

Shoe Budget

INTERNET

MARKETING

**How To Use The Internet
To Advertise, Promote,
And Market Your Business
With Little Or No Money**



ShoeBudget Internet Marketing

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Promote, And Market Your Business
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Brought to you by Cathy Cresser

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Introduction

You have a dream and that dream is to make your business as successful as it can be. Who wouldn't want to see their business rise to the top and bring in large amounts of sales while padding your pockets with cash?

You are no different than any other online marketer or aspiring marketer out there. We came up with our business ideas, worked hard at planning it out and spend a great deal of time figuring out how to make it work. So, naturally, we want to see that business dream turn into a reality.

Of course, when starting out, most marketers tend to go gung-ho and try every possible advertising and promoting idea they come across; without regard to their costs. They have the wrong idea and believe that in order to achieve their dreams they have to spend the most money possible on their marketing efforts.

There's certainly nothing wrong with being aggressive in your business promoting efforts, but you still have to keep an eye on the price tag factor. Let's face it not too many marketers can start a business from scratch and be able to afford costly advertising campaigns. Most business budgets of someone just starting out are extremely tight.

With that said, what do you think happens to those who spend their modest business budgets on marketing campaigns right off the bat? Well, some might get lucky and hit it big right away. Unfortunately, that scenario is a rare occasion.

A more common situation that's seen is the marketer who ends up losing their advertising money and their business either folds or they get just enough sales to squeak by.

When this happens the ultimate business dream you have set for yourself will become more of a huge disappointment than a dream realized. Your confidence level goes down and you no longer have the passion you need to drive it forward. Everything you put into your business so far is put to waste. The dream is no more.

Before you give up on your dream; you should know there is hope! You can achieve your dream, but you need to start with some basics. The basic advertising techniques laid out in this book will show you how you can promote your business with little to no money. The key is not in how much money you spend on your marketing. It's in *how you implement* each technique you use. By using the more inexpensive (or free) ideas, you save money on your budget and still gain the success you crave. It just takes a little hard work and sweat to make it happen.

The Internet helps you make the most of your advertising campaigns, so you should consider using it to its fullest. There are nooks and crannies within it you may never have heard before or, if you have, you might not have considered using them when planning out your promotion strategies. Sit back and get ready for the ride you're about to embark upon.

Sometimes the Simple Things Bring the Most Pleasure

When you think about it, the best gifts one could receive usually come in the smallest or simplest packages. Online marketing is no different. People can spend thousands upon thousands of dollars to advertise their business and not make much more than the smallest entrepreneur who used their head instead of their wallet to advertise.

Sure, some have made a killing by spending tons of money getting their company advertised, but in actuality, others have seen the same results by spending little money. Which would you prefer?

There are many ways to kick start your marketing campaign online that are inexpensive or won't cost you a penny. Some of those power boosting techniques include:

- Blogs
- Forums
- Social Networking
- Social Bookmarking
- Article Directories

- Press Releases
- And More...

We'll talk about each one as this book goes along and you can see how much pull they can have in the advertising game. We'll also explore how you can utilize them for your business marketing efforts to achieve maximum results. So, let's get started...

Connecting With Others

Everyone you know has connections with other people in some way. It could be that they know people who have similar businesses as yours or maybe they know others that are experts in one particular area of business. Or it could be as simple as knowing others who share interests like your own.

A person connecting with other people is the best way to pass along your business name. Word of mouth campaigns became a hot marketing method for advertising agencies and continue to be used today. Why? Because there is nothing more powerful than when one person passes on information to another and that person passes it on to someone else. The process repeats itself over and over again.

It's a simple formula of strength in numbers. It's this concept you want to utilize to market your business. Without it, you may be fighting a losing battle that you have no chance of ever winning. The Internet offers many opportunities to blast your business out to the masses, so make sure you're on board with it. With that said, let's

start with one people connecting medium that most marketing gurus use for their high ranking businesses - *blogging*.

Connecting with Others through Blogging

Blogging was once seen as a chronicle of a person's daily life. One would share their ups and downs on whatever their daily occurrences happened to be. Some shared stories, while others shared pictures of family or events they attended. People saw it to be a medium that allowed them to keep in contact with people they already knew.

Pretty soon it became apparent that blogging held more possibilities than just keeping in contact with friends and family. The Internet enabled us to 'meet' new people over cyberspace and blogging is one way that could be accomplished.

Today, almost everyone you know has a blog or is thinking about getting one set up. Each blog has a following of readers; whether it's a handful or enough to fill a couple of football stadiums. When a blog is interesting enough, people will want to keep coming back for more. There's something in our minds that just craves information. If you can fulfill those cravings with what you have to say you will have your readers entranced with your words.

Why are blogs so popular? What's different between them and plain articles?

Articles hand out information in a structured format, while blogs are usually written in conversational style. People are drawn to both, but

they relate better to blogs since the readers feel like they're actually being talked to.

The blog community is so influential because people who like what you have posted for the day scramble to share it with their friends. Other blogs will link to your posts and have their readers check it out or they will provide a link on their site listing your blog as a recommended place to check out. After awhile, you'll find your blog with more readers than you ever imagined. People connecting with other people through blogs are at work here.

Every business that sets up shop online should have a blog to go with their website. But, it's not enough to just have a business blog if you're looking to increase exposure for your company. Your business blog will need to appeal to the people who have an interest in the product or service your business site offers.

The more it appeals to them, the more credibility you gain and the more trust they'll have in you. When you can gain that trust from your prospects they won't be so apprehensive about parting with their money. You will be viewed more as a person and not some faceless robot lurking on the Internet.

So, how can you make your blog more appealing to these people?
Read on to find out.

Tips for a More Appealing Business Blog

Blogging is a great way to market your website, but it's not enough to simply get visitors there. You need to keep them coming back to your blog time and time again before they can get interested in the products or services you're offering. They're not going to come back if you don't use your blog to establish a relationship with them.

Here are some ways to accomplish this:

Stick with Your Business Topic

The first thing that will make your blog more appealing to your readers is to provide them with a topic that matches that of your business. People are going to stumble across your blog because they're looking for specific information.

It's hard to look like a professional if you sell nutritional products and your blog is about video games. You look more like a spammer and people probably won't return to your site or your blog. There go some great possible sales.

That doesn't mean you have to blog about nutritional products though. Just pick a topic that somehow relates to nutrition and tie it in to the site's topic. The possibilities are numerous without having to stick to one single specific subject only.

Make it Unique

Since there are tons of blogs all over the Internet, which cover pretty

much every topic you can imagine; you need to come up with a unique angle to get yours to stand out. This can be done by providing new insights that others aren't using.

Do a thorough search of other blogs and see what you can find on the topic you want to blog about. See what these other bloggers are doing to stand out. Come up with something new that you can blog about that would appeal to your readers.

Keep it Up

The more popular blogs are the ones that people post to regularly. If you keep posting people will come back to see what you have to say. Your readership then expands because they want others to see the goldmine they have found.

The blogs that don't get enough attention are likely to be seen as dead and not worth someone's time to go back to. So, it's important to post to your blog as regularly as possible. A couple times a week is a good rule of thumb.

If you're going to be gone for awhile for whatever reason, don't be afraid to let your readers know in a post. People are okay with that if you just let them know. If you don't; they may think you've abandoned the blog and won't bother coming back. You can also pre-schedule posts that will automatically post while you're gone and your readers may never even know you left.

Let Your Personality Show

One thing to remember is that this may be your business blog, but the whole point to it is to gain some rapport with your readers. That won't happen if you only post how to articles or provide them only with technical information.

You don't want to appear as an uncaring and cold person. Let your personality show with some of your posts. Show your visitors that you're a real person and not a robot. Give them the how to type stuff, but also give them some individuality and post about things that happen in your life.

If you can tie those life events into your business site's subject matter - great. If not, that's okay too. Just make sure it's interesting enough to make them want to continue coming back. Rapport is important if you want your potential customers to trust you.

Link to Other Blogs

Take a look at some other blogs on the Internet. You'll see somewhere on your blog (and if not you can easily create one) a section called "blogroll." This is a list of other blogs that the author recommends to their readers. Believe it or not, people will actually check out some of those other blogs to see what other information they can get.

Find other blogs that write about similar topics as you and contact them to see if they want their blog listed on your site. Most will reciprocate and list yours on their site. The more places you can get

your blog linked to, the better; especially if the theme is similar to yours.

Participate in Other Blog Conversations

Another way to get your blog noticed is to be a reader of other blogs yourself. Participate in some of the conversations by commenting on their current posts. Your blog can be linked with your user name, so someone else reading those comments just may want to see what you have going on at your blog.

Make sure to provide comments that are appropriate to the conversation. Spammers will post some of the most ridiculous things in the comments and are generally frowned upon by the author. Those comments are usually deleted. If yours isn't appropriate to the conversation, your words could be deleted to.

Use Some of Your Best Keywords in the Titles of Your Posts

Pick a keyword for your blog and use it as some of your post titles. This will increase your chances of getting your blog indexed by the search engines, which will drive more readers to your blog. Make sure the keyword matches what the post is actually about.

You can put your keyword in the post itself, but don't go overboard. Too many keywords placed within the post will make it seem too unnatural and will turn your readers off quickly; not to mention the search engines are not real fond of keyword stuffing either.

Again, this is a rapport building medium for your business, so don't lead your readers to believe that you care about them and then give them hard to read posts or use each entry as a sales pitch. Blogs are not for telling your visitors to buy from you. It's to gain some trust, so they can feel confident about giving you their money.

Making your blog an inviting and appealing place for your readers to visit will help them connect with you. Be personable and open-minded. Your blog visitors may just be your future customers, so make them feel comfortable every time they stop by your blog. Happy customers are ones that are more willing to share your business name with others. Keep that in mind when thinking about your marketing plan.

Connecting through Message Boards/Forums

Have you ever noticed that sometimes certain groups of people will gather together at your local coffee shop or deli to shoot the breeze with each other? During slow times, farmers sometimes meet up at a coffee shop to discuss crop prices or problems they may have faced during harvest. Moms are another group that tends to gather together for some chit-chat with or without their little ones.

It's not an official meeting these groups are having, but just a time for like-minded people to get together to chew the fat. People who are alike sometimes will naturally gather together to feel like a part of some kind of group and it's not just in the real world that this happens.

That's where message boards and forums come into play. People who share some type of interest will join forums that relate to their interests, so they can meet and mingle with others who are just like them.

It's like meeting at the local coffee shop; only it's done online and you're not meeting together at the same time. You post messages and people will answer them as they drop by the forum site later on. Pretty soon, you have a conversation going on a particular topic.

Forums are great places to learn new things, share your experiences or simply meet new people. They can also be great places to market your business. The members of the forum you join share something with you.

You're in some way connected with each other. It could be an interest or maybe you're in the same kind of business. This connection allows you to share your business with the other members who are likely to be interested in what you're selling.

Most forums and message boards have a signature line that will show up with every post you make. In this signature line you can put almost anything; including your website link. Check with the site's rules as not all of them do allow this type of advertising.

For people who lurk in the forum and don't join in on the conversations, this is a great way to get them on board. They can see your website link and follow through to see what you're offering and if they're in need of it. They don't have to be a member or even active participants on the forums to become one of your customers.

How to Make Your Forum Experience Work for You

Since forums are a great way to market your business by connecting with others; you should use it to its fullest advantage. You can do this by avoiding some of the more common mistakes that others make when trying to utilize this technique. Here are some of those mistakes others have made and what you should do instead:

Mistake – Upon joining a forum, the business owner jumps right in and starts throwing their sales pitch anywhere and everywhere they can.

Correct Way - When you join a forum, always introduce yourself and keep it on a strictly personal level for awhile. You want to build some relationships first before you try to sell any of your products or services.

The other forum members tend to ignore the ones that only seem to care about selling their stuff. They want to chat with other people and get feedback on their problems or ideas before they ever think about

checking out your website. Build your relationships first and folks will be more receptive to what you have to offer.

Mistake – Not following forum rules.

Correct Way – To keep your membership with that forum; you need to follow their rules. If you do, you have a higher chance of being viewed as a professional and someone other members can trust when they do decide to see what you have to offer.

Mistake – Only posting messages about yourself and not replying to anyone else's posts.

Correct Way – Forums and message boards are a give and take situation. There's nothing wrong with posting your own messages, but you need to provide feedback on other people's posts as well. Show that you care about someone other than yourself.

Mistake – Giving a simple link in your signature line. For example:
xyz.com

Correct Way – While you're busy building rapport with the other members your signature line can be doing the marketing work for you. But, it needs to grab their attention, in order for that to happen. A simple link is not likely to do that.

It's best to give a short attention grabbing statement and provide a hyperlink for a user to click on to check out your site. For example: [Need a power boost to get through your day? Check this out!](#) Then link your website URL into that statement.

Mistake – Being arrogant or pushing your ideas onto others.

Correct Way – Keep in mind that the other forum members would be your target audience, so you need their input as much as possible. If you alienate them by coming across as arrogant or trying to force your beliefs onto them they won't be too interested in buying from you. Most won't bother sharing more thoughts with you in the future either.

You need their input for any future products you may want to offer or changes you may want to make in your business. Forums give you the best opportunity to get inside your potential customers' minds and get to know them. If you lose this opportunity you lose potential sales.

Message boards and forums allow you to connect with others who have the same interests as you. By building rapport with them, you build credibility and show professionalism as well. When they decide they're ready to buy a product that you happen to sell, who do you think they'll check out first?

Connect With Others through Social Media Sites

Forget any preconceived notions you may have about social networking sites. They have been and are still being considered one of the best, most inexpensive ways to market any business. Why? Because of the remarkable social community connections they create.

In the past, certain social media sites have been a playground of sorts for teenagers and young adults. They would meet each other and share experiences in music, arts, film and any other interests they had.

Over the years, though, this social connection expanded in many ways. There are more of these sites as well as other social community mediums like social bookmarking sites. Each one targets certain groups of people.

Some sites have numerous communities where you can join a group of people that are just like you or you can start your own group and have people become your 'friends'. The members of your group keep in touch with each other and share experiences as well as ideas.

Business owners use these sites to connect with other business owners or to connect with their target audience. Both are good ways to market. Connecting with other business owners enables you to get

inside tips on things or fellow business owners might even share some of their prospects with you.

Connecting with your target audience helps you to gain insights into what they like, dislike or what problems they have and the solutions they need. You can also gain credibility and rapport with them as they get to know you as a person.

Some of the more popular social networking sites include:

- Twitter
- Facebook
- MySpace
- Flickr

There are many more, but this gives you an idea of which ones the majority of people are using these days. To determine which one you should use, check each site out and see which one has what your business will need.

Of course, you can use more than one, but it's probably best to start off with just one. At least until you get a good following that is.

How to Use Social Networking for Marketing Purposes

We know these sites are great for connecting with other people to gain insights and credibility with your target audience. Unfortunately, a lot of marketers don't see the whole picture when it comes to utilizing them to their full advantage.

It's one thing to join some groups and gain rapport. When comes to marketing there's a little more to it than just that. The trick is getting the number of people in your group to grow. You want more people to find the groups you're currently in or you need to find more groups to join. These two things will give you more potential customers and remember – *These individuals know more people to send to your site as well.*

So, the question is how to find the more profitable groups on these networking sites. Are there any tricks you could use to find these crowds or to attract more people? Well, actually there is. What's great is that there are no spectacular or magical tricks needed to do it.

Profile Page

First, you should start with your profile. The profile is what tells others who you are and what you're all about. People look for groups to join by using a search feature to find them. Yes, a *search feature*. Think about that.

When marketing your business on the web, one of the first things you do is to provide your site's content with specific chosen keywords. Those keywords are what attracts the search engines to your site, right?

On the social networking sites, your profile is where you should provide some of your best keywords. Each site is different when it comes to how to set up a profile and what questions they ask you to answer. Each one will have a section containing your likes, dislikes, interests and other things along those lines.

Those are usually the best places to position your keywords. People are searching for others who have the same likes or interests as they themselves have. For example, if you're in the business of selling nutritional products you can use many keywords that relate to that. Words like nutrition, exercise, body building, etc. all get the job done. You'll be presented with tons of groups that you can then join. Of course, you don't want to join them all at once. Pick the ones you think you have the most chances with and stick with those for awhile. Keep in mind; you need to actually spend some time getting to know the group and how they work. This will take a bit of time and if you join a bunch of groups at once you won't have that essential time.

Your Web Space

Depending on how the particular site you choose works you may have a whole web page as your profile or you may just have a smaller

separate section for your profile. Your web space is where people will really get to know you.

If the community you join has the main purpose of selling a specific type of product then you can focus your web space on just your products. However, this doesn't help much for your target audience. They're looking for friends and confidants - not salespeople.

So, when you join a community to get friendly with your target market, you should focus more on yourself and less on your business. You're trying for rapport, credibility and trust first. Selling your stuff becomes secondary in this marketing technique.

Social media goes beyond just these networking sites. Here's another extremely powerful website traffic tool to use:

Social Bookmarking Websites

This technique can be a fierce marketing tool for your website when implemented correctly. In some cases, people have seen *thousands* of hits for their website or blog in a matter of a couple of hours after implementing the use of social bookmarking websites.

Let's explore what it is and how it's successful in the marketing game.

What is Social Bookmarking?

You should be familiar with your Internet browser's bookmarking feature. It was designed to give you a way of saving a website page to your browser so that you can find that site again. The social bookmarking websites take that feature and bring it to a whole different level.

These types of sites allow you to save a website or page of interest to you and give you the opportunity to share that piece of gold with others. Other people who are searching for the same interests will see this site as a recommended place to check out, so they run on over to see what it's about.

There are several social bookmarking sites available and each one specializes in their own particular thing. Some of the more popular social bookmarking sites include:

- [Digg™](#)
- [StumbleUpon™](#)
- [Reddit™](#)
- [Del.icio.us™](#)
- [Propeller™](#)

Digg™ – This site is a community of people who share articles seen on other sites and place them here to be voted on by other members.

People will go to the site where the article is to check it out and then they'll vote on whether they thought it was a good article or not. People can 'Digg' blog posts as well, but articles are what's seen here the most. Some articles will get placed on the main page where they can get maximum exposure, thus increasing the site owners' traffic numbers.

StumbleUpon™ – This is a lot like Digg™ in the sense that people will bookmark blog posts or website pages they have come across and others will check it out to see what they think of it. They can vote either thumbs up or thumbs down by using the special toolbar that can be downloaded when they register at StumbleUpon™.

With this site, the higher ranked posts will come up in the searches of people looking for that particular topic - hence the StumbleUpon name. They would literally stumble upon your site simply by looking for specific interests that relate to what your website is about.

Reddit™ – This site works much the same way as Digg™ and StumbleUpon™. People submit the articles they see as worthwhile sharing and other people will vote on whether or not it's good. The ones that get the most votes will end up on the main page.

In order to vote on the article, a user would have to go to the original website to read it, which could be your website or blog. It's pretty easy to see hundreds of hits to your site within the hour if one of your articles was submitted.

Del.icio.us™ – This social bookmarking site was developed to work like your browser’s bookmarking feature. People would be able to save certain articles, web pages or even photos using this website’s server instead of a user cluttering up their own computer.

People can bookmark an article you have on your site and tag it with specific keywords related to the subject of that article. Someone else searching for information related to the tag words would then have your article come up as one of their results.

Propeller™ - This is another website like Digg™ where people can submit their chosen stories to be voted on. The difference between Digg™ and Propeller is that Digg™ tends to draw a more techie type of crowd; whereas Propeller™ draws the non-techie types.

Getting higher rated votes would be a little easier on this site if your site is not technical nature.

Those who simply like a good story or article tend to navigate here. If one of your website’s articles or blog posts gets submitted here, you could receive a ton of traffic very quickly.

There are a ton more of these social bookmarking sites to check out, but this gives you an idea of ones you could test out to see what types of articles tend to get submitted to which sites.

Now that you know what social bookmarking is about you can go to the next step which is how to get your articles or blog posts submitted to these sites.

Get Your Content Submitted to Social Bookmarking Sites

Every site could receive instant high traffic numbers by using the popular social bookmarking sites. The problem most business owners face is how to get their content to be submitted to these sites in the first place.

Some marketers have started out by self-submitting their own stuff. This is really not recommended, but it could be done. You will want to research the sites first, before you even try it. Some sites may have rules against it, others frown upon it and yet there are some that don't really care as long as it's good content.

If you're using a bookmarking site like Del.icio.us, where there's no voting or ranking involved then it doesn't matter too much provided you're tagging good content that others would want to read on a subject. Check the site out before trying to get your pages submitted.

For the ones that other people have to submit to you need to simply have good, quality content on your site. The information you provide will need to appeal to your readers. To produce quality content that

might find its way on one of these sites you will need to do the following:

Research

You have to find out what kinds of articles or posts are being submitted on each site. Check each site out and see what articles are doing well. Do you see a pattern of a particular type of article submitted a lot? If you do, then you can plan to write that type of article.

Next, you will need to research other articles written on the topic you have decided to write about. Come up with an article that gives a different, more unique view of that topic. For example, if you found one site has a lot of how-to articles and you're site is about health, why not put together an article which talks about how to eat healthier.

Decide What to Write About

There may be a lot of material already written on a particular subject such as health. If that's the case with your topic, you'll need to come up with a new angle that not too many people have touched on. For example, using the eating healthier topic, maybe a how-to article on eating healthier at the fair might be a better choice.

As long as it's interesting, unique and would appeal to your target audience; it would probably work for you. People who submit to these sites look for articles that give a different view of a certain subject.

Make Sure the Article is Well Written and Error Free

This is important. You want your content to be taken seriously on these sites, so good quality material with as few spelling mistakes as possible. Too many mistakes make your content look unprofessional and unappealing. If you're writing is full of errors, chances are good it probably won't even be read all the way through, let alone submitted.

Also check your facts. Don't assume something is right. Check it first, because someone may know you're wrong about one of your facts and that could affect your ranking, which could affect those who come to your site to check it out.

Give Your Visitors a Way to Submit Your Content

Not everyone who visits your site or blog will know how to submit your articles to these social sites, so you need to give them a way to do it. Each bookmarking site has a button that you can place on your site.

You can just give them a link to the site itself, but it's much easier if a user has a button to do it. They can quickly submit it or vote on it easily without having to go through tons of steps to do it. Who has time for that?

Social media sites continue to bring website owners instant traffic all the time. It's time for you to join in the fun and watch your traffic numbers rise.

The next thing to keep in mind, though, is your website.

Connecting with Others through Backlinks

Backlinks are what happens when another website has a link to your site on it. You can also trade links with website owners. This happens when you place a link to their website on your site and vice versa.

Backlinks and reciprocal links can help drive their traffic to your site, but there are sometimes when it does more harm than good.

Here are some things to avoid:

- **Don't link to websites that are not of your niche:** If your business niche is about nutrition, then you shouldn't be back linking to a site that's about video games. Make sure the website you are linking to is in some way related to the topic of your business site. If you don't, people won't take you seriously and the search engines just may punish you in the rankings for it.
- **Don't link to just anyone:** As your business grows on the Internet, you may get many websites asking to link to you. While you would think that this would be great, it isn't always. Some websites may not have the best track record with the search engines when it comes to backlinks. It's ok to be choosy about who you link to.
- **Avoid buying any backlinks when starting out:** If you've just started your online business then you will want to stay away from buying backlinks. You won't know what you're getting into. Wait until you are in business for awhile and learn the ins and

outs of backlinks before you decide to try buying backlinks. Honestly, if you do things correctly, there really is no need to purchase this type of promotion.

The Visitors Have Come! How Do I Get Them to Stay?

You have put a lot of work into getting visitors to come to your website, so the next question is, of course, how do you get them to stay so that they'll see what else you have to offer? Keep in mind, that out of a hundred or so visitors that come running to your site, there will be only a portion of them that will be within your target audience.

Make sure your website is appealing to your target audience. They are the ones that are likely to stay, so it must appeal to them. Others will stay if you provide good quality articles or blog posts, so make sure you're providing good content as well.

Even though they may not be interested in what you're selling they're still important, because they know other people who just may need what you have. So, writing one great article is not going to get them stay. Make sure all of your content has some appeal.

Let's talk about another inexpensive way to market your business next.

Go Out of Your Way to Grab Their Attention!

Get people's attention. Get your name remembered and get your voice heard. These are some of, if not, the most effective ways to get some publicity for your business; or better yet for you. If they can think of you and remember your business, you've got the attention you need.

What am I talking about? Do you remember Evel Knievel? He was the famous daredevil performer who grabbed attention from audiences everywhere by doing dangerous stunts on his motorcycle. Can you guess what this guy marketed to achieve the fame he did? If you guess, himself you're absolutely correct!

People came from all over to see him do some kind of motorcycle jump that would risk his life. His adventures may have left him with some nasty injuries, but his legacy lives on even today - years after his last jump.

Of course, no one is encouraging you to risk your life doing some dangerous acts. I used this example to get a point across. The simple notion of going out of your way or stepping out of the box to get attention for your business can work wonders.

How can someone like you do something like this? Take a look at these ideas...

Grab Attention Using Current Events or News

People crave any kind of information they can get on whatever's happening in our world today. News shows get a lot of viewers for certain stories if they can provide them with the best stories of the day.

All they have to do is announce there will be a story about love, tragedy or some kind of suffering and people will tune in to watch the newscast just to see that story. Some of biggest news stations can televise an event that people want to know about, for hours and people will watch to catch new updates on that story. (Example: The September 11th terrorist attacks)

How can something like this help your business? Simple - use the same techniques and watch the people come to your site. This is the most effective for blogs. Take a look at what's happening nationwide or even worldwide and see if you can write a post around that.

Why would you want to do this, you might be asking? The mere fact that people will be searching for anything that has to do with that event, that's why. When they do a search and your blog post comes up, naturally they'll want to read it to see what you have to say concerning that event.

For example, let's say that the Olympics are going on at the time. You can use that to grab some attention and get people to your blog. You'll need:

- *An attention grabbing headline and*
- *A well-written post relating to the topic*

Headline

The headline you choose for your post, of course, needs to demand attention right from the start. Simply getting people to find you isn't necessarily going to get them to read what you have to say. You want them to enter your site and read the post. If they read it, you have a higher chance of them staying to check out other things there as well.

Using your current event, come up with the most appealing headline that you can think of. Using the Olympics for example, you could say something like this:

*"Olympics: What You **Don't** Know!"*

That will grab their attention and make them want to see what it is they don't know about the Olympics.

Well Written, Attention Grabbing Posts

Now that you've demanded attention with your headline, you will need to come up with a post that's just as appealing. Come up with

something that you can tie into your business if possible. Do your own research on the current event you're using.

Let's say, you're selling nutritional products and your blog covers various topics of nutrition. You do your research and see that one of the famous Olympic athletes uses nutritional supplements on a daily basis, but for whatever reason, he was told not to take them during the Olympic competition.

That example seems farfetched, but you get the idea. Take the tidbit that relates to your blog topic and write an attention grabbing post using the information. Readers will flock to your blog to read about it. Who knows, they may even Digg or Stumble it.

In some cases, some Internet marketers have used this technique, but wrote their post in a little different way. They use the event in the post, but they tie it into something completely unrelated.

This is often seen when using famous celebrities or musicians. They'll use those names in their headlines, but the post will go on to say something about seeing a look-alike of that person somewhere. The point is to grab the attention of potential readers and get them to find your blog. Once they stumble upon your blog, they can see what else you have to offer that they may be willing to buy.

Grab Attention Using the Word “Free”

The word *Free* is the most powerful word used in marketing today. Everyone likes to get something free. It doesn't always matter what they get as long as it's *Free*. This could come in the way of a:

- Free Report
- Free Guide
- Free Checklist
- Free Calendar of Events
- Free Chapter of one of your books
- Free eBook
- Free Subscription to your newsletter or e-zine
- Free Business Form to use for their taxes
- Free manual to a product
- Free software program
- Free eCourse
- Free Membership

Scream the word free and they'll come running. Offer something free like a report and be sure to include your website link in it somewhere, so they have another place to go to get more information on that topic.

Your free item can be offered on your website, blog or both. You can talk to some fellow business owners that have a business related to yours and see if they would include your freebie item in their newsletters or see if they'll post them on their own blogs.

With your site's link included everyone who reads it will know where the item came from. If it's good, they'll check out your site to see what you're all about. Remember, free is a word that entrances people and grabs their attention instantly.

Grab Their Attention with Email Marketing

Are you currently using this? Are you planning to use it in your marketing plan? If not, you should be. This is a great marketing tool that no Internet marketer should be without. What's so great about it? Well, let's take a look.

Think back to one of your web surfing sessions. You find a website and see some things that you find interesting. You leave and go about surfing other places. Now, if you don't bookmark, save or write down any of those websites, do you think you would remember how to get back to any of them?

More than likely – no, you won't. You probably saw at least 20 different sites during your surfing session. You (if you're like me anyway) will be lucky to remember one of them. Of course, this doesn't mean much to you if you're the one surfing.

But, imagine that you're one of those website owners. What do you think it would mean to you then? You would be losing a lot of potential customers wouldn't you? People don't remember it's just a natural part of being human.

But wait! That's not all. Extensive researching has been done on this and more than one study found:

***"It takes an average of 7 visits
before someone will be willing to buy."***

Think about that for a minute. A customer would have to visit your site at least 7 times before they actually pull out their wallets to buy something from you. Okay. They visit your site once and that's great! But...how do they come back to you if they don't remember that your site exists or how they got there in the first place?

The simple solution is to use email marketing. Email marketing is when a website visitor signs up for something and gives their permission to receive email messages from you. You can then send them newsletters, updates or simple messages to let them know what's going on your business.

This puts your name and business in their mind on an ongoing basis. They can now be reminded that you have a business, what your business offers and lots more. Your messages would have a link back to your website, so they can now go visit again and again.

If it's so great, why doesn't everyone use it?

Unfortunately, not everyone uses this extremely effective marketing tool. The main reason most don't implement email marketing into their business plan is because they mistakenly believe they would be spamming their customers. This leads to them thinking they will push their customers away or cause them to simply delete their email messages without reading them.

Another reason many business owners don't use email marketing is because they seem to think it would take a lot of time and effort to get an email marketing campaign going. While both are understandable concerns; it's easy to work your way around them to make this tool work for you. Here is how it can be done:

Let's address the time and effort problem first.

Autoresponders

Gone are the days of having to send emails to potential customers one by one. Eeeks! That was a lot of work if you actually tried doing it at all. Autoresponders were developed a few years ago to take the hard work out of email marketing.

An autoresponder is a program you can input information into and it will do all the leg work for you. It will help you develop a list of email addresses to send your messages to and it will send whatever you want to those who have opted-in to your list.

The only work involved on your part is in the development of your email messages, newsletters or whatever you decide to send. That's it. The program sends them for you and helps you track how those messages are performing.

There are several autoresponder programs out there to choose from. It's a simple matter of finding one that works for you. It will cost a small bit of your investment, but believe me; it will be well worth it in the end.

Now, let's address the spamming problem.

Getting Them to Sign Up for Your Email Lists

Before you can start an email campaign, you'll need people to sign up to receive messages from you. Most autoresponder programs will have step-by-step instructions that will walk you through setting up your list. Once you've finished this, you'll then receive a bit of code that you will need to place on your website.

Once the code has been placed, a sign up box will show up on your webpage. Your readers can input their name, email, etc. and click submit. This will add them to your list. This tells you they want the information. But, that's not all.

If your email marketing software complies with anti-spam rules, they will have created what is called a double opt-in choice. When you choose this during the setup, it will send an email message to the person who signs up on your website an email asking them to confirm that they in fact do want to receive information from you.

So, how do you get people to actually sign up for your list? Here are some tips:

Make sure the sign-up is easily seen on your site – This should be placed right at the top of your main page and also every page of your site. People who visit your site will see whatever you have at the top first, so be sure the sign up box can be seen right away. If they don't see it quickly, the chances of them opting in will be lower.

Make your sign up box stand out – Use some attention grabbing headlines and text to help it get noticed. Sell them on the benefits they would get by signing up for your messages. You can even place an attention grabbing graphic or image next to it, to help them scan their eyes over to it.

Devote an entire web page to it – Some people will use a whole web page, also known as an opt-in page, to focus on getting people to sign up for whatever they want to send out. They usually utilize copywriting techniques to grab their visitor’s attention and show them what benefits they will receive by signing up. This page can easily be accessed from other areas of your website and it could be picked up by the search engines and forum signatures.

Make it simple to sign up - The easiest sign up lists simply have a user type their name and email address and click a button. If it’s a double opt-in list like we discussed earlier, they will receive an email where they can confirm their subscription to your list by clicking on a link. That’s it. Don’t try to add more steps, because no one wants to jump through hoops. Make it quick and easy to access your information.

Offer something as a little gift for signing up – The people who find success with their sign up program are usually the ones that offer a freebie of some sort. A free report, guide, checklist or whatever you can think of that your audience would appreciate some great ways to entice someone to type in their names and addresses.

Once you get your visitors to subscribe to your list, the next hurdle will be in getting your messages past the spam filters. One thing you could do is simply ask your subscribers to set their filters so that your messages will go through, but that is one extra step that many won’t take. Here are some other suggestions.

How to Get Your E-mail Messages Opened

Sadly, the increase in spammers over the years has made things difficult for the rest of us honest online business owners. We do have to work a little harder to get noticed when our potential customers are well aware of the spammer population and aren't willing to welcome everyone with open arms into their inbox. That shouldn't deter you though. There are actions you can use to get past their spam filters and get them to read your messages, all honestly. Here are a few of them.

Subject Line – This will be the first thing your readers look at when seeing your message in their inbox. What you put here will be extremely important. A poorly written subject line will turn them off instantly and they'll delete the message before they ever read it.

The thing to remember with email marketing is that the receiver will be more interested in personal type messages – similar in nature to the ones they get from their family or friends. These are the ones that get opened more often than not.

Usually, the emails they get from their friends will appeal to them because they exude a personal feel. You'll see things like *Hello, What's up? or Check this out!*, and so on. Yours should reflect this more personal touch as well.

Of course, they're going to know you're not one of their friends or family members, but they'll see that you're speaking *to them* with your subject line, just as if you did know them personally. What you write will depend on what you're sending, but whatever it is; your subject line should appeal to them as a person.

Here's an example subject: If there's a holiday coming up you can start off by saying something like "Happy Holidays!" or "Merry Christmas!" or whatever holiday is coming up.

You can also just appeal to their intellect. People are naturally curious and will open an email that promises them something of interest. Here's another example: "Free Report! Check it Out!" There's that free word again.

The From Line – There has been some debate over what should appear in the receiver's inbox in the from line. Some think it should be from the company name while others feel it should be your name. When it all comes down to it – what you put in this section really should depend on what you're sending.

Newsletters and e-zines seem to do best with a company name. People signed up for your newsletter or e-zine because they wanted to see what information you have to offer them. They expect to see the newsletter come to them from a professional company.

On the other hand, the regular messages you send them would be of a more personal nature. These messages would announce discounts, sales or updates on new products that may be coming out. In this case, it's probably best to send it from you personally. They would be more receptive if it came from a person than a company or from what seems like an automatic robot.

Now, if you intend to send your newsletters, e-zines and messages through the same email address, then it might be better just to stick with the your name as the sender. The receiver would be used to seeing messages from you, so it won't matter much if the newsletter comes from a person and not a company.

Some email programs, though, will always show an email address in the from line instead of a person's name. In that case, there's not much you can do, but use an email address that sounds more professional or personal, depending on your needs.

Having an email that says something like killthemall@xxx.com probably won't get an email opened by too many people, unless of course they know the one sending the email personally. It's also a good idea to avoid using addresses from free email providers such as Hotmail or Yahoo™, because they don't convey professionalism and could be seen as a spam address.

When and How Often to Send – A lot of marketers tend to abuse their email marketing efforts, by sending their messages way too often or at the wrong times. Believe it or not, your timing makes a huge difference in whether or not your messages will get opened.

Obviously, if the receiver signs up for daily tips then they'll expect daily emails. Or if they sign up for weekly or monthly newsletters, then they'll expect weekly or monthly emails. So, you'll want to be sure that you stick to whatever it is they signed up for.

When you don't specify how often the emails will be sent out is when you need to watch out. Too many will overwhelm your receivers and they'll unsubscribe to your list quickly. Daily email messages tend to be too much since they probably didn't have time to read through the previous day's messages by the time you send another one.

How often you send varies with who you're sending them to. This is another reason you need to really know your target audience. Get inside their minds - figure out what's going on in their lives.

Let's say you're targeting a specific group such as work at home moms. Stop and think about what they go through in a day. They're probably pretty busy with performing their jobs and taking care of the family. Do you think they will want daily messages from you? Not likely. They hardly have time to get their other things done let alone have time to sit and read messages from you every single day. Unless of course, they signed up for daily messages that is.

How often do you suppose this group of individuals would want to receive messages from you? Taking their busy days into consideration, it would probably take a few days for them to get around to reading your first message. So, a couple of times a week might work better for this target group.

Now, think of what days work best for them. Do you think Mondays would be a good day? For this group... not likely. Mondays would be one of their busiest days with work and family. Having a message from you on this day, might overwhelm them and cause them to just delete it right away, so they won't have to deal with it. Tuesdays would be spent trying to catch up on everything, so this might be the better bet here.

It would still take them a day or two to get to it, so keep that in mind as well. Weekends are good, since that's relaxing time and time spent with family and catching up on personal things. A message from you might possibly have a higher chance of being opened on the weekend with this group.

If you're targeting specific groups of businesses, then maybe Monday mornings work best for them. It all depends on your target market and what they're going through within their daily lives. Get in their heads and plan your email marketing strategy based on these things.

What Should the Email Messages Contain?

Now that you have your subscribers opening your emails, the next step is to get them to read those messages and act on whatever you want them to do. Your message must be important or they won't bother reading any of it. Here are some tips to get your message read.

Greeting – The greeting should have the person's name listed. "Jane" is better than "Dear Madam", because using their name makes it look more like a personal message and less like spam.

Add a P.S. – A P.S. is something important you should add to your message that you didn't include in the main part of the email. Most people will read a P.S. even if they don't read the rest of the email, so make sure to add one of these to your email messages. Two or three of them are even better sometimes.

A lot of times people will state that there's a limited time for whatever it is they're offering to entice their readers to act quickly. Some people will even provide a link to whatever it is they want the reader to see. Both have shown to be effective in email marketing campaigns, so be sure you include a P.S. in your communications.

Links – It's important to provide links to your site in your email messages. These links are what will get your readers to come back and visit you again. As with the other aspects of email messages, this is just as important.

You want to be sure the link takes a reader straight to the item you want them to see. Don't link them to the main website page and expect them to muddle through and find what you want them to see. They'll see it as too much trouble and will leave your site instantly; with the possibility of never coming back.

Another important tip is to provide a clickable link for them. Not too many people like to play with links if they have to copy and paste them into their Internet browser. Some do, but most don't. They don't want to take the time for extra steps.

Some email programs may not send the clickable link through to the receiver, so make sure to provide the website page URL, so they can copy and paste if they need to so.

Yet another item that might prove beneficial is to provide a link that stands out to the reader. You could place a small graphic in front of it or it could be something as simple as an arrow pointing to it.

Inside the Message Itself – Not a lot of people read through the entire message. It's still important to have though for those that do. Make sure your message is written so it comes across to the reader as if you're talking to them personally.

Always tell them what they would get out of whatever you're offering in the email. No one will care what *you* get out of it; only what *they* will get. By letting them know what they will get, you're justifying their need to click your link and go to your web page. By just telling them to go see your web page without any reason, they will have no desire to go. If they don't have any desire to go then why should they go see what you want them to see? They would have no point to.

Be sure to use the first two or three sentences of your email to convey what the message is about. If you want them to check out a certain product of yours, then you will need to state that in the first couple of sentences along with the benefits they will get. The reason for that is because some readers will only read the first couple of sentences of these messages before deciding whether or not it's worth reading the whole email. If you don't grab their attention in the first couple of lines, they'll just delete the email altogether; never seeing what you had to say.

Your message should be short and sweet. Stick to the important aspects of what you've got to say. A message that's too long is too time consuming for a receiver to read. This is especially true when you think about all the other emails they've probably received along with yours.

Besides newsletters what can I use my email messages for?

Your email messages can be used for many different things. You can let your readers know about any discounts you may be offering, updates on upcoming events or products you might be selling in the future.

People use email to offer free reports or guides or to recommend another resource they think their readers would like to see. This is basically a way of connecting with your reader, even if they haven't purchased anything yet.

Another exciting way to appeal to those email subscribers is to use something they can interact with.

How to Get Your Readers Involved

To make your email marketing program more personalized to your readers give them a way to get involved or interact with you. These can be done in a few ways:

Polls/Surveys

People like to participate in polls and take surveys. Periodically, to mix-up your humdrum of messages, send out a poll or survey on something related to your business topic. There are some sites that can help you set up the surveys and polls so that the reader will have to go to your blog or website to participate.

Ask for Feedback

This can be a powerful, but simple trick to keep your email subscribers interested in you. You probably have seen a lot of blogs start conversations by asking their readers a question or by asking for feedback on something.

The readers would then use the comments section to tell the author what they have to say about whatever was asked. This should be no different than your email messages. Come up with something you might want to know about your target audience and ask them to help you out by answering a question.

You can even go so far as to offer them some free guide, checklist or whatever as a gift for helping you out. Some even send them out with the message to help entice them to send some feedback.

By getting your readers involved in some way, it makes it seem more like you're talking directly to them. Especially if the email message starts out with "Jane," or whatever the person puts down as their name when they sign up.

Let's look at some more ways to grab people's attention.

Get Their Attention with Contests

Blog owners will do this a lot. People love a good contest as much as they love things for free. A contest tells a reader that there's something fun going on and the winner of the contest will receive a great prize.

The most important things a contest should have are:

- A great prize
- A fun way of competing for the prize
- Clear and *simple rules* for the contest

Prize

No contest would be successful unless it includes a prize that's worth your readers' time and effort to compete for it. The prize is the whole reason for them coming to your blog and participating in the contest, so it should be a good one.

Money is always the best thing to offer, but if you don't have the budget for enough to make it worthwhile, pick something that's related to your business topic, affordable to you and eye-catching for your readers.

Providing more than one prize to a few other winners is a good idea too. This way people won't think they don't have any chance to win and you don't sit with a contest that has only a couple of people entered.

Having a few winners also helps when different genders or people from other countries are participating as well. If some men want to participate and you're only prize is an eBook on Women in Business then it won't make it worthwhile to them.

A Fun Way to Participate for the Prize

People will have to compete for your prize in order to get it. Be sure they have fun doing it, so they'll keep coming back to check for future contests. There are a few things to keep in mind when coming up with your contests.

Consider the Timeline

Simply asking people to answer a question correctly and being the first one to comment on your post with the answer is unfair to others who won't be able to see the post entry until after 20 people have already answered it. Try to come up with something more people can participate in and give plenty of notice for the contest.

Involvement

Some people like contests where they have to perform some kind of action to feel involved. Simply having them answer a series of questions doesn't get them involved much. If you're going to have them answer questions; make them questions they have to surf the net in order to get the answers.

Otherwise try other options like creating a short piece of video related to your business or writing a short piece explaining why your business topic is important. Basically, *give them something to do*.

Honesty

You will need to run an honest contest. Your credibility is on the line. Don't think you can swindle people by running a contest for your own benefit and then cheat them out of the prize. Someone somewhere will find out about it. When they do, your name and business will end up being plastered all over the Internet as a dishonest business owner and contest runner. Your credibility and trust with your customers will be gone in an instant.

Keep it honest and enjoy the perks that come from it. To get some ideas, here are a few contests that some blog owners have run successfully:

- *Using Popular Reality TV Shows* - Some people have run contests where they start off with a certain number of contestants and then every so often one person gets eliminated until one winner remains.

- *Searching Your Archives* - Some blogs who have had a lot of posts in their archives have run contests for their readers asking questions that they can only find by searching through the archives. The timeline would be from x day to x day, so even newer visitors will have a fair chance.

- *Creating Titles or Headlines* - Some have run contests where they would write a brief post entry and ask their readers to come up with the best title or headline for it. The most creative one would win the prize.

- *Write an Entry* - Instead of coming up with titles, some blog owners have asked their readers to write an entry to a title they had posted. The entries usually had a specific word limit, so none would be too long or too short and making it fair for everyone who enters.

- *Jokes* - Some contests have involved people coming up with the best jokes concerning a certain event. Those who could come up with the funniest joke and followed the guidelines won the contest.

Clear and Simple Rules

Any contest you decide to run should have rules and guidelines to follow. They should be posted at least a few days prior to the contest day, because some of your readers may see discrepancies you might miss.

Try to make those changes before the day of the contest if possible. Its okay to make changes during the competition as it's your contest, but to be fair to all those competing, it should be stated beforehand. Too many changes during the competition don't get you many points as a contest leader or a blog owner in general. You might even be seen as a corrupt blog or business owner.

The rules you set up should be clear. You don't want too many people trying to tell you that "your rules don't say that you have to..." If you have them clear to begin with, you can avoid that mess altogether.

Also, they should be simple enough that everyone participating can understand them. Rules that are too technical are hard to understand and can be a turn off for anyone who originally thought about participating.

Having rules for your contest is important, so you don't end up biting yourself in the behind in the long run. You want to drive readers to your site, so make your competition a good one, with worthwhile prizes, so that people will come back as a regular reader after the contest is over.

Run these contests periodically to generate more interest as you go along. Not too often though, as that could get expensive and possibly even annoying to your readers. Once in awhile is good to keep the interest in your blog going and generate more new traffic.

Once you have a contest planned out you will want to get it known to the blog reading masses.

How to Publicize Your Contest to Generate Huge Traffic

Now that you've decided to run a contest and have an idea of what you're going to do and how you will do it; you need to market it to others. The people need to know about your contest in order for you to increase your traffic.

How do you do that? There are many ways you can accomplish this. Here are some effective ones:

Ask Your Readers

One thing you can do is post about your contest and then ask your readers if they would post about it on their own blogs. Some people, who are regular followers on your blog, will be more than willing to do that for you; especially if your contest is well worth it.

Post About it on Forums or Social Networking Sites You Joined

If you are a member of a forum or one of the many social networking sites that happen to be within your niche, post about your contest there. Let the other members know where they can get more information and even enter. If you're in good standing with this community, ask them to help you out by spreading the word.

Guest Blogging

You can guest blog on someone else's blog and mention that you have a contest coming up and the readers should check it out. Make sure you have permission to do so before you actually post about it. There are some people that don't allow things such as this from guest bloggers, so be sure to ask first.

Comment on Other Blogs

This can be quite effective, but watch how you do it. You only want to mention the contest when it fits the post entry. If it doesn't fit at all; it would make you look unprofessional and simply desperate. Not too many people have patience for that on their blogs.

Blog Contest Sites

There are actually several of these sites devoted specifically to contests. People can search these sites for any contest coming up or they can have their contest added to the site for people to see. A high number of traffic goes to some of these websites, so if your contest is good, that traffic can find their way over to you.

Advertise within Your Email Marketing Messages/Newsletters

If you have an email list, let your readers know you have a contest coming up. Give them some information about it and a link to where they can go to find out more. You can even ask if they would help you spread the word.

One key thing to remember is to have fun with your contests. If you have fun, your readers will have fun as well. It's good for rapport building and increasing your credibility, which are things any business owner should have.

Gain Attention with Press Releases

Here's where a lot of online marketers make a mistake. They don't utilize this powerful marketing tool or they don't utilize it effectively. One press release alone can generate a ton of traffic - If you create one that's useful for your business.

What is a press release? Well, a press release is a written account of a news item relating to an event or something else a business owner wants to announce to the masses. This news release is submitted to media sites where they are then published and seen by tons of Internet users.

Is it really that simple to create one? No, it's not simple, but it doesn't have to be too hard either; as long as you know how to create an effective press release. To help you understand what a press release is all about, let's take a look at what a press release is **NOT**:

- It's not an article.
- It's not a sales pitch or advertisement.
- It's not a means to write fluff.

A press release is a news story that tells people about a news event. It's written much like a journalistic piece in the fact that it tells you who, what, why, where, when and how.

Press releases are typically written for journalists or news editors to entice them to publish one's story. In that case, it needs to be written like a news piece. Not sure how to do that? No problem, here is what a press release **SHOULD** contain:

1. When the release should be published.
2. An attention grabbing headline.
3. Contact information.
4. Powerful first couple of paragraphs.
5. Supporting paragraphs.
6. Any pertinent quotes about the event.

When the Release Should be Published

You will either put a specific date on when the release should be published or state that it's for immediate release. If you have a special event going on a specific day, then you would want your release to be published a few days prior to that date. If it's just a news item, then immediate release could be placed.

An Attention Grabbing Headline

The headline of your press release will be much like the headlines you see in the newspapers. It should grab someone's attention and make them want to read what the release is all about. Your headline needs to stand out from the rest of the release, so it can be seen quickly and easily to help with immediate awareness.

Simply stating "*New Business Opens Doors*" is not going to grab as much attention as something like "*Great New Way to Achieve a Healthier Lifestyle*". The body of the release could then explain that a business selling nutritional supplements opened its doors. Once a reader is hooked by the headline; then they'll want to read the entire release to find out more.

Contact Information

People who read your release will want to know how to contact you to get more information. A website link should be provided as well as the business address, so people can be driven to your site to see what your business has to offer.

Powerful First Couple of Paragraphs

When writing your release, you will want the first paragraph or two to tell your readers exactly what the news story is all about. This is where you need to include who, what, why, where, when and how information.

The reason for including this information towards the beginning is simple. Not everyone will read the entire press release, so make sure they get all the pertinent information in right off the bat. This way they'll know everything they need to know even if they don't read the entire thing.

Supporting Paragraphs

The rest of your paragraphs will be information that supports what you've already stated in the first couple of paragraphs. It can go on to explain a little more about what you've already written as precise and to the point.

Any Pertinent Quotes Regarding the Event

This is usually the business owner or whoever is involved in the news piece. Along with that quote, it would be beneficial to get another quote from someone who's considered an expert in the topic of your press release.

For example, if your press release had something to do with finances, then a quote from a financial expert such as a CPA would help add credibility to your release. So, you try to find an expert in the field your release covers and ask them if they would answer a few questions so that you could use one of their quotes in your press release.

Things You Should Avoid in Your Press Release

In order to create a powerful press release, there are a few things you should attempt to avoid. Some of them are:

Sales Pitches – No press release should ever contain any kind of sales pitch. The purpose of the release is to drive more traffic to your site and generate interest in your business. It's important that you leave the sales pitching to your website and leave it out of the release.

Most places that would essentially publish the release, won't accept it anyway if it seems like no more than an advertisement. To get it published make sure it's strictly a news story piece and not a blatant promotion of your business.

Wrong Language – Make sure the words used in your press release are ones your target audience would understand. If you're targeting rocket scientists then the over the head scientific terms will be just fine. If not, make sure the words are ones that a regular, every day Joe type of audience will identify with.

Long Press Releases – A good press release should be no more than 1- 2 pages long. Any more than that and it generally won't get published or doesn't get read. No one wants to read a news piece that takes forever to read.

Sending the Release Off Without Proofreading it First – Once the release has been written, it's imperative that you proofread it. Make sure that there are no spelling or grammar errors. Check any facts to be sure everything is correct. Double check any dates, amounts, times, etc.

Boring Headlines – The headline must demand attention. Any headline that doesn't demand attention will only bore your readers if it makes it through editors to get published. Check with newspapers or other press releases to help generate ideas for your headlines.

Bad Mousing Competition – Your press release should be about the news event that you want to get out. It should not contain anything that badmouths any of your competition. If there is, then it would become less of a release and more of a sales pitch, not to mention distasteful.

Your business will receive more traffic if you use some of these attention grabbing techniques. Sometimes stepping out of your comfort zone can be extremely useful. So, don't let any stone be unturned when it comes to marketing your business. You may just find something invaluable to you.

Marketing By Appealing to the Senses

Marketing can be done in so many different ways. So far, we've discussed ways to market your business by connecting with others and doing different things to grab their attention. Now it's time to talk about how to market to them by appealing to their senses.

In this case, appealing to their senses is more like engaging their emotions by using their senses. A person is driven to action because of their emotions. Therefore, if you want to drive them to your site - appeal to their senses.

In this section we'll explore:

- Articles
- Viral Video Marketing
- Podcasts

Appeal to the Need for Information with Articles

People love information. They are driven to surf the net to find it on any subject they desire. That information is generally found in the form of articles. People love to read articles. That's why you see millions of articles plastered all over the Internet, because they're meeting an Internet user's need to locate information.

Articles are found in many different places such as:

- Websites
- Article directories
- Newsletters
- E-zines

Each of these places has a potential for good marketing opportunities. Let's find out more about all of them.

Websites

Articles published on websites can gain new traffic by using optimal keywords placed within the text of the article. Those keywords are what will get the popular search engines to index your site and rank your site higher in a user's search results page.

To make your articles effective you should make sure:

- There are no spelling or grammar mistakes.
- The article provides quality information.
- It contains unique and original content.
- It has good keywords placed throughout without overusing them.

If your articles contain incorrect information or have too many spelling mistakes people will get turned off quickly and you won't be seen as a professional. If you place too many keywords in your article the piece

won't flow well and it will make it hard for someone to read. The search engines may not like this either. Be sure you always provide high quality content.

Article Directories

Article directories are websites devoted to publishing other people's written work. Those articles provide a short bio of the person who wrote it and a website link where people can find more information on the topic of the article.

These sites should be used in your marketing plan because the search engines love them. So, someone searching for information on the topic you wrote about (remember it needs to be related to your business topic) would find the article easily and could click through to your site.

Above the search engines' love for article directories, is the love other website owners have for them. When you place an article on one of these sites you are giving other site owners free reprint rights to place the article on their own website. The catch is they have to publish it showing you as the writer leaving your author information (including your link) intact.

Newsletters

Internet marketers will send newsletters to the people that sign up for their opt-in email lists. Again, people love information, so reading a company's newsletter is one way to do that. It gives them morsels of facts on an ongoing basis.

A newsletter allows those subscribers to receive information and then a week or so later, they get more. This is how you can appeal to their emotions again and again. It's not just a one time thing like you often see with articles. Since your website link would be included with the newsletter, they could go back to your site to look for even more information.

E-Zines

There is some debate on whether or not e-zines are the same as newsletters. For the most part, they are. Newsletters and e-zines provide a reader with information on a niche topic on a continuing basis. So, basically, it's up to personal opinion. For the sake of this book, we'll discuss a little bit of how people view it as different and how it can work for you.

E-zines tend to offer someone with good articles, tips and tricks concerning the niche topic it's covering. That's a lot like newsletters, but some people feel that e-zines have a little more flexibility when it comes appealing to the reader's emotion.

Some e-zines put a little spice into the content they provide. They use the newsletter to stick with the facts of a topic and make it vague, but basically tease the reader into subscribing to the e-zine, so they can learn more and you can earn a little extra cash on the side.

E-zines also can have space set aside for advertising. Others who have a business in the same niche as yours or similar can purchase space to market their own business, so that can help with any costs that creating the e-zine might bring.

Appealing to the Need for Visual Pleasure

We know that people have a need to read information and we covered that. Now, let's explore their need for visual pleasure. Sometimes, people like to just sit back and see something.

The most common way to do that is through video marketing. Videos are extremely popular, because they appeal to our emotions. It could be a sappy, sad, funny and sometimes informative piece of video. Everyone has different likes and dislikes, so not every video is going to appeal to everyone.

When using video in your marketing efforts, you're not going to try to reach everyone and get them to like what you created. Don't bother, it's a losing battle. You will want to focus on your own specific target market.

A video that appeals to your target audience, can build rapport, relationships, credibility and even sales. How, you ask? Simple, the videos have appealed to an emotion, which drives them to want more. Where can get they get more? Why, your website of course.

Okay, maybe it doesn't sound like much of a huge deal to you at this point. You would be right, because we haven't touched on the whole picture yet. Now, it's time to dig into your memory bank.

Have you ever received an email, from someone you know, with a link to a video clip that they wanted you to check out? You followed the link because they recommended it. You view the video and something about it tickles you. You thought it was good enough to share with some of your other friends. You send them the link.

What you don't always know is that those friends will do the same thing that you did and will share the link with their friends; who will share with other people and so on. Pretty soon that short video clip gets thousands of hits.

That's the power of what's known as a viral video marketing campaign. The same principle being used here is seen in word of mouth campaigns. Basically, its people telling people about something and those people share it with others. The process keeps going.

Where are These Video Clips Seen?

Obviously, one who creates a video for marketing purposes has to start somewhere. So, that brings up the question of where to place them for optimal marketing success. They will have to be published somewhere for the power of viral video to take place. Here are some of the finest, but simplest places to get your campaign started.

Video Sharing Websites

This is the more popular option that people choose just to get started. It's inexpensive, easy to use, and holds a strong community of like minded people. By publishing a video clip on one of these sites; you can reach a whole range of people, whether they're in your specific niche market or not. By now you've heard of [YouTube](#), right?

You would set up your own little web page to contain all the videos you create. Those who search for videos may come upon yours, because of the keywords you tagged them with. If they like the video they see, they will want to check out any other clips you may have in your web page set up.

This is where the viral part will take place. They like a video clip of yours, so they'll tell their friends to come check it out. Those people will tell others. Pretty soon these people are drawn to find out who you are and what you're all about.

Your website link could be placed at the end of the video clip for them to see or it could be placed in your profile.

If they happen to be someone in your target market, they'll probably check out your site. If they aren't they might check it out anyway, just to see what it's all about. That's just fine, because they could either become interested in your site's topic or they could tell others they know who might be interested in it.

Blogs

Blogs are another way that people share video clips. Usually, these videos are embedded into a post using a code from a video sharing site. Blog owners place them into a post and encourage their readers to check it out.

Those who view it would see your website URL somewhere within the video; typically at the end. So, in the video, you could have something simple like "Visit xyz.com." If a user thought the video was good they can not only share it with others, but they can also go to the website they saw in the video.

Also, you could go to blogs that have a topic related to your business, comment on a post where applicable, and share the link to your video. People do read other people's comments, especially when they're located near the top. They'll see the video link and check it out, because you've made them curious to see it.

It's also possible, that other blogs will pick up on the video they saw on another blog and link to it. There have been many times that one video clip ended up being recommended on tons of blogs at once. You see where this is going don't you? They are sharing not only your video, but your website URL also.

Forums & Social Media Sites

Since these are places people congregate to, in order to "chat" with other people like them this would be the second most optimal place to

share your video clips. The communities these social networking sites contain more people than some of the largest cities in the world.

So, to get a word of the mouth campaign, so to speak, started you should begin here. Posting one of your video clips on a forum or social media website would allow the video to be seen by a ton of people all at once.

Now what do you suppose happens? Those people who see it are, of course, going to share it with others and right on down the line. Pretty soon you'll have more hits on the clip than you ever thought possible. This gives you more chances of people being driven to your site and possibly buying something down the road.

The power of this type of marketing campaign is definitely there. Just get one started.

What Makes Up a Good Viral Video?

Yes, there are millions, if not billions, of videos all over the Internet today. Some have gone down as the best viral videos ever while others only receive a few hundred hits and never really go anywhere.

How can you make yours good enough to spread as fast as the common cold virus? It's important to note that in order for a video to

become viral, you need good marketing techniques, but not necessarily the greatest video ever.

Even with the best advertising campaigns, not all videos will make it as a viral marketing tool. You still need to make them as appealing as possible in order to have a chance of getting it spread.

How long or short should your video be?

Well, some of the most popular videos tend to be long enough to grab attention, but short enough to keep the viewer's attention. So, it's recommended to keep it videos around 2 minutes or maybe even a little less. If you think about it, 10 seconds is not really long enough for anything to happen to grab attention.

On the other hand, a 5 minute video on the Internet can be an instant turnoff. People don't usually have that kind of time to spend sitting and watching one clip. Keep it around 2 minutes and it will fare better.

Should it always be a funny video clip?

Absolutely not! Not all viral videos are funny. Yes, there's a good portion of them that are humor based, but they certainly don't have to be. As long as it appeals to someone's emotions, the clip has a better chance of becoming viral.

It could be one that makes a person laugh, smile, or cry or even make them say, "AWWW! That's cute." Again, the real key to making your video a viral success is more in the marketing end of it and not in the creation of it.

Should it be professionally made?

Not really. A professionally made video could get you a top quality creation, but that doesn't guarantee you a viral video. Some of the best videos on the Internet, which has gone in the viral direction, have been made by an amateur.

On the same note, a lot of those videos have been of spontaneous events. In those cases, a professionally made video wouldn't really be possible. Quality is important yes, but not the most important. You want it to be seen and not a bunch of bouncing or blurry mess, but it doesn't have to be the type that high definition movies are made of by any means.

Can I just make a clip about my products?

This is really not recommended. Most people don't like to watch commercials on television. So, watching a clip about your products will seem more like viewing an advertisement. These don't generally go over well.

Unless you make the clip over the top by selling your product, it's not likely to be spread in the viral direction. Again, you should always keep in mind that the quality of your video isn't as important as how you market your clips. Appeal to their emotions and promote it everywhere you can and you could have a huge viral video marketing campaign for your business.

Appealing to Their Senses through Podcasting

Podcasting is a recorded piece of audio content. Basically, it's an easy and fun way to deliver information online by using auditory means. Podcasts are popular nowadays, because people still have a need for information, but they don't always have the time to sit down and read a typed document off their computer.

Audio content allows a user to listen to the information being provided, so they can go about their business and do other tasks at the same time. It's a busy world we live in, so being able to perform more than one task at a time appeals to us.

How Are Podcasts Used in Business?

Podcasting is another great way to market your business. People love to learn more about a certain subject, so one way you could appeal to that need is to educate them on different aspects of your niche. Present them in this audio media form and build your credibility as well as getting them interested in your site.

Businesses use podcasts as a marketing technique. They offer up a series of segments where they talk about all kinds of subjects relating to their niche. They get their audiences interested in that niche, so they will want to learn some more by checking out their website.

If you decide to use podcasting in your marketing plan, you'll want to know how to get one created. Here are some tips to get you started:

How to Come Up with an Idea for Your Podcast

This is pretty much the hardest part of getting started with a podcast. Choosing your podcast topic isn't easy, but you can come up with one if you start with your business niche. For example, you may be in the business of selling nutritional supplements.

Your niche would be within the nutrition field. To come up with an idea for your podcast, do some research on what other people are doing, podcast wise, in that niche. Now, all you need to do is figure out how to come up with one that presents a different view or take on the topic of nutrition.

If you're in the nutritional supplement business, then you could use them to sell your products, but people are looking for more information than sales pitches. So, sticking with a broader subject would give you more topics to discuss in the long run.

When you come up with a idea, you can start creating some of your segments for future podcasts. If you choose to go the educational route with your podcast, you could have segments explaining different topics of nutrition.

For example, one show might talk about proper food handling tips while another show could be about certain chemicals placed in foods. If they're interested in the niche your podcast is in, they'll be interested in your segment ideas. Provided you promote it well.

How to Create Your Podcast

Once you have an idea for what the podcast segment will be about, you can start planning the points of topic you will discuss. Going back to the example of the food handling idea, you could plan what tips you want to share with your audience and what you want to state about them.

Basically write up a rough draft for a script. You don't want to spend too much time writing an actual script to the podcast. You don't want to come across as if you're reading a script word for word. That would sound too unnatural. Just jot some notes to use as a guideline.

The next thing to do is to find an audio recording software program to use. This will do most of the work for you. At least pretty much everything except run your show. Before you start to scoff the idea, let me tell you a little secret.

Most of these software programs are **FREE!** Yes, some won't cost you a cent for the program. You would need a microphone of some sort to talk and record into, so that would be your biggest expense. Follow the instructions with the recording software program you chose to record your program.

To help calm your nerves before recording your first podcast show; try practicing a few times to get a feel for it. This will help you come across as more professional when you go to record the show for real. Don't worry about mistakes too much; as these recording software programs allow you to edit.

Once you've recorded the podcast, you can go back and listen to it. Edit out whatever you don't want in there and add to it whatever you think needs to be there. Get it to your satisfaction and you're ready for the next step.

Publishing Your Podcast

After the podcast is recorded and ready to go, it's now time to publish it on the web, so people can come and listen to what you have to say. Your podcast needs to be saved to your computer in MP3 format or whatever format your recording software recommends.

In order to get it published, you will need to find a place to upload your podcast file to. There are a few ways to accomplish this. They

range from technical ways to the most simple to use. If you are just starting out, you will want to use the simplest ways.

Place it on your website – You could upload the file and add it to your website if you choose to do so. This will help your business, because if they found your podcast they would already be at your site. The bad side to just using your site to publish it on is that it would be a little harder to market it.

People may not be too receptive to seeing the podcast on your site; as it might make them think your podcast is nothing but an advertisement for your products. Not too many people would want to listen to a commercial. The better way to use your site is to include a link to someplace else where your podcast is published. Places like these:

Podcast Publishing Sites – The whole purpose of these sites is to allow someone to publish and promote their podcasts using the site's special tools. Some of these kinds of sites are free to use, so that makes this option even better.

Depending on the site you use, you will probably be given a dashboard in your account that will give you the freedom to control all of your podcasts. They will simplify your publishing and promoting process by basically doing all that work for you. How could you get any simpler than that?

From here, you can have your podcast embedded into any blog or social networking site that you choose - all this without having to deal with placing special HTML codes on your website. Of course, you can still do that, but why would you want to when you can do it a simpler way?

On a Blog – If you choose to not use a podcast publishing site, you can still create a blog to put your podcast on. There are some blogging sites, like [Blogger](#) and [WordPress](#) that will help you with this process for free.

Create a blog specifically for your podcast. This way people can easily listen to your current podcast or they could access any podcasts that you might have in archives. You can even write posts about each one so a listener can go there and see what topic is discussed on a particular day.

No matter which route for podcast publishing you decide to take, you will still need to get the word out there and promote what you have just created.

How to Promote Your Podcast

Obviously, you want to market your business using your podcast. The only way to do that is to get it out there, so people can find it. There are some great ways that can help you promote it efficiently. Here are just a few of them:

Press Release – This should be the first thing you do to promote your podcast. Press releases are an invaluable tool to getting the word out about your audio creation. Get one written up and grab your potential reader’s attention, so they’ll come and hear your show.

Email List – If you have an email list set up, you should be utilizing it for your podcast promotion. This way, you’re target the people that would likely be interested in your program. You can reach many people at once by sending out an email message to your list of email subscribers.

Podcast Directories - This is another easy way to get your podcast listed so people will find you. The podcast directory sites basically list all the podcasts that are registered with them and help people find ones related to the subject they’re looking for. You want to provide good tags to help others find you when you list your podcast on these types of sites.

Since these directories have a lot of other podcasts listed with them; yours may be a little difficult to find when people search for them. In that case, this option shouldn’t be used alone in your promotion. Use it with other options for optimal podcast promotion.

Feeds - Along with podcast directories are feed directories. There are tons of feed services out there. A service, such as RSS can alert anyone, who’s subscribed to that service, when something has been

updated. Blogs often use this service to help people find their way back to their site.

Forums & Social Networking Sites - These are great places to connect with other people and let them know about your podcast program. Since these networking sites hold strength in the number of members in any community, you can reach a ton of people quickly. If you're in good standing with the community, they could help you pass on the word by getting your podcast on a social bookmarking site. If they do, your podcast will get blasted to even more potential readers.

Grab Attention with Teleseminars & Webinars

Another way to appeal to someone's need for an educational experience is to develop a Teleseminar or Webinar. These can be good marketing tools much like the video and audio marketing techniques we've already discussed.

Teleseminars are presentations that someone gives over the phone system. People can either call a certain number to listen in on what you're presenting or they can go to a website or blog and access a recording from that call at a later time. Webinars are pretty much the same except they are viewed online.

All types of business owners have used this option for marketing their businesses. They offer up some type of information for their target audience to learn from and lure them to their business website.

Benefits of Using Teleseminars for Marketing Purposes

There are so many benefits one could receive from using this type of marketing technique. Let's talk about just a few of them here to help you get started:

Quick and Easy To Create – Teleseminars are easy to create and they don't take too much time to plan. Basically all you need is some knowledge in the subject of your niche and a telephone. Plan out what topics you want to cover and simply market it to get the people to come listen to you.

Can be Offered for Pay or for Free – Teleseminars can be created easily; so that you can either charge your potential participants or you can offer it to them for free. Some people use them for some extra cash on the side, while others use them as free bonuses on other products. Either way is good in the marketing game.

Increase Credibility – Teleseminars allow you to showcase your knowledge and point of view on the topic at hand. You can start to build some trust and credibility with your target market. This can also

help you gain some expert status in your chosen niche, so people will be more willing to buy what you're offering.

Can be Interactive – Sometimes people like to interact with their teachers. Instead of going to their local college to get educated on a subject they can learn something about that subject from someone like you. In a teleseminar setting they can still ask questions and get answers quickly. If they're listening online, they can use a chat feature which will allow their questions to be asked during the teleseminar and also get answered right away.

What Types of Businesses Have Used Teleseminars as Part of Their Marketing Plans?

Any business can benefit from using Teleseminars to market their website. Some who have done so in the past and have been successful at it are:

- Life Coaches
- Business Coaches
- Executive Coaches
- Advertising Agencies
- Copywriters
- Accounting Services
- Freelance Writers
- Web Designers

- Virtual Assistants
- Marketing Professionals

These aren't the only businesses that have used teleseminars though. The list goes on to include those who sell all different types of products and services. You don't have to be an expert in any certain topic and have an educational degree in order to create a teleseminar for your business.

In Conclusion

No online business should be trying to run without any type of marketing to help reach their target audience. If people don't know you're there how can they know to come to your site and purchase your products or services?

Online marketing has numerous ways to help you achieve your marketing dreams, but a lot of them do require a good bit of money to implement. When you're just starting out with your business, it's highly unlikely that you will have enough money in your pocket to afford most of the costly tactics used by the big dogs.

That isn't to say you can't still have a powerful marketing campaign for your business though. There are tons of marketing techniques that can be utilized to reach your target market. It's simply a matter of figuring out which ones might work for you.

Some ways are fairly inexpensive to use, while others can be absolutely free, so there should be no excuse in not implementing any marketing in your business. Most of those are even easy to apply and if you have trouble there are a ton of resources available to help you get started.

Each technique discussed in this book has been used by many other, more successful marketers, which proves they do in fact work. Just remember they won't work for you if you don't take the time to execute them properly.

The results these methods could bring aren't going to happen overnight. They will take time to get the results you want to see, so patience will be the key, particularly in the beginning. Huge website traffic numbers are possible provided you exhibit a bit of work and planning in your marketing efforts.

Using the more inexpensive tactics is very helpful to your marketing budget and can save you money to use for other aspects of your business. Profits will be modest in the beginning, but that's okay, when you're just starting out.

As your business grows and you see some decent profits coming your way, then you can begin to implement the more expensive strategies that could skyrocket your sales. Learn from what other Internet marketers have done before you and try them out for yourself.

Best of luck to you!

Cathy Cresser