top of an ice-cream pie where it conveys the brand's promise. In fact, how you brand your corporate identity goes a long way in establishing your product/service in customer conscience.

While the ice-cream scoops stand for your products and services, the apples represent your corporate environment and crust in the pie is actually your systems and how effectively they work and respond to customers.

How does a brand convey its promise?

That's actually quite an interesting way to look at branding. This promise of the brand is conveyed through quite a few factors:

- the product's reputation (the company's own reputation also goes a long way here),
- its experience (particularly if the product has been in the market for some time – a perfect material for viral marketing),
- the product's name – a catchy, easy to remember name helps
- its logo – though innocuous looking, a logo is a stamp of authority
- its positioning in the market and accordingly its pricing
- news and reviews about it – the web 2.0 world is all about sharing notes, information and experiences through social networking sites and what is written about has become vitally important
- advertising – a good tag line or slogan can race into public memory
- marketing collateral – depends upon your product/service and what media suits it best such as flyers, sales letters, direct mailers, and so on)

Developing a promotional mix depends on the character or features of the product/service. For instance for some products/services may just need a direct marketing campaign and not TVCs or print ads at all, such as home-based businesses.

Or some such as debt management services may bank on a well done corporate video production to create a brand presence in business fairs.

Watch out for my next article in which I discuss the vital ingredients needed for preparing an effective media mix, particularly in the context of interactive advertising.

Marketing: Trade Show Setup

Trade Shows Q&A: Things To Consider When Exhibiting At A Trade Show

* Are trade shows really worth it?

Trade shows are worth it because they offer a great opportunity for many companies and make showcasing business services or products easier. You can show your products to a great number of people who go to trade shows to look for a particular product.

Trade shows usually have a theme. The market that theme attracts are all potential customers since they are laser targeted niches.

* Is it best to exhibit at new trade shows?

Generally, it is not advisable to exhibit at a new trade show. New trade shows are untested venues. Small businesses have limited time and money to experiment on unknowns. Just save your money for the regular, proven shows in your industry.

But if the new trade show is in a sure populated venue with good marketing strategies in a wide scope, then it is viable as well.

* How can I know which trade shows will give me the best ROI?

Usually in conducting a trade show, the main concern is the return of investment. You can determine which trade show will give you the best ROI by following these easy steps:

- Identify the theme of the trade show
- Analyze if it is related to your product or services.
- Prepare a typical visitor profile from the tentative participants profile and products.
- Analyze if your product or services profile matches the visitor profile by 80 percent, and then if it matches, participate in the show.

In business, it is natural to take risks. So before making one, make sure to study or analyze your steps before moving in to another because your time and money is at stake.

* Which tradeshow exhibits are best to use for companies on limited budgets?

Table top trade show displays are the best exhibit for companies on a limited budget. Most small companies use this type of trade show exhibit. They don't require expensive and elaborate booths. Table top displays are usually indoors and only need tables for each participant.

* What are some things I can do for trade show success on a small budget?

Do not worry if you have a small budget for your trade show. There are still plenty of ways to make your show successful even if your budget is small. Here are some ideas:

- Research shows that will give the most bang. Pick an offbeat show.
- Never exhibit at a new trade show.
- Invest in trade shows that will reach the key decision-makers of your target.
- Prepare a neat printout of "Comparative Matrix" in between your product/services and involving your competitors.
- Make your booth clutter free.
- Provide an audiovisual display of a working model for patrons to appreciate.

* What are some things I can do in advance to prepare for exhibiting at a tradeshow?

Preparation is very important in operating a trade show. Therefore, you need to do some important things in advance in order to avoid problems and make your exhibit a success. Here are some suggestions:

- Plan and make arrangements well in advance of show dates.
- Visit and walk through the facility and look for potential problems that would inhibit your success like food courts, competition and accessibility.
- Avail lead retrieval services if they are available from show management or contract agencies.

- Train your trade show team.
- Months prior to the show, spend time informing existing clients and your market of the upcoming show.
- Seek help or consult experts in trade shows in developing an appealing booth, staff scheduling, and market campaigning prior to the show kick-off.
- Sales staff should have more extra time and incentive to contact and follow-up show leads within weeks of exhibit.

Following these steps will give you fewer headaches and will lead to a successful trade show. Be sure not to rush things to avoid problems.

Introduction to Trade Show Booths

Trade Show Marketers: How To Make Attendees Willingly Rush to Your Booth

Trade show booths are a lot like cars. They all basically do the same thing: they take you from point A to point B. Some do it in sleek, chic manner, others with zip and zing, and still others do it more by just sort of lumbering along.

And when it comes to your trade show booth, the last thing you want to do is lumber along. You want a trade show booth with class, sass and kick, well, you know.

The absolute best way to ensure your trade show booth has just the right combination of class and sass is to hire graphic design experts to create the perfect trade show booth for your business.

Yes, you can buy a trade show booth that's more or less designed using a template, and it will look good. But you want more for your booth than to just look good: you want it to be stunning and hypnotic and suck people over to check you out like they will a lovely Jag in a mall parking lot.

Graphic designers know how to do this. They'll take the time to learn about you and your business. They'll look at all your marketing materials for colors and themes they can use in your trade show booth. Professional graphic designers know their eye candy and can guarantee you will have a visually appealing trade show booth that customers will be drawn to.

More importantly, what professional graphic designers can do is to develop an overall marketing concept for your trade show booth. Why is that important? Every great marketing and advertising campaign has a concept, a basic message that it works to convey. That concept will carry through all of a company's advertising and marketing materials by using various elements in them all of them to ensure that consumers are saturated with that message.

For instance, if your company uses the colors royal blue and white, you want these colors to

be dominant in your booth design. You don't want to go with purple and green for your booth, though you would definitely stand out from the trade show booth crowd using that combination of colors! What would happen, though, is after the trade show when a customer saw your standard royal blue and white marketing materials, they wouldn't automatically connect those materials with your business-and worse, might toss them in the trash.

Professional graphic designers also know how color and visuals work together to be appealing, inviting and tell a story. They also understand color and balance, and how to use them to get a response from the viewer. And that response should always be something more than "Oh, what a nice-looking trade show booth." They can create a trade show booth that will have customers going "Oh, wow! I've got to get over to that booth right now. Gotta check it out!"

And really, why would anyone settle for being nice looking when they could be fabulous! Or lumber along in a nice mini-van when they could just as easily be zipping around in a Porsche!

Trade show booths come in an array of styles and designs that will show off your products, your services or your company in an unforgettable manner that offers a unique appeal, which is intelligent, chic and contemporary. Most trade show booths are very easy to assemble and transport to make your experience a more enjoyable one.

Choosing the perfect trade show booth to accommodate the products that you wish to display will be very easy once you know just how much room you will have at the trade show and how much material you will be presenting.

A bit of flash and sophistication never hurt a presentation. You only have a few minutes to grab the attention of a potential customer, client, or buyer. As they walk past your trade show booth, you must have something that will draw their attention, whether it is your personality, the products themselves or a very unique design displayed to entice.

To begin with, you should choose a trade show booth that will fit properly with the allotted space you have been assigned. You can choose from 10 feet by 10 feet, 10 feet by 20 feet or 20 feet by 20 feet Truss trade show booths. Each one has a compelling appeal that with the right graphics will draw a crowd to your booth. Be sure to get a trade show booth that will hold everything you wish to present without your visitors feeling claustrophobic, clutter will definitely turn them away. They should be able to walk around and through your display without bumping into items and knocking items off counters and shelves.

Remember most people will notice items that are eye level. This is where the main attraction should be. You want the area to be well lit, colorful, and maybe even add some music. You must attract attention just before they get to your booth. If they notice a pleasant, stylish, elegant trade show booth, they will at least stop and look around.

Now, you should start to think about what trade show booth you should purchase. In the 10

feet by 10 feet style, you can choose from the Carina, the Pluto, the Mars, Mercury, Cygnus, Lyra, Castor, and Sirius. All of these styles offer durable steel construction, 2 or 3 tabletops in either lightwood or silver in color, 2 or 3 silver spotlights, and the tools for assembly.

If you believe a 10 foot by 20 foot trade show booth will present your products better then you can decide on some quality and professional looking booths such as the Andromeda which comes complete with 4 tabletops and 5 silver spotlights, the Hydrus with 2 tabletops and 5 silver spotlights, the Venus with 5 tabletops and 4 silver spotlights, the Saturn with 2 tabletops and 5 silver spotlights, the Polaris with 4 tabletops and 5 silver spotlights, and the Arcturus with 4 tabletops and 7 silver spotlights. Each one of these trade show booths will have potential customers clamoring to your display to see what you are offering.

Next, in line to consider are the 20 foot by 20-foot trade show booths. You may believe these are just too big for your company. Nevertheless, remember you do not want any clutter and you want your guests to be able to walk around and feel comfortable while they are eyeing your products. This size may be the perfect size to display everything you wish without any worries about missing something you believe is an important selling feature. You can choose from Truss trade booths in this size and style that include the Cassiopeia, the Centaurus, the Neptune, the Jupiter, the Vega and the Orion. All have wonderful features that you desire with steel construction and easy to assemble.

Prices for trade show booths may seem a bit expensive, especially if this is your first time being involved in a trade show. But, you must remember trade show booths are an investment. You can use them time and time again and with the quality steel construction, they can last for years to come. Spending the money now to make a statement for your company is a wise decision that can lead to more money and loyal customers in the years to come.

There are also many different accessories that you can add with your trade show booth that will give your company many more options when presenting your services or products to the world. Enjoy setting up your booth and bring in more customers with the perfect trade show booth with a style of elegance, innovation, and style.

Everything Displays, Inc. is the publisher and owner of this article and is a national leading provider of trade show display solutions, with one of the largest selection of trade show booths on the web. Visit their website to view the numerous trade show booths available including a wide selection of pop up displays and banner stands.

Introduction to Trade Show Displays

This article provides a basic introduction into trade show displays and related products such as banner stands, literature racks, and more.

When it comes to displaying items at a trade show, you have many options from banner stands, literature stands and pop-up displays. You may choose to use more than one type of

trade show display unit since each one can be used together to give a more full effect and useful information.

Banner Stands

Banner stands come in an array of sizes and designs. the majority of banner stands are portable are designed to be set up in very quickly and have a practical existence for several trade shows as long as they are treated properly. Deciding on which type of banner stand is best for you is to decide among the varieties available. The main types are retractable, spring back and telescopic.

Rollable banner stands are great for creating a floor standing photo mural. This type has hardware that allows the graphic image to be seen from the floor to the top of the image. The main selling point for this type is that from the front of the stand all your potential customers will see is the image. All of the hardware is either hidden or a small portion is at the top or the bottom of the stand. Therefore, the hardware is not what is noticed by visitors to your display. The rollable display can also be attached side by side with other rollable banner stands to create a much longer imager that can be as long as ten feet or more.

Retractable banner stands may be better if you are seeking durability. The graphic in this unit is rolled in and out of a metal housing, which is at the bottom of the display. With retractable banner stands, the lamination is on both sides this will aid in preserving and protecting the image from any type of damage.

Literature Racks

Literature racks also come in many different styles, designs and sizes that will enable you to fit all of the literature that you would like to offer to potential customers. Most of the time trade show literature racks are silver or black and have 3 to 5 pockets. A few larger ones are similar to a magazine rack that you commonly see at the grocery store holding comic books.

The most popular literature rack is probably the Zed Up. This great literature rack has a shelf system that can be folded down and put into its own bag for transporting. The main reason this type of literature rack is popular is that you do not have to remove the literature when you are ready to pack up. There are two sizes of the Zed Up, one with 3 pockets that will hold single brochures and another that will hold larger quantities of literature in each pocket.

You may desire a more sleek and modern design which would be the Slope literature rack. It is also very easy to transport by just folding the rack flat. It has 3 pockets that will hold literature 10 inches wide by 57 inches high and 16 inches deep. The slope has its own carrying bag as well for easier transport.

Pop-up displays

There are quite a few different types of pop-up displays that you can enjoy using for your trade

show needs. There are five fashionable types that most people prefer which include the Standard Pop-up Displays, the Photo Mural Pop-up Displays, the Fabric Mural Pop-up Displays, the Commercial Pop-up Displays, and the 3-D Style Pop-up Displays. Each one has their own unique qualities and style to enhance your trade show experience.

The commonest is the standard pop-up. These are normally around 10 feet wide with a curved design. They are usually made with lightweight aluminum frame, PVC or steel channel bars, individual aluminum, or Velcro fabric panels.

The photo mural pop-up displays are pretty much like the standard pop-up displays except they use photo mural panels instead of the Velcro fabric panels. The photo mural pop-ups draw more attention because of the large format graphics that they use.

With the fabric mural pop-up display, you do not have to worry about set up as much. The mural is attached to the frame, which makes setting up faster and easier than with the standard or the photo mural style. This type also weighs less than most standard pop-ups on the market today. You can choose from a curved or non-curved design and most come with their own carrying bag.

Commercial Pop up displays may be what you need, but they are a bit more expensive. This type is sturdy and can take a bit more mistreatment or mishandling than other units can.

One of the newest pop up displays on the market today is the 3-D Style Pop-up Display. These are similar to the fabric mural displays in that the fabric image is attached to the frame, but you can choose from different shapes such as square or round. Set up is easy and quick.

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Trade Show Exhibit Shipping Tips

The keys to keeping costs down on shipping charges.

Your trade show costs can dramatically escalate if you just happen to hire an inexperienced shipping company to transport your trade show booth to the conference site. You may suddenly be faced with broken or missing parts, late delivery and a budget that could put your company's trade show display in total disarray and your job in jeopardy.

Although unforeseen events such as a major winter blizzard can cause havoc with your trade show delivery schedule and budgeting, it is always best to minimize your chances for error by picking the right professional transportation company. If you want your trade show booth to arrive in good condition, on time and within your budgeted allowance, you need to be informed on how to pick the right freight handler and transportation company.

You can take control of your trade show booth's destiny by becoming fully informed. Bad weather, causing flight delays at certain times of the year, is a concern beyond your control. But just like you can reclaim lost luggage from an airliner if you have your name tag

on it, you have a better chance of finding a lost or misplaced trade show booth element if, for example, you labeled every part of your trade show display in advance.

Although GPS technology has been a boon to tracking trade show booths, it can't find what is not labeled. And, since there are so many different people handling the shipment of a trade show booth, there is no guarantee that your trade show exhibit will arrive safely on the other end. You can, however, improve your odds of success by taking steps to insure your trade show display's safe journey. Thus, the first step is to find an experienced trade show specific carrier.

What to look for in a trade show freight carrier:

1. Make sure your transportation company records all of your trade show exhibit information, such as destination, schedule, weight, number of pieces, and exact dimensions of your pieces. This detailed information not only determines the cost of transporting your trade show booth to the exhibit site but also drainage costs (what the unions charge to deliver your booth from the loading dock onto and off the trade show floor)
2. Look for a freight carrier that has a good rapport with the unions so your trade show exhibit will be in reliable hands. You are better able to avoid unnecessary charges if your transportation carrier deals regularly with the trade show conference hall unions. Your carrier benefits from knowing the industry venues well—whether they be the McCormick Convention Center in Chicago, the Kaiser Convention Center in Oakland, the Moscone Center in San Francisco, the Santa Clara Convention Center or the San Jose McEnery Convention Center.
3. Look for a transportation company that handles a large volume of trade show business. You can get price breaks if your cargo company has multiple or less than truck load shipments to a convention site. An example of what can happen is the recent Semicon West 2006 Convention at Moscone Convention Center in San Francisco July 11 -13th.

Pope reported that, due to the popularity of this show, his National Transportation Company had to wait in the marshalling yard for 11 hours before delivery at the unloading dock. Because he had 3 trucks and multiple shipments, he was able to waive the waiting charge fees which would normally be charged. A less experienced trucker most likely would pass along these charges to the trade show exhibitor. Marshal yard fees range anywhere from \$45 – \$85 hour.
4. Select a trade show freight company that has first class communication capability. Check to see if they offer 24/7 contact with a live person, since trade shows are not a 9 to 5 business. Also make sure you give them contact names and cell phone numbers of your exhibitor reps on the trade show floor. Check to see if the freight company has the capability of sending Internet air bills and bill of lading in case an air bill is lost and you need a duplicate copy immediately.

Poppe suggests that once you select your freight company, you should ship 7 – 10 days ahead of your targeted move in date in order to avoid late penalties. And be sure to also communicate your trade show exhibit details with the company you select to do your trade show installation and dismantling. It's really all about communicating.

Remember, do your homework in advance and know what you can do to avoid major mishaps of shipping your trade show booth. By picking an experienced freight company, you can minimize your exposure to mislaid or damaged trade show booth components and budget cost overruns.

Trade Show Exhibiting Tips

Information on how to achieve a successful exhibition or trade show. This article will help you increase your ROI at exhibitions.

Participation in a trade exhibition is an essential weapon in the marketing armory – and like any weapon it has to be handled with care, skill and attention if it is not to go off at half-cock.

Its effective use requires careful preparation and training. Incorporate it into the total marketing strategy and it becomes a tactical device which, when aimed at the right target, can trigger a highly successful campaign.

Preparation

All craftsmen will confirm that a good job depends on good preparation.

Tell everyone in your organization that your company is going to take a stand at the exhibition. Everyone may have something very worthwhile to contribute to your ultimate success.

Communicate

Create a small Action Committee and appoint one of its members as Exhibition Co-ordinator with responsibility for all aspects of your participation – and the authority to get all things down. Allocate a budget and set a regular agenda with a clear timescale for each action.

Look again at what you have booked. Is it space only? A shell stand? Or an all-in- package? – is it what you need?

Space Only – i.e. chalk marks on the floor. This means you have simply rented some empty floor space on which you have to pay to have a stand erected. You'll need to appoint a stand contractor/designer.

Shell Stand – i.e. in addition to the floor space you have rented a simple structure usually comprising two or three walls, carpet tiles, name board and a lattice work or muslin ceiling. Check if other items such as lighting or stand cleaning are included in the purchase price. If

you have your own demountable display system you will probably only be allowed to set it up within the official shell scheme. Do you need an interior designer or contractor?

All in package – i.e. a ready made unit usually for smaller stands only but comes complete with all the basics and awaiting your display.

Right, so now you know what you've booked and you're ready for the opening day. No, not the first day of the show though that will come along quickly enough, but the first day of your preparation which is never a moment too soon.

Remember that when you move into the exhibition hall you will be putting your company on show. What you do with your stand reflects your company's image.

Decide what it is that you want to show. Try to introduce a theme which will give a focal point to the display, a theme, perhaps, that can be carried through your pre-show advertising. If possible include a demonstration of the product in action – remember the old Hoover Salesmen who emptied dust on the housewife's carpet before vacuuming it away? If the visitor can see the product working or, better still, can try it for himself, he'll be easier to convince.

If you sell a service or your product is too large to display on the stand think about other ways you can attract potential customers onto your stand

Face to face contact means that you can use all five senses – sight, touch, smell, taste and hearing – so take a good look at your product and see how many of these can be brought into play. They say that the more senses involved in an experience the longer that experience will be remembered.

Remember that it is your product that the visitor has come to see, or other similar products. There is nothing more infuriating – and deflating – than a visitor trying to sell you something while having no interest in your product. Have an action plan to deal with these type of persons, maybe just explain that you are very busy trying to get business for your company and if they can just leave you a business card, you will contact them after the show if you need more information.

You'll find, for example, that your stand should be at least two-thirds open. This is for your sake as well as the visitors, the exhibition is neutral territory. If your stand is designed like a fortress or a special club into which only very selected visitors are invited, a barrier is created.

As you begin to design the layout, think what would help entice you onto a stand if you were the visitor. You'd want it to be accessible, welcoming and not full of little areas where you might be trapped. Ensure it is well lit, highlighting those products which you wish to emphasize. Make your visitors feel comfortable about coming onto the stand. Remember the psychological barriers that can be so easily erected. Visitors may be reluctant or hesitant to step up onto a platform or even to cross the carpet line, feeling that either will leave them, as

fair game to predatory sales people.

Remember, that some visitors like to browse or window shop. If they see something they like then they will make a move to find out more. Watch body language. It's also worth taking a tip from some of the big department stores who are past masters at window display – not too much, not cluttered, but the message is all there. If you are having large graphics to get your message across, do not have too many words printed on them. Keep it short and simple. Visitors do not have the time to stand and read something that is too wordy.

Small stands can be effective too. Exhibitions give the opportunity to demonstrate your product to a large number of potential clients simultaneously, something not possible in your office or theirs – and one good visitor can make the entire exercise worthwhile. Sometimes that visitor is the one that even your best sales representative couldn't get to see in his office but he came to the exhibition!

It's as well to read the Rules and Regulation again. Again? You mean you didn't read them when you booked the site? They're there to help, not to hinder, and their contents draw on years of experience.

Check the exhibition Manual; it includes a checklist of things to do and when to do them by, it includes order forms, catalog entry forms and a mass of important information. It may be tedious but it's not difficult and it will keep your operation running smoothly. It even sets out a timetable with deadline dates for your planning progress. Use it.

As build up approaches, do a final check. Make sure that everything works. If you have any electrical appliance on the stand, make sure that you have got the right electrical connections, that sockets have been installed, that the equipment has a plug and that it all operates. Take a spare or have one available at short notice.

Tell people that you're going to be there. Communicate.

Whose show is it anyway? It's yours, as if there was no other exhibitor, as if every visitor was coming to the show just to see you. The organizer has been employed by you to do certain things – like hiring a hall, arranging the technicalities and promoting the event – but when it comes to getting visitors there the organizer's job stops as soon as they have entered the exhibition. From that point onwards, it's up to you to make sure that they come onto your stand.

Think about your investment. Would you trust it all to someone else? Your participation has to be an integral part of your overall strategy. Remember organizers help those who help themselves.

Your participation is, has to be, part of your total strategy, an integral part. It is the one medium that can make all the others come together.

So what are the other mediums?

Advertising: It works better if there is a requirement to action – like sending for a free ticket, or bringing the advertisement to your stand to collect a further benefit. So use your existing advertising campaign by quoting your stand number at the show. Use the show's logo; it identifies you with the exhibition. It's provided free of charge, and gives the reader a further focus, a touch of added confidence.

Direct Mail: Send a free ticket with your mail shot – it adds an extra benefit, a purpose, it helps to communicate.

PR: Your Participation at the event gives you something to talk about, create news – use it.

Sales Representatives: If an interview is not reaching a conclusion, your sales staff can invite the hesitant client to 'take another look' by coming along to the show. It's also a courteous way to maintain contacts with existing customers.

When the circus comes to town the most important part is the parade – letting people know that it's on. The organizer will do his stuff but like the circus promoter, he needs to highlight the stars of the show. That's a good reason for you to book early – a great deal of additional publicity at no extra cost. But the organizer will do a great deal more. He'll provide you with a range of promotional items. Use them...

Posters: Put them up in reception, in rest rooms, in the sales office, in the showrooms etc and make sure that your stand number is written large print.

Let staff and visitors know that you're going to be at an exhibition.

Letter Stickers: They should go on every letter leaving your office, including invoices and statements. If all your staff are aware of, and enthusiastic about the show then they'll want to use them – because they are a way of bringing more business.

Logos: Use them on advertisements; they provide an action point where potential visitors can make a mental note to visit you. They also boost confidence among staff and customers, knowing that you'll be taking part.

Tickets: Ensure that you have a good supply but remember they will do you no good if they sit in the pending tray. Ensure that invitation tickets are enclosed with all mail shots and quotations. Plan a specific mailing to existing and potential customers, preferably with a personalized letter. Make sure that your Reps carry a supply of tickets and use them to invite potential clients to the show.

It's a proven fact that more visitors respond to an invitation from an Exhibitor than they do from any other source.

Many exhibitors do not invite their existing customers – fearful that they may be attracted to a rival.

This is the wrong strategy. It is important to install confidence in customers – confidence in your product and confidence in your ability to out-swing the competition. Not to invite them is a negative attitude.

Look at your [limit] Marketing: Overlooked Free Advertising

The Most Overlooked Free Advertising In The World-Wide Universe.

The press release is the most underutilized yet most powerful method of promoting one's business. It is amazing that so few businesses write and distribute press releases. Learn how you can incorporate this free promotional tool into your marketing plan.

Why would anyone in their right mind pass up an opportunity for free advertising? The answer is, you shouldn't. Never.

That's why you need to learn the careful art of press release writing and submission.

The press release is the perfect tool for free publicity. Most people know that non-profit and community service organizations are capable of getting free publicity by using this tool. But can it be used for businesses that operate for profit? Sure can.

If written the right way and promoting the proper angle, a press release can get your business in the spotlight for some free publicity. But you've got to keep a few things in mind.

First, no media outlet is going to advertise your weekend sale or special one-time low prices on out-of-date widgets. If you are seeking publicity for your business because you want to rake in some quick cash next weekend, don't waste your time. You won't get the publicity you're looking for.

However, if you are the proud sponsor of a community event where members of the public are invited then you could get some free publicity. There are all kinds of creative ways to make this work.

For instance, suppose the new and outrageous Springling Sisters Carnival is coming to town. They are going to use your storefront parking lot to set up for entertainment. Normally, your business is closed on weekends and the carnival is only going to operate on Saturday and Sunday. What a great opportunity to capitalize!

That is one golden opportunity for a press release. But don't mention your business. Just promote the carnival and be sure to give the address where the carnival will be located – the address of your business, which you won't mention by name. People who read about the carnival in the newspaper or hear it on the radio will be looking for your address. When they

find it, they will find your business open on days it is normally not open.

Here's what you do on Saturday and Sunday when the carnival is in town. Hire a clown or someone who represents a mascot for your business. Have them stand at the entrance of the carnival or beside the street where traffic is passing by. They should be holding a sign advertising your business is open or passing out flyers and brochures to carnival-goers inviting them to your store after they have enjoyed the entertainment. Promote it as a special Carnival Day Super Saver Day, or a similar special sale day. People will love it.

Your store can be promoted this way through any number of events. Suppose you hire a local celebrity to visit your store on a certain day. Send a press release stating the celebrity will be at your store (this time you can mention it by name) on that day at a specific time. Because your event is promoting the celebrity, not your business, and it's a free event that anyone can attend, it is likely that local news media will pick it up.

One other way you can get free publicity for your business is to host a free seminar where nothing will be sold. The idea is to give people free information they can use in their businesses or private lives. Suppose you run a local automotive shop. You can give a free seminar teaching women and new drivers how to do a tune up. Since you are not selling your services at the seminar this is a great opportunity to promote your business in the community without advertising.

Also, you can use legislative issues as a tool for free publicity. What if your state passes a new law regarding emissions testing. Write a press release where the legislation is the focus of the article. Don't talk about your business. Instead, discuss how the legislation will effect people in your community. Then, throw in a quote from the owner or manager of your business. You can include the person's title and the business name since you are writing a news story and position the person quoted as an expert on the subject. Voila! Free publicity.

It is important that you focus on an event or special moment that will appeal to a wide variety of people and involves some sort of community service or popular interest. It shouldn't be self-serving. You are giving to the community and you want the world to know. This is your one chance to shine.

Be sure to send the press release to as many media outlets (radio, television, print and Internet) as you can find contact information for. It is best if you send it to a specific editor by name rather than just "editor" or "producer." Also, learn to write in journalistic style with all the pertinent information (who, what, when, where, why and how) in the first two or three paragraphs. Write in an inverted pyramid style with the most important information up front. That way, if the media company only has space for so much content they will use the most important information because they always cut from the bottom.

Press releases can be used to promote your business in a variety of ways, to include special community events, charitable sponsorships, joint ventures with government and community service organizations, celebrity appearances and holiday events that involve a wide berth of

community personalities and agencies. Be creative and remember that your goal is to promote someone or something else. You should be in the background as much as possible, but visible. And that is how you can promote your business through free publicity using the most overlooked free advertising tool in the world-wide universe.

Marketing: Email Marketing Strategy

Internet marketing covers a lot of different areas. From website design to search engine optimization, online marketing is necessary to have a successful business on the internet. One of the most important aspects of it is having a solid email marketing strategy.

Perhaps you are already doing some email marketing. If so, then you are far ahead of all of the businesses who don't do it. Whether you do it now or not, and no matter to what degree you are doing it, having an effective email marketing strategy is absolutely vital to your business reaching its full profit potential.

Email is one of the most basic things computer users use on a regular basis. This means even if they don't do much else, they at least know how to check their email. To be sure, there are a lot of people that get connected just so they can send and receive email. Being able to tap into that is key to internet marketing.

So, the question then becomes what makes a successful email marketing strategy. In short, it's getting people to agree to receive messages from you on a regular basis. The reason that this is so important is that it gives you a captive audience to market to repeatedly. The people on your email list don't have to remember to visit your website to check if you are running a special offer. Nope. All they need to do is see your message waiting for them in their in-box.

At the very least, you should get the email address of everybody that buys from you online; just make it a part of the purchase process. Current customers tend to make up the most responsive lists for future mailings. They have already bought from you, so they are more likely to buy from you again, assuming you have met their expectations.

However, you know as well as anybody that not all visitors to your site are going to buy something. In fact, it's safe to say that the vast majority of them won't buy anything at all when they visit your page. That's just the way the math works out. But does that mean you should just let them go and hope they come back in a buying mood some other time? Of course not! And that's the other way an email marketing strategy can improve the bottom line of your business.

Give non-buyers a reason to sign up for your email list, too. (If at all possible, have a separate list for buyers and non-buyers.) Just because they weren't ready to buy this time, doesn't mean they won't be ready the next time you send out a mailing to them.

Finally, remember that every mailing you send out should provide value of some kind. You can send out informational pieces that relate to your product, or you can send out sales pieces.

But offering value is absolutely necessary to having an effective email marketing strategy.

Email Video Marketing – Personal And Super Valuable

There are many ways you can use email video marketing to enhance your business. By building an email list you can build rapport with the people on your list by teaching them some skill that will help them. Once you do that, you can make the occasional recommendation for a product or service that will benefit them and they will be likely to buy.

Using video is an easy way to increase your response rate. People online are rather short of time and attention span. A good video will help grab their attention and hold on to it. If you make a series of good quality, short (3 -5 minutes) videos that will help them with some problem or issue that they have, you can gain their trust and respect and they will stay on your list for a lot longer and even buy things from you on occasion.

Make sure that your videos are easy to understand. Don't use a lot of jargon or big words, that isn't the way to establish yourself as an expert, it will most likely just annoy people and they will stop watching.

Instead make sure that if you do use jargon, you explain what it means. Use these videos to educate people and not just as one long sales pitch. Use emotion to create a sense of urgency so they will buy from you.

Take this example, if you are selling a diet aid you can make a short video that explains why your diet aid is better than the others. Instead of making it boring and filled with a lot of technical drug names explain that your diet aid will help them look great at the beach this summer. Or that your diet aid will allow them to get the tight hot, abs they've always wanted.

Use emotional words that conjure up a positive mental picture. It's OK. to mention the facts but don't get too caught up in the technical side of things. Always include plenty of 'emotion' words. Emotion is what makes people actually make the purchase, logic will give them a reason to justify it.

When you're making your video, don't worry about making it perfect or think you have to have a flashy presentation. The less you have going on the better. The video portion should only compliment the audio. Keep it simple. You want people to focus on your message and not just some flashy graphics.

Do make sure that you speak slowly and clearly when you record your audio. If it helps, make a script to follow so you won't forget to cover any of the important points. Don't try to sound overly professional, just be yourself. Of course, that doesn't mean you should be stammering or stuttering but you can just act as though you're talking to your friends. Keep it casual and easy.

Use email video marketing to provide all the people on your email list with so much valuable

and helpful information that they'd never consider hitting the 'unsubscribe' button. Give to them what they need and they'll return the favor by buying the products you recommend. Using video just makes the process better.

Video Email Marketing – Short And To The Point

Hey, everyone who is trying to make money online knows the saying, "the money is in the list". To get the most out of your email marketing you should start using video email marketing. You can use videos to drive traffic to your site or offer and you can also include great, helpful videos in your email messages.

An interesting well made video will grab the viewers attention. When you get them to your website you can have another video that encourages them to sign up to your email list. A great incentive to get them to sign up is by offering them something of value, say a short course on something related to your niche.

Once they sign up you can then send them email messages, complete with videos, that will teach them a skill, or teach them how to expand on an existing skill. Doing that will really create a high perceived value.

Here are a couple tips to help you get the most out of all your video marketing efforts:

1. Grab their attention fast. People online tend to have short attention spans. Have an interesting headline, something that is controversial, or intriguing and will make them want to know the answer.
2. The next step is to answer the age old question of potential customers: what's in it for me? Telling them how great your product or service is won't get you too far. You need to spell out what your product or service will do for them. How can they benefit and why should they buy it?
3. The next thing you have to do is let them know why they should trust you or care what you have to say. What 'credentials' do you have?
4. Another thing you have to do, and it may sound mean, is to find your prospects pain and rub salt in it. I know that sounds horrible, but you have to remind them of what they need and why they need it, and it needs to hit them on an emotional level, and then you can provide them with the relief to that pain.

If you are selling a dog training guide, for example, you could remind them of the times they are missing out on spending with their dog because their dog isn't trained. Remind them of all the missed walks on the beach or at the park simply because they can't trust their dog to behave.

Once you've done that and gotten them to that emotional place, offer them a solution. Tell

them that your dog training videos will cure that and they will be able to take their well behaved dog with them anywhere.

See how you 'play on their emotions'? You remind them of their pain, using emotional words and thoughts, then you offer them a solution.

Creating a compelling video email marketing series is as easy as following the directions above. Using these tactics will help you get the most out of all the emails you send. You will have fewer 'unsubscribes' and you will make more sales as your list grows.

Opt In Emails Will Save Your Butt

One of the many advantages to using the internet to grow your business is the high level of automation available. No where is this automation more evident than with the use of emails to contact a large list of customers. In order to keep the email process clear of any accusations of spam you will need to use opt in emails.

When someone agrees to receive emails from you they are 'opting in' to your list or newsletter, that way they can't accuse you of spamming them by sending them unsolicited emails. When they visit your website they will be encouraged to sign up to your list. In order to get them to sign up you can offer them something of value such as a free report, or a multi part mini-course. Whatever your incentive is you have to make sure it's a good one or your visitors won't sign up.

Once you've got your visitors contact information it's vitally important for you to carefully follow through. Make sure they receive whatever you promised them and continue to provide them with quality information when you send out your follow up emails.

You can send out follow up emails as often as you like, but remember, that every time they receive an email from you there is a link at the bottom that says 'un-subscribe'. If your emails are nothing but an obnoxious sales pitch a lot of the people on your list will be hitting the un-subscribe button and you don't want that. So be careful that you continue to offer them something that they can benefit from and not just a sales pitch.

Of course, the whole point of gathering your website visitors name is to hopefully turn them into a buying customer. It's estimated that up to 98% of the people who visit your website won't make a purchase on their first visit... and they won't ever come back. That's why using an opt in email list is essential. To monetize your list you have two basic options: you can send out a sales message say for every 5 or so informative emails, or you can add a brief sales message as a post script to each email you send out.

Either of these methods can help you turn your email list into a virtual money machine, if you use them properly. If you use the 1 in 5 method you will be able to include a longer message, and of course, you can combine both methods.

Remember that the people on your list probably get a lot of emails every single day and you want to set yourself apart, you want to show them that the information in your emails will help them and that it's worth their effort to open and read your emails. If you can accomplish that your emails will be the ones that get opened on a regular basis.

To build trust and rapport with your website visitors use an automated auto responder system and opt in emails. The more of your business that can be automated the more time you'll have to do other tasks that need to be accomplished, like spend time at the beach!

Contact Email Marketing Is Effective

When you own a business, whether online or off, you know the importance of not only staying in touch with your existing customers but constantly trying find new ones. There is so much automation available online today that it can make this process much easier. One of the best tools you can use is a service that will enable you to use contact email marketing.

Having a website can be an extremely beneficial to an offline business (and mandatory for an online business!) but the sad truth is that for the most part, people won't visit your website more than once (of course if your website offers a lot of products or services you will likely get repeat visitors) but if your website is more of an informative format it can be tough to get people to come back.

If you have a method for capturing their contact information, such as an opt in form, you can build a very large email list. When they opt in to your list they are telling you that it's OK. for you to send them emails. This is the very best way for you to establish yourself as an expert in your field and build trust with your customers, or would be customers.

Of course, as with most things, the implementation of this method might take a little trial and error. One of the biggest mistakes many people make with their opt in list is that they don't spend enough time contacting their customers and offering them special deal. This can be as simple as telling your customers of an upcoming sale, and make sure they know that they are getting early notice only because they are on your email list. You can also offer coupons or other incentives.

If your business is more serviced based you may want to use this method to inform your customers of any new services you are providing. The point is that this allows you a great opportunity to keep in contact with your visitors and provide them with some valuable perks and that will make them eager to open and read every email that they receive from you.

Another helpful tactic is to use your existing customer email list to find more customers and a great way to do that is to offer your existing customers an incentive to get their friends and family to become a customer too. For example, if you have an offline store you could offer everyone on your list a coupon off of the price of a purchase if they refer someone else to your store and that person signs up for your email list. There are a lot of ways you can do this but you get the point, an email list can be a wonderful way to leverage your existing customer

base.

If you are willing to spend some time to build a list of customers, or potential customers, and then spend some time to keep in contact with them and build a relationship with them by offering them information and special deals just for being on your list, you will have an extremely powerful tool in building your business. Contact email marketing, when done correctly, can be like money in the bank.

Mass Email Marketing – Tips On The Right Way

Using the internet as a way to help you build your business, whether it's an online or offline business, is an extremely cost effective technique. When it comes to mass email marketing you can literally reach hundreds of thousands of potential customers all with the click of a button and with very little overhead (just the price of your internet connection and website hosting costs).

The low cost of this type of advertisement had a downside, companies started sending out millions of messages to unsuspecting email recipients who then started complaining about spam – unsolicited bulk commercial emails.

The rocketing number of spam emails that were being sent out created a back lash from the public which eventually led to new laws to prevent the abuse of the email message system, the CAN SPAM laws. These laws basically state that you can't send out a lot of emails to random email addresses.

In order to be in compliance with the law, and not be accused of spamming, there are a few things you need to do:

1. Your email message must have an accurate 'from' heading where you put in your name or the name of your company.
2. The subject line on your email must be accurate and relate to the actual content of your email.
3. As the sender you must provide an actual physical address for you or your company.
4. Make sure to clearly label your email if it contains adult content.
5. You cannot have a false header on your email.
6. You must provide a clear, and free, link for the recipient to 'un-subscribe' and if they click on that link they should immediately be removed from your email list and you should never send them another email.
7. Having an 'opt-in' list is probably your very best defense against being accused of spam.

This method will encourage your website visitor to sign up to receive your emails. They are giving you permission to send them emails. In order to get them to sign up to your list you can offer them an incentive such as a free report or a multi part mini-course that they will receive over a period of a week or so. Whatever you offer them to get them to sign up, make sure it has real value to your subscriber. Take a little time and develop a report that has some real value and substance to it.

These are the basics of the law. I'm not an expert or a lawyer so make sure you take a little time and learn all the ins and outs of the CAN SPAM law so that you can make sure your company is in compliance. Don't let the new laws scare you off from using mass email marketing since it can be a very effective marketing tool for your business.

If you take the time to find out what all the regulations are and then you follow them, you will be in compliance and you will be able to add a lot of customers to your business which will eventually lead to a lot more sales, and that's what we all want.

Email Campaign Manager Will Keep You On Track

When it comes to finding a good email campaign manager you can either hire an outside firm to oversee your email marketing efforts, or get someone from your company. The option you choose will depend on your budget, your needs, and the desired results.... but mostly your budget.

Which ever method you choose when it comes to having someone manage your campaign, the steps needed to establish an effective campaign will be the same.

Here is a list of some of the things you need to consider when putting together your email marketing campaign:

1. First things first, what do you hope to accomplish with this campaign? What outcomes do you need to achieve in order to consider the campaign a success? This may sound like a dumb question but if you don't have a clear idea of your ultimate goal than you don't know the best way to structure your campaign.

For example, is your goal to get more customers into your store or to your website? Or is your goal to provide your existing customers with some sort of customer appreciation perk? Identify the goal of your campaign so that you can structure your email messages accordingly.

2. Carefully consider what you are going to put in the 'subject' line. This is a very important element and a good subject line can be the difference between your email being read or being sent to the spam folder. Your subject should be short and to the point but also intriguing and pique your readers curiosity.

When you create your email make sure that the opening is personal. Use the name of the individual you are sending the email to, this can easily be done with certain automated

methods.

3. Remember that most people receive dozens of emails a day and don't have time to read them all. If they open your email that is a big step. In order to get them to read the whole message make sure to keep your email short and sweet. Focus your message on your customer and their needs and wants not on you or your company. In most cases people will only skim the email message so only put in the important points. Don't make your message too long or your customer will lose interest and stop reading.

4. Don't get too fancy with font styles and graphics. Remember, there are a lot of different types of computers and all ages of monitors out there and if you get too high tech some of your customers may not be able to read it. Different font styles can also be difficult to read sometimes. Just keep your message short, professional yet friendly, and to the point.

5. And of course, if you have the budget and / or you just don't have time to do it yourself, you could always hire a professional to organize your email campaigns for you. In many cases this will be the best option since they are experienced and can make sure your messages are written in an effective way to maximize not only your open rate but your desired results as well.

When it comes to setting up an effective email marketing campaign, just remember that there are a few simple things to keep in mind. If you are able to hire a professional email campaign manager than by all means, so do. If not, don't let that keep you from setting up your own campaign so you can benefit from the enormous potential of email marketing.

Local Email Marketing – Ins And Outs

You will often hear people singing the praises of the internet when it comes to marketing a business. They will talk about the power to reach millions of people from all over the world by using email marketing. With the simple push of a mouse button they can have instant, and free, contact with thousands or millions of potential customers. While this is a great aspect of using the internet for your business building, what happens if you just want to target your local area? How does local email marketing work?

The same concept can work just as well for you even if you have a more localized focus. Email marketing is quite simple to use and even if you've never sent an email before you can easily learn a few basics and put this technique to work for you.

Of course, the first thing you will need is a list of customers, or potential customers, names and email addresses to send the emails to. There are a few methods you can use to start building a 'subscriber' list.

If you have a website you should incorporate an 'opt-in' box on your website. When they sign up to receive your emails they are opting-in to your list, which means they are giving you permission to contact them and protects you from spam complaints. The process can easily

be automated by the use of an inexpensive autoresponder service.

Another way you can build your subscriber list is to ask the customers who come into your store to sign up for your email messages. One factor will be common to both scenarios: in order to get them to sign up to receive your emails you have to offer them a reason why. Don't forget that your customers will be asking 'What's in it for me?' That's why it's important to let them know that they will benefit by signing up to your list.

Once they've opted- in to your list you can send them coupons, early bird sale information, etc. This will create more customer loyalty and make them feel like they're special and appreciated. Let your customers know what perks they'll get and that will encourage them to sign up to your email list.

Once you've got some people on your list, if you want to send out a group of emails you can either send them yourself manually (all you have to do is put all the email addresses into a group and they will all receive the same message) or you can use a professional service to handle your email marketing, it's all up to you.

The most important thing to remember is that local email marketing is a very powerful and cost effective way to increase the number of customers you have as well as improve customer loyalty with your existing customers. Don't overlook this extremely effective method to help you grow your business. In today's competitive business environment you need every advantage you can get.

Marketing: Advertising

Internet Marketing Versus Traditional Advertising

Old-fashioned advertising isn't going anywhere any time soon, but is definitely felt the impact of the new kid on the block, namely internet marketing. the big problem for marketing firms is how new the internet is. Sure, it has been around for over a decade now, but it is still maturing, and people who use the internet still haven't settled into a reliable pattern that traditional advertisers can readily react to.

This is good news for all of the people trying to make their living online. How so? Well, it means that a regular guy or gal can compete with well-established companies. On the internet playing field, the winner is the one who can connect with their site's visitors the best. But it goes even deeper than that.

The really big companies tend to move more slowly. That's not normally a problem, but the online world moves far too quickly for them to always respond in the best way. A big company has an entrenched corporate culture that it has to convince. The regular person does not.

A single person running an online business can make changes as they see fit, whenever the urge strikes them. Those who really understand internet marketing are constantly making

changes then tracking the results. If the changes have a positive impact, then they incorporate them, and then try something else that's new.

But none of this means that regular advertising is a bad thing. In fact, all of the basic principles used in internet marketing were developed by traditional advertisers. However, the medium has a major effect on how the message is perceived by a target audience.

The internet still has a certain wild feel about it. It is still trying to find its feet, so to speak. But at the same time, it is in a constant state of change. Slow moving companies are getting left behind. Even companies that seem to move quickly in the brick and mortar world can be slow to respond to changes happening online. Again, the sole proprietors who can make instant decisions and take a "see what happens" attitude are the ones who are poised to do the best.

It is a two way street, however, as the big companies are paying attention to what the "little guy" is doing. Granted, they don't always get it right, but they do notice, and respond in a way they think is best. But, because they have such a large budget, they can absorb the occasional costly mistake. The average person can't afford to lose a lot of money, so this gives them an added incentive to do things the right way.

Never before has the playing field been so even. Internet marketing is a great equalizer, and puts the potential for profits in the reach of anybody willing to learn how to do it right. It's hard to say what the future holds in store, but right now is a great time to get into internet marketing.

Using Internet Marketing To Build Your Company

If you happen to be a small business owner that wants to expand your company, then you should seriously consider internet marketing. Now, this may sound obvious to anybody that is in a tech-related field, but it's not so obvious to others. Regardless, internet marketing is a great way to build just about any business.

When you think about it, every business has something in common, and that is selling to customers. Of course, there are many variations on this, and what's being sold could be a physical product, a service, or a virtual product such as a web application. The definition of what a customer is can vary as well. Either way, when you boil it down all businesses are basically the same.

No matter what type of company you have, internet marketing helps in two main ways: getting new customers, and keeping customers. While there is no hard data, it's safe to say that the majority of businesses focus on getting new customers. And far too many of them don't do it very well. The idea that you can open a business and customers will start pouring in is an idea that will set you up for failure.

If you've been in business for any amount of time, then you know that customers do not magically appear just because you have decided to start a business. This applies to both brick

and mortar businesses and online businesses. To be blunt, customers don't care about you or your business. All they care about is what you can do for them.

There may have been a time when just having a website was enough to attract the attention of would-be customers, but those days are long gone. Internet marketing may include having a website, but having a website is not all there is to internet marketing.

Internet marketing is just like it sounds: using the internet to market your business. There are many facets to online marketing, but they all revolve around getting and keeping more customers for your business.

The first thing you need to do is get people to your website (or whatever online presence you have). This is known as traffic. Some of the ways you can get traffic is by running a pay-per-click campaign, through high placement in the search engines for keywords related to your business, writing articles that point back to your site, or paying for advertising on another company's website.

Once you have people at your site, you need to connect with them in a way they respond to. You need to make them feel that doing business with you is a better option than not doing business with you. Now, that doesn't mean you have to write a pushy sales letter for them to read; though you may want to, depending on your business. You can do things in a low-key way, or be very blunt; whatever works best for your business.

The above things cover getting new customers, but that's only half the battle. Customer retention is also an important aspect of running a successful business. An easy way to do this online is by capturing their name and e-mail address. That way you can market to them again and again. The best part is that they don't even have to be customers to sign up. See, they may not be willing to buy right now, but they may be willing to buy later. And you won't have to spend as much on traffic if you have a list of people that are ready to receive your message.

Those are the basics of internet marketing. The world is more competitive than ever, and that's not likely to change any time soon. Business owners who harness the marketing power of the internet are more likely to succeed than those who don't.

What are the Tricks to Effective Internet Advertising

In order to perform effective internet advertising, you first need to understand your target market. It doesn't matter what business you are in or what products/services you offer. If you are unable to learn what your potential customers are looking for, you might as well not even waste the money on advertising. So spend some time researching your target market until you have their wants and needs crystal clear in your mind.

Put yourself in your audience's shoes. They probably receive pages and pages of spam every day. If you are sending out email advertisements, you need to figure out a way to distinguish yourself from the rest of the hype. One easy way to do this is to not be "hypey" yourself.

Create an ad that is informational and problem-solving, rather than one that is all about buy, buy, buy.

The headline of your ad, whether it's a banner, a PPC ad or an email ad, is extremely important. Your audience will make a decision on whether they want to continue or not based on your headline so it must be compelling. Ask a controversial question or provide some shocking information. Those work well. But it should all tie into the benefits your audience will receive from your products/services. Your headline should also be keyword optimized. Research what keywords you want to be targeting with any of the free keyword research tools.

Effective internet advertising is professionally written and designed. Make sure you don't have any grammatical or spelling errors, don't use too many colors or fonts and try to use some "proven effective" shades as well.

Remember that your ad must have a "call to action". Many advertisers forget this important step. After you've peaked your target audience's curiosity and sold them on your benefits, you need to tell them what to do. Show them where to click so that they will be directed back to your website or wherever it is that you want to lead them. Always have a way for the reader to get in contact with you. Don't make them search for it.

Incorporate an opt-in form to your advertisement. This is where your reader will fill in his/her details. Offering a free trial or free informational guide are some ways to get your reader to fill out the opt-in contact information. Don't make him/her fill in too much information. The more they are required to put in, the more they are likely to just not enter in their information.

The response you get is also enhanced with your personal touch. If you can follow up by making a phone call to each of the new members on your customer lead list, you are miles ahead of the game in terms of establishing your trust-worthiness and credibility.

Finally, keep yourself in tune with what the market is offering in terms of effective internet advertising—new and innovative technologies are constantly being developed.

How to Establish an Advertising Marketing Plan

Many business owners are searching the internet to find information that deals with an advertising marketing plan. In reality, advertising and marketing are two different animals, although closely related. Marketing refers to the whole product service mix which includes those famous four "P"s: Price, Place, Product and Promotion. Advertising is just a part of the mix and of course, it fits within the Promotion aspect of marketing.

Within the marketing scheme, you need to establish a price-point for your product or service. You also need to set up a channel through which you will offer your product/service (this is the Place part of the mix). The product or service itself is a vital part of the mix. . .and then we get to Promotion which includes advertising.

In today's internet economy, you can actually do certain forms of advertising which are free. Some of these advertising options include online classified advertising like Craigslist or US FreeAds. Perhaps one of the most effective free "soft advertising" methods makes use of the many social media sites that are now available. The key word in this type of promotion is "social". In order to be effective, you need to stick to the social etiquette that is required. No spamming or hypey activity is allowed.

coming up with a solid advertising marketing plan will most likely take some trial and error. But there are some tips that can help you get going.

The most important is to understand who you are advertising to—in other words, know your target market. And know it very well. A thorough understanding of this will make your plan much more successful. Getting it wrong will set you up for failure. This will require quite a bit of research which cannot be skimmed on.

Next, set your goals. Identify what you want to get in return for your advertising (recognition, sales, brand identity, etc) and set specific short-, mid- and long-term objectives.

Then you will want to do some brainstorming to come up with the actual advertisements. Create a rough draft. This is just the start. It will most likely be revised over and over again as you figure out what is doing well and what isn't.

Which brings us to tracking, testing and tweaking. You need to have tangible results with every ad that you place. This is harder to do with magazine, television, newspaper or radio advertising. But online advertising very much lends to tracking. Analyze your results and make necessary changes. Sometimes just one word can make all the difference in advertisement conversions.

Research advertising agencies to find who you will work with best. If possible, go for those who are specifically expert in advertising your business niche.

Using the correct advertising marketing plan is a process. Taking action and getting help from professionals can help you get started.

How to Measure Internet Advertising Effectiveness

One common question that many business owners share deals with how to evaluate their internet advertising effectiveness. Up until fairly recently, it wasn't too easy to track how well your online ads were doing, not to mention anything about trying to figure out offline advertising results. However, the online techniques have really changed. It's getting easier and easier to track the progress of your internet marketing advertising and most sites will at least give you the chance to see how many impressions your ad has received and how many people have actually clicked on it.

If you are using Pay Per Click (PPC) advertising, the search engines will provide you with

relatively sophisticated tracking systems, making it very easy to see which ads are being clicked on and which ones aren't. More importantly, it shows you which ads are actually converting. Traffic without conversions won't do you much good.

If you are doing online marketing advertising elsewhere, you can implement your own tracking methods by assigning different values to each of the sites in which your ads are appearing. This way, when and if a customer clicks on your ad, they won't only be directed to your site but you can then see how they got to your site in the first place. This data can be seen in your web site's log files, if you are creating redirects, through reports generated by a link program or within your autoresponders, depending on your methods.

One extremely simple way to measure internet advertising effectiveness is to add an unsophisticated referral box right in your site's shopping cart. Here you can just ask anyone who is making a purchase to answer how they found your site before they complete their order. Many webmasters create a drop-down list which customers can choose from to make the process go by quickly. However, not everyone will enter in the correct information so the data will not be completely reliable.

How do you analyze the information that you're getting from your tracking methods? If you see that the ratio of impressions to clicks is very low, you'll at least need to consider making some changes to your ad campaigns. Keep in mind that your ad needs to connect with your target audience and compel them to want to find out more. If you are getting a good amount of clicks, but they aren't converting, it could mean that your ad didn't reflect what you are promoting very well.

If you have just started advertising online, make sure to start small and test the waters first. You don't want to spend a great deal of time and money on an extensive campaign that isn't bringing in results. Take small steps and learn with each one. Another good idea is to do split testing. For each products or service, create two ads and track which one does better. .another part of the learning curve.

Measuring your internet advertising effectiveness should be a constant activity.

Marketing: Create Loyal Customers

4 Tried and True Techniques To Create Loyal, Life-Long Customers

It's difficult to reach your business goals if you don't have the right materials and/or the information to help your business reach the success it's capable of. These four insights will help you generate the business you've always dreamed of.

Let's be honest... everybody knows that people are in business to make money. Yeah, customer's know you've got our eyes set on making a profit, but they still want to believe that you are in business for more than just their money. Do your customers know that you really care about them? Here are 4 "tried and true" techniques to show them you care.

1. Be Personal

I recently walked into a well-known store and spoke with a salesperson who really seemed to have it going on. I felt pretty good about the interaction, until I walked away and heard him reciting the same spiel he had just used with me moments earlier.

Customers are looking for personal one-on-one recognition. In this automated world, they are used to feeling like just a number, and crave to have real interaction. Take the time to discover their lifestyle before you try to sell them a one-size-fits-all product. Think about the ways the product will benefit THEM.

You'll find that there are pockets of people with similar interests and needs. Hey, that's the perfect opportunity to customize your sales campaign to the needs of different market niches.

2. Look Out For The Customer

Sure, you've sat and listened to boring sales speeches that went on and on about every feature, aspect and guarantee a product had to offer. Yeah, BORING! Customers don't give a hoot about the specific details and credentials of you and your product nearly as much as they want to know how it will benefit them.

Make sure your advertisements on the Web, sales letters, and other promotions point out the advantages to the customer. Keep the focus on them. How will the modern features make life easier? How will your credentials make you better equipped to help them?

3. Stay in Contact

There are a lot of customers who don't buy on the first visit. Sure, there are a fair number of impulsive shoppers, but not everyone shells out the bucks the first time the idea pops into their head to make a purchase. Wise shoppers take a little time to consider it first.

What happens in the meantime? Well, that depends on you. Do you follow up regularly with customers? Give them a little additional information each time, and build a relationship of trust. Before long, you'll have a loyal customer spreading the word about your business.

Internet marketers need to devise ways of getting email addresses to use for follow-up strategies. Free newsletters and complimentary reports are perfect for opening the door for future communications.

4. Be "Question Friendly"

Nothing says, "I really care," like taking the time to thoroughly answer a question – no matter how small. Think of it this way... a customer who is asking questions is considering the possibility of making a purchase. Hey, it might not be today or tomorrow, but someday you'll

reap the benefits of the time you spend answering their questions.

Is it easy for your customers to ask a question? Now, I'm not talking about calling an automated answering service that you spend 25 minutes pushing buttons and end up back at the main menu. Can they ask questions, and get personal answers?

Always provide a phone number where a person can be reached, or an email address that someone will personally answer. You can save a lot of time by posting a frequently asked question page, where they can find answers without the effort of making contact.

Assuring customers of their importance is one of the greatest ways to make loyal, life-long customers.

Marketing: Business In China

5 tips to invest and do business in China:

To many, investing in China can be quite a headache as not many people can understand China's culture and business practices. It is true that in order to be successful in China, one will have to truly understand China's distinct and unique culture. The following few pointers hope to provide some assistance to investors who are interested in entering China's market.

1. Have clear understanding of China

It is essential to understand the culture of the country before investing in it. Understanding China is vital as China is a land of vast diversity. As such it is important for the company to understand the culture and the society's values before establishing operations in China. Only through understanding the culture and values strong foundations can be built and higher chance of success can thus be achieved.

2. Understand local business practices

Given China's distinct culture differences from the rest of the world, understanding China's business culture is extremely crucial. What works in one's country will not be applicable at all in China. Understanding how the local people think and their business practices can allow one to engage better and faster with them. Original organizational culture and practices may have to change in order to accustom to China's practices. Thus flexibility and adaptability is the key for any organization to be successful in China.

3. Acquire local knowledge and establish local presence

Establishing a representative office in conjunction with a strong domestic private sector partner that has access to all necessary information and contacts in their field is the widely practiced formula practiced by foreign firms who already enjoyed success in China. Another way will be through setting up joint venture. Most importantly it has to be the selection of the

correct partner. Finding the right partner may require more time, patience and experience but it is never a hassle to spend more efforts in choosing the partner because a wrong partner will definitely guarantees failure. Chinese expertise and local talent must also be incorporated into management or consulted during decision-making since local knowledge is essential as a source of information, access to networks and social and cultural learning, especially in China.

4. Need for establishing business relationships

Guanxi (relationship) is an important element in achieving successful business in China. Top management must learn to nurture close relationships with their local counterparts. This not only helps them to understand the Chinese domestic market, but also creates avenues for help in times of trouble or in need of assistance. Building strong relationships with business partners can aid in mitigating strategic and operational risks.

5. Establish close relations with government officials

Because the China government plays an important role in influencing market movement and administering foreign investments, a strong government relationship remains an important factor to do business successfully in China. Fewer hiccups may be met during paperwork applications or achieving local authorization if a strong relationship with government officials is in place.

How to do business in China

It is not surprising at all when many foreign investors complained when they do business in China. Many wondered why their years of experience in the business world could not be applied in China immediately. Doing business is about building mutual trust and benefit amidst establishing relationship with people. If you do not understand your counterpart well, it will be quite difficult to establish good cooperation with him/her. An old Chinese saying goes: know yourself and your enemy well and you can fight a hundred battles without any fear of defeat. This greatly emphasized the importance of knowing and understanding your counterpart.

Modern economic model differ greatly from the traditional one, whereby people in the past 'fight' till the last man standing. Today, people seek to achieve a "win-win" situation, and pursue long-term trade cooperation under a fair and healthy competition environment. Understanding factors such as China's history, humanity and culture will be the key to investors' success in China. As Western thinking and China's traditional values do differ, encountering the culture differences is therefore inevitable, thus a better understanding of the cultural differences is necessary when doing business in China:

1. Learn how to handle Guanxi (relationship)

In China, Guanxi (relationship) is a complicated field. Establishing relationship with others does not mainly deal with achieving own self-interests or personal goals. A special feature of

doing business in China will be that Guanxi (relationship) in China will have to include relationship with the government body, investors, partners and even relationship with your own staff. China government plays a large role in administrating the investment in China. This is because China is a socialist state; the economy is still largely controlled and managed by the government, so when doing business in China, it is important for foreign investors to learn to coordinate with the China government. At the same time, seeking a suitable local partner may be a shortcut and helping hand in developing your business in China market.

2. How to prevail over competition

China, at the moment, can be said to be a big, open market, and the ability to prevail over competition is a very important issue today. Investors should fully realize and maximize one's advantages. Some investors are afraid that the China's imitation products will hurt the sale of their products. Even though this symptom is worrying, however in a free and competitive market, it will always be one that has the superior quality that will not be afraid of competition and will prevail eventually. China market is constantly undergoing standardization, and the China government has vowed to protect the quality of the market.

The Vice-Minister of the Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Cooperation had previously stated in his speech that being a member of the World Trade Organization, China government will continuously rectify and standardize the economic structure of the market, and will persistently crack down illegal acts of producing counterfeit products. Technology level in China is still relatively lagging behind, thus foreign investors should fully make use of their advantages in technology and expertise to produce high-quality products and services. One should not be over worried about the negative impact brought about by new counterfeited products. Continuous development of one's technology and emphasizing on innovation will be the key to success.

3. Route for Investment

There are three options to take when make investments in China, mainly: wholly foreign-owned enterprise, Chinese-foreign cooperative enterprise and Sino-foreign joint venture. Which option to take will have to depend on factors such as the investors' investment direction, investment environment, and the amount of investment to be undertaken. Generally speaking, wholly foreign-owned enterprise require examination and approval from many government bodies and this process can be quite hassle and time-consuming. Government procedures for establishing Chinese-foreign joint venture and contractual joint ventures will be even more and the process will require even more from more government bodies. Thus Sino-foreign joint venture appears to be the ideal investment option as less governmental procedures and authorization time will be required. Possibility of encountering hiccups will be smaller.

How to export to China

Mainly there are 3 ways whereby one can export his/her goods in China:

1. Distribute your goods directly
2. Establish a joint venture
3. Find a qualified agent or distributor with a vast sales network

Before exporting your goods into China or choosing a Chinese partner, it is advised for you to conduct thorough market research and due diligence. Companies should be mindful of possible problems in export rights, regulations and intellectual property rights protection. If the company decides to distribute the goods directly, then it will have to be aware of the distribution rights and understand the licensing process in China.

Distributing your goods directly may be a complicated and time-consuming process as one may not be familiar with China's business practices and government regulations. Application for distribution rights and establishment of own distribution channels will be difficult. Chances of failure will be higher as a result. Establishing a joint venture will thus be a better option. Establishing cooperation with a local partner can allow you to have faster access into China's market and with the local partner's knowledge and experiences of China's market, your success rate will be higher and goods can be better distributed. Acquiring help from a local partner does give you many advantages in penetrating the China's market. A side issue to note will be that joint venture usually requires large amount of capital and China's government may have capital control towards outflow of funds should one transfer his/her funds back to his/her home country. The government will also need to assess the potential economic benefits that it can bring to China, e.g. does it create job opportunities for the local population before approving it.

For small and medium sized companies, the best way to enter the China market is through a reputable or well-known agent or distributor. These companies are located regionally and typically have large sales network. Thus they will be able to have a better understanding of the China's market and can provide assistance in developing distribution strategies in China and the region. In this way, new products can be launched easier into the market and distribution network can be set up rapidly without any problems dealing with distribution rights and licensing.

Besides all these, the most important step that one must take before exporting his/her products into China will be to have a thorough understanding China's customs, regulations and controls towards imported goods. A sound market entry strategy is also necessary in order to penetrate the China's market successfully. An assessment of your goods' strengths, weakness, opportunities and threats can allow you to promote and distribute your products better. Understanding the profitability and marketability of your products in the China's market is thus vital before exporting your products into China.

Marketing: Postcards

5 Ways to Have a Sound Postcard Marketing

Postcards, if used wisely, can be a great marketing tool. It can transmit your business' information by just hand transfer. It is one of the most convenient and economical tool that you can rely.

Sound marketing is easy if you just know where to put emphasis. Here are the vital points to consider:

1. Create a good marketing message. You have only a few seconds to attract readers so do not spoil that. Make a brief and easy to read text. Complement it with an attractive graphics. Simple yet catchy that's the idea behind postcards.
2. Maximize space. Use the space to inform your readers what you can give them. Of course they want to know. That's the very reason they are reading your postcards. What you can give them and how they can get it are vital.
3. Do not forget the 'call to action'. The most important content is the 'call to action'. You must say what you want them to do next. To buy, to subscribe – these are calls to action. Thus, if you have established it you also have to support it. Place in your postcards important details like your phone number, address and the likes. By this, you will be contacted easily.
4. Print and mail the postcards. There are a lot of postcard mailing and printing services available these days. Choose the postcard printing services that are appropriate for your needs. Make the process special. You can inquire with the printer's services to boost the appearance and result of your postcards.
5. Put some spice to it. One way to build a great business relationship is to make your offer special. You can pass on coupons to your potential customers. If they do not intend to use it, they can pass it on to others. This process can result to new clients, new purchases and repeat purchases as well.

Business industry is growing more and more competitive. Businessmen are getting savvier thus, the need to keep the pool of customers has become even harder – much more is to get a bigger market. Moreover, we have to get the most out of our marketing techniques. Postcards can do us a very good favor. It is affordable and effective. Why let the opportunity pass without taking advantage of its charisma?

Postcards can quickly and inexpensively convey your marketing message. Use them to keep the customers and making them return for more!

6 Things I Know About Postcards That You Don't

Really Simple Postcard Marketing Tips

In my plethora of experience tucked away between these ears, I have managed to cull out for you what I consider the "best of the best" – in other words, I took the most proven details

about postcards that were significant to you starting a postcard campaign and really winning at it. So here goes the most incisive highlights about postcards.

1) I know that a postcard is better than something in an envelope.

For many reasons, the main one being, in an envelope you can't make your potential customer see your message.

People are fast. We see and read very quickly – actually much more quickly than we even realize.. Think about yourself – how fast do you go through your mail and process out what you want to keep and what you don't want to keep? Pretty darn fast. It takes fractions of seconds to go through and process in your mind “bill, bill, advertisement, bill, advertisement, letter...” And it also takes fractions of seconds to decide whether you are even going to bother giving more attention to the pieces that you designated as advertisements.

With a postcard, even if they throw it away, they already saw your message regardless of whether they think they did or not. They saw it enough to throw it away, didn't they?

And the next time they get that same postcard in the mail, they see it again as they throw it in the trash.

Let's face it – junk mail gets thrown away. And postcards are junk mail to a lot of people.

Although they may be junk mail, postcards get read no matter what – even if thrown away without reading them, they get seen. It's like the phoenix rising up from the ashes.

2) I know that if you are not doing repeat mail with your postcards you are flushing your money down the toilet.

Repeat mailings cannot be repeated enough. **DO REPEAT MAILINGS! DO REPEAT MAILINGS! DO REPEAT MAILINGS!** A one shot in the dark postcard mailing is not going to change your business, your bottom line, your life or your anything.

The long and the short of it is, if you are not up to confronting that you need to do a campaign then don't bother being in business. Sorry if I sound a bit harsh!

3) I know that the best price is not best necessarily the best postcard.

The cheapest is not necessarily the best. The old adage “you get what you pay for” applies here. Get whatever potential postcard company you interview to send you samples. Make sure the postcard is a very good, quality, stiff card that catches your attention. Get them to give you customer references. Call those references and find out what they think of that company's service, product, etc.

There is a lot of behind-the-scenes work that goes into getting your postcard done right. If

they screw up printing, if they don't get your mailing out on deadline, etc. – doing it dirt cheap might not mean getting the quality service you need or want.

4) I know that although most people, if surveyed, say they like full color on both sides, the truth is black on white on the back of the postcard gets a better response.

Why? Because full color on both sides is confusing. On the other hand, if you have a very aesthetic, pleasing-to-the-eye front – with a great headline – you just want to turn that postcard over and simply get the message on the back. You want good eye trail.

Eye trail is where your eye goes when you look at the postcard. You can have good eye trail with full color on both sides – but it has to be done correctly. Usually when you give people a choice to do full color on both sides they go overboard and the creative juices start flying, not flowing, flying with, “WOW!!! full color on both sides?!!” And they make it too busy. You don't want it to be dispersing – you want it to go like a trail. Have a start, a middle and an end.

Example:

Did YOU Notice this Postcard?

Your Customers Will Notice Yours Too!

5000 Full Color

Super-glossy

Postcards

for only

\$389

Look at it from the customer viewpoint – really look at it from their viewpoint and you can see what I mean by eye trail.

5) I know that you should promote only one thing at a time on your postcard.

Even if you sell lots of different products, you only promote one of them. It is fine to mention them on the back of the postcard bullet pointed. But your main focus on the front of your postcard needs to be one product, service, item, what have you – just one thing.

Say you have a flooring store and a furniture showroom in the back. Your postcard should only talk about flooring. It is not that people who are looking for flooring are not also looking for furniture – it's just too much information on the front of postcard.

The purpose of a postcard is to get your prospect interested with one thing. You can put on the back as just a mention: “We also have a giant showroom full of furniture.”

But on the front – one item! ONE ITEM!

If a company sells hot tubs, above-ground pools and jungle gyms they need to pick the one that gives them the most income and make their postcard about that.

6) And I know that a person could grow a company with no other marketing media.

With postcards alone, one could take a company from zero to over a million bucks in revenue or more. How do I know? Because I did it.

We mailed postcards every single week, and the more postcards we mailed out, the more we grew. Yes, it is good to diversify and as we grew and became more successful and had more money to try other media, we did. Some we kept and some we nixed. Postcards are a staple that works no matter what.

These six points of postcard marketing data are proven techniques of making your postcards WOW your prospective clients while at the same time being faithful to the time-honored methods that have proven to get more bang for your buck. These tips are what will put your postcard in a class all by itself.

Marketing: Confessions Of A Failed Affiliate

Confessions Of A Failed Affiliate Marketer

It all seemed so easy. Just join up for a free affiliate marketing program and watch the money roll in. I don't know about you, but I feel for it. It had to work after all Rosalind Gardner made almost half a million dollars with affiliate marketing. Other people were getting rich. But after a few failed efforts I realize that I must be doing something wrong. I knew that rather than build a business on hype, I needed to start treating my business like a business.

More and More people are lured into affiliate marketing and you might be one of them. Affiliate marketing is one of the most effective means of generating a full-time income through the Internet. It's a fair deal between the seller and his affiliates as both benefit from each sale. Like in other kinds of business, a great deal of the profits in affiliate marketing depends on the affiliate's advertising, promoting and selling strategies. Everyday, as the affiliate marketing industry expands, competition heightens. To be successful, an affiliate marketer must be creative enough to employ unique and effective ways to convince potential buyers to purchase or avail of the products and services offered.

Compared to traditional advertising practices, affiliate programs are more effective, risk-free and cost-efficient. But why do many people still fail in affiliate marketing? There are a lot of reasons. The most critical aspect in the affiliate program is advertising. Many affiliate

marketers fail in this area. Although it pays to be lucky, you cannot merely rely on it. Affiliate marketing isn't as simple as directing customers to the business site. If you want to earn big, you have to invest time and great deal of hard work in promoting the products. As I already mentioned, the competition is very tough and customers are very wise. After all, who doesn't want the best deal possible.

A second reason many affiliate marketers fail is, lack of preparation. Part of the preparation is researching. On the part of the merchant, he has to be highly selective in choosing the right affiliate websites for his affiliate program. In order to be sure he has the best choices, he must have exhausted his means of looking for highly interested affiliates whose sites are sure fit to his products and services. The affiliate site's visitors must match his targeted customers. From the affiliate view point, you need to do research on the best merchandisers before you sign up for an affiliate program. You must ensure that the merchants' products and services match your interests so you can give your full attention and dedication to the program. You can get valuable information by joining affiliate forums, comparing different affiliate programs and reading articles on affiliate marketing where you can get tips from experienced affiliate marketers on how to choose the best merchants and products with high conversion rate.

The website is another very important tool in the whole affiliate program. As an affiliate marketer, you should plan how your site is going to look. Everything from the domain name to the design, the lay-out, the content, and ads is important. Some users are particular about what they see at first glance and if they find an ugly site, they won't read through the content even if your site has many things to say and offer. On the other hand, there those who want information more than anything else. Affiliate marketers with "rich-content" web sites are usually the ones who prosper in this business because the content improves traffic to the site. Websites with high quality content and relevant keywords and more importantly, right information about the product and not empty hyped-up advertisement, allow you to earn big in affiliate marketing even when you're asleep. If you won't be able to sustain the interest of your site visitor, you won't be able to lead him to the merchants' site. No click-through means no sale and no sales means no income on your part.

Selecting a top level domain name is also crucial to the success of the affiliate program. Lots of affiliate sites don't appear in the search engine results because they are deemed by affiliate managers as personal sites. Before you decide on the domain name, you need to decide what you are going to promote. Many fail because their sites are not appropriately named, so even when they feature the exact products the customer is looking for, the customer might think the site is not relevant and won't enter the site.

Above all, an affiliate marketer must be willing to learn more. I try to learn something new about affiliate marketing every day. There are still a lot of things to learn and you must continue to educate yourself so you can improve your marketing strategies. Many fail because they don't grow in the business and they are merely concerned about earning big quickly. If you want long-term and highly satisfactory results, take time to learn the ins and outs of the business. Continue to improve your knowledge especially with the basics in affiliate marketing ranging from advertising to programming, web page development, and search engine

optimization techniques. Likewise, study the needs and wants of your site users and how different merchandisers compete with each other.

Last of all, Keep on trying; don't get disappointed if your first attempts did not pay off. Thousands are attracted by the possibility of generating skyrocketing incomes through affiliate marketing and so they sign up in any affiliate program without carefully understanding every aspect of the business. When they don't get instant results, they quit and sign up for another program and repeat the process of just copying links and referring them to others. When you sign up for an affiliate program, don't expect to get rich in an instant. Work on your advertising strategies and be patient. You'll never know how much you can get if you don't persevere. Look at it this way if it takes you \$50 in advertising to make a \$55 sale you've just made a 10% return on your investment in a really short period of time. Rather than looking at it as a lousy five bucks. Figure out how you can do the same thing 100 times a day and you are now making \$500 a day. What you may have viewed as a failure may have been a great success.

Marketing: Strategy

A New Internet Marketing Strategy

Internet marketing is a term that is often misunderstood. Some people hear the term and instantly think of all of the junk email messages they receive. Others hear the term and think anything and everything online is internet marketing. Still others hear it and think about how they could get a better internet marketing strategy. For the sake of this article, we will assume you fall into this last group. Let's take a look at a few ideas to help you do better.

There is one thing that any good internet marketing strategy is based upon, and that is systems. The problem is that too many many marketers throw a site together, put it online and then try to get people to buy from the site. It is possible to make money this way, but it isn't easy and it isn't the most profitable. What they need is a step by step system that starts from the beginning.

Before you put a site up, you need to know who your market is and how your product or service will help them. For the record, "people online" is not a market. You need to be specific. Also, do not just assume there is a market for what you're selling. Instead, you need to find the market first, then figure out how to cater to them. Be careful! A lot of amateur marketers assume there are markets where none exist.

Once you determine who your market is, you need to know the primary way they are going to find you. An internet marketing system takes this into account. Do not assume that they will just find you by searching for some terms at Google. They may, or they may not. The truth is that you get to decide to a major degree how you want people to find you. Whatever you choose, make it a part of your system.

Now you can start thinking about putting your website together. Your site needs to incorporate everything you have done up to this point. You need to know the best way to communicate

with your market, and how you want them to find you. If they will be coming to your site from somewhere else (such as an article you have written), then you need to make sure that your site matches the expectations you are creating.

Granted, a lot of these things in your new internet marketing strategy are a bit different than you have been doing them. But this is a good way to go about it if you want to get more customers and generate higher profits. Do not just go about things in a haphazard fashion. Find or make a system that you can follow each and every time.

An Easy Way To Improve Your Internet Marketing Strategy

If you have an online business presence, then there's a good chance you want to know how to improve your internet marketing strategy. Perhaps your current efforts are bringing in some form of a return, but you know you could still be doing better. OR, maybe you are seeing no results at all and need an entirely different approach. Either way, there is a simple thing you can do to improve your strategy.

The main principle behind internet marketing is to value and respect your customers. Sounds pretty simple, doesn't it? Yet far too many online marketers see each and every one of their visitors as potential marks. After all, if one person doesn't buy, or if they ask for a refund, it doesn't matter because there are so many people online around the world. In other words, they see it as a sea full of people ready to be suckered. Needless to say, this is the wrong approach.

In fact, what was just described isn't really marketing at all. If someone just sees their online visitors as suckers ready to be taken for as much money as possible, then there isn't any need to market to them at all. Instead, all the seller has to do is make up the biggest, most convincing lies possible to separate people from their money. Like I said, that's not marketing.

Instead, what you need to do is respect each and every visitor. Remember that they are real people. Value them. I'm not suggesting you're not doing this; not at all. The point is that there's a good chance you good be doing it better than you already are.

The key is to put yourself into the mind of your customers. What do they want? Why do they want it? What does it mean if they can't have it? Questions like these will help you shape your marketing message in a way that not only connects with your visitors, but shows that you care about them.

Whatever you do, don't lie to them. Everything you are offering to your customers needs to be able to stand on its own merits. If you feel you have to lie "just a little" then it means your product needs to be better, or that you don't really believe in your product. But, if your product isn't as good as it could be, then you really aren't ready to sell it. And if you don't believe in your product, that will show through in your sales copy, and your site's visitors won't believe in it either.

If you want to improve your internet marketing strategy, then put your customers first. Think about them as real people, with real problems and real wants and needs. How successful you are will be directly related to how well you understand and connect with them. Remember, customers are the lifeblood of your business, so always value them and treat them with the respect they deserve.

Marketing: Strategy To Segmentation

Marketing Strategy: 7 Steps To Market Segmentation

Market segmentation is widely defined as being a complex process consisting in two main phases:

- identification of broad, large markets
- segmentation of these markets in order to select the most appropriate target markets and develop Marketing mixes accordingly.

Everyone within the Marketing world knows and speaks of segmentation yet not many truly understand its underlying mechanics, thus failure is just around the corner. What causes this? It has been documented that most marketers fail the segmentation exam and start with a narrow mind and a bunch of misconceptions such as “all teenagers are rebels”, “all elderly women buy the same cosmetics brands” and so on. There are many dimensions to be considered, and uncovering them is certainly an exercise of creativity.

The most widely employed model of market segmentation comprises 7 steps, each of them designed to encourage the marketer to come with a creative approach.

STEP 1: Identify and name the broad market

You have to have figured out by this moment what broad market your business aims at. If your company is already on a market, this can be a starting point; more options are available for a new business but resources would normally be a little limited.

The biggest challenge is to find the right balance for your business: use your experience, knowledge and common sense to estimate if the market you have just identified earlier is not too narrow or too broad for you.

STEP 2: Identify and make an inventory of potential customers' needs

This step pushes the creativity challenge even farther, since it can be compared to a brainstorming session.

What you have to figure out is what needs the consumers from the broad market identified earlier might have. The more possible needs you can come up with, the better.

Got yourself stuck in this stage of segmentation? Try to put yourself into the shoes of your potential customers: why would they buy your product, what could possibly trigger a buying decision? Answering these questions can help you list most needs of potential customers on a given product market.

STEP 3: Formulate narrower markets

McCarthy and Perreault suggest forming sub-markets around what you would call your “typical customer”, then aggregate similar people into this segment, on the condition to be able to satisfy their needs using the same Marketing mix. Start building a column with dimensions of the major need you try to cover: this will make it easier for you to decide if a given person should be included in the first segment or you should form a new segment. Also create a list of people-related features, demographics included, for each narrow market you form – a further step will ask you to name them.

There is no exact formula on how to form narrow markets: use your best judgment and experience. Do not avoid asking opinions even from non-Marketing professionals, as different people can have different opinions and you can usually count on at least those items most people agree on.

STEP 4: Identify the determining dimensions

Carefully review the list resulted from the previous step. You should have by now a list of need dimensions for each market segment: try to identify those that carry a determining power.

Reviewing the needs and attitudes of those you included within each market segment can help you figure out the determining dimensions.

STEP 5: Name possible segment markets

You have identified the determining dimensions of your market segments, now review them one by one and give them an appropriate name.

A good way of naming these markets is to rely on the most important determining dimension.

STEP 6: Evaluate the behavior of market segments

Once you are done naming each market segment, allow time to consider what other aspects you know about them. It is important for a marketer to understand market behavior and what triggers it. You might notice that, while most segments have similar needs, they’re still different needs: understanding the difference and acting upon it is the key to achieve success using competitive offerings.

STEP 7: Estimate the size of each market segment

Each segment identified, named and studied during the previous stages should finally be given an estimate size, even if, for lack of data, it is only a rough estimate.

Estimates of market segments will come in handy later, by offering a support for sales forecasts and help plan the Marketing mix: the more data we can gather at this moment, the easier further planning and strategy will be.

These were the steps to segment a market, briefly presented. If performed correctly and thoroughly, you should now be able to have a glimpse of how to build Marketing mixes for each market segment.

This 7 steps approach to market segmentation is very simple and practical and works for most marketers. However, if you are curious about other methods and want to experiment, you should take a look at computer-aided techniques, such as clustering and positioning.

Marketing: Web Domains

Domain Parking – 5 Tips For Getting Ahead

For anyone working online who is looking to add an income stream, domain parking may just be the ticket. Many people are making several thousand dollars a month with this innovative concept. When parking a domain it means that you've purchased the actual domain name, this can be done for as little as ten dollars per year or even less if you pay for several years in advance or buy several domains at once.

You can just hang on to them, or park them, and make some money by allowing advertisers to place ads on your parked sites. The more traffic your domain site gets the more you can earn, and charge the advertisers. While you are waiting to sell your domains you can still be earning a nice income stream.

Here are some tips to keep in mind when first starting out with parking domains:

1. In most cases it will work best if you choose a .com extension. They are still the most popular, and will be for a long time to come. Finding a domain name that is a highly searched term will help get a lot more targeted traffic for free. That is always a good selling point for a domain so make sure to take some time and do your research when choosing a domain name.
2. It's a fairly common practice to buy misspellings of domain names. By doing so, you can assure yourself that anyone who misspells the word will still end up on the right site, eventually. This can help decrease the amount of wasted traffic.
3. You should get at least 80% of the revenue earned by your parked domain. It's not hard to find a company to park your domains with. It will take a little time and some research to find the best company for you, there are a lot of them around. Just check out each one that you're

considering doing business with before you sign up. Make sure you are completely comfortable with all the terms and conditions of that company.

4. You can also park domain names that you are planning on using for your own business but just don't have time right now to set up. You can park them for a short time and earn a little extra cash until your ready to tackle that project and get your website set up.

5. By targeting the right keywords on your landing page you can greatly increase the amount of organic traffic you get, thus increasing your potential income. So choose wisely. Make sure that any company you're thinking about working with will allow you a lot of leeway when it comes to the landing page layout.

If you want to increase your online income by using domain parking as another revenue stream, or if you've just bought up a bunch of great domain names but you don't have the time right now to put websites up, you can make some extra cash. More and more savvy internet marketers are getting wise to the idea that you can park a domain and make a lot of extra cash, it's really kind of a no brainer!

Domain Name Search – Tips For How To Do It Right

When it comes to choosing a great domain name, it really should come down to more than just something that sounds clever. There are specific things you can do that can increase the amount of traffic your site gets, of course the focus of your site will go a long way to determining which methods will work best for you. Here are some domain name search ideas to keep in mind the next time you are in the market for a new domain name.

First of all, you have to determine what the purpose of your site will be and how you plan on getting your traffic. If you are putting up a website to sell a product or service online your site name should be something directly related to that product or service. To drastically increase the amount of organic traffic (this is the traffic that basically 'stumbles' upon your website because the search term they used matches the keywords you've used for your sites domain name and any on site search engine optimization you've done) you should create a domain name that is a highly searched for search term.

To illustrate what I mean let's look at the example of a niche on dog training. Let's say that you've done keyword research on this niche and you've found the term 'simple dog training' gets a lot of monthly searches and doesn't have a lot of competition. That would be a great keyword to target. If you could get a domain name that was "SimpleDogTraining.com" you'd likely get a lot of free traffic.

If this is your primary goal you may want to also consider using a .net or a .org extension especially if any non-organic traffic you get will come from links in articles or PPC which people will just click on as opposed to typing in the address (this makes a difference because if people are actually typing the address into their browser bar they are more likely to type a .com than any other extension). You can also have a domain name that is a little longer,

usually no more than 4 words is a good rule of thumb.

If the purpose of your site is to encourage visitors to tell their friends and recommend other's check it out you'll want a shorter, easier to remember domain name since most people will have to type the domain name into the browser themselves rather than just click a link and the longer the domain name (or if you have an unusual extension) people will most likely mis-type it and not get to your website.

Once you've got a list of viable domain names it's time to see if they are actually available. To do that go to GoDaddy.com, DomainCheapsters.com or do a search for other's online. Enter your desired domain name and see if it's available. If you buy one domain at a time for a one year period it will cost around \$10 a year (you can get discounts if you buy in bulk or if you register a name for more than one year at a time).

Having your own domain name is very important to your success online, picking the right domain is also crucial. Before you start your domain name search, remember to keep these tips in mind.

Domain For Sale – Tips For Domain Buying

Want to buy a domain for sale? Not sure where to look? Well, I've got some answers for you. Having your own domain name is step one to having a successful internet business. Many people mistakenly think that it's OK. to go with the free services such as Yahoo, WordPress or Blogger. If you're only building a blog so you can keep in touch with family or friends than that's a good way to go about it, but if you're trying to make money online there are several reasons why that isn't the best course of action.

For one thing, when you use the free services you don't own anything. You are completely at the mercy of the company, and their policies. If they decide they don't like something in your blog they can pull the plug, and they don't have to warn you or give you an explanation. You don't want to spend weeks, months or years building up a successful business to just wake up one day and find that your website has been offline.

The second thing is that you want to brand yourself. As you build your business you want to gain name recognition. This is a very important element to any successful business and without your own domain name it's virtually impossible. If you are using free services it just makes you look unprofessional, this is especially bad if you're trying to build yourself up as a teacher in a certain field.

Now that I've convinced you that you need to invest in your own domain names, you need to know how to pick the best name and where to buy one. For most people the best way to pick out a good domain name is to start with keyword research. Pick a list of highly searched keywords in your niche market and then try to get those exact keywords as domain names.

For example, if your niche is dog training and you find a great keyword: Quick and easy dog

training. Than you would try to get QuickAndEasyDogTraining.com as your domain name. You do want to keep the domain name around 3 or 4 words max, but with a domain name like this you will get a ton of free traffic since your domain name is the exact search term people are looking for.

Now that you've decided on what your domain names should be you can go to places like GoDaddy.com or DomainCheapsters.com and do a search to see if the domain name you want is available. Many times it won't be, that's why it's important to have quite a long list of possible names. I personally recommend using other extensions than just a .com. I've found that I have just as good luck with a .net or .org (it can also be easier to get one of these extensions). If you buy just one domain name at a time for a one year period it's usually around \$10 a year. You can get a discount if you buy more than one domain name at a time or if you buy it for several years in advance.

I personally don't buy my domain names for more than a year at a time at first, true you'll have to renew it in a year (the company you bought it from will let you know when it needs to be renewed) but why pay for several years for a domain name that might not be a moneymaker? I personally like to pay for one year until I know whether or not I've found a moneymaking niche, when I know I've got a profitable niche on my hands I'll pay for several years in advance.

There you go, everything you need to know when it comes time to find a domain for sale. Having your own domain name is one of the most important steps in building a profitable online empire.

Expired Domains – Can Be Profitable

It's a sad fact, but many people start an online business and then abandon it when they're aren't making as much money as they thought they should be (of course there may be many other reasons why they stopped working on their online business, but getting frustrated and giving up is a common scenario). For this reason people don't always renew their domain names when they expire, these expired domains can actually be money in the bank to the savvy internet marketer.

The biggest advantage is that many of these expired domain names actually have a website that is ranked high in the search engines and has a nice steady stream of traffic. Buying a site that has a high rank and that already gets traffic will make it so much easier for you to make money since you don't have to invest the time to start from scratch. No matter what some of the more unethical 'gurus' online may try to tell you, it takes time to get your website to the point where it is getting enough traffic to be profitable.

Allowing a site to 'age' can help the traffic a lot as the search engines tend to like older sites more. It also allows for there to be a lot of backlinks into the site, and again, building these links is time consuming so if you can benefit from someone else who has done the work for you, you can be that much further ahead.

Another great advantage is you might be able to pick up a gem, though it's rare, in a market that has become saturated and it's difficult to find a good domain name. This expired domain may be just the thing but you will most likely be paying a premium for it.

That brings me to another point, while there are many places online where you can buy domains that have expired you do have to be careful to not get caught up in the moment and overpay for a site. You should be willing to spend time to do your due diligence and make sure that the domain you are interested in is actually worth the amount of money that is being charged for it.

Some of the things you should check out are the number of back links to the site, what the page rank is and how long the site has been active. Some unscrupulous people will try to make a killing on a site that is no longer in it's heyday and not getting the traffic it once did. They will show you old stats that are no longer accurate as a way to trick you into paying more than the domain is actually worth.

If you know what you are doing and are willing to invest the time to adequately research any given site to make sure it's still profitable, than buying expired domains can be an amazing way to get a turnkey site up and running (and making money) for you. Someone else has already done a lot of the work, now you get to reap the rewards. Have fun!

Buy Domain Names – 3 Tips To Help You

There's a belief that you can never really lose money if you invest (wisely) in real estate. As the saying goes "they're never going to make more land". When it comes to the internet, having domain names is owning online real estate and that's why despite all the free resources online you should buy domain names... as many as you can.

But, just like real estate, not all domain names are going to be equally valued, some will be worth more than others. To pick out a good domain name, which will enhance not only your business but how much you could sell the website for down the road, is something of a science. There are a few elements you should consider when you buy your domain name:

1. The first thing you need to do is to identify the niche your new website will be in. What product or service will you be promoting? Once you've figured that out you should do keyword research to find a list of great keywords that get a lot of searches every month. Those keywords should be the domain name. For example, if my site was on dog grooming and I found a great keyword: dog grooming clippers. Then I would try to get a domain name something like: dog grooming clippers.com.

This is a great way to get a lot of traffic to your website for free. Why? Because you already know from your keyword research that the term dog grooming clippers gets a lot of monthly searches, so many of those searches will be sent right to your website since that is the domain name. This one step can help you get a lot more targeted visitors for free.

2. There are a lot of places online where you can buy domain names. GoDaddy, DomainCheapsters are two of the most common, and one's I've personally used. If you want to find more just visit some internet marketing forums and ask for opinions, or do a search. Domain names are inexpensive usually around \$10 a year at the most. Many sites offer sales or multiple domain discounts. I know at DomainCheapsters if you buy 6 or more at a time they are around \$6 to \$7 depending on the extension you get.

3. There is a lot of conflicting opinions about whether or not you should get any domain with a different extension such as .net or .org for example. Personally, I will use a .com, .net or .org. I've found that any of them work very well for my needs and .net are quite cheap. You'll have to find what works best for you, but you need to remember something: many people will say that customers will forget a long URL or a different extension, which is true, but how do you target the majority of your customers?

If you aren't handing out business cards and expecting them to type in the domain name than it's not such a big issue. Most of the traffic I get is either from searches or from online marketing and in all cases my website visitors just have to click on a link which is why I think having different extensions hasn't had a negative impact on my business.

Take the time to establish your internet presence, don't get fooled into thinking that going the 'free' route with a blog is the best way to go. If you don't buy domain names and rely solely on the free services you don't actually own your fair share of internet real estate and you don't present a professional image.

Domains For Sale – Ins and Outs

When starting an online business there are many ways you can go about it. You can buy your own domain, from scratch, or you can get domains for sale that already have a website and traffic built in. If you choose the later option, it's important to do your homework so you don't overpay for the website.

Just like in the 'real world' you can make money flipping websites. People do it all the time. If you want to profit from someone else's work, you only have to look as far as the nearest website auction site such as GoDaddy.com or Flippa.com. There you will find a list of websites that someone else has taken the time to build and grow and hopefully has a steady stream of traffic and has made money from it.

Now you may ask yourself, if this person is making money with their site why would they sell it? The reason is that this is the way a lot of people actually make money online, they make more from selling the site than they would by keeping it. Or, they just don't want to hold on to a particular site, or they want to make some quick cash. If you do your due diligence you can pick up a great niche site, with decent traffic and maybe even some good links for very little money. And the best part is that it is turn key. You don't have to do much since it's already set up and profitable.

It's easy to get caught up in the moment and overpay for a site, but if you do that than it will take you longer to be profitable, or you might just get taken completely and never make money from a certain site. To be sure you don't do this it's important that you verify all income claims the person is making about their site. At a minimum they should provide you with screen shots showing their traffic counts, and their monetization efforts.

Many of the bigger flipping sites will have fairly strict guidelines that need to be followed by anyone who is listing a website for sale, these can help protect you but ultimately you are responsible for protecting yourself.

Take some time to do your own research into the niche that the website is centered around. How many products are for sale in this niche? Go to Amazon.com and do a search for the precise niche items to see how popular they are. Check to see how many customer reviews each product has (this will give you an idea of how passionate the people in this niche are about the product, more reviews typically means more passion, and more sales).

Go to the website yourself, look around. What is your first reaction to the site? All of these things will help protect you from making a bad purchase. Most sites that sell websites will have fairly extensive training materials to walk you through the process, I highly recommend that you take some time to check them out first, that is step one when trying to find great, profitable domains for sale.

Domain Name For Sale – Flipping A Website

One of the easy, and potentially profitable, ways to make money online is by 'flipping' websites. This concept is the same as when an investor will buy a house, fix it up and turn around and sell it for a profit, the only difference is that you are doing it all in the virtual world, online. You will first find a domain name for sale, purchase it, put up a simple website and sit back and wait for a few weeks or months, then sell your website for a nice little profit.

While this is a fairly easy concept there is, of course, a little more to it. The first thing you want to do is purchase a desirable domain name. It's unlikely that if you buy the domain name 'Jim Smith' you're going to get many people who would want to pay for it later.

When deciding on the domain name you want to buy you should do some research to find a hot niche that has a lot of interest in it. It could be anything from cat toys to coffee makers. When you find a niche that not only has a lot of traffic but where people are actually making purchases then you need to do some keyword research to determine which specific words and phrases people are using when they search for products in that niche.

For example, if your niche is cat toys you will need a list of words and phrases that people are searching for... a lot. So after your keyword research you might find that one phrase that has a lot of searches is: catnip cat toys. The next thing you have to do is to go to one of the online domain name sellers such as GoDaddy.com or DomainCheapsters.com and see if you can

get that exact phrase as a domain name. If you can get CatnipCatToys.com than you are well on your way, you know that your domain name will get a lot of free traffic because it is a popular keyword phrase that gets a lot of traffic.

Once you've got your domain name, you need to put up a website. This can be a simple blog style. Add some content and sit back and wait, or you can be a little more proactive and help your site grow more quickly by adding more content more frequently and also by doing some article marketing to get even more traffic. It's up to you which way you choose to go, one will be easier but take longer and the other will be harder but get results more quickly.

Now that you've got a desirable domain name in a popular niche and your site is getting traffic, you can sell it and (hopefully) make a profit. There are several sites online that will walk you through the steps and list your site for sale, one of the best known is Flippa.com. It costs around \$20 to list your site for sale, and of course, there is no guarantee that it will sell but if you've followed these steps you've got a good chance of selling your site and making several hundred dollars and it all starts with picking the right domain name for sale.

Domain Web Hosting Service – Can Make You Or Break You

When starting your online business there are a few things that are crucial to your success, having your own domain name and a domain web hosting service are two of the most important. Your own domain name will allow you to 'brand' your product or service and you need a good hosting company that can provide you with a space to put that domain name and the website you build around it.

Think of it like this, a big storage facility where anyone can rent one, or more, storage units. You pay a monthly fee and will have varying degrees of access to your storage space. The company that is renting the storage buildings will take care of all the maintenance and service, you just have to watch out for your particular storage unit.

Web hosting is a similar concept. There are many companies that will provide you with an online 'storage space' where you can 'place' your website. You will be renting a portion of their server, or a whole server depending on your needs. You will pay a monthly fee and they will take care of making sure that their servers are up and working 24/7.

The major hosting companies such as GoDaddy and HostGator will offer several packages to suit virtually every online business need. For many people a simple shared hosting plan (where you rent a portion of a server) that will allow them to host unlimited websites (as long as none of them require a lot of bandwidth) will be plenty. If you are building a niche website empire you might want to consider a dedicated hosting account where you can rent a whole server from your hosting company. By going this route, you have more control and a lot more bandwidth.

Still another option is a reseller account. This is where you pay to rent a block of the servers and you can sub-divide that block into smaller units and then rent those out. The hosting

company will still handle all the maintenance and usually the customer service. Just check the specifics with whichever hosting company you choose.

When choosing a host make sure you get one that guarantees 99% up time. You will lose money if your server goes down and customers can't get to your website. Great customer service is another thing to consider. You want to be able to reach someone 24/7 if you have a problem or a question.

Most companies are quite inexpensive and if you pay a year, or more, ahead of time your actual cost can be as low as \$3 or \$4 a month depending on your plan. If you don't prepay and you opt for a monthly payment plan you can expect to pay around \$10 a month for a shared hosting plan which will still allow you unlimited websites. You may have some bandwidth restrictions with this type of plan but unless you are getting millions of hits everyday you shouldn't have to worry too much.

As your online niche website empire grows you might want to consider getting a dedicated hosting account so you can have more flexibility in the bandwidth as well as some other functions.

Once you've bought your domain name, you will need a place to store that domain name. You will need domain web hosting and with all the reliable companies around today you can get the hosting you need for less than a cup of coffee.

Buying Domain Name The Right Way

When it comes to making your online presence professional buying domain name is one of the best things you can do for your online business. With so many free options available online, many people mistakenly think that they will be just as successful (and save money) by going the free route, but there are a few problems with that line of thought.

For one thing, when you are relying on a free blog, no matter which platform you are using, you don't own a thing. If the service that provides the blog, say WordPress, decides that they don't like something about your blog, they can shut it down and they don't have to let you know they are doing it or why they are doing it.

Another problem using the free methods is that you can't get a good domain name. You want your own unique domain name not a hybrid name tacked on to the end of the free service you're using, it just looks more professional to have your own name.

Domain names are inexpensive and easy to buy so there's really no reason to not buy your own. With sites like GoDaddy.com and DomainCheapsters.com plus many more, you can get a domain name for as cheap as \$10 a year or if you buy many at once you can get the price down to less than \$7 a piece per year.

Besides establishing your online presence and creating a professional look, when you buy

your own domain name you can actually flip your website and sell it. It's the same concept as when someone buys a house, fixes it up and sells it for a profit. There are sites online that will allow you to place your site up for sale, Flippa.com is one of those sites.

Just buy a good domain name, put up a site, get some traffic (and hopefully some sales) than list it on Flippa and make some money. Think about it, if you only paid \$10 for a domain name and a little bit for hosting, and then you sold the site for only \$200 that would be a pretty nice profit for such a quick and easy sale.

When it comes time to picking out your domain name there is a few simple things to keep in mind:

1. Do keyword research to find a list of keywords associated with your niche that get a lot of traffic every month. Then try to get one of those keywords, exactly, as your domain name. For example, in the niche for cat toys let's say I found a great keyword that gets a lot of monthly searches without too much competition: cheap cat toys. Than I would want to use that as my domain: CheapCatToys.com. That way my domain name is a highly searched for keyword which will guarantee quite a bit of free, highly targeted, traffic.

2. If all of your marketing efforts are going to be online I wouldn't worry too much about the extension. I've had equally good luck using a .com, .net, or .org. All my marketing efforts are with PPC or article marketing so no one needs to type in my domain name, they just click on a link which is why I don't think the extensions matter too much. If you are going to be marketing in such a way that people would have to actually type in the domain name to find your site, it may make more of a difference.

Treat your online business like a business and establish your online presence and professionalism by buying domain name. The cheap route can work in a pinch but as soon as you can afford \$10 or so, buy your own name.

Marketing: Leads From Seminars & Webinars

Get Leads From Seminars

Whenever a particular interest group, home-related business associations, or any other group set up seminars, they usually go out of their way in order to get sponsorship and the like. While it may seem unlikely that you will get anything out of sponsoring a seminar, think again! Moreover, you can get the most out of a seminar without even sponsoring the event yourself.

Let's talk of sponsorships in events first. By giving the organizers a required amount of money, you will be given advertising mileage and marketed as the company who made the seminar possible. This makes your real estate venture very attractive not only for potential customers, but even for people who are impressed and may refer you to one of their friends. Sponsorship also gives you the benefit of setting up a booth within the vicinity of the seminar, where guests can approach and find out more about what you offer before and after the seminar, or in-

between seminar breaks. With a booth set up, you have a clear avenue for which leads can come up to you and ask questions. In return, you have the opportunity of giving a winning sales pitch to convince them of your real estate venture's merit, or simply ask for their information should they want additional informative materials on your company.

Because people are currently experiencing great fatigue from being sent padded and impersonal brochures through postal and electronic mail, you'll be surprised at how responsive they would be to an interactive and personal sales talk that you can give through this seminar side.

The key to getting the most out of sponsoring a seminar is identifying which seminars are worth sponsoring. First, you may want to sponsor something that is at least remotely related to real estate. This way, you will have people flocking to an event who are already personally interested in real estate. This will make it much easier to convince leads to provide you their information or become a potential client in the future.

Choose seminars that invite people who are within your financial target market. It's difficult to convince a buyer of a service he or she cannot afford. Also, try to be part of an event that is going to be attended by a large sum of people.

If you are simply attending a seminar, sit alongside people who have slight inclinations towards real estate. This way, it will not be difficult to get their attention. Always bring with you a brochure and your card to give away to the person sitting next to you just in case he or she may be interested in your service.

More and more WEBINARS (seminar videos) appear on YouTube. That is the way to get lots of leads!

Marketing: Teleseminar Basics

How To Do A Teleseminar

If you are a consultant, business coach, teacher, professional, speaker, lawyer, direct marketer, or business trainer, you have knowledge and skills that can be of value to others and they're willing to pay for that knowledge. Why not offer your services online? Here's how to do a teleseminar.

There is plenty of money to be made teaching. And a great way to make an income is by teaching about something you love and enjoy. Teleseminars have a very high profit margin and they are easy to produce. You can use the same information bundled different ways to create different sources of income. It's the perfect solution for business entrepreneurs.

Teleseminars are an excellent way to promote your message, increase your credibility and make your mark as an expert in the field. Offering your potential customers a free teleseminar is a very smart and cost effective method of promoting yourself. Teleseminars that a customer

pays for are an excellent way of distributing your knowledge to your paying customer. So how do you conduct your own teleseminar?

A teleseminar is a meeting between participants in different locations around the world that occurs over the telephone, and where all members can participate in the conversation just as if they were in attendance at a seminar. If you use video conferencing you will also be able to transmit video via your computer through a video camera.

The great thing about teleconferencing is that it knows no boundaries. Whether you live in Florida, Ontario, Russia, Australia, or somewhere remote in the great North, if you have access to a telephone you can conduct or participate in a teleseminar.

It's always best if you can designate one person to set things up. That person will make the initial calls to each participant to let them know the time and date that the teleseminar will take place. That person should also be the person that initiates the calls to assemble everyone on the day of the seminar.

There isn't a lot of equipment required. A speaker phone is a great way to let several people have access with just one phone, but it's definitely not required. In more complex setups where there may be satellite connections or audiovisual connections, you may require a specialist.

Your need to have a well thought out agenda that stays focused and on topic. It's always nice to give your participants a bit of a briefing prior to starting so they know what they can expect.

Make sure you speak clearly and address how you wish participants to participate. Is there an order of speaking? Is the floor open to questions at any point? Let participants know what is expected of them. Remember this may be a new experience for them.

You as the moderator should lead the teleseminar which means you'll control the flow of the conversations, identify any guest speakers you might have, and open and close the teleconference. It's your job to ensure things run smoothly and on time.

A teleseminar is one of the most cost effective methods of bringing a group together without the need for travel. It's a convenient, cost effective tool that has great potential and is often overlooked.

Marketing: Mini Sites / Squeeze Pages

The Bare Basics Of Squeeze Pages

Squeeze pages are basically one-page websites that offer you something in exchange for filling in your contact details. The page will also contain (at the very bottom) the business privacy standards and possibly other information like contact details. The squeeze page / mini site is designed so that the visitor will be compelled to take a very specific action. So, to be

effective it should have a catchy headline, a story or some content that immediately catches the interest of the reader, examples of how the product or service is helping others, testimonials, and the bonuses the reader will get if he or she takes the action you desire. There is no navigating on the squeeze page. Your visitor will just follow it through and take action, or will decide to leave the site.

At this point, some squeeze pages will have a pop-up window incorporated to invite you back to the page by promising you a discount, an extra bonus, or some other benefit that the visitor will have a hard time passing up.

There is a lot of information about the best way to create a squeeze page / mini site or to have someone do it for you. Many internet marketers leave this work to established designers who understand exactly what kind of pages convert visitors into leads and/or sales. Others prefer to do it themselves. In either case, there are certain elements that are crucial to having a good squeeze page.

The headline, of course, is the most important factor. It's been said that you have eight seconds at the most to capture your visitor's attention. If your headline doesn't do that, then the rest of the content on the page is pretty much useless. Keep in mind that the headline does not have to be "hypey", but it does need to be compelling. Also, you don't want to put the features of the product or service you are offering in the headline. Rather, you want to tell the visitor why he must have whatever it is you are offering, so speak in terms of benefits to him or her. Most squeeze page / mini site headlines are in red, and they can then be followed by a smaller sub-heading.

The rest of the squeeze page / mini site is about further convincing your visitor that what you are offering is not to be passed up. By the end of the squeeze page, he or she should feel he or she is going to be getting a tremendous deal just by giving you his or her contact information. Customer testimonials are necessary, as well as other examples. You also want to make sure that the visitor knows that there are limited items of whatever you are offering on your squeeze pages, or that the price will be going up soon, or both. If you don't give them a deadline, they will often just think that they will come back to it later, and then they never do.

Why Do You Need A Squeeze Page

A squeeze page, also called a landing page, lead capture page or power page, has one goal—to capture the contact details of the visitor. The purpose of this is to create a contact list of customers and potential customers that you can begin to establish a relationship with, and hopefully maintain that relationship far into the future. How do you get someone to leave you with his or her contact details in a world full of email hype and spam? You offer them something (free or charge) that they cannot pass up. In order to do this, you must be very in-tuned with your target market so that you can pinpoint their needs and make it very easy for them to turn over their email addresses to you.

While it is true that your goal is to make sales, obtaining the names of people who do not buy

from you is also important. It has been estimated that the average consumer will look at an offer seven times before purchasing. But how can you remind them of your offer if you do not have a way to contact them? That is why squeeze pages are so important. But it is just the first step of the process. After someone fills out your landing page, you will first hand them what they wanted when they filled in their contact information. You can then direct them immediately over to the salespage of your product or service, or you can decide to just keep in contact with the contact by email. If you send out informative, useful information in your emails, someone is more likely to buy from you than if you just send out constant sales pitches.

Lead capture pages are essential steps in the overall strategy of any internet marketer. Some pay upwards of 25,000 dollars to have a landing page developed for them. And the average cost of a landing page is 5,000 dollars. If there is one thing that you can invest in when it comes to your online marketing efforts, it should very well be the landing page. An effective one will allow you to earn back your investment very quickly and move into the profiting zone.

A squeeze page / mini site will do exactly what you want it to do, which is act as the passageway to your business by giving your target audience what they want. Obviously, the better the product you offer, the better results you will get with follow-up and sales from the leads your page captures.

You will need to have an autoresponder so that you can insert a form into your lead capture page. There are many auto-responders to choose from with some of the most recognized being AWEber, GetResponse, and IContact. You can set your auto-responder to send an email to the visitor as soon as he or she completes the squeeze page / mini site form, and then to continue sending out emails that will help build your relationship with your list.

squeeze page / mini site Templates Save Time

Even if you are an experienced internet marketer, you can use squeeze page / mini site templates to help you create your page. Squeeze pages are one of the many tools that you can use to build your list of customers and potential customers, and they are often considered one of the most important elements in the strategy of online marketing. The goal of the squeeze page / mini site is to get your visitors to fill in their contact information. And, in order to do this, you must offer them something that makes it worth their while to do so.

You can find many types of squeeze page / mini site templates online, for free or at a small cost. You will see that all of them contain the following five components:

The Headline

Many will argue that this is the most important part of the squeeze page. Without a good headline, you really won't get readers to continue on to the other content, so make sure you put some time into this. The headline should grab your visitor's attention and tell him or her that you have the solution to whatever problem he or she is facing.

Bullet Points

Bullet point will list all of the specific benefits and features alluded to in your heading. This is where you will point out details of whatever it is you are offering your visitor. Keep it simple and focus more on benefits than on features. So, for example, a feature would be “fast software” and a benefit would be “saves you tons of time”.

Testimonials

Do you need testimonials on your squeeze page? Not necessarily. But one or two, especially if you are just starting out, is not a bad idea. Try to use testimonials that represent the target market you are going after.

Offer

This is whatever it is you are going to give your visitor in exchange for his or her contact details. This must be free to them, but it must not be “cheap”. In other words, you want to make sure that your visitor knows that this product is worth something, but you are making an exception and offering it to them for free here on this page. You can take it a step further and put a time limit on your offer, saying that it is free for now but the price will be raised later on.

Opt-in form

The whole point of the squeeze page / mini site is to get information from your visitors so an opt-in form is absolutely necessary. And you will want your form to appear on the right hand side of the page.

Setting up your own squeeze pages is not particularly difficult, and using squeeze page / mini site templates can help you do it more quickly and efficiently. Some will even allow you to customize certain elements so that your squeeze pages stand out from the crowd.

Basic Elements Of A Good squeeze page / mini site Template

A squeeze page / mini site template is what you, as a marketer, will use to build your ever-important list. If you've been in internet marketing for any time at all, you know that having a list is extremely important because it allows you to build and maintain a relationship with your customers and potential customers. The squeeze page / mini site concept is very simple. You offer your target market something in return for their contact information. So, in other words, if a visitor gives you his or her name and email address, you will give him or her a free sample of your product, a free informational guide, some free training, a free consultation, or whatever is important enough for him or her to offer up his or her contact details.

A good squeeze page / mini site template will have four basic elements. Keep in mind that these make up just the framework of the page, and the details must be filled in within each

section.

The Heading. The heading is like a title on your squeeze page. The best converting squeeze pages use headings that are some shade of red, like brick red or bright red. The heading should be larger than the rest of the text on your page, and it should be compelling. It has been estimated that most people will make a decision about whether to put in their contact details within 8 seconds of accessing your page so you'll need to say something that grabs your intended readers' attention very quickly. The heading can be preceded by a pre-heading—a couple of words of introduction to the heading, in smaller print and in black—and followed by a sub-heading, which will also be smaller and in black.

Bullet points: After a short introduction which explains what you are offering, you'll want to list the benefits of whatever it is you are offering your visitor. These are not features of your product or service, but the benefits that your visitor will receive when he or she has the product. So, for example, you don't want to write about a super-fast software, but instead, about how much time the software will save your visitor.

Testimonials. Some may argue that these are not as important on a squeeze page / mini site as they are on a sales page, but having at least one can really add credibility to you and what you are offering.

Opt-In Form. Of course, a squeeze page / mini site is not a squeeze page / mini site if you don't have a form that your visitors can fill out. You'll need to get the code for your form from your auto-responder. You can also consider adding a little text below your form that states how you will respect the privacy of the contact details you capture on your form, and that the information will not be passed on to any third parties. Finally, your entire squeeze page / mini site template should be visible on your screen without you having to scroll down.

squeeze page / mini site Tutorials Cant Teach You Everything

squeeze page / mini site tutorials are a great way to get started with building your own squeeze page / mini site and to understand the basics of how squeeze pages, otherwise known as landing pages, or lead capture pages, work. The goal of any squeeze page / mini site is to get the contact information of a visitor. So, it's important to understand and implement an effective structure to your page.

You can find free text squeeze page / mini site tutorials on various sites like BuildThatList.com, TamingTheBeast.com and hundreds of others. BlinkWeb.com offers video tutorials after you sign up for free. But most of these training tools are focused on the structure of your squeeze pages and they don't go into the whole concept and details that make certain pages perform better than others. If you analyze the information enough, you can even come across some advanced techniques that will improve your results. However, there are some crucial things that you cannot learn in these tutorial and I will list them here.

First of all, your squeeze page / mini site can be the most professional, high-quality site on the

internet, but it doesn't matter if you aren't getting any targeted traffic to it. Before you set your squeeze page / mini site up to start building a high-quality list, make sure that you look at how you are getting traffic. Your squeeze page / mini site must fit the audience that you are targeting, and therefore the traffic methods that you are using. This is where having multiple squeeze pages comes into play. You can have a basic model that is then further customized for the various niches and/or keywords that you are targeting.

Next, even if you do start pulling in contacts from your squeeze page, you will then have to know how to follow up with them. Having a list of contacts will do you no good if you don't build a mutually respectful relationship with them. Even the best of squeeze pages will only create sign-ups, not relationships, and not sales. Don't even start to build a squeeze page / mini site until you are clear on how you are going to follow up with the list you start to build. And make sure that you are sending your list valuable content and useful information, not just spam that they can add to the tens of other spam messages that they receive on a regular basis.

By all means, take advantage of squeeze page / mini site tutorials. Soak up the information and create yourself a winning page. But remember that, while building a list is key, it is only a small part of the whole picture. If you don't have anything to back your squeeze page / mini site up with, you are only wasting your time and that of your potential customers. Take the time to figure out the whole game plan before you start, and you will save yourself quite a bit of time and frustration in the long-run.

Should You Use A squeeze page / mini site Generator

A squeeze page / mini site generator is something that many internet marketers look into at one time or another, but usually in the beginning phases of their online marketing training. Squeeze pages, also frequently called landing pages, or lead capture pages, are fundamental tools for list-building. They offer your visitor something in exchange for his or her contact details. The offer can be a free sample of the product or service you offer, a free consultation, a free report, etc. And obtaining and maintaining a list of qualified buyers and potential buyers is one asset that can set you heads and shoulders above those who do not have lists.

An effective squeeze page / mini site will get you good conversion rates and targeted leads. It may take some time, testing and tracking to get to the highest converting squeeze page / mini site for you if you do it on your own, or you can hire someone to do this step for you. Basically, there are three ways that you can go about creating a squeeze page.

- * You can design it yourself.
- * You can hire a professional to design it for you.
- * You can use a template generator or a full squeeze page / mini site generator.

There are many places that offer free squeeze page / mini site templates. Just go to Google

and search for that term. You will have plenty to choose from. The templates themselves are free but you will have to host them at one of the many hosting companies. While these templates are easy to use, and a good place to start, remember that their design quality is nothing special and they tend to be overused, precisely because they are so easy to use for newcomer marketers on the web. If you want to stand out from the crowd, in the long run, this is not the way to go. However, it is a great place to start until you understand how to do your own squeeze page / mini site or choose to invest into someone doing it for you.

Outsourcing is often a viable alternative to having software do your page for you. It allows you to have a custom and quality design, and it doesn't have to cost a fortune. Another important point is that many generators do not give you the option to place a video in your squeeze page. And video squeeze pages are extremely effective and very quick and easy to do. Once again, in this case, either creating your own page or hiring someone to do it for you is the best choice.

It might surprise you that you can get your page and video for much less than what you would spend doing it yourself. And you can find a designer that is experienced in creating effective lead capture pages and that doesn't cost an arm and a leg. In the long run, you will probably be happy that you chose this route rather than the squeeze page / mini site generator.

Design A Free Squeeze Page

If you're looking for a completely free squeeze page, then you have several options to choose from. If you do have some money to invest, it's not a bad idea to do it in a squeeze page. These are the pages that you will use to generate leads, or business contacts, and eventually sales, so having a professional, converting page is something worth spending money on.

But if you are just starting out, you can do just fine with a free squeeze page. One site that offers this type of product is InstantSqueezePageGenerator.com. Sign up (for free, of course) and then create a basic squeeze page / mini site by following the directions. You will need to either purchase an auto-responder from this service or use the code from your existing auto-responder.

Blinkweb.com is another site that offers free service. This one actually gives you the choice of doing a website, blog or salespage and it comes with step-by-step tutorials to walk you through exactly what to do.

If you are just looking for squeeze page / mini site templates, then you also have quite a choice. You can really go into Google and just type in the term "free squeeze page / mini site templates" and you'll get quite a list.

If you have decided to go your own route and design your own free pages, there are some tried and true guidelines that you want to meet. For example, you will want to use a brick red headline, in bold, and possibly followed by a black, bold sub-heading.

Your heading must be compelling – it must grab your visitor's attention right away and make them want to read or, in the case of a video squeeze page, to listen further. And somewhere right in the beginning, not necessarily in the headline but just under it, you want to tell the visitors exactly what they are going to get. Don't make them search for what you are offering.

Next, remember that you want the page to be as clear, uncluttered, and simple as possible. Make sure that your visitor knows exactly what you want him or her to do. If your goal is just to get his or her contact details, your opt-in form should be towards the top — don't make your visitor scroll down because he or she may not get that far. And whatever it is that you are offering in exchange for their contact details has to be good— a free sample, free information, a free consultation. Make sure it is targeted specifically towards your target market.

Testimonials are another key to effective squeeze pages. People want social proof—in other words, the proof that what you are offering has benefited or is benefiting others. Even adding just one testimonial can make a world of difference from having nothing. As with anything else, you will need to test and track your free squeeze page / mini site to see what works and what doesn't.

Marketing: Google Ranking

Five Google Ranking Tips

Most Google ranking tips deal with getting incoming links (or backlinks as they are also referred to) to your website. And for good reason. The more quality incoming links (determined by the rank of the site that the link originates from and the relevance of the keyword) you have, the higher your Google Page Rank will be and the more visible you will be to your prospects and/or customers. Here are some tricks to build your incoming links.

Submit your site to search engine directories. some directories charge a fee but many of them are free. If you're on a tight budget, stick to the free ones. These can get you some free links back to your website. Sign up with as many as you can. The more links you have into your site, the better your page rank.

This is one of the most overlooked but best of Google ranking tips. Join forums that are relevant to your industry. When you participate in forums and include the link to your website in your signature, you will get links back to your website. This is a very effective way to establish your reputation in your industry and raise your page rank at the same time.

Create an ezine (or newsletter). Taking the time to create a newsletter that you can send out to subscribers is definitely worth it. This keeps your visitors up to date with what you are doing and brings them back to visit your website on a consistent basis. You can also submit your ezine to an ezine directory which will link back to your website and give you more free incoming links.

Take advantage of article marketing. If you can create (or hire someone to do it for you)

articles that pertain to your business, with your website information at the bottom, and submit them to article directories, you will get more traffic and links.

Ask for links from other related sites' webmasters. This is a rather "old-school" tactic but is still effective, albeit frustrating and time-consuming. Find sites that are related to your industry and write to their webmasters requesting that they link back to you. Some will not answer you. Some will say "no". Some will ask you to link to them as well. And others will just link to you.

You have higher chances of getting the results you want with this if your site contains valuable information. While your ultimate goal is to have high-rank sites linking to yours, you can start out with any rank (as long as the content is valuable and relevant to what you have to offer). As you bring in more links, your rank will go up as well and you will be able to attract the higher ranking sites.

Hopefully these five Google ranking tips will help you achieve the ranking and traffic you're aiming for.

How To Increase Your Google Web Ranking

Before you can effectively raise your Google web ranking, you need to understand what factors figure in to the rank number. Google (or any search engine for that matter) uses many methods to determine which pages are displayed first in the results. There is an exact algorithm that determines placement but that is confidential. However, there are several well-known strategies that you can employ to improve where you come up in the search results.

First of all, do not waste your time or effort on submitting your website to hundreds of search engines. Not only will this not get you results, it could actually backfire and cause your ranking to go down. However, submitting your site to the right directories can help. Search for directories that are directly related to your business. Check what their page rank is (the higher, the better) and submit your website there.

Keyword optimization is important. If you aren't familiar with this term, it basically means using the exact words that people are searching for on the Internet in the content of your website. It's very easy to find what terms people are searching for and how often they are searching for them.

You can use any of the search engine's free keyword tools to help you with this. Just in a general term that is related to your business and the tool will give you related terms that users are typing in, along with how many searches per month that term gets, how competitive the term is and other information. If you are just starting out, you will want to use the uncompetitive keywords (those that don't get too many searches). As you start to build in ranking, you can use more competitive keywords.

How often do you use the keywords you have chosen to target? You should try to use them in main headings, titles or links within your website as well as within the content. However, the

usage should not be forced. Your Google web ranking will actually go down if you try to “trick” the search engine by over-using keywords.

One of the biggest determiners of your rank is how many incoming links you have to your site. If Google sees that you have other sites linking to yours, it signifies to them that your content is valuable and must be worth sending visitors to. The more links, and the better the quality of the links, the better your ranking will be. If you have other high-ranked sites (that are relevant to your business) linking to you, you will get a boost in your ranking.

You can also submit your site to social networking sites. When people bookmark your site, Google sees that as a thumbs up and raises your ranking.

These are just a few things, along with maintaining valuable content and good design, that you can keep in mind to increase your Google web ranking.

How to Check Search Engine Ranking Strategies

Your search engine ranking is the position of your website on any particular search engine (Google, Yahoo, MSN, etc). Because search engines favor the high-ranking sites, you need to check your search engine ranking continuously and find ways to improve your ranking. There are many free tools that can allow you to do this. Page ranks range from 1 to 10, with 10 being the highest (and virtually impossible to achieve). Even a rank of 1 on Google is considered high.

In order to obtain a high search engine rank, you need to employ SEO (search engine optimization) techniques. And this can take a significant amount of time and/or money depending on whether or not you do it yourself or hire someone else to do it. SEO software is also a viable option to consider.

If you've decided that you want to be the one to check your search engine ranking yourself, and to take care of the SEO for your website, you'll need to make a daily habit of performing activities that build incoming links to your website and using the right keywords. Incoming links greatly influence your page ranking. If you can get a high-ranking site to link to your website, you will bypass a great deal of your competition.

However, obtaining these links can often take quite a bit of time and patience. There are several ways to go about this. You can write to other webmasters and ask them to link to you. You can submit your site to online directories. You can do article marketing. You can use a social bookmarking strategy. The list goes on and on. But the most important concept of all is that the information you offer on your site must be valuable. It is much easier to obtain links to your site when you are offering information that your visitors (or other webmasters) find valuable.

Keyword optimizing your site is also part of the SEO strategy, although less important than incoming links. The best ways to go about using the right keywords is to use the free keyword

tools offered by all of the search engines. These free keyword tools tell you exactly what people are searching for on the internet.

Check out the words that pertain to the industry and use these words on your website. If you're just starting out, go with very detailed keywords and not the general highly-searched and highly competitive ones. It's estimated that about 60% of searches online consist of two to three keywords so try to stick with phrases that fit that. Make sure you use your keyword phrases in important places on your website like titles, headings, sub-headings, etc.

Whether you manage to optimize your website on your own, with the help of a consultant or agency, or with software programs to check search engine ranking, you will see that your position continues to climb and this will bring in more traffic to your website.

The Google Rank Check

It's important to regularly perform a Google rank check so that you can evaluate how well your site is doing in terms of search engine results. When you're just starting out with a new online presence, you're only worried about setting up a website and other online real estate. But in order to get traffic to all of your web content, it helps to have a high Google rank. Checking your rank is extremely easy. Just download the free Google toolbar and the results will appear at the bottom right of whatever website you are looking at. Here are some tips to help you raise your score.

Use other search engines—not just the Google rank check. There are many places that you can check your rank besides Google. It's also important to note that if you have visited your site many times (which you have), then your rank might appear higher on your computer while it will not appear that way on other computers.

Next, while it's important to check regularly, don't get addicted and check continuously, or even every day. Spend time doing other improvements to your site in order to improve its ranking, not constantly checking what the score is. The most you should be checking is once every two weeks. Try to pick the same day so that you can evaluate your performance a consistent time period. It's hard to see what's happening if you check too frequently.

Remember not to get worried or frustrated if your site drops down in the rankings. This is another reason not to check your score continuously. Your site's rank will fluctuate constantly in relation to what is going on with your industry, competition, etc. That's completely normal and doesn't necessarily mean that you made a mistake with something. Keep focusing on your rank-raising activities like link-building and keyword optimization. Concentrate on this and you will see that your site will gain.

Obtaining incoming links can raise your site rank very quickly. There are several ways to go about this: submitting your site to directories, requesting links from other sites, bookmarking, article marketing, and more. This should be an ongoing activity that you perform regularly.

And keyword optimization is also important. All this means is that you need to use the words in your website that people are searching for online. It's easy to find out this information as well on any of the free tools offered by search engines like Google, yahoo and MSN. Just type in a word that is relevant to your business and whatever tool you are using will give you a list of related keywords that people are typing in when they do a search. The tool will also tell you how often these keywords are typed in.

Using these strategies along with your Google rank check and watch your rank soar.

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Marketing: Home Business Network

Home Business Network Marketing

Network marketing is not always as simple for everyone. There are individuals who are very natural at talking with others and find it quite easy to be in a room full of strangers and talk about what they have to offer. Then there are those who are terrified of the very idea of network marketing and having to talk to anyone about anything. Network marketing does not have to be a unpleasant experience for you and you do not have to have a panic attack at the thought of attending one. When you prepare for network marketing and do not go in with your eyes closed, you will find that it will make an enormous difference in the productivity of your business. Network marketing can be beneficial in building a Reservoir of resources and contacts that you can have at your fingertips to propel your business forward.

If you do not have a briefcase, it would be wise to purchase one. In your briefcase, you can keep your business cards, brochures, and informative documents about your business and other items that you can use to talk to others about what you have to offer. Keep your briefcase with you at all times, especially when you go to events to network.

Decide in advance how many people you want to talk to and do just that. If it is your first time, you may only want to talk to three people. Although once you are there, you will probably find yourself relaxing and notice that you came home with more than three contacts. Do not forget the business cards of the people you meet. In the excitement, you may forget their names. It is a good idea to write down some relevant information on the back of the card to help you remember why or why not you like that particular contact.

One way to get to know those who come to the event is to volunteer to greet people as they come in. You are the first person they meet and then you can go up to them during the meeting with some ground under your feet and not feel so uncomfortable.

Being a good listener is the key to being good at networking. If you spend all your time talking about yourself and how good you are and very little time listening to them you will be wasting your energy. Remember, people like to talk about themselves and if you let them they will, and they will leave the event thinking how much they enjoyed talking to you and will remember you. This is also an excellent way to obtain information about them and the business they have to offer.

Home Business Network Marketing : Your First Time

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Marketing: Article Marketing

Article Marketing Service – Your Own Business

I've always thought one of the coolest aspects of starting an online business is the number of ways you can generate traffic to your website and some of them are free. I can't think of any place else where you could literally start a million dollar business for no money at all. One of the best free methods online is article marketing. If you're one of those people who are convinced that they can't write but want to take advantage of the benefits of article marketing, there are many article marketing service companies online that would love to assist you, for a

price of course.

One of the biggest benefits of article marketing is that you get to shine. You can show the people who read your articles that you are an expert. You can gain virtually instant credibility. The good news is for those of you who are 'writing challenged' that a marketing service can do as little or as much as you want them to.

For example, you can hire a company that will write all your articles for you but you can then distribute them to article directories yourself. This is time consuming but if you're on a limited budget and just can't stand the idea of writing but still need to save some money this may be a good option for you.

You can get the whole package and have the company write and distribute your articles for you. In most cases they can even help you with finding the right keywords to target in the articles.

Besides the obvious time saving advantage of going this route, the company will probably know about more online article directories and other sites that will accept original content. Sure, it's all online and you could find out about these sites too, but it would take a lot of your time. For many, it just makes more sense to streamline their online business as much as possible and that means hiring a firm to take care of all the 'grunt' work.

Before you pull out your credit card, make sure the company you are considering is qualified and reputable. One way to do that is to check for testimonials right on their website. Do they have a lot of them? Of course you have to be aware of the fact that a company will only list their best testimonials and the negative ones will most likely end up being destroyed, still this can be a good place to start.

Also compare the rates and service plans of several companies. Don't settle for the first one you find. Make sure that you carefully consider what each company will do as well as how much it will cost you.

If you want to take full advantage on all the traffic and credibility that article marketing can offer, but just don't have the time to do it yourself, you should consider finding a good article marketing service. This is an excellent option for anyone who has more money than time when starting their online business.

Easy Article Marketing – 3 Fast Tips

The internet has opened whole new realms of opportunity and since much of it is fully automated it's quite easy opportunity too. The problem is that we weren't raised to think that you can get something for nothing, we think that if something isn't horrible and difficult it can't really work. Well when it comes to article marketing nothing could be further from the truth. It really is possible to use easy article marketing techniques to generate a ton of very qualified traffic to your website.

For those of you who aren't familiar with the term, article marketing, it's simply a way to give the search engines what they want and in return they give you what you want. The search engines are always on the lookout for quality, fresh content. You may have heard the phrase 'content is king' and that's what it's referring to.

See the customers of the search engines (anyone who does a search online) demand the information they are looking for. If they don't get it they will stop using the search engines, which is the last thing the search engines want to happen. So they will view any type of information that can keep their searchers happy, favorably.

Here comes the part that benefits you. When you provide quality content for the search engines they will 'repay' you by listing your article at the top of the search results. (Now, of course, there is a little more to it than that. You need to pick out a keyword and include it in your article 2 to 3 times and you need to pick a keyword that gets a lot of searches but doesn't have a lot of competition).

Now that you've got the basics, here are the answers to some frequently asked questions or concerns:

1. I hate to write! Most people will say something like that. I tell them that if you find a great keyword and just write your article around that, you'll be fine. If you are selling dog toys and you find a great keyword 'best dog toys' than all you have to do is write an article listing some great dog toys and why they're great. See? The keywords will largely determine the way the article will go. It's not that hard. (and if you want to you can hire someone to write an article for you).

2. How do I find the right keywords? For this you can use the free Google keyword tool Just plug in the base keyword and you'll get a list of similar keywords. What you are looking for is a keyword that gets around 1,500 searches a month minimum but has less than 20,000 competitors. Generally, if you stay within these guidelines you'll have a good shot at having your article show up on the first page of Google for that keyword.

3. How much does it cost? Nothing, it's totally free. The article directories will publish your articles for free (as long as you follow their rules). The only cost is if you decide to hire someone to write your articles for you, if you do that don't pay more than \$10 per article.

That's it. That's the basics of article marketing. I told you that easy article marketing techniques were something anyone could do!

Affiliate Article Marketing – 4 Tips On Being Effective

Affiliate marketing is one of the best ways to start an online business. It's free to get started and if you take the time to learn a few simple skills you can make a lot of money pretty quickly and easily. Your main job as an affiliate marketer is to drive as much targeted (people who

actually want to buy what you are selling) visitors to your site. One of the very best ways to do that is to use affiliate article marketing

.

The basic idea of article marketing is that you will find a list of 5 to 10 good keywords for your niche. A 'good' keyword is a keyword phrase that has at least 1,500 searches a month but less than 20,000 competition. Once you have your keywords you can write several articles per keyword phrase. Make sure your article provides some beneficial information for your reader.

When you submit it to the article directories you can provide a resource box. This is where you can promote your website. You can provide a direct link here so that when people read your article they can click on the link in the resource box and be taken to your website.

While you can't do any blatant selling in your main article, you can use the resource box to do your selling for you. Each article directory has it's own rules, just follow those rules and you'll get published.

This method is so effective for several reasons:

1. It's free. You can write an article and submit it for free. It won't cost you a cent. You can even use a free keyword tool online. You can submit as many articles as you want to.
2. You will establish yourself as an expert in your field. Don't let this freak you out. Some people, especially those who are just starting out, can get intimidated by this. But just remember, you don't have to know everything to be an expert, you just have to know more than most of your readers.
3. If you write a good article and target the right keywords you can have your article show up online for months, or even years. So, it will take more than one article, but you can write a few articles and have them stay online and drive traffic for a long time to come.
4. Submit multiple articles to several article directories. Don't submit all the exact same versions. Instead submit several versions of each article. As long as they are mostly different (I understand that if you are using the same keyword there will be a lot of similarities).

There are a lot of great resources available online that can help you build your business. Many of them are free and most of them are easy to use. affiliate article marketing is one of the best methods of driving traffic to your website. It's perfect for anyone who is getting started online and doesn't have any money.

Online Marketing Articles – 5 Article Tips

One of the great advantages of doing business online is the multitude of cheap, or free, advertising options. One of the absolute most effective (and most cost effective) is online marketing articles. Using articles to drive traffic to your website is very effective for a lot of

reasons.

here are the reasons that article marketing is such a great tool in your online tool box;

1. It's easy and free. Unlike other forms of online advertising that take a lot of time to learn or you need to test over and over again, article marketing is very simple right out of the gates. And even if you do need to refine your skills a little bit when you first start out, it won't cost you a dime. You can submit as many articles as you want for free. The tools you need to do your keyword research are free. It's a totally free method so you won't be if if you do make a mistake.
2. You can establish instant credibility. Anyone reading your informative article will view you as an authority and will be more likely to trust you. If you make a recommendation for a product or service they'll be much more likely to take your recommendation and make a purchase.
3. A well written article that targets the right keyword, can stay in circulation for months or even years. SO basically, you do it once (if you do it right) you can get traffic for a long time to come.
4. If you hate the idea of writing you can hire someone to do it for you. You can hire a writer for as little as \$5 to \$10 dollars per 500 word article.
5. There are many software products and companies that will help you write and distribute your articles for you. This amount of automation can help you get a lot of articles out in a short amount of time. That amount of automation will allow you more time to take care of the other aspects of your business.

These are just a few of the reasons why you should use article marketing to help build your online business. IT just makes good sense. You will need to make sure to carefully choose the keywords that you use in your articles. You don't want to just use the keyword that gets the highest search, though it may be tempting, but if you do there will simply be too much competition.

Instead, make sure you pick a keyword phrase that will get good monthly searches but not have too much competition. Generally, you'll want long tail keywords, keyword phrases that are two or more words in length. These long tail keywords will still do well for you but they won't have nearly as much competition.

there are many great ways of using the internet to drive traffic to your business, whether your business is online or off. One of the best forms is online marketing article Articles, if done right, are extremely effective and the best part is that they are free to use. There is very little learning curve involved so you can be up and running in no time at all.

Article Marketing Software – Is Your Lifesaver

To get the largest number of articles submitted in the shortest amount of time the use of article marketing software is growing in popularity. This software can help you distribute your article to hundreds or thousands of online sites. Not only will more people have access to your articles (and hopefully read them, like what you have to say and click on the link in your resource box and get taken to your website) you will also have the ability to build a lot of incoming links to your website.

Search engines use a lot of different parameters when they decide what rank your site will receive. One of those parameters is how many incoming links you have to your site. The more you have the higher you can rank. If the links coming to your site are from another site that is ranked very high, the link will carry even more weight and will help you even more.

In order for any of this to happen though you'll need a lot of articles in circulation. A well written article that is targeting a good keyword can stay in circulation for months or even years. But it is a numbers game and to get the most out of this process you need a lot of articles circulating the web.

It takes a lot of time to do keyword research, write and submit all those articles by hand. That's why using the available tools can help you get all the results you want in a lot less time and with much less effort.

Now there is something to be aware of when it comes to software submission programs. Some of them are not well liked by the search engines. The search engines generally aren't big fans of anyone who takes 'shortcuts' to submit a ton of articles. The biggest reason is that they don't want the same version of the same article submitted four hundred times. When it comes time to pick out a good software program be careful which one you choose and carefully monitor your results. Don't just assume it's working.

The best way to do that is to carefully monitor your traffic before you submit the articles. Then watch for any change, good or bad. If you have access to your control panel for your website you can get pretty in depth statistics about where your traffic is coming from. This will help you determine just how many sites your article has been distributed to.

Whether you choose to use article marketing software or not, there are some things you can do to greatly increase the effectiveness of your online advertising. For one thing, make sure you target the best keywords possible. You don't want the most highly searched for keywords since they'll have too much competition. What you want are keywords that get decent searches a month, around 1,500 but don't have too much competition. Next write your article in a clear, easy to understand format. Provide a strong call to action in the resource box and submit multiple versions targeting several top keywords for your niche.

Marketing: Reach Your Target Market

5 Great Ways to Reach Your Target Market

There are many ways to reach out and find the people you are trying to attract for your business. Here are just a handful of ways to get you started:

1) Attend organization meetings

Where do people in your target market hang out? Research this, and then plan to attend a meeting or two to mix and mingle. What better way to meet and get to know these individuals while learning more about the market?

2) Offer to speak at a meeting or conference

What do you have to offer that you feel could be of value to those you are trying to reach out to? Present a short talk or slide show on a helpful topic. Be sure you present something of value to the group. What helpful tips or other material would hold their attention, and entice them to learn more about you and what you do? Just give them a small taste of your skills and knowledge. Chances are, they will want to talk to you after the presentation.

3) Advertise in publications your target market reads

The Internet is a great place to research what publications are out there. You can probably even get your advertisement to appear online as well as in the hard copy of a publication. Advertising can be rather expensive, so be careful with this one!

4) Present a free teleclass

If you are not confident in your public speaking skills, but still feel you have something of value to teach those you are trying to influence, try offering a no-cost teleclass. It is usually fairly inexpensive to rent a bridge line to host your class. You can teach from the comfort of your own home, too. This is also a great way to get a list of names to add to your subscriber list for mailings. If you are comfortable with this option, you can charge a small fee for future teleclasses you hold, which will bring you some passive income.

5) Start a blog

Write daily or weekly posts related to subject matter that will pique the interest of your target market. Spend time researching particular topics that you can write about. Then, add some pizzazz...get excited when you post the information to your blog. If you're excited about something, others will be too. And don't forget to use keywords. These are what the search engines will use to find the content in your blog and draw others to it.

Marketing: White Papers Often Suck
Why Your White Papers Don't Work?

It's not easy to write a white paper. And reading them can also be quite a challenge!

Unfortunately, many white papers are difficult to digest and come across as though slightly 'nerdy-types', locked in research labs, prepared them with very little consideration for their readers.

So, if you're about to write your first white paper, here are a few golden rules to follow...

1. Get the Best Writer on board

Individuals with little writing experience are often delegated to write the white paper. In the IT industry, there is an assumption that the developer is best suited to write about the solution. Let's be honest: writers write and programmers program. There are some individuals who have both skills, but these are hard to find.

In general, developers are not ideal for writing white papers – and neither is the Sales Manager. Developers will focus on the technical innards, while sales types will gush about its 'unique' qualities. In doing so, both miss the mark.

You can save yourself a lot of stress by hiring an experienced writer who can look at your product or service – and present it in an easy-to-understand manner. These writers know how to 'sell' a concept to both a technical and business audience—not everyone has this skill.

2. Sharp Presentation

Attractive graphics reinforce your message. Use diagrams and charts to stop 'glazed eyes syndrome' setting in. Text-heavy documents drain the reader very quickly! By combining charts, diagrams and tables you weave together the main selling points and sustain the reader's interest.

3. Avoid Terminology

Geekspeak and Three Letter Acronyms—e.g. B2B, B2G—are endemic in the IT industry. Experienced writers avoid TLAs as they know that readers won't understand the terminology, become frustrated and move on. If you have to use these terms, put a reference section at the start.

No-one likes to be patronized.

Technical terms without a clear definition will lose the reader's confidence in both you and your products. They will stop reading and go somewhere else. Why not? After all, your beloved White Paper is not the only show in town!

4. Subject Matter Organization

Before you get to the heart of the paper, outline the relevant background materials, such as

industry research figures, that support your arguments. In the opening section, highlight why your solution exists; in other words, what specific problem does it solve?

Don't meander from topic to topic or you will lose the reader. Each paragraph should only discuss one idea. Don't mix ideas in the same sentence or paragraph.

For example, before you begin, assume that the reader is completely new to the subject matter. Then outline the most significant issues and progressively walk through the solution; begin with the larger issues first and sequentially move through the other points.

5. Abstract v. Reality

Many white papers discuss the theoretical application on the solution, e.g. Product X will do Y in situation Z. That's fine up to a point as it helps paint a picture for the reader. However, you need to underline your 'theory' with real world examples.

Case studies and customers quotes are a very effective way of demonstrating how your solution performs in a working environment. Case studies reinforce the theoretical concepts. They help the reader see how the solution could work for them.

If the reader can't relate to your solution in a practical sense, they will search elsewhere for another product.

Summary

Oddly enough, many of us read the summary first. Because of this, it should capture the essence of the white paper and identify the most interesting points.

If this section lacks interest, you may lose the reader — before they've even read the first page!

Make your points. Make them clear. Make them stick.

White Papers are a low-cost way to promote your products and potentially gain an advantage over your competitors. They also have a long shelf-life.

They live on the web, intranets, and hard-drives long after your product has been rebranded, you've changed business strategy, or moved onto the golf course.

For this reason, ensure that your publication reflects positively on your company's high standards. Poor quality material will have the opposite effect of what you intended. Persistence is the key. Once you get it right, a well-written white paper pays for itself many times over in the long-term.

Best of Luck!

Marketing: Write Articles To Promote Your Business

Writing articles can do all of these and more. You can vital get exposure for your web site, or the product / service you are promoting by writing articles.

This will not happen over night, but if you write one article a week the number of links you can build up for your site will grow steadily, and each one of those links helps you become more visible on the internet, helping your potential customer base find you rather than your competitors.

Why go the all the trouble of writing and submitting an article, well these are some of the benefits of submitting articles

Increased number of back-links to your website

You can targeting different keywords and key phrases

Ge links back to your site from your article content

Authoritative back-links – establish yourself as an authority on your product or service

Increase traffic to your website

Increase your search engine position

Why we need to Write and Submit Articles?

1. Free advertising

Promoting your web site by writing and submitting articles is the best way of creating more visibility for your website, product or service. It is free to do and all it takes is your time to write the article. How often do you get the chance to advertise your business free of charge and at such length?

2. It isn't hard to write an article about something you know as well as your own business

Writing an article about your business is not that hard, after all you talk to your customers about every time you have a conversation with them, so why not make a few notes about the these conversations and then turn it into an article.

3. Increase the links to your website

Once you have published your article you will immediately gain incoming links to your site making it more visible on the web and in search engines, an article about painting equipment from an artist would be considered to be highly relevant by the search engines.

4. Establish yourself as an expert

Giving your opinion and views, especially when backed up by facts and figures set you up as an expert in your field.

5. Articles last longer than adverts

Article you have published in directories will be around for a long time, so an article you wrote two years ago comparing the qualities of different oil paints will still be driving traffic to your website today.

6. Multiple links from one article

Articles also encourage others to promote you and your website by using your article, including the link to your site, on their web site, or blog, another way to increase traffic to your site

And it's free, certainly using social media such as Facebook

Marketing: Colors

Unlock the Symbolism and Color Psychology of Common Colors

Color is a magical element that gives feeling and emotion to art, design, and advertising. By understanding color meaning, (or the psychology of color) you can choose the right color to support and emphasize your design.

A dominant color or overall color scheme can determine the tone of your document. Certain colors will help your product, corporate document, or advertisement attract specific target audiences and evoke desired responses.

The information below provides generally accepted guidelines on the symbolic meanings of color and how you can use color more effectively in your marketing pieces.

The meaning of the color yellow (including coral, orange, amber, gold)

What it Symbolizes: Energy, caution, warmth, cheer, joy

Yellows are often associated with the following characteristics: homey, friendly, soft, welcoming, moving, excitement, or adventure. Good for press kits, stationery, and shopping bags.

Use yellow for signage in work situations warning of danger. Yellow is also good for any project that needs to evoke feelings of lightheartedness, humor, or friendliness.

The meaning of the color red (including mauve, magenta, crimson, scarlet, poster red)

What it Symbolizes: Power, romance, vitality, earthly, energy

Reds evoke highly charged emotions such as aggression, danger, or love. Red makes us pay attention and catches our eye immediately so use reds on items that need to grab attention.

In the financial arena, red symbolizes a negative direction.

The meaning of the color green (including lime, leaf green, sea green, emerald, teal, sage)

What it Symbolizes: life, foliage, grass, trees, water

Greens are sensuous and alive. Green is associated with the following characteristics: friendliness, dependability, freshness, non-threatening, safe, secure, healthy, strong, expensive, and primitive.

In the business world, green symbolizes growth and prosperity.

The meaning of the color blue and purple (including sky blue, ultramarine, violet, purple, azure)

What it Symbolizes: Peace, law and order, logic, analytical, intelligent, honest, calm, clean, good will, tranquility, compassionate, serious, thoughtful, quiet, reflective, regal, classic, dependable, trustworthiness, tradition, magical.

Blues are often used for older, more mature audiences and situations. Blue is common in financial institutions, hospitals, and legal and medical professions. Purples have long been associated with royalty, magic and power. Purples are often used with feminine, rather than masculine designs.

Make sure the colors you use in your marketing materials attract the attention of your target market. Check color resource design guides or swatch books to discover what color combinations work best to make your designs pop.

Marketing: Seasonal Selling

4 Strategies For Seasonal Selling – Planning For Retail Cycles

Every product has a natural life cycle and a season where it sells best: some early buyers come at the beginning, and then the mass of buyers come. Prices peak and retailers begin running out of stock. Sales slow, and trickle down to a few last-minute shoppers.

As an online seller, it's critical you prepare for the natural retail cycles throughout the year. With some simple strategies, you can make the most of the opportunities presented by the changing seasons:

1.Keep the Flow Going

The way to maintain sales volume is to be ready for the next selling season. Phase in your new seasonal items for early shoppers while your other product line sales are winding down. You can keep the momentum going in your store and your income if you plan accordingly.

2. Make Advance Preparations

Don't wait until the holiday is upon you to get your products lined up and ready to go. You should begin pushing your promotions two to three months ahead of time, according to Lisa Suttora of <http://WhatDoISell.com>. Says Suttora, "The advantage to having your products ready several months before a holiday season is you capture the early bird buyers... You'd be amazed how many people shop months in advance of a holiday."

Another benefit of early marketing is it provides lead time for the search engines to pick up the pages for your holiday specials. Include the season or holiday name in your titles, because people are searching for those terms.

3. Use What You've Got

You don't necessarily have to change your entire product line every season. Evaluate your current product line and see what can be promoted as a seasonal item. Use your imagination—create unique gift baskets and kits. Shoppers are pressed for time and are looking for solutions, so put together product bundles to solve their holiday needs.

4. Adjust Your Website

Your web store should reflect the season—feature items that work well for the approaching holiday. Put a seasonal spin on your ads and listings. "Your sales don't have to drop," advises Suttora. "Evaluate what you're selling and how you want to position it—freshen up the look of your site. You've got a whole new group of buyers coming in [with each new season], so you want to be ready for them."

Marketing: Affiliate Marketing

Affiliate Marketing Strategy – Important Aspects of Affiliate Marketing

You probably won't be surprised to learn that the winning affiliate marketing strategy involves getting as much traffic (and as much targeted traffic) to your affiliate products as possible. And getting enough traffic starts with choosing a product or service that is guaranteed to generate interest and then to convert into sales.

One part of an effective affiliate marketing strategy is making sure that you leverage off of the merchant's time and effort that have been put into his or her product or service. An experienced and skilled merchant will know that the more his or her affiliates are selling, the more he or she will earn. And therefore, he or she will continue to test and tweak the product's or service's sales page to make it into the most compelling offer possible that makes it hard for people to refuse once they land on the page.

Look for sales pages that are simple and clean, that offer a compelling headline, testimonials and, if possible, even a timer that shows people how long they can claim the product or

possibly the bonus that comes with it.

Once you've chosen a product with a proven sales page and conversion rate, you need to get as much high-quality traffic to the offer as possible. You can do this directly by advertising your affiliate link with PPC (pay-per-click), classified ads, banner ads, etc. Or you can set up a content blog or website that provides useful information on the niche of the product or service you are selling.

If you are just starting out, a blog might be the easiest way to get started and a WordPress blog is often the most highly recommended because it comes with many free plug-ins that will allow you to be more visible to the search engines.

Keyword research is an important part of any kind of affiliate marketing plan of action. After you've chosen the product or service that you want to promote, then choose the keywords that you are going to use to get traffic to your link or to your website or blog. Again, if you are new, you want to choose less competitive keywords.

Go to the Google Adwords Keyword Research Tool (which is free of charge) and type in the general term that describes your product's niche. This tool will then provide you with all the related search terms that people are actually using when they go to their browser and do a search. The tool also provides you general statistics on how often each term is searched, how competitive each term is, what people are bidding on this term in PPC ads, etc.

Start with lower-searched terms and use these in your blog/website content, or in your direct link advertising methods. As you start to get more visitors, you can start using more competitive terms in your affiliate marketing strategy.

Affiliate Marketing Newbie

Advice for the Affiliate Marketing Newbie

Are you an affiliate marketing newbie? Whether new or experienced, there are some tips of the trade that you should follow.

First of all, the lure of working from home in your pajamas with nothing but a computer is almost too much to bear. In fact, more and more people are trying their hand at affiliate marketing exactly for this reason. But in order to be successful in your efforts, you do need to spend time and at least a little bit of money. It is hard work, so be prepared.

If you are an affiliate marketing newbie, start out promoting something that you are familiar with and, even better, something that interests you. As you get more experienced, this aspect will not be quite so important — you will be able to promote things that you know nothing about or care nothing about and still be successful — but in the beginning, it helps to start with something that you will be committed to as you go through your learning curve. Keep in mind that taking this route may not end up as the best converting method or gain you the

highest commissions, but it will be easier for you to build a website and to stick with what you are working on

When you do get your site up and running (and, by the way, a WordPress blog is a very fast and way to establish a reputable website), promote more than just one product in the same niche. This also gives your visitors a choice and allows you to track which products are selling more or less.

Always remember the tried and true saying: content is king. “Contents sites” are the ones that offer educational, instructional and topical content about whatever it is they are promoting. And the best of these types of sites actually make the promoted product or service seem like an afterthought. This is another reason that it is easier if you are new to affiliate marketing to start with something you are familiar with and/or interested in. While content is important, your main goal is to drive visitors to the sales of your affiliate products, so make it as easy as possible for them to get there.

Do not give up. There is a lot to learn when it comes to affiliate marketing and it takes a lot of work in the beginning. It’s also important to keep up with rules and regulations that change in the field of affiliate marketing. Affiliate marketing revenue can end up being passive (meaning you don’t have to do anything to earn it), but it takes a while to get to this point. Most people will take months even to make enough money to cover costs. Keeping these tips in mind when you are an affiliate marketing newbie will help you in achieving a profitable status.

Affiliate Marketing Tips

3 Important Affiliate Marketing Tips

Affiliate marketing is a very hot topic right now. Who wouldn’t want to just start making money from selling someone else’s product or service online, without even leaving their home? Sounds easy, right? While affiliate marketing is not rocket science, it does require work, dedication, and patience. You are not the only person who finds it intriguing to think that they can actually be making money off of someone else’s product without even leaving your house. The field is very competitive and if you want to become a player you will need to invest time and effort, and possibly money, into your endeavor.

The first step in effective affiliate marketing is choosing a commercially viable product to sell. This is not particularly hard, but keep in mind that you have millions of products and services to pick from, some good and some not so good, so you want to have a list of criteria that your product must meet. Clickbank is an extremely popular site and a good place to get started with affiliate marketing. The site itself also offers many affiliate marketing tips. And, you can see stats which tell you how well a product or service is doing. Some feel that these stats aren’t all too reliable, but if you find a product that you like, and one that has a good “gravity” and “popularity” measurement, then just go ahead and contact the owner of the product and ask him or her to show you some sort of proof of sales and conversions. This is very simple, and any merchant worth his salt will be happy to provide you with the details.

Another of the most overlooked affiliate marketing tips has to do with traffic testing and tracking. As you probably already know or will soon realize, there are a million and one ways to get traffic to your affiliate offer. How do you know which one to choose? You really don't. You have to try one for a while and see how that works, or try several at a time and compare them with each other. When you find some that are clearly outperforming others, invest more time, effort, and/or money into those and let the others go.

Last but not least, take a look at the support that you can offer your customers. Yes, that's right. If you are selling a product (whether it's yours or not), you should be prepared to answer questions about that product. While this may bother you, it is also one of the factors that will separate you from other affiliates who are not answering questions. This also probably means that you will have to actually buy the product and not just promote it blindly, without knowing its real features, advantages, potential problems, etc. Making use of these three affiliate marketing tips will distinguish you from the other affiliate marketers in the business today.

Affiliate Marketing Offers

How to Find Affiliate Marketing Offers

There are many different sites that you can use to find affiliate marketing offers. Clickbank is one of the most well-known and also very popular and it focus on digital informational products. Clickbank is a great place to start if you are new to affiliate marketing because it has a wide variety to choose from and it's very easy to get started. Clickbank lets you, as an affiliate, sell electronic products even if you do not have a merchant account and the commissions generally range from 50% to 75% of the sale. Right now, Clickbank boasts over 100,000 affiliates that are selling over 10,000 products.

In order to choose the right products, most people look at the "Gravity" and popularity score which is assigned to each product. The easy definition of gravity is a measure of how much competition there is for the particular product – however, the actual measurement is derived by a more complicated formula. In general, you do want a comparatively high gravity when looking for a product to promote, but not so high that it is too hard for you to compete.

Commission Junction (CJ) is another popular site that has many affiliate marketing offers from which to choose. The merchants that put their products and services on Commission Junction tend to be bigger and more established companies who are experienced in product development, marketing, and promotion. CJ also offers many types of promotional links for its affiliates. So, you can promote the products and services that you choose with banners, text links, product links, and search boxes.

Amazon was one of the founders of the affiliate movement and it is a noteworthy affiliate network to join if you want to sell products from your site or blog. While the commissions with Amazon are generally lower, it is extremely easy to get set up with promoting products on your blog or website, and it is much easier to make sales with these products. And you can even choose to set up what is known as an Amazon aStore. Another handy feature of Amazon is

that it offers context link ads and Widgets.

If you want to take your analysis a step further, you can take a look at OfferVault.com. This site allows you to search for the type of product or service you would like to promote and then gives you a list of all of the platforms that offer these products and services. Offervault offers both CPA and affiliate network offers and it is completely free for affiliates and publishers alike which makes it accessible to everyone — even the newcomers to the affiliate marketing game. This site can save you lots of time in searching for the right product or service to promote and comparing various products/services and networks. New affiliate marketing offers are added daily to this site.

Affiliate Marketing Website

How to Increase Traffic to Your Affiliate Marketing Website

Having an affiliate marketing website will do you little good if it is not well-ranked in the search engines. If you are well-ranked, on the other hand, your site will come up when someone does a search for the types of products and or services you are offering, or information that is relevant to that. There are many ways that you can increase your site's rankings. Here are just a few of them.

First of all, you should try to add new content to your website or blog on a regular basis. A good rule of thumb is to do this about 2 times a week. If you're stuck about what to write about, do a product review, or take an article that you've written and break it up into more detailed points. You can also do an article about a video that is relevant, or an e-book that you've read.

Next, an easy way to get your website indexed is to submit it to directories. Many directories are free and some charge you to submit your site but they offer greater visibility. There are thousands of directories to choose from. Try to add your site to 10 to 20 directories a month, or you can hire a person or a service to do it for you for not too much investment.

Article directories are another great asset of affiliate marketers. While it does take some time to write articles and submit them to the directories, it is completely free and very effective. There are two schools of thoughts on this. Some say that you can submit your article to the top three directories, and others say it works better to submit them to hundreds of directories. If you do choose to submit them to many directories, you might want to consider investing in some article submission software.

Making use of forums are another way that you can establish both credibility and links to your site. Try to stay active in at least one forum by asking genuine questions and answering what you can. If you can keep up with it, try to contribute at least one comment per day. This will definitely generate links to your affiliate marketing website. Use the same principle to post comments on highly ranked blogs. If possible, comment on blogs that are ranked higher than your website or blog is.

Use socialmarker to bookmark your site on some of the social bookmarking sites. Do not bookmark your site on all the sites at one time or in one day. Instead, do it in a random fashion. Bookmark your site with one social website on one day, along with some other sites, and maybe the next day bookmark your site twice along with some other sites, and maybe skip a day of bookmarking your site.

These are just some ways to get your affiliate marketing website ranked to get more traffic.

Affiliate Marketing Support

Getting Affiliate Marketing Support

One of the biggest advantages that you can have when you decide to get into the world of affiliate and online marketing is some kind of affiliate marketing support. As more and more people decide to test out this relatively new way of making money on the internet, there is a great deal of hope, confusion, and skepticism. You want to make sure that you start out on the right foot and avoid any scams that are out there. And this is where a good support system can really make the difference between failing and succeeding.

Affiliate marketing support will be necessary throughout your whole affiliate marketing career—not just when you start out. In fact, it may even be more valuable as you actually start to gain experience and insight in the industry. Forums can help you keep up with what the new trends in the industry are, as well as get advice and make valuable connections that will prove useful in both the present and the future.

Another good place to look for help is with the actual affiliate merchant that you are promoting. The best merchants will provide you with tips, training, and support that will allow you to make the most sales with the product or service you are promoting. It is obviously in their best interest to arm you with whatever you need to sell their products.

Another good idea is to find a mentor. This will be someone that you can have direct access to and learn from—not a guru who is marketing a product but not his or her actual help. Many mentors actually spend a great deal in forums and offer free advice so as to build up their credibility and expert status. There is no real substitute for learning from someone who is successful in doing exactly what you want to do. While there are many products on the market to help you get started, keep in mind that the world of internet marketing and affiliate marketing is constantly and quickly changing so it's very easy for a product to become outdated with methods that worked at one time but do not work now.

You can also decide to pay a nominal fee to become part of a membership training or support site. Make sure you join one that is targeted specifically for affiliate marketing and any of the other various forms of internet marketing. Do your research to make sure that the site is what you are looking for and check out the testimonials provided. Sometimes you can even contact the people who offer testimonials and they can help you in your decision as well as in other

aspects of your affiliate marketing path.

The above are just some of the easiest ways to obtain affiliate marketing support and to maintain it as you proceed in your journey.

Affiliate Marketing Without A Website

Succeed in Affiliate Marketing Without a website

Is it possible to succeed in affiliate marketing without a website?

The answer is yes, it is. While most would agree that you'll eventually make more if you can implement certain strategies on your own website, it is definitely possible to profit without worrying about how to go about starting your own site or blog. And it might be a good way to start so that you can begin profiting right away and gradually learn how to build your own site.

Affiliate marketing is very appealing because you have a ready-made product along with a sales page and all you have to do is find a way to get traffic to it. That sounds easier than it actually is, especially because you are not the only one trying to sell the products that you decide to promote. But when you do make a sale, you will most likely get anywhere from 50 to 70 percent of the sales price in commissions.

One of the quickest and easiest places to start is on Clickbank. This site offers an enormous choice of mostly digital products and services that you can sell. Take a look at the training offered on the site to help you get started. Based on the stats that Clickbank offers for each product, you can decide which one or which ones you want to promote. If you are new, it's generally recommended that you start with just one product.

One of the best ways to then proceed with your affiliate marketing without a website is to do some article marketing. But before you do this, you'll need to do some keyword research. Use the free Google Adwords Keyword Tool to come up with the exact keywords that people are typing into the search engines when they do a search for whatever it is that you are offering. Then, you should purchase a domain name with the top keyword in it so that you can direct that to your affiliate link. Next, write an article on one of the keywords you select — the article should be between 400 and 600 words. Include the keyword in the title of the article and in the first sentence of each paragraph of the article. You should try to hit a percentage of about 3% of your article being your keywords. Then, submit your article to sites like EzineArticles.com. Keep in mind that while you cannot place links from your article to your affiliate page, you can do so in the resource box which appears at the end of the article. This is really the most important part of the whole article so make it compelling enough for the person to click on the link.

Writing articles is really one of the best ways to succeed in affiliate marketing without a website because it helps you establish a presence and some sort of authority, even though you do not have the website.

Compare Affiliate Marketing

How to Compare Affiliate Marketing with Other Jobs

Many newcomers to online marketing like to compare affiliate marketing with other strategies for making money. The draw of affiliate marketing is strong, especially if you are new and have no product or service of your own to sell. You can just go to one of the many affiliate networks (like Clickbank, Commission Junction, Amazon, or any of the CPA networks, just to name a few), sign up for the product you want to promote, and get started. There is no investment necessary, and your salespage is already prepared for you. Also, many merchants offer support for their affiliates.

Another big advantage of affiliate marketing is that you don't need to keep inventory. And if you use Clickbank as your affiliate network, there really is no inventory to store anyway because its products are mainly digital. This is also something to keep in mind for if and when you do want to create your own digital product.

Perhaps one of the biggest appeals of affiliate marketing is that the sky is the limit in terms of how much you can earn. The more you sell, the more you earn, and no one or nothing can cap your earnings, unless, of course, you do something that is unethical or illegal.

You are your own boss when you become a full-time affiliate marketer. You have no one to answer to but yourself. And you can team up with other like-minded individuals in order to pump up your sales and knowledge. When you compare affiliate marketing to a nine-to-five job, the biggest feature that sticks out is that you can work from anywhere, anytime. All you need is a high speed internet connection.

So these are some of the reasons that so many people want to at least try affiliate marketing. However, if you have dreams of making millions, or even thousands, or even hundreds of dollars overnight, then you need a reality check right now. Being successful at affiliate marketing requires quite a bit of learning. While there is no investment needed to start promoting affiliate products, you will need to invest in some sort of training and tools to help you in your endeavor. Also, while you will find lots of ads that promote affiliate marketing as a job that you only need to do a couple of hours a day, or even a couple of hours a week, this is not how it works in the beginning. While you can definitely start your affiliate marketing career training on a part-time basis, you will need to put in just as much, if not more, time and effort "on the job" as you would in a traditional company.

When you compare affiliate marketing with other jobs, you will also see that the field is very competitive. If you put in the training, time and effort to succeed in this business, you will have a very lucrative future.

Affiliate Marketing MLM Combination

Affiliate marketing and MLM (otherwise known as network marketing or multi-level marketing) are considered two separate business models. But in reality, a good network marketer will use an affiliate marketing MLM combination to create other streams of income. Other than those which come from his or her particular MLM business.

On the other hand, a skilled affiliate marketer might also consider joining an MLM in order to leverage their efforts. While affiliate marketers make money each time they sell a product or service that they are promoting, an affiliate network marketer can also make money off of the products and services that their downline sells, or the others that they recruit into their business.

There are many affiliate marketing MLM programs to choose from. An MLM funded proposal is an example of this. These types of business models are designed to capture the interest of the entrepreneurial type of person; who is looking for help with starting a business from home.

Even more specifically, these folks are researching network marketing or a specific MLM company. The funded proposal is a good way to build up a contact list of people who are interested in home business or MLM businesses. These proposals offer what these types of people are looking for: training, support, help, strategies, etc.

The funded proposal can be free to join with a later option to upgrade, or it can cost a relatively small fee. Then you can choose to promote the funded proposal yourself or you can take advantage of their promotional tools which are often available at an extra charge. As others join the funded proposal under your personal link, you then get their names and contact information and can continue to keep in touch with them in order to promote other products and/or services that are related to what they are looking for or to promote your own MLM opportunity. In addition, you can earn commissions when people join you in your funded proposal. While these are generally not enough for you to make a living off of, you can funnel these profits into more advertising or other business costs.

The key to being successful with the affiliate marketing MLM combination is to build a responsive list and offer them exactly what they are looking for. If you have someone on your list that has signed up for MLM training, then you can continue to offer them products and services that are related to that.

If someone on your list has signed up for information about getting into the MLM business, you can show them why they would want to join you in your MLM and on your team. And if you are already an example of someone who is creating multiple streams of income with affiliate marketing, then you are more likely to get a “yes” from them when it comes to them joining your MLM. They can learn from you and pass this information on to their downline as well.

Marketing: SEO Search Engine Optimization

Tips for Search Engine Optimization are widely sought after as this is a crucial aspect to generating traffic and income from your website. SEO experts will focus on different tips that

have helped themselves or their clients to be profitable. Here are some that they all agree on.

1. Don't put any time or effort into a website without first taking a look at your search engine optimization strategy. Your efforts will be wasted if you do so.
2. On the other hand, you can do all of the SEO that you want but if it is not based in good content, then this is also a waste of time. Make sure that the content you are offering on your website is original, valuable and problem-solving. This will bring in the best kind of links — the organic ones. People will link to you naturally because you have something of value that they want to provide to your readers. Updating your content will increase your rankings. Try to add fresh, useful content to your pages on a regular basis. The search engines favor this. The “look and feel” of your website is also important, but not as important as the content. However, photos, graphs, pictures, or images and an easy-to-navigate site will help you in terms of SEO.
3. Make sure that you include an original title tag on every page of your site, and make sure that it includes your keyword. Many people make the mistake of putting the name of their company in these titles but in general your company name will not get too many searches while your keywords will.
4. Don't forget internal linking. When you use anchor text within your site, make sure that the linked text is a keyword or keyword phrase, and not something like “click here”.
5. This is one of the more overlooked tips for search engine optimization. Most people think of link-building in terms of quantity. But the reality is that the quality of the incoming links are much important than the quantity. One simple link from a high-quality site can offer you much greater results than lots of poor quality links, which can actually hurt your ranking.
6. Broaden your way of communicating to include video, powerpoints, podcasts, news, press releases, social content and so forth. The more different ways you can communicate what you have to offer, the better you will look in the eyes of the search engine. If you were to choose just one other form of communication, let it be video. Video is extremely hot and growing in popularity every day.
7. Make it easy for your visitors to increase your site's ranking. Add what can be termed “viral components” to your web site or blog such as bookmarking, reviews, ratings, visitor comments, and sharing tools.
8. And the last of these tips for search engine optimization, do not underestimate or discount the power of social marketing. This is a great contributor to SEO.

Search Engine Optimization Training

Search Engine Optimization training (SEO training) is necessary if you are new to the worldwide web and want your website to be successful. There are several SEO training courses that you can take advantage of. Here are just a few of them:

Seobook.com, run by Arin Wall, is the largest online SEO training course available and you can attend this course without even leaving your home. The training program provides hundreds of articles and videos, advanced SEO tools, and practical tips to help you market your website, obtain the best search engine rankings, get better website monetization, and improve conversion rates, among other things. SEObok.com works for one-man-show websites as well as large corporations and the material is presented so that you can just go along at your own pace.

Excel-Your-Business.com offers training that focuses on the best way to optimize your landing pages, offline and online web analytics, link-building and ROI (return-on-investment) conversion. It extensively covers both national and even very local search engine marketing strategies and the seminars offered are geared to help business owners and executives that are just learning or who have fallen behind on what is necessary in SEO (Search Engine Optimization) and SEM (Search Engine Marketing) terms. Jason Lavin conducts these seminars follows through with step-by-step examples to emphasize the main points.

WebiMax is renowned worldwide for being one of the most reputable online marketing firms. The company has been on MSNBC, The Wall Street Journal, Entrepreneur Magazine, Inc. magazine and other reputable media outlets. Located in New Jersey, this company boasts more than 45 full time employees who adhere to the full-service approach to web-based marketing. The company works with large corporations as well as new start-ups and grants the same importance to each. Ken Wisniewski leads this search engine optimization training, using the experience and knowledge that he has acquired in his more than 10 years of successful internet marketing. Another unique advantage of WebiMax is that it does not require you to sign any long-term contracts. Rather, you can take advantage of the training on a monthly basis. All new customers get a free marketing analysis to help you decide if WebiMax is the right training for you.

4MoreHits focuses on improving your website's structure, content and reputability in its Search Engine Optimization training. All employees are SEO experts, with over 10 years experience in Search Engine Marketing as well as Automotive SEO. Their focus is on how to use relevant keywords through extensive keyword analysis. Keywords are the key and all other efforts will be wasted if you do not get this crucial step right. The 4MoreHits team, in addition to Search Engine Optimization training offered, makes sure that your website is set up correctly and eliminates bad links, missing meta-tags, and other small details that can bring your website up to the top of search engine ranking.

Marketing: Lousy Content Attracts No Customers

Stop Chasing Away Customers! Bad Copy Is Your Worst Enemy

Every day, more and more of us begin new online business ventures, hoping to make a better living or just a little extra on the side. And every day, more and more of us fail. This may seem like a negative attitude, but unfortunately, it's the truth. The Internet is a great place to do

business, but finding real success is like finding a needle in a virtual haystack. So what's the problem?

This may seem like a negative attitude, but unfortunately, it's the truth. The Internet is a great place to do business, but finding real success is like finding a needle in a virtual haystack. So what's the problem?

To be honest, the more I surf the Web, the more bad writing I see. I can't tell you how many sites I've visited that feature boring, disorganized, or almost incoherent copy. And let's face it: if your website can't communicate your marketing message in an exciting, informative, and professional way, you're not going to sell much.

If you think the way your website or other marketing materials read just isn't that important, think again. When you're trying to sell online, through the mail, or with email, written words are all you've got.

If you walked into an electronics store to buy a computer and found their salespeople unhelpful, uninterested, and untrustworthy, would you buy? Of course not. The same goes for your website or sales copy. If someone is reading your homepage and finds your writing sloppy, boring, or skimpy, they're not going to buy from you.

First, make sure you have ENOUGH copy to explain your product or service. If there just isn't enough content, people won't have the information they need to make a decision. Skimpy or sparse sales copy will drive people away faster than anything else.

Next, be careful! When writing your sales copy or website, don't just rush through to get it over with. A lot of people hate to write, but we're talking about your only interaction with customers here. Even minor spelling errors, grammatical mistakes, or awkward sentences can add up to a gaping hole in your credibility—and your profits.

Third, get excited about what you're selling! You don't have to hype it up to the rafters, but you do need some enthusiasm. Your writing can be exciting and motivational without losing its credibility. If you don't get excited about your product, why should anyone else?

These are just the basics, but remember: the way your sales copy or website is written can literally make or break your chances for success. If you have a hard time finding the right words, can't spell worth beans, or need a little help in the exciting department, don't be afraid to ask for help from a friend, associate, or professional. When words are all you've got, you need to make them count!

Marketing: Keywords

Keyword research – do not depend on your assumptions alone

Proper and extensive keyword research is the first and most crucial step towards building a

search engine friendly website. However, a lot of new and tuned webmasters tend to depend on their own assumptions to determine related keywords. Perhaps they forget that they are not the intended buyers.

Where is the loophole?

The problem is there in the core keyword research process. And when you are using a free keyword research tool, it does not allow you enough options to fine tune your search. The results provided by these tools mostly depend on your own assumptions.

An example may demonstrate the process in a better way.

Say, you are searching keywords for a website that sells MP3 music players. Inevitably, your research will start from 'MP3 music players' which will provide you some keywords like:

100% free music downloads for mp3 players, concepts music express mp3 players, download music video for mp3 players, free down loadable music for mp3 players, free music download for mp3 players, free music downloads for mp3 players, free music for mp3 players, free music uploads to mp3 players, how to put music on mp3 players, mp3 music players, music downloads for mp3 players, music for mp3 players, music mp3 players, music sources for mp3 players, nextar mp3 players downloads music etc.

In the next step, you will exclude some keywords from this list and continue the same process.

If you take a closer look, you will see that the result (related keywords) they are providing you depended on three words (MP3, music and players) that you entered together in the query box.

But are people really using 'MP3 music players' to buy what you are offering?

Practically you can never be so sure about it.

Why?

If you take a look at Vertical Leap's SEO Keyword game (<http://www.vertical-leap.co.uk/seo-tools/seo-keyword-survey.asp>) your idea will definitely change. They have developed this to research and understand the complex part that individual intent plays while searching for something.

Here, they show a picture and ask the visitor to enter the terms they would use to find it on the web. The result is simply mind-blowing and shows that there are at least 21 different permutations that could be used to identify that image.

For example for a 'MP3 Player' people used the following terms – mp3 player, usb, mp3, flash drive, usb key, usb mp3, usb mp3 player, flash memory, generic mp3 player, budget mp3

player, movil, memory stick, memorypen, USB memory mp3, pixel, mp3 plater, mp3 playetr, pen drive, usb memory stick, usb memory stick mp3 player, usb stick.

Do you have these terms in your keyword list?

What is the solution?

If you need to work on these free tools, start with more generic keywords like 'mp3' or 'player' or 'music player' and than move forward while excluding irrelevant or less popular keywords. Perhaps this process will take you closer to the best set of keywords.

Keyword Selection For Website Marketing

Keyword selection is the first step for writing meta tags or the text of your website. If you don't select your keywords wisely and carefully, you would not be able to attract the desired traffic to your website.

Simply having meta tags in your website does not guarantee more website visitors or high rankings in the search engines. You need to base these meta tags on carefully selected and targeted keywords. Here are a few guidelines to help you in selecting good and appropriate keywords.

1. Descriptive Keywords

The first rule is very simple. The keyword should describe the product or service you are offering. Don't make the mistake of making your company name a keyword. It might be related to your service, but people would hardly search for it (unless you are a big and famous company). For example, I won't put the words "BizTalk4U Consulting" in the meta tags of my website. Instead, I would use "web content writers", which describes the services I offer.

Also, in the beginning I was using the words "website copy writing" in my meta tags and content, and was hardly getting any hits from search engines. When I did some research, I realized that people use the words "web content" for their website text, and not "web copy". I had to change the entire text of my website, to optimize it for the keywords "web content".

Therefore, please don't assume that you know which keywords to target. Ask you customers and prospects about the phrases/ words they would use if they search for a product or service like yours. Make a list of all the answers and select your targeted keywords from them.

2. Popular Keywords

Once you have brainstormed and asked around about possible keywords you can target, it's time to do some online research. Put in the keywords of your list in keyword suggestion tools to assess their popularity. A good tool to use is the:

– Overture suggestion tool

This is the search suggestion page of the pay per click search engine Overture, which was formerly known as Goto. Type in your chosen keyword and it would generate a list of similar keywords and how many hits each of them got. This would give you a fair idea of how popular a certain search term is.

3. Words or Phrases?

Research shows that people usually use phrases of 2 to 3 keywords instead of a single word, when searching. This is because they have come to realize, that typing phrases would give them more relevant and targeted results. Therefore, it is advisable for webmasters to use key phrases instead of keywords for their meta tags and web content, so that they generate more targeted traffic. For example, if you are selling clothes for little girls, only using the word “clothes” would not bring targeted visitors. People searching for “clothes for little girls” would be more interested in what you have to offer.

4. Competitive Keywords

After you have researched the popularity of keywords, you may also want to look at the keywords your close competitors are using. You can do this by running a search for one of your chosen keywords, and observing the other keywords being used by the sites that come up. Wordtracker also gives you an analysis of the competition, which your keywords face.

5. Trade off

Once you have list of the most popular and competitive keywords it is time to make your final selection. If you use keywords that are extremely popular, they would also have more competition, and your chances for high ranking would be slim. On the other hand, if you try to use keywords with no competition, they would not be popular and no one would search for them. Hence, your website would come in very few search results, even if the ranking is higher. You need to make a trade off between popularity and competition. You must choose words, which are reasonably popular, and low in competition.

6. Focus

You must try to focus on a few qualified keywords instead of trying to target every phrase that is even remotely related to your product. If you use too many keywords in your meta tags and content, you will end up having very low keyword density, which would again result in lower rankings.

If you feel that there are many keywords that you simply can't do without, then you must create several web pages. Each web page should focus on one or two keywords you are targeting. This strategy takes a lot of work but is bound to give you higher rankings and more exposure in the search engines.

7. No Cheating / Spamming

This is well known rule but worth repeating again and again. Do not cheat by using keywords that have nothing to do with your web site. You would get traffic that has no interest in your offering.

Do not spam by repeating your keywords too much in your meta tags and content. You can be banned from search engines for this. Also it is advisable to stay away from using tricks like cloaking and hidden text. Search engines hate these tricks, and would ban you forever.

These are the seven secrets of smart keyword selection. Choose your keywords wisely and carefully, so that you get the desired amount and quality of traffic to your website.

Marketing: Brand Design Logo Design

Brands are an important influence on our lives. They are central to free markets and democratic societies. They represent free choice. They also have a profound impact on our quality of life and the way we see our world. They color our lives. They reflect the values of our societies. Global brands can even embody the spirit of many nations, if not the spirit of an age.

Most importantly, strong brands bestow value far beyond the performance of the products themselves. Brands that do this possess an idea worthy of consumer loyalty. The more inspiring the idea, the more intense and profound the commitment. And the more the consumer believes in the brand, the more value the brand returns to its owner.

Good logo designers are not only able to design you a professional logo, but they will also make sure that your logo is distinct and unique so as to create a long lasting impression. Therefore the question that now comes to mind is, do we really need logo designers or can just anyone design a corporate logo? The answer to this question is not as simple as it seems. While the obvious answer may be no, the fact of the matter is that we do need professional logo designers because they are specialists in their field and are able to produce quality work that is distinct and one of a kind.

In recent times the term 'logo' has been used to describe signs, emblems, coats of arms, symbols and even flags. In this article several examples of 'true' logotypes are displayed, which may generally be contrasted with emblems, or marks which include non-textual graphics of some kind. Emblems with non-textual content are distinct from true logotypes.

Logo designers therefore are of great importance to any business as they can help create logos with a powerful impact and reach. Think about Apple's logo or the logo of Windows, besides the obvious there is more than just what meets the eye. These logos are not only powerful because they represent a company, but they are powerful because of what they stand for. Good logo designers know how to capture and depict the essence of a business in a single small image. They realize that a solid logo design communicates a company's

identity simply, clearly, and powerfully all at the same time.

Anyone can design a logo. There are software packages that do that in a way that any kid can do the job. To design a name is a lot less obvious. Only a very few can design a logo or name that has a multi-layered deep range of meanings that can stand the times to come in this era of volatile data pandemics.

Your logo or name must be unique, and exactly matching the subversive meaning that you or your company want to bring forward. A good logo can survive centuries, can position your company on top of the attention levels, can awaken the consumer's mind, can bring in more sales.

Sometimes a client tends to evaluate the final logo against some superficial references, something in the order of "it looks weird" [I hope it does], "it's not what I had in mind" [it's what the business needs], "I would have this detail a bit like that" [are you a logo professional?], etc. I understand the human mind, and I understand how mainstream thinking patterns may get disrupted when something unusual comes across. But you must know that every pixel in a subversive logo has a distinctive function.

Marketing: SEO Experts Should Not Use Press

Learn why your SEO company should not pay hundreds of dollars to PR companies.

Rumor has it that press releases are the next big thing in the SEO business, and many companies are spending top dollars trying to write the next big press release announcing the next big balloon breaking technology. But is this really the next big thing?

By definition, a Press Release is a kind of news item released by the company on whom the news is being reported. As such, you will have to compete with all the other press releases and hope that yours will get picked up.

Why Will Your Press Release Be Trashed?

1) Unless you are writing a press release about Microsoft, Adobe, Sony or one of the other mega-companies, or at least about a company that is relatively well known, forget about it. Journalists and news editors receive thousands of press releases a day and there is no way that they will waste more than a quick glance. So why should you pay a company seven to eight hundred dollars for them sending your press release to thousands of editors and journalists when they are going to junk it anyway?

2) Unless you are announcing a truly revolutionary product or technology (which I assume you are not since you are only interested in using the professionally paid and written press release to boost your search engine rankings), whatever you make up or announce such as some

new free deal or new portal offering something unique, your chances of being picked up are very slim. Yes, the PR companies will tell you that they have vast experience in writing Press Releases that will make yours stand out and get picked up but this is not accurate. The only way your PR is going to get picked up is if it truly is something out of the ordinary or something that no one has ever thought of.

3) Unless you plan to spend millions of dollars and then just by sheer volume your site will go ahead in the search engines, this is not a good option. Why? If you send a large number of press releases then these will be placed on the different PR companies websites main page. Since most of these home pages have a very high page rank, your site will get a boost. The question is whether this boost is worth the large amount of money you will put into the PR companies pocket. No it is not. Use that money to buy (though I do not recommend this) links from high-ranked websites and you will pay less and receive more benefit.

4) Any press release, even if it has been accepted, will remain on the different pages for just a short time, making the time and effort and even more so the amount of money you paid fruitless.

Conclusion:

A press release is useful if you wish to contact the press and maybe get some free publicity, but it is of no use if you wish to use it as a tool in order to advance your website in the search engines.

Marketing: Email Marketing

Email Affiliate Marketing Discover How To Make It Work For You

It might be depressing but it's true, upwards of 98% of the visitors you drive to your website aren't going to buy anything and most likely won't ever come back. That means a lot of extra work for you when it comes to getting traffic. How much better would it be if you could somehow have multiple contacts with these website visitors so that you could build trust with them and they would eventually buy from you?

When you install a simple opt in form on your website you have the ability to encourage your visitors to sign up to receive your email messages. If you use this tool properly you will be able to turn many more of these visitors into customers.

You've probably heard that it can take anywhere from 7 – 10 contacts with someone before they're comfortable enough with you to buy from you. In order to get them to open and read your emails so that you can build a relationship with them you have to always offer them something of value. you cannot just use your emails as a chance to make a sales presentation. If you do, they will opt out of your list and you will have lost them forever.

Make sure that you step outside of yourself and offer your email list something that will truly

benefit them, not you. By providing them great and helpful information you are proving to them that you are not only an expert in your field but also that you can be a trusted resource who can provide them with what they need in order to accomplish whatever it is they want to accomplish.

To get them to sign up for your list you can offer them a report or a short mini course. No matter what you offer as an incentive the same rules apply: make it something of real value that will help your subscriber in some way.

There is a lot of free information floating around the internet. It isn't enough anymore to just offer someone something for free. It has got to be something unique that offers a lot of perceived value.

This same principle applies when you are preparing your follow up email messages. Whatever you include make sure it offers your subscribers useful information that isn't readily available elsewhere.

The best way to monetize your email list is to include a post script at the end of each of your messages that includes a link to a product or service that will help them further.

Most of us want to make more money and when it comes to email affiliate marketing the biggest thing you can do to increase your income is to take the time and effort to build a trusting relationship with your email list subscribers. People are always much more likely to buy from a friend that they trust than they will from a stranger.

Local Email Marketing – Ins And Outs

You will often hear people singing the praises of the internet when it comes to marketing a business. They will talk about the power to reach millions of people from all over the world by using email marketing. With the simple push of a mouse button they can have instant, and free, contact with thousands or millions of potential customers. While this is a great aspect of using the internet for your business building, what happens if you just want to target your local area? How does local email marketing work?

The same concept can work just as well for you even if you have a more localized focus. Email marketing is quite simple to use and even if you've never sent an email before you can easily learn a few basics and put this technique to work for you.

Of course, the first thing you will need is a list of customers, or potential customers, names and email addresses to send the emails to. There are a few methods you can use to start building a 'subscriber' list.

If you have a website you should incorporate an 'opt-in' box on your website. When they sign up to receive your emails they are opting-in to your list, which means they are giving you permission to contact them and protects you from spam complaints. The process can easily

be automated by the use of an inexpensive autoresponder service.

Another way you can build your subscriber list is to ask the customers who come into your store to sign up for your email messages. One factor will be common to both scenarios: in order to get them to sign up to receive your emails you have to offer them a reason why. Don't forget that your customers will be asking 'What's in it for me?' That's why it's important to let them know that they will benefit by signing up to your list.

Once they've opted- in to your list you can send them coupons, early bird sale information, etc. This will create more customer loyalty and make them feel like they're special and appreciated. Let your customers know what perks they'll get and that will encourage them to sign up to your email list.

Once you've got some people on your list, if you want to send out a group of emails you can either send them yourself manually (all you have to do is put all the email addresses into a group and they will all receive the same message) or you can use a professional service to handle your email marketing, it's all up to you.

The most important thing to remember is that local email marketing is a very powerful and cost effective way to increase the number of customers you have as well as improve customer loyalty with your existing customers. Don't overlook this extremely effective method to help you grow your business. In today's competitive business environment you need every advantage you can get.

Business To Business Email Marketing

Email marketing is an extremely efficient and effective method of increasing your sales and your customer base, but as with so many other marketing tools, if you don't know what you're doing it can actually cause more harm than good. Don't ever forget that you are marketing to other companies and not individuals so your messages need to be tailored to your actual audience. When your company is trying to establish a business to business email marketing strategy, there are significant differences in your approach then if you were working on a business to consumer campaign.

Here are a few of the major points you need to consider in order to create a more effective and profitable email marketing campaign:

1. Keep it simple. If you were to meet with a prospect in person you would make sure that your pitch were straight to the point. When sending B2B emails you want to achieve the same no nonsense tone. Their time is valuable and you want to prove to them that you appreciate that fact by getting right down to business in your email, just as you would if you were talking to them in person.
2. Don't forget the "WIIFM" (what's in it for me) approach to your email messages. Make sure that you clearly articulate what advantages your company can provide to their company and

why it just makes sense for them to do business with you. You have to structure your email message in such a way as to set yourself apart from the competition.

3. Don't be afraid to ask them for their business. If you don't have a clear call to action such as 'click here now', for example, they may not do anything. It's one of the most common mistakes marketers make, they don't ask the prospect to actually take action, they fail to ask for the sale. Don't make this mistake.

4. To optimize the effectiveness of your email campaign make sure you take the time to learn more about your prospects business and what you can do to help them. This information can prove extremely helpful when you are composing your email message. By being able to add specific points to your email that would only apply to their particular business you are letting them know that you've taken the time to learn about their company and their needs which will help you build trust with them.

5. Remember, this is a business that has their own marketing campaigns and they are familiar with all the tricks. Don't try too hard to 'sell' them. Keep your message short and on point and then follow up with a firm and clear call to action.

6. Track your results. You want to keep track of open rates as well as an increase in sales and/ or customers. It's important for you to know which campaigns work and which ones didn't. This information will allow you to tweak the ones that work and reuse them and start from scratch on some of the less effective campaigns.

Email marketing can be a huge benefit to any business building strategy. Take the time to research your market before you implement your business to business email marketing plan. This added step will allow you to make more money and increase your customer base for a very small investment.

Email Promotion Internet Marketing

When it comes to building a profitable online business you actually have many inexpensive, yet effective, methods available to you. One of the best methods to use is email promotion internet marketing. Using an opt-in email list to build trust and rapport with your website visitors can pay you dividends for years to come.

Building an opt-in email list is simply a way to get your visitors to grant you permission to send them emails thus eliminating the danger of being accused of spamming. When a visitor gets to your website they will have the chance to sign up, or opt in, to your email list. In order to encourage them to sign up you can offer them useful information that will provide them with a lot of value.

For example, let's say your website is on bird watching, if you want to get your visitors to sign up to your email list you could offer them an ebook on the basics of birdwatching. It doesn't have to be something expensive to have a high perceived value.

The reason building an email list is so important to your long term internet marketing success is because it can be very difficult to build long lasting relationships online. The internet offers amazing opportunities but it can also be tough to set yourself apart from all the other internet marketers. By building a list you can communicate with, and provide helpful information to, the people on your list for as long as you want.

In order for this technique to be effective there are a few things you have to keep in mind:

1. Do not make all of your emails one sales pitch after another, if you do your subscribers will opt out of your list and you will lose that potential customer forever. Instead offer them useful information in every email and either send out one sales pitch for every 5 or so informational emails, or you can add a P.S. at the end of your email message suggesting a product or service that can help them accomplish some goal.

2. When offering them an ebook or a newsletter as encouragement to sign up to your list, make sure that it is something that has a lot of truly beneficial information in it. People are overwhelmed with free offers these days and more often than not the free things really don't offer that much value. This is a great way to set yourself apart from the others, if you offer some unique and valuable information for free instead of the same old recycled junk that everyone else gives away, you will show your visitors that they can trust you which will make them much more likely to buy from you in the future.

Email promotion internet marketing is the only real way to establish a long term relationship with your website visitors. It's much easier for you to make another sale to an existing customer than it is to constantly find new customers to sell to, use email to leverage all of your website visitors.

Marketing: Effective Ways to Lose Customers

3 Perfectly Effective Ways to Lose Customers

It's difficult to reach your business goals if you don't have the right materials and/or the information to help your business reach the success it's capable of. These three insights will help you generate the business you've always dreamed of.

1. Let Them Procrastinate

Yeah, procrastination has stolen millions of dollars from the pockets of business men and women just like yourself. The longer it works on the customer, the less likely they will be to open their wallet and hand over the dinero they've been hording there.

Here's how it works... First, the customer leaves your store without making the purchase. Second, time causes the desire for the product to fade, and distracts them from making their way back. Finally, your "almost customer" totally forgets about making the purchase, and you

can kiss potential profits good-bye.

Don't let it happen to you! Make deals so irresistible they just can't say no, and set an expiration date. Yes, put a little pressure on them to buy TODAY! Reward them for complying, and make sure they forfeit the deal if they don't. Don't be victimized by "almost sales" that could be turned into REAL profits!

2. Stay Off The Top Of Their Priority List

Hey, sometimes we need to be reminded of exactly what is and what isn't important in life. Where we spend our money indicates its level of importance. Are your customers telling you that your product isn't significant to them?

Put them where you want them to be with a dramatic word picture that evokes the emotions that drive purchases. Let me say it this way... If you're trying to sell them a home business... let them feel the freedom of being their own boss, and setting their own schedule. Are you selling water skis? Get them on the water in the hot summer sun with the wind blowing their hair and water spraying around them. Let them FEEL the importance of the decision.

You CAN motivate buyers to put a high priority on your product!

3. Don't Build Trust

Do your customers feel confident that your company will provide the services that it says it will? How many times have you raised an eyebrow at an offer that makes big promises? Yeah, if you don't already know they are a reputable company, you're likely to take claims with a grain of salt.

Unconditional guarantees give credence to your desire to please customers. Testimonials are evidence that you have a proven track record. Put some facts in front of your "almost customers." Let them know a little bit about you and your staff. It's always easier to trust a person, than a business.

Internet customers are at especially high risks for feeling a legitimate amount of distrust. After all, anyone can make grand claims, but who is responsible for upholding them? A personal photo, a little information, and a phone number where a contact can be reached go a long ways toward building trust on the Web.

How many "almost customers" have slipped through your fingers? You can effectively turn them into loyal customers who regularly frequent your place of business with the business savvy insights we've talked about in this article.

Marketing: Get Subscribers Trust You Quickly

4 Ways To Get Your Opt In Subscribers To Trust You Quickly

While the rest of the world have developed many barriers and protections to keep their e-mail accounts spam-free, there are also those that subscribe to mails that promotes their products, services and their site. This is mainly because these subscribers want to know more about what these sites are offering and can be beneficial for them. They expect to get kept posted on what they are interested in and what are new in the market or field they have chosen.

Businesses would be so lucky to have these kinds of customers; the basic element needed to get these types of people is trust. When your customers trust you they will reward you with their loyalty. Many internet users have gone to great lengths in protecting their email accounts from spam mail. Some free-mail internet providers and internet service providers offer spam protection while there are also some internet based companies that screen your mails for you.

With an opt-in mail list, the mails you send containing your promotional materials such as newsletters, catalogs and marketing media will go through. Your intended recipient will be able to read and view what you have sent making it a successful transfer of information. To be able to be allowed to do so, you will need permission from your recipient, to get this permission; you need to be able to get their trust. With the great lack of disregard for privacy in the internet, getting the trust of an internet user you don't personally know is a big achievement.

To build a good opt-in list you need people to trust you, for a faster and quicker build up, you need to get your opt-in subscribers to trust you quickly. The faster you build your opt-in list the faster word about your site and company gets to be spread. The bigger the scope of your opt-in list the more traffic you get spelling more profits. Its easy math if you thin about it. Getting the numbers is not that simple though, or maybe it is?

- Getting the trust of your clientele shouldn't be so hard especially if you do have a legitimate business. Getting your customers trust should be based upon your expertise. People rely on other people who know what they are talking about. Garner all the knowledge and information about your business. Ell, frankly if you decide to go into a business most probably you have an interest in it. Like how many basketball players become coaches, you don't really venture into something you don't have any interest in.

- Show your clients that you know what you are talking about. Provide them with helpful hints and guidelines that pertain to what you are selling. Talk about how to install a roof if your into hardware products or provide articles on insurance settlements if you're a settlement lawyer. You don't have to be a big corporation to make use of an opt-in list. If your customers see you as someone who knows what he is doing and saying, they will trust you quickly.

- Be true to your customers, if you want to hype up your products and services, provide guarantees. The more satisfied customers you get, the bigger probability there is that they will recommend you. Generally, people will trust someone they know, when that someone recommends you then you're a shoo-in. They will go to your site and check it for themselves

and be given a chance to experience what the other have experienced from you, so make sure to be consistent in the service you provide.

•Another tip in getting a customer to trust you quickly is to provide them an escape hatch. Show them that you are not there to trap them. Keep a clean list that would enable them to unsubscribe anytime they want. Elaborate your web form by providing information on how to unsubscribe from the list. Guarantee them that they can let go of the service when ever they want to. Many are wary that they may be stuck for life and would have to abandon their email accounts when they get pestered with spam.

Remember that when you get the trust of your clients don't lose that trust. Because if you do anything with their email addresses like sell them or give them out, you will lose many members of your list as well as potential members. The true quickest way to gain the trust of your subscribers is when you are recommended by someone they trust.

Marketing: Reach Your Target Market

5 Great Ways to Reach Your Target Market

There are many ways to reach out and find the people you are trying to attract for your business. Here are just a handful of ways to get you started:

1) Attend organization meetings

Where do people in your target market hang out? Research this, and then plan to attend a meeting or two to mix and mingle. What better way to meet and get to know these individuals while learning more about the market?

2) Offer to speak at a meeting or conference

What do you have to offer that you feel could be of value to those you are trying to reach out to? Present a short talk or slide show on a helpful topic. Be sure you present something of value to the group. What helpful tips or other material would hold their attention, and entice them to learn more about you and what you do? Just give them a small taste of your skills and knowledge. Chances are, they will want to talk to you after the presentation.

3) Advertise in publications your target market reads

The Internet is a great place to research what publications are out there. You can probably even get your advertisement to appear online as well as in the hard copy of a publication. Advertising can be rather expensive, so be careful with this one!

4) Present a free teleclass

If you are not confident in your public speaking skills, but still feel you have something of value

to teach those you are trying to influence, try offering a no-cost teleclass. It is usually fairly inexpensive to rent a bridge line to host your class. You can teach from the comfort of your own home, too. This is also a great way to get a list of names to add to your subscriber list for mailings. If you are comfortable with this option, you can charge a small fee for future teleclasses you hold, which will bring you some passive income.

5) Start a blog

Write daily or weekly posts related to subject matter that will pique the interest of your target market. Spend time researching particular topics that you can write about. Then, add some pizzazz...get excited when you post the information to your blog. If you're excited about something, others will be too. And don't forget to use keywords. These are what the search engines will use to find the content in your blog and draw others to it.

Marketing: Making Your Business Card

5 Tips On Making Your Business Card A Powerful Marketing Tool

When used effectively business cards can be a great marketing tool. In this article we will discuss 5 of the most effective ways that you can use your business cards everyday.

1. Be Creative.

Be creative in the design of your business cards. Business cards do not just need to be bits of paper with your contact details on them. Be creative and give your business cards a use and purpose. Make them a powerful marketing tool in the promotion of your business.

Your aim is to make your business card something that the receiver will want to keep and make use of. This is the difference between a well thought out and designed business card and a piece of paper with your contact details on it that will probably be thrown into the trash.

Give the recipient of your business cards a special offer. For example if you are a school/training center you may offer 'first lesson for free with this card' or if you run a shop maybe you will offer '10% of any purchase over \$50'.

Whatever your business, there is a creative way to give your business card real value to the receiver. If you can think and implement these new creative ways before your business does, you will have an instant advantage in that area of business, and should definitely see a rise in business if you have promoted your cards correctly.

2. The 1 minute rule

The 1 minute rule basically says, if you talk to a person for longer than 1 minute they should already have one of your business cards in their hand.

This means in conversations you need to find a way to talk about what you do, and be in the position to be able to offer one of your business cards to the person you are talking to in the first minute of conversation. This can be likened to a conversation you may have with someone at the bus stop or on the elevator. The conversation will end in a very short time and you only have a very short time to get your message across, or in this case get your business card to the recipient.

The 1 minute rule is basically just practice to get your business card out there as much as you can. Many people go through all the trouble of ordering business cards just to let them sit in a corner of their office. To use business cards effectively you must be giving them out at every opportunity that you have.

3. Make them keepers

Once you have given your business card to someone what is going to keep it from being thrown in the trash or forgotten about. Unless you are selling necessities it is probably fair to say that most likely they do not need the product/services you are offering at the present moment. Hopefully though in the future will come a time when they are looking for that product/service and that is when your business card still needs to be in the hands of the person.

Why does someone want your business card? If you cannot answer that easily, maybe it is time to think about a new business card design.

Does your business card have valuable information on it? By valuable I mean a map, discount, calendar, measurements, charts or anything relevant to your industry? If it doesn't, you may want to think about adding a value feature to your business card.

4. Leave them everywhere you go

During a number of trips around a number of businesses in my local area I have noticed piles of business cards on the counters of various businesses. For example a recent trip to my accountant I noticed they had a few piles of business cards on the counter for mortgage lenders, home loans, etc.

This can be likened very much to link swapping that goes on with webmasters looking for business referrals from similar businesses.

Every place that you frequent, you should ask if they mind you leaving a stack of your business card there for their customers. You could try this at your doctors office, your dentist, accountant, lawyer, beauty saloon or hairdresser.

For similar businesses (e.g. accountant > lawyer or money lender) maybe you can arrange to have a stack of their business cards displayed at your business when they offer your business cards at theirs. This can be a very effective way to use your business cards and can have great returns.

5. Ask for an opinion

‘Do you mind if I ask you a quick question? I’m looking for opinions on my new business card’. After asking the question and bringing the topic up hand them a business card. Make sure that they keep it, even if they try to hand it back to you tell them that you have thousands printed already.

Thank the person for their time, and if they ever need the product or service that you are offer that your contact information is on the business card. Even if that person may not directly contact your business, there is always a chance that they may pass your card or business name onto another party.

Even in the worse case they may go home and tell their friend how a nut just came and talked at the bus stop and handed them a business card for his lawn mowing service. That friend may say, ‘I’ve been looking for a good lawn mower’. ‘Here’s the business card I got’. And there is a situation where you may still even get business out of handing your business card to a stranger and even a disinterested stranger.

By following just one of the above five ideas each day, you can turn your business card into a great marketing tool, and see an almost instant increases in business.

Business Card Design That Works

This article illustrates how can the design of the business cards affect greatly on your marketing results. It also states how to achieve the best result.

There are a lot of business cards being circulated by countless businesses nowadays, but the truth is most people only keep a few. The main reason is that the business card does nothing to make the people who have them want to know more about the business. There are cards that utilize loud designs that make the contact information hardly noticeable. There are letter heads which are printed in unreadable fonts and sizes, or a paper material that is way too scented or way too glossy.

Business cards have the ability to speak so much about a business. This is the reason why the design of a business card is as essential as the distribution of the cards to a greater number of people. There are many business card printing companies that are able to come up with professionally designed cards best suited to your company or business. Whether online or offline, these printing and design experts can be of great help in determining which design, color, or lay out will give your business the best possible exposure it can generate.

Although there are businesses, especially small or start-up businesses who would rather print their own business cards to save on costs, choosing a professional business card lay-out designer and printing company is a wiser option. There are in fact many ways to optimize a business card. The products or services can be enumerated on the face of the card for the

clients to have a clearer grasp of what the business can offer. Unfortunately there are cards that fail to include other services which may add to the profitability of the business by increasing sales.

Furthermore, in business cards, the business logo and business name must be printed legibly on them. It is not wise to fill your card with so much information and other designs, and barely leaving enough space for your company name and logo. A business card is not a company resume, and as much as information on the company is essential, there is no sense in overdoing it.

Finally, the other side of the business card can be utilized for a number of purposes. The location map of the business may be printed, or a particular product best seller or service can be highlighted. Or the card can have a folded design so as to have more space for additional information. Business cards can do so much for any business, when optimized for exposure and sales purposes.

Business card's Enduring Commercial Commitment

Business cards are not just tiny pieces of paper. Size does not matter, that is. This is because tiny things may mean a lot.

Handing of business cards is common to the business world. You can see businessmen exchange business cards after meeting. You can even see the act when you walk across the streets. Business cards are so tiny that they are pretty accessible. They are not as big and as heavy as other promotional tools. Hence, they are easy to carry and distribute. Aside from this reason why do you think are they trusted by businessmen and the common people alike?

The reason is that they have already gauged its effectiveness when it comes to giving vital information. A business card can convey a message of enduring commitment to your business venture. The presentation, information and the totality of the business card can very well give an impression of dedication and passion. This is the reason why business card printing must be trusted only to the reliable printers who are skilled and reputable.

Personalization is a key factor that can make business cards a powerful marketing tool. With it, you are given a broader horizon and a wider leeway in connection with your brochure printing needs. You can make use of your own design as well as texts and incorporate it with your company logo and name to make it appear more personal and warm. The more you are perceived personal by your potential customers, the more they will trust you. This is because you create an atmosphere of friendliness and comfort and they, in turn, develop trust and confidence in you.

Whether you are a doctor, engineer, lawyer or a business company indulged in products and services, you must put special consideration to your business card printing needs. Big companies all over the globe do that. It is one of the factors why they stay on top.

With the latest breakthroughs, business cards these days can now be printed on top quality biodegradable paper with the use of exquisite colors. These two enhances graphics, shadowing, bleeds and the overall quality of the business cards. These cards are the fulcrum that fetches the customers to your commerce, make sure that you take advantage of the fulcrum to create bonds and confidences.

Marketing: Sell Your Products Now

10 Incredible Ways To Sell Your Products Now

1. Make your reader visualize they have already bought your product in your ad. Tell them what results they have gotten and how it makes them feel. They'll already become emotionally attached before they buy.
2. Turn your ad into an article. It could be a story, or how-to article. This will lead them into your ad without them knowing it's an ad. They'll already be interested when they get to your sales pitch.
3. Make sure you show your reader that they are getting a bargain. Tell them the usual price you sell your product for is \$99. Then tell them if they order today they can buy it for \$69.95.
4. Direct your ad headline to your target audience. Your readers will feel important and belong to a select group of people who buy your product. For example; "Attention! Accountants, Discover A New Way To Increase Your Client Base!"
5. Tell your reader how fast they can receive your product or service in your ad. Their buying decision may be based on how fast they can receive your product. They may need it by a certain deadline.
6. Use bullets to highlight your product or services benefits. Benefits are the key to selling anything, make them standout in your ad. You can use dots, dashes, or circles to highlight them.
7. Give a money back guarantee that surpasses a normal one. Instead of the normal timed guarantee, give them extra back. Tell them they can keep the free bonus or give them double their money back.
8. Tell your reader they'll receive surprise bonuses. This'll raise your reader's curiosity and make them want to buy so they can find out what the surprise bonuses are.
9. Let your reader know this specific package will not be offered again. You must create urgency so people buy now. You may always sell the same product but not with the same bonuses or price.
10. Give them a couple tips in your ad that will help them with their problem. This will give your

business credibility and gain your readers trust to buy your products or services.

Marketing: Offline Methods

16 Tips For Offline Marketing

Search engines are Not “the only form of marketing” these days as to how people will find your website (as was the case five years ago)! Many more people are visiting websites where they have seen the URL in writing. Why do you think so many television commercials these days always include the web address of the product they are promoting?

These tips will do wonders for increasing your Offline Marketing and the amount of traffic to your website, which of course, is what we all want to

1. Answering Machine – This one is easy for offline marketing, just be sure to include your URL, dot.com in your answering machine messages!
2. Address Labels – Again easy all your outgoing mail for everything use your address labels for more offline marketing of your business and website!
3. Business Cards – Definitely use them, get in the habit of carrying them with you and pass them out “It Works”, you can even get you cards done on cd-roms!
4. Company vehicles – We all see vehicles with company names and telephone numbers on them driving our streets and motorways. This is a great idea as it gives potential customers the chance while out and about to learn about the company and also learn about how to contact them should they need the service or product they offer at some stage in the future. I often wonder why more websites aren’t promoted in this way by simply adding the company website URL also, you definitely should do this as part of your Offline Marketing!
5. Flyers – Post flyers on free local bulletin boards (grocery stores, discount chain stores, shopping malls, laundromats, dry cleaners, etc.) print a flyer on bright yellow paper detailing your web address and your company. BE SURE to include your email address, URL as well as your telephone number! Tack the flyer to bulletin boards all over your town. Keep a supply in your car for handy offline marketing!
6. Freebies & Giveaways – This method is a personal favorite of mine. It involves purchasing and distributing items such as pencils, pens, t-shirts, mugs, mouse pads, calendars, key-chains, bumper stickers, refrigerator magnets and the like. All these items will have your URL, Logo, or Email address located somewhere on them helping to market offline and attract people to your website.
7. Christmas Cards – Use your Christmas cards to all your customers also for offline marketing with all your info URL, email and phone numbers!

8. Checks & Coupons – Again use all your information when using coupons and have your company checks printed with this information!

9. Web decals – are a new, inexpensive and fun way to use offline marketing and attract attention to your website. People absolutely love them, and they are very simple to use. Web decals are made of high quality vinyl and printed with state of the art digital equipment. Display your website address and more in bold white or black & white letters. People stick them everywhere. In your car windows, store, office and home windows, any place with glass!

10. Word of Mouth – easiest and a very viral form of offline marketing, your happy customers and friends just pass it on!

11. Fax cover sheets – (many people forget this one for offline marketing!)

12. Personal brochures – about you and your company!

13. Printed Material – Print your URL (Web site address) everywhere you print your business name. Including business cards, fliers, signage, ads, product tags, labels, craft show directories (in shows you may be attending) and anywhere else your business name is printed!

14. Newspapers, classifieds and related magazines – The print media which includes newspapers, journals and magazines is another avenue where you can have your URL exposed for everyone to see. It's best first to start advertising your products, services and URL in local newspapers and then if successful continue onto regional and national publications. If you can't afford the common graphical advertisement as seen throughout newspapers and journals related to your industry don't worry as most of these publications have classified ad sections. Classified ads allow you to reach a targeted audience very cheaply with a simple short message and of course your URL is included in there somewhere too again a great source of offline marketing for your business!

15. Press releases – Press releases using them for offline marketing and promotion. Press releases or news releases as they're sometimes known are newsworthy stories about your business that you send to various sections of the media. These sections of the media must be related to your industry for you to have any chance of success. Newsworthy stories are stories which readers of the media publications you submit to might be interested in.

If the journalist reads it and likes it he or she may publish it or some of its contents in his or her publication, if this happens you're on to a winner because the public in general are much more responsive to a news story than a plain old hyped up advertisement. This could mean they'll inquire about or even purchase your products or services.

Using press releases for offline marketing of your website uses the same principals, if it's newsworthy release it. Newsworthy events for websites include website launches, website re launches and new online services among other items. Also don't forget online press releases!

16. I. ID-It Plates – These Elegant mini-Billboards promote YOU 365 days a year, enhance the appearance of your vehicles, last for years and most important, give you literally Millions of Impressions and affordable offline marketing over their lifetime.

Conclusion – Even if your business only exists in the virtual world you must realize ALL your customers live and always will live in the physical world and therefore can be reached much better from the physical world. The moral of the story is never ever forget about the offline marketing and promotion of your website. Your success or failure could depend on it!

Marketing: Nation Branding

Nation Branding and Place Marketing – I. The Marketing Plan

Since World War II, economics prowess replaced military power as the crucial geopolitical determinant. The resilience of a country is measured by its inflows of foreign investment and by the balance of its current account – not by the number of its tanks and brigades.

Inevitably, polities the world over – regions, states, countries, and multinational clubs – behave as only commercial businesses once did. They actively market themselves, their relative advantages, their history and culture, their endowments and assets, their mentality and affiliations. In short, they aggressively promote their brand names (“brands” throughout this article).

To cast countries in the role of brands implies that they act as “producers” to some “consumers” out there. But what do countries – as distinct from firms – produce? And who are the consumers enticed by said statical brand placement and regional location marketing? And how does the process of exchange take place – who gives what to whom and where?

Few governments know the answers to these economically crucial questions. Ministers of finance and industry the world over religiously repeat the mantras of “attracting foreign direct investment” and “encouraging entrepreneurship”. They recite the list of advantages proffered by their country to the lucky investor, manager, scientist, expatriate, or businessman. But they lack a deep understanding of the process and meaning of nation branding.

Few countries – Britain being the notable exception in the past decade – conduct serious market research and bang heads together in think tanks or inter-ministerial committees to redesign the national brand. Even fewer maintain long-term, sustained branding campaigns supported by proper advertising. Only recently did a few pioneering polities hire the services of nation branding experts. None has in place the equivalent of a corporate “brand manager”.

One of the critical mistakes of countries the world over is the self-centered lack of emphasis on customer satisfaction. Meeting and exceeding the “client’s” expectations is merely an afterthought – rather than the axis around which the planning, evaluation, control, and revision of the marketing mix revolve. At best, countries concentrate on concluding specific

transactions instead of on the development and cultivation of long-term relationships with their “clients”.

It is as though countries arrogantly refuse to acknowledge their dependence on the goodwill of individuals and firms the world over. The traditional and impregnable supremacy of the sovereign nation-state has gone the way of the dodo – but decision-makers still have to be appraised of this startling development. Most countries – and nowadays there is a surfeit of sovereigns – are nothing more than bit players in the global marketplace. It takes getting used to. Many politicians mentally equate self-marketing with humiliating mendicancy.

Instead, decision makers should hire marketing (and, more specifically, brand name) experts to prepare a thorough and comprehensive place marketing and nation branding plan for them:

Strategic Marketing Analysis

I. Identify what needs and whose needs can the country meet and satisfy. What preference groups (of investors, for instance) or even market niches (e.g., stem cell scientists) should be targeted to optimize economic outcomes?

II. Compile databases of past clients of the state, its resources, offerings, laws, regulations, international treaties, and economic opportunities (e.g., state companies to be privatized). These allow for micro-branding (or segment branding as opposed to mass branding): tweaking the national brand to suit the preferences, likes, dislikes, and wishes of specific target groups, down to single, important, individuals.

III. Position the country in relation to its competitors, emphasizing its natural and human endowments and its relative advantages. The process of positioning aims to identify the nation with an image, perception, concept, or trait which capture its essence and further its appeal to the clients it had identified in stage I above (investors, other countries, diplomats, scientists, and so on). Great care should be taken to align the positioning messages with realities on the ground. Anything perceived by the preference groups as being a lie or an exaggeration will backfire.

IV. Marketing is about optimal allocation of resources in view of objectives and opportunities.

The classic STP model calls for:

I. Segmentation – Identify potential customers – for instance, foreign direct investors, or expatriates and the diaspora.

II. Targeting – Concentrate on those “clients” you can serve most effectively, to whom you are most valuable and thus can “charge” the most for your offerings

III. Positioning – Communicate effectively the main benefits you offer to the targeted group.

The marketing mix comprises 4 P's which are perfectly applicable to nations as they are to businesses:

Product – Your “products” as a country being tax incentives, infrastructure, natural endowments, human resources, a geographic vantage point, helpful laws and regulations (or absence thereof), etc.

Price – Demonstrate a relative or absolute advantage in terms of return on investment

Place – Facilitate the unhindered exchange of goods, services, and capital (tax holidays, free processing zones, no red tape, double taxation treaties and free trade agreements with other countries, etc.)

Promotion – The advertising and dissemination of news and information, lobbying, public relations, media campaigns, etc.

But what products do countries offer and market and how are they tailored to the needs of specific market segments?

Nation Branding and Place Marketing – II. The Product

II. The Product

What products do countries offer and market and how are they tailored to the needs of specific market segments?

In a marketing mix, the first and foremost element is the product. No amount of savvy promotion and blitz advertising can disguise the shortcomings of an inferior offering.

Contrary to entrenched misinformation, the role of marketing precedes the development of the product. The marketer gathers information regarding the expectations of the target market (the customers). In the case of a country, its clients are its citizens, investors (both foreign and domestic), tourists, export destinations, multilateral organizations (the international community), non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and neighboring nations-states.

The marketer communicates to statical decision-makers what features and benefits does each of these disparate groups desire and suggests how to reconcile their competing and often contradictory needs, interests, preferences, priorities, and wishes.

The marketer or brand manager then proceeds to participate in the design of the country's “products”: its branding and public relations campaigns both within and without its borders, its investment laws and regulations, the development and presentation of its tourist attractions, the trumpeting of the competitive or unique qualities of its export products, the tailoring and monitoring of its mutually-beneficial relationships with neighbors, NGOs, and international organizations.

In designing its “products” and, thus, in acquiring a brand name, a country makes use of and leverages several factors:

1. Natural Endowments

The country’s history, geographical location, tourism sites, climate, national “mentality” (hard working, forward looking, amicable, peaceful, etc.)

2. Acquired Endowments, Public Goods, and Externalities

Level of education, knowledge of foreign languages, quality of infrastructure, the court, banking, and public health systems

3. Risk Mitigation

International standing and the resolution of extant conflicts (political risk), the country’s laws, regulations, and favorable international treaties, its credit history, insurance available to investors and exporters

4. Economic Prowess

Growth promoting policies, monetary stability, access to international credit, the emergence of new industries

Governments can influence many of these factors. Granted, there is little they can do about the country’s past history or climate – but pretty much all the rest is up for grabs. Aided by input from its brand managers and marketers, a country can educate its population to meet the requirements of investors and exporters. It can improve infrastructure, reform the court system, pass growth-promoting laws, cut down red tape, support monetary stability, resolve conflicts with the international community and so on.

It is important to understand that the “products” and brand name of a country are not God-given, unalterable quantities. They can and should be tailored to optimize the results of the marketing and branding campaigns.

Maintaining the country’s brand name and promoting its products are ongoing tasks – not one off assignments. They require a constant infusion of financial and human resources to conduct research and development to evaluate the shifting sentiments of the country’s clients. States and regions are no different to corporate entities. They, too, must gauge and study their markets and customers at every turn and respond with alacrity.

Exactly like commercial outfits, political entities seek to extract a price for their offerings and products. Increasingly, the price they can obtain is settled by highly efficient global markets in perceptions, goods, and services. As competition stiffens and the number of state-players

increases, the barriers to entry become more formidable.

Nation Branding and Place Marketing – III. The Price

III. The Price

A product's price reflects the shifting balance between supply and demand (scarcity) as well as the value of inputs, the product's quality, and its image as conveyed and fostered by marketing and advertising campaigns (positioning). Price is, therefore, a packet of compressed information exchanged between prospective buyers and interested sellers.

In principle, countries "price" themselves no differently.

But, first, we should see how the price mechanism comes into play in the global marketplace of sovereigns and their offerings.

The "price" of a country is comprised of two elements:

- (i) The average (internal rate of) return on investments in its infrastructure, human capital, goods, and services – adjusted for
- (ii) The risks associated with doing business there.

The first component takes into account the costs of conducting business in the territory – everything from outlays on inputs to taxation. The second component considers the country's political risk, volatility (as measured, for instance, by fluctuations in the prices of its financial assets and obligations), quality of governance, transparency or lack thereof, dysfunctional institutions, stability of policies and legislation, and other hazards.

A country should strive to maximize its price and, thus, create an aura of quality and prosperity. "Selling oneself cheap" communicates desperation and compromised standards. The way to attract investors, tourists, and other clients is to project a kind of "promised land" but without resorting to exaggerations, confabulations, or outright lies.

The message should be relayed both directly (though not obtrusively) and subtly (though not incomprehensibly or deviously). The country should enumerate and emphasize its natural and human endowments, capital stock and infrastructure, favorable tax and regulatory regime, political stability, good governance, transparency, functioning institutions, and so on. It should also appear to be substantial, sophisticated, forward-looking, pleasant, welcoming and so forth.

As an increasing number of people around the world "buy" the country's self-perception (where it stands now) and its vision (about its future) – its price keeps climbing and its value is enhanced.

It is much debated whether countries should engage in negative marketing and discount pricing. "Negative marketing" is the disparagement of sovereign competitors and their

products and services which are comparable to the country's own offerings or substitute for them. Discount pricing is the strategy of providing at a discount products and services identical to those offered by the country's sovereign competitors.

An example of negative marketing would be to point to a neighboring country's uneducated and expensive labor as a reason not to do business there. An example of discount pricing is to offer tax holidays and rent-free facilities to a relocating multinational.

From my experiences, both practices diminish the country's perceived value and hence, its price. In the long run, the damage to its image far outweighs any dubious economic benefits engendered by these unsavory practices.

Still, some countries are geographically disadvantaged. Recent studies have shown that being landlocked or having a tropical climate carry a hefty price tag in terms of reduced economic growth. These unfavorable circumstances can be described as "natural discounts" to a country's price.

What can be done to overcome such negative factor endowments?

Nation Branding and Place Marketing – IV. The Place

IV. The Place

Some countries are geographically disadvantaged. Recent studies have demonstrated how being landlocked or having a tropical climate carry a hefty price tag in terms of reduced economic growth. These unfavorable circumstances can be described as "natural discounts" to a country's price.

What can be done to overcome such negative factor endowments?

In classical microeconomics, the element of "place" in the marketing plan used to refer to the locus of delivery of the product or service. Well into the 19th century, the "place" was identical to the region where the product was manufactured or the service rendered. In other words, textiles weaved in India were rarely sold in Britain. American accountants were unlikely to practice in Russia. Distribution was a local affair and networks of dissemination and marketing were geographically confined.

A host of historical and technological developments drastically altered the scene and frayed the straitjacket of geography.

The violent disintegration of the old system of geopolitical alliances led to the formation of massive, multiplayer trading blocs within which and among which the movement of goods and, increasingly, services is friction-free.

The vast increase in the world's population – matched by the exponential rise in purchasing

power – created a global marketplace of unprecedented wealth and a corresponding hunger for goods and services. The triumph of liberal capitalism compounded this beneficial effect.

The advent of mass media, mass transport, and mass communications reduced transaction costs and barriers to entry. The world shrank to become a veritable “global village”.

The value of knowledge (processed information) has fast risen to surpass that of classical (physical) goods and services. Information has some of the properties of a public good (for instance, nonrivalry) – coupled with all the incentives of a private good (e.g., profit-making).

Thus, the very nature of distribution had been irrevocably changed. The distribution channel, the path from producer to consumer (in our case, from country to foreign investor or tourist, for example) is less encumbered by topography than it used to be.

Even the poorest, most remote, landlocked, arid, and disadvantaged country can nowadays leverage air flight, the Internet, television, cell phones, and other miracles of technology to promote itself and its unique offerings (knowledge, plant and animal species, scenery, history, minerals, cheap and educated manpower, cuisine, textiles, software, and so on).

The key to success is in a mix of both direct and indirect marketing. Nowadays, countries can (and do) appeal directly to consumers (ads targeted at tourists or road shows aimed at investors). They present themselves and what they have to offer, circumventing brokers and agents of all kinds (disintermediation). Still, they should not fail to cultivate more traditional marketing channels such as investment banks, travel agents, multilateral organizations, or trade associations.

With many of the physical obstacles to marketing removed in the last few decades, with the very concept of “place” rendered obsolete, promotion emerged as the most critical facet of nation branding and place marketing.

Nation Branding and Place Marketing – V. Promotion, Sales, Public Relations, Marketing, and Advertising

V. Promotion, Sales, Public Relations, Marketing, and Advertising

Advantages have to be communicated to potential customers if they are not to remain unrealized potentials. Moreover, communication alone – the exchange of information – is not enough. Clients have to be influenced and motivated to visit a country, invest in it, or trade with it.

This is where promotion comes in. Not to be confused with marketing, it is concerned with setting up a trained sales force, and with advertising, sales, and public relations.

We deal with sales forces at length in our next installment. Suffice to say, at this stage, that poor countries will be hard pressed to cater to the pecuniary needs of high-level and,

therefore, expensive, salespersons. Setting up a body of volunteers under the supervision, guidance, and training of seasoned sales personnel maybe a more suitable solution.

Advertising is a different ballgame. There is no substitute for a continued presence in the media. The right mix of paid ads and sponsored promotions of products, services, and ideas can work miracles for a country's image as a preferred destination.

Clever, targeted, advertising also ties in with sales promotion. Together they provide the customer with both motivation and incentive to "buy" what the country has on offer. Brand switching is common in the global arena. Investors and tourists, let alone exporters and importers, are fickle and highly mobile. This inherent disloyalty is a boon to new and emerging markets.

An interesting and related question is whether countries constitute similar or dissimilar brands. In other words, are countries interchangeable (fungible) as investment, tourism, and trade destinations? Is cost the only determining factor? If countries are, indeed, mere variants on given themes, acquiring and sustaining permanent market shares (inducing a market shift) may prove to be a problem.

The answer is that the issue is largely irrelevant. Specialization and brand differentiation may be crucial inside countries – in domestic markets – but, they are not very important in the global arena.

Why is that?

Because the global marketplace is far less fractionated than national markets. Niche investors, off-the-beaten-track tourists, and boutique traders are rarities. Multinationals, organized package tours, and commodity traders rule the Earth and they have pretty similar tastes and uniform demands. Catering to these tastes and demands makes or breaks the external sector of a country's economy.

Enter public relations.

While advertising and sales promotion try to access and influence the masses – public relations focuses on opinion-leaders, decision-makers, first-movers, and tipping points. Public relations is also concerned with the country's partners, suppliers, and investors. It directly appeals to major tour operators, foreign legislators, multinationals, and important non-government organizations (NGOs), as well as regional and international forums.

As the name implies, public relations is about follow-up (monitoring) and relationships. This is especially true in the country's dealings with the news media and with specialized publications. Press conferences, presentations, contests, road shows, one-on-one meetings or briefings, seminars, lobbying, and community events – are all tools of the twin trades of marketing public relations and image management.

A recent offshoot of the discipline of public relations – which may be of particular relevance and importance where countries are concerned – is crisis management. Public awareness of crises – from civil wars to environmental disasters – can be manipulated within limits of propriety and veracity. Governments would do well to appoint “public policy and image advisers” to tackle the periodic flare-ups that are an inevitable part of the political and the economic dimensions of an increasingly complex world.

Yet, even governments are bottom-line orientated nowadays. How should a country translate its intangible assets into dollars and cents (or euros)?

Nation Branding and Place Marketing – VI. The Sales Force and Marketing Implementation Oversight

VI. The Sales Force and Marketing Implementation Oversight

How should a country translate its intangible assets into dollars and cents (or euros)?

Enter its Sales force and marketing intermediaries.

Even poor countries should allocate funds to train and maintain a skilled sales force and pay its wages, expenses, and perks. Salespeople are the human face of the country’s promotion efforts. They tailor to individual listeners (potential customers) the message the country wishes to convey about itself, its advantages, and its prospects.

As their title implies, salespersons personalize the sales pitch and enliven the sales process. They are as indispensable in mass-attendance road shows and in retail marketing (e.g., of tourism packages) as they are in one-on-one meetings with important decision-makers and investors.

The country’s sales force should be trained to make presentations, respond to queries and objections, close deals, and cope with account growth. Its work should be tightly integrated with other promotional efforts such as mass mailings, telemarketing, media releases, and direct offers. Sales personnel should work hand in hand with marketing intermediaries such as travel agents, financial firms, investment funds, and corporate buyers.

Marketing intermediaries are at least as crucial to the country’s success as its sales force. They are trusted links to investors, tourists, businessmen, and other “clients”. They constitute repositories of expertise as well as venues of communication, both formal and informal. Though usually decried by populist and ignorant politicians, their role in smoothing the workings of the marketplace is crucial. Countries should nurture and cultivate brokers and go-betweens.

A marketing expert – preferably a former salesperson with relevant experience in the field – should head the country’s marketing implementation oversight board or committee. The Marketing Implementation Oversight Board should include representatives of the various state

bureaucracies, the country's branding and advertising consultants and agents, its sales force – and collaborating marketing intermediaries.

This body's task is to harmonize and coordinate the country's various efforts at branding, advertising, publicity, and promotion. It is the state's branding headquarters and should enjoy wide supervisory as well as executive powers.

In other words, marketing implementation is about ensuring that the country's message is both timely (synergetic) and coherent and, thus, both credible (consistent) and efficient. Scarce resources are better allocated and deployed if the left hand consults the right one before it moves.

But how can a country judge the efficacy of its attempts to brand or re-brand itself and, consequently, to attract customers?

Nation Branding and Place Marketing – VII. Marketing Implementation, Evaluation, and Control

VII. Marketing Implementation, Evaluation, and Control

How can a country (region, state, city, municipality, or other polity) judge the efficacy of its attempts to brand or re-brand itself and, consequently, to attract customers (investors, tourism operators, bankers, traders, and so on)?

Marketing is not a controlled process in an insulated lab. It is prone to mishaps, last minute changes, conceptual shifts, political upheavals, the volatility of markets, and, in short, to the vagaries of human nature and natural disasters. Some marketing efforts are known to have backfired. Others have yielded lukewarm results. Marketing requires constant fine tuning and adjustments to reflect and respond to the kaleidoscopic environment of our times.

But maximum benefits (under the circumstances) are guaranteed if the client (the country, for instance) implements a rigorous Marketing Implementation, Evaluation, and Control (MIEV) plan.

The first task is to set realistic quantitative and qualitative interim and final targets for the marketing program – and then to constantly measure its actual performance and compare it to the hoped for outcomes. Even nation branding and place marketing require detailed projections of expenditures vs. income (budget and performs financial statements) for monitoring purposes.

The five modules of MIEV are:

1. Annual plan control

This document includes all the government's managerial objectives and (numerical) goals. It

is actually a breakdown of the aforementioned pro-forma financial statements into monthly and quarterly figures of “sales” (in terms of foreign direct investment, income from tourism, trade figures, etc.) and profitability.

It comprises at least five performance gauging tools:

- I. Sales analysis (comparing sales targets to actual sales and accounting for discrepancies).
- II. Market-share analysis (comparing the country’s “sales” with those of its competitors). The country should also compare its own sales to the total sales in the global market and to sales within its “market segment” (neighboring countries, countries which share its political ambience, same-size countries, etc.).
- III. Expense-to-sales analysis demonstrates the range of costs – both explicit and hidden (implicit) – of achieving the country’s sales goals.
- IV. Financial analysis calculates various performance ratios such as profits to sales (profit margin), sales to assets (asset turnover), profits to assets (return on assets), assets to worth (financial leverage), and, finally, profits to worth (return on net worth of infrastructure).
- V. Customer satisfaction is the ultimate indicator of tracking goal achievement. The country should actively seek, facilitate, and encourage feedback, both positive and negative by creating friendly and ubiquitous complaint and suggestion systems. Frequent satisfaction and customer loyalty surveys should form an integral part of any marketing drive.

Regrettably, most acceptable systems of national accounts sorely lack the ability to cope with place marketing and nation branding campaigns. Intangibles such as enhanced reputation or investor satisfaction are excluded. There is no clear definition as to what constitute the assets of a country, its “sales”, or its “profits”.

2. Profitability control

There is no point in squandering scarce resources on marketing efforts that guarantee nothing except name recognition. Sales, profits, and expenditures should count prominently in any evaluation (and re-evaluation) of on-going campaigns. The country needs to get rid of prejudices, biases, and misconceptions and clearly identify what products and consumer groups yield the most profits (have the highest relative earnings-capacity). Money, time, and manpower should be allocated to cater to the needs and desires of these top-earners.

3. Efficiency control

The global picture is important. An overview of the marketing and sales efforts and their relative success (or failure) is crucial. But a micro-level analysis is indispensable. What is the sales force doing, where, and how well? What are the localized reactions to the advertising, sales promotion, and distribution drives? Are there appreciable differences between the reactions of various market niches and consumer types?

4. Strategic control

The complement of efficiency control is strategic control. It weighs the overall and long-term marketing plan in view of the country's basic data: its organization, institutions, strengths, weaknesses, and market opportunities. It is recommended to compare the country's self-assessment (marketing-effectiveness rating review) with an analysis prepared by an objective third party.

The marketing-effectiveness rating review incorporates privileged information such as input and feedback from the country's "customers" (investors, tourist operators, traders, bankers, etc.), internal reports regarding the adequacy and efficiency of the country's marketing information, operations, strengths, strategies, and integration (of various marketing, branding, and sales tactics).

5. Marketing audit

The marketing audit is, in some respects, the raw material for the strategic control. Its role is to periodically make sure that the marketing plan emphasizes the country's strengths in ways that are compatible with shifting market sentiments, current events, fashions, preferences, needs, and priorities of relevant market players. This helps to identify marketing opportunities and new or potential markets.

The Encyclopedia Britannica (2005 edition) describes the marketing audit thus:

"... (I)t covers all aspects of the marketing climate (unlike a functional audit, which analyzes one marketing activity), looking at both macro-environment factors (demographic, economic, ecological, technological, political, and cultural) and micro- or task-environment factors (markets, customers, competitors, distributors, dealers, suppliers, facilitators, and publics). The audit includes analyses of the company's marketing strategy, marketing organization, marketing systems, and marketing productivity. It must be systematic in order to provide concrete conclusions based on these analyses. To ensure objectivity, a marketing audit is best done by a person, department, or organization that is independent of the company or marketing program. Marketing audits should be done not only when the value of a company's current marketing plan is in question; they must be done periodically in order to isolate and solve problems before they arise."

Nation Branding and Place Marketing – VIII. The Psychology and Demographics of the Consumer

VIII. The Psychology and Demographics of the Consumer

The country's "customers" are its investors, tourists, traders, market intermediaries, NGOs, and office-holders in other countries and in multilateral institutions. Understanding their psychology and demographics is crucial. Their interactions with one another take place in a

complex environment, affected by governments, social forces, cultural factors, and markets.

The country must clearly identify its clientele: who are they, what motivates them, what do they do and buy (and how, where and when), what are their decision-making processes and priorities, who[limit] Marketing: Cold Calling Sales Secrets

Cold calling the old way is a painful struggle. Change Your Mental Objective Before You Make the Call. If you're like most people who make cold calls, you're hoping to make a sale — or at least an appointment — before you even pick up the phone. The problem is, the people you call somehow always pick up on your mindset immediately.

But you can make it a productive and positive experience by changing your mindset and cold calling the new way.

To show you what I mean, here are 7 cold calling ideas that even the sales gurus don't know.

1. Change Your Mental Objective Before You Make the Call

If you're like most people who make cold calls, you're hoping to make a sale — or at least an appointment — before you even pick up the phone.

The problem is, the people you call somehow always pick up on your mindset immediately.

They sense that you're focused on your goals and interests, rather than on finding out what they might need or want.

This short-circuits the whole process of communication and trust-building.

Here's the benefit of changing your mental objective before you make the call: it takes away the frenzy of working yourself up mentally to pick up the phone.

All the feelings of rejection and fear come from us getting wrapped up in our expectations and hoping for an outcome when it's premature to even be thinking about an outcome.

So try this. Practice shifting your mental focus to thinking, "When I make this call, I'm going to build a conversation so that a level of trust can emerge allowing us to exchange information back and forth so we can both determine if there's a fit or not."

2. Understand the Mindset of the Person You're Calling

Let's say you're at your office and you're working away.

Your phone rings and someone says, "Hello, my name's Mark. I'm with Financial Solutions International. We offer a broad array of financial solutions. Do you have a few minutes?"

What would go through your mind?

Probably something like this: “Uh-oh, another salesperson. I’m about to be sold something. How fast can I get this person off the phone?”

In other words, it’s basically over at “Hello,” and you end up rejected.

The moment you use the old cold calling approach — the traditional pitch about who you are and what you have to offer, which all the sales gurus have been teaching for years — you trigger the negative “salesperson” stereotype in the mind of the person you’ve called, and that means immediate rejection.

I call it “The Wall.”

The problem is with how you’re selling, not what you’re selling.

This is an area that’s been ignored in the world of selling.

We’ve all been trained to try to push prospects into a “yes” response on the first call. But that creates sales pressure.

But, if you learn to really understand and put yourself in the mindset of the person you call, you’ll find it easier to avoid triggering The Wall.

It’s that fear of rejection that makes cold calling so frightening.

Instead, start thinking about language that will engage people and not language that will trigger rejection.

3. Identify a Core Problem That You Can Solve

We’ve all learned that when we begin a conversation with a prospect, we should talk about ourselves, our product, and our solution. Then we sort of hope that the person connects with what we’ve just told them. Right?

But when you offer your pitch or your solution without first involving your prospect by talking about a core problem that they might be having, you’re talking about yourself, not them.

And that’s a problem.

Prospects connect when they feel that you understand their issues before you start to talk about your solutions.

When people feel understood, they don’t put up The Wall. They remain open to talking with you.

Here's an example based on my own experience. I offer Unlock The Game™ as a new approach in selling. When I call a vice president of sales, I would never start out with, "Hi, my name is Ari, I'm with Unlock The Game, and I offer the newest technique in selling, and I wonder if you have a few minutes to talk now."

Instead, I wouldn't even pick up the phone without first identifying one or more problems that I know VPs often have with their sales teams. Problems that Unlock The Game™ can solve.

For example, one common problem is when sales teams and salespeople spend time chasing prospects who have no intention of buying.

So I would start by asking, "Are you grappling with issues around your sales team chasing prospects who lead them on without any intention of buying?"

So, come up with two or three specific core problems that your product or service solves. (Avoid generic problem phrases like "cut costs" or "increase revenue." They're too vague.)

4. Start With a Dialogue, Not a Presentation

Let's return to the goal of a cold call, which is to create a two-way dialogue engaging prospects in a conversation.

We're not trying to set the person up for a yes or no. That's the old way of cold calling.

This new cold calling approach is designed to engage people in a natural conversation. The kind you might have with a friend. This lets you both of you decide whether it's worth your time to pursue the conversation further.

The key here is never to assume beforehand that your prospect should buy what you have to offer, even if they're a 100 percent fit with the profile of the "perfect customer."

If you go into the call with that assumption, prospects will pick up on it and The Wall will go up, no matter how sincere you are.

Avoid assuming anything about making a sale before you make a call.

For one thing, you have no idea whether prospects can buy what you have because you know nothing about their priorities, their decisionmaking process, their budget, etc.

If you assume that you're going to sell them something on that first call, you're setting yourself up for failure. That's the core problem with traditional old-style cold calling.

Stay focused on opening a dialogue and determining if it makes sense to continue the conversation.

5. Start With Your Core Problem Question

Once you know what problems you solve, you also know exactly what to say when you make a call. It's simple. You begin with, "Hi, my name is Ari. Maybe you can help me out for a moment."

How would you respond if someone said that to you?

Probably, "Sure, how can I help you?" or "Sure, what do you need?" That's how most people would respond to a relaxed opening phrase like that. It's a natural reaction.

The thing is, when you ask for help, you're also telling the truth because you don't have any idea whether you can help them or not.

That's why this new approach is based on honesty and truthfulness. That's why you're in a very good place to begin with.

When they reply, "Sure, how can I help you?," you don't respond by launching into a pitch about what you have to offer. Instead, you go right into talking about the core problem to find out whether it's a problem for the prospect.

So you say, "I'm just giving you a call to see if you folks are grappling (and the key word here is 'grappling') with any issues around your sales team chasing prospects who turn out to never have any intention of buying?"

No pitch, no introduction, nothing about me. I just step directly into their world.

The purpose of my question is to open the conversation and develop enough trust so they'll feel comfortable having a conversation.

The old way of cold calling advises asking lots of questions to learn about the prospect's business and to "connect." The problem is that people see right through that. They know that you have an ulterior motive, and then you're right back up against The Wall.

These ideas may be hard for you to apply to your own situation at first because trying to leverage calls based on what we know about our solution is so engrained in our thinking.

If you stay with it, though, you can learn to step out of your own solution and convert it into a problem that you can articulate using your prospects' language.

And that's the secret of building trust on calls. It's the missing link in the whole process of cold calling.

6. Recognize and Diffuse Hidden Pressures

Hidden sales pressures that makes The Wall go up can take a lot of forms.

For example, “enthusiasm” can send the message that you’re assuming that what you have is the right fit for the prospect. That can send pressure over the phone to your prospect.

You must be able to engage people in a natural conversation. Think of it as calling a friend. Let your voice be natural, calm, relaxed...easy-going. If you show enthusiasm on your initial call, you’ll probably trigger the hidden sales pressure that triggers your prospect to reject you.

Another element of hidden pressure is trying to control the call and move it to a “next step”.

The moment you begin trying to direct your prospect into your “sales process”, there is a very high likelihood that you can “turn off” your prospect’s willingness to share with you the details of their situation.

It’s important to allow the conversation to evolve naturally and to have milestones or checkpoints throughout your call so you can assess if there is a fit between you and the person you are speaking with.

7. Determine a Fit

Now, suppose that you’re on a call and it’s going well, with good dialogue going back and forth. You’re reaching a natural conclusion...and what happens?

In the old way of cold calling, we panic. We feel we’re going to lose the opportunity, so we try to close the sale or at least to book an appointment. But this puts pressure on the prospect, and you run the risk of The Wall going up again.

Here’s a step that most people miss when they cold call. As soon as they realize that prospects have a need for their solution, they start thinking, “Great, that means they’re interested.”

What they don’t ask is, “Is this need a top priority for you or your organization to solve, or is it something that’s on the back burner for a while?”

In other words, even if you both determine that there is a problem you can solve, you have to ask whether solving it is a priority. Sometimes there’s no budget, or it isn’t the right time. It’s important that you find this out, because months later you’ll regret not knowing this earlier.

Putting the Pieces Together

Have you ever wondered where the “numbers game” concept came from?

It came from someone making a call, getting rejected, and the boss saying, “Call someone

else.”

But with the new way of cold calling, it’s not about how many people you call. It’s about what you say and how you come across.

Do you remember the definition of insanity—continuing to do the same thing but expecting different results?

If you go on using the same old cold calling methods, you’ll go on experiencing the ever-increasing pain of selling.

But if you adopt a new approach and learn how to remove pressure from your initial cold calls, you’ll experience so much success and satisfaction that it’ll really change the way you do business, bring you sales success beyond your imagination—and eliminate “rejection” from your vocabulary for good.

Marketing: Does Your Marketing Pass This 10-Point Test?

Good marketing, whatever form it takes, always meets certain criteria. That’s what makes it good. The following 10-Point checklist will help you determine if your marketing passes the test.

I challenge you to evaluate one of your recent ads, promotions or other marketing activities to see how it measures up.

1.Does it focus on the solution or benefit you provide?

Too often ads simply list product or service features. Don’t make your prospects work that hard to figure out how your product or service can help them. Tell them straight out.

2.Does it have one, clear message?

What’s the one message you want to communicate? Make sure it’s not buried in too much information or it may not get across.

3.Is it focused on one, specific group of prospects?

Do you know who you are talking (and marketing) to? Make sure your marketing is targeted at one, specific group of prospects – it’s the only way to make sure you are addressing their needs.

4.Is it written in language these prospects can relate to?

If you want your message to resonate with your prospects, make sure it speaks to them, both in content and in the tone and language you use.

5.Does it feature your Unique Selling Proposition?

This is the ONE thing that sets you apart from every other product or service your prospect could possibly buy to fulfill the same need. It better come across loud and clear in everything you do

6.Does it have one, compelling point of focus?

Ever see an ad with so many things in it you didn't know where to look first? Your prospects won't know either if you try to cram too much into your ads or promotional materials.

7.Does it accurately communicate your business' personality?

Yes, your business has a personality and everything you do should reflect it. You want your prospects to feel like they "know" you. If you change your personality every week, they won't come to know and trust you.

8.Does it give prospects more than one reason to respond?

Not everyone is ready to buy, or take the one, primary action you want them to take. Make sure you give them another reason to respond, or they are simply a lost lead.

9.Does it give prospects more than one way to respond?

Make it easy and convenient for prospects to take action. What if you only offer an email or web site address and someone doesn't have computer access, or they're away from their office but they want more information right now?

10.Do you have a specific objective for the marketing?

If you don't know what your marketing is designed to achieve, then how will you know if it was successful? Always have a plan and an objective for everything you do.

Marketing: Effective Internet Advertising How to Establish an Advertising Marketing Plan

Many business owners are searching the internet to find information that deals with an advertising marketing plan. In reality, advertising and marketing are two different animals, although closely related. Marketing refers to the whole product service mix which includes those famous four "P"s: Price, Place, Product and Promotion. Advertising is just a part of the mix and of course, it fits within the Promotion aspect of marketing.

Within the marketing scheme, you need to establish a price-point for your product or service. You also need to set up a channel through which you will offer your product/service (this is the Place part of the mix). The product or service itself is a vital part of the mix. . .and then we get

to Promotion which includes advertising.

In today's internet economy, you can actually do certain forms of advertising which are free. Some of these advertising options include online classified advertising like Craigslist or US FreeAds. Perhaps one of the most effective free "soft advertising" methods makes use of the many social media sites that are now available. The key word in this type of promotion is "social". In order to be effective, you need to stick to the social etiquette that is required. No spamming or hypey activity is allowed.

coming up with a solid advertising marketing plan will most likely take some trial and error. But there are some tips that can help you get going.

The most important is to understand who you are advertising to—in other words, know your target market. And know it very well. A thorough understanding of this will make your plan much more successful. Getting it wrong will set you up for failure. This will require quite a bit of research which cannot be skimmed on.

Next, set your goals. Identify what you want to get in return for your advertising (recognition, sales, brand identity, etc) and set specific short-, mid- and long-term objectives.

Then you will want to do some brainstorming to come up with the actual advertisements. Create a rough draft. This is just the start. It will most likely be revised over and over again as you figure out what is doing well and what isn't.

Which brings us to tracking, testing and tweaking. You need to have tangible results with every ad that you place. This is harder to do with magazine, television, newspaper or radio advertising. But online advertising very much lends to tracking. Analyze your results and make necessary changes. Sometimes just one word can make all the difference in advertisement conversions.

Research advertising agencies to find who you will work with best. If possible, go for those who are specifically expert in advertising your business niche.

Using the correct advertising marketing plan is a process. Taking action and getting help from professionals can help you get started.

What are the Tricks to Effective Internet Advertising

In order to perform effective internet advertising, you first need to understand your target market. It doesn't matter what business you are in or what products/services you offer. If you are unable to learn what your potential customers are looking for, you might as well not even waste the money on advertising. So spend some time researching your target market until you have their wants and needs crystal clear in your mind.

Put yourself in your audience's shoes. They probably receive pages and pages of spam every

day. If you are sending out email advertisements, you need to figure out a way to distinguish yourself from the rest of the hype. One easy way to do this is to not be “hypey” yourself. Create an ad that is informational and problem-solving, rather than one that is all about buy, buy, buy.

The headline of your ad, whether it’s a banner, a PPC ad or an email ad, is extremely important. Your audience will make a decision on whether they want to continue or not based on your headline so it must be compelling. Ask a controversial question or provide some shocking information. Those work well. But it should all tie into the benefits your audience will receive from your products/services. Your headline should also be keyword optimized. Research what keywords you want to be targeting with any of the free keyword research tools.

Effective internet advertising is professionally written and designed. Make sure you don’t have any grammatical or spelling errors, don’t use too many colors or fonts and try to use some “proven effective” shades as well.

Remember that your ad must have a “call to action”. Many advertisers forget this important step. After you’ve peaked your target audience’s curiosity and sold them on your benefits, you need to tell them what to do. Show them where to click so that they will be directed back to your website or wherever it is that you want to lead them. Always have a way for the reader to get in contact with you. Don’t make them search for it.

Incorporate an opt-in form to your advertisement. This is where your reader will fill in his/her details. Offering a free trial or free informational guide are some ways to get your reader to fill out the opt-in contact information. Don’t make him/her fill in too much information. The more they are required to put in, the more they are likely to just not enter in their information.

The response you get is also enhanced with your personal touch. If you can follow up by making a phone call to each of the new members on your customer lead list, you are miles ahead of the game in terms of establishing your trust-worthiness and credibility.

Finally, keep yourself in tune with what the market is offering in terms of effective internet advertising—new and innovative technologies are constantly being developed.

Where Do you Buy Internet Advertising

Internet advertising is a very broad term which encompasses hundreds of different methods, all designed to get you traffic and customers. There are many places that you can buy internet advertising: any of the search engines (with Pay Per Click – PPC – Advertising), on business websites that attract similar customers to your business, in E zines (online magazines), on paid classified advertising sites, and more.

Sometimes you don’t even need to buy internet advertising. You can do it for free on the social networking sites, forums that are relevant to your business or products/services or through article marketing.

But before you start advertising for free or otherwise, you need to first figure out who you are advertising to and what they are looking for. The more specific you can get about this, the more effective your advertising will be so you need to put in quite a bit of thought and research into this. Where can you find what people are looking for? One of the easiest ways is to do some keyword research. You can use many of the free keyword research tools to see exactly what people in your business area are typing into the search engines. You can then use these keywords in many of your online marketing and advertisements.

You can then go about designing your own internet advertising campaign or you can choose an agency or service to do one for you. Doing it on your own when first starting out may be long and tedious, but hiring someone to do the work for you can be expensive. If you decide to pay an agency, do some research on which one fits your needs best first. Also, it's better if you can find someone who will actually explain their processes and methods to you—not a company that just takes care of it all for you. This is how you can start learning to make your ads more effective as well.

PPC ads are one form of paid online advertising and perhaps the most popular. These are the ads that you see on the right-hand side of your computer screen when you click a term in your search engine browser. The most popular search engines are Google, Yahoo and MSN, but there are hundreds more out there. With PPC advertising, you create an advertisement based on a keyword or keywords that people are searching for on the internet (after you've done your keyword research). You then pay the search engine each time someone clicks on your advertisement.

With E zine advertising, you choose an e zine that fits your target market and place ads within its newsletters. The prices of these ads depend on the size and quality of the e zine subscriber list.

Many business websites grant you the possibility to advertise on their sites as well. Again, prices here will vary.

When you buy internet advertising, you must also make sure that you are tracking which ads work and which ones don't. This is the only way you can improve your traffic and conversions.

Marketing: Mistakes Managers Still Make

Business Marketing Mistakes: 3 Biggest Marketing Mistakes Every Business Manager Makes

Your idea of marketing may be costing your business big bucks. Learn what the three biggest marketing mistakes every business manager makes. By avoiding these pitfalls, you will make your marketing efforts more meaningful and effective.

Who hasn't let a typo slip by or misspelled the CEO's name or printed the wrong phone number somewhere? Those marketing mistakes don't warrant an article. In fact, just one word

of how-to-fix-it advice is sufficient: proofread!

Here are a few more important marketing mistakes that just about every business manager out there makes, along with a recommended fix that will help you attract more business and get better results from your marketing, regardless of how big or small your marketing budget is.

Mistake #1: We think that marketing is something we 'do'.

"We need to do some marketing." It's the first thing you think when you need to boost business. Problem is, when you think of marketing as something you 'do', you're usually thinking about publicity, direct mail, flyers, email, ads and promotion. Marketing is much more than merely promotion, and it's rarely a quick fix.

The real fix is to expand your definition of marketing. Instead of thinking of it as something you 'do', think of marketing as anything that helps or hinders the sale or use of your product or service. This includes: your location, the attitudes of the person who answers the phone, your name, pricing, policies, proposals, personality and more.

Before you write a promotional word, do a 'help or hinder' once-over. Make a list of what's helping you attract business and what's getting in the way. Figure out what obstacles you can quickly fix or remove? What 'helps' can you enhance or spotlight? Until the help-or-hinder homework is done, working on promotion is premature.

Mistake #2: We breathe too much of our own exhaust.

We are such big believers in our businesses that we can't wait to show it off. We admire our attributes and inhale our excellence. Then we exhale it all into our marketing communications. The problem is, when you do that, your marketing is all about you. And people don't care about you. They care about themselves.

If your marketing is going to get any response at all, the first thing it must do is connect to something prospects care about. Connect before you convince. Try this four-step exercise:

1. Describe your products and services. Get the exhaust fumes out.
2. Identify one or two attributes or attraction factors.
3. What is the benefit, the need or the want, that is satisfied by those attributes?
4. Why is that benefit important, personally, to the target audience?

For example, Joy dish-washing liquid (description) has real lemon (attribute) that cuts grease and leaves dishes shinier (benefit). What a nice reflection on you! (Connects to what a mother cares about.) Connect to what people want. Not to what you do.

Mistake #3: We all look alike.

A bank is a bank is a bank. Realtors, lawyers and consultants are a dime a dozen. The list goes on. But here's the good news: the more two businesses look alike, the more important each difference becomes, and the more impact even the tiniest difference will have on setting you apart. Why?

Consider identical twins. What's the first thing you do when you meet a pair? You try to find a little something to tell them apart. The same is true for your business. Your prospects are looking for a point of difference (just about anything)they can use to set you apart from your competition.

To find your points of difference, start with your points of contact, or 'touch points' in your company. Make a list. Business card, fax cover sheet, invoice, phone greeting, front door, home page, etc. Then look at what the competition does and ask yourself how you can do it differently. Just a little bit will make a big difference, because your prospects are looking for them.

For now, try the Help or Hinder, Connect Before You Convince and Find Your Points of Difference tools to make your marketing more meaningful and effective. Be wary, too, of unrealistic expectations, faulty research, deadly bullet points and lack of follow through— four other common marketing mistakes.

Marketing: Business Marketing Strategy

Business Marketing Strategy

What is it and who needs one?

The term business marketing strategy might sound like it is esoteric or stratospheric, so let's take the mystery out of it so you can devise and implement your own business marketing strategy that fits in to your small business plan.

Strategy comes from a Greek word "stratagein" meaning "to be a general". Think of a strategy as an overall plan of action needed to win a war. The smaller, detailed actions are called tactics. You can have tactical plans which help you achieve your strategic marketing plan or overall business marketing strategy. That's simple enough, isn't it?

A business marketing strategy or strategic marketing plan is an overall plan of marketing actions you intend to take in order to accomplish a specific goal for your company.

Start with a goal: \$2 million in sales this year; expand into new premises by a certain date; double the size of the company in 2 years... whatever the goal may be. Something realistic but challenging. That's the "war" you want to win. Guess who the general is.

Then work out a simple, overall plan of the major marketing steps needed to accomplish that (for example):

1. Publish a newsletter for all existing customers and mail out quarterly.
2. Work out 4 special offers in the year and promote them to all our customers.
3. Set up on-line shopping and expand the web site.
4. Direct mail campaign promoting the web site to all customers.
5. Get mailing lists of (target markets) and do a series of 3 mailings of postcards to them and follow up on and close all leads.
6. Etc.

You get the idea. Don't rush this. Do your homework. What worked in the past? Read up on successful marketing campaigns.

Your business marketing strategy needs to be laid out in the right sequence and you should have some idea of budget when you write it. "Run a series of 30 second TV ads during the Superbowl" might sound like a good thing to do but can you afford it? On the other hand, when you build your business marketing strategy you mustn't try and cut corners. If you don't promote heavily, it doesn't matter how good your product or service is, no one will know about it and you will go broke.

What really works when it comes to marketing?

Many business owners don't have a good enough answer to this important question. I learned by a combination of study and trial and error.

From my own hard won experience I have discovered that a real marketing campaign will take into consideration at least the seven points which are outlined below:

1. Target Your Market

Your marketing will produce the best results for the lowest cost when you target prospects with the greatest need for what you offer.

Identify the best people to send your postcards to. Design your postcards to appeal to their greatest need.

If you are able to break down your target market into sub markets you can then write postcards that specifically speak to the needs of those people (an example is breaking down your own customer list into customers who buy most often, customers who spend the most money with you, customers who have been your customers the longest and then making them special offers based on the category they fit into).

2. Create A USP For Your Business

USP stands for "Unique Selling Proposition".

It is a statement of what is different about your company and its products. Your USP gives the reason people should do business with you. It amplifies the benefit of doing business with you

and your company. My USP is POSTCARD MARKETING EXPERTS.

Create your own USP and put it on all your promotional materials, invoices, shipping labels etc.

Use your USP to communicate the benefit of doing business with you and why you are better than any of your competitors.

3. Always Make an Offer

Make sure you ask your prospects and customers to do something when they receive your postcard. By offering them something you know they are likely to want and giving them a smooth path to respond on, you are making it easy and desirable for them to respond.

4. Create and Maintain a Database of The Customer Information You Collect From The Responses To Your Mailings

Most people who receive a postcard from you won't contact you the first time they receive one.

But once they contact you, you must create and maintain a database which allows you to repeatedly contact them with offers to respond to.

Fifty percent or more of many businesses' sales come as a result of following up with people who were previously contacted, but didn't buy right away.

No kidding, repeat contact does drive sales. One-time mailings can get response, but are bound to leave sales on the table. Those sales can be picked up with repeated mailings.

5. Take Away the Fear of Loss

People don't want to be fooled, plain and simple. Unfortunately trust does not run high today between customers and businesses in general. People have been disappointed too many times by being sold one thing and getting another.

A guarantee or warranty is a good way to reduce or eliminate the customers' risk of getting something other than what they bargained for.

Guarantees and warranties increase response and sales by reducing customer risk.

6. Expand Your Product Line

Getting new customers is more expensive than selling to existing ones. By regularly developing new products and services to sell to your customers and offering these new products and services to them, you can expand your business efficiently and easily.

7. Test Your Postcard Promotions

Track the effectiveness of your postcard mailings. How many people responded to your mailing? What dollar amount of sales resulted from those responses?

Is the money you are spending to attract new business giving you a good return? What can you do to make your marketing more effective? Change your offer, headline, price, the timing of your offer. When you do track the results and improve your response.

These are the points to follow when designing your own marketing strategy. When you are done, you will have laid out the steps needed to accomplish your goal using existing resources to achieve a great marketing ROI (return on investment).

After that, you simply have to get those steps executed and that might require further planning but it is all in the context of your main business marketing strategy.

Marketing: Myths That Steal Sales Four Marketing Myths That Steal Sales

How many times has bad advice gotten you into trouble? Yeah, everybody's saying and doing it, so you jump on the band wagon... and guess what... you get the same results as they get. Maybe it's a comfort to know that you're not the only one who played the part of the fool, but when it comes to marketing...you may not have enough leeway to count the loss and go on.

Yeah, there sure are a LOT of ideas out there about what will and what won't skyrocket sales numbers and profit margins! And to be truthful, a lot of those ideas are just a bunch of bunk. Yep, you've got to be on your toes and know the truth about marketing tales. Here are a few of the lines of misinformation that you've probably heard before...

— You've Got To Have The Cheapest Prices In Town To Be Competitive

Let me ask you this...Do you always buy the cheapest product on the shelf, or always shop at the store that has the lowest prices? No, I don't either. What you and I know that these people don't is, that value counts for a lot. Oh yeah, sure... there are a few people out there who only buy the cheapest things in town, but most of us understand that the cheapest isn't always the best buy for our buck.

How does this apply to you? Here's something you can try...make it a little test to see just how true this myth is. Find a low-cost way to enhance the perceived value of your product or service, then raise the cost a little. See what happens! Don't be surprised if your sales and profits shoot up!

— Advertisements Need To Be Changed To Keep The Public From Becoming Bored

This one reminds me of one of my cousins. He's famous for breaking things that are fixed. Yeah, he'll go out and buy a perfectly good running car, but every time you see him, he's under the hood tinkering with something. Before long...you guessed it...the car won't run and has to go to the garage for repairs.

It makes no sense to run a business like Cousin Jim and his cars. Hey, if it's working why try to fix it? Think about it...what's the goal for advertising? Yeah, to attract new customers. Once the new customer comes through the door, the advertisement has effectively done its job. Does that customer need to be affected by the same ad? No, so let the ad do its job for the rest of the people out there who haven't seen it yet.

Now, I'm not saying that you should never change your advertisement... just never abandon a winner midstream. A good rule of thumb is to spend 80 percent of your advertising money on proven methods, and to risk 20 percent on experimental advertisements. Keep the tried and proven working for you, while you test the waters for new ideas that might work even better.

— The More Choices A Customer Has, The More Likely He Is To Buy

Yeah, yeah...they say variety is the spice of life and all that, but too many choices can lead to procrastination. We all know what happens when we procrastinate. Yep, we never get back to it!

Do you know what happens when a customer can't decide?... you lose a sale that you already had in your pocket. Yep he came in to get it, saw more options, stopped to make up his mind, then walked out still thinking about it...maybe to never return.

A tip for the wise marketer – limit your customer's decisions to either yes or no. Let them decide either yes I'll buy or no, I won't buy. Don't risk confusing them and losing the sale.

— Everybody Needs My Product/Service So I Don't Need To Advertise

Hey, building a business is a lot of hard work! There aren't many free rides along the way. Chances are, your potential customers need to be convinced that they NEED to choose your service/product. Yep, finding the customer, convincing him to use your service/product, then closing the deal is a process that can't be easily bypassed. Don't be fooled into thinking you're any different! It could be hazardous to your profits.

A friend of mine owned the only dog grooming shop in her town. Hey, no competition means you don't need to advertise...right? After an initial announcement of her grand opening, this lady did no advertising. Business slowly trickled in and barely covered the overhead. Finally in a desperate attempt to get business off the ground she began putting flyers in all of the local veterinarian clinics and ads in the local newspaper. Bingo! Business began pouring in... and most of the people said, "I didn't even know you were here!" or "Fifi's been needing groomed for quite some time. When I saw your ad, I decided to go ahead and get it done."

Let's face it, people are often....well, lazy. They don't always go out of their way to find the phone number to contact you, even when in the back of their mind they know they need to do something. Yeah, advertisements are often the little prod they need to get motivated. Don't shortchange yourself by neglecting to advertise.

How about you? Have you ever driven by a business for a long time without even noticing it? Yep, we all get too busy to pay attention sometimes.

Hey, you've learned a few of the misguided marketing myths that many people are fooled by... now you can apply the REAL marketing concepts to your own advertising campaign and watch the results!

Marketing: Law Firm Grading Clients

Law Firm Marketing – By Grading Clients Increase Your Revenues

Law firm marketing is comprised of many different elements. The analysis of your firm in law practice management can be complex, however, let's begin with a key success variable – your current client base. Managing your client base is the most important aspect of your law firm marketing efforts. I suggest you begin with grading your clients.

The ABCD Solution

In looking at your client base for law firm marketing purposes, you can use a time-tested method of analysis. This is the key concept of "ABCD clients". Service professionals of many types use this method to accurately rate and organize their client base. And for effective marketing for law firms, this method is priceless. By the way it is not just about marketing. It is also about serving your clients better than ever.

As you certainly know in schools we use the letter grading system to rank the students in order of how well they perform on papers, tests, quizzes, etc. Similarly we will "grade" our clients. So think of your client grading system for law firm marketing as summing up all the aspects of a good client.

A client who gets an "A" would be one who has reasonable expectations, follows your instructions, is grateful for the work you do as well as courteous and professional in their demeanor with both you and in particular your staff. In fact if you are ever wondering if someone is an "A" client or a "D" client just ask your staff. The "A" client sends you referrals that turn into "A" clients as well. The "A" client is never concerned with the fees you charge since they know your services are worth the cost. They pay their bills on time all the time. And finally, their cases are interesting and substantial matters. Now isn't this the kind of client you are aiming for in your law firm marketing in the first place? Additionally, have you ever heard the old saying "birds of a feather flock together"? This means your "A" clients know a lot of other "A" clients who they can refer to you if you play your cards right.

Of course a client with a “B” grade would have many of the same qualities of the “A” client, but not all. A client with a “C” grade would be closer to a “D” client. A client with a “D” grade is the complete opposite of all the characteristics of an “A” client. They don’t have reasonable expectations, they pay their bills late (some not at all), try to negotiate lower fees or retainers, don’t follow your instructions (may even think they know better than you do), are rude or unprofessional, they do not send referrals (or if they do they are also “C or D” clients), their matters are not substantial and interesting, and they often complain about normal fees. Not a pretty picture these “D” clients. Let your competitors have them!

In targeting your law firm marketing, “C & D” clients are not the kind of client you want to attract. Most firms find that “C & D” clients take up between sixty to eighty percent of their time and efforts, while only bringing in twenty to forty percent of the firm’s revenue. Does it make sense to cultivate this type “C & D” business? Of course not. You need to stop taking “C & D” business and “fire” (ethically of course) any “C & D” business that you can. Even if you only begin with the “Ds” it is a beginning. Quite liberating as well my clients report to fire these folks.

Effective marketing for law firms includes a realistic look at what will bring the best benefit for the best clients. Ridding yourself of clients who are graded a “C or D” is one of the best things you can do for your “A & B” clients. Without spending all your time on the “C & D” problems and concerns, you can pour your attention into your “A & B” clients (moving their matters to conclusion faster thus you can do more of them). Thus the “A & B” clients will be even more satisfied, resulting in more referrals and more business from them. Clearly a “win/win” for all.

Another big, big advantage of spending less or no time on your “C & D” business is you can focus more time on developing your “A & B” referral network. Your increased marketing time and more focused law firm marketing will result in more quality “A & B” business.

What I have found working individually with over 500 attorneys is most of you will need to limit your practice areas to one, two or maybe (and I do mean maybe) three practice areas in order to drop your “C & D” cases. Too many attorneys are practicing “threshold law” that is defined as taking anything that comes across the threshold of your office. In selecting your practice areas try to incorporate cross-salable areas, such as wills and trusts, real estate, and/or estate planning for example. Select the most lucrative practice areas you have and then pour your law firm marketing efforts into those targeted practice areas while focusing on “A & B” clients and referral sources. This may be a bit frightening at first and in the long run you will be extremely glad you did.

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Do you hate selling? Should you hate selling? What does “selling” mean anyway? How does hating selling impact your client service and revenue? If you decide to learn to love selling (or love it now) how would you go about developing that love anyway?

Law firm marketing and the “hating part” in the title depends on what you mean by selling don’t you think? After all many people think the word “sell” is a four-letter word. If you mean the kind of traditional selling we find prevalent in the selling of new or used cars or if you think of selling as getting someone to purchase what you have to sell regardless of the means used – then I would say I hate selling myself! In law firm marketing if you mean facilitating a person’s unique process in deciding what is in their highest and best interest (while suspending one’s own needs and supporting their decision making process) – then I love selling. I assert, in law firm marketing, selling is not something to “hate” given how I define selling. In fact selling, given my definition, is a required skill set in serving people well and is critical in lawyer marketing. Given my definition what do you do? Read on.

What does this law firm marketing coach recommend you do in building sales skills? First, I would suggest you think through your responsibility to your prospective clients to deliver “buyer facilitation” (more on this a bit later). Second, I would suggest you become familiar with some of the “consultative sales” models that have been developed that are applicable to lawyer marketing. Few attorneys have ever had any training in sales or even read a book on the subject (or so I have found in my work with over 500 attorneys). What are these sales models that can work with lawyer marketing? Read on.

One model that works with law firm marketing and has a 30-year track record is the Sandler Sales Institute’s 7-Step System For Successful Selling. The book I found that is best for understanding this approach is David H. Sandler’s *You Can’t Teach A Kid To Ride A Bike At A Seminar*. There are around 175 Sandler franchisees around the country that have multiyear sales training programs you don’t need, however, you can find the book at <http://Amazon.com>. Even though I don’t agree with all that is said in this book it is one of the top three I recommend for law firm marketing. The next model is *Integrity Selling For The 21st Century*

by Ron Willingham. One of its big strengths is talking about different “buyer types” so you don’t speak the same way to everyone, instead you speak to their “type” if you can.

Finally, my top recommendation for lawyer marketing is *Selling with Integrity* by Sharon Drew Morgan. Sharon’s model is the one I use in my work since it is “third generation” and a win/win situation. First came traditional selling, and then came the consultative sales model, and now the buyer facilitation model. One does not throw out consultative sales (represented in the first two books I mention) totally with buyer facilitation but consultative sales skills comes AFTER buyer facilitation. Also, it goes without saying traditional sales is out in law firm marketing.

Why would sales distinctions (more on that in my client development e-course) be important to learn in law firm marketing? First, you want everyone you talk with to have a good experience. Whether they hire you or not they have been profoundly served and will remember your unique connection with them as well as tell others. Second, you want your prospective client to be an educated consumer in making a decision since an educated consumer is more likely to say “yes” and say it sooner than later. Third, as a law firm marketing coach I am interested in your “conversion ratio” or how many of the people you talk with actually turn into clients. If I can help you improve your “conversion ratio” or please forgive me “closing ratio” then I will increase your income while you serve your clients better than ever. What is wrong with that?

Law Practice Management – How To Determine Your Fees

Determining fees is a difficult law practice management task for most attorneys when thinking through their law firm marketing plans. In determining fees for certain services, attorneys often fall short of what they should charge. Too many attorneys are afraid of even charging the competitive price for their services when making their law firm marketing plans. Further, they make the pricing decisions often with no data or conceptual framework. Additionally, instead of focusing their efforts on how they can justify getting top dollar for what they offer, they charge a fee that is often way too low and often actually can scare off potential clients who think there is something missing from a service that is “cheap”. Additionally many attorneys don’t realize that most purchasers in the marketplace by far are “value purchasers” and not looking for “cheap”.

So before you sit down and begin thinking through your law practice management pricing strategy you need some distinctions around pricing commonly used in law firm marketing planning. Then add your pricing strategy to your law firm marketing plans. You need to be sure that you are charging a sufficient fee on everything to guarantee you a good profit not just a good living. Do know a law practice management law firm marketing plan is not effective if you only attract people who want to pay the lowest fee for a service. These are not loyal clients. Instead, you want to focus your law practice management and law firm marketing plans on attracting clients who will become long term assets to the firm. Low price clients are not building your base of long term clients I can promise you that.

There are basically four ways of determining how much you should be charging for your services. Lets move right into those now.

The Market Method In Law Practice Management Pricing

This is one good way of determining pricing. Get your assistant to support you in this law practice management task and spend some time discovering what the range of pricing is in the community. Have her do a "mystery shopper" study by calling around as if he/she were a potential client and find out what your competitors say on the phone to her around pricing. She may need to call from her home phone to avoid caller ID. As another option you could have him/her call other assistants or paralegals at your competitors and offer to exchange your fees for their fees or you could do that with other lawyers yourself in your market. If you really want to get into it and have maximum data you can write maybe a few dozen competitors in your marketplace and say you are doing a fee survey and if they would send you their fee list you will create a composite list that does not identify those responding and send them a copy of the results. To keep it simple for them include a stamped, self-addressed envelope with a list of the most common services offered in your practice area. Now you will see what people are charging for services similar to those you offer. You should be able to come up with a range of prices. Use this range to set prices for your own services. My recommendation in law firm marketing planning is to charge at the 75% level of the list. So you should be at or in the top 25% of the fees.

Remember that in general it is not a good law practice management strategy to compete on price. Most potential clients will see pricing that is too low as a signal that there is something missing either from the service, the provider, or the firm. And people who are looking for a low price will follow that low price wherever they can find it rather than becoming long-term clients. So be sure that your price covers your costs and a reasonable profit margin.

The Cost Method in Law Practice Management Pricing

This law practice management pricing method is very straightforward really. One simply determines what the costs are to deliver products or services and adds on a reasonable profit, somewhere between fifteen percent at the least and maybe thirty three percent at the most. The most common mistake in law practice management using this method is to neglect to include some form of your expense. Solo and small firm attorneys tend to not include their own salary!

OK, let me say it again. In law practice management often you count yourself out of the expenses and you should include yourself in the expenses. Why? Often you are doing at least some of the technical work. Yes? Often you are doing at least some of the management work. Yes? As the owner of the business you are due a reasonable profit. Yes? If you are all three of these in one, you should consider one salary as due you for your time and expertise as the technician and manager as well as a profit of fifteen to thirty percent due you as the owner. So be sure to include a reasonable cost for your technical and managerial work in the expenses part of this formula.

Fixed Rate Method in Law Practice Management Pricing

This is the method used by many auto mechanics (it is called “the flat rate book”) and other service providers. This method is where you determine a fixed rate for various jobs and charge that rate no matter what. If the mechanic spends less time than allotted for the job, he makes more. If he spends more time than allotted, he makes less. But in the end, it all evens out (well, usually to the mechanics’ favor if you ask me). Another example using this method is how managed health care has used this system with hospitals and doctors. Lawyers can use this system if they desire.

The “Rule of Three” in Law Practice Management Pricing

This “rule of thumb” called the “rule of three” used in law practice management is not what your CPA might tell you and it does not fail you either. Ask your CPA what they think about it and they will like it. To begin we are going to be thinking in thirds. For the first third we will take the total amount of salaries/bonuses (not benefits just salaries – benefits go into the second third coming next) for the revenue generators and/or timekeepers (this includes you if you are generating revenue) and call that our first third. So add up the salaries of the lawyers, paralegals, and legal secretaries who generate revenue or are timekeepers and call this your first third (lets just say that number was \$100,000 to keep it simple). Whatever that number is take that number again and it is your second third which we will call your “overhead” (thus that second third is \$100,000 and don’t forget you if you are doing some managing partner type duties since that part of your time goes here in overhead). Then take that same number and we will call that your last third, which we will call gross profits (another \$100,000). What you need to do is take the total amount (in this example \$300,000) and now figure out how much you must charge per billable hour, per fixed rate or how many contingency fee cases won to be sure you hit the target we must hit given our first third number times three (in this example \$300,000).

This method shows you how much per hour you need to charge. Since you know how many billable hours each revenue generator can do per month, simply divide that into your total of all thirds (\$300,000) to see what you need to charge per billable hour to make your numbers come out correctly. As long as you hit your targets you will be assured of a 15% to 30% net profit from your operations. After all if you are the owner of the practice you deserve a fair profit as well don’t you agree? This method is known as the Rule of Three. If this method is a bit too confusing do feel free to contact me and I will help you sort it out in a few minutes on the phone.

It is a good idea to think through all of these pricing methods in determining your law practice management pricing strategy before setting a price and moving ahead with a law firm marketing plan to ensure you are thoroughly exploring all options. Remember the tendency for most lawyers is to price too low. Don’t do that! In another article I will tell you how to speak to potential clients so you never have a problem getting the fee you deserve.

Marketing: Wedding Photographers

Incentive Based Marketing Strategies for Wedding Photographers: 5 Wedding Packages To Attract More Wedding Clients

While professional photographers shoot many types of events, many are coming up with unique ideas and incentives to offer their wedding clients, which are giving them an edge over their competitors.

Photographers who are looking for ideas that compliment their current wedding offerings are turning to other wedding vendor's professional photographer programs to market themselves in a whole new and very unique way.

In a recent survey conducted by Adesso Albums, the following five incentives were identified as the most successful incentive-based marketing strategies for attracting wedding clients and referrals:

Engagement Photo Sessions

Many photographers will add an engagement photo session of the couple to their wedding package. This is a great incentive for couples wanting to publish professional engagement photos in their local newspaper or later use their engagement photos in a showcase album at the wedding.

Engagement Photos Showcased At Wedding

Engagement photos are showcased in an album that is later used at the wedding reception as a guest book. The photographer's engagement photos of the couple are showcased in the album and guests then add their handwritten sentiments and warm wishes on the album pages – a keepsake that is a lasting reminder of the day (and the photographer).

Wedding Photo Website

A website that hosts the engagement and wedding photos is a wonderful way for the couple's out-of-town guests who couldn't make it to the wedding feel as if they were a part of it. It also gives the couple an opportunity to stay in touch with their guests with fun pictures of the wedding and wedding reception.

Custom Parent Albums

Creating a custom album for each set of parents can boost the currency of the new son or daughter in law in addition to making a very special and personal gift. The albums feature photographs that are meaningful to each set of parents in a beautifully bound and personally created coffee table album for them to enjoy for years to come.

Hi-Resolution CD

Having a high resolution CD of all their photos gives the couple the ability to have prints made long after their wedding day is over – for family gifts, to frame and send to friends as a reminder of that special day or even to get shots printed and framed for their new home.

Reduced Rates for Enlargements

This incentive is especially meaningful to couples with large families. With a reduced rate for print enlargements, the couple can provide their close family members with more than a few 4 x 6 wedding prints.

Marketing: Twitter Followers Sales Scam

So you want to buy Twitter followers? I did it once, to see what happens. Well, I found a Twitter followers supplier, named FollowMania. For a few Dollars I could buy 1000 followers. I wanted to give it a try, just for the fun and out of curiosity. So I placed an order and paid with PayPal.

FollowMania had some troubles with their crappy website, so I reported their error messages. To this day they remained absolutely autistic and no reply at all. The only thing they did was to unfollow me on Twitter. Well, anyway, I did not need a mute follower, so I was glad I got rid of them. But ... FollowMania did not deliver the 1000 followers. None whatsoever!

I am of course the first to be loud mouthed and before it was dawn I filed a complaint at PayPal accusing FollowMania of non-delivery. Hey, I am not going to wait and see. Fuck them! The good ole PayPal took my case seriously and in no time I got a refund. Not a single communication from that autistic mute dumb FollowMania.

My personal advice: NEVER do business with scammer FollowMania. They do not deliver one follower to your Twitter account. They can sue me, but this posting will stay till the end of times. I have the legal right to tell the truth. Below is the forensic evidence:

Order Number : 5024250133

Merchant Order ID : 635079228017750246:221517169:50:1000

FollowMania (<http://followmania.com>)

Contents of your purchase :

Product ID : 3

Vendor Product ID : fm_1000x50

Product Description : FollowMania – 1000 Followers

Product Name : FollowMania – 1000 Followers

Quantity : 1

Handling Fee : 0.00

Total : 4.80 (EUR)

Billing Information
George Philip Birney

George Philip Birney

To: support@followmania.com

Server Error in '/' Application.

A connection attempt failed because the connected party did not properly respond after a period of time, or established connection failed because connected host has failed to respond 68.233.254.217:80
Description: An unhandled exception occurred during the execution of the current web request. Please review the stack trace for more information about the error and where it originated in the code.

Exception Details: System.Net.Sockets.SocketException: A connection attempt failed because the connected party did not properly respond after a period of time, or established connection failed because connected host has failed to respond 68.233.254.217:80

Source Error:

An unhandled exception was generated during the execution of the current web request. Information regarding the origin and location of the exception can be identified using the exception stack trace below.

Stack Trace:

[SocketException (0x274c): A connection attempt failed because the connected party did not properly respond after a period of time, or established connection failed because connected host has failed to respond 68.233.254.217:80]
System.Net.Sockets.Socket.DoConnect(EndPoint endPointSnapshot, SocketAddress socketAddress) +251
System.Net.ServicePoint.ConnectSocketInternal(Boolean connectFailure, Socket s4, Socket s6, Socket& socket, IPAddress& address, ConnectSocketState state, IAsyncResult asyncResult, Int32 timeout, Exception& exception) +279

[WebException: Unable to connect to the remote server]
System.Net.

< SNIP > A FULL PAGE OF ERROR MESSAGES< /SNIP >

Version Information: Microsoft .NET Framework Version:4.0.30319;
ASP.NET Version:4.0.30319.272

George Philip Birney
Mon, Jul 1, 2013 at 9:46 AM
To: Support Followmania

Dear Support,

Please find below the purchase I made a few days ago.

To this day I have seen only a few new followers, and I am wondering about the remaining batch, as we are now a couple of days further on the time track. For the record, my twitter id is "iqnyte".

I could not find any explanantion of such phenomenon on your website, hence this email.

I do follow each follower in return, however, I also do unfollow each unfollower in return. But I guess this should not be an issue.

Thanks for advising me.

Best regards,

George

DisputeThe buyer and seller have 20 days to communicate directly to resolve an issue with this transaction. All disputed funds are held until the issue is resolved. If both parties can't agree to a solution, either party can escalate this to a PayPal claim.

EscalationThe buyer or seller asks PayPal to review the case and decide the outcome. We make every effort to resolve the claim within 30 days and restore funds to the rightful owner.

Awaiting other party's responsePayPal requests more information from the seller to resolve the issue. If the seller doesn't respond within 10 days, we close the case and restore funds to the rightful owner.

Requiring your actionPayPal requests more information from the buyer to resolve the issue. If the buyer doesn't respond within the allotted timeframe, we close the case and restore funds to the rightful owner.

Being reviewed by PayPalWe review the information the buyer and seller have provided. We try to reach a final decision quickly, but complex cases may take longer and require additional information from the buyer or seller.

This claim or case has been closed. A closed dispute cannot be reopened or escalated to a PayPal claim.

Disputed Amount:

€4,80 EUR

Status

Your claim has been resolved and you'll receive a €4,80 EUR refund.

What happens next

Please allow up to 7 days for the refund to appear in your account. Once the refund is complete, the case will be closed.

Supporting documents: Files (0) You haven't submitted any files. Faxes (0) You haven't submitted any faxes.

View dispute comments

04-07-2013 12:04 GMT+02:00 – PayPal: Buyer escalated this dispute to a Claim.

04-07-2013 12:04 GMT+02:00 – Buyer: Seller did not deliver. Seller did not communicate.

Seller did not prove not to be fraudulent, neither the contrary. But I strongly suspect they are dishonest, possible scammers. I do not want to do any business with this seller. I want my money back now.

02-07-2013 08:24 GMT+02:00 – Buyer: Dear Seller, I have now revoked access for your app and it will stay that way. I no longer want to take of your services. You do not communicate to me and for me that is another reason not to have any business with you. Sincerely, GPB

01-07-2013 18:56 GMT+02:00 – Buyer: Dear Support, I have contacted you several times, but to this day I have not heard from you. I hereby refer to your website where it says that I can expect 50 followers per days being delivered. Of course you can argue that no starting date is specified, that your T&C says different things, etc., but the bottomline is this: I paid and after 3 days I got nothing. The few new followers I got were not through your service. Besides, I also mailed you severe error messages coming from your system. No reply. You even unfollowed me after my mail. I hereby request the following: You pay me my money back, USD 5.95.

Thanks and best regards, George

Now I went a bit further in testing other Twitter followers suppliers as well, to make sure wether this was an isolated incident.

So I did 7 different twitter sales sites at the same time and came to the conclusion that I lost nearly as many followers as I purchased. See picture that speaks for itself.

Roughly estimated, I bought 3500 and I lost 3500 from the batch I paid for. And those followers weren't the ones I had initially! I use tools to check all the stats.

Net gain: zero.

All the 8 major suppliers that I tested did delivered the amount of followers properly. Some even delivered 20 to 80 percent more! Hats off and thumbs up! But, within a week or so, the followers disappeared as fast as they got acquired.

Of course some suppliers claim that the followers are real users, blah blah they are the most trusted complete with seals and certs blah blah whatever hot air sales pitch, but I have taken the test for purchasing both “real” followers and “fake” followers, to see the difference, and the picture clearly shows that it doesn’t make any difference!

My personal advice to all Twitter users: do not buy followers. They are fake or cease to exist within a week – ie. ghost accounts – and even the real ones will unfollow because it wasn’t their genuine choice. Also, spam accounts are suspended by Twitter too.

When I checked in the ghost accounts their follow numbers, I noticed that most of them had only one or few followers. My best guess is that some folks or bot systems are at work to mockup Twitter users using fake email addresses. It is not clear to me why or how these accounts unfollow so soon. I suspect that they use an automatic unfollow system for that. A bit unwise, because if they would retain their followers, they would be less suspect.

As a special gift, I received hundreds of egghead spammers, i.e. fake accounts that were only following other victims. These fakers have no followers, usually, have no profile description or bio, no profile picture other than the default egghead, and no location indication, plus they have weird cryptic usernames. It is not a blessing to have tons of fake followers, because they spam you with DMs containing links to crap sites, and they ruin your reputation as a serious Twitter user.

I have my twitter protection set ON and from then on, so only real followers are welcome. Spammers I block straight away (see pic left) and nowadays I report them to twitter.

Tested Twitter followers suppliers aka scammers aka spammers:

<https://www.fastfollowerz.com/> – the most expensive – offers targeted followers and 5 years guarantee – I did not test them – their rates are a bit outrageous – no credentials or testimonials

<http://twittertechnology.com/twitter/> – fake & bogus followers

<http://5dollarfame.com/> – fake & bogus followers with wonderful profile bio

<http://freefollowers.me/premium.php> – very unclear website – no idea what’s to be expected

<http://www.increasesocialpresence.com/increase-twitter-followers/> – quite expensive with questionable quality delivery

<http://followersdelivery.com/> aka zendesk.com – more expensive but the most specific in terms of quality levels, and, the only one who communicated personally with the customer, me! – they seem to take their business quite serious, which is a good thing – but lo behold, the day after they deliver your followers, you will receive 3000 fake spam followers, so make sure your twitter account protection is ON as to decline these eggheads!!

<http://twiends.com/home> – THE GOOD – the only one that is both free and offering good followers – in fact, they do not sell followers neither do they inject your account with followers – they simply promote profiles, most of them genuine potential followers – I do recommend this one (I am not affiliated to them)

<https://www.followmania.co/> – THE BAD – <http://increasefollowers.org/> – these are the scam crooks that take your pay and do not deliver
<http://youtubeviews4you.webs.com/apps/webstore/> – THE UGLY – lousy administration – supplier seems stoned – the first batch of 250 looks fine, any next batch only eggheads! And then there is TFeServices, whom I did not order from, a Twitter followers sales company that runs different websites such as <http://www.increasesocialpresence.com/increase-twitter-followers/> and <http://buy-real-twitter-followers.com/>. One one site they sell for example 2000 followers for 17 \$, on their other site 1000 followers for 17 \$. A bit weird and obviously they are not honest. And so there are plenty more such scamsites that deliver useless traffic to your account.

Yeah, most of them do deliver followers that do not unfollow. The math is simple: those followers have each only 1 or 2 followers and they follow a few hundred others. Moreover, these followers are fake, have only 1 or 2 tweets of a year ago, are inactive (that's why they do not unfollow you), have been generated by bots, have a cryptic alpha-numeric user-name, often the same profile pic as other followers from the same batch WTF, and all they do is to occupy your useless list of useless static meaningless buddies.

So I advise: Just stick to the other “natural” follow flow, simply because these are the ones whose interest in you is genuine, rather than artificial. You should avoid granting access to Twitter apps of follower suppliers, and you should NEVER give your password to any third party ever! All of the followers sales spamtards require your Twitter account protection to be OFF. That means that none of the followers are human followers. They use a spambot. Require your money back!

Moreover, most fake followers are one time only accounts, abandoned and waiting to be suspended due to inactivity. Of course during their existence they will never unfollow you because no one cares. That is one the the selling points: “Our followers will never unfollow you”. Yeah right, none of these accounts ever logs in again.

Fake followers are injected into your account by a bot. And after a month or so, every day you will receive DMs from these followers with a URL pointing to some fat loss pills or potency pills website. In other words, you buy a bunch of adware trojan horses.

Moreover, lots of follower suppliers send tons of egghead follow spammers to your account. And quite a few protected accounts that will never respond. That sucks too much even for those who just want to get the numbers because eggheads are nothing to be proud of..

Just numbers have no meaning other than some minor useless ego tripping. Please do not lower yourself to that meaningless level.

During the entire test (and after test) period of 1 month, the number of purchased followers was 4000, and the number of lost followers was 3972.

Net profit: 28 Followers
Total costs: 56 US\$

Net cost per remaining follower: 2 US\$ – so if you want a net result of 1000 followers, then it will cost you 2 grand!

One of them I did not buy followers from because it was a free service: Twiends. The major drawback of Twiends is that it works with seeds (credits) that you can earn by following someone, so scamfucktards may initially follow you for a few seconds, then unfollow you, and you have just lost a bunch of credits, and they gained them! Of course you'd block those folks, and as a consequence you may be listed as an aggressive unfollower, not being welcome.

Twiends does have a fair lost seeds policy, so they give back your seeds for each follower that unfollows immediately. If you purchased a VIP package. Taking into account your filter and preferences, every net follower may cost you 10 seeds or more.

Every instant unfollower I reward by reporting them to Twitter as a spammer!

Followers at Twiends unfollow nearly as quickly as they started following. That results in loss, even though Twiends may replenish part of the seeds. The effectivity is around 10 percent only. So if you buy 1200 seeds for 30 bucks, then expect not more than 120 followers net result at the end, i.e. 4 for 1 buck. Yep, Twiends put 20% VAT on top of the price. For placing a nano ad. Fuck!

And TFeServices I only cyber stalked, hehe, those asses don't get my money. Three – maybe more – separate websites with the same products but different prices. Spamsolutely scamdiculous!

As for the other paid suppliers, I advise you not to buy anything. See, Twitter company has tools that enable them to see what followers are fake, been purchased, or natural. If your account suddenly shows a peak of 1000 or 10,000 or more, Twitter system puts a red flag at your record. Twitter has become quite strict as far as suspending accounts is concerned.

Conclusion: buying direct followers can be a great waste of money and reputation.

SUMMARY

My blacklist of Twitter spammers scammers salesfolks is summarized here:

<https://www.fastfollowerz.com>

<http://twittertechnology.com/twitter>

<http://freefollowers.me/premium.php>

<http://5dollarfame.com>

<http://followersdelivery.com/> aka zendesk.com

<https://www.followmania.co> – <http://increasefollowers.org>

<http://youtubeviews4you.webs.com/apps/webstore/>

<http://www.increasesocialpresence.com/increase-twitter-followers/> aka <http://buy-real-twitter-followers.com>

One of these scammers keeps sending spam egghead followers – in the same batches every time – to my Twitter account, since I published this article. Prime suspect is that zendesk.com punk, I wrote them but they denied. Their website looks professional and very convincing, but these guys are scammers.

Twitter followers are not necessarily qualified customers. Most of them are number hunters, follow addicts, and not genuinely interested in your endeavors. Just like on the internet for website visitors. Statistics have no meaning, other than some illusional numeric ego tripping.

All in all, the best followers are those whom you get the “normal” way. It is better to have 10 follow exchanges with those whom to share real interest then to have 10,000 without content.

Those who think that a high number of followers gives a high status to that profile have now something to think about. Why are you on Twitter anyway? To improve a department in your life, right? Don't waste it.

Marketing: History Of Marketing Social Media

Marketing is a concept – or better, an activity – that exist now for some 175 years, in the form as we think we know it. It is only the past few decades that marketing has become a major issue in the ever expanding business world.

Social media is not just a marketing spin-off. It is a modern implementation of marketing. Here is a chronological summary of the promotional – not the financial – part of marketing.

1839 Posters on private property in the UK. People were basically tweeting about their offerings. Anyone walking along could read it or ignore it. If they read it, they could spread the word, follow and re-tweet, so to speak. And that's they way people communicated about common interests. That was word of mouth, literally. So the concept of twittering was put into the business arena.

1864 Telegraph mass spam. Just another one to many communication method. Shouting about what's being offered, where to get it, how much to pay for it. Telegraphs were normally used to send messages though radio wave broadcasting. At the receiving end, an electrical typewriter writes out the message. At the end of the message, a small commercial gets typed. Later on, commercial messages got broadcasted just like that, so anyone who had a telegraph machine could receive it. That was the beginning of unsolicited spam.

1867 Billboard rentals. Well, the idea from 1839 proved to pay off, and so people started to make a living out of creating and planting billboards all over the place. Interesting to know that the physical billboard came only three years after the electronic telegraph.

1905 The University of Pennsylvania releases a first course in Marketing Of Products. Yep, the concept of reaching the mass by using various methods has gotten scientific status. It is not clear whether PhD degrees in billboard planting could be earned. Just kidding. Anyway, this university was before the now more famous Harvard.

1908 Harvard Business School opens. Nothing special for the moment, HBS still being in the grassroots. Just that there was considerable attention to the how-to of doing business. And marketing of course. Interesting to notice that HBS was not the first university with this curriculum.

1922 Radio advertising. The good old telegraph and billboard have given way to radio broadcasting. The DJ's, as they were certainly not called that time, did their commercial talk to the listeners. Quite an impact.

1940 Computers. Here we are talking about mainframes. In present time we tend to use the term Cloud Computing, which is conceptually mainframe computing, a sort of centralized or grouped piece of computing power that users can hook up with through a terminal or workstation. Hey, don't think in the 1940's they had browsers. Just punch cards and line printers Huge machines with switches, wires and plugs, and only a few KB of RAM. Mainly production of printed documents. Lots of them. No office without paper.

1941 TV advertising. Same as the 1922 radio advertising, but then visually. Not too many special effects, besides of white noise on the monochrome cathodic ray tubes.

1957 Approximate ... The internet immaculate conception. Here is when the first internet application got public. At that time, it was all mainframe based, with point to point terminals. This network technology was created by ARPA, with some military background flavor. Only 15 years later, the TCP/IP protocol came live. But really, the internet was born in the mid fifties!

1970 E commerce Electronic commerce is the technological implementation of computer aided selling and buying. You know, online shops and stuff like that. In those days the internet was not as it is today. It was an era without Java, Ajax, PHP, MySQL, XML and DHML stuff like that.

1980 Database marketing, relationship marketing, computer oriented spam. Business contacts got neatly recorded into electronic files that could be quickly read by computer programs that generate commercials. Addressed to the contacts directly. Printed.

1982 TCP/IP based internet world wide. This was the after birth of the internet whose immaculate conception was in 1957. Roughly 15 years after 1982 it became a commercial platform, the way we have it today.

1984 Guerrilla marketing. Wrong name for a peaceful way of spreading the commercial word by as many, more and most in the least possible amount of time. Typical quantity leap

strategy.

1985 Print advertising through desktop publishing. Now anyone can create, print and distribute their own flyers. That's what it basically was. In a way, flyers are paper pop-ups.

1990 CRM marketing & promotions planning. Customer Relationship Management simply means to take good care for your rolodex, and use the contacts to increase interest in your offerings. CRM is not just sending commercials. It is also integral part of account management, to keep the contacts live and happy through effective communication.

1991 Integrated marketing communications. An expensive term for smart computer programs that aid the marketer in segmenting and targeting. It has never been exactly defined what precisely the word "integrated" means in this context. It is not the first time that expensive words are used for simple stuff by those who don't even understand these words themselves. And to this day, the word "integrated" is frequently misspelled by IT professionals.

1995 Alta Vista, Yahoo and eBay are born. The first search engines on the world wide web plus the first global auction site. Some 100,000 websites, roughly estimated, were around and indexed by the search engines. Boy, at that time my website was in the top 1000! Now its position seems nowhere.

1996 Ask.com viral marketing. The word "viral" – meaning spreading around and picking-up quickly, like a virus – is coined by some young dynamic people who really had too much caffeine on their desk. Viral won't make anyone sick, other than unsolicited spam ads.

1998 Google and MSN. Yes, Google was born only in 1998! Today it has even become a verb in quite a few languages. A verb. Yak!

1999 Epinions, Second Life and Video Games. The 3D world is still in its infancy today. That is mainly due to crappy slow hardware & networks, and the intellectual entry threshold is a bit demanding compared to the average applications in the virtual world. Second Life and some adult games are misused for 3D virtual sex. Up to now, these virtual reality environments have not been used to the max of their true potential. A decade later: still a lot to do in this area! Except in modern movies where 3D rendering is absolutely necessary. Actors are being replaced by 3D avatars.

2001 Social bookmarking is nothing more than a one-click way of storing your favorites. Usually it concerns a social network of some sort. Controlled through a mild form of mafioso. If you have your own social network, unless you can prove your 7 or 9 figures, you are likely not to be included in the world wide social bookmarking list. Prove me otherwise!

2002 Flickr and Photobucket photo sharing. Photo sharing was nothing new, as at countless other websites photos could be downloaded and saved. But some "official" entities managed to add some sort of formalities to it, to give that elevated feel of authority.

2003 MySpace. We have not forgotten the shared multi-site concept as brought forward by numerous free website providers. MySpace had a more dedicated look and feel and was targeted to a more specific audience with a web creative mind-set.

2004 Facebook and Digg. Same as MySpace, but in a different setting. Facebook, no way of individual page designs. Another social network that surprisingly still attracts under aged users as half of their total audience, although it started out as a local face-book at a university adult class. Only a sparse flavor of dating is present, contrary to the more specific or localized social networks. Micro blogs & comments are often used as two way conversations of limited time span.

2005 Vimeo and Youtube. Videos got available through the internet and of course heavily used by marketers. And daters too! Porn is forbidden on these sites and there is considerable censorship on video content.

2005 Ten years after 1995, over 1,000,000,000 websites were around, most of them carrying some sort of ads. That is ten thousand times the number of 1995. Explosive growth.

2006 Twitter was one of the latest new marketing channels to come into existence, and is based on micro blogging of time lines. Most Twitter users blog URLs of external sites and have no content to write by themselves. There is hardly any two way conversation. Everybody is just shouting.

2011 The majority of social network developments are simply polishing the user interface. Some sites got better, most got worse. Graphical user interfaces got cosmetic overhauls at disastrous levels. Functionally little new, though. Shifting a menu, changing a background color or resizing thumbnails is not a significant improvement. It seems the developers have either fallen asleep or ran out of imagination. They just keep doing plastic surgery on their sites without really improving their business.

We are now a few years further down the marketing road, and not much new has been invented. So who's going to be the next marketing multi-billionaire?

Marketing: Online Scams

Beware of the three ways of getting fooled into giving up your money through seemingly innocent money-making schemes. Scams are all around us and it can be found in every single area of life, but more so in such areas where the risk is greater such as when dealing with credit cards, bank accounts and other activities which involve sending or receiving money online.

The Bank/Credit Card Email Scam:

If you get an email asking you to sign up to your bank account or credit card through the email because your privacy is under danger or just to receive a free gift or something: BEWARE! Do not sign up through the internet address provided in the email. If the email does make you

anxious, go to the bank or credit card site using the address you know already or through searching the search engines.

How Does This Scam Work?

The senders of the email know that only a very few will sign up but that is all they need. When you signed up to the bogus internet address, they got your user and password. Now its time for them to party!

The Missing Millionaire Scam:

If you receive an email saying that they represent a dead or missing former ruler, high-ranking official or businessman from an African, Gulf or even Russian: BEWARE! They offer you a chance to earn anything between one to five percent of ten to fifty million. And for your co-operation only. Don't get sucked into this, for though they speak of giving you money, they will receive cash and from your account.

How Does This Scam Work?

They will ask you for your bank details in order to transfer the cash and then they will use that to transfer a small amount. Now, once you trust them, they will ask you for more personal and secure details because they "need" that to transfer the entire sum in and out of your account. What they won't tell you is that they will transfer all the money out from your account: theirs and yours.

The Make Money Fast Scam:

This is the most innocent of the lot, but that is also why it is the most dangerous. These are so-called companies that advertise that if you only sign up and use their system, you will mint money. Please do not fall for such schemes. They will pay you some money but then once trust is built, they will fleece your bank account. Remember that quick money scams are the surest and fastest way to lose all your money!

Conclusion:

Whatever you do online, always remember that the internet is not a safe place. Treat it like you would treat any other business venture and bring up your guard. If you play it safe and check out the companies before committing, you will be able to guard yourself against losing money to crooks.

Marketing: Gift Economy One Way Street

There is that wonderful money-less concept called "Gift Economy", to enable people to exchange goods and services without involvement of currency, largely based on mutual trust.

I have taken this concept to the test, as a website builder, offering my services in exchange for simple second hand goods that I even would pay for by myself.

Real life example in present time: I am about to move to another home, and I want to use wooden platforms (beach footbridge style) to cover the floor for reason of heat and sound

isolation. And I'd be happy with used platforms, but have a hard time finding these.

So I have the idea to exchange the supplier contact info against a website. So I just need the contact and then I buy the platforms from there.

I have a deal with a writer who is in need of a website. In exchange he agrees on supplying me with the platform info. I have been hearing excuses after excuse, even after I delivered the website, and to this day my share is zero.

Another real life example, a couple of months ago, a stucco worker needed a website to promote his business locally, and with him I had exactly the same agreement. I needed only platform supplier info for cheap stuff. I have been hearing excuses after excuse, even after I delivered the website, and to this day my share is zero.

Again another real life example, half a year ago, a spiritual foundation needed a website to promote their spiritual teachings, and with them I had the agreement that they supply me with some used dated electronic equipment. After many emails, I still did not get my stuff, even after I delivered the website, and to this day my share is zero.

And so there is another potential candidate, a floor tile seller, but I will not try a fourth time.

The "Gift Economy" concept heavily relies on keeping promises, i.e. real trust, and after three hard lessons I have learned that people cannot be trusted in this idealistic concept. Unless legally binding contracting would be involved, although that would largely take away the "humanistic factor". But hey, business is business ...

The Gift Economy concept does not fit in this world of selfish people. Besides, the word "Gift" rather be "Exchange", as "gift" seems strongly suggesting its original meaning.

Exchange Economy! EXEC

So from now on, I will charge for the websites again outrageous amounts of money, and I leave the Gift Economy to the hippies and the rich.

I need to pay for my living, and that is the long and short of it. Period.

Marketing: Business With Arabs In The Gulf Region

American business cowboy mentality does NOT work in the Gulf Region at all.

US business executives are way too ill mannered and assume that they can command Arabs just because they do not wear Western business suits.

Those cowboys do not talk one word of Arabic language, have no clue how to greet an Arab properly, do not have the slightest inkling how to make friends with Arabs.

Friends, that's right.

All Arab business communication is primarily based on human values such as friendship. You are only successful when you have been eating at the same table as the Arabs, and preferably at their home!

Arabs don't care too much about money. They have plenty. They care about higher values. They do not want to be forgotten.

You must have a lot of patience, with yourself and with them. At a meeting, you have to be on time, and they have to be late. Accept that kind of etiquette.

Never spend the first meeting on contractual and financial matters, not even on the product or service. Just talk about whatever pleasant subject comes up. Make them feel at ease with you.

And for heaven's sake: smile naturally. Not like Clint Eastwood. If you cannot come forward as a warm natural honest compassionate human being, then take the first plane exit the Gulf region and go back to your ranch. Arabs don't want to do business with Rambo Colt.

Arabs might give a first impression as being unpleasant, but in reality they are amongst the finest people on Earth. For as long as you accept them the way they are and for as long as you are a true warm natural honest compassionate human being, you will succeed in getting them accepting you and your products or services.

Arab men do like boyish humor. They like to laugh, but keep it clean. Do not talk about any other taboo subject and never criticize them, just acknowledge and smile. That is the long and the short of it.

And never ever flirt with their women! Do not even look into their eyes for longer than a quarter of a second!

Doing business with Arabs is 80 percent personal touch and 20 percent matters. Once that 80 percent is accomplished, the remaining 20 percent goes by itself.

Western marketing & sales does not work in Arab countries. You have to show your own soul inside out. They want first trust, then more trust, and finally absolute trust. No friends, no business.

One glitch and you are out till the end of times. Don't screw it.

Marketing: Afloat In A Changing Marketplace

Let's face the facts... old-fashioned marketing tools aren't going to keep your business a growing and prosperous entity in today's marketplace. Hey, this month's hottest techniques and information will be obsolete in six months. Now, I'm not saying that old marketing principles can't be upgraded and incorporated successfully, but as a rule marketeers have to stay on top of the latest marketing trends.

If you're wanting to stay ahead of your business savvy competitors you'll need to implement 3

tactics to stay one step ahead.

1. Watch For New Advertising Methods

You never know what will work for you unless you take the time to experiment! Who knows? The next marketing experiment you test may be a million dollar idea. Keep your eyes peeled for the latest marketing news.

It never pays to put all of your eggs in one basket. Don't neglect the tried and true marketing tools that have been successful in the past. Invest about 20 percent of your advertising budget and time into testing for new marketing strategies that will increase your profits.

2. Spruce Things Up

Don't get stuck in a rut. Yeah, you have products that have been successful for years, but what would happen if you gave them a "face lift?" Would you attract new customers? Would your old customers enjoy the change? You'll be surprised at what a new packaging will do for old product sales.

Sprucing up doesn't have to stop with your products. A few minor changes in the store appearance can bring new life to your place of business as well.

3. Diversify

The more products you have to offer, the more insulation you have against the decline in popularity of one particular item. Don't go out on a limb, when you've got a good thing going. Look for products and services that compliment your current products and services.

Don't let the speed-of-light changes in the market take your business under. Stay afloat with these proven tactics.

Marketing: Marketeers! How To Avoid SKIP AD Clicks in 12 Seconds
[UPDATED June 26, 2014] – Dear Social Media Marketeer,

SKIP AD is usually clicked on as soon as the ad starts out very loud, almost blowing-up the sound card. If some yells in your ear "I luv ya!!!" at 120 decibels, would that really feel more convincing than a gentle warm whisper? You know better than that. So that is mistake number one. Therefore: Never start an ad with the max of output.

How much would you like to sell? I am now going to almost give away a 1200 – 1800 Dollar advice. Yes that's what I charge and that's what companies happily pay me for a one hour marketing consultation.

First of all, you should recognize that marketing has little to do with the product or service to be promoted or sold, but it has everything to do with psychology. A marketer who has no

serious psychology background has no chance of survival in these modern times of today. A few years ago you could still survive with all that CGI, Flash and PowerPoint shit, but that era has gone.

Marketeers must seriously get into commercial mind control, in an ethical way of course, and therefore a thorough understanding of the human mind is a must. I am going to show you why and how.

The fact that your ad video clips on for example YouTube allow interruption by the infamous SKIP AD button confirms that you do not value your own ads as good enough to be enjoyed till the end. Obviously, you did not apply enough psychology.

In other words, you know that your way of advertising sucks. Have you really studied what web visitors eat like candy and what they puke like shit? You completely ignore the viewers taste, and all you do is to design those boring and annoying school-book commercials from decades ago that no one gives a damn about. You had the wrong professor in front of the marketing class. A PowerPoint & CGI sales geek from the last century perhaps.

Here is the complete method on how to make stunning ad videos that no viewer will want to click away prematurely:

< BEGIN OF SNIP >

No, I am NOT going to give it for free. Twelve bucks I want! It has taken me years of research, dammit! So if I sell 100 copies, I will have my one hour consulting paid. After that, the book is sold out till a much later date. Period.

BUY THE BOOK!

< END OF SNIP >

Ten or twelve bucks is nothing! It is a shame that you do not want to pay 1200 bucks, or 120 bucks, or even 12 bucks. Keep on failing as a mediocre marketer, if that is what you want!

Okay, dear Marketeer, yes I may be rude sometimes, but that is because I care and cannot stay indifferent like a robозombie. Why do I almost give away my advice? Because I want to see nice clips that make me buy what you advertize!

May I wish you happy marketing!

< MORE SNIP >

Oh I forgot, you are not online with this book. Here is the URL : <http://iqnyte.com/?p=6856>

Well well well, this concludes The Marketing BlogBook! Of course you did not cheat and skip a lot of pages to land here, eh?

Happy Marketing!