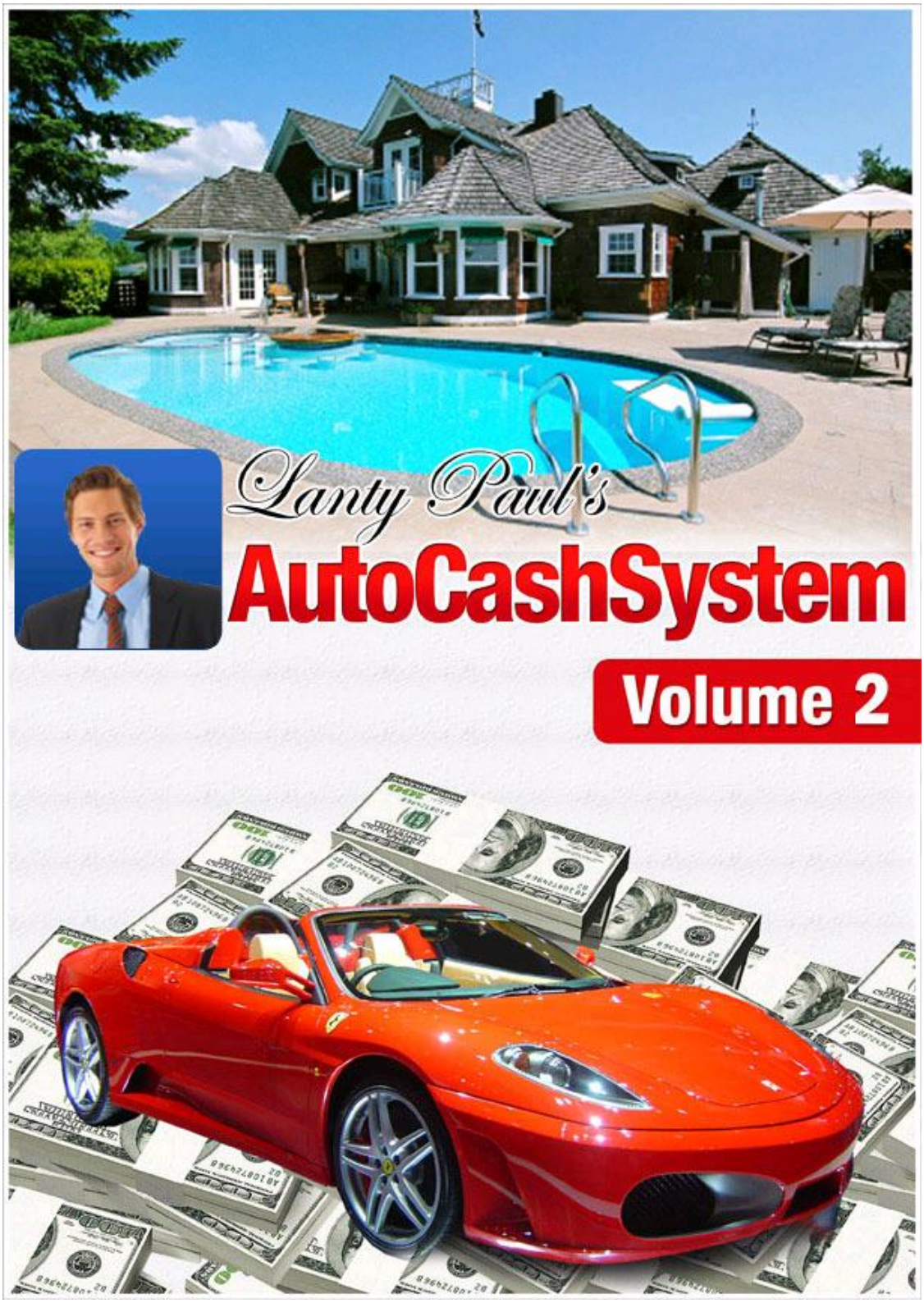


# Volume Two

By: Lanty Paul

**"I suggest printing this out for easier reading"**

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## INTRODUCTION

Congratulations on completing volume 1 of AUTOCASHSYSTEM. After reading volume 1 you should completely understand all of the basics of internet marketing, affiliate marketing, Google adsense, Google adwords, search engine optimization, building your own website, selling your own product and running a successful E-bay business. I wrote volume 1 as a guide for people who want to get started making money online but know absolutely nothing about the world of internet marketing. In volume 1 I laid out all of the basics that you will need to know to get started.

This is the second step in the AUTOCASHSYSTEM course. In this E-book I will go into more detail about everything I taught you in the first volume and will show you how to take all of the basic information you have learned thus far and begin extracting huge profits from it. I will show you exactly what you will need

to do in order to ensure your success online. Let's get started!!

## CHAPTER 1 – Creating a website that will sell

### A. Building an attractive website

To succeed at your online business (whether you are selling your own product/service or are selling for other merchants as an affiliate), you need a Web site created just for that - a simple, focused site. One that is easy to build, maintenance-free, low cost, credible, and a powerful traffic-builder and customer-converter.

Having the right tool and the right product alone doesn't insure the success of your website. There are many factors to be considered while designing a site. Unfortunately, most of these are easily ignored by Internet business owners.

Build It for Speed - It's a fact of modern life - people are in a hurry. This means that you have between 10 and 30 seconds to capture your potential customer's attention. To minimize your load time, keep graphics small. Compress them where possible. Use flashy technology (JavaScript, Flash, Streaming Audio/Video, animation) sparingly and only if it is important to your presentation.

Target your Market - Know who your market is and make certain that your site caters to their needs. It is critical that your site reflect the values of your potential customers. Is your market mostly business professionals? If so, the site must be clean and professional. Is your product aimed mostly a teenagers and young adults? Then your site could be more informal and relaxed. The key here is to know your market and build the site to their preferences.

Focus the Site - Make certain your web site is focused on the goal, selling your product or service. A site offering many unrelated products is not necessarily unfocused, but this is often the case. If your business does offer many products, dedicate a unique page for each instead of trying to sell them all from one page.

Credibility Is Crucial - The most professionally designed site won't sell if your customers don't believe in you. A clear privacy statement is one way to build your credibility. Provide a prominent link to your privacy statement from every page on the site as well as from any location that you are asking your visitors for personal information. Provide legitimate contact information on line.

Navigation should be simple - Make site navigation easy and intuitive. Simple and smooth navigation adds to the convenience of the visitors. Add powerful search

and catalog features. Many times a lot of visitors do not have the patience to navigate through the whole website to find what they are looking for.

Consistency is the key - Make sure the site is consistent in look, feel and design. Nothing is more jarring and disturbing to a customer than feeling as if they have just gone to another site. Keep colors and themes constant throughout the site.

Make your site interactive and personalized – Make your website interactive. Add feedback forms as well as email forms that allow your prospective customers to ask you any questions they might have pertaining to a product. Personalization of your website is another key element that can lead to customer delight and can increase your sales. Personalization technology provides you the analytic tools to facilitate cross-selling and up-selling when the customer is buying online. It would give you an idea of what products to cross-sell and up-sell. For example, when a person buys a CD player, a disc cleaner can also be offered.

Content is King - Good content sells a product. Ask yourself the following questions. Does your copy convey the message you wish to get across to your visitors? Is it compelling? Does it lead your visitor through the sales process? Have others review, critique and edit your copy to insure it is delivering the intended message. Always double check your spelling and grammar.

Make your website interactive. Add feedback forms as well as email forms that allow your prospective customers to ask you any questions they might have pertaining to a product. Personalization of your website is another key element that can lead to customer delight and can increase your sales. Personalization technology provides you the analytic tools to facilitate cross selling and up selling when the customer is buying online.

It tries to restore to the online business the magic of personalized attention that is one of the chief reasons why most people still prefer in-store purchase. You can use personalization to match your customer with the right products through either rules-based or customer analytics based processing. Thus as your software stores customer information and preferences, it can help categorize them into groups. At the same time, observations over time can suggest products to cross-sell and up-sell. Thus when a person buys a subscription to a fitness site, exercise equipment is also offered. Amazon pioneered personalization on the net – when you a buy a book, it shows you other books in the similar genre saying "people who bought this book also bought these", inducing you to buy more.

A consumer survey from the Personalization Consortium found that 56 percent of respondents say they are more likely to purchase from a site that allows personalization, and 63 percent are more likely to register at a site that allows it.

Personalization can lead to customer delight and can increase your sales.

B. Getting traffic using expired domains

In the physical world, you can distinguish a business because of its structure, window displays, or signs. You can tell that a bank is a bank, or a clothing store is indeed a clothing store.

In the Internet, however, it is an entirely different story altogether. Your domain name is the only clue to your online business. You do not have visual clues: no location, no look, and no store design. Instead, users have to type in a word or a set of words to reach your site. Your prospective visitor has no way of knowing what your site is all about until he/she finds it and reads its contents. Who can ever tell that Amazon.com sells books? Or that Excite is a search engine?

Your domain name can spell your success on the Internet. A good domain name is the best asset you can ever have. It can make your business stand out in the crowd, or just float aimlessly in space.

The need to provide immediate clues to an online business led to the prevalence of generic domain names. Generic names instantly provide the user with an idea of what a business is all about, what to expect and look for in a site. For instance, Etoys.com is a toy store.

The temptation of the generic name has been so powerful; that some companies even paid ridiculously high prices to get the name they want. The domains Loans.com and Wines.com were both bought for $3 million each. Telephone.com was acquired for $1.75 million, while Bingo.com sold for $1.1 million.

However, generic names do not necessarily create the "buzz" that you'd like surrounding your website. Branding has always been about proper names: McDonald's did not name their store Hamburger. Hertz is not called Car Rental. FedEx is not Mail Carrier. Kodak is not Photographs. Microsoft is not Computer Software.

For better branding results, your domain name should be memorable and easy to remember. Remember the following tips when creating a domain name.

- The domain name should be short
- The domain name should be simple
- It should be suggestive of your business category
- It should be unique
- It should be easy to interpret and pronounce
- It should be personalized
- It should not be difficult to spell
- It should not be difficult to remember

Domain names can be registered through many different companies (known as "registrars") - a listing of these companies is available at ICANN: http://www.icann.org. You can register for 1 to 10 years - prices can vary anywhere from $10 to $20 per year. Most web hosting companies, as explained later, will handle the registration process for you, but make sure that you are properly listed as the owner of the domain when it is registered. If you have registered a domain name for a specific period, make sure you renew it in time. You can be surprised at the number of cases, where site owners have let a domain name slip by if they have not renewed in time.

At some point while you're building your website, you're going to have to buy a domain name. This is the address that users type into their browsers to reach your site. That takes about five seconds, and depending on the name you want and whether anyone else owns it, it won't cost you more than a few bucks.

But domain names are also a golden opportunity to make some easy money.

I'm not talking about Internet real estate, where you buy up good names and sell them on for a profit—if you haven't got into that now, forget it. The bottom's fallen out of the market and the best domains are long gone.

I'm talking about expiring domains.

Thousands of webmasters invest time, effort and money to promote their site and build up traffic. Many of them then lose interest and move on, leaving their site active. That means that although they still own the domain, they're not actively promoting it. But they don't need to. All the automatic marketing systems they've put in place are still bringing in traffic. The site runs itself.

Now, at some point the ownership of those domains is going to expire. If you snap up those domains once they come back onto the market, you've got a pre-built stream of customers. You can either rebuild the site, or redirect the traffic to your domain. You could set up an affiliate program get paid for users someone else paid for.

It's that easy.

There are tons of options, and lots of easy ways to make lots of money with very little effort. Opportunities like these are everywhere.

Websites such as www.expiredtraffic.com or www.deleteddomains.com actually do all the legwork and let you reap all the rewards. Expired Traffic even has an affiliate program and www.snapnames.com allows you to back-order a specific domain name.

Do be careful when using other sites though. There are some swindlers out there that will sell you subscriptions, provide you with outdated lists, take your money and keep the good domains for themselves. It happens, and there's little point in taking a risk when www.deleteddomains.com does such a great job.

C. Writing a good affiliate review

There are five strategies that are very important when writing a good sales copy or an affiliate review. Every time I put a site together for my own product or as an affiliate I always use these 5 guidelines when writing my content.

1. GENERATE HOPE

Hope is why most people buy things. Rather their purchasing a new T.V in "hope" that it will make their living space that much more enjoyable, or their buying the newest acne product in "hope" to finally get rid of those blemishes on their face. People buy things everyday based solely on hope. You purchased AUTOCASHSYSTEM in hope that it will help change your financial future, didn't you? Think of the reasoning behind everything you've ever bought, I bet 90% of them were purchased because you "hoped" it would change your life in one way or another. Everyday millions of people surf the internet looking for HOPE, so you have to make sure to give it to them when writing your sales copy. Giving people HOPE is easily applied to informational products but can also be applied to physical products. For example say you were selling flat screen televisions you could create HOPE by saying something like "The new ABC flat panel plasma T.V will change the way you currently watch television, with a picture so clear and real you will feel like you're actually in the movie". This created HOPE by making you believe that if you purchase this T.V you will feel like you are in the movie and it makes you HOPE that this T.V will actually give you a better viewing experience. This sentence alone isn't enough to make you buy the product but there are 4 other strategies to incorporate into your sales letter.

2. SUPPLY AND DEMAND

You have to make your reader believe that there are only a certain number of products left, or that the product you are selling will only be available for a limited time. I'm sure you heard of supply and demand and you know that if the quantity of a product is low then the value of that product usually goes up. This holds true with the number of sales as well. If you say you only have a certain number of items available more people will buy your product because they don't want to take a chance on missing out and not be able to purchase it later. I usually do 1 of 2 things, I either put a quantity on the product and say something like "act fast because there are only 80 left and they will sell out in a mater of minutes" or I will put a time limit on the product and say something like "this offer will only last until Monday, after that the doors will be closed forever!!". Doing this encourages people to purchase the product now. It is a fact that if a visitor comes to your site and reads your review and is interested in the product you are offering but decides that he will come back later to make the purchase 95% of the time they will never come back, so you have to pressure the customer to purchase your product right then and there and the best way to do this is to put a limit on the amount sold and make the visitor feel that it will sell out soon, or put a limit on the time the product will be available and make the visitor feel that it will be too late to purchase the product later.

3. YOU MUST APPEAR AS AN AUTHORITY

Would you purchase an E-book on how to create a successful E-bay business from someone who shows proof that they make $50 a week on E-bay and has a feedback rating of 65? Of course not! You want to purchase an E-book about how to create a successful E-bay business from the guy who makes $100,000 a month on E-bay and has a feedback of 23,000. The more of an authority you can come across as the more products you will sell. People want to purchase products from people who know what they are talking about so you must come across as an expert on the topic.

4. DON'T MAKE MONEY OFF OF THE SALE OF THE PRODUCT

Now that's foolish! Of course you want to make money off of the sale of the product that is why you signed up as an affiliate and wrote your review of the product and you put your website together in the first place, you want to make money off of the sale of the product, but you don't want to appear like you make any money off of the sale. You want to come across as an unbiased third party, someone who just wants to help people make informed decisions and not get ripped off or scammed by anyone on the internet. You can do this by saying things like "I have been ripped off many times before and this is the only product that I had any success with" or " there are tons of people out there that will just scam you and steal your money, but I have personally used this product and I know it works". Saying things like this makes you seem like an honest citizen just trying to help. If you can make people feel that you do not make any money off of the sale of the product and that you are just trying to help, you will build trust and trust sells.

5. SCARE THEM INTO BUYING

The final technique you will want to apply to writing a killer sales copy is to scare your customers. Make your customers feel that if they do not go with the product you are recommending and instead purchase another similar product they will be throwing their money away and will run into problems in the future. Bad mouth all the other products out there (but don't get specific and don't name names) and talk about how the product you are affiliated with is so much better. If you can make your visitors feel that your product is the only one worth buying and that there is no need to shop around your sales will go through the roof.

Now put all 5 aspects together and write your review. The right website with a good sales copy could make you millions!!

D. BUILDING CREDIBILITY WITH YOUR CUSTOMERS THROUGH YOUR WEBSITE

Make sure that you build trust and credibility for your business. Credibility is a key ingredient for any successful business venture. Building and enhancing the credibility of the products and services you offer is an ongoing and full-time effort.

Why not make sure the web site you use works as hard as you do to establish credibility? Let's look at elements that can be built into a well-designed web site to enhance credibility in the eyes of your potential customers.

Offer a Guarantee

Nothing beats a solid, believable guarantee for building credibility online. It may be hard to believe but buying via the Internet is still unfamiliar, and uncomfortable, territory for the majority of people. It is up to you, the business owner, to put their minds at ease. One way to do this would be to offer an unconditional, 100% money back guarantee. By assuming all of the risk, you will earn instant credibility points with most potential customers.

Provide Contact Information

Even the best guarantee won't help establish credibility if the potential customer cannot contact you. Post accurate contact information on your web site and make it easy to find. Provide as many methods of contact as possible; do not simply post a link to an email address. For maximum credibility, post the complete mailing address, phone number (preferably a toll free number), and email addresses for customers to use if they feel the need to contact you.

Provide a Brief Bio

Familiarity is one of the most effective tools for building credibility on the Internet. How do you establish familiarity in a faceless, impersonal medium like the Internet? Simple, tell people about yourself. Post a page that provides a thumbnail sketch that describes who you are. Be sure to include personal data as well as professional credentials. Place your photo on the page so people can put a face with your name. Creating familiarity will impart another level of credibility for you and, by extension, for the product you represent.

In this chapter, we looked at how you can build your website and explained what it should contain. We also discussed some of the ways you can generate traffic and even told you about a fantastic way to make buckets of cash for a nickel investment. And we're only getting started! In the next chapter, we're going to look more closely at some of the popular and successful Internet business ideas.
CHAPTER 2. MAKING THE MOST $$$ SELLING YOUR PRODUCT

1. WHAT SHOULD YOU SELL, A PRODUCT OR A SEVICE?

The Internet is primarily used to communicate, entertain, educate and research. It is thus no wonder that nonperishable, information-intensive products - including computers and software, books, travel, consumer electronics, magazine subscriptions - are the most popular online products at present. Content-rich sites, subscription-based sites to advertiser-supported sites focusing on a wide range of topics, have been sprouting all over the Internet.

Services such as hotel reservation, air travel and investments have successfully

translated themselves to the Internet.

Unique services such as Online driving schools have been prospering. Some states in the US have set up online payment sites for Government services. Residents of a state can log on to a common site to pay all bills and other expenses, such as parking tickets to the local/County courts.

However, all kinds of services cannot be run entirely on the Internet. The Internet is less effective when face-to-face selling is needed to close a deal. The Internet can give lots of preliminary information that's useful in setting the scene for the closing. But the actual closing takes place offline - i.e., not on the Internet.

Products can also be marketed and sold successfully on the Internet. The kinds of products and services that sell best on the Internet are those that take advantage of the convenience of the Net. Remember that convenience is the primary reason why consumers flock to the Internet in the first place. People can shop any hour of the day at any site. They can avoid crowded stores, irritating sales clerks, and even avoid pickpockets.

Offbeat or unusual products and services often attract online attention and sell strongly. You would generally not try to sell items people can get at the corner store. Thus, few toothbrushes are sold on the Net; the same thing with daily food and beverage purchases. But special cheeses, rare cigars, Turkish plates, long-aged wines, even diamonds, can and do sell on the Net.

Most products sold by catalog and mail order also sell well on the Net. However, people tend to buy only those products that could be shipped at a reasonable price. Higher shipping costs diminish the price competitiveness of online products and turns-off a lot of potential buyers. In fact, high shipping costs is the primary factor that discourages people from buying online more than any other single reason. An Ernst and Young report shows that 53 percent of online shoppers are concerned with shipping costs that are too high, compared to only 19 percent who are concerned with credit cards being stolen.

As an online merchant, you have to work out the advantages as well as disadvantages of selling either products or services. However, in the recent past, online services have known to flourish. Nevertheless, if you chose to sell products you need to rethink your product offering if the total costs of the product and the shipping are higher than what is offered elsewhere.

1. MAKING MONEY ON THE BACK-END

Considerable effort is required to get customers for your products. You design killer web pages, work hard for high search engine rankings (or pay for them), spend hours writing killer sales copy, etc. but still do not manage to sell enough. This is where the concept of back-end sales is useful.

Most marketers are successful because they apply back-end selling into their

marketing efforts. Back-end selling is when you sell other products or services to your existing customers after they have purchased an initial product.

It is always easier to sell products or services to your existing customers because you have developed a relationship with them when you sold your first product or service to them. You will find it less expensive to sell to old customers as compared to selling to new customers.

Your conversion ratio will be dramatically higher with existing customers. Every time you continue selling back-end products or services to existing customers, you will be building a life-long relationship. You should continually bring out new back-end products or services to sell to existing customers.

Many businesses sell their front-end products (initial products) at almost zero profit in order to generate back-end profits. These businesses do not care even if they lose money on the front-end products or services; they want the back-end profits.

How do you make backend sales? There are several ways. When you order a product from a mail-order company, they'll send you a catalog along with your order, or put you on a mailing list and send you new catalogs from time to time. They might also send you a sales letter for another product. This may be related to the first product in some way. Many companies implement such a strategy.

To implement this technique on the web, you can put the sales pitch for your backend item in the email to the customer to confirm their order. If you have an online catalog, you could include a link to it, or even include a coupon or special offer "for all valued customers".

For a faster response, you should put the backend offer on the "Thank You" page that is generated by a credit-card sale. The customer just bought something from you and has a credit card in his or her hot little hand! Why not ask for another purchase while they are in the mood to buy. In case you do not sell more than one product or service, affiliate programs might come in handy. This way you can back sell products promoted by your affiliate programs as well.

Back-end selling can also be integrated with “Up-Selling” wherein you introduce more expensive products or services to your existing customers in similar ways as those mentioned above. This will almost instantly raise your sales and profits.

1. CROSS SELLING

Another successful strategy similar to the ones discussed above is Cross Selling. One of the best examples of cross selling via the web is on Amazon.com. If you search for a book on the Amazon site, a message will appear on the same page, saying 'Customers who bought this book also bought…' and will list half a dozen other books for your consideration. This is an excellent way to cross sell additional services or content to your members.

You can also direct visitors to other parts of the site, to consider products and services that they hadn't previously considered. Successful cross selling is the result of recognizing a customer need and meeting that need with a useful product or service. Customers benefit from needs-based cross selling efforts because they receive the services they need and want.

Cross selling can help your business realize its objectives: providing useful services, retaining customers, attracting new customers, and staying competitive with other websites.

In conclusion, you can offer a range of products and services on the Internet. The key is proper research and a great marketing plan.

## CHAPTER 3 – More On Affiliate Marketing

### A. THE BASICS…… GETTING STARTED

As with any marketing venture, you need to be careful in the selection of an affiliate program. The benefit of an affiliate program is that it gives you another way to make money from your users. Instead of selling them a product yourself, you send them to a partner and take a cut.

On the downside though, your affiliate ads will take the place of a different ad that you could have put in that same spot. You have to make sure that each advertising position on your site is bringing in the maximum revenue possible. If you're not getting the most from your site, you're tossing money away.

The key to success is to choose the right program, right from the beginning.

Now, a lot of commercial sites run affiliate programs. That's because they know that they only have to pay a commission if a sale is actually made; it's a proven way to generate revenue without risk. What that means for you is that when it comes to choosing an affiliate program, you're going to have a huge range to choose from. What it all boils down to though is product and price.

While it might be tempting to go for the program that pays the highest commissions, the program won't pay you a penny if your users won't go there or won't buy once they get there. You have to be certain that the service you're promoting is of genuine interest to the kind of users you buy, whether you're buying them from search engines or anywhere else.

Sure, you can work backwards: You find a high-paying affiliate program and create a small site to send users to it, but do you know where to buy users for a

program like that? You're going to have to research the field, check out the most popular sites, and negotiate banner campaigns and link exchanges.

That's fine if you want to invest the time and the effort. But it's much easier to find an affiliate program operating in a field you're familiar with, and use that program to earn extra cash.

For example, suppose you had set up a dating site. You might make bit of money selling subscriptions, but you might make even more by joining Match.com's affiliate program and selling them your users. Unless you're planning to be the Internet's biggest dating site, you're not going to be able to compete directly and beat them, but you can join them—and earn money.

Or rather than sell your users directly to a 'competitor', you can look for services that complement your own. Visitors to your dating site, for example, might be interested in buying flowers, books on relationships or tickets on singles cruises. Instead of selling just one product—membership subscriptions—you'd be selling a whole range of different goods to the same people, and increasing the sources of your income.

Here are some tips to selecting an affiliate program that is lucrative and right for you:

- Don't accept less than 25% commission. You can find affiliate programs with great payment structures and high percentages of the purchase price in just about every field.
- Look for comprehensive statistics pages that list the number of click-throughs, sales and earnings so you can see how you're doing. The information should be broken down by month.
- Look for programs that offer a wide variety of promotional tools to put on your Web page, including text links, banners and graphics.
- Find out how often you will be paid and make sure that the payment schedule meets your expectations. Some programs pay monthly, others quarterly; which is best for you?
- Look for examples of marketing methods that successful affiliates are using to get the best results.
- Make sure that top level support is given. If they can't answer your questions promptly and intelligently, you don't want to work with them.

B. Creating and operating your own affiliate program

Joining an affiliate program is a neat way to make money from your users. But just as you can join someone else's affiliate program, so you can set up your own program and invite webmasters to sign up.

What would that bring you? The same as you're bringing your affiliate partners: deals. Every time someone sends you a user who gives you money, you give a portion of that money to your affiliate. It's an easy way to generate traffic and earn cash.

And you don't need to be a programming genius to set up an affiliate program. There are a whole bunch of companies out there that offer entire affiliate kits right off the shelf.

Ultimate Affiliate lets you run a fully featured affiliate program from your website. It integrates with virtually every payment method, awards down-line commissions, and can handle high-traffic websites. You can edit the sign-up form to match the "look and feel" of your site as well as delete some of the optional fields. The administration area allows you to edit affiliates and commissions, create printable reports of money due, export the

data to a text file, view the traffic through your affiliate program, and much more. Your affiliates can log in at any time and see their traffic and commission statistics as well as change their information and get links and banner code.

Once the program is set up you'll only need to log in once a month to print out a list of the affiliates, their addresses, and the money owed. You can do this quarterly if you wish. You can export the payments owed to a text file in PayPal's "mass pay" format and then just upload it to your PayPal account to pay everyone automatically. Or, you can simply write your own checks. If you have to pay a lot of commissions, there is a check printing service called qchex.com. Upload the file and they'll print and mail your checks for a fee of about 80 cents each.

Alternatively, Locked Area Pro is an advanced member's area management system offering very good security that's easy to maintain. The system provides a huge list of useful features including automated sign-up, user account validation, optional random password generation and an administration approve/decline account feature. It also comes with an extremely powerful control panel with an online administration of users, backup, and full customization facilities from the browser. A statistics system is also in built in. What more could you want?

### B.1 Stopping the spam

Any time you run a program where your affiliates rely on other signups to generate profits, you will eventually have a problem with spam. One of your affiliates will inevitably get it into their head to blitz the Web with unwanted garbage.

When this happens you need to be ready to take action—otherwise it will cost you! Your Internet company can boot you off your server and you can find

yourself blacklisted. Not good for business. If you get an email from someone claiming they received spam with your URL, then take it as an early warning. I am not advising you to immediately terminate the affiliate's account, but be sure to contact them to follow up on the complaint. Let your affiliate know you received a complaint and advise them to remove this person from their list.

If you only get one or two complaints, it's probably not spam—the complainants might simply have signed up for an email list and forgotten all about it. You will know when one of your affiliates is spamming, because you will get anywhere from 10 to 100 complaints in the same day all regarding the same URL. The best thing to do in this case is to immediately terminate or disable the account of the affiliate URL that was spammed.

The key to any business is to promote your products and services to people who need them. Your affiliate business is no different. In order to earn commissions you must put your products in front of the people who need them. The beauty of marketing affiliate programs is that it is anybody's ball game. This is the one place you can burrow deep into your own niche and stick it to the so-called 'big wigs'.

You may create your own affiliate program or you may promote other popular affiliate programs that are related to your product or service. The best way to manage and track affiliate programs is by creating your own affiliate program website. This is where you can list all your affiliate programs.

There are many affiliate networks that provide multiple affiliate programs and merchants. Keeping a track of all affiliate programs in a single network is easy. You would generally be given one username and password as well as a single interface that controls all the programs. However, if you have many of your own affiliate programs or you promote several stand-alone affiliate programs from your website, the task of staying organized becomes a bit more complex.

There are many software programs available on the Internet that organize and keep track of all data associated with affiliate programs. Some of these are My Affiliate Program 2000 and Affiliate Assistant 1.0. These programs maintain databases pertaining to information about all your affiliate programs. A typical database would consist of the following fields:

- Program Name
- Date joined or created
- Contact Name
- URL
- Email Address
- ID
- Password
- 1st Tier Percent
- 1st Tier Sale
- 2nd Tier Percent

- 2nd Tier Sale
- Total Income
- Additional comments

Once the program information has been entered, you can add information about individual sales made and checks received. The program then keeps track of sales to date, amount collected and receivables. Besides, some of the advanced software programs also provide analysis and comparison tools for all affiliate programs. If you take the time to input collected data about clicks, sales, and page views, impressions, emails sent etc. from your various campaigns and enter all of it into the program, it will show you:

- Click to Sale Ratios
- Impression to Sale Ratios
- Amount Earned Per Impression
- Amount Earned Per Click

Apart from these are a few other tips that might help you manage your affiliate programs.

- Always ensure that your website is up and running. On a Daily basis type your URL into your browser's address bar, refresh the page and find out. The danger in not knowing that your site is down comes when you are running a pay per click advertising campaign. The click costs add up whether your site is functional or not. If your site is down, you are paying for advertising, but no one is buying.

- Check your statistics daily, maybe even twice a day. This will give you a better idea of your income trends and also highlight affiliate programs that bring your business. Visit the statistics interface for each network and individual affiliate partner and input your total revenues into any accounting software. Using such software frequently will also keep you informed as to whether certain checks have become overdue.

- Be prompt in answering any queries from affiliate partners or customers, especially when these are about your products or services. This probably means that the customer trusts your site and is thinking of buying your product.

- One of the main aspects of any affiliate program is residual income. You've got to make the most of each and every customer you receive. The best way to do this is by promoting affiliate programs that offer residual commission.

- This allows you to repeatedly get paid for work you do once. For example, if a visitor arrives at your site and purchases auto responder services, newsletter subscriptions, ISP/hosting services, you will collect a portion of the monthly fees for as long as they remain a paying customer. Membership sites are a good way to collect residual commissions and are steadily growing in popularity. There are many affiliate programs that offer residual commission.

- A well placed recommendation placed at the end of an outgoing email can bring in extra sales. Target your audience, what are their specific needs? If you can offer them a product they need/want, often times the end result will be a sale.
- Finally, track all your affiliate links. The best way to accomplish this is by setting up tracking software for your affiliate links. There are a number of scripts that will do the job. Most tracking programs typically allow you to setup tracking links for any product you promote, telling you how many hits each product has received, and where the hits are coming from. A more detailed view of tracking and analysis is given in the section below.

- It is not enough to have a few banners and classified ads. You must provide as much help as possible for your associates if you want them to be successful. You should have tested and proven endorsements, testimonials, sig files, ezine ads, and other unique tools and techniques. You must also make yourself available, either through email or the phone, to help your affiliates implement these tools and to answer any questions they may have.
- Whether you run your own or participate in an affiliate program, you must be able to determine what methods work best in a particular medium. For instance, which ezine ads work best and in what ezine; which banner ads produce the greatest clickthroughs and from which sites or banner exchanges; and where on your website is the most effective spot to include a testimonial.

Some affiliate programs, have implemented unique payment procedures to get affiliates their commission checks on a timely basis. Some of these procedures include: online electronic payment services, direct bank deposits and checks by fax. If you can solidify your payment procedures from the start, you will save yourself an administrative headache and more importantly, keep your affiliates happy and working to promote your program

B.2 Attracting affiliates

One of the biggest fears new Affiliate managers have is in finding new affiliates. This fear is a stumbling block that stops many site owners from getting started with affiliate marketing. Interestingly, with a proper marketing strategy, getting affiliates may not be very difficult. Given below are some tips that may help in attracting new affiliates.

- Find complimentary sites - "Complementary" sites are a sites that sell products or services that compliment your offerings. If you sell "gardening tools", a site that sells books on "gardening tips" would be a perfect affiliate. If you sell software, try looking for sites that sell computers or computer parts. Finding sites that already attract your target market, and can benefit from recommending your product or service to their visitors, is the goal.
- Find content sites – There are many sites that do not sell any kind of product or service but are mainly content-oriented sites. Such sites promote an idea, concept, study or belief. Content sites that are used as a resource for your target market are ideal affiliates.

Finally, there are several sites on the Internet dedicated to listing affiliate Programs. Get your program listed in these directories

The hardest part of administrating an Affiliate Program is deciding what your affiliates need to help make the sale. But, by carefully categorizing your affiliates, you can easily determine what their needs are and how to accurately meet them. The plan given below helps in categorizing affiliates in order to manage your affiliate program better.

The first step is to pick at least three types of affiliates. Take a look at your affiliates and try to determine one outstanding characteristic that can easily be compared across the board and choose at least three types of the characteristic. Here are some examples:

- Level of Sales - You may find that your affiliates are so completely different that it's hard to find something to classify them by. Try classifying them by the level of sales they've reached with you. You'll most likely find that you have a few forerunners that lead the pack with a number of sales, quite a few affiliates that have sporadically made a sale or two and some that have yet to make a sale. This will help you classify them based on sales.
- Products - If you sell a wide variety of products for specific interests/needs you may be able to classify your affiliates by product. For instance, a financial site could classify types like Personal Finance, Small Business Finance, and Corporate Finance.
- Industry - If you market commodities like office supplies, health and beauty products, house-wares and so on, you may find that your affiliates come from a wide variety of industries. You can most likely classify your affiliates according to their industry.

The Second Step is to determine the needs of each type. Each of your affiliate types will have different needs; some of their needs will overlap, but you should find a distinct difference in many of their needs. If you find that all of them have the same needs, go back to step one and re-think your types.

Here are some basic things to look for:

- Linking Methods - Different types of affiliates will need different linking methods. Let's use the example above where we had different groups based on sales. Your low sales group may be satisfied with a banner or two to place on their site. Your medium sales type may be interested in an article or two for added content on their site. Your high sales group will probably pass up banners for articles, guestbooks, email ads and signature files.
- Capturing visitors is what you want. In order to do so -- you have to know what they want. Visit your affiliates' sites to see what visitors are looking at and looking for. Ask yourself, "How does my product relate to what I am seeing?"
- Different types of affiliates may expect different commissions. You'll have some Affiliates that have joined your program "on the side" and others that plan on earning a substantial income from the program. Determine what effort they are putting into advertising, how much other programs in your industry are paying, and the amount of time they devote to your program.

The Third Step involves the process of creating and compiling linking methods for each group of affiliates. Based on the needs you identified in Step two, create and compile linking methods for each type. Here are a few linking methods to think about.

- Banners - Though they aren't as effective as other linking methods, banners are still widely used and expected. Make banners in a variety of sizes to fit tops of pages, bottoms, toolbars, sidebars and other miscellaneous areas.
- Articles - These are great for affiliates that need content for their websites and newsletters. Be sure that your articles are articles and not ads.
- Email Ads - Your active affiliates may be interested in placing ads in e-zines or their own newsletters. Try writing a few ads in different lengths.
- Signature Files - Dedicated affiliates may even add your tag to their signature line. Give them a few witty lines to choose from.
- Guestbooks: - Let your affiliates help you build your Opt-In email lists with guestbooks. Offer them a commission for each email address they send you, or each resulting sale from the subscribers they send you.
- Product Images - Give your affiliates images that show and link directly to specific products. They'll be able to choose an image specific to their site, or choose several images to display.

- Review each affiliate Type and match them up with your new linking methods. You may have some linking methods that overlap Types -- this is okay. Just be sure you are concentrating on the affiliates' needs.

The Fourth Step is to decide commission levels. Your first decision will be to determine whether you want to pay a flat rate or percentage of each sale. Based on the needs you identified above for each of the affiliate types, decide on a commission amount for each Type. If you have a two-tier program, consider the possibility of different second tier rates as well.

The Fifth Step is to devise promotions for affiliate groups. Once you have your affiliates properly categorized and your system under control, consider developing promotions for your affiliate groups. Give them special incentives to sell more during a certain time frame, move seasonal products, or increase business during your slow months. Offer them additional commissions, or even bonuses for reaching a specific amount of sales.

A few avoidable errors

- Many affiliate marketers make a huge mistake of posting their ads on forums. Forums can be used to promote your affiliate programs and your website but in a proper manner. Posting banners is very similar to spamming and may easily upset forum administrators.
- Always do your research before promoting your affiliate program to a potential customer. Do not offer affiliate programs to visitors who are not at all interested in the products associated with the program. This is a futile endeavor.
- If you promote affiliate programs offered by other merchants, ensure that you develop your own advertising copy. Many websites commit a common mistake of using the same advertising copy as used by the merchant themselves.
- Avoid Copyright infringement in all cases. Always use original content or ask permission to use graphic images or text found on other websites.
- Do not submit your programs to free websites. These may be free but your programs would hardly ever be noticed, especially by Search Engines. Moreover, your own ranking would get lowered if you submit your affiliate programs to such websites.
- Avoid using caps on your web page or email ad. Using caps is symbolic to shouting, which never goes well with potential customers. A few words may

be written in capital text to give them additional emphasis. However, such practice should be limited.

- Always respond to all queries sent by visitors as soon as possible. A slight delay in your response could easily result in loss of a potential client.
- Do not use pop-up ads along with your webpage. Most surfers are likely to close their browser if they come across pop-ups.
- Do not host your website on a free server or use free email accounts. This gives a negative impression to visitors. Using free hosts and email accounts looks cheesy and loses sales.
- Many websites do not have an opt-in list. Create an opt-in and opt-out list for your visitors. Without these, there is no way of tracking potential customers. Visitors should be allowed to opt-in at any time as well as opt-out at any time.
- Most sites have a poor tracking mechanism. It is essential that you track all business activities. Accurate record keeping is crucial. There are many software tools, discussed earlier in this chapter, than can automate your record keeping process with minimal error.
- A 'mall' site is best used as a central hub to send visitors to your other domains. As a main or only site, unfocused mall sites don't get traffic from the engines, and they don't convert well to sales. Highly focused theme sites attract traffic and sales.
- Offline advertising may not be effective. A lot of money and effort should not be wasted on offline advertising. Most people rarely check websites that are advertised in local magazines or newspapers.
- Avoid focus on animated banner ads. These simply use up bandwidth, thus making web pages load slower.
- While advertising do not degrade other competitors. It is recommended that you highlight your products' uniqueness and superiority but never mortify other products.
- Banners or text links that expire are guaranteed to eventually send your visitor to a broken link or show a broken graphic on your page. Time

sensitive advertising is best used only in email advertising campaigns.

- Never put affiliate links on your homepage. This is similar to asking your visitors to leave immediately. Give them a chance to browse, sign up for your newsletter and decide that they'd like to come back to your place before introducing them to your affiliates.
- Technology changes with amazing speed. To keep up with this rapidly evolving industry, you must invest time and money in research. The investment is a tax write-off, and will pay you back many times over in additional revenue.

Finally, persist with your plan. It might take you time to get established even if you have a solid marketing plan. Persistence is the single most important factor in determining success online or off.

B.3 Clickbank and Linkshare

CLICKBANK –

ClickBank (http://www.clickbank.com) has a built-in affiliate program. It offers all features of a good affiliate program. There is no need to install any expensive scripts on your website. You can start signing up affiliates right away as soon as you open your account.

The beauty of ClickBank is that it integrates the affiliate management program with an in-built payment gateway. ClickBank is one of the most popular and easiest services to use for payment processing online. Sign-up is quick and you get approved and running in one day.

The ClickBank Control Panel is easy to use. You can get familiar with the whole system in no time. It costs $49 to open a ClickBank account. This is pretty cheap when compared with other payment processing systems. Once you open an account, all your transaction money gets deposited into your account. You are paid the full balance every two weeks.

I'm a member of probably about dozen different affiliate programs, and have literally hundreds of webmasters signed up in the programs I run myself. If you're serious about earning serious money on the Web, then you're going to be spending a lot of time checking out affiliate programs and tracking your responses. It's one of the easiest and most reliable ways to make cash with a website.

So far, we've talked about the kind of marketing plans that work through your website: banners, links, affiliate programs etc. But the website isn't the only way to get the traffic you need. In the next chapter, we're going to begin talking about how you can use e-mail to drum up business.

Linkshare –

LinkShare hosts a password-protected website that offers affiliates a choice of hundreds of merchant programs. On the site, affiliates can join new programs, get links to put on their sites, and then see reports about how their links are performing and how much they have earned.
When a visitor from an affiliate's site clicks on a link and goes to a merchant's site, LinkShare keeps track of all of the transactions that the visitor makes. If that visitor buys something on the merchant's site, you get a commission. In some cases, affiliates are compensated even if the visitor doesn't buy anything, just for having driven traffic to the merchant's site.

LinkShare also provides affiliates with customer service, notifies affiliates about new programs and new opportunities, and offers resources for affiliates to learn about how to get the most out of their programs

## CHAPTER 4 – BUILDING A LIST… MAXIMIZING PROFITS THROUGH EMAIL MARKETING

Off the Web, mail marketing is hated by customers. It's unwanted, uninvited and stuffs mail boxes. But it's pretty clear that it's also incredibly popular with advertisers. Why? Because while most potential customers toss away their junk letters with barely a glance, enough take action to make it all worthwhile. They do buy—and in high enough numbers to more than cover the cost of those who don't.

Email marketing is pretty similar, but with one important difference: on the Web, you can only send marketing emails to people who have already chosen to receive them. A bit tricky. On the other hand, because those people have already chosen to receive your emails, you can be confident that they're going to buy.

In this chapter, we will read how to produce marketing material that gets results!

1. Collecting OPT-IN email addresses

Email is still the most popular and most used application on the Internet. It's also an efficient means of distributing your message to large numbers of people who have requested that information. As a form of marketing, it generates high response rates—and gives you measurable results with instant feedback.

But because email marketing been so abused, it's just not accepted any more to send emails to people who haven't chosen to receive them. Bust that rule, and there's a good chance you'll be out of business. That gives you the problem of building up a list of willing subscribers.

When you're first starting out, there's often a temptation to simply purchase an

opt-in email list. Lots of people sell them and you can easily pick up a million or so addresses for just a few bucks. But while that may appear to be a fast, easy way to build up customers, the names on the list may not be up to date, or even opt-in contacts at all. You could well find yourself inadvertently spamming.

Similarly, there are also programs that surf the Net, recording every email address they find. These will let you quickly build up a huge list of e-mail addresses—none of whose owners will thank you when you stuff their inboxes with marketing material. Forget about them; they're not worth the effort. It's much safer, and much more effective, to take the time to build your own list.

Marketing by e-mail can attract new customers, keep existing ones, upsell, cross-sell, and cut costs. E-merchant Wine.com, for example, found e-mail campaigns drove twice as many "best prospects" to their site compared to banner ads or other Internet marketing programs.
If executed improperly though, e-mail campaigns can backfire with disastrous business consequences. How to minimize the risk and maximize the return? Part of the answer is a common sense approach called "permission" or "opt-in" marketing, in which customers or prospects volunteer to receive e-mail.
The odds of users joining a list can be improved by providing three opt-in opportunities, all with low entry barriers. First, there should be minimal sign-up work. Many sites require only an e-mail address; all other personal information is optional. Second, there should be several sign-up opportunities on a site, including on the inquiry, order, and feedback forms. These forms may use a checkbox asking prospects if they would like to receive occasional special offers/newsletters by e-mail. If so, it must be placed conspicuously on the form. Third, a privacy policy that addresses what will be done with user information should be posted in an obvious place.
Continuing on the lines of "opt-in" marketing, one of the most successful methods is the double opt-in technique. In double opt-in a user elects to receive e-mail newsletters or standalone commercial messages. A confirmation e-mail is sent to that user, who is not required to take further action to be included on the list. The confirmation e-mail includes an opportunity to unsubscribe or opt out. Although, the double opt-in techniques runs the risk of losing subscribers during the confirmation process, it gives the subscribers more control and thus, has proven to be more successful. That said, here are some measures e-mailers who practice, or are considering, double opt-in can take to reduce confirmation drop-offs.

- When a user enters his address, mention an e-mail will be sent to him and include its estimated arrival time. Indicate the user is required to respond to that message to receive subsequent mailings. With transactional customers, consider placing this information on the page with order confirmation.

- Ideally, a confirmation message is sent immediately. It should be sent while the subscription is fresh in subscribers' minds and they're still engaged in an online session. If you notify them it will be within a day or two, make

sure you follow through on that promise. If your systems are slower, then requirements related to message content are even more relevant.

- If you need a confirmation, that's the only thing you should ask for. Explain to users they will not be added to the list until they take the necessary action. Most desirable is a one-click confirmation link embedded in the message. Giving users a reply option with subject line intact is another good approach. Requiring them to write something in the subject line or body of the message or asking them to forward the e-mail on to another address is not as effective. Ensure the brand is clear, the list subscription is identified, and contact information is included. It's also a good idea to link to your privacy or e-mail policy.

1. Creating Pop Ups

Pop ups are mini windows that open when a user takes a particular action. That action could be anything from reaching the site, clicking onto a particular page, or even leaving the site.

Many businesses use pop ups in collaboration with joint venture partners as a way of sharing traffic, but they're also great ways to trap users' email addresses so that you can keep them informed and send them marketing material. It's very effective.

So how do you add pop ups to your site?

One of the best things about pop ups is that they're dead easy to produce. It takes just a few lines of script inserted into the part of your website. You don't need to hire a programmer to do it for you. I'll give you the script right here. All you have to do is paste it into place and customize it to meet your needs:

Don't worry about how the code actually works; the important thing is that it does. Simply swap the parts in bold for the name of your link and the name of the pop up.

Of course, you'll still need the trigger that gets the pop up popping:

The link

Use that as the link, with the right URL and the word 'notes' replaced by the name of your page, and you're in business.

Finally, when you build the pop up page itself, make sure you include the following line of code:

This just makes sure that your pop up stays in front of the main window instead of disappearing behind the browser and getting lost. Very important, otherwise

your users won't see it to sign up.

So pop ups are dead easy to make. Anyone can do it. But there's no point in having a working pop up if the pop up itself doesn't have persuasive enough text to close the deal. There are a number of sales tactics that you can use on your pop up to make sure the user actually fills in the form and sends you his details:

1. Give them a reason to play
If you really want to make sure your users hand over their email addresses, offer them something in return. Free reports are good, e-books are fine too. In fact, anything that's free and relevant is likely to get results. You don't have to go overboard here; if you can find a goody that won't cost you anything, fantastic. If you're going to pay, make sure it pays overall.

2. Make the Title tell

The title tag of your pop up isn't going to push it up the search engine listings, but it's still important. If you leave it out, or worse, write something daft, like "mypopup", no one's going to take you seriously. Be professional and you'll achieve professional results. Use a real title.

3. Use a hard-hitting headline
I talk about headlines in more detail later in this chapter. I can't stress how important these are. You've got about two seconds to grab a reader's attention and make them read. That's the job of your headline. It's got to focus on the benefits the user can expect by signing up:

"Increase Your Sales By 127%!"
"Learn How To Speak Swahili In Three Weeks Or Less!"
"FREE Marketing Newsletter! Sign up here!"
Use a duff headline and you'll get a duff bottom line.

4. Keep it slim
If your users have to wait more than a few seconds for the pop up to download, the chances are they'll close the window before it's finished. Use minimal graphics and make sure everything's optimized before you put it on the server.

5. Make it sexy!
Slim doesn't mean the same as dull. You can still use cool colors and attractive fonts, but make sure the pop up looks professional. The copy has to be easy to read, and the whole page has to be good on the eye. Balance and simplicity are key when it comes to pop up design.

6. Offer a close button
You might think it's a good idea to keep the pop up open until the user signs up. But if they're not going to register to get the benefits you're offering, are they likely to opt in just to get rid of the pop up box? And if they do, are they likely to buy from you? Keep your users happy; let them close the box easily if they want it out of the way. Maybe they'll go ahead and buy something instead.

1. Email marketing tactics

All right, so you've got the addresses. Now what are you going to do with them? Obviously, what you're going to do is send your users marketing material in the mail so that they'll know all about the great stuff you've got on offer.

There are two ways you can do that: you can send them a newsletter every couple of weeks or so; or you can send them a sales letter. Newsletters are hugely important. In the next chapter I talk about newsletters in detail.

In the rest of this chapter, I'm going to explain how to write simple sales material that gets results. I'm going to do that by concentrating on the two most important parts of any sales material: the headline and the call to action. Get those two right, and any piece of marketing material you produce—online or off—will get the results you want.

Writing Headlines That Grab Your Customers and Sell Your Goods!
Headlines are absolutely vital for all your marketing efforts. Whether you plan to use them on your website, your emails, your newsletters or anywhere else, they're the hook that grabs your readers, reels them in and turns them into customers. There are dozens of different kinds of headlines that you can use and some of them are better than others. These are the ones that I use, and that I've found the most effective.

The No Nonsense Headline

The first type of headline you can use is the simplest. No frills, no tricks, no hooks, just a straightforward description of the contents of your message. You could produce something like:

Tips To Save Money On Your Weekly Shopping
The Best Way To Choose Your Next Car
Real Estate Agents That Shift Property Fast!

Notice that you can still use explanations and hard-hitting adjectives to get your point across, but these headlines do little more than tell the reader what to expect.

The advantages of these headlines is that they're easy to write and easy to read. You don't have to try to come up with some hard-hitting sales message and customers aren't put off by a document that looks a piece of promotional material. On the other hand, they're a bit weak and that makes them hard to turn into cash.

When to use it

You can use No Nonsense Headlines when you don't need to work hard to make

the sale. If you're sending information that you know your customer will read, either because it's free or because it makes no obligation on them, these are the kind of headlines to use.

The Question Headline

Question headlines work by asking customers a question that plays on their worries and promises a solution further on. These are great devices when you really want to grab a customer and ram your message home.

Want To Save Thousands On Your Home Insurance Bills? Learn How To Cut Your Costs In Half!
Where Do You Look For Love? Discover The Best Places To Meet Your Match!
Suffering From Termites? Drive Them Out With The Extermite-Ator!

To write these headlines, think first of what problem your product is actually going to solve. (If it's not going to solve a problem, then you're going to have a problem selling it!) In the first half of the headline, you ask your customers if they're suffering from the problem. Just by asking, you're suggesting that they do. In the second half of the headline, you tell them that you have the solution. Dead easy and dead effective.

This is a really simple formula to follow: all you have to do is state the question and promise the answer. And it sells too; you've put the problem in the reader's mind, now you're offering the solution.

Of course, these kinds of headlines depend on the reader empathizing with the problem. If they don't, or if they decide that the headlines looks too long to read, they're not likely to buy.

When to use it

Question Headlines are most effective when your product is going to clearly solve someone's problem—and when you know your customers are going to empathize with that problem. If they don't say yes to the question, they're going to say no to the sale.

The How Headline

This is pretty similar to the Question Headline—but only offers the solution. It makes for a shorter read than question headlines so you get your point across faster, but you lose the empathy.

How To Fix Up Your Home Without Breaking The Bank!
How I Made $3,000,000 With One Phone Call!

How I Lost 33 Pounds On A High Fiber Diet And A Revolutionary Light Exercise Plan!

These kinds of headlines cut straight to the problem-solving aspect of your product. They're short and to the point and can be easily absorbed with just a glance.

When to use it

How Headlines are great when the rest of the document is going to reveal information. That information might just be details about your product, but the focus should always be on telling customers how they can solve a problem. These work best when you're selling information products like books or newsletters.

The Numbered Headline

There's a good reason that magazines like Cosmopolitan use headlines like "6 Ways To Drive Your Man Wild!" They work. Most people are put off by the sight of a giant slab of text. They want their information in bite-sized chunks. When you put a number in your headline, you let your reader know that the information you're offering them is going to be easy to read:

7 Ways To Make Your Computer Run Faster
15 Top Tips To Turn Your Website Into A Money spinner
23 Sales Tools That Guarantee A Sealed Deal

The advantage of these headlines is that they promise easy reading, increasing the chances that your text will actually be read. It's also easy to slip a call-to-action sales message into these kind of documents: one of the tools, deals, or ways etc. will be "buy my product"!

On the other hand, easy reading isn't the same as interesting reading. The headline still has to grab your readers to make them want to read it.

When to use it

Numbered Headlines are most effective when you're confident your readers will find your message interesting and you don't have to fight to make them read on. They're best used when you're competing against other articles or sales letters. I use them a lot in newsletters, especially when I know it's going to published in a joint venture partner's newsletter.

The Testimonial Headline

These are some of the toughest headlines to write. You take a chunk of text from a letter written by a satisfied customer and use that as the headline for a sales letter:

"Last Year, I Was Working 12 Hours A Day And Making Just $36,000. Last Month, I Made $32,000 And Worked Three Days A Work—And It's All Down To Your Amazing Methods!"

"I'd Tried Every Weight Loss Program Ever. I'd Tried Dieting, Exercise, High-Fiber, Low Fat, High-Carbs... You Name It, I'd Done It And Nothing Worked. Then I Tried The Lose Fat Fast Program. I Lost 33 Pounds In The First Two Months And I've Never Felt Better!"

"Within A Week Of Sending Out My Resume, I'd Got Three Interviews And A Fantastic Job Offer. I Couldn't Have Done It Without You!"

These headlines puts your reliability right at the top, increasing the customers' confidence to buy. They explain in detail precisely what you're offering and what you can do for the reader. They also create massively long headlines that are difficult to absorb at a glance and can put a reader off.

When to use it

Testimonial headlines are best used in industries where reliability is a bit of a problem. If you're selling weight loss products for example, or any other life-changing service, then a headline like this goes some way towards proving to the buyer that you're on the level.

Those are just five kinds of headlines that I use in my businesses every day. There are dozens more, but these are the ones that I've found the most effective. There's certainly enough here for you to get started. Play around with them, figure out which ones would work best for your business and try them out.

But even the best headline will only grab a reader's eye and get him reading. They won't close the sale. After the headline you'll have to describe all the wonderful benefits of your product—you've got to get the reader to actually take the action that will seal the deal. That's the call to action.

Growing your Email lists

A key concern of most marketers is how to build their Email lists without compromising on the subscribers that already exist. After all, Email marketing is about building relationships with your best customers without neglecting others. The process of growing email lists can very easily turn into spam. This is something all marketers need to steer clear of. Most companies are always looking for ways to get their email marketing address lists together. Large companies are trying to get email addresses for their existing customers and prospects, while small or startup companies are just trying to create any list at all.

With careful and meticulous planning, you can build strong relationships with new subscribers. Here's how:

Collect only relevant information

While requesting a visitor to sign up, collect information that is relevant to your business. A recent study lamented that most of the corporate probing was unnecessary, given that most companies never act on the information they extract from their customers. It is crucial that you know exactly what you intend to do with the information you're going to collect. Moreover, you should also be able to prove to your visitors that information you would be collecting from them is actually vital for your business.

Do not make your customers repeat information

Most customers don't mind telling their banks the ages of their children if they think the bank will use the information to help them sort through the myriad college savings plans or make them aware of estate planning issues. But nothing irritates customers more than having to repeat the same information to each channel as if it's the first time they've ever heard the information. This is especially true in the case of Email lists on web sites.

Focus your list

We have discussed the importance of focusing or targeting customers earlier as well. Current customers are the most important e-mail addresses to collect, much more so than prospects. They'll be more receptive to your communications and likely to respond, since they're familiar with your company and its products. Do not run campaigns that attract a high number of visitors that have no interest in your products or services.

Scrutinize and leverage all available data

Scrutinizing all data that is collected is vital. This is particularly true for bigger companies. Let the rest of the company know what you're doing—they may know of a quick way they can help you. There have been many cases when employees come and go, unknown projects sprout up and wither before anyone discovers them and multiple, redundant databases flourish.

Special Offers and Discounts

Special offers like coupons and discounts are classic direct marketing techniques that translate extremely well to email. In order for an offer to be effective, it must provide something of real value to the recipient. Minimal discounts are not enough to get the readers' attention; you have to offer something of substance. Don't discount lower than your profit on the transaction, however. Having a time limit on these types of offers is extremely important, in order for the call to action to work.

Apart from using the Internet as a medium, there are also some ways you can use your marketing efforts in the real-world to help build your Email lists.

Networking Meetings

From your local chamber of commerce, to specialized industry groups, the

meetings of many organizations are great opportunities to make contact with new people. You are exchanging business cards with interested prospects or possible referral sources, so make sure that you send appropriate email communications to these people. Start with a personal email recapping your conversation with them, and letting them know that you will be adding them to your monthly email list. Don't just start sending a barrage of email to every person that you come in contact with, however. Make sure that the person indicated some interest in what you have to offer first, or your contact will become quickly unwanted.

Trade Shows

Whether you have a booth, are one of the presenters, or are simply attending a trade show, you have an excellent potential opportunity similar to networking events, but at a much greater scale. Organizing the follow-ups to people you actually spoke to yourself, and then adding the person to your personal list is a given.

The general information requests gathered by associates at your booth can be handled in a similar way. Lastly, you may have organized a giveaway or contest to gather more leads at the show. These people are frequently less interested in what you have to say, and more interested in whatever they might be getting or winning. As a result, it may require secondary contact to obtain the permission to add them to your regular communications. In general, hitting contest winners with a "hard sell" is not usually effective.

Seminars

Organizing informational seminars is a great way to build a healthy relationship with prospects and potential referrers. One effective technique is to have advance registration, and to ask permission to send regular emails at that time. This way, even if the person is not able to attend the seminar, you still have an opportunity to stay in touch with them. After all, they were interested enough to register for the seminar.

Events

Concerts, parties, art openings, or any other occasion that gathers people together can provides an opportunity to build your email address lists. Having a registration or check in location, or associates with clipboards working the room are just two ways to make contact. In the case of events, it is a good idea to offer some kind of incentive to boost signups. However, make sure that the person can only receive the incentive via email. This way, you will improve the quality and accuracy of the lists you are collecting.

Post Cards/Direct Mail

When a company has an existing database of postal addresses, direct mail may be the best way to get the email addresses for your existing customers and prospects. Again, offering an incentive always helps stimulate a greater response, and is particularly effective when there is a pre-existing relationship. This helps increase the typical response rate of converting postal address recipients to email recipients. Publish a specific, but simple, web site address on your mailing to direct people to a landing page with the list signup on your site.

Email Content – Text vs. HTML
This is probably every Email marketer's dilemma. More so, due to the fact that there is no clear majority of people preferring one format over the other. Some people will always prefer text to graphics, and some email readers only support basic text. A prominent Internet Marketing website recently carried out a survey asking not only which format was preferred but why one format was preferred over another. Over 600 people—mostly marketers and small business operators—responded.

55% favored HTML and 45% preferred Text. Given that well over 90% of email readers can view HTML, it is surprising that almost half the people would prefer to receive Text. To investigate this point further, the survey gave those who chose Text a list of possible reasons to explain why. On average, people listed about two and a half reasons each. They said:

1. Can't read HTML 6%
2. Just want the meat without the distractions 32%
3. Like to read offline 15%
4. Ads are more intrusive in HTML 22%
5. Slow to download 14%

- Other 11%

The most popular reason for choosing Text over HTML was an interesting one. People were clearly expressing a desire for email layouts that focused on the message, and they often saw HTML emails as containing elements that distract from the content—the content being the reason they signed up for the email in the first place.

11% of the people who selected "Other" as their reason gave their own reasons as:

1. Text takes up less storage space 28%
2. Security—fear of viruses 22%
3. Easier/faster to read/scan 13%
4. Text is easier to read on a PDA 9%
5. Text is more reliable, formatting/forwarding etc. 7%
6. Easier to save/file/copy text 6%
7. Like to read email in preview pane 4%

8. Text is more personal 4%
9. Fear of tracking/being spied on with HTML 4%
10. Text is more easily searched off line 1%

The fact still remains that readers are almost equally divided on their preference. The best way to get around this is to give your subscribers an option of receiving messages in Text or HTML.

1. How often and where to email

Email marketing is a powerful yet inexpensive way to make contact with customers and prospects. Depending on whom you are trying to touch, there may be certain times of day, or days of the week, when the recipient may be more responsive to your message. In addition to specific timing for your email marketing campaigns, the frequency and the number of times to send can all play a big role in helping improve your results.

When to Email?

For a mailing to business recipients, sending midday from 11 AM through 3 PM is probably the best time. Sending a message earlier in the day can result in a higher risk of the message getting lost in the rush to prepare for morning meetings. Sending it too late in the day and it may end up quickly deleted before the recipient leaves for their commute home.

On the other hand, when mailing to consumers after work is probably the best time. People tend to check their personal email when they get home from work or after dinner. Most consumers are too busy getting ready for work in the morning to read their email.

Like the time of the day, different days of the week can affect your results as well. The best days to contact businesses are weekdays barring Monday and Friday. Monday has proven to have too many meeting to reach decision makers, and on Friday most people would prefer to leave early before the rush hour than receive your email, no matter how cool the email and offer may be.

Consumers are more likely to spend more time on the Internet on weekends, and hence have more time to consider your offer. One observation is that since many people tend to check their personal email at various points throughout the day, selecting a specific time to hit your target group while they are online is much more difficult.

Avoid mailing during Holidays

During the holidays, people tend to be away from their computers and not check their email regularly. This means they may get your message when they return

together with a ton of other mail that has piled up during the holidays. Chances are all but the most important messages will be deleted in a rush without a second look.

Frequency of the Email

Sending email too often can be annoying, resulting in recipients asking to be removed. Not sending often enough and you may have been forgotten when the recipient is finally ready to buy. As for most communication, once a month is best. A few exceptions are a daily newspaper, or a time-dependant offer like a seminar invitation.

Sending three variations of the same offer to the same recipient is a good way to improve response rates. You should never send the exact same offer more than once. Otherwise you risk the recipient thinking that it's just another copy of the same email and deleting it. If a recipient has not responded by the third attempt, they are not going to, either because it's the right offer/wrong person, or the wrong offer/right person.

Following Up

It is important to follow up at least once after an initial offer. Many times it has been seen that a number of recipients who click-through on the first mailing after receiving a second mailing. You cannot wait too long to send a follow-up message or they may have forgotten about the original offer. Follow-up contact is recommended one to two weeks after the original offer is sent.

The proliferation of abusive email marketing has dramatically changed the landscape for anyone with an email address. Legitimate marketers now not only have to work harder to obtain a positive response for a campaign, but they also have to avoid a negative response and all this while trying to avoid getting filtered right out of the in box before recipients even see your message.

Make sure you have permission to communicate with every person on your lists. Many spam emails are now claiming "you signed up for the XYZ list" when in reality there is no existing relationship. If someone has indeed opted-in to your list, make sure they understand when and where this took place. If their relationship is with a third-party that you are partnered with, make sure to spell that out instead. You may well be better off with a partner sending on your behalf, so as to avoid any confusion about exactly why the recipient is being emailed.

Once you've crossed the line with a recipient by spamming, there is usually no going back. The same ability of email marketing to directly reach recipients, can inadvertently offend them. Like the difference between using a chainsaw to cut up a fallen tree versus accidentally severing your own limb, email marketing requires both care and knowledge to use correctly. Make sure you stay on the

correct side of the line, and you can put that power to work to improve your bottom line results.

1. Auto responders

Automation of your Email marketing process is crucial for the success of your business. An automated system enables you to reply immediately solicited information, send follow ups to your prospects, and save lots of time. Automation can be achieved with tools known as Autoresponders.

The auto-responder is a program that automatically sends a reply with a pre-designed response to any email address that sends email to it. It is also often called infobot, autobot, auto-mailer, or responder. Auto-responders are great for confirmation messages as well.

Advantages of using an Autoresponder

The auto-responder allows you to capture the email addresses of your visitors, so you can build your own opt-in targeted mailing list. This is a great tool to use for an Email or Newsletter. You can offer via auto-responder a free article that pertains to the subject of the newsletter to all of your new subscribers.

The auto-responder will automatically extract the prospects name and use this information in your follow-up messages. With this marketing tool you can send personalized follow-up messages. If you personalize an email message, your prospect is twice as likely to buy from you.

You can sell your products 24 hours a day, 7 days a week with the help of an auto-responder. Auto-responder is a handy tool that automatically follows-up with a series of email messages at preset time intervals and works for you 24 hours a day. You will be able to develop your follow up messages and set reliable time intervals.

Following up with your prospects could mean a 50% increase in your sales. Your potential customers may simply forget about your initial message or they simply may have a bad day; for that reason, it is so important follow up with your prospects at preset time intervals at least five times after sending your initial message.

Autoresponders are great for sales letters. Suppose you posted to a couple of forums and newsgroups you can offer a free report about your industry and included in that you could have a sales letter. You then post the email address of your autoresponder and within seconds the user could be reading the free report and your sales letter. You don't have to do anything. Apart from these, autoresponders also allow you set up predefined answers to the most likely questions. This can cut up to 70% of your customer service requirements.

Given below are some of the other key benefits of Autoresponders:

- They introduce your business to the prospective customer

- List out special offers for members
- List out benefits of joining your website
- Compare your product or service with your competitors
- Give testimonials of existing customers
- Welcome letters for new members
- Thank you messages for new orders
- Order confirmation
- Acknowledgement of a query or a receipt of payment from your customer
- A reminder when their subscription or free access period is about to expire.

It is a good idea to have a copy of the original email sent to the autoresponder forwarded to you. Some people don't understand exactly what to expect from the autoresponder and they put a message inside the body of the email. If you don't at least take a peek at these emails, you may accidentally ignore a question from a prospective customer.

Autoresponders can handle many more emails than you could ever process manually. Also, you can send a ten-page email just as fast and easily as sending a two paragraph email.

Choosing and Setting up Autoresponders

It can be simple to set up and use an autoresponder, but choosing which one from the dozens of autoresponders that are available can be difficult. Most web hosts offer a simple autoresponder that gives one email message in response to an email to a specific email address. The problem with this type of responder is that one message is often not enough to keep the continued contact or deliver the content that you want to offer your visitor.

There are two main types of autoresponders. They each have their pros and cons.

Autoresponder services

Autoresponder services are web based services that allow you to send a series of emails to a visitor who has either requested the email through a web-based form on you site (the service provides the html code for your site to use) or who has sent an email to a specific address the service has provided you to use.

The primary advantage of such services is that they are very easy to set up, and are very reliable. In addition, they are host independent. This means that your web host doesn't have to allow you to run any particular services on your site to have access to all that an e-mail autoresponder can provide.

Email autoresponder services have two main drawbacks -- they can be costly, especially if you need to use an autoresponder on more than one web site, and they lack a certain amount of flexibility -- whatever the service provides is what

you get. There is a limited amount of customization that you can do with such a service. GetResponse is recommended for most people. It has good customization, and the price is quite reasonable.

Autoresponder programs (or scripts)

The other choice for an autoresponder is to purchase (or lease) a program or a script (usually written in perl, requiring CGI access on your server.) Several of these are available. They offer the potential for lower cost, especially if you have multiple web sites to support. (But be careful to check the license agreement. Some license agreements require an additional fee if you are going to use the program or script on more than one site at the same time.

These types of autoresponders also allow, potentially at least, for increased flexibility. Some are quite powerful in their own right, while perl scripts can generally be modified to suit your needs for a fee. A good example of a script based Autoresponder that you can install on your site and never have to pay monthly fees to use is Autoresponse Plus.

Autoresponse Plus offers the advantages of a system you can own along with all of the flexibility. It is available at a very reasonable price, and a multi-domain license is also available for only modestly more. Finally, most of the complexity often associated with such programs can be almost completely eliminated because professional installation is available for a small incremental increase in cost.

CHAPTER 5 – GETTING TRAFFIC THROUGH SEARCH ENGINES

1. All you will ever need to know about search engine optimization

It doesn't matter how great your website, if no one sees it, you're not going to make a penny. You can spend days producing the perfect design, weeks tweaking the copy, and months writing the code and uploading the pages, but if no one knows where you are, how are they going to know they should buy from you?

When I first started selling on the Web, the first major problem I ran into was bringing customers to my door. I put banner ads on other sites, organized reciprocal links and joined Web rings. Those methods all worked to some extent, but what really did it for me, what turned my business from a small earner into a major money-grabber, was figuring out how to use search engines.

Sure, I'd submitted my sites to the major search engines as soon as I'd finished building them, but I didn't really pay them much attention. After all, I figured search engines are just for people who are looking for information; they're not really good for commercial sites.

Boy, was I wrong!

One day, I sat down and checked out which sites were popping up first in the categories that suited my businesses. I found that all the top-ranked sites were my biggest competitors. And when I say biggest, I mean these guys were in a

whole other league. They had incomes that were ten or twenty times the size of mine—no wonder they had top billing at Yahoo! and Google! And then it clicked. Search engines don't list sites by size, they list them by relevance. These sites weren't listed first because they were big; they were big because they were listed first!

That was when I began to 'optimize' my pages and think about meta-tags and keywords. As my sites rose through the listings, my traffic went through the roof. And not just any old traffic! The people that came to my sites from search engines hadn't just clicked on a banner by accident or followed a link from curiosity, they'd actually been looking for a site like mine. My sales ratio went up like a rocket. I'd created my own big break.

In this chapter, we are going to discuss all proven strategies of Search Engine Optimization. We would discus how to optimize your site, submit your pages and pick up the targeted traffic you need to make cash. This chapter is probably the most important chapter in the whole book. It's crucial that you read it carefully.

Let's start with search engines.

## How Search Engines work

Internet search engines are special sites on the Web that are designed to help people find information stored on other sites. There are differences in the ways various search engines work, but they all perform three basic tasks:

- They search the Internet -- or select pieces of the Internet -- based on important words.
- They keep an index of the words they find, and where they find them.
- They allow users to look for words or combinations of words found in that index.

Early search engines held an index of a few hundred thousand pages and documents, and received maybe one or two thousand inquiries each day. Today, a top search engine will index hundreds of millions of pages, and respond to tens of millions of queries per day.

Spidering

Before a search engine can tell you where a file or document is, it must be found. To find information on the hundreds of millions of Web pages that exist, a search engine employs special software robots, called spiders, to build lists of the words found on Web sites.

When a spider is building its lists, the process is called Web crawling.

In order to build and maintain a useful list of words, a search engine's spiders

have to look at a lot of pages. How does any spider start its travels over the Web? The usual starting points are lists of heavily used servers and very popular pages. The spider will begin with a popular site, indexing the words on its pages and following every link found within the site. In this way, the spidering system quickly begins to travel, spreading out across the most widely used portions of the Web.

Indexing

Once the spiders have completed the task of finding information on Web pages, the search engine must store the information in a way that makes it useful. There are two key components involved in making the gathered data accessible to users:

- The information stored with the data
- The method by which the information is indexed

In the simplest case, a search engine could just store the word and the URL where it was found. In reality, this would make for an engine of limited use, since there would be no way of telling whether the word was used in an important or a trivial way on the page, whether the word was used once or many times or whether the page contained links to other pages containing the word. In other words, there would be no way of building the ranking list that tries to present the most useful pages at the top of the list of search results.

To make for more useful results, most search engines store more than just the word and URL. An engine might store the number of times that the word appears on a page. The engine might assign a weight to each entry, with increasing values assigned to words as they appear near the top of the document, in sub-headings, in links, in the meta tags or in the title of the page. Each commercial search engine has a different formula for assigning weight to the words in its index. This is one of the reasons that a search for the same word on different search engines will produce different lists, with the pages presented in different orders.

An index has a single purpose: It allows information to be found as quickly as possible. There are quite a few ways for an index to be built, but one of the most effective ways is to build a hash table. In hashing, a formula is applied to attach a numerical value to each word. The formula is designed to evenly distribute the entries across a predetermined number of divisions. This numerical distribution is different from the distribution of words across the alphabet, and that is the key to a hash table's effectiveness.

The Search Engine Program

The search engine software or program is the final part. When a person requests a search on a keyword or phrase, the search engine software searches the index for relevant information. The software then provides a report back to the searcher with the most relevant web pages listed first.

Top Search Engines

We studied how search engines work. An integral part of any Internet Marketing or Search Engine Optimization campaign is to know exactly which search engines to target. This section discusses some of the top search engines today.

Google

Google has increased in popularity tenfold the past several years. They have gone from beta testing, to becoming the Internet's largest index of web pages in a very short time. Their spider, affectionately named "Googlebot", crawls the web and provides updates to Google's index about once a month.

Google.com began as an academic search engine. Google, by far, has a very good algorithm of ranking pages returned from a result, probably one of the main reasons it has become so popular over the years. Google has several methods which determine page rank in returned searches.

Yahoo

Yahoo! is one of the oldest web directories and portals on the Internet today, and the site went live in August of 1994. Yahoo! is a 100% human edited directory, and provides secondary search results using Google.

Yahoo! is also one of the largest traffic generators around, as far as web directories and search engines go. Unfortunately, however, it is also one of the most difficult to get listed in, unless of course you pay to submit your site. Even if you pay it doesn't guarantee you will get listed.

Either way, if you suggest a URL, it is "reviewed" by a Yahoo! editor, and if approved will appear in the next index update.

AltaVista

Many who have access to web logs may have seen a spider named 'scooter' accessing their pages. Scooter used to be AltaVista's robot. However, since the Feb 2001 site update, a newer form of Scooter is now crawling the web. Whichever spider AltaVista uses, it is one of the largest search engines on the net today, next to Google.

It will usually take several months for AltaVista to index your entire site, although the past few months scooter hasn't been deep crawling too well. Unlike Google, AltaVista will only crawl and index 1 link deep, so it takes a good amount of time to index your site depending on how large your site is.

AltaVista gets most of its results from its own index, however they do pull the top 5 results of each search from Overture (formerly Goto).

Inktomi

Inktomi's popularity grew several years ago as they powered the secondary search database that had driven Yahoo. Since then, Yahoo as switched to using Google as their secondary search and backend database, however Inktomi is just as popular now, as they were several years ago, if not more so. Their spiders are named "Slurp", and different versions of Slurp crawls the web many different times throughout the month, as Inktomi powers many sites search results. There isn't much more to Inktomi then that. Slurp puts heavy weight on Title and description tags, and will rarely deep crawl a site. Slurp usually only spider's pages that are submitted to its index.

Inktomi provides results to a number of sites. Some of these are America Online, MSN, Hotbot, Looksmart, About, Goto, CNet, Geocities, NBCi, ICQ and many more.

Lycos

Lycos is one of the oldest search engines on the Internet today, next to Altavista and Yahoo. Their spider, named "T-Rex", crawls the web and provides updates to the Lycos index from time to time. The FAST crawler provides results for Lycos in addition to its own database.

The Lycos crawler does not weigh META tags to heavily, instead it relies on its own ranking algorithm to rank pages returned in results. The URL, META title, text headings, and word frequency are just a few of the methods Lycos uses to rank pages. Lycos does support pages with Frame content. However, any page that isn't at least 75 words in content is not indexed.

Excite

Excite has been around the web for many years now. Much more of a portal than just simply a search engine, Excite used to be a fairly popular search engine, until companies such as Google seemed to have dominated the search engine market. As of recently, Excite no longer accepts submissions of URL's, and appears to no longer spider. To get into the Excite search results, you need to be either listed with Overture or Inktomi.

Looksmart

Getting a listed with Looksmart could mean getting a good amount of traffic to your site. Looksmart's results appear in many search engines, including AltaVista, MSN, CNN, and many others.

Looksmart has two options to submit your site. If your site is generally non-business related, you can submit your site to Zeal (Looksmart's sister site ), or if you are a business, you can pay a fee to have your site listed. Either method will get you listed in Looksmart and its partner sites if you are approved.

Once you have submitted your site, and it is approved for listing it will take up to about 7 days for your site to be listed on Looksmart and its partner sites.

**AOL Search**

**America Online signed a multiyear pact with Google for Web search results and accompanying ad-sponsored links, ending relationships with pay-for-performance service Overture Services and Inktomi, its algorithmic search provider of nearly three years**

## Search Engine Page ranking algorithms

**A search engine's main job is to provide results which most satisfy a user's query. If they present a result that the user visits and doesn't agree that the document is about their query, there is a very good chance that the user may not use that search engine again. Most search engines pay no attention at all to the Meta description tags. Meta description and keyword tags are hidden attributes that you can add to the front of your document which are supposed to annotate and describe the document. Since the users will never see this information, they will be disappointed if you stick in invalid keywords or fail to keep the description in line with the document's contents which usually is the case.**
**Most Search Engine page ranking algorithms rank pages based on the following aspects:**

- **Content of the website**
- **Representation of content, keywords, and links on websites**
- **Location and number of inward and outward links on websites**
- **Relevancy of search terms as compared to the websites**

**Given below is a brief description of the page ranking algorithms of some of the most popular search engines.**

**Google**

**You can submit your site to Google using http://www.google.com/addurl.html. Submitting your site will only make Google aware that your page exists; it is quite possible that your pages may get crawled even if you have not submitted. It is advisable to submit the home page and some inside pages. Inside pages are added to the submission, just in case the home page is found too slow to load or crawl. The pages that are submitted should link to the rest of the pages. Google indexes the full text that is visible on any page that it crawls. It generally does not index the metatags – keywords or descriptions.**

**When Google lists your page in the search results, the description that is displayed is the extract of text that is around the first line where the search word appears on the page. It may thus be a good idea to write a good description of the page and build it around the most likely search term(s) and place that near the top of your page. You should remember that one sure way of getting your site listed and indexed is if there are several links that point to your site and such links appear on web pages that in turn have several other links pointing to them.**

The term 'link popularity' is used for this. It analyzes links of the pages that it has visited and this 'link analysis' helps to determine the ranking of the page.

Google uses a proprietary PageRank algorithm for determining relevance and ranking of pages in the search results. Location and frequency of the search term on your web page are no doubt factors in ranking; however off the page factors such as link analysis are more important. Generally, Google provides search results based on relevancy, meaning that it returns a list of pages ranked by the number of other Web pages linking to each page, as well as other mathematical algorithms

Yahoo

Yahoo offers a human powered directory and visitors are offered the results from this directory. The directory is supplemented by web page index created by crawling. Yahoo currently uses Google for its crawler indexing. The directory is an important channel in the area of search engine marketing. It is popular and is used extensively by people to locate sources of information. Moreover the directory is a valuable boost to your site for crawling and ranking in other search engines, as the directory provides a high quality link to your web site.

When a visitor is looking for information or relevant sites, he/she could either browse through the hierarchy of directories and sub directories or search for an appropriate directory through a search interface. As your site can be listed in just one category, generally, the choice of category is an important step. Choose the top category that your target visitor who is making a search may select out of the different categories offered to him/her.

Select your target keywords and find out which categories relate to those keywords. For submission of non-commercial sites also the Yahoo Express submission is recommended rather than the Standard submission option.

Listing of your site on the results page in your chosen category is in two possible sections (for most categories). One section is called Most Popular Sites and this is on top, while the remaining listing is Alphabetical in the second section on the page.

Yahoo does not reveal how it includes certain sites in the Most Popular Sites list. However link analysis, clickthroughs are likely to be factors. You cannot pay to be included in this section. Certain sites with sunglasses shown next to their name or @symbol shown at the end of the name reflect that Yahoo considers those sites as excellent.

Inktomi (MSN Search, AOL Search, Hotbot)

Inktomi is a search engine that does not offer its search services through its own site, but through Partner sites – prominent ones being MSN Search, AOL Search, HotBot and others.

Inktomi through its crawler creates three different indexes. Best of the Web index has around 110 million pages that it indexes on the web and considers high in link analysis. The next set of around 390 million pages is indexed as Rest of the Web, considered as lower in link analysis. The third index is of paid inclusion. It also offers specialized regional indexes as well as targeted news, multimedia and directory indexes. It avoids duplication of the same page in more than one index. Link crawling and paid inclusion are the two most effective ways to get covered by crawling. For bulk submissions to its paid program, it offers IndexConnect (for 1000 or more pages). Again there is a cost per click basis, with a monthly minimum.

Ranking at Inktomi is determined by a combination of factors including HTML links, keywords and description tags near the top of the page or in the Title tag. If the search string matches with what is found at these places on the page, the ranking is higher. Link analysis and analysis of clickthroughs are other important criteria that it adopts.

AltaVista

AltaVista will accept free listings through its addurl link, but it also has paid inclusion features. Generally their crawler may visit every four weeks. Paid inclusion may be desirable if you have a new website or pages or if your pages are refreshed every week or so and you do not wish to wait till the next cycle of crawling. There is an Express Paid inclusion service of self-service type for upto 500 pages at a time. This service will enable weekly crawling. Their bulk program called Trusted Feed will enable the pages to be directly linked to their index. Pricing for Trusted Feed is on a cost per click model with a monthly minimum. In this program you can submit the Meta data, descriptions and keywords directly to the index. Nevertheless, the engine will check whether the destination page has the same Meta data or not and could levy a penalty for spam.

AltaVista's ranking policies are a combination of various factors. The frequency and positioning of keywords and descriptions is important, so are Title tags or words that appear near the top of the page. Besides, it applies link analysis to determine relevancy and page ranking. It levies penalty on spamming and also it does not recognize invisible or tiny text, keyword stuffing, identical pages, mirror sites, and quick meta refresh tag.

## Keywords—Optimizing Your Site to Get Top Billing at Search Engines

When a user enters a search term, also known as a 'keyword,' into a search engine, the engine runs through the billions of pages in the database and awards each one a 'relevancy score.' The higher your score, the higher your listing. If your site doesn't contain the keyword used by the searcher, the only score it's going to get is a big, fat zero. Your first task then is to make sure you know

which keywords are most relevant for each of your sites.

There are three ways to figure out your keywords:

Ask your competitors

This is the cheapest way to find many of the most important keywords. Simply log on to a search engine (AltaVista is good, Google is better) and carry out a search for sites like yours. Open the top site, and once the home page has downloaded, click on 'View' in your browser, and then 'Source.' That will reveal all the HTML used to build the Web page, including all the keywords that have been specially inserted.

For example, let's say one of your websites sold nutritional supplements. You could carry out a search for 'vitamins' in Google. The top site there is called DrugEmporium.com, and the keywords they list are "The Katz group, Snyders, Drug Emporium, Drug, Drug Store, pharmacy, stores."

Some of those keywords will be relevant to your site. Others, of course, won't be relevant and there will be lots of other keywords that aren't obviously listed—like 'vitamins' for example. But you can repeat the process on other sites, using different keywords, and build up a pretty long list.

Ask the pay-per-clicks

Pay-per-click sites actually let you see how popular a keyword is. They're not being kind; they're trying to make money. The more webmasters bid on those keywords, the higher the bids are going to rise—and the more money the pay-per-clicks are going to make. FindWhat, for example, has a Keyword Center, and Overture a Keyword Suggestion

Tool. Both are very handy, but they also require you to open an account. That can cost a few bucks, but when you have a lot of sites covering a lot of different areas, it's usually worth the expense.

Use a specialized tool

Not too surprisingly, a number of companies have popped up to supply specific keyword services for a fee. The best of these is WordTracker.com. They're not bargain basement, but you get what you pay for. They'll give you all the keywords you need and in my experience, they're a sound investment.

Googlefight.com is another useful tool to see whether one keyword is more popular than another. The site compares two keywords and tells you which is more

popular. It's free and has a limited use, but it's fun to play with.

As you make up your list of keywords, bear in mind that it's also worth looking at key phrases. It's quite possible that a user looking to buy flowers online might search for 'red roses' or 'cheap bouquets' as well as just 'flowers.' Key phrases are often overlooked by competitors, so you've got a pretty good chance of getting a high placement with the right combination.

Don't worry too much about the competition though. Some people will tell you that you're better off trying to find keywords that no one else has thought of—as if there were any!—and others will tell you to throw in keywords that are only slightly relevant to your businesses.

In my experience, that's a waste of time. If your competitors are using certain keywords, it's because they know they work. And if you pick up any users using irrelevant keywords, you're not going to sell them anything. Don't try to reinvent the wheel here: just try to figure out the most popular keywords and the best key phrases to put on your site.

Whichever of these methods you use—and I tend to use more than one—you should end up with a pretty comprehensive list of keywords that you can stick into your website. The next question then, is how do you use them? When a search engine assigns relevancy to a site, it looks for the keywords in a number of specific areas.

Title Tag

The title tag is written in the section of the Web page and after the

That looks long, but the title tag is usually between 50 and 80 characters including spaces. Different search engines have different limits so you want to make sure that your most important words are near the beginning of the title. When you look at the New York Times' site, you only see "The New York Times on the Web".

The rest of the title is made up of keywords and phrases but in fact, you don't want to put in too many keywords here. Just place one keyword as the second or third word in the title. Too many, and your site could be seen as spamming.

You can also list more keywords in the and sections of the area, but because these areas have been so abused in the past, a number of search engines today will skip right past the title tag and go straight to the Web copy.

## Web Copy for SEO

The search engines will scan the text on a Web page to see if your site is relevant to the search term. That means that in effect, your Web copy is going to have to do two things: to persuade a customer to buy, and persuade a search engine it's relevant.

When you write your copy aim for about 500 words a page, but throw in between four and eight keywords. You'll have to try to balance a smooth text flow with getting in all the keywords you need to be listed.

You can also consider adding text-only pages such as how-to articles, tips or tutorials to your site. Throw in some keywords and they can turn up in search engines and create opportunities for link exchanges.

So there's a few ways you can try to improve the position of your site in a search engine. More important than where you put the keywords is choosing the right keywords. That's not really a huge challenge as your competitors are likely to have done the job for you.

Of course, even if you do get everything right, it doesn't mean you're going to shoot straight to the top of Google. One of the criteria for relevancy is how long you've been online, so success on the search engines won't come overnight. The sooner you start submitting though, the sooner you can start to rise.

## Submitting to Search Engines

Submitting sites to search engines is much easier than submitting them to directories or pay-per-clicks. In fact, you only have to submit the home page. The search engine's 'spider'—a neat little software program—will then follow all the links from the home page and include your other pages. Spidering actually increases your relevancy score more than hand-submitting your internal pages yourself.

The disadvantage of spidering is that it can be slow. Google has the best spider but even they can take up to a month to index all your pages. For other search engines you can wait three times as long.

## Search Directories – The Benefits of Browsing

Search directories differ from search engines by providing a range of categories for users to browse. Rather than enter a keyword into a search box, users click through categories and sub-categories narrowing down their options.

You could say that search engines are like going straight up to the sales assistant and asking what they have in eveningwear; search directories are like browsing through the store and seeing what catches the eye.

How you make your site catch the eye in a directory though is actually pretty similar to standing out in a search engine: it's all about relevancy—a mixture of keywords and links.

## Submitting to Search Directories

Submitting your site to a search directory is a little tougher than submitting to a search engine. Directories don't have spiders—they rely on humans. When you submit your site, whether it's to Yahoo! or any of the other myriad directories, you'll have to complete a form that will include your URL, Page Title, Keywords and a Page Description.

Your keywords and title will play some role in your ranking, but for the description, it's much better to put a hard sell that will attract users. There's no point having a link at the top of a category if no one wants to click on it.

Bear in mind that because each submission to a directory is checked by a human editor, it can take quite a while for your site to be approved and listed. Some sites do have express services but these are pretty pricey (Yahoo! wants $299 and $600 for adult sites!), and if they decide your site isn't suitable for a category, you don't get your money back. It's usually worth the wait.

## Pay-Per-Click—Buying Status

Pay-per-click programs (PPC's) allow you to buy a prime position in a search engine by selecting the price you wish to pay for each visitor your receive. This can place you exactly where you want to be in the listing, or let you decide how much you want to spend on advertising.

The big advantage of PPC's is that you don't have to worry about messing with keywords or links or any of that. You can just figure out how much you want to pay for a keyword and buy your position. In addition, you only pay for people who actually click on your link (for banner ads, you often have to pay when someone sees it.) And you can also get cheap visitors. Bids usually start at around five cents per click. The top three bids though are often promoted across a network of sites (Overture place theirs at the top of Yahoo!) so there can be big bonuses for bidding high.

**This is how most pay-per-click programs work:**

- **You create your page title, description and link as you want it to appear in the search results.**
- **You enter the keywords and phrases that will prompt your listing to appear.**
- **You enter your keyword bid (the amount you are willing to pay for each click to your site).**
- **Your keyword bid is compared to that of other bidders for the same keyword. The results are returned to the user with the highest bid appearing first.**

Show me the money!

**With PPC's, the name of the game is profit. You need to be careful not to get carried away with the ranking so that your promotion doesn't cut into your revenues.**

**This is essential! There's no point in being top if you're out of business in a month. You have to figure out what you can afford and keep to it. Base your decision on your visitor to sales ratio (the number of visitors on average that it takes to generate a sale) and your net profit per sale.**

**So for example, if you were get a sale from every tenth visitor, and you net a profit of $20 from each sale, then you can't pay more than $2 for each click without operating at a loss. In practice, you might make one sale for every 500 or so clicks and pay perhaps 15 or 20 cents for each visitor, depending on your market.**

**It's absolutely crucial for you to know your visitor to sales ratio.**

**It's also important to keep that ratio as high as possible, and that means only bidding on relevant keywords. If you pay for visitors who are looking for something completely different to the services you're offering, you're just throwing your money away. They aren't going to buy, and even at five cents a shot, those wasted nickels soon add up. On the other hand, because you can pay so little, it is worth bidding on as many relevant keywords as possible.**

**The key is to balance high payments for top keywords with low payments that bring in less traffic.**

**You should also consider the quality of visitors the site will send you. The more targeted a directory, the more your visitor to sale ratio may improve—and that might make it worth improving your bid price.**

Submitting to pay-per-clicks

Submitting your site to a PPC is certainly a lot faster than submitting to a search engine or a directory. You must, however, make sure you consider the following:

- The maximum amount you can bid (can't stress that enough!)
- The keywords you wish to bid on.
- The titles and descriptions of the site.

That last point is very important for making the most of PPC's. Just because you don't have to worry about putting keywords in your title and descriptions to please a program doesn't mean relevance isn't important. On the contrary, relevance still matters. You need to let the user know that your site is exactly what they're looking for. That means putting the keyword in the title and having a catchy, informative description. Remember, the more good clicks you get, the more money you'll make.

## AdWords and Premium Advertising

If you do a search at Google, you'll notice that not only do you get a list of all the sites that return your keyword, you also get a list of other relevant ads on the right of the page and at the top of the listing. These are part of Google's Adwords and Premium Advertising programs. Advertising like this can certainly be an important part of your marketing plan. Well developed ads with clever wording can prompt an immediate response from the reader to visit your site. Google and Overture are currently making a lot of money with this kind of advertising—and if they're making money, you can be sure their advertisers are too.

Buying an AdWord on Google is a little complicated but it can be very cost-effective. In effect, Google have combined the Pay-per-Click system with their own relevancy calculations. You'll need to select a keyword—or an 'AdWord' in Googlespeak—and write a short description. But you'll also have to choose how much you wish to pay, and the price won't guarantee you a position.

Advertisers enter a maximum bid per click and this is multiplied by the click-through rate (the percentage of users who click on the ad). That's the score Google use to allocate position.

So for example, if you were prepared to pay a dollar per click, and one user in a hundred who saw your advert clicked on it, you would get a rank number of ($)1 × 1% = 0.01.

Let's say that gives you top position. You might then get even more users and a higher click-through rate of 2%. That higher rate would reduce your price to 50 cents (0.01 divided by 2%).

All very nice, and it's always fun to pay less than you've said you can afford, but how it works is less important than the fact that it does. All you have to do is figure out how much you're prepared to pay for each click, how much you can afford to pay each month, and write a great description.

And once again, it's the description that's key.

Like the PPC's, your description has to persuade users that you're relevant; it doesn't have to play to the search engine's software. By all means repeat the keyword, but also make sure you have good, call-to-action copy like "Grab a great deal on DVD's today!" or "Buy now, while stocks last!" Remember, the more clicks you get, the more sales you'll make—and the less you'll pay.

Always place the AdWord in the most appropriate category and track the responses you receive from it. Be proactive in redefining your strategy if you receive minimal response. You'll probably have to play with the wording and the keyword selection to get the results you want.

Premium Advertising

This is the Platinum Card of Google advertising. For at least $5,000 you can be one of two advertisers to top a category. Very effective, very prestigious—and very expensive. $5,000 is the minimum bid. Something to think about—if you think you can make the money back.

## Link Popularity and Link Analysis

Majority of the major search engines use link popularity as an important factor in ranking relevancy. As search engines have become more sophisticated, so too has link popularity. Link popularity simply is the number of links from other websites that point to your website. This strategy has gained immense success due to the crawling nature of most search engines. Spiders crawl from link to link and store pages into their database. Link popularity is generally gained through reciprocal linking. Other websites would usually point to your website only if you have a link to their website from yours.

A few years ago, the number of websites linking to your site gauged link popularity; little emphasis was placed on the "content relevancy" of the linking site. In an effort to gain more link popularity, "link farms" began sprouting up across the web. For a nominal fee, a website owner could join link farms and enjoy increased link popularity overnight.

Search engines caught onto this tactic and created better tools for detecting legitimate links. Websites that have links from websites with "similar" or

"relevant" content score higher, thus earn better placement in search engines.

However, Avoid joining "link farms"; some search engines consider them a form of Spam. Many engines will actually penalize sites for maintaining an abundance of links from non-related websites. It is more important than ever to develop a solid "link-popularity" strategy. One excellent, although time consuming, method is to simply write complimentary website requesting a link exchange.
Link analysis is somewhat different than measuring link popularity. While link popularity is generally used to measure the number of pages that link to a particular site, link analysis will go beyond this and analyze the popularity of the pages that link to your pages. In a way link analysis is a chain analysis system that accords weighting to every page that links to the target site, with weights determined by the popularity of those pages. Search engines use link analysis in their page-ranking algorithm. Search engines also try to determine the context of those links, in other words, how closely those links relate to the search string. For example if the search string was "toys", and if there were links from other sites that either had the word toys within the link or in close proximity of the link, the ranking algorithm determines that this a higher priority link and ranks the page, that this is linked to, higher.

## Reciprocal Links and Partner Sites

Keywords and AdWords aren't the only way that search engines score relevancy; links to other similar sites are another important factor. Keywords have been so abused by some webmasters that links are winning much more relevancy points. Google is said to love them.

It might sound strange to suggest that your users should check out your competitors, but they probably know about them anyway. If your competitors have a higher ranking than you, linking to them can make the higher relevancy score—and the increase in traffic—worth your while.

Alternatively, you can link to your own site by creating a sub-directory. This is like building another Web page, but the URL will include your keyword. So if you were selling stuffed toys, the new URL would be www.yourdomain.com/stuffed_toys/stuffed_toys.html. You could then write a short paragraph on the home page, describing the new page and including a link. Big relevancy points!

### Reciprocal Links

Reciprocal linking means forming partnerships with other sites who place a link from their Web pages to yours. You give them a similar link in return.

When you look for people to swap links with, make sure that you don't reduce the

quality or content of your own site. You don't want users to click straight through without reading your content; you want them to buy first. One way to stop them from running away too quickly is to create a "Webmasters Resource Page" and link to that page from your homepage. This doesn't take away from the content on your homepage and the links are just one click away rather than being buried deep within the site, giving value to your partners.

In any case, you want to be sure that your site is more than just a page full of links. If your site contains more links than content, it will not be attractive to webmasters, search engines or users.

## Picking your partner

Your link partners should be sites your target market will visit. Think about your product and its subject area and brainstorm to determine where people interested in your product might be looking online. For example, if you're trying to shift your book about blackjack strategy, it makes sense that the people visiting online casinos would make great customers. Online casinos then could be good partners. Identify top-ranked, high quality casino sites and find the email address of their webmasters.

You can also identify your competitors and see where they trade links.

Tips for talking to webmasters

- Before you contact webmasters, place a link to their site on your resource page to assure them that you will actually provide a quality link.
- Create a subject line that will encourage them to read your message rather than deleting it—you don't want them to think you're spam. (Something about their site or product is sure to capture their attention; they will open it, thinking you're a potential customer.)
- Begin your message by talking about your visit to their site and what you found interesting about it. Detail your product or service in one line and ask them to exchange links with you.
- Tell them in detail where you have placed their link and emphasize that it is only one click away from your homepage.
- Tell them that if you don't hear back from them in a couple of days, you will consider that to a negative response and that you will remove their link from your site.

## Inward link analysis

Like reciprocal linking, inward links to your website can be an effective strategy to increase your website's visibility. Inward links are links pointing to your

**websites from other websites without providing a reciprocal link from your website.**

**There are many techniques to improve inward linking. Many of these have enjoyed success. The most proven technique for inward linking is through Ebooks. You can offer interesting and educative Ebooks for free to other websites and they could install the icons or the Ebooks on their sites. The icon or the Ebook you create would have a link to your website. This will allow a spider to crawl through that link and visit you website. For example, a footer on every alternate page can have a link to your website that would increase the probability of your website being listed with a crawler based Search Engine.**

**Other techniques include posting newsletters, white papers, news stories and press releases at other websites, particularly industry specific and general portals. The newsletters and press releases would contain a link pointing to your website, thus, promoting your website.**

## Optimizing your Website

**To get listed correctly in the search engines each page of your site that you want listed needs to be optimized to the best of your ability. Since the keywords that you decide to target will be used throughout the optimization process choosing the right keywords is essential. If you choose the wrong keywords you will not be found in the search engines. If you are not found in the search engines how will anyone find your site? Since the keywords you choose to optimize your pages with are so important we have put together some tips to help you make sure that you make the right choices. You should utilize these tips when selecting keywords for each page that you plan to submit to the search engines.**

**Think "specific keyword phrases" not "keywords". Due to the extreme amount of competition for general terms in the search engines, if your keyword phrases are too general it is very unlikely you will rank well in the search engines. You stand a far better chance to rank well for specific phrases where there is less competition. The resulting traffic, since it is more highly targeted, should also be much higher quality too.**

**You should try to come up with as many keyword phrases as you can think of that relate to the page you are optimizing. Try asking a few friends and family what they would search for when searching for a site like yours. Check out your competition for ideas. Do a search using keywords that you already know you want to target and click through on the top sites that come up. Once on the site view the source HTML code and view the keywords they have in their Meta tags - this should give you many more ideas.**

**Make sure to only use keywords that relate to YOUR site or page. To view the HTML code, simply click the 'View' at the top of your web browser then select**

'Source', or 'Page Source'. You should develop a list of keyword phrases, following the tips on this page, for each page that you optimize for the search engines.

Apart from these, there are certain aspects that should be avoided. These are:

Dead Links - As search engines index your entire site by crawling through hypertext links, you must make sure you check for dead links before submitting.

Graphics and Image Maps - Search engines cannot read images, be sure to include Alternative Text tags.

Frames - Many Search engines aren't frames compatible. Meta tags and the tags are important in this instance.

Spamming - Avoid resubmitting your pages repeatedly to search engines if your site does not get listed in the first few weeks. Allow at least 6 weeks before resubmission. Continual resubmission (such as those caused by automatic submission software) can cause your site to be penalized.

## Monitoring Your Progress

Okay, so you've decided on your keywords, inserted your links and submitted your sites. Now all you have to do is open your offshore account and wait for the cash to pour in, right?

Well, not quite. You might get lucky with your first shot, but it never happened to me. Once you've submitted all your links, you need to keep a close eye on them, and see which need improving and which can be dropped.

The crucial factor here is to keep track of your Search Engine Statistics. These will tell you how many people have come from the various search engines and how many of those became customers.

But it's not enough to know how much traffic you're receiving, you also want to know how you're doing in the rankings. There are two ways to do that:

### Manual Searches

Dead easy, simply log on and look. First enter your URL to make sure your site has been approved and listed. That can take a little while. Once you can see that you're online though, you want to see how you're ranked in each keyword. To do that, you can simply enter each keyword into the search engine and browse the pages until you find your listing. Works, but takes a while.

Computerized Searches

I'll be honest with you: it's been a long time since I did a manual search. If you've got just ten sites and you want to check ten keywords for each once a week, you're going to lose at least a day's work a month. That's too much for me. I use WebPosition Gold. I tell it which keywords to check where and it gives me an automated report. Simple.

When you look at your statistics, pay particularly attention to which keywords are bringing in the most traffic. In general, the higher you are, the more traffic you receive and the more sales you make. But that isn't always true. It might pay more to be fifteenth on a keyword that gets a million searches a month than first on a keyword that gets just a thousand. And if you're fifteenth, you've still got room for improvement.

And it's the improvement that's the key. If you see that your link is stuck at the bottom of a list somewhere, try adding more links, putting that keyword in more pages or adding keyword-rich content. If you can see where you stand, you can figure to where to go.

## Finally, a word about Spam

Don't.

You can spam search engines by stuffing your site with keywords, submitting them numerous times or filling your pages with links. And they'll just get you blacklisted.

Don't do it. It's just not worth it.

It used be accepted practice to create doorway pages—duplicates of a home page filled with different keywords—but search engines won't accept even these any more.

They will accept smart pages though. If you want to use more keywords than you can fit on your site, create a second page that is totally different from your homepage but which is still based upon your product or service. Here, you can expand upon a topic you merely touched on in your homepage. A great example of a smart page is to write articles on the benefits of your services using a different set of keywords to those on your home page. You can do that.

To sum up, this chapter gave a detailed view of many of the proven and effective Search Engine optimization techniques. SEO is probably the most important and the most successful traffic generating mechanism, and when done carefully it can

do wonders for your website and your products.

To Your Success,

Lanty Paul

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