

Internet Marketing Secrets

from the trenches...

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Internet Marketing Secrets, from the trenches...

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* For purposes of this eBook I will often use the term “IM” or “Internet Marketing” to cover all aspects in Internet Marketing, which includes SEO (Search Engine Optimization), SEM (Search Engine Marketing), and General Internet Marketing Strategies.

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ISBN: 978-0-9790543-2-7

Chapter 1 – Introduction

Thanks for taking time to download this ebook. I trust that you will find the information useful and profitable. As I have studied Internet Marketing over the past decade, I have seen change after change with regard to the best ways to market businesses online and drive traffic to websites. Search engines continue to change their indexing and ranking methodologies and we, in the trenches, continue to work hard to keep up and maintain a steady flow of traffic for our corporate sites and those of our clients. Additionally, although most professional marketers now see search engine marketing as a critical component of a well planned marketing campaign, more emphasis is being placed on increasing the rate of capturing visitors information in order to build a profitable customer database.

Who am I and why should you listen to me? In 1999 I founded an SEO (search engine optimization) firm that grew over the next several years into a full service technology-consulting firm and still operates today. As we grew the business, we attracted companies of all sizes including start-ups, mom-and-pop businesses, small businesses, non-profit organizations, and Fortune 100 / Fortune 500 clients. I later resigned as President & CEO of that company, sold my interest in the company, and started a small “incubator” firm to focus on new business endeavors, as I have a passion for developing new businesses and researching & developing cutting edge Internet technologies. I have launched several successful web-based businesses through this incubator firm over the past several years and The Web Traffic Team is one such entity. The goal of the Web Traffic Team is to help

businesses increase the return on investment (ROI) on their Internet Marketing dollars by effectively utilize Internet Marketing strategies.

I am *fully confident* that EVERY business in the United States (and most likely many other countries as well) can benefit from these techniques; not just web based businesses. One of our clients (a brick and mortar company) found out the hard way that it is far more effective to invest in Internet Marketing as opposed to the old school advertising that produces next to no results and is gone with the next issue. This business owner originally did not believe that the web could be effective as a marketing tool for his brick and mortar business. Unfortunately he was duped into buying advertising before we spoke and sadly threw away LOTS of money that was not recovered. He eventually saw that for less money than he spent on advertising, he could see a greater return in that the web site will not go way, but the advertising he paid for is long gone and still hasn't produced a return (or a recovery of the money initially spent).

My philosophy is that a company should view its web site as a profit center rather than an expense. If you are seeking to convert your web site from an expense to a profit center or take your site to the next level of profitability, then keep reading ahead.

I trust that you will see the tremendous value in this publication. As I study what many companies offer in the realm of web marketing, I continue to see is that a lot of what is out there is the same old stuff, just reworded, or its plain garbage. In this ebook, I will lay out practical steps on launching an

effective web-marketing plan as well as tips on how to take your current site to the next level in terms of increased traffic and conversions. I also make some recommendations of which “experts” to listen to in the IM world if you are seeking to learn the tricks of the trade. As you read, you will understand the theory behind why I willingly give away information that I could rightly charge for and possibly find value in doing this for your business.

So here you have it, Internet Marketing Secrets from the trenches of the daily Internet Marketing grind.

I wish you much success along the way.

Anthony Kirlew

Founder, Web Traffic Team

Chapter 2 - The Basics of Internet Marketing

In life, you really need to do your homework to be successful. We hear this from the time we are in school and we often ask “how will this help me in the real world?” It’s funny, because looking back to the discipline of doing homework alone *can* be the difference between success and failure in the real world as discipline is crucial to success. When your kids ask you this question, now you have something to tell them. It is only by God’s grace that I am where I am today, because I wasn’t a great student in school. It’s not that I wasn’t smart, I just “didn’t think how my teachers thought”, so they wouldn’t give me the best grades... and well... I would often “forget” to do my homework or show up to class. The good news is that I learned early on that education was the key to success in life and in business. To this day I spend thousands of dollars each year on personal development, which includes taking courses in my field(s) of expertise and studying my colleagues and other experts in the fields of Business, Finance, Marketing, & Internet Marketing. The more that you study successful people, you will see that this is a common denominator in being successful – Never Stop Learning!

We all have heard the importance of being “educated consumers” and that is no different when it comes to Internet Marketing. The more you know, the less you will set yourself up to be taken advantage of. It is sad to see that so many unscrupulous firms have shown up in the IM realm but it is true that there are companies out there that will take your money and not do anything

for you, or take your money and get your site banned from a search engine by using unacceptable practices.

You should also have some basic knowledge of IM so that you can discuss your site's needs intelligently with a prospective IM firm. As they propose solutions and explain what they are going to do for you and your website, you won't be lost and just agree because it sounds good.

So where do you get this information? I will give you the basics as well as several solid resources for becoming your own expert in IM. There is definitely value in having this knowledge because you will know which specific components of IM you need to incorporate into your overall Internet Marketing plan and in the end this will save you lots of money (you do have a plan, don't you?). You may take this on and become a true expert as many others have, or just enjoy the benefits and savings of being a well-educated consumer. As you study the "gurus" of Internet Marketing, you will see that many of them became experts by necessity. It is no different with me. I built my first website in the late 90's. I thought it was "cool" and I shared it with people, and even made some money. Wanting to experience more success for my website, I became very curious as to how to get my sites to come up in the Search Engines and then my journey began. As I learned more and more, I got very good at getting my sites listed at the #1 position in all of the search engines (without pay-per-click), but then I had to ask why I didn't have the sales that I desired or expected based on the number of searches for my keywords and the amount of visitors to my site. I then learned about things such as making a site user friendly, instilling

confidence in your audience, and the need to establish yourself as an expert by giving web searchers quality information if you want them to do business with you (more on this later). By the middle of 1999 I was sharing my new found expert knowledge with web masters on search engine optimization (back then we just called it search engine optimization) forums all across the web. As I voraciously studied SEO, I became an expert and developed a following that grew even more as I became the moderator of an SEO forum (formerly at selfpromotion.com). I began to receive requests for help from individuals and companies desperate to make their websites profitable. At that point, my SEO business was birthed.

So what are the basics of Internet Marketing?

Internet Marketing is synonymous with:

- Search Engine Optimization (SEO)
- Search Engine Marketing (SEM)
- Web Marketing

As a definition, Internet Marketing refers to any strategy that is used to attract a customer and ultimately produce a sale using the Internet, whether through a web site or email.

An Internet Marketing plan encompasses several elements including but not limited to:

- Web Site Coding
- Search Engine Submissions
- Directory Submissions
- Pay Per Click Web Sites
- Developing web content
- Blogging
- Podcasting
- Email marketing
- Cloaking (not recommended as the search engines don't like this)
- Keyword Research
- Link Development (Internal and External)
- Online advertising (Banner Ads, Text Ads, etc.)
- Affiliate Marketing
- Viral Marketing / ebook marketing

Rule #1 is to have a web site. Simple as it sounds, you cannot effectively market to anyone online if they have no way to find you online (yes, there are still companies without websites). If you don't have a web site, then you need to either learn to build one or hire someone to do this for you. I would resist the temptation to spend thousands of dollars to build a top-notch site until your idea is proven and you know you will make money. I consulted with a firm in the fall of 2000 that spent over *\$3 MILLION DOLLARS* before

launching their website. In the end they had hyped up and built a huge International web Infrastructure, contracting with some of the largest developers in the country and never took the site live. Needless to say, my last assignment for them was taking the site offline.

Contrary to Rule #1 is Myth #1 – We aren't an online business; we don't need a web site. Sadly, there are people that still believe this. If you don't think there is a market for your product or service, go to Google and type in what you do and watch your competitors web sites come up.

As you progress, you can fine-tune your web site, but here is a list of “Do's and Don'ts” related to your web site to make it search engine and user friendly.

“DO's” and “DON'T's”

DO:

- Develop as much content as possible; search engines love content.
- Ask others for candid feedback about your web site. Ask if it is simple to follow, does it appeal to the eye, etc. **DO NOT TAKE OFFENSE TO SINCERE FEEDBACK.** This is business and your ego will only cost you money; besides chances are your specialty is not web design, but the product or service that you are promoting. Your alternative is to pay someone like me hundreds of dollars to tell you the same thing.

- Have a means of capturing your customers' information (first name and email address at a minimum). More on this in Chapter 5.
- Pay to submit your site to Yahoo. It currently costs \$299 for a review and then \$299 per year, but it will be one of the best investments you make in your website. Make sure your description is optimized and meets Yahoo's Standards – they do reject sites even if you pay the \$299 (you have to agree to this before you submit your site).
- Use an autoresponder to reply to all customers that sign up at your website. This could be a one-time reply, or a series of email replies designed to build a relationship with you prospective client.
- Maintain periodic contact with your customers via email (at least monthly) and make them an offer to try and induce a sale.
- Offer a way for your users refer others to your site (such as an affiliate program).
- Learn some basic web coding (HTML) skills. The more you know, the less you will pay (as is true in almost every arena of life). Visit www.elearnconnect.com for a simple online HTML course.
- Become a student of Internet Marketing (see below for resources)

DON'T

- Use a Yahoo hosting platform. I hope Yahoo doesn't get mad at me for saying this because I respect them as a search engine and they are a great company. My problem is that I have seen to many "rookies" use a Yahoo site builder and end up with a site with lots of "extraneous" coding or have challenges when they go to upgrade to a their own hosting account.
- Use a Word Processor to build your site. Same as above with the Yahoo Site builder.
- Use your company name in the page titles or forget to change them from the defaults.
- Submit a web site to a search engine or directory with an "Under Construction" page.
- Send unsolicited email (a.k.a. SPAM). Never buy an email lists unless you are buying from a professional list broker.
- Abuse your customer database by emailing too frequently (the amount of emails will depend on the industry being served.)
- Use advertising or promotional language in your directory submissions.

Don't worry if something doesn't make sense for now; at least you have a list of simple things to do and not to do.

Internet Marketing Educational Resources

So how do you become a student of Internet Marketing (besides reading the updates to this ebook?)? Here are a few resources to get you started, actually the only ones you need.

We have recently launched a Search Engine Marketing Training Division called [Web Traffic Academy™](#). Here, you will find over a dozen self-paced Internet Marketing courses and certification programs online.

[Search Engine Watch](#) - The #1 resource online regarding search engine optimization and marketing is [Search Engine Watch](#). This site was started by the “Master of SEO”, Danny Sullivan, and has grown into the ultimate SEM (search engine marketing) resource online. Search Engine Watch also hosts several annual [Search Engine Strategies](#) conferences around the world, which are multi-day sessions jam packed with SEM information for everyone from the beginner to the expert. I enjoy these conferences every time I attend and there is always something to learn because you are often hearing from the “source” such as a search engine rep or other industry insider. Often you will hear about what is coming down the road so you can start to prepare or hold off on an implementation that will be worthless in a short period of time. Additionally, Search Engine Watch has a blog and a

newsletter to keep you up to date with the SEM industry and a paid member section for the “real inside scoop”.

[Planet Ocean](#) – If you are serious about keeping up with the monthly changes in the field of SEM, I would advise you to invest in Planet Ocean’s monthly publication, Search Engine News. They also publish, “*Unfair Advantage Book on Winning The Search Engine Wars*” which is one of the best SEM publications around. They currently offer the book to subscribers of their valuable monthly newsletter. The April 2006 featured an article on the specifics of how “*How a business got ripped off by their SEO firm*” (all back issues are available to subscribers). What you will receive in the monthly updates is equivalent to having someone go out and interview everyone in the SEM industry on a monthly basis and reporting back to you. Visit this link to learn more about Planet Ocean: www.webtrafficteam.com/planetocan

The Search Engines – Every search engine has a “webmaster” section or a “add url” link that discusses their criteria for listing (and ranking) sites. If you are trying to get your site listed in a specific search engine, make sure you have read and understand their criteria. You can also send them an email to ask questions, but there is never a guarantee of a personal reply. Please know that I use the term “search engines” to include search directories as well.

The [Internet Marketing Center](#) – This is where you will learn grass roots Web Marketing. Founded by the late Corey Rudl who was an Internet Marketing Pioneer, and a marketing Genius, and now run by Derek Gehl, this company is responsible for the success of SEVERAL online entrepreneurs. They have produced several training programs to help you get started in an online business or take your current business to the next level, and have developed several software programs to help you take your business to the top. They don't give away any of their secrets for free, but all come with a solid money-back guarantee. Don't let their "sales letter style" web site fool you; they are the real deal.

Here are a few other notable industry resource sites & Forums:

[Search Engine Roundtable](#)

[Webmaster World](#)

[LED Digest](#) – An Internet forum where you can post questions on e-commerce related topics. Search Marketing is often a hot topic there, and every so often, you will see my replies to questions there as well.

[Search Marketing Standard Magazine](#)

[Website Services Magazine](#)

Chapter 3 – Content Strategies

With regard to getting a site well ranked in the search engines, content has always been, and will very likely always be, KING. The advent of blogs (discussed in the next chapter) has helped many companies improve their visibility on the web by launching new sites (the blogs) that are jam packed with content which result in very well ranked pages themselves and can be linked to the company's main web site, increasing its link popularity.

In addition to blogs, there are two additional areas of content development to incorporate into your web-marketing program; articles and press releases.

Articles

Writing articles is fairly simple and shouldn't stress you out. All you need to do is write about something related to your business. I often take client scenarios or something that I explain to a client and turn it into an article or blog entry (or both). Go through your day and think about the things you have talked to your partners, vendors, employees, clients, and competitors about, and then start writing. Once I have the article, I use it three ways: I post it on a blog, I submit it to article aggregators, and I add it to my website with an internal keyword link to the page and a keyword rich page name.

Article aggregators are companies (websites) that will review and post your articles and allow content producers to post your content to their site (ideally with your bio and a link to your site). This works to establish you further as an expert in your field and also helps build your inbound external site links.

There is always the possibility that someone will steal your work, or not give you a link back, so be sure to take whatever measures you feel comfortable with to protect your work.

Here are some content aggregators to submit your articles to. Currently, the sites listed provide this service at no charge, however this is subject to change.

<http://www.ideamarketers.com/>

<http://www.ezinearticles.com/>

<http://www.goarticles.com/>

There are several others, but these are quite popular and are well ranked sites which helps as you begin to have your articles published because you will have stronger inbound link values from them.

Press Releases

A Press Release is a way of telling people about something your company is doing. The challenge is making it something that a respected and well-connected journalist will have interest in. When thinking of stories to send to the press, ask yourself “why would someone care about this?” It may help to solicit outside opinions, but be sure they are people you can respect to give you candid feedback. Submitting a press release isn’t that much more difficult than submitting an article. You can submit at some sites for free but it is advisable to pay for additional services such as copy editing if you do not have those skills in-house so that you know it reads well.

Know your target audience when sending your press release. Depending on your story, you may want to have national coverage, industry-wide coverage, or just local press. Most PR services offer a range of services from free press release submission to copyediting, and local to major newswire distribution. Here is a list of companies for you to consider for your PR campaigns.

www.prweb.com

www.marketwire.com

www.emediawire.com

www.sbwire.com

Chapter 4 – Create Online Communities

One thing that will continually bring people back to your site is feeling as if they have a place to connect with others on a related topic. A blog is one way of doing this, but also having features such as forums or chat rooms can accomplish this. Beware of the additional support that will be necessary to manage these resources.

Creating an online community for your past clients is a great way to start. It will allow them to share how you have served them and give you an opportunity to remedy in problems that you might pick up on by reading the threads. You may even develop new business by empowering some of your web savvy customers to serve as forum or blog administrators (they will tell everyone they know about this and they will visit your site).

Chapter 5 - New Internet Technologies – Blogging & Podcasting

There are several new trends in Internet based marketing, and blogging and podcasting are two that you have probably heard a lot of buzz about lately. I will give a brief overview of these new technologies and include their definitions as well as resources for learning more about them.

➤ Blogging

Blogging is the equivalent to keeping an online journal. You log in, type a message, and log out (very simple). The origin of the word blog comes from the term “web log”, and was shortened to “blog”. Blogging has become very popular due to its low cost of entry and simplicity. You can start a blog within minutes for free and there are no special skills required to put one up. All you need to do is set up your account (which is like registering for anything else on the web) and start typing. If you are just getting started, I recommend using [Word Press](#) or [Blogger](#) as they are both free, and pretty user-friendly.

Word Press simplifies tasks such as template modifications and allows you to organize your postings by category (which makes it easier for people to browse and navigate through). Another feature that I really like about Word Press is that it has automatically publishes your work so you don’t have to keep hitting the publish button. Additionally, we have found the best search engine results from Word Press blogs due to the use of tags, which are the keywords that link your blog to the search engines, helping people to find your blog when searching online.

Google's [Blogger](#) platform is also free and allows you to make your blog profitable by displaying Google's Ads on your blog. For some, they feel this is a benefit due to the potential for extra-added revenue. My thought is that if you are sending people away to your competition you are diluting your brand and reducing your selling opportunities; hardly worth a .50 payoff for a click.

One advantage of blogging as a means of business promotion is that it can help establish you as an expert in your field. For example, if someone does a search for your field of expertise and then they find your blog, they assume that you are the expert because they found the information they were looking for AND your site was the one they found. *This is key here*; people searching the web are often not looking to spend money. They are very often looking for information, and free information at that. What ends up happening is that they come across an expert in the field that they are researching and realize that it is a far better use of their resources to pay someone to solve their problem rather than becoming the expert. An example of this is the fact that you came to our website and are now reading our ebook. Many of our customers have come to us in this manner because they realize that we are the experts and have invested YEARS of testing, learning, and research to produce the results that we have for our clients and our sites. The time and monetary investment in "doing it yourself" often outweighs the investment of having a expert on your team whom you can consult with on given matters and have answers to your IM questions in a fraction of the time.

Another advantage of blogging is the fact that it is content based. Ultimately, the search engines desire content to deliver to the searching public. Those that commit to spending a small amount of time on a consistent basis (daily or weekly), will have more content and therefore be of more perceived value to the search engines, and thus have better rankings in the search engines for their blogs.

Blog content can also be mass distributed to channels that receive blog content via RSS (Really Simple Syndication), allowing people to subscribe to your blog and receive updates as you post new content to your blog. There are several services that will help you syndicate your blog. One that I recommend is [Feed Burner](#).

Additionally, there are specialty search engines just for promoting blogs ([ping-o-matic](#) is one of the more popular ones), which makes them somewhat easier to promote than a traditional web site. Know that you can reap the rewards of having an additional web property (your blog) indexed in the search engines for the cost of just the time it takes to type your articles, but I recommend making a commitment to fully implementing your blog for it to be effective. You can start slow while you are learning, but posting one or two articles is hardly enough to be considered a quality blog and will not likely generate any results from the search engines or consumer confidence. This additional search engine traffic can equate to additional revenue for your business, and increased ROI considering the low cost to implement.

If you would like more information on how to implement blogs into your Internet Marketing program, please visit the Internet Marketing Center for information on their blogging course entitled “*Blogging For Dollars*”. We have set up a link on our server to direct you to information on this information filled course: www.WebTrafficTeam.com/IMCBlogCourse.

If you are interested in an evaluation of your business and how implementing a blog strategy can increase your bottom line, please contact The Web Traffic Team.

➤ Podcasting

I will give you a brief overview of Podcasting, although it is not my personal field of expertise. I am humble enough to admit that I do not know every thing and smart enough to partner with or hire experts that have the skills that I do not have, which allows me to be the most efficient in what I do and to offer the highest quality of services to my clients.

Podcasting refers to the publishing or broadcasting of audio files that are commonly distributed to iPods, hence the name “**pod**casting”. If you do not know what an iPod is, it is a portable audio device made by Apple that allows you to listen to audio files such as music, news, books, or any information that is converted to digital audio format. I won’t get too much into explaining what iPods are, but visit www.apple.com/ipod/ipod.html for more of the basics of what an iPod is and the basics of iPod technology.

Podcasting for the purposes of promoting your business is a new trend in Internet Media. There are many resource sites devoted to helping you create the audio files to be distributed to iPod users. Keep in mind that these audio files can also be used on your web site, as they are able to be heard using MP3 players and other audio devices.

One such resource is an information-packed, but very affordable ebook titled “*Podcasting for Fun & Profit*”. You can currently purchase this for \$0.99 at this site: www.podcastingprofitsecrets.com.

Chapter 6 - The eBook Revolution / Viral Marketing

In addition to offering quality information from your web site, one of the best ways to allow information about your business (and your site) to spread like a virus (hence the name, Viral marketing) is to offer an information product to your visitors in the form of an ebook. You should notice as you continue to read, you are watching these systems that I am writing about at work. The most important thing to remember when offering your free ebook is that it isn't truly free. You are giving your ebook (and information) away in exchange for information about your customer and the permission to market your products or services to them. Ideally, you should provide something of significant value to your customers, not just a teaser to try and sell them your product. Our "free" *Internet Marketing Secrets* ebook that you are reading contains enough resources for you to acquire the same level of IM knowledge that I have, however it does not give you my expertise which came with years of research, study, monetary investment, trial, error, failure, and success.

Don't be afraid to give away too much information. You might do some searching and see that your competition is giving away your "industry secrets". Some people get frustrated when they see this type of activity, but others see the wisdom in it. This might also explain why your competitors may have clients that you could have had, if you had positioned yourself as an authority in your field by becoming a source of information to your prospective clients. The good news is that it is never too late to start!

So how do you go about producing this information? The simplest way is to start writing about what you do. Find a niche in your field to provide your prospective clients information about and offer it from your website in a downloadable format (ebook or electronic book). You can create this with any word processor, and then convert it to PDF format. I STRONGLY recommend using [Adobe Acrobat](#) (the full version, not the free Acrobat reader) as opposed to any knock off PDF creators. I have tried many of them and I have not seen any of them that have all of the features or the simplicity of [Adobe Acrobat](#).

The key to successfully “giving away” information is to make sure you only give it away in exchange for the information (i.e. name and email address) of the reader. Sure, you will have people that will try to scam you by giving you bogus information, but you don’t want them as customers anyway. They are the ones who will try and not pay your invoices. How much information you ask for depends on your product or service, but at a minimum you need a first name and an email address so you can contact your prospect down the road to offer them a product or service. Ideally, you should get a contact number so you can call them and follow up to see if they received the ebook, ask them if they have had a chance to read it, ask if they have any more questions, and define their need. Once you have defined their need, only then should you approach them with regard to your service and only if your service is the best thing for them. I know this will make some people think twice, but the worse thing you can do is offer someone your service just so you can make money. I don’t where I heard this saying, but I love it “do the right thing and the money will follow”. Simply put, if

you focus on the money first, people will perceive that you are just looking out for your bottom line. If they feel that you are genuine on top of being informative, you will likely earn a client and an advocate. Another saying that I have heard is “they don’t care what you know, until they know that you care”. We very often refer prospects to other companies that may be best suited to serve a clients need. Keep in mind that your client may not know what they want, but think that you have the answer. For example, we have had clients contact us saying they needed SEM consulting when in fact they had good search engine positioning. What they needed was a new website because their site was very amateur looking, did not instill trust or customer confidence, and therefore no one cared that they were #1 for a search term; they had a conversion problem rather than an SEM problem. I have received prospects from other SEM firms (with no expectation of compensation) based on our work in a certain niche market or industry that they knew we had an extensive research database for. For those that are curious, some of our niche areas include the automotive, real estate, mortgage, and travel industries.

The next thing to do is use autoresponder technology to follow up with your prospects after they have downloaded your ebook. Some people use the “contact them until the buy or die” mentality. I say every customer is an individual with individual needs. My philosophy is to spend time finding out what that persons needs and philosophies are and then help them find a solution. The more time you spend with a prospect, the more you will find out about their problem. The bigger the problem you discover, the more you will be paid for providing a solution.

Chapter 7 - Know Your Web Sites' Purpose

KNOW THY PURPOSE! Ask yourself, what is the goal of your website? Is it ultimately to make a sale? Is it to champion a cause? Is it to drive traffic to a brick and mortar store?

This is a hard question because many people do not know what their goal is or should be with their web site. Some feel that every one else has a website, everyone says you need one, so they went out and got one. If you do not have specific goals, you will not accomplish anything because you cannot hit a moving or aimless target. Start by defining your web sites goals first, and then you will be able to better see how to develop and implement your IM plan for the site.

(Here is another key) No matter what your ultimate goal is for your site or business, your web site should center around providing quality information for your prospective customers, capturing their contact information, developing a prospect database, and marketing to your customer database.

The previous two chapters touched on providing information so I wont drive those into the ground. So lets talk about capturing customer information and developing a prospect database.

Few people will give you their contact information if your site does not appear reputable so make sure that you have a well laid out, professional looking site. Next, make sure you are offering an ebook, a newsletter subscription, or something of value, as you will capture more information

with an offer as opposed to just asking for it. Many people are skeptical of giving up their email address due to their fear of spam. Another factor is that as you start to send out emails to your customers, they may not get them due to spam filtering either at the ISP level, network level, or personal computer level. This is why it is important to have a strong enough offer to allow you to ask for additional information such as phone number or a mailing address that will allow you to reach your prospects through other means.

Speaking of spam or unsolicited commercial email, if you are not aware of what this is, please visit [CAUCE](#) (Coalition Against Unsolicited Commercial Email) and do your homework. The bottom line here is *NEVER* send anyone an email if they have not given you their email address and permission to market to them.

In general, I do not condone buying email lists, but rather building your own list from people that come to your site. Most of the lists sold today are worthless and many contain email addresses that have been obtained through less than professional means and can get you in trouble or labeled as a spammer. You will have a much higher success rate (and lower spam complaint rate) when marketing to prospects that have come to your web site, given you their email address, and have double opted in. A double opt in is where a customer confirms their desire (usually via email) after signing up at your site, that they want to receive information from you.

To capture this information, you can hard code your form, use a script from your host, find a script on the web, or use a third party service such as Aweber. Unless you are skilled at coding and maintaining a customer database, I recommend using Aweber as it will generate code for you, handle the double opt in process, maintain a database, and send follow up auto responder messages for you. This is not a free service, but the nominal \$179.40 investment for one years worth of service is well worth it if you are serious about marketing your business. Like anything else, there is a learning curve, but the more you learn, the less money you will spend paying professionals like The Web Traffic Team.

We have arranged for a FREE 30-day trial subscription to Aweber. Try it for 30-days, and if you are not happy for any reason, you will get your money back. You must use this link for your FREE trial offer: www.WebTrafficTeam.com/Aweber. Please note you will pay for the service up front, and if for any reason you decide to cancel within 30 days, your money will be refunded. You can start at the \$19.95 level for one month of service, but I am confident that you will upgrade to the annual subscription.

Chapter 8 - Be a Specialist / Develop a Niche in Your Field

It's no secret that specialists earn more than generalists. All you have to do is look at how doctors and lawyers work. You can find a doctor to go to if you need a physical or if you are feeling under the weather, but if you need cardiac surgery, you will need a specialist, and I guarantee that you (or your insurance company) will pay more for the services of a cardiac surgeon as opposed to the services of a general practitioner. The same goes for lawyers, any lawyer can represent you in the event of an IRS audit, but would you put your fate into the hands of an attorney that was not intimate with the IRS code and familiar with IRS audit proceedings? The tax attorney will very likely charge 3 times what the general practice lawyer charges, and it will be well worth it if they keep the IRS off of your back, keep you out of jail, and save you additional fees or penalties.

Take a look at your business and find ways to specialize in your field. You can brainstorm and identify a niche within your field, or you can identify a target audience to market to.

An example of a niche market would be if you sold furniture, to specialize in children's bedroom furniture and be known as the company everyone goes to when they want bedroom furniture for their children.

An example of a target audience would be performing some research and identifying a particular culture that needs your products and services. There are many cultures and people groups in the United States (and other countries), and they are very often an underserved group because people

assume that they do not speak English and also don't invest in finding ways to market to them. Can you imagine the impact of having your sales materials (web site included) translated into another language? Would that be a big step? Absolutely! Would that require additional personnel to handle those clients? Possibly - services such as site translation and foreign language customer service can be outsourced to minimize your risk. Could this bring you a windfall and give you an extremely competitive advantage over your competition? Absolutely!

ESTABLISHING YOURSELF AS THE EXPERT (ONLINE)

Aside from having an informative website, there are several things you can do in the Internet Marketing arena to solidify your position as the expert in your field.

1. Start to write. You will see many instances in the ebook that speak of writing as a form of marketing, whether it is blogging, writing articles for your industry, or writing your viral marketing ebook.
2. Continue to Write. Write a book. Yes, this is a huge feat, but it can be done. I have done it a few times myself. If you do not have the endurance or the discipline to complete it yourself, you can always hire a co-author or a ghostwriter. The easiest way to get started is to write your ebook, then convert that to print. Being a published author certainly establishes you as an expert in your field. Our parent company, The Finamark Group, has limited openings to assist individuals in getting their works in print. Send and email to corp@finamark.com if you have a sincere interest in having your book published or converting your ebook into print.
3. Become Active in Online Communities related to your field. Join forums and offer to answer questions for people related to your field. Eventually, you may earn an admin role at the site, which gives you even more clout. Although it is time consuming, I can attest first hand that you can get clients this way.

You can also post comments on blogs using your “signature” (which is your name and contact info including web address). Some will delete the contact info, but many do not, which will result in additional web traffic to your site.

4. Sign up to be an Expert at About.com. About.com (owned by the New York Times) remains one of the most trafficked sites on the web, and is seen in search results for almost every topic. The bonus is that the Guides at About are also paid by about, based on the performance of their category (minimum \$500 per month, and up to a full time income).

Visit <http://beaguide.about.com> and click on “Available Topics” to see if there are any Guide opportunities in your field of expertise.

If there is no category available, you can apply to be a volunteer expert at <http://www.allexperts.com> which is owned by About.com.

Chapter 9- Developing Your Internet Marketing Plan and Setting Goals

Do you have an Internet Marketing plan for you website? If not you should.

Ask yourself these questions:

Is our website an expense or a profit center? (Do we want to change this?)

Do we know exactly what our sites purpose is? (Are we providing information, making sales, or what?)

Do we know what terms people use to search for our product or service? (Do we know where we rank for these terms? Do we want to improve this? Are they finding our competitors instead?)

Do we know how many customers come to our site daily? Weekly? Monthly? Of these prospects, what is the percentage that we are converting to customers?

What is the Return on Investment for our website?

Are our profit margins too high? Too low? How about our prices?

Do we have a customer database? If not, why not? What will we do to change this? How will we start? When will we start?

Is our site pleasing to the eye? How long do people stay on our site? Why?

Does anyone link to our site? Do we link to any other sites? Does our site link to itself?

What is our Page Rank? (What is Page Rank anyway?) Does it matter?

Are we listed in all of the search engines? If not, why not?

Are there any specialty search engines for our industry?

Do our competitors all have blogs?

How do our competitors' sites rank?

Would an affiliate program work for our business? How much would it cost to implement and would it pay off?

I could go through this exercise with you all day long and get lots of information. You would glean much insight regarding the state of your web site and your business in the process. Some of the information to help you answer these questions (such as where your customers are coming from, how long they are staying, and what they are looking at on your site) can be found in your servers' web logs. A good web-hosting provider will offer some sort of analysis package to allow you to get insight into your web site by analyzing the server web logs and providing it in a readable format. There are also third party solutions to offer web site analysis such as Web

Trends Live. This is a critical component and if you do not have access to this information, you should change web-hosting providers immediately to a company that offers this. We recommend [Distal Pulse Hosting](#) (an affiliate of iXWeb Hosting) as they offer a vast array of hosting and domain services including simple and advance web statistics analysis. Be aware that switching hosting providers has some disadvantages such as possible site outages or loss of email as the DNS transfer is taking place, especially if not done methodically and by someone with experience transferring hosting providers.

Once you know more about your stats (site statistics), then you can start to set some goals for your site. These goals can be as simple as adding a form to your site to acquire customer information, changing hosting providers to have a detailed analysis of your web traffic, increasing your Page Rank, starting a blog, showing a profit, or increasing profits.

Here is another pointer – Goals must be written and accountable. If you don't write your goals down for your site, you will most likely not achieve them. Also, your goals need to be specific and have timetables and benchmarks (i.e. increase page rank from 1 to 3 within 3 months, find 5 new link partners this month, etc.).

At this point, you are either overwhelmed with things to do, don't know where to start, or you are ecstatic that you got all of this for free. Either way, we would appreciate your feedback. If you would like to schedule a

telephone consultation with one of our web-marketing specialists, or just give us feedback, please send an email to ROI@WebTrafficTeam.com.

If you would like to schedule a telephone consultation, please send a detailed email to ROI@WebTrafficTeam.com so that we can determine what level of service you require. We offer two levels of site consultation based on our determination of your IM needs. The first is a \$500.00 consultation that includes initial site research, 60 minutes of telephone time to discuss your site and your IM needs, and a brief written summary to help you know the next step for accomplishing your web marketing goals.

The second level is for an advanced site consultation, normally for larger ecommerce sites, which includes one of our consultants performing significant advanced research based on your needs prior to the 60-minute conference call. You will receive a follow up report based on your request, details of our findings during the research stage, and the 60-minute conference call with this level of service. The cost for the advanced consultation is \$1,000.00.

Both levels of service include a 30-day follow up to monitor the implementation of your IM campaign (or campaign components).

We strongly suggest that you and your internal team have met and answered the questions at the beginning of this section prior to the call maximize the efficiency of the time on the call. We provide one 800# for the client conference call and you can have as many participants on your end as you

can accommodate. Consultation fees are paid in advance and the conferences are scheduled via email. You will receive a confirmation email with the date, time, and agenda once it is confirmed.

Chapter 10. Putting it All Together

There is a lot to absorb here, but I want to briefly give you some steps to take to put the various strategies into action.

This assumes that you already have a web site for your business and have established your goals for the business. If you don't have a site, the good news is that you now have the ability to design one from the ground up that won't have to be corrected.

1. Look at where your site is in terms of profitability and determine what your goals are for your website. Your statistics will give you some clues here. If you do not have statistics for your website, then your first step will be to host your site with a company that offers site statistics. I recommend www.DistalPulse.com.

2. Get feedback on your site. Ask employees, friends, and family what they like the most and the least about the site and ask what they would like to see that is not there already or what they want to see go away. You don't have to agree, but it is all valuable feedback.

3. If your site needs to be re-designed, then by all means, do that. Make sure that the site is being designed in a search engine friendly manner. Also, always design your site on paper first with a goal of having as many pages as possible. Separate the site into top level and secondary pages. For example

is you sell software, have a top-level category of laptops, and then secondary pages for each type of laptop that you sell.

4. Know your targeted keywords for your site. This is critical in that you will need to use these in your title tags, and in your sites content.

Here are a few methods that you can use to perform keyword research:

a) Think of your product offering and make a list of what terms you would use to find your product, or words that are related. You can also look at your web statistic software to see what terms people are actually using to find your site.

b) Look at your competitor websites and see what terms that use. This may seem scandalous, but its not. It is simple competition, and it reduces your keyword R&D time. Of course, you need to know how to specifically implement them to make them effective.

c) Yahoo Search. You can get a glimpse of how terms are searched on the Yahoo (formerly Overture) network by using this link and entering the keyword or phrase that you are looking to assess:

<http://inventory.overture.com/d/searchinventory/suggestion/>

Sometimes the link will time out due to having too much load. If that happens, just try it again.

d) Wordtracker. This is a more advanced keyword analysis tool used by many professional SEM consultants. You can find more information out here: [WordTracker](#)

5. Develop your web content. You want your content to be unique and keyword rich, but not overly repetitive of keywords. Pages should contain enough content to cover a screen without having to scroll excessively. Make sure you use anchor tags to create internal (and some external) links as this will help with your search engine rankings.

6. Pay Attention to your Title Tag. This is one of the most basic components of SEM that can grant you positive search engine marketing results.

7. Search Engine & Directory Submissions. Contrary to what some may believe, you do not need to submit your site to the search engines. In fact, if you do, and do it wrong, it can be detrimental. The techniques that we describe here will position your site to be found by the search engines organically (naturally).

I do strongly recommend submitting your site to the directories, which you will have to pay for in many cases. I have broken them down into four categories:

- 1 = critical to any SEM campaign
- 2 = optimal
- 3 = optional but helpful for inbound linking
- 4 = specialty / niche directories

| <u>Rank</u> | <u>Directory</u> | <u>Annual Fee</u> |
|-------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| 1 | Yahoo | \$ 299.00 |
| 1 | bCentral | \$ 49.00 |
| 1 | Business.com | \$ 199.00 |
| 1 | GoGuides | \$ 69.95 |
| 1 | JoeAnt | \$ 39.95 |
| 1 | Gimpsy | \$ 40.00 |
| 1 | Massive Links | \$ 19.95 |
| 2 | Linkopedia | \$ 9.95 |
| 2 | SiteSnoop | \$ 10.00 |
| 2 | BigAll | \$ 14.95 |
| 2 | Azoos | \$ 69.95 |
| 2 | This is our year | \$ 19.95 |
| 2 | WOW Directory | \$ 20.00 |
| 2 | IllumiRate | \$ - |
| 3 | Best of the Web | \$ 99.95 |
| 3 | Uncover the net | \$ 39.00 |
| 3 | Site-Sift | \$ 34.95 |
| 3 | 01 WebDirectory | \$ 49.00 |
| 3 | Tygo | \$ 39.99 |
| 3 | Web Beacon | \$ 39.99 |
| 3 | Seven Seek | \$ 49.95 |
| 3 | Browsell | \$ 35.00 |
| 3 | Skaffe | \$ 39.99 |
| 3 | Rubber Stamped | \$ 25.00 |
| 4 | Specialty / Niche | Varies |

Please note that these are subject to change in terms of availability and / or pricing at any time.

One thing to be aware of is that most of the directories are staffed by live editors who will often reject a site if the description is deemed to be (blatant) advertising. The goal is to prove to the directory that you are a source of information on a topic. Also, they do not have to accept your submission or return your money in many cases as you are often paying for them to review your site, not list. If your site is rejected and you are not doing anything scandalous, you can often plead your case and get it overturned, it just takes time.

8. Using Pay Per Click Search Engines (PPC SE's). All of the search engines employ some kind of paid search feature where you can buy your rank. Incidentally, statistics show that user are more likely to utilize organic search results, so it is equally important that you focus on building a site to be obtain positive organic search results.

Pay Per Click can be an effective way to marketing online, as it does bring immediate search results. There are several things to keep in mind when using pay per click however:

- a) Establish a monthly budget and stick to it.
- b) Test, Test, Test. Try different ads to see which ones bring you the best click through ratios (then you can use the better performing ads in your offline marketing campaigns).
- c) Monitor your income vs. expenses. (CRITICAL)

Know that there are top tier PPC SE's such as:

- Google's AdWords
- MSN's AdCenter
- Yahoo Search Marketing

and there are secondary PPC SE's such as:

- Kanoodle
- Enhance
- 7Search
- MIVA

9. Utilize Viral Marketing Effectively. I don't care what you write, just write something. It can be a one page "how to" that relates to your field. The point is you want to get your information in people's hands, and have them hold on to it and share it with others. You can make it better as you go along, but the key is to just get it out there.

10. Get a Blog. Just Do it! Go to www.wordpress.com right now and sign up. Use it to post original articles or to answer clients questions. Just start writing.

11. The rest of the stuff. You have to determine what you are willing to put into your site, or if it makes sense to utilize certain techniques.

- Podcasting – This can be done simply. Visit www.podcastingprofitsecrets.com for the A to Z guide on how to make it happen.
- Affiliate Programs. This is a great way to grow your business. It is equivalent to hiring hundreds of commissioned sales people. You need to determine if it makes sense for your business, and determine the cost to implement the system (software, tracking, accounting for commissions, training, etc).
- Email Marketing – I firmly believe that all companies should have a component of communicating with their customers and prospects via email. I also firmly believe that with the advent of spam controls, there needs to be more than just email marketing. Whatever you do, make sure you know the "do's and don't" of professional email

marketing. Being labeled a spammer can ruin your reputation in a heartbeat.

- Online Advertising. Unless you have some expertise here, I would save your money, and divert it to Pay Per Click Search. You can spend a lot of money on advertising online without any results.

I hope this helps you put it all together. If you still would rather have professional assistance, the next chapter will assist you in finding the right IM Firm for your companies needs.

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Chapter 11 - How to Find a Quality IM Firm

When looking for an IM firm, you need to do your due diligence by researching the company as best you can. [SEOPros.org](http://www.seopros.org) is a great resource for finding quality IM firms that uphold the SEO Pros “best practices” for the industry. You can search their directory by state, but know that just because a company is not listed, does not mean that they are a bad IM firm. For some odd reason, our listing does not always come up by state search, but we are listed by US Firm found on this link: <http://www.seopros.org/seo/United-States2.asp>.

There are pros and cons to using an IM firm that specializes in a particular market. As long as they are above board it can be a good thing, as they will know the market like no other. I have heard the concern that client information will be shared with competitors. I imagine it could and has happened, but for the most part, it is a benefit as it gives you the strength of other people’s experiences through the firms work experience.

As with any business, you can always check the Better Business Bureau (BBB) for a negative report, although please know that just because a company does not pay to be a part of the BBB that does not make them a bad company or unscrupulous (yes, companies pay to be listed in the BBB Directory). If a company has a negative report, make sure they have resolved it. If you find multiple negative reports on a company, that may be an indication to move on and look for another firm.

Google is usually quite helpful as well when researching companies. Do a search by company name and look for any negative information on the company or its leaders.

Lastly, you can ask them for references to companies that they have done work for.

Conclusion

I hope this was helpful in your efforts to increase your knowledge of Internet Marketing. We are here to see you succeed, so do not hesitate to send us a question via email. As I mentioned previously, we are always happy to help you find a solution to your problem, whether we profit from it or not. In the words of the sales trainer Floyd Wickman, “We get by giving”.

About The Web Traffic Team

The Web Traffic Team is an Internet Marketing (IM) Firm helping companies increase revenue, both online and offline, through the effective use of responsible & ethical Internet Marketing strategies and technology. Our goal is to help companies increase their ROI from their investment in Internet Marketing. We believe that a web site should be a profit center for a business, rather than a cost of doing business.

The Web Traffic Team is also a member of SEO Pros, an Industry Organization dedicated to “best practices” in the field of search engine optimization. We are featured as a Preferred SEO Vendor at MarketingTools.com and our consultants serve as guides and editors at several major search directories.

Disclaimer

And now a word from our legal experts. This book is not to be misconstrued as legal or financial advice. No guarantees have been made as to how successful you or your web site will be by implementing any of these techniques or strategies. Additionally, we make no guarantees of increased traffic or revenues based on implementing these strategies, as The Web Traffic Team cannot monitor the effectiveness of how these techniques are implemented. By accepting this publication, you agree to indemnify and hold harmless, Anthony Kirlew and The Web Traffic Team in the event of any losses suffered due to attempting to perform Internet Marketing services based on the information provided. This information is for use by those skilled in the respective fields and qualified to implement such measures. The field of Internet Marketing is a continually changing one. All techniques and strategies presented were valid at the time of writing this publication and may not still apply currently. You can check for newer versions of this publication at www.webtrafficteam.com/ebook

Version 1.1

December 27, 2006