

PROMOTION TACTICS

How To Gain Customers For Your Online
Business Using Powerful Promotion Techniques



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Introduction to Online Marketing Using Email Lists as a Marketing Tool

As a business entrepreneur there are numerous ways to increase your sales and better market yourself and your abilities. One of the most common, and most profitable, ways to increase your network is through online marketing.

Online marketing is a must for anyone who owns their own business or has a product or an idea they're trying to sell. Twenty years ago online marketing wouldn't have gotten you very far, but now the internet is the quickest, and most productive, way to get your idea out there into the world.

One of the most useful methods of online marketing is email marketing. Email marketing does a number of helpful things for you. Email marketing:

- Allows you to reach many people at once
- Gives you an unlimited number of contacts
- Is more affordable than regular mail
- It's easy to update

These points are very important for today's marketing entrepreneur. Let's talk about the first point. Email marketing allows you to reach a number of people at once.

Allows You to Reach Many People at Once

When I say 'A number of people' I don't just mean ten or twenty, I'm talking hundreds and thousands. You might have a hundred email addresses to work with and email marketing will let you get through to all of them.

It's not only that you can email many people; the great thing about email marketing is also that you can email many people at once and say the

same thing to them. In other words, you don't have to re-write the email over and over.

One of the things I find about hand writing letters and advertisements is that although it is still a lot less informal, it is sloppy.

Hand writing all of your clients means you either a) Write hundreds of letter until your wrists are stiff and your fingers ache, or b) write one letter and photocopy it which doesn't look nearly as impressive as handwriting them. Email correspondence saves you a lot of trouble because nobody expects a handwritten online letter. You don't have to worry about photocopies and buying stamps, all you have to do is write a brilliant advertisement or newsletter and send it through multiple emails. You can also copy and paste the letter if your email list is too large to send that many messages at once.

Gives You an Unlimited Number of Contacts

That brings me to my second point. Email lists can be unlimited. Yes, addresses in your personal organizer can be unlimited as well, but emails are so much easier to keep up with. You don't have to worry about losing your address book or one of your clients moving and you not having the new address. With your email list you can almost guarantee their email address is going to be the same every time you make contact with them, no matter how far away they moved.

Keeping your email list organized is also much easier than you think, in fact, most providers, such as Google, keep your contacts organized systematically.

An autoresponder service such as AWeber.com would be the choice if you're looking for a complete email marketing solution – from getting your site visitors to subscribe for updates to easily sending out a newsletter to them. I'll discuss more on this in the next few pages.

It Is More Affordable Than Regular Mail

Email is free. It really doesn't get any better than free, does it? When it comes to marketing, very little things can be considered affordable. After all, marketing is a competitive business to be in.

When you market yourself you have to keep up with everyone else in the same market as you, which means you need to be aware of:

- Current trends
- Your manner of speaking and writing
- Your appearance
- Your sell ability
- Your finances

Your finances are the first thing that should be on your mind as you step into the wonderful world of online marketing. Actually, your finances should be on your mind even marketing yourself offline and there are many ways to save yourself some money here and there.

One of the best ways, of course, is through email marketing. Let's look at the cost of postage for a moment. When you send a letter you are paying for the price of the paper, the envelope and the stamp.

Those are just the outside costs. Mailing a letter through the post also means you're paying for your own time. Writing one excellent sales letter can take anywhere from five minutes to an hour (We tend to rethink our sales letters, don't we?). Copying that letter hundreds of times will take even longer. Now, let's add in the time it takes to hand write that letter instead of type it (you can double the minutes on that) and then add on some more wasted time when you have to search every contacts address and write those on the envelopes (which is a necessity).

Time consuming, isn't it?

Emailing your clients takes away all of that extra wasted time and money you would have spent on sending those letter or advertisements through the post.

It's Easy to Update

One of the most difficult parts about regular mailings through the post is that your product or idea is one that changes throughout times (such as cell phone services), then you are going to have to send out letters on a regular kind of basis.

In other words, you are not done mailing those letters yet. Whenever something about your product changes or (very importantly) goes on sale, you are going to have to notify your clients again.

That notification takes you back to square one of your mailings. Why would you want to go through all the trouble of having to mail out numerous new letters or advertisement when you could just email all those updates for free?

One of the best things about having an email list for your online market is that not only can you write your clients and keep them up to date on your products and services, but you can also email coupons to your clients and have limited time sales without worrying about your fliers being outdated by the time they reach your customers through regular mail.

This particular email strategy is also extremely useful for those who have a business that shops to other places in the world. If your clients are travellers and they don't get to check their house mail too often, then using email as your communication will ensure your customers are up to date on

your services and can order from wherever in the world they happen to be at the time.

Using An Autoresponder Service To Build Your Email List

One of the easiest and most convenient ways to build and maintain a database of your subscribers is to use an autoresponder service as mentioned before.

A popular autoresponder service is AWeber (<http://aweber.com>). AWeber is an all-in-one solution to building, maintaining and emailing to your database.

You can broadcast an email anytime to particular lists you create or to all.

In addition, you can personalize your email newsletters with your subscriber's details such as their first and last name, only if you collect these details when they subscribe.

AWeber allows you to build opt-in forms so that your website visitors can enter their details to stay up to date with your site, get tips, download a product and so on.

Have a special offer you want to email out to your list? Simply send a broadcast message.

One powerful feature of using these types of autoresponder services is that you can schedule messages to broadcast on specific days after someone subscribes to your list. This makes a great sales tool since you are following up on subscribers/prospects.

Top Tips To Make The Most Out Of Email Marketing

Utilize split-testing, click tracking and open rate features of an autoresponder service like AWeber. Most major autoresponder services offer these features so that you can test to see which email gets more opens and clicks or you could even test between two versions of your email.

Make your email subject line captivating to increase open rates. The first thing your subscribers will see other than who the email came from is the email subject line. I don't mean USING ALL CAPS to capture attention (it sounds like you're screaming), but instead utilize certain techniques such as the power of specifics.

Example: "How I grew an email list of 10,128 subscribers in 10 days". This makes it look more realistic and believable than "How I grew an email list of 10,000".

Another great way to increase open rates is to ask a question. Here's an example: "Did you receive your latest report?"

Subscribers will most likely open it out of curiosity and to make sure they didn't miss out on anything.

Be consistent with your broadcast emails. The last thing you want is for your subscribers to forget about who you are and why they subscribed to your list. It's a good habit to email on a consistent basis, whether that's once a month or once a day, people want to know when to expect to hear from you.

Segment your list to laser target your content. The best response you'll get is when you have subscribers who are actually interested in a specific topic.

If your market is in the "online marketing" niche, you could segment your list by creating a "Social Media" list, Copywriting list, Emailing Marketing list and so on.

Whenever you have an offer or update related to any of those topics, you simply send it out to just that specific segment.

You could also create a "Customers" list and also a list for your Affiliates to segment it even more.

A good example of a company segmenting their list quite well is Unbounce (<http://unbounce.com>). Take a look at their blog and the free guides they are giving away at the end of each post. The guide given depends on the blog topic. If it's related to testing and tracking, they offer a guide on testing and tracking.

Use email as a way to drive traffic to your website. You could write 1,000 words in an email and make your subscribers read a long email or you could simply tell your subscriber to click on the link to view the message on your website.

The idea is to get your subscribers to visit your website, and this could be your blog or a page with an offer, so that they can engage in your content. With email, your subscriber would only be able to reply to you via email.

How Often Should You Contact Subscribers?

When it comes to contacting your subscribers, how often should you contact them? On one end, you don't want to be in their face all day and on the other, you don't want to make them forget about you.

So what's the frequency that works best?

The simple answer is, there's no one rule that fits all.

It depends on your business model and how you actually utilize email marketing.

Take a look at Groupon as an example. When you subscribe for their offers, you almost always get at least one email a day with the latest deals. You can select which categories you're interested in, example – travel, food and electronics and you'll be informed of any new deals related to those areas. A site like Groupon relies quite heavily on its email subscribers so they can keep coming back.

In the Internet marketing niche, some list owners email their subscribers once, twice even three times a day with offers, though three times may actually be crossing the line.

What's important to take note of is that you need to set your subscribers expectations from the start when they are opting in to your newsletter. Tell the subscriber exactly what they can expect from subscribing to your newsletter. For example, "Receive a free daily recipe straight in your inbox". That way they won't be surprised to actually receive a recipe each day.

Using A Blog And Website to Promote Your Business

Having a subscriber list is not the only thing you need to ensure you have in the world of online marketing. While we all want a lot of customers, we also need to make sure those customers keep coming back.

One of the many ways you can ensure your subscribers are listening and staying engaged is to have a website and blog. A website does more than you think to help sell you or your product. I can't think of any company that doesn't have a website and let me tell you why.

There are four reasons why you must have a website:

- To stand out from the competition
- To describe and feature your product(s)
- To have a blog to share your voice
- Entertainment

Most people are under the impression that a website is just another means of putting up pictures so people can see your work, but that couldn't be farther from the truth.

Almost every company or individual who needs to sell themselves has a personal or company website. From selling shoes to selling your art, websites are what makes you stand out from the crowd.

Competition

It is a great big world out there and chances are if you have the most brilliant idea of the century, someone else has the same idea. Because of

that, getting the word out quick is the most important thing you can do for yourself and your business.

Websites offer you a chance to step up to the competition and stand out, which is why it is extremely important to have a website that not only shows your product but also shows who you are. Your website has to be a mixture of business and commercialization, so to keep things competitive you must make sure your website stands out.

Product Description

If you are an author or someone who does any kind of art media, then you must make sure your work is the center of attention.

That being said, let me explain now that there is a difference between being classy and being gaudy when it comes to making your website. While you do want an eye catching website, you do not want a website that looks like a bad flamenco dancer.

Website design is not nearly as difficult as it sounds. There are a number of professional website domains out there which allow you to build the website yourself by choosing your own layout, background colors, background images and putting in your personal preferences.

One of the most important things to remember when it comes to website building is that

“You absolutely must compliment your product with the appropriate website”

Let me give you an example. I received the business card of a very talented author whose work I was truly interested in. The books were very

modern takes on ancient ideas, a new age sort of style. The book covers were soft tan and looked as if they were meant to be antiques. I was immediately drawn to the style and art of the book covers.

When I went to check out the artist's website, however, I was disappointed to see that the website background was 'done in a very flashy space scene where the stars looked as if they were coming towards you and the background music was a cheesy futuristic sort of thing.

The website did nothing to enhance or promote the books based on looks, it simply flashed out at me drawing in my attention. Because of this, I lost interest in the website. I was still very interested in the books, but I did not check out the website for any updates or read the author's blogs, I just couldn't get past the look of it.

More importantly, it's the copy (the words you use) on your site that will either make or break your site.

Having a "Welcome" page or "About Us" page as your main home page will deter visitors from finding out more about your product or service. Instead, you want to capture their attention by having a clear headline outlining the biggest benefit your customer will get out of your product or service.

The Power of A Blog

Whether you have a website featuring your product or not, a blog should also be one thing to have. It isn't enough to just put your products on display and hope for the best, your website is the place you are going to be marketing yourself or product/service.

One of the best ways to promote yourself or product/service is by having a blog. A blog is a special form of communication that allows those who visit your website to see what's on your mind. Blogs can be used for many different things, the most common reasons for blogging include:

- Personal thoughts
- Up to date product information
- Future events
- Tips and tricks

I will use Unbounce as an example again of great use of a blog. Their main website at www.unbounce.com features the main service they offer while on their blog (<http://unbounce.com/blog/>), they offer free tips related to landing pages, testing, email marketing, social media and more.

The blog helps generate reader engagement and exposes their service towards more people as a result. The simple model is to give away free information to build trust and authority so as a result, they would want to choose your product or service as a choice.

Now, let's talk about the reasons why people use blogs.

Use Your Blog To Share Personal Thoughts Or Rant On A Subject

I remember a time when I could go to the local grocer and they knew me by my first name. I would walk into the shop and hear, “Do you want your usual?” and the answer was almost always a yes.

Not only did my grocer know my name, but he also knew the names of my kids and asked how the family was doing. I would then ask about his wife and kids. In other words, we had personal interactions.

One of the things most companies don't have a lot of anymore is this type of personal social interaction. People simply become a number to them and selling the product is more important than getting to know their consumer. What's even more daunting is that the customer knows nothing about you, the seller. You could stand against everything they believe in and they wouldn't be any wiser about it.

You might think this is a good thing, but I can tell you that if people know where you stand (animal testing, no way!) then they are more likely to purchase your products.

Blogging your thoughts is a great way to let your customer know who you really are and what you stand for. By sharing your feelings and day-to-day life, your customers feel as if they know you as a person and not just a company.

Blogging is just putting a simple thought, perhaps a paragraph long, onto your website. The blog of the author I mentioned above was actually very well done. Not only did she promote her new books, but she also voiced her thoughts and opinions on day-to-day books that she read (always in a positive manner). I got to know and respect her on many levels because of her blogs.

When you rant on a certain subject in your field, it can cause controversy. Controversy gets people talking thus driving more readers to your blog. Use it carefully and sparingly. You don't want to rant on every single post.

Use Your Blog To Entertain

Blogs are also a way of keeping your clients entertained. While many of us just post our day-to-day business happenings, it's important to remember that blogging isn't just about what's new with the business.

“Your clients want to be entertained.”

There is nothing I distaste more than a sales pitch from someone who doesn't take the time to tell me anything about themselves or to ask me about my likes and dislikes.

The best example I can think of for this is the ever so popular infomercial. Infomercials are one of the most irritating sales methods I have ever seen. Here you have this guy (or gal) standing on stage for half an hour to an hour trying to sell you a juicer.

Their energy is always abundant. They will jump, yell, be very enthusiastic about the product they're selling, but do they ever really communicate with us as people?

No, not really.

This marketing technique is brilliant, don't get me wrong. If you put a hyper person on television at three in the morning to convince me I really need that thingamajig in my kitchen I am probably going to say “Of course I do, look how awake this guy is!”

I am no stranger to buying products at three AM in my jammies. Infomercials are brilliant because they work. However, they only seem to work on me in the early hours of the morning. If I see an infomercial on daytime television I change the channel and ignore it. It has no effect on me because there is no personal communication.

Using a blog on your website is the best way to entertain your clients and make them feel as if they're part of your family.

Remember, you want your clients to feel as if they're part of the family. No, not the family member that is never invited to Thanksgiving because every year they wreck the turkey, you want your client to be the one who carves that turkey.

A blog gives them that feeling. Keeping weekly updates of your company with a funny life anecdote will ensure your clients feel as if they're a small part of the bigger whole that is your company.

Use your blog to entertain by giving small personal details, such as:

"I was so excited to see my new book online this morning, I forced my kids to download it on their kindle in the hope they'll show it off to their friends. They, of course, rolled their eyes at me and said sweetly 'of course we will'. Teenagers. Gotta' love 'em."

This paragraph blog does three things:

- Mentions your product
- Personalizes you as a human and not just a company, making you sound authentic and real
- Gives your readers something they can identify with

By mentioning your product you are marketing and selling yourself in your blog. This is a brilliant way of 'namedropping' without being overly obvious about it.

This personal style blog is also a very handy technique to make sure your clients remember that you are a person just like they are. People want to have a personal connection. I much prefer shopping local (even though I pay more) than shopping at large retailers because I love the feeling of going into a store and having someone know my name. I also love the feeling of seeing the owner and telling them what a great job they have done on their recent store changes. It's imperative you humanize yourself.

Giving your reader something funny they can identify with keeps them coming back to you. If your reader knows you have sarcastic teenagers living at home just like they do, then your reader will identify, laugh, and nod to themselves in agreement. In other words, you just got them hooked.

You don't have to be a comedian, you don't have to be constantly witty, you just have to be yourself in your blog and your readers will identify with you. It's not only one of the best marketing tools available to you, but your blog is the best way to make sure that your clients turn to your product first.

Use Your Blog To Share Valuable Tips & How To's

What do most people do when they are online other than checking emails, socializing, etc? They look for information.

They want to learn, discover and find a solution to their problem. This is where your blog can also help. Don't be afraid of sharing your best tips and tricks on your blog. Not only will your readers come back for more, you'll also gain more trust and authority in your niche. As a result, you'll sell more of your product or service.

Model what other popular blogs are doing. What topics are other blogs in your niche talking about which are getting a lot of engagement? What sorts of posts get your attention? Model what others are doing but don't copy. The purpose of a blog is to add your own taste and personality into it.

A great example of a blog post sharing tips is this post by CopyBlogger.com – 7 Scientifically-Backed Copywriting Tips:
<http://www.copyblogger.com/scientific-copywriting/>

People love tips because it's chunk sized and even if they know one or two of the tips, there are other tips they can take away.

Another great blog post idea is to share a "how to" where you give the steps on how to do something, for example: How To Write A High-Converting Sales Page In 7 Steps.

Give your reader the steps to follow so that they can do it themselves.

You could either do this in written form or a video tutorial. You can use something as simple as Screen-O-Matic to record your screen (<http://screen-o-matic.com>). It's free with an option to upgrade for more features.

If you want to go a little more advanced, you can take a look at ScreenFlow for Mac (<http://www.telestream.net/screenflow/>) or Camtasia Studio (<http://www.techsmith.com/camtasia.html>) which are both paid product but give you a lot more options to work with.

Do And Don'ts When Blogging

Be wary of what you say in your blogs, though. There are things you need to stay away from such as:

- Religion
- Politics
- Bad language
- Negative thoughts

These four points are a serious no, no when you're writing your blogs. Any kind of negative commentary will give your readers the impression you are unpleasant. People want you to be humanized; they just don't want you to be human. You are still a corporation, after all.

Religion and politics are always taboo subjects. I shouldn't have to tell you that these two topics can make or break you (usually break) and it's best to avoid them at all costs. Don't even make a simple blog talking about going to church this morning because you will not be able to identify with all of your clients.

Family and kids usually identifies with most of your clients because there is a good chance that most of us were raised in some kind of family. Children are always an easy comedic relief because they cause the most mischief and your clients will either get a laugh at their antics or sympathize because they have gone (or are going) through the same thing.

Keep your blog tasteful, don't mention the latest celebrity news unless it's relevant to your product or pleasant for all of your readers (congratulating the royal baby is a safe topic, for example).

Update your blog at least once a week to keep your readers informed and coming back to you.

Social Media Marketing

Marketing yourself and your products online isn't just about setting up the right website and having a great blog for people to read. It's a great big Internet and you have to know how to utilize it to your best ability.

One of the most popular trends for aspiring entrepreneurs is using social media to bring in new clients. Social media is everywhere and it isn't just for your kids to talk about what school class they're in right now.

There are a few different kinds of social media you need to get to know in order to market yourself better online:

- LinkedIn
- Facebook
- Twitter

LinkedIn

LinkedIn is one of the best social networking groups to become involved in if you are a business entrepreneur or if you have your own small business. LinkedIn is like having your little black book of business associates...and their little black book of business associates...all rolled into one neat little package.

LinkedIn allows you to tell the world about yourself and your business in a professional manner. Think of it as a type of resume anyone can follow. You give details about yourself in reference to jobs you've had, your current endeavors and a short bio and business portfolio for others to see. Then you 'link' your peers and partners to your bio.

You can then see your associates 'linked' business associates and create a larger business based social network based on these things.

You might be wondering what this does for you? After all, why would you need to have your business resume online for the world to see?

Let's look at this from a different standpoint. If you are trying to get your name out there as a budding entrepreneur you will want to have as many people on your side as possible because the business world is all about the networking.

The larger your portfolio of people, the more networking options you have available to you. Let's say, for example, you want to expand your business into the international market, but you don't know anyone who is in the same field as you overseas. For the sake of the scenario, we're going to suggest you want to expand your product to the Japanese market specifically.

In order to make that expansion, you need to know someone who is in the Japanese market. What you might not know is that your co-workers boss's daughter's secretary has an uncle who is a Japanese businessman in the same field as you. However, you are LinkedIn to your co-worker, who is LinkedIn to his boss, who is Linked in to his daughter, who is Linked in to her secretary, who has her favorite uncle LinkedIn. You see that person and decide to make contact, expanding your business and marketing yourself outside the box.

LinkedIn is a fantastic way for people to come together. It builds buildings out of basic social building blocks that you already have all around you.

Facebook

Whenever most of us think of Facebook we tend to think of a social network for teenagers to get together, have pictures of them and their friends up, and tell the world what soda they're drinking at the moment.

We tend to think of Facebook as a way of hanging out with your friends, without actually hanging out with your friends. I know I use Facebook for friends and family far away to say hi, get out my thoughts, and share a few memes with.

As a business entrepreneur, it's important to know that Facebook is also a very easy and genius way to market yourself into the world. Using this method of social media in a similar way to how you would use a blog is the key to getting yourself out there.

I have seen Facebook pages for almost everything. The key to creating a good Facebook page for marketing is not only to make sure your page is up to date and accurate, but to keep posting on your Facebook page.

What's the point of all this when you already have a blog on your website? Facebook is different than a blog because people check their Facebook pages almost constantly throughout the day.

Have you ever watched a teenager play with their phone? These kids are constantly social networking. Not only do they look for cool memes to show off to their friends, but they're telling their friends what they are doing, what they like, what they don't like and who they are with.

“Facebook is a continuous way to keep in contact with your friends and partners.”

What exactly does this mean for you as a business person? This means you have to get in with the cool kids. The quickest way to market yourself is to make sure you have a Facebook page.

There are two things you need for your page. The first is an actual Facebook page for your product and the second is a profile page for yourself.

Your Facebook profile is the place people are going to start when they're looking for you. In other words, everyone uses Facebook. I am definitely one of those Facebook people myself and not only to market my own work, but to (here's the most important part of it) like things.

Liking things on Facebook is the most important part of this social network. It might seem like such a trivial thing, but when you like something EVERYONE else sees it and they get interested.

Here's a scenario for you. Let's say you are an avid Bocce Ball player. It's your favorite sport, it keeps you happy, and you can't get enough of it. Now, let's also say there's a Bocce Ball page on Facebook (which there probably is) and you click "Like" on it. What happens next?

Your dear friend Mike sees that you liked the Bocce Ball page and says to himself, "Wow, I didn't know Jim liked Bocce Ball, I've never heard of that, what is it?"

Mike then clicks on Bocce Ball, reads over the rules, decides to give it a try, enjoys it immensely (as you knew he would) and then clicks "Like" on the Bocce Ball Facebook page. Now, Mike's friend Stephanie sees he liked Bocce Ball and decides to see for herself what it's all about.

Do you see the string of events happening here? Bocce Ball has just become liked by your friends and their friends and so many people are now playing Bocce Ball you all get together and have a fun Bocce Ball tournament.

Okay, maybe not a tournament, but the word spreads quickly on Facebook which is why you have to have a page for your product.

Once you have established a Facebook page for your product, you need to establish a page for yourself as a person, a page where you can say who you are and what you like, a page where you can show people “I own this company” and show off your product page.

This personal page is also one that allows you to blog without actually “blogging”. One of the most important things you can remember here is this:

“People will see your blog when they go onto your website, but they’ll see your Facebook posts every time they go to their own Facebook page.”

As discussed earlier, they’ll go to their own page a lot. I would say, on average, people visit their own Facebook profile three or more times per day to update their status or check on their friends.

Make sure you have a Facebook profile you log into and update at least once a day (keeping it clean and professional, but still fun and entertaining” as well as a strictly professional page for your business or product.

Twitter

Aside from Facebook, Twitter is another social media you need to have in order to keep yourself out there in the world. Twitter is different from Facebook in two ways:

- It has less room for writing
- Hashtags

The first way that Twitter differs from Facebook is that there are a very limited number of characters to write on your Tweet. In other words, this is the perfect place to speak when you don't have a lot to say.

Twitter allows you to send people little messages about what's going on in your life or your business. You can't get into a long description, so if you just received a shipment of red women's shoes Twitter is the perfect place to make that known. You can tweet "Just got on red shoes for women! Come on by and see them." And nobody expects you to describe those shoes.

That's a very big difference from the Facebook crowd because on Facebook everyone expects you to go into at least some detail about those shoes. Are they heels or flats? What shade of red are they? Do you have them in all sizes? Are you going to post a picture?

Facebook users have higher expectations than a two or three sentence post. Twitter users know you won't delve into those kinds of details. This social media groups is the basic of the basic information.

How does that help you? For one thing it is easy to Tweet. Instead of having to come up with long, informative and interesting posts or blogs, all you have to do is write a sentence or two.

Another reason Tweeting is good for you is, much like Facebook, people can follow you on Twitter. Twitter allows you to follow an unlimited amount of people, read quickly what everyone is up to, respond when you want to, and then move on to other things. It's all done very quickly, too.

One thing that really stands out from the Facebook market is that Twitter users have something they like to call 'Hashtags'.

Hashtags are a way of grouping a conversation into more organized methods of communication. Let's say, for example, you have an online meeting and you need to keep the ball rolling, so to speak, and make sure your partners are aware of the meetings. Putting a hashtag (#) in front of the meeting name will keep your group organized.

Twitter hashtags are also a fantastic way of keeping up to date on the latest Twitter trends. Hashtags are a means of tracking what's popular. As a person who is trying to market themselves it can be very important to know what people are looking for and these Hashtags are a very easy method of tracking those markets.

While at first the concept of Hashtags is extremely confusing to people (I'll admit, I had to do some research on it when I began using Twitter) it does get easier.

The one thing to remember when creating a Hashtag is to make sure your Hashtag is relevant to your conversation or to ensure that people understand the Hashtag you're trying to create.

If you Hashtag your company, do so in a sentence. Simply put the # symbols before your company name and a Hashtag is automatically generated for you.

Twitter also allows you to choose from unique backgrounds and colors to build a good visual market for yourself. You can make your Twitter Background relevant to your business to increase the visual appeal for your clients.

Search Engine Optimization

Anyone who has ever written a keyword targeted article or blog post knows what SEO keywords are. SEO stands for Search Engine Optimization. Search Engine Optimization, to put it simply, is using key search words in your writing to ensure your web page pops up whenever someone types that keyword into the search engine.

I know, it sounds much more confusing than it actually is. Search Engine Optimization is one of the most beneficial and easiest forms of keeping your business in the loop. There is no particular skill involved (other than being a skillful writer) and there is absolutely no cost to you.

One way that people utilize Search Engine Optimization to their best advantage is by writing articles on their website. Articles are going to help you make the most of your marketing abilities:

- They describe your products
- They prompt open ended discussions
- They utilize the search engines
- They allow you to show your expertise

Articles Describe Your Products

I should start by saying that articles are not the same thing as blogs. Articles are expertly written “How To’s” that people read to gather information. Blogs are your random train of thought to keep people entertained and connect to them on a human level.

By writing articles on your website, you are able to give yourself the chance to describe your product to those who may not be familiar with it. Let’s me give you a scenario I found myself in one day.

I was given the opportunity to write a book on Woodworking. While I do consider myself a crafty person, I can tell you in all honesty that the closet I ever came to woodworking was high school shop class and as I recall I didn't get an A grade.

Woodworking, although fascinating, has never been my niche. I needed to do a lot of research and fast in order to better acquaint myself into the wild world of woodworking. The first thing I did (as anyone would do, I imagine) was search the internet for 'woodworking'.

Everything under the sun popped up to greet me. I was able to do my research with relative phrases and submit the book to be published. Now, the question is, how on earth did my Internet know how to find what I was looking for?

There's the genius in Search Engine Optimization. The Internet is not some magic device that just knows what you want and provides it for you in some whimsical way. The Internet uses keywords.

Whenever you type something into the search engine, the internet automatically shifts through billions of words, articles, and other miscellaneous internet things to find for you websites and pages that have that keyword or phrase in them.

If I type the word "monkey" into my search engine everything that has to do with monkeys comes up. It's a fast and convenient way of doing research.

As a marketing entrepreneur, however, you already know that monkey is a very broad spectrum. There are different types of live monkeys, there are toy monkeys, there are zoo monkeys and there are monkeys that only live in storybooks.

So how do I sort through my monkeys now? I tighten my keywords. Suppose I need to write something on old world monkeys. I would type 'old world monkeys' into the search engine and anything that has ever been written and posted on the internet that has anything at all to do with old world monkeys is going to pop up (theoretically).

This, however, is still way too broad of an idea for my tiny monkey report on yellow baboons. This causes me to type in yellow baboons into my search engine and see what happens.

Everything that shows up now is centered on yellow baboons. This means that the keyword phrase 'yellow baboons' is much more beneficial than simply typing in 'monkeys' when I have research to do. The Internet weaved through every little word and video of yellow baboons and posted them for me to look at.

One of the things that I can tell you about Search Engine Optimization is that:

“You must use the right keywords for your product in order for Search Engine Optimization to work best.”

If you have a business based on Jonathan apples and you want to write articles on your website for keyword Search Engine Optimization, the best thing to do is make sure your articles contain the words 'Jonathan apples'.

The Internet is going to look for your articles anytime someone types in those words, which will really help your webpage stand out in that search engine organization.

The number of times you use your keywords when writing an article for your website will be pertinent to your search engine optimization as well. If you overuse the keywords there's a risk the search engines will penalize your website. You don't want to over-saturate with keywords. Google is very particular about Search Engine Optimization.

Your Home Page

Your website should have more than one page, in fact, you should have numerous pages full of fascinating information on your website for people admire and look through and remember.

Your home page is the most important part of your homepage is the page people see first so there are things you need to have accomplished on page one:

- Eye-catching style
- Keywords
- An excellent first article with great copy
- Product descriptions

Eye-catching style is an absolute must. It's not enough that you have a website, as we talked about before you have to make sure that your website is visually appealing to people who click on it.

Your home page is the first thing people notice about you. They might say "Wow, this person is selling chocolate covered bacon!" but if you don't have a stylish eye-catching webpage to post pictures of your chocobacon on, then you aren't going to get many buyers. It's simply visual marketing.

Think of your web page as your clothing. If you go out on a first date, you don't want to be in your jogging pants and ratty old concert T-shirt, do you?

No, you want to be dressed in your best. You want your date to see you as the beautiful person you are.

The same idea goes for your webpage. You don't want a white background and some limited visual text. You want to show how classy and cool you are and appeal to whoever it is that's looking on your page.

Keywords

You must have keywords on your webpage in order for people to take notice of it. In other words, if your chocobacon site is talking about pig farming and making candy bars then you are not being clear on your product. Have one very strong opening page, like a small article detailing your business, which utilizes your specific keywords (in this case 'chocolate' and 'bacon').

Keywords should be used on your homepage around four times in order to be Search Engine Optimization ready.

You Must Have an Excellent First Article

Your homepage must have an eye-catching background, an informative and relevant article which has the keywords tucked neatly into it and you must have an excellent first article as your homepage description.

You want to keep your clients interested. Going into long, technical details about your company is something you can do in a later article (further into your website). Right now you're going to try and SELL, SELL, SELL!

In order to best sell yourself and your product it's imperative you make it sound interesting. I know people who couldn't sell water to a thirsty man lost in the desert, and I know others who could sell you a house you already own.

“One of the most important things you will ever need to know is that marketing is mostly made up of an average product spoken interestingly about.”

You don't have to have the most interesting product in the world to market it, you just need to make it sound like the most interesting product in the world.

Product Descriptions

When you use product descriptions it is very important you put these things into words:

- The name of your product
- What the product does
- Why someone would need it
- Availability of the product

It might sound a bit obvious to state the name of your product on the first page of your website, but many people get nervous and forget to do that. I know plenty of business entrepreneurs who spent all of their time fussing over the details of the product and then forgot to name it.

On the other hand, there are just as many business people who have their product named, excitedly jazzed up for why you need it, but then they don't have a description of the item there. If there is a possibility someone could read your website and say to themselves “Yeah, but what does it DO?” then you haven't properly explained your product.

Building yourself up also means you have to explain to your clients (and more importantly your potential clients) why they need your product to begin with.

There is a good possibility I have a thousand pens lingering somewhere in the kitchen drawers of my house, so tell me why would I need your new turbo ink pen?

Here's where you get to be creative.

Now, before I continue encouraging your creativity, let me just say that although you get to be creative you still have to be factual. If your turbo pen writes in fifty different colors, works in the water and is made of squid ink harvesting by local Japanese fishermen, then that's fantastic and you should use those details to your best advantage!

If your turbo pen does not do any of those things, then don't say that it does. Market the abilities your product has not the abilities you wish it had. Your home page should show truthful, and still fun and useful reasons for purchasing your particular product.

Also, market the availability of your product on your homepage. You don't have to just sell a product you can sell an idea as well. If your turbo pen comes in different colors, use that to your advantage:

"Now available in blue, green, orange and magenta! Colors to fit your every mood."

Describing your product is the best way to sell your product Consumers want to know what they're buying and it's your job to show them.

Linking Your Page

Have you ever heard anyone talk about page links? Page links are a way of advertising your product through other companies and building your Google rank.

What's the big deal about building your Google rank, you ask? A higher Google rank means your website shows up in the top results whenever someone searches for your keywords in the Search Engine Optimization.

Google bases its search results on page rankings. While it's important to use keywords relevant to your particular niche on your home page and website articles (remember, your homepage is a huge deal!), it is also important to make sure to use links.

One of the most common misconceptions about these links is that they are links you put on your website advertising other people. While this is a good marketing strategy (and I'll get more into that later) it is not the primary way for you to get your ranking higher with Search Engine Optimization.

One of the most important things you can do in order to market your website is to have other websites put a link to your webpage on their own site. In other words, if your webpage is based on chocolate covered bacon, have other webpages of similar or relative causes advertise your link.

One idea for that would be to put your link on a website dedicated to bacon. Another possibility would be a website dedicated to chocolate. You can also put your webpage link on any website that promotes food, cooking, bacon, pigs, and culinary gifts. Use your imagination and run with this idea.

You might have to pay to use other websites for marketing your own web link, but it'll be worth it. Google is a fickle process and if people click on

your links on other websites then you are going to get higher rankings in keyword relevancy.

One word of advice, while it might seem feasible to simply put your link on every possible webpage out there, it is important to put your link on relative webpages and webpages or reputable companies.

You do not want clients to associate your chocobacon with something negative or with a company that has been banned or under constant scrutiny or protest.

“Make friends with the greats to catch up in the ranks.”

Utilize your keywords sparingly, make sure that you don't overuse them, make sure they're relevant and keep linking your page. The more clicks the better.

Why and How You Should Use Video Marketing

Another fantastic way to market yourself online is to use video marketing. Have you ever just flipped through Youtube? Video marketing is everywhere and there is no end to it.

One thing that is almost universal about people is that we would rather watch than read our advertisements. I get much more entertainment out of watching a thirty second commercial than I do reading a blog.

“Consumers need to be entertained, we have short attention spans.”

Making a video to use for marketing is simple and will benefit you immensely. Before I get into how to make a video, let's talk about where to put a video.

There are two places you should put up a marketing video. The first is your website. If you have gone through all the trouble to make a marketing video than you need to make sure and put it up on your own personal website so that everyone can see it.

I know someone who makes video blogs along with written blogs just to keep things entertaining and keep their customers entertained. If you don't put it on your website first, however, your client might not know it exists.

Many consumers don't go around looking for web videos of potential marketers through Youtube. In other words, if you make a video on chocobacon and don't put it up on your own website, then you are missing out on a very marketable opportunity.

So why would you even bother putting it on Youtube if you already have the video on your personal website?

I'm glad you asked. Your webpage is limited to those who know about your product or are actively seeking out someone who offers your product or services. If you sell turbo pens or chocobacon then your audience is going to consist of people pen hunting and looking for chocobacon.

Now, that doesn't mean there won't be the occasional stray wonderer who happens along your webpage. I have stumbled onto many pages (some of them I wish I hadn't) out of sheer curiosity.

However, your customers already know you're going to entertain them. What you need is to broaden your horizon. Putting your video on Youtube will definitely broaden that horizon.

Youtube allows anyone in the world to watch your video. All you have to do is make a video and upload it and see how many clicks it gets. One way to ensure you are getting the response by putting a link to your video on your social networking sites.

You can post a link to your Youtube video up on your personal Facebook site and your product Facebook webpage. You can also post a link to your video on Twitter. Whichever way you choose (and I would suggest all three methods) your Youtube video is there for the world to see.

What to Put in Your Video

Just like writing a blog, people sometimes draw a blank when it comes time to put content into their web video. Making a video doesn't have to be overthought, you're not trying to win an Oscar here, you're simply advertising yourself in a more creative manner.

What you do need to have in your video is content. Your video can go one of two ways:

- Professional
- Silly and entertaining

This isn't to say that your professional video won't be entertaining, as I'm sure it will be, it just means that you can make your video more structured and formal or more informal and commercialized.

To answer this question you need to ask yourself what market you're trying to appeal to. If you want a professional market full of busy entrepreneurs such as yourself, then you definitely want to make a professional video. However, if you want to appeal to the younger generation and give people a laugh then you want a more comic approach.

The Professional Video

Making a professional video means you need to have a certain style. You will want to wear a suit and tie (if you're a man) or a dress top and professional hair and make-up (if you're a woman). The background of the video should be a solid color and you will want sit with the video only showing your upper torso.

Also, make sure whatever color you're wearing doesn't clash with the background of the video. It's important to keep your appearance professional. Bright colors, loud make-up, huge hair and a five o'clock shadow are not professional.

A professional video should be short and informative. This is the kind of video you want to show to business CEO's and use to sell yourself as a reputable investment. You want to market your product by marketing yourself. In other words, you need to do the following:

- Speak professionally
- Articulate
- Describe the product
- Show an example of the product if necessary
- Explain why the product is a good investment

One thing many people have a hard time with on camera is the ability to speak professionally. Slang is not professional, you must choose your words carefully and make sure they are grammatically correct.

I suggest writing down your thoughts on a piece of paper first, in speech form, and then memorizing the speech. It is not professional to hold notes in your hand when you're making your own video.

If you have difficulty memorizing speeches (you're not alone, by the way) it's okay to have someone hold speech cards up for you to look at. The reason you don't want to hold note cards yourself is that it is unprofessional to look down away from the camera.

It's almost important to note that the first few seconds of your video must get the attention of the viewer so it's a good idea to summarize in a few words what the viewer will get out of watching your video.

**“You must look at the camera at all times,
just as if you were looking into the eyes of
your peers.”**

Don't get caught up in the camera, simply be yourself and be confident about your product.

You must accurately describe your product. Many people assume that the product speaks for itself (and in most cases it does) but what is the point in making a video if you are not going to sell your product? If your video is about an idea, then you have to sell your idea.

Articulate

When speaking into the camera make sure you articulate your words. There is a popular commercial here where it sounds as if the guy is contradicting himself because his words are running together and he's mumbling a little.

You don't want to mumble.

Speak clearly and at a conversational tone. If you have to practice pacing yourself, then do so. It's more important that people understand you than it is to entertain people.

Speak your words clearly, at a conversational pace, and with a professional tone of voice. That means don't over exaggerate your cheerfulness into words and don't sound as if you're depressed or sarcastic.

“Speak optimistically neutral into the camera.”

It might sound like an oxymoron, but optimistically neutral is the basic way we speak when we are trying to sell something.

Have you ever gone through the drive through at a coffee shop or fast food place and listened to their tone of voice? Perhaps you've called your credit card and heard the operator greet you pleasantly, but still neutrally.

This is what I call optimistically neutral. You are not showing any form of self-doubt and you are keeping things on naturally optimistic, put professionally neutral, level.

Describe the Product

When you go to describe the product you're trying to sell it's important you don't overdo it. One thing people tend to do on camera that drives consumers crazy (myself included) is give a bunch of technical jargon that nobody understands and, more importantly, nobody cares about.

I can tell you I like a shiny toaster. I will gladly listen to you describe the way my toast will pop out perfectly in record time, but I don't want to know how it works. I really don't. Just tell me that it works, show me an example and let me purchase your product.

I get more frustrated at people who try to over explain (or even worse who try to over sell me) than I ever would if you just pleasantly introduce me to the product and give me a quick "how to".

Show an Example of the Product if Necessary

Speaking of the quick "how to", I don't find it terribly necessary to show an example of the product working unless you must. It is not necessary to over work yourself trying to impress your consumers, you want to show that you have the kind of product or idea that speaks for itself.

Now, sometimes it is impossible to demonstrate the product. If you have a new type of oven idea, but don't have a prototype, then you will not be able to describe the product by example.

However, if you have your turbo pen and you think people should see it in action (What?! It writes under water??? I NEED one!!!) then yes, by all means, demonstrate your product.

There's just one catch:

Only demonstrate your product if you can do so comfortably without making an idiot of yourself.

Take it from someone who has made this mistake before, if you cannot comfortably and accurately show your product as being hassle free, then don't try to demonstrate it. Nobody wants to watch you struggle. They won't buy it.

Explain Why Your Product is a Good Investment

You do have to explain why your product is a good investment. You have to give a good reason to your potential consumers that your chocobacon is going to make them happy or your turbo pen is better than any other pen on the planet.

“Having a good product is not enough; you have to have a product people can't live without.”

Remember, marketing is a competition and as with any competition you have to show that you are the best.

Going for Silly/Entertaining

While some of the same rules apply when you're using a more comical tactic to sell your product, you don't have to stress out over voice tone or clothing as much here as you would with a professional video.

Silly marketing appeals to kids and teens. Think of the difference between a toy commercial and a car insurance commercial. Which of these two commercials is your five year old going to get excited about at six thirty on a Saturday morning?

Exactly.

When you're going for silly you need to make sure that you have a lot more energy than you did in the professional video. Keep your voice upbeat, and your attitude chipper and hyper.

Think of those early morning infomercials we talked about earlier. That's the kind of energy you want to put into a silly video.

Your clothing can be a bit more relaxed here, as well. You can wear jeans and a t-shirt or something crazy to go along with your product. If your product is chocobacon, have yourself joyfully competing in a chocobacon eating competition. If turbo pens are your thing, then wear a white t-shirt and start writing away ("Look! You can even sign your friends' shirts...with fifty different colors to choose from!").

Silly commercials are lighthearted, fun and appeal to the child in us.

Now, there are some commercials you cannot turn into silly commercials (mostly because it would be extremely distasteful):

- Any product dealing with death
- Any product dealing with feminine hygiene
- Any product dealing with poverty stricken people
- Any product dealing with third world countries
- Any product based on an idea that could make you cry

This should be a given, but I want to make sure you don't make a rookie mistake by trying to lighten up a subject that's meant to be dark just to give it a new look.

When You Have to Hire Someone Else

Sometimes we don't want to be in our own commercial or blog. I'll give you an example. I know a woman who writes for an escort service. She has brilliant video ideas for certain foot fetishes, but she doesn't want to show herself on film.

In this case, she has had to hire actors to work for her. When hiring an actor to work for you, you must be clear in your needs and the needs of the company or product.

If your actress is not prepared to do the work that needs to be done, you need to hire someone else.

One thing that is certain is there is always someone willing to work. Videos are not hard to do and you can hire people on a number of different freelance markets for a very reasonable price.

Conclusion

Marketing yourself online is not only easy it is also necessary in today's world. While it's easy to sit back and think that a newspaper or television commercial will get your ideas out there just as easily, the truth is those methods are seriously outdated.

Being a part of the consumer driven society we are in means you have to keep up with the times. It is important to market yourself whenever and wherever possible. Keep your Facebook and Twitter profiles updated on at least an every other day basis.

Use your friends to help spread your business by having them click on your website or Youtube video. The more hits you get the more people will wonder what it's all about.

If you are a business entrepreneur, you absolutely must get your name out there to the big wigs. LinkedIn is the best way to make sure that those people who know someone who knows someone else know who YOU are.

Remember also that any kind of marketing is just that: marketing.

“When you sell your product, you sell yourself. Don't sell yourself short.”

Many people don't realize that just because the idea has been done before that doesn't mean that it's a bad idea to do it again.

Look at mattresses. One of my favorite marketing products is the mattress, and do you know why? Mattresses are everywhere! Almost every household or place of residency has a mattress.

Now tell me, is there only one mattress factory?

Absolutely not! There are always new mattress ideas, mattresses that move up and down, that form to your body, space shuttle mattresses, you name it.

There are still so many mattress ideas out there to choose from.

Another thing is books. As an author I can tell you that there are a limited number of book ideas in the world. There is NOTHING that hasn't been done before.

Does that stop aspiring writers from writing? Did Mark Twain put down his pen and say "Nah, it's already been done."?

Again, absolutely not.

Authors will not stop writing,. Authors have a passion for an idea that is most certainly already out there, but they feel it needs to be told again in a fresh new way.

As a businessman, you are not unlike those authors. You also have a passionate idea, something to work towards. You have a goal and a dream and you are simply trying to sell your product in a world that quite likely already has something similar.

But you have an advantage Mark Twain didn't have. You have the Internet. You can reach out to everyone in the world in a millisecond and promote your product, your idea, your video, or your book. You can market your idea simply, uniquely, and globally in the blink of an eye.

Not giving up is the most important part of online marketing.

The second most important part of online marketing is making sure people know your name.

People are creatures of habit and the consumer is definitely hard to break. Do you know why large brand name companies remain in business? Could it be their products? Could it be their logo?

Well, yes it could. It could also be their following. Large name brand corporations did not become who they are overnight, they became who they are with determination, hard work, reliable products, and by maintaining a following.

The trick to maintaining a following is to first gather a following and online marketing is there to help you gather your consumers.

If there is one thing that rings true for consumers it's that these people do not like to change products. My brother has used the same aftershave since he first started shaving decades ago.

I asked him why and do you know what his response was? He said, "Why would I change things now?"

Not everybody likes to live life on the edge.

Making even the smallest change can be quite daunting as a consumer. They must have a certain brand of hotdogs, the right designer purse, their favorite cereal, and their choice of soda.

I know, I'm a consumer and I am the same way. I'm really bad about authors. I have three authors I read religiously and anybody else I tend to huff at when asked to give them a try.

The truth is, it's not that I think these authors are bad it's just that I like what I already have. I'm one of THOSE consumers. Most of us are, really.

Your task in online marketing is to make sure you reach out to those people like me. Reach out to those who really do need to step out of their shells a little and try something new.

Just look at yourself, you are stepping out of your marketing shell and giving online marketing a try.

“Do your best and you will be a success.”

Don't be afraid to use your contacts to sell yourself or promote your idea to new potential business partners.

Make sure that you utilize the Internet to the best of your abilities to get your name out there into the consumer world.

Sell your idea and your product. If it's a tangible product and you need a place to sell it, try doing something unique like starting yourself off on Etsy or Amazon.com. Both of these websites are perfect for the entrepreneur who has a book or painting they want to sell.

Marketing is not for the faint of heart. Internet marketing is not something you can just post and then forget about. You must remember it's just as important to keep up with your blogs and articles as it is to initially start up your webpage.

Check your website messages daily and look for client inquiries. Respond personally to these emails because that will help build your reputation.

Also, don't forget to keep daily Tweets and make at least weekly articles for your webpage. People want to know what is new and exciting with your online idea.

Also, remember to keep up with the times. Watch commercials, go to technical stores and see what's "in". This will ensure you have more information to put onto your webpage.