

THE SECRETS TO PROMOTING YOUR WEBSITE ONLINE

*What your competition doesn't
want you to know*



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"VodaHost are the best providers of information I know when it comes to making money online. Whether you're looking to drive more traffic to your website, or simply make your first bit of income online, you'd do well to take their advice. VodaHost have inspired improvements in some of our online systems and every time I've taken their advice I've made more money as a result!"

**Suzie Gibson
Delaware, USA**

"Universally successful information - this is exactly what VodaHost have provided in this eBook. By "universal" I mean that the techniques described here work in every industry. It's all really simple too. You don't need a degree to follow VodaHost's advice. Pick your industry, do a test on one site, then copy the same on several sites - and you will see that making money online is an exciting and completely real endeavor."

**Jason Roehm
East Sussex, UK**

"On the whole, 'The Secrets...' contains magnificent, highly stimulating and in fact, practical website promotion advice; a compelling introduction to the world of website promotion. The depth of the information provided by VodaHost, especially on subjects such as link building and social networking, is striking and is sure to open up new avenues and inspire new ideas for your online business."

**André Vellozzi
New York, USA**

"I wish I'd had VodaHost's text 3 years ago when I started out trying to make some money on the Internet! While it may not specifically be about how to make money, all of the topics will exponentially increase the amount of money your own enterprise will be able to make from the Internet; it's very good, straight-forward and is sure to be an indispensable companion to you as you work on marketing your own web site."

**Erin Welker
Dortmund, Germany**



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THE SECRETS

TO PROMOTING YOUR WEBSITE ONLINE

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W e l c o m e !

Thank you for downloading "*The Secrets to Promoting Your Website Online*"!

We suggest you print yourself out a copy of this document, grab yourself a cup of coffee and get comfortable ... What you are about to read is going to blow you away!!!

This certainly isn't a "*get-rich-quick*" guide but instead a guide to help you build and promote a strong and lasting online presence and generate a real profit from it. This guide is about the road to making real money in the long term...

Making money online isn't particularly hard but it does come with its costs. No Internet entrepreneur has ever become a millionaire over-night without putting in any effort. If they're honest with you, none of them will tell you that they became rich in just a few days by signing up to a program that was promising to make them rich quick. It eventually all comes down to your willingness to make it happen and putting in the work.

Promoting your website isn't about being a genius or working extremely hard either but it IS all about working the right way: with the right mindset and the right tools. If you want the online business you're promoting to be truly successful, you'll find yourself investing in both time and money.

If you have already tried but failed to make money online, or simply failed to make enough money, this guide will re-arm you so you can give it another shot. If you're a total beginner, don't be intimidated by the amount of work. Thousands of people have made it before and so can you. You can apply the secrets given in this guide as many times as you want, for almost any niche. However, not all techniques shown in the eBook apply to all niches. Use your best judgment!

It is important that you follow the advice given in this guide. Ensure that you apply all the secrets to your website and don't bypass any of them; they're all equally important. Finally, learning is important but won't make you earn any money if you don't take action and apply the secrets you have learned here.

This eBook describes plentiful resources for you to learn from and even use for your own business. Now let's get started! If you act fast you could be promoting your own online business by the end of the day!

Always at your service,

Brad Costello

[VodaHost](http://VodaHost.com)

Your Website People!



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Secret 1:

Your Domain Name

1.1 DOMAIN NAME OVERVIEW

We'll start out with the first thing that any prospective customers to your website will see: Your domain name. Below you will find a collection of very useful hints-and-tips for when you are picking your domain name.

Whatever the type of online presence you decide to have (blog or website), you need to get a domain name. Don't just hurry to register a domain name though. Take your time and choose it wisely because a good domain name can be an extremely valuable asset for your business. Take your time to consider the many and varied options available to you.

Ideally, your domain name should be short, memorable, easy to spell & type and be descriptive of your website. Choose a common domain name extension such as .COM, .NET or .ORG. It's also strongly recommended that you perform keyword research prior to registering a domain name as a keyword-rich domain name can help you rank better in the Search Engines. For example if you want your site to rank well in the Search Engines for "*sky diving*", you should try to get a domain name that contains the words "*sky*" and "*diving*".

Once you have a few domain name ideas in mind, go to a domain name registrar like [VodaHost](#) and perform a few searches.

Once you found a domain name you like, register it! After you purchase your domain name, you will need to point it to the name-servers of your web hosting, if you already know them.

We're often asked how to go about picking an effective domain name and we're only happy to oblige with our essential domain name checklist below:

1. What's the purpose of the domain name?

How are you planning to use this name? If the domain name will be your primary company website, try finding the closest version to your company name that you can. If you're just starting out, choose your business name and domain name with care. Make sure your visitors know what your domain name means or, if it's an acronym, what it stands for.

2. Brainstorm a list of ideas of the problem you're trying to solve or the solution that you have.

A domain name that clearly indicates what you do ([VodaHost.com](#)), or a problem that you solve, or a solution that you have to a problem will give a visitor a fairly clear picture of what



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he'll/she'll find on your website. Visit the domain checker at [the VodaHost website](#) and just start plugging in the names you're brainstorming until you come up with 3 or 4 that are available.

3. For Search Engine Optimization (S.E.O.) purposes, it helps to have your keywords in your domain name.

Before buying your domain, make a list of keywords that someone might use to find you online. This list could include your industry, your target market or niche, a problem your target market has, or a solution that you can offer.

4. Shorter is better, if it's to be your primary domain.

If the domain name is going to be your primary domain where your primary email address will be housed, you want your domain name to be as short, catchy and memorable as possible. After a few times of spelling out your lengthy email address, you'll come to appreciate the beauty of a short domain name. Your domain name can contain up to 67 letters and numbers (although we would highly encourage you NOT to have one of this length) and can contain no special characters other than hyphens.

5. Purchase your given name as a domain name.

It pays to purchase your given name as a domain name, as well as any common misspellings of your name. Once you've purchased your name as a domain, you can redirect it to your primary website. This means that when someone types in a domain, they land at the website to which you pointed that domain.

6. Buy the .COM version of the name if it is available.

When people hear a domain name, they "hear" .COM whether it's .NET or .BIZ or .ORG or whatever. So, it pays to find a domain name that you like that is part of the .COM family. If you just can't get the name you want, try a hyphenated version of the .COM name. Many S.E.O. specialists state that Search Engines like hyphenated names and many online business owners use hyphenated keywords in their domain names to be more attractive to the Search Engines. Some domain name holders may be willing to sell you the domain name that you want.

7. Consider owning other versions of your primary domain name.

If you are registering the .COM version of a domain for your business, you may also want to secure variations of the name, alternate spellings, common misspellings as well as the .NET and .ORG versions of your domain and re-point them to your main site to keep them out of the hands of your competitors.

There. Your domain name is the beginning of the establishment of your presence online; take some time and put some thought into the process and the domain name will serve you well in the years to come. It is an effective tool for helping you get more clients online!



1.2 DON'T LEAK WEB TRAFFIC!

So you've bought your domain name, you've got your website set up and you're just waiting for the floodgates to open and for your visitors and customers to come pouring in. You've optimized your site for Google, you've spent hours crossing the t's and dotting the i's, you're cross-linked and ready to go. Statistically, it's all gravy, baby.

But here's food for thought: Statistics are all very well and good but they sometimes work in strange and unexpected ways. Web users make mistakes when entering domain names and web addresses into the address bar in their web browsers. Perhaps infinitely more importantly up to 10% of web users forget to put the 'dot' between the 'www' and 'yourdomainname.com'.

Think about that for a second...

10%!!!

It doesn't matter how much work goes into your site, how many hours of code writing, late nights and cold coffee. Statistically, up to 10% of users trying to get to it may end up somewhere else, somewhere completely different looking at someone else's page and products.

Have a think about this example: [VodaHost](#) has a website (you probably knew that already). If you wanted to get to our home page you would type "[www.vodahost.com](#)" into your browser and WHAM you're at the homepage of the internet's best web host.

Now try it the other way. Type in "[wwwvodahost.com](#)" (without the 'dot') as someone may if they incorrectly typed the address in a hurry. WHAM! The VodaHost home page again.

'wwwvodahost.com' IS a domain name ... We own it and have redirected it to our website.

There are further applications, too. Imagine if no one had registered [wwwsony.com](#) yet. There are folks out there, web-speculators if you will, who buy up unregistered domain names. They then hold or use these domains, either in the hope that someone will want to buy them in the future at a massively high cost, OR, in cases such as above, to simply steal traffic from unknowing websites and redirect it as they wish, to their own ends.

You should act on this to stop people capitalizing on your domain name and protect your investment. Get hold of "[wwwyourdomainname.com](#)" today; it's the 2nd most important domain name you'll ever own.



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Secret 2:

Setting-Up Your Website

2.1 WEBSITE SET-UP OVERVIEW

Who still believes that setting up a website or blog is difficult? Those who haven't tried yet or those who have not tried with the right tools... There are a lot of different site builders, script auto-installers and other point-and-click tools to help you build an online presence easily. You no longer really need to be tech-savvy at all.

However, you do need to have the right tools at hand. Only a very small share of Internet users could build a site not so long ago. Now almost anyone can. A website builder like [BlueVoda](#) is a great example of a tool that allows you to build a site without any technical knowledge.

There are plenty of Articles & Tutorials that you can refer to while setting up your website or blog with [BlueVoda](#) and we recommend that you watch through all of them while you familiarize yourself with the website builder. You can find them [here](#).

Another great example is WordPress, which is one of the most popular blog management systems in the world. Installing WordPress isn't easy if you aren't really familiar with web hosting and SQL database management. However, [VodaHost](#) provides script auto-installers like Fantastico DeLuxe for cPanel.

When done, you can choose a theme, which is basically a web template. Squeeze Theme (highly recommended) is one of the best converting WordPress themes in the industry. This theme is truly ideal for Internet marketers and home business owners as it allows you to tweak and customize your site very easily. The theme has an eye-catching layout that really makes visitors take action: click, subscribe, purchase, etc.

Alternatively, you may want to give Thesis Theme a try. This theme is very Search Engine-friendly and also very easy to tweak. It's one of the most popular themes in the blogging industry and you'll easily understand why when you start using it. Both are premium themes.

2.2 HOW TO MAKE YOUR WEBSITE LOAD SUPER-FAST

As you settle in to build or update your website with [BlueVoda](#), what's going through your mind? No doubt thoughts of a dynamic, feature-rich, website with loads of beautiful, high resolution images and lashings of JavaScript to entertain and delight your visitors; and why not? After-all this is the generous age of fast Internet ... What can go wrong?

In truth there are quite literally still millions of dial-up Internet users out there. Remember that your



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website exists for the benefit of your visitors and customers and a fraction of them will have slow Internet connections. Just because a visitor has a slow Internet connection doesn't mean they don't want to buy things from your e-commerce store or enjoy your website. They will click away very fast if they find your website doesn't load quickly enough. If anything, as the Internet has become faster, attention spans have gotten shorter. Your page loading time will even improve your search engine ranking now that Google uses site speed in their ranking algorithm. For all these reasons, we at [VodaHost](#) have prepared some easy tips to help you get your website is off the mark before its competitors:

- Graphics** Images and graphics are the main culprit when it comes to slowing down a website's page load time. Always say it with plain text where you can or use small thumb-nails instead of the full graphic. Remember that even a massive website that is all plain text will load significantly faster than even one single largish image. It is nice to show off the artistic qualities of your design but if it is at the expense of your visitors experience then it is detrimental. You should also try to use image-manipulation software to make your images the right size for the page. Try out [PIXResizer](#), for example. You should avoid re-sizing your images from within [BlueVoda](#) without re-rendering them at the right size because the web browser will still have to load the whole image and then just squish it when it comes time to render it; this will take time. Try and avoid having duplicate images too by keeping all the images for your website in one folder because your website should, as much as possible, load from the cache (memory) of your visitor's computer. Identical images with different file-names will get in the way of this. You should also try and avoid using animations and use a static, properly re-sized, image where possible.
- Tables** Try and minimize the use of tables in your website if you can. Your web browser (Internet Explorer, Firefox et al) doesn't display the contents of a table until it has loaded all the elements within it, so if your entire website is contained within a table, it's gonna take a while to load. If you must use tables in your website, create as many different tables as you can. A different table should be employed for at least the header, body and footer of your website. That way, at least part of the web-page will appear to your visitor should they have a slow Internet connection. Consider this: Instead of tables, use CSS to keep your page organized.
- Scripts** Some of the scripts out there can be fun but in an attempt not to mince words on the subject, it's fancy-shmancy. Little applications that show the user what the weather is doing in their part of the world (for example) are fairly pointless and slow down their web-surfing experience. If your visitor wants to know what the weather is doing outside, they can look out the window. You should consider scripts to be a luxury item and the rule here is, if it isn't essential, loose it!
- Videos** Adding videos to your site can also slow down your website significantly. If you absolutely must stream, make sure your videos are small in file size. A really fantastic way to save on website speed is to embed videos into your site that you have uploaded to YouTube. You can get the HTML code from your YouTube video and then use the Insert HTML button in [BlueVoda](#) to embed the video into your web-page by copying in



the code. Embedding videos in this way also saves on the scripts you'll have to add to your site for the video player to work and means that your website will function faster. The more you distance the content of your site from the HTML file that "builds" it, the faster your site will load. As an added bonus, the link to Google's YouTube will even help the Search Engine Optimization (S.E.O.) of your site and the more links to YouTube, the better!

Optimizing your page load time for your visitors will mean them a better experience and they will return to your website. Making a website for your visitors is extremely important. You must consider all the options and always optimize your site for them. Streamline your site, spread out your content neatly and stick to simple designs. All the really fast loading sites do...

2.3 THE 25 DEADLY SINS OF WEBSITE DESIGN

It's quite natural and very easy to make mistakes when building a website, whether it is your first venture online or if you have taken up web hosting for a few websites already. Mistakes do cost you though and in terms of S.E.O., because you're counting on the way the search engines see your website, a simple mistake can multiply and result in greatly reduced visitors.

Below are 5 areas that each contain 5 common pitfalls you must avoid at all costs if you wish your website to be successful. Following this simple guide will improve the experience of your visitors, improve the way the Googlebot and friends index the site and will improve the overall S.E.O. of your website.

Let's get started ... Here are 25 deadly sins of website building; 5 things never, ever, to do when...

2.3.1 ... giving your web-pages titles

The titles of your website are integral to the promotion of your website. They are the first part of your website that will be seen in the search results pages of Google and Yahoo! and therefore the one element that the viewer will use to decide whether to visit your web page or not.

- NEVER:** Choose too complicated or too vague a title that isn't relevant and/or has no relation to the content on the page. Your website is not a newspaper that a reader has already committed themselves to so make your titles simple rather than really clever.
- NEVER:** Use default or vague titles like "Untitled" or "New Page 1" ... This gives the Googlebot and your visitors nothing to work with... They should be finding what they are searching for ... not have to guess what your content is about.
- NEVER:** Use a single title tag across all of your site's pages or a large group of pages. Each page MUST have a unique title that is relevant to the content.
- NEVER:** Using extremely lengthy titles that are unhelpful to users. Keep it short and sweet.



NEVER: Stuff unneeded keywords in your title tags; this will be seen as content spamming by Google and the Search Engines and your website will be penalized for it.

If you are using [BlueVoda](#), you should use: View > Page Properties to edit the title of your web pages. You should choose something, short, concise and relevant. Make sure it contains a couple, at least one, of your keywords but don't go overboard!

2.3.2 ... creating your website's navigation

Your website exists to be useful to your visitors and it is not being very useful if a visitor get's lost while navigating it. In my opinion your visitors should never have to use the Back Button on their browser. You should provide them basic navigation from within the website so that they can get, easily, to wherever they want to be. As well as creating both an XML Sitemap (for the Googlebot) and a HTML sitemap for your visitors there should always be some text navigation for the user to use.

NEVER: Create a complex web of navigation links, e.g. linking every page on your site to every other page. This is overkill and will confuse not only you but your visitors as well!

NEVER: Go overboard with slicing and dicing your content (so that it takes twenty clicks)

NEVER: Have a navigation based entirely on drop-down menus, images, or animations. Many, but not all, search engines can discover such links on a site, but if a user can reach all pages on a site via normal text links, this will improve the accessibility of your site many fold.

NEVER: Let your HTML site map page become out of date with broken links.

NEVER: Create an HTML site map that simply lists pages without organizing them, for example by subject matter. The links alone are not useful out of context.

You should always make the navigation of your web pages easy. Your visitors must be able to easily navigate around your site and it must be easy for them to return to a contents page if they quickly wish to return to a piece of content. How are your visitors to link to a piece of your content if they cannot find it?

2.3.3 ... creating content for your website

Your content is the reason that visitors visit your web-pages. Without content, your website has nothing to offer; without good content you have a collection of designs. When you are creating your content, never do the below things...

NEVER: Dump large amounts of text on varying topics onto a page without paragraph, subheading, or layout separation.



- NEVER:** Rehash (or even copy) existing content that will bring little extra value to users. You should also avoid having duplicate or near-duplicate versions of your content across your site.
- NEVER:** Insert numerous unnecessary keywords aimed at search engines and are annoying or nonsensical to users. Creating your content around your keywords is the wrong thing to do ... You must optimize your content with your keywords.
- NEVER:** Have blocks of text like *"frequent misspellings used to reach this page"* that add little value for users.
- NEVER:** Deceptively hide text from users, but display it to search engines. The search engines know when you are doing this.

Your websites content, like its navigation, should be hierarchical, with clear and original subject matter, set-up like the best organized library in the world. If it is of no value to your visitors then it has no place on your web page. Make it all really, really useful!

2.3.4 ... creating links within your website

Links are the life-blood of the Internet and are essential to the promotion of your website. Getting links to your content from relevant anchor text (the text that contains the link) should be your ultimate goal when creating content. You can do some great S.E.O. on your internal links by following the notes below.

- NEVER:** Write generic anchor text like *"page"*, *"article"*, or *"click here"* and never write long anchor text, such as a lengthy sentence or short paragraph of text.
- NEVER:** Use anchor text that is off-topic or has no relation to the content of the page that is being linked to.
- NEVER:** Use the page's URL as the anchor text in most cases (although there are certainly legitimate uses of this, such as promoting or referencing a new website's address).
- NEVER:** Use CSS or text styling that make links look just like regular text. Googlebot knows when you are doing this and doesn't like it one bit.
- NEVER:** Use excessively keyword-filled or lengthy anchor text just for search engines.

Links are very powerful and should be used properly. They are a massive part of where your website appears on the Search Engine Results Pages and are responsible for how your website appears for certain searches. Always treat your links with a great amount of respect.



2.3.5 ... promoting your website

- NEVER:** Attempt to promote each new, small piece of content you create; go for the big, interesting items.
- NEVER:** Keep promoting the same piece of content repeatedly. You will alienate your viewers! Keep creating!
- NEVER:** Spam. Don't even consider it! It is completely unacceptable. Use a mailer that uses a Double Opt-In like [AWeber](#) to ensure that your mailing list understands that they have been added to your mailing list and what their choices are as far as unsubscribing from your mailing list.
- NEVER:** Promote your website based on mis-truths. Always tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth.
- NEVER:** Stop promoting your website the right way. In fact, never stop learning and promoting your website... This would be the worst mistake to make; it is tantamount to failure.

Follow the tips above and you are guaranteed greater success for your website because you will not be making any basic, simple mistakes. The list above is by no means exhaustive; there are plenty more mistakes to make.

2.4 THE 5 COMMANDMENTS OF E-COMMERCE

You never get a second chance to make a first impression...

It is one thing building a website and quite another getting it to work for you. You and your customers see countless websites everyday and regardless of what you show and tell them, they already have a fully formed idea of how a website should be. You **MUST**, therefore, make the best first impression you possibly can.

The following is a simple guide to make sure that you get the best possible start for your e-commerce website, from its design and layout to your sales and continued marketing, to give you the best possible chance of e-commerce success.

1. **Thou shalt** ALWAYS think like your customers. You are a consumer as well, so you know just how important it is to be able to easily locate the product you are looking for when shopping online. Organize your site into relevant categories and put your products in more than just one category, so that there is more than only one way for a consumer to find what they are looking for.
2. **Thou shalt** use really good photos to illustrate your products and keep the photo headlines brief. A photo can tell a consumer a lot about a product instantly and it has been proven that most consumers only scan the descriptions, so keep each sentence short and the detailed



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summaries to no more than 25 words.

3. **Thou shalt** resist the temptation to overload your website with media and fancy transitional effects (flashy is not always better); these actually become distractions and your website will be less effective at keeping the consumers attention. Most snazzy website effects add to upload time and delay the consumer's product search, commonly causing them to abandon a website altogether...which would be bad.
4. **Thou shalt not** complicate the process with unnecessary steps or pages. Purchasing should be easy. Make sure your check out procedure is simple and all pricing and shipping information are displayed clearly. You should always include a phone number and a return policy. This will help reinforce the consumer's confidence in their purchase and in you.
5. **Thou shalt** continually promote your online business as you would any other. A website DOES NOT market itself. Make the effort to stay in touch with your customers, perhaps via newsletters or special offers. Always keep an open mind. There may be many types of markets available to you that you are not reaching, or have not considered. Think outside the box. Try targeting new markets and optimizing your content as you grow... and grow... and grow!

2.5 WHY YOU NEED A BLOG

2.5.1 What is a Blog?

It's quite clear that if you want to make money on the Internet and want to increase the S.E.O. of your website then, without question, you absolutely, *1000%*, **NEED A BLOG!**

blog *noun* **1.** a website containing the writer's or group of writers' own experiences, observations, opinions, etc., and often having images and links to other websites. *verb* **2.** to maintain or add new entries to a blog

77% of Internet users read blogs and that, right there, is massive exposure for your website. Blogs have become absolutely indispensable to businesses in their quest for improved commerce and are a great way to provide your clients with information that bonds them to your business as blogs lets them see you as an authority on your subject and a friendly person they can contact. Usefully, they are a feature that you can easily add to your website.

2.5.2 About Blogs

Blogs started as VERY simple online applications for posting *online diaries*. Those diaries were used as personal diaries, political activists, amateur news reporters, and for anyone that needed a soapbox. Today, that has all changed, and with this text I'll show you some of the reasons why blogs need to be a necessary part of your online marketing (and all for just a little more than free).



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You are sure to have heard about blogs on the Internet umpteen times and you are sure to have read them but do you know what they are? Do you know why they are so useful in selling your products and making yourself money?

A blog is a type of website where relatively short entries (almost like diary entries) are written in chronological order and displayed in reverse chronological order (i.e. your latest blog post sits at the top) like a news-feed. Blogs provide a commentary, information, news or your own thoughts and commentaries any particular subject (could be food, politics, sports or local news; absolutely anything you like). A typical blog combines text, images, and links to other blogs, web pages, and other media related to its topic and as such can be a rich and rewarding to read. The ability for readers to leave comments in an interactive format is an important part of many blogs and involves the visitor. Most blogs are primarily textual, although some focus on art (*artlog*), photographs (*photoblog*), sketchblog, videos (*vlog*), music (*MP3 blog*), or audio (*podcasting*), and are part of a wider network of social media... If you are an authority on a subject, whatever it is, you can blog about it!

Like many online tools and applications, blogs started out as a tool and a toy for geeks. If you look at email, forums, html, and now blogs, they were all used by geeks for some time before businesses found a way to monetize them. Blogs have fairly recently become the next online tool to be indispensable to businesses.

2.5.3 Blogs are Free!

You can create a blog for your website in minutes and this has eliminated all barriers to creating blogs online. As you can see, this blog you are reading is a WordPress blog; we love WordPress because it is highly extendable. WordPress is a free addition to your website. Naturally, VodaHost.com hosts blogs and provides the Fantastico auto-installer, so you can install WordPress in just a few minutes and with just a couple of clicks and at no extra cost whatsoever!

2.5.4 How to Install WordPress to your Website using Fantastico

One-click installation is the quickest way to get WordPress up and running on your website; after you've determined that one-click would best serve your needs, you can follow the tutorial below to learn how to set up your WordPress blog using Fantastico's one-click installation option.

1. **Click on Fantastico Icon.** If you have not already done so, log into your website's cPanel account, then click on the Fantastico icon.
2. **Click on WordPress Link From the Fantastico interface,** scroll down until you see the Blogs section and just below it, you should see WordPress in the list. Click on the WordPress link.
3. **Check WordPress Version To the right,** you will be provided with some information about the version of WordPress you will be able to install. Take a moment to ensure that it's up to date. If all is well, click on New Installation.



- 4. Configure Installation:** You should arrive at the first of three steps in the one-click installation process. Here, you'll be able to determine which folder you'd like to have WordPress installed to, as well as some other blog information:

- Installation Location:** If you want your blog to be your website's homepage, ensure that you leave the space blank, otherwise type in the name of the folder you want WordPress installed to (make sure it doesn't already exist).
- Admin access data:** Choose the username and password you'd like to use in order to access the WordPress admin panel after installation is completed.
- Base configuration:** Type a nickname you'd like to use throughout the blog. By default, the nickname is used whenever you leave comments or write an entry on the blog, so choose something you don't mind the world seeing. The admin e-mail address is where notices, passwords, and other information about the administration of the blog are sent. Your blog's name and description should be self-explanatory.
- E-mail account configuration:** You only need to worry about this if you plan to blog via e-mail. If you've set up a special e-mail account that you'll use for blogging via e-mail, then enter the settings where applicable. (Bear in mind, you will need to enter an e-mail account password in order to proceed with the installation, simply use a false one if you don't plan to blog via e-mail.)

When your blog information is complete, click on the Install WordPress button at the bottom.

- 5. Confirm Everything Is Correct:** Verify that the information you provided is correct and click on Finish installation. Fantastico will create a brand new database for you and create the necessary WordPress files.
- 6. Confirmation Message:** When the process is complete, you will receive a confirmation notice with the details of the installation. If you'd like a copy of the report for your records, you'll have the option to send an e-mail to an account of your choosing.

2.5.5 The Benefits of Blogging

- **You get increased sales of your product or service** – If, let's say, you were selling special Cat Food and Cat Toys, you get a chance to promote your products through your blog and talk about your experience with them.
- **You become known as an expert in your field** – People will come to view you as an expert on Cat comforts and will take your advice with less hesitation.
- **Blogs get more traffic from search engines**



- They get traffic from next-generation social networking search engines (like Technorati.com)
- **News agencies are more likely to do a story on your business**
- **Real-life stories and tips warm up your web presence and help your customer connect with a real person.** – People will relate to your tales about your Cat and how you try to do the best you can for it ... This makes you far more trustworthy. As your visitors relate to you more, they will spend more money with you.
- **Educating customers on how to be a better customer helps your business run better** – Tell them why to buy your products and tell them how to buy your products. The guidance of a human being is way better than the static instructions on your website.
- **You can update your blog on your own without your webmaster's help** – More time to spend blogging, more money to spend creating and marketing your products and “Mittens” doesn't feel abandoned when you are meeting your webmaster...
- **Helps build communication between departments that are posting to the blog**

2.5.6 Uses for your blog

- **Create a how-to section** – these tend to get attention from search engines
- **As a replacement for a static news article on your company home page**
- **Warn customers of possible problems that they could have with products/services in your industry**
- **Use the blog as an “ask the expert” section of your website**
- **Tell customers about new products and services via your blog**
- **Link to related articles and web content from your blog**

Blogs are hard work to maintain and because they must be added to periodically so that the visitor feels they are getting the benefits.

2.5.7 12 Reasons you Need a Blog!

There are many blogs for many different things and here are the top 12 reasons why you need to get a blog to compliment your money-making efforts.

1. You Get to Earn AdSense Income!

You know those Google ads you see on some web pages? Well, those ads have the ability to



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earn you money! Having a blog that doesn't have Ads on it is like turning up to your Prom with no clothes on – it just doesn't make sense.

Signing up for AdSense is easy. Then you just choose what size ad blocks you want your blog to display. When visitors land on your blog and click on an ad you'll hear "*ker-ching*" every time they do!

2. You Get to Call Yourself an Expert

When someone wants to learn something new and interesting about permission marketing, the image of a bald Seth Godin springs to mind. What do they do? They Google his name and stop by his blog to learn what his most recent insight is.

Here is where different is better because it helps you stand apart from the crowd. What are you known for? Add your personality or character to your blog and let it help you build a brand for yourself. Who hasn't heard of the Rich Jerk or Seth Godin? You have if you've been in Internet Marketing very long...

3. Google SEO Loves Blogs; and rewards them handsomely

As a result of all the great Internet Marketing blogging that we have done on this website, it's no secret to most of you that the way you get good ranking in the Google is to write fresh, original content on a regular basis. That goes for all types of sites.

Well, isn't that what blogs are best at? Write something newsy, thoughtful, controversial, or opinionated and you'll get noticed in the search engines more easily. This is the secret to having a profitable blog, too!

Search engines recognize blogs in several ways. At the most basic level, they naturally crawl them like any other website, indexing the content in them. In this way, a blog provides your company with a second website, which can cross-link to your main website. If your company has only one website, this can help. But blog software tends to be very optimized for search engines out of the box. As long as you are entering meaningful articles that contain your keywords, text links, and categories, then you should get most of these benefits automatically. Blog software typically generates nice page titles, text link titles, and search engine safe URLs. All of these Search Engine Optimization (SEO) tricks make your blog get noticed by search engines.

4. People Subscribe and you get an Audience to Pander to!

Blogs are easy to subscribe to – if your blog theme doesn't have RSS built-in, then it's easy to download the plug-in to make it work. "*Feedburner Feedsmith*" is one that comes to mind. Too technical for you? If you have a blog set up for you, then your blog will definitely come RSS-ready. RSS is used for many things besides subscriptions, so make sure your blog has an RSS feed!

With RSS your followers can get your regular posts sent to their favorite RSS reader or even sent



directly to their email. Best of both worlds! Put your readers in your niche pipeline and make them remember you, love you, and buy from you.

5. You Can Automate Your Blog Posts If You Want To!

What's better than a static website? A self-posting blog! Did you know there's a super sneaky way you can queue up months of blog posts that post themselves for you – and then even bookmark themselves on the web?

You can write a *"Merry Christmas"* message in January and set it to auto-post in December... and completely forget about it! It'll be like having your own little robot employee.

It might make you feel like you're no longer needed on your blog, and maybe you won't be if you queue up enough posts – but it'll be a wonderful relief knowing your blog's left the nest and is able to care for itself – you raised it well – be proud!

6. You Don't Have to be really Tech Savvy to Update Your Blog

Once your blog is set up you won't need any outside help to keep it going!

Blogs are so newbie friendly, really. The typical Internet user can keep up with a blog and make changes without any headaches at all –The best thing is that you don't have to know any HTML or CSS. You have the control like a webmaster without all of the head knowledge of a tech geek. Once set up, you can basically just fill in the blanks and press Publish!

7. You Win the Ultimate Trust Award!

Your customers trust you more when you have a blog – they say you're committed, consistent, and reachable. Take a bow and smile – you're loved by your loyal fans and followers!

As you post consistently, you'll build a following of people who bookmark your site and return day after day to see what you've said that's new. Or, if they're not stubborn with technical tools, they'll subscribe to the RSS feed and have your blog words of wisdom come to them!

Have a contact area on your blog and allow your fans to reach you if they want to. And be committed to regular updates. Don't post daily for 3 weeks and disappear for 5 days without warning. You'll break their little hearts!

The key is to ALWAYS BE CONSISTENT. Post once a day, once a week, or once a month, just be consistent about it!!!

Hint: See reason number 5. above ;)

8. Backlinks from Your Blog Boost Your PageRank on Google!

Backlinks – ah yes, the key to ranking well in Google. So, make sure to refer to your main site, if



applicable, throughout your blog. Don't overdo this because Google frowns on this if it's forced and too frequent. Just be natural, and you'll notice the difference.

Just make sure you have links to your website on your blog, using appropriate linking text if possible.

9. Blogs Offer Online Reputation Management

Now, here again you're creating a sort of storefront – a place where people can get to know you better. Suppose someone stumbled over your name or a product you sell on some other website and they want to know more about you before they buy.

Having a blog lets you address rumors, false information, and other nonsense floating around that was put out there by your competitors to try to tarnish your reputation.

It also lets you be a do-gooder! Helping people in public through your blog aids you in building a stellar reputation on the Internet.

There is nothing that will brand you quicker than a comment on your blog from someone gushing about how much you've helped them out!

10. Visitors Can Post Comments on Blog Posts

There's just something about a blog that says, *"I am here – talk to me."*

Your blog is a place for you to share your thoughts, ideas and opinions and others can talk back, even if they disagree with you.

When you get feedback or comments left on your site, it all contributes to your rank in Google. Did I mention that 77% of active Internet users read blogs? – You don't want to be left behind!

Think of the exposure you're missing if you don't have a blog.

Also, (and this is a golden nugget for you entrepreneurial types) one of your best sources for ideas and how to best serve your customer can show up in feedback in your comments section. If they have a problem, you find a solution. Isn't that what we're here for – to solve someone else's pressing, if not desperate problem?

11. Blogs Deliver Traffic to Your Main Website!

Let's say your main site sells an eBook or software program. If you have a blog, you can talk about aspects of your product and you can feature some benefits of your product and then promote your main URL via a link to the sales page.

Stick the 3D image of the eCover in your sidebar and make sure you hyperlink it. Add banners between blog posts that take them to your main site. And hyperlink anchor text from your blog



posts to your main domain to keep visitors on the slippery sales slope you've cleverly created.

Don't have your own product? Doesn't matter! You can promote other people's products as an affiliate and get up to 75% of the cash. Affiliate marketing and blogs are a match made in heaven!

12. Remember – Your Target Audience Is Reading Blogs

Who's reading blogs to gain information?

The question should be, "*Who isn't?!*"

Check out these stats of blog readers, according to Technorati.com:

50% are above 35

44% are parents

70% have college degrees

Four in ten have an annual household income of \$75K+

One in four have an annual household income of \$100K+

If these people are in your target audience, and they probably are, then you need a blog! It's hard to think of many niches where at least one of those statistics doesn't apply. The fact is, every gender from teenagers to Baby Boomers (and above), of every financial classification are reading blogs!

If you don't have a blog, then you're saying it's perfectly okay with you that your competition is stealing your rightful income.

A blog gives you power and presence – claim yours and rule your niche!

2.5.8 Who SHOULD have a blog?

- Anyone that is a trusted adviser to their clients
- Anyone that has written articles or tips that are designed to educate their clients
- Anyone that gets privileged access to services or products
- A person that is in support, or who fixes problems for a living
- Employees that believe in (and are allowed to) be open about their methods
- Any professional that has extensive training and/or experience on a subject
- Companies that need a way to share their victories and tell stories about their projects
- A senior professional that is willing to share lessons that they have learned

2.5.9 Who SHOULD NOT have a blog?

- Unenthusiastic employees
- A CEO that does not wish to share
- A worker that punches the clock and who doesn't care about community



- Someone that has terrible grammar and can't write
- Someone that sees blogging as a chore

2.6 10 WEB DESIGN MISTAKES NOT TO MAKE THIS YEAR!

“To err is human and to blame it on a computer is even more so”

There are many atrocious website design mistakes to make as you build your website with [BlueVoda](#). Mistakes are natural and very constructive if properly fixed and you take away some experience from the mistake but in the online arena, where you don't get a second chance to make a great first impression, it is best not to alienate your users by making any rookie mistakes at all. Here I have outlined some of the very worst website design mistakes you can make against your own users. Don't make any of these mistakes as you build your website with [BlueVoda](#). – You have been warned!

In compiling this list I have made some additions from my own mistakes over the years – I have fallen prey to several of these and to be honest I have made nearly each of these mistakes at least once; changing my ways has been difficult.

Just rest assured that the practices listed here are very useful.

2.6.1 Custom Search Mistakes

If you are using a search feature on your website, you must be careful that it is not being detrimental to your website.

Some of the very literal search engines reduce the user friendliness of your website because they're unable to handle typos, plurals, hyphens, and other variants of the search terms. Such search engines are particularly difficult for elderly users but they do hurt everybody.

Another problem is when search engines prioritize results purely on the basis of how many query terms they contain, rather than on each document's importance. Much better if your search engine calls out *“sure things”* at the top of the list — especially for important queries, such as the names of your services and products.

The ability to search is the user's lifeline when navigation fails or they get lost. Even though advanced search can sometimes help, simple search usually works best, and search should be presented as a simple box, since that's what users are looking for.

Google provides a really nice too for searching your website and you can find it here:

<http://www.google.com/cse/> – just make sure it's not getting in the way of your content in any way. If it is – LOOSE IT!



2.6.2 PDF Files for Online Reading

Users very often dislike coming across a PDF file while browsing, because it breaks their flow. Even simple things like printing or saving documents are difficult because standard browser commands don't work. Layouts are often optimized for a sheet of paper, which rarely matches the size of the user's browser window. Goodbye smooth scrolling and hello tiny fonts.

Worst of all, PDF is a great wall of content that's pretty hard to navigate, especially if PDF contains a great deal of content.

PDF is great for printing and for distributing manuals and other big documents that need to be printed; you should reserve it for this purpose (as [VodaHost](#) does with "*The Secrets to Promoting your Website Online*") and convert any information that needs to be browsed or read on the screen into real web pages. Otherwise, offer it as a download. You can do this by putting your PDF in a .ZIP archive.

2.6.3 Not Changing the Color of Visited Links

As you surf around the World Wide Web, a good grasp of where you have been helps you understand where you are now, since it's the culmination of your journey. In fact, knowing your past and present locations in turn makes it easier to decide where to go next. Links are a key factor in this navigation process. Users can now choose to disregard links that proved pointless in their earlier visits. Conversely, they might revisit links they found helpful in previous visits.

Most important, knowing which pages they've already visited frees users from unintentionally revisiting the same pages over and over again.

To be perfectly honest, I would fall prey to this mistake again and again. I think having the visited links a different color to the un-visited links makes the design of my website unbalanced. To be honest, I think it looks a little ugly.

The important thing is that this is MY problem and in not changing the color of text for visited links I am compromising my visitors' enjoyment as they navigate my site. This is another important lesson of website design ... Never make your own problems your visitors' problems!

These benefits only accrue under one important assumption: that users can tell the difference between visited and unvisited links because the site shows them in different colors. When visited links don't change color, users exhibit more navigational disorientation in usability testing and unintentionally revisit the same pages repeatedly.

Generally, browsers change the color of visited links automatically – just don't change any of the link colors in your CSS or set any of the colors the same as your body text.

2.6.4 Text that is not easily readable

A massive unbroken wall of text is deadly for an interactive experience. It's intimidating, boring and painful to read in today's world of instant gratification.



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Write for online, not print. To draw users into the text and support “*scannability*”, always use the tricks below:

- Sub-headings
- Bulleted lists
- **Bold** (or **highlighted**) keyword phrases
- Paragraphs that are short and sweet
- An inverted pyramid of text; more at the top, less at the bottom
- A simple writing style, and
- De-fluffed language devoid of “*marketese*”

2.6.5 Fixed Font Size

Cascading Style Sheets (CSS) unfortunately give websites the power to disable a Web browser’s “*change font size*” button and specify a fixed font size. Many times, this fixed font size is tiny, reducing readability significantly for most people over the age of 40.

Respect the user’s preferences and let them re-size text as needed. Also, specify font sizes in relative terms — not as an absolute number of pixels.

2.6.6 Page Titles that the Search-Engines will not like

Search is the most important way users discover websites. Search is also one of the most important ways users find their way around individual websites. The humble page title is your main tool to attract new visitors from search listings and to help your existing users to locate the specific pages that they need.

The page title is always contained within the HTML <title> tag and is almost always used as the clickable headline for listings on search engine result pages (SERP). Search engines tend to show the first 60 or so characters of the title, so it’s truly micro-content.

Page titles are also used as the default entry in the Favorites when users bookmark a site. For your homepage, begin the with the company name, followed by a brief description of the site. Don’t start with words like “*The*” or “*Welcome to*” unless you want to be alphabetized under “*T*” or “*W*”, which will be quite a ways down the page.

For other pages than the homepage, start the title with a few of the most salient information-carrying words that describe the specifics of what users will find on that page. Since the page title is used as the window title in the browser, it’s also used as the label for that window in the taskbar under Windows, meaning that advanced users will move between multiple windows under the guidance of the first one or two words of each page title. If all your page titles start with the same words, you have severely reduced usability for your multi-windowing users.

Taglines on homepages are a related subject: they also need to be short and quickly communicate the purpose of the site.



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2.6.7 Anything That Looks Like an Advertisement

Selective attention is very powerful and Web users, over the years, have learned to stop paying attention to any ads that get in the way of their goal-driven navigation. (The main exception being text-only search-engine ads.)

Unfortunately, users also ignore legitimate design elements that look like prevalent forms of advertising. After all, when you ignore something, you don't study it in detail to find out what it is.

Therefore, it is best to avoid any designs that look like advertisements. I'm not saying don't use Ads; I'm saying don't make your content look like ads. The exact implications of this guideline will vary with new forms of ads; currently follow these rules:

- Banner blindness means that users never fixate their eyes on anything that looks like a banner ad due to shape or position on the page
- Animation avoidance makes users ignore areas with blinking or flashing text or other aggressive animations
- Pop-up purges mean that users close pop-up windows before they have even fully rendered; sometimes with great viciousness (a sort of getting-back-at-GeoCities triumph).

2.6.8 Going Against Design Conventions

Consistency is one of the most powerful usability principles: when things always behave the same, users don't have to worry about what will happen. Instead, they know what will happen based on earlier experience. For example, if you release an apple over Sir Isaac Newton, it will drop on his head. That's good.

The more users' expectations prove right, the more they will feel in control of the system and the more they will like it. And the more the system breaks users' expectations, the more they will feel insecure... *"Maybe if I let go of this apple, it will turn into a lemon and jump a few miles into the sky."*

No matter how good your website is, the truth is that users spend most of their time on other websites and in general this means that they form their expectations for your website based on what they see commonly done on most other sites. If you deviate from what the user expects, your site will be harder to use and users will disappear.

2.6.9 Opening New Browser Windows

In many respects, this is a battle of the browsers. Some browsers, (e.g. Firefox) only open up new Tabs rather than new Windows and I really like this; I find it quite useful. Unfortunately, Internet Explorer (the most used browser out there) opens up new windows and opening up a new browser window when a visitor clicks on a link is like a vacuum-salesman who starts a visit by emptying an ash-tray on the customer's welcome mat. Don't fill your users' screen with any more windows, thanks.

Website Designers often open new browser windows with the idea that it keeps users on their site but even disregarding the hostile message implied in taking over the user's machine, the strategy is self-



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defeating since it disables the Back button which is the normal way users return to previous sites. Users may not notice that a new window has opened, especially if they are using a small monitor where the windows are maximized to fill up the screen. So a user who tries to return to the origin will be confused by an unusable Back button.

Links that don't behave as expected undermine users' understanding of your website and their own systems. A link should be a simple hypertext reference that replaces the current page with new content. Users hate unwarranted pop-up windows. When they want the destination to appear in a new page, they can use their browser's "open in new window" command — assuming, of course, that the link is not a piece of code that interferes with the browser's standard behavior.

2.6.10 Not Answering Users' Questions – ALWAYS ANSWER USERS' QUESTIONS!!!

Users are very goal-driven as they surf the Web. They visit sites because there's something they want to do — hopefully even buy your product. The ultimate failure of a website is to fail to provide the information users are looking for.

Sometimes the answer is simply not there and you lose the sale because users have to assume that your product or service doesn't meet their needs if you don't tell them the specifics. Other times the specifics are buried under a thick layer of marketing language and bland slogans. Since users don't have time to read everything, such hidden info might almost as well not be there.

The worst example of not answering users' questions is to not list the price of products and services. No Business to Consumer ecommerce site would make this mistake, but it's all over the place in Business to Business ecommerce sites, where most "enterprise solutions" are presented so that you can't tell whether they are suited for 100 people or 100,000 people. Price is the most specific piece of info customers use to understand the nature of an offering, and not giving them it makes people feel lost and reduces their understanding of a product line. The last thing you want is a massive queue of users asking "Where's the price?" while tearing their hair out.

Contact information and the location of your store are also essential to your website. You are not helping your customers in the least if they can't trust your location or are unable to get in touch with you to ask their questions.

Don't make the mistake of forgetting prices in product lists, such as category pages or search results. Knowing the price is very important in both situations; it lets users differentiate among products and click through to the ones which are most relevant to them and their wallets.

"People think computers will keep them from making mistakes. They're wrong. With computers you make mistakes faster."



2.7 HOW TO BRAND YOUR WEBSITE AND CREATE AN IMAGE

2.7.1 Keep 'em Comin' Back!

We spend a great deal of time in this blog discussing how to drive traffic to your website using **SEO** and other marketing techniques. However one of the critical tools that will keep visitors returning to your website is the **branding** of your website. Once you have delivered traffic to your website, your visitors are now in the hands of your website's content and your websites branding, the latter of which will contribute greatly in determining whether visitors will ever return ... *or not*.

2.7.2 Hands Off!

Branding is a pretty old idea. It came about as a simple solution to the issue of how to tell one persons' cattle from another's. I'm not an expert in the field (*quite literally*) but I'm willing to imagine that it was as simple as branding the name "Steve" on Steve's cattle and "Bernie" on Bernie's cattle – A simple technique that was later adopted by students worldwide to keep wandering hands off their provisions in the refrigerator (note: with varying degrees of success).

As we discuss branding here today, we are still discussing a certain amount of ownership and though branding has evolved and become a powerful sales technique, the basic idea remains very much the same. Branding exists so that we (the consumers) can tell the difference between one business' product and service from another business' product or service and can make the "**right**" decision about which to purchase.

Branding is certainly not a light topic – there are entire publications as well as very many books that have been written on the subject, however to put it in a nutshell you could describe a 'brand' as an organization, service or product with a 'personality' that is shaped by the perceptions of the audience. This article should be considered as a starting point for further research.

2.7.3 What is a Brand?

The American Marketing Association defines a brand as a "***name, term, design, symbol, or any other feature that identifies one seller's good or service as distinct from those of other sellers. A brand may identify one item, a family of items, or all items of that seller.***" [Note: Abridged]

It is easy to explain using the definition above but a really good brand is a different entity altogether and is far greater than the sum of its parts. Branding has become an entity that has **real psychological power** over people.

Do you remember having a birthday party somewhere, or choosing where to go for your birthday... a restaurant, say. How did you choose where to go? What are the memories you have of the occasion? How did the experience it make you feel? Maybe a few years down the line you might see the logo of the restaurant and recall a memory or an idea that relates to the brand... and the happy memories of your birthday party.

Brands are designed to capture you on a subconscious level and not let you go!



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At its very, *very* best a brand is a psychological stimulus that will sell a product or service before a salesman has even spoken to you but it relies upon your connection with the brand and the subconscious images and ideas it brings with it. Branding is important everywhere in business, no matter what your niche!

2.7.4 The Power of Branding

A brand is the visual, emotional, rational, and cultural image that you associate with a company or a product. Here are some well-known branding examples.

When you think **Volvo**, you might think safety. When you think **Nike**, you might think of Tiger Woods or “**Just Do It.**” When you think **IBM**, you might think “**Big Blue.**” The fact that you remember the brand name and have positive associations with that brand makes your product selection easier and enhances the value and satisfaction you get from the product or service.

While Brand-X cola, or even Pepsi-Cola, may win blind taste tests over Coca-Cola, the fact of the matter is that more people buy Coke than any other cola and, most importantly, they enjoy the experience of buying and drinking Coca Cola. The fond memories of childhood and refreshment that people have when they drink Coke is often more important than a little bit better cola taste. It is this **emotional relationship** with brands that make them so powerful.

A brand is not just a logo, ad campaign, spokesperson or slogan. Rather a brand is a product of the millions of experiences a company creates with employees, vendors, reporters, communities, and customers—and the emotional feelings these groups develop as a result of their experiences.

A brand is the sum of all the characteristics that make your offering unique:

- **Reputation**
- **Customer Service**
- **A Promise**
- **Price**
- **Feeling**
- **Attitude**
- **Logo**
- **Product Line**

Every business has a brand, whether they like it or not, whether they realize it or not, whether or not they have an expensive **ad campaign** or a new **logo**. A company has a brand whether it’s selling bread, beer, oxygen cylinders, accounting services, or chemicals. Even cities and geographic areas have brands – think New York, Los Angeles, Cape Cod and Detroit. Some cities have such a strong brand identities that they have products named after them to leverage this image—South Beach Diet, LA Fitness, Chevy Tahoe.

Your business has a brand. It’s the sum of **everything** your organization is, says, and does.



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The question is, ***are you in control of your brand?*** When you are, your image will be clear and your results will be consistent. When you aren't in control of your brand, the marketplace will let you know. You can see it for yourself with companies like AOL. They placed much emphasis on an initial push for consumer business which resulted in big sales, but whose service wasn't able to keep up with the demand they created. Until AOL built greater capacity the results were dissatisfaction—even anger from consumer's diminished trust.

2.7.5 How to Brand your Website

Right, we've spent quite enough time discussing the brands of other businesses. The purpose of this article is to get you creating a brand for your own website.

This process usually begins with brainstorming and I would certainly recommended that, even after you have picked the branding elements that you want for you website, give yourself a few days to think them over. Once you have branded your website and attracted a few visitors, you would be disappointing them and losing their trust. It would be tantamount to learning that overnight, MacDonalds had re-branded their primary color to green and changed their logo to a penguin diving off an iceberg... I'm pretty sure that wouldn't go down too well...

There are many things to consider and to ask yourself questions about:

1. What products and/or services do you offer? Define the qualities of these services and/or products. What are the core values of your products and services?
2. What are the core values of your company?
3. What is the mission of your company?
4. What does your company specializes in?
5. Who is your target market? Who do your products and services attract?
6. What is the tagline of your company? What message does your tagline send to your prospects?

Using the information from the previous steps create a personality or character for your company that represents your products or services. What is the character like? What qualities stand out? Is the personality of your company innovative, creative, energetic or sophisticated?

Use the personality that you created in the previous step and build a relationship with your target market that you defined in Step 5. How does that personality react to target audience? What characteristics stand out? Which characteristics and qualities get the attention of your prospects?

Review the answers to the questions above and create a profile of your brand. Describe the personality or character with words just as if you were writing a biography or personal ad. Be creative.



2.7.6 Creating your Logo and Design

A logo identifies a business or product in its simplest form.

A logo is not your brand, nor is it really your identity. Logo design, identity design and branding all have different roles that together form a perceived image for a business or product.

The identity or “*image*” of a company is made up of many visual devices:

- **A Logo** (The symbol of the entire identity & brand)
- **Stationery** (Letterhead + business card + envelopes, etc.)
- **Marketing Collateral** (Fliers, brochures, books, websites, etc.)
- **Products & Packaging** (Products sold and the packaging in which they come in)
- **Apparel Design** (Tangible clothing items that are worn by employees)
- **Signage** (Interior & exterior design)
- **Messages & Actions** (Messages conveyed via indirect or direct modes of communication)
- **Other Communication** (Audio, smell, touch, etc.)
- **Anything visual that represents the business.**

2.7.7 A logo is for identification.

A logo identifies a company or product via the use of a mark, flag, symbol or signature. A logo does not sell the company directly nor rarely does it describe a business. Logo’s derive their meaning from the quality of the thing it symbolizes, not the other way around – logos are there to identify, not to explain. In a nutshell, what a logo means is more important than what it looks like.

The [BlueVoda website builder](#) offers a fantastic logo maker for your website. [Click here](#) to watch a tutorial on how to use the Logo Maker in BlueVoda.

2.7.8 Branding Tips

Here are several hands-on branding strategies for you to apply to your own Web site, using your business name and your own name:

Repetition	This is very important: keep all of your design elements the same from page to page and make sure the key elements are always present. Most importantly, display your logo at the top of each page, consistently throughout your website. Your website must always have its own distinct “ <i>feel</i> ”.
Newsletter	Use your mailing list to push your domain name and slogan (consisting of your Unique Selling Proposition). If you have a newsletter (or a periodical e-magazine) create a header that contains your domain name and your slogan. Use this same header in every single issue.
Domain name	Always use your domain name as your brand and put it everywhere; put it on all of your stationary (letter heads, business cards, post cards, statements, etc.).



- Signature file** Implement your USP into your signature file, so with every email you send visitors will be further and further exposed to your brand. Check out the help file of your email software for more on setting up sig files.
- Thank You pages** If you have online forms (for visitors to contact you, request more information, subscribe to your newsletter etc.), you most likely have a “thank you” page where you thank visitors for using your form. This is an excellent place to position your logo and slogan. Don’t clutter with lots of banners and marketing material. Keep it plain and simple.
- eBooks** Create free books on subjects of interest to your visitors and allow them to re-distribute to their own visitors. Brand your eBook with your logo, domain name and slogan on every page of the eBook (also consider including your own name).
- Publish free articles** With thousands of new Web sites and eZines popping up in Web land every month, the demand for high quality content is immense. You can provide articles for other webmasters/editors to publish on their Web sites/eZines. At the end of your article put your name and a link to your Web site, with short teaser copy to get people to click on your link (offer a free book, subscription to your eZine or some other enticing offer – see my resource box at the end for an example). This is free publicity at its best – not only will you get traffic back to your Web site; you’ll also add status and credibility to your name (provided your article is of high quality).
- Autoresponders** These are emails that are sent automatically to anyone who requests them (triggered by sending them an email). Auto-responders are great as they work 24 hours a day without any intervention on your part. Use them to send visitors free reports, articles, list of links, etc. And add your branding copy (logo, name, slogan, USP etc.) at the top and bottom of the auto-responder message, with a link back to your Web site. Nowadays all good Web hosts provide their customers with free auto-responders.

If you don’t brand, you’ll have a hard time surviving on the Web. If you do brand – properly – you’ll have a hard time not laughing all the way to the bank. And as shown by the above tips, online branding is not hard to do. Just implement the tips and you’ll be well on your way.

2.7.9 Branding Outside your Website

Remember that your branding can use tools offered to you by websites such as Facebook Twitter and YouTube to include your branding there, using your account control panel (and maybe a bit of markup code). Make sure your logo is always present so that regardless of how a visitor finds you, they will feel comfortable when they arrive at your website.

Remember: Your branding must be universal and repetitive if it is going to stick in the hearts and minds of your customers!



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2.7.10 Your Website Needs Good Branding

If your website does not stand out or stay fresh in the mind of your visitor then your website has done them an injustice! You will always be surprised at the effect that a well branded website will have versus a website that does not have such good branding. Simple things like an extra bit of thought about the perceptions of your visitors and some design work can do wonders.

Make sure that you never let another website visitor leave your website without having been exposed to your branding and certainly don't frighten them out by suddenly changing your branding!

2.8 HOW TO SETUP YOUR RSS-FEED

2.8.1 Feed Me!

“Whether or not to use RSS on your site should no longer be an option. I believe it has become a necessity if you wish to compete with others in your industry.”

Paul Scrivens, Founder of Forever Geek

RSS is brilliant; a truly great and valuable technology to use in automating the marketing of your website or blog. The content they beam to your subscribers automatically will be, without doubt, a massive boost to the professionalism of your blog or website as well as to its number of visitors.

RSS feeds “*syndicate*” your content (that is, *publish it simultaneously to many places automatically*) and have many benefits, not least that your new content is beamed directly to your subscribers and they do not have to come looking for it. It's a little bit like the convenience of knowing that you can find something really good to watch on your favorite TV channel, rather than having to leave your home to go look for the movie in the local Video store. Email Spam is gone forever too under RSS marketing because you can just delete an RSS feed if you find that you are being spammed by it.

Chances are that you have seen or heard about RSS online before but may not fully understand what it is – RSS is a little ambiguous and it sounds a little complicated (because it uses big words like “*syndicated*” and “*aggregator*”). In fact, I'm willing to bet that it is the minority of you, rather than the majority who have knowingly used RSS and fully understand what it is ... That's where this article comes in. Here I'm going to get you started with RSS – What it is, how its use can benefit you, and how to use it – I'm even going to turn you into your very own Radio-Show host :)

Trust me when I say that RSS is simple to use and is certainly not as complicated as it sounds; please don't worry that it is a new thing to you – Try it out and practice!

2.8.2 What is an RSS Feed?

RSS is often quoted as standing for **Really Simple Syndication**, though it began its life as **RDF Site Summary** in the late 1990s. The term **RSS** describes a family of web feeds used to publish frequently updated works – things such as blog entries, news headlines and video in a standardized format. RSS feeds are the basis of anything that is syndicated online, such as Podcasts, Videocasts etc. It provides a



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means for you to send out bite-size information about when an update or important piece of content is added to your website, straight to your readers.

You can subscribe to an RSS Feed wherever you see the orange RSS logo (it's not *always* orange).

2.8.3 RSS works like this...

When a website visitor subscribes to your RSS feed, they will automatically receive a link to whatever new content that you have published and that information will go straight to the "Inbox" of your subscribers' feed readers. It will be in the form of a short piece of description about the new content and will contain a link to that content that they can follow if they wish.

2.8.4 How to Subscribe to an RSS Feed

When you visit the web-page that houses the RSS feed, you will be given the option to subscribe by a window that is at the top.

So, before you can go off creating your own RSS feeds, you must understand what you will get as a result when you subscribe to an RSS feed.

[VodaHost](#) maintains an RSS feed for you to subscribe to and doing so is exceptionally easy:

1. Visit the following URL: <http://www.vodahost.com/feed/rss/>
2. Tell your web browser how you would like to subscribe to the RSS feed (see the section on RSS Readers below)
3. Click **Subscribe Now**
4. Sit back as the Feed Reader downloads the RSS News feed.

Now that you are subscribed to the RSS feed, you can get VodaHost updates on content and new services without looking for them – all the information will be brought to you.

2.8.5 The RSS Reader (or Feed Aggregator)

Any software that has the opportunity to display an RSS feed is called an RSS reader or RSS feed aggregator (because they collect or "aggregate" RSS Feeds from a variety of sources). There are very many to choose from (my favorite, though, is **Mozilla Thunderbird** – because it lets me read my new feed elements as I check my mail and because it's really straight forward – note: This is a personal preference).

There are plenty of RSS aggregators to choose from if Thunderbird isn't your cup of tea – [Click here](#) for Wikipedia's list and comparison of RSS Feed readers – you may already have several of these installed on your computer (i.e. **Internet Explorer**, **Firefox**, **iTunes** etc.):



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2.8.6 What are the Benefits of Having an RSS Feed?

RSS is beneficial to both publishers and website visitors. To keep things simple I have listed just a few of the benefits for both publishers and website visitors.

2.8.7 RSS benefits for webmasters:

1. You can reach new audiences through syndication
2. You will improve the Search Engine Optimization (S.E.O.)
3. RSS is an easier and less expensive vehicle for communication than email.
4. RSS provides an additional way to communicate with customers or potential customers.

2.8.8 RSS benefits for your website visitors:

1. Website visitors do not have to release personal information in order to subscribe to an RSS feed – they are happier to do so.
2. 100% opt-in, users absolutely control the content they wish to receive.
3. RSS provides your visitors a faster method for scanning content (which saves them time)

2.8.9 How to Create an RSS Feed with BlueVoda

An RSS Feed is essentially an **XML** file that you create and host which describes your RSS Feed. There are several ways to create them but here we will focus on how to create an RSS feed with the fantastic [BlueVoda website builder](#)

PLEASE NOTE: If you are using a content management system such as WordPress or Joomla, you will probably be able to find plug-ins to create an RSS Feed for you with just a few clicks. The information below pertains to creating an RSS feed with [BlueVoda](#) (but still in just a few clicks :))

You can easily add an RSS feed to your web-pages using the RSS Feed tool in the BlueVoda website builder:

1. **Click the RSS Feed tool in the left toolbar** (it bears the orange RSS logo). You may have to expand the toolbar to find the RSS tool.
2. **Move the RSS element that appears on the BlueVoda workspace to wherever you would like your website's RSS button to appear** – You can move and re-size the RSS element as you please.
3. **Double-click on the RSS element that was added to your workspace to open up the RSS Feed Properties dialogue window**



4. In the General tab, **give your RSS Feed a title, a short description and add the URL of your website.**
5. **Pick a name for the RSS XML file that this process will create** (it won't hurt to leave the file-name as it is though)
6. **Everytime you wish to syndicate a piece of content, click the [Add...] button and fill in all the information regarding that piece of content** (*Subject, Description, URL of the content*) in the Add Headline dialogue window. You can browse for your .mp3 file if you are creating a Podcast here, too.
7. **You can remove "Headlines" from your RSS feed using the [Remove] button and you can edit any of your pieces of syndicated content (Headlines) using the [Edit...] button.**
8. Click [OK] when you're done.

That's it! You have now created an RSS feed for your website with [BlueVoda...](#)

2.8.10 Why your Website Needs an RSS Feed

Your website **needs** an RSS feed because an RSS feed is a great way to get information out to subscribers easily and in a way that means no extra work on their part. Hopefully they will get excited about the ease at which they can get in touch with you. **REMEMBER ALWAYS** that your RSS feed is an add-on to your website and its content (not the other way round). Make your content **INCREDIBLE** and your RSS feed will do it justice. If your website does not contain excellent content people will not continue to use your RSS feed!

2.8.11 Fun with RSS: How to create a Podcast

One of my absolute favorite uses of RSS feeds is **PodCasting** (*formally known as **WebCasting** before Apple came along with their iPod device that just a few people may have bought*). If you have ever wanted to be your own radio host or create a radio show – I'm going to show you how!

Creating, promoting, and distributing a podcast to an audience of possibly millions online is pretty easy. You can get your podcast online in about 5 – 10 minutes and it can help to increase the audience for your business. Podcasting is becoming really popular as many bloggers have turned to radio shows on the Internet to get their message out.

If you are really creative then this is a perfect way to catch the attention of your subscribers.

To create a PodCast you will need the following things:

- **A computer** – (I'm guessing that most of you have that one covered)
- **The [BlueVoda website builder](#)**
- **A microphone**
- **Some software** for recording and editing audio – I highly recommend [Audacity](#) (it's free!).



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- **A really good idea good idea for you podcasts.**
 - That's it!
1. **Determine the nature of your podcast.** What will the content of your podcast be? Write it all down so you know where you are! Come up with an outline or some way to keep track of what you will discuss and/or promote during each episode.
 2. **Record the audio for your podcast** ([Audacity](#) is really great for this).
 3. Save the audio file (in **MP3** format) to your computer desktop or somewhere where you will not use it. Do not use special characters (such as # or % or ?) in the file name. Open it up into your sound editor and edit out extra background noise or long periods of silence. Put in intro/outro music if necessary.
 4. **Tag the MP3, give it ID information (Artist, Album) and give it album art.** Either make it yourself or find yourself some free, non-copyrighted images online, or have a friend make one for you. **NOTE: DO NOT USE ANY COPYRIGHTED MATERIAL IN YOUR PODCAST ...** Doing so is seriously, seriously *un-cool!* Be creative and create your own content!!!
 5. **Create your RSS podcast feed.** The feed must meet all industry standards for a valid 2.0 feed with enclosures. If you're creating your RSS feed manually, in RSS 2.0, the syntax for the `<enclosure>` tag, (an optional child of the `<item>` element) is as follows:
`<enclosure>url="http://www.andysexamplersdomain.com/file.mp3? length="192837465? type="audio/mpeg" />` where the value of the URL attribute is a URL of a file, length is its size in bytes, and type its mime type. There may only be a single `<enclosure>` per `<item>`
 6. **Put your RSS podcast feed on the Internet.**
 7. **Make a post on your blog/website** – the title of the post should be the title of that episode of the podcast, and the content will end up as the *"Shownotes"* or the *"Description"*. Put in a little about what you talk about in your episode. At the end of the post, put a link directly to your media file.
 8. You can **submit it to iTunes or a number of other podcast directories** to get it known. **VodaHits offers** an RSS pinging service that is second to none and will be very beneficial to all your RSS Feeds. You should check it out at this point ... You may want to wait, however, until you have some experience, so that your podcast will be compared as a fifth episode, say, to another's first.
 9. **Put the appropriate subscription buttons on your website** so people can subscribe to the RSS podcast feed.



2.9 THINGS YOUR WEBSITE NEEDS IN 2012

2.9.1 Get Up-to-Date! – 12 for 2012!

Here we are in the latter half of 2011 and there are an incredible amount of Websites on the Internet; each one unique in its design and functionality, its content, markup, features and in loads of other ways too. However, even though each website is completely different, there are certain needs that must be fulfilled pretty consistently, right across the Internet and regardless of the website. This article aims to examine 12 common elements that your website MUST have just right, to compete. They are in no particular order of importance (because they are ALL important!).

1. A Great Navigation Menu

A website is any domain on the Internet that consists of more than one page and since you want people to be able to find the other pages easily, your website must be easy to navigate! This may seem pretty obvious, but even so we encounter many sites with some pretty mysterious navigation or, on a deeper level, are inaccessible because they need JavaScript or images so that they work. Your website MUST make an easy to use and completely accessible navigation menu available. There are other concerns that you should address as you work towards building a proper navigation menu, as well, such as...

- Its link styling – the **:hover**, **:focus**, and **:active** elements.
- The logical and meaningful use of lists to properly organize your links into a great and wholly understandable menu.
- You should even go so far as marking the current page so that the visitor knows where they are NOW.

You must get your visitors navigating around your website smoothly making sure they are always aware of where they came from, where they are now and where they are going to navigate away to, based on your menu-structure.

2. A Simple, Meaningful and Well-Formed Title

By “*meaningful title*” I am specifically referring to the title element of your website (that is the words that are contained within your `<title></title>` tags); it is this that’s shown in the title bar of your browser. Ideally the content title should come before the site (this helps search users find stuff like your main content heading, instead of seeing your site name over and over again) and, if at all possible, each page should have its very own title. An example of an effective title is shown below:

`<title>12 Things Your Website Needs in 2011 | VodaHost web hosting</title>`

The Title element should also always contain one of your keywords as a great deal of SEO comes from the title element of your website. Your title must always be relevant to the content that follows it and should always be simple and descriptive, so that the Googlebot and the other Search Engine spiders can pick up on the meaning of the content that follows and better place it in their results.



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Note: You can use a “hyphen” (-) to separate the parts of the title but the “vertical bar” (or “pipe” (|) used on this site is our favorite way of doing things.

3. A Method of Contact

Offering a means of contact is ALWAYS necessary. It gives all your website visitors a feeling of legitimacy and security; it’s a really great thing to do as a service to your visitors (if they want to contact you they should be able to).

Offering a phone number and address is good, if possible and a contact form is a nice option instead of a **mailto:** email link that not all your visitors will be able to use anyway (because they may not have set-up a mail client like Microsoft Outlook or Mozilla Thunderbird).

Unfortunately you should use a secure form since some visitors, robots or people are just up to no good. It has been argued that client-side spam filtering negates the need to protect your email address on the Web, but your address can still be harvested and put into use. There is no winning this war — not as long as common account names like **info@yourdomain.com**, **contact@yourdomain.com**, and **admin@yourdomain.com** can be put to use as soon as you register a domain name — but it doesn’t mean we should make it easy.

4. A Sitemap for your Visitors

Please Note: In this section I am referring to a HTML sitemap for human visitors NOT an XML sitemap for the Search Engines.

You must have a sitemap, even though not all of your website visitors will be well-served by a site map; Say, for example that you have a basic, five page site with a clear, consistent and readily available navigation menu. You could probably do without a site map (surely it can’t be too hard to find all those five pages). How many sites stop growing at five pages, though? Experience over time has taught me that domains tend to grow as new needs inspire new pages or applications.

You should start your site map as soon as it starts to grow, or consider adding it to your site from the beginning. At first you can link to it from the footer and then later move the link to a more obvious location as the site grows, since more visitors will find it useful. On small you might incorporate the site map into a “*site help*” or “*site info*” page, killing off numerous birds with a one stone — accessibility and copyright statements, privacy policy, etc.

If you aren’t yet convinced, also know that many users will seek a site map first since it gives them a snap-shot of the domain’s offerings, so to speak.

A site map can be as simple as a Web page with an unordered list () and maintaining it can be quite simple: add a new list item when a new page is added. It’s as simple as that. The hardest part is actually remembering to update it and updating it properly. That’s where the beauty of dynamic sitemaps really shows itself. Applications such as WordPress give users the opportunity to create everything from simple to complex sitemaps with not much more than a few clicks of your mouse. “*Plugins*” are also available further simplifying the process for novice users and if you want to step it up



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a notch, you can also offer an XML sitemap but know that a HTML site map is what I am referring to. People should come first, not robots and spiders!

5. Boost your Search Engine Rankings

Search Engine Optimization (or SEO) is extremely important to your websites exposure on the internet. SEO is the “*tweaking*” of your websites content so that your website appears as far up the search results page as possible when a search engine user enters a specific search phrase into Google Search. So, if you have a website about software flight simulators (just for example), you would want the searching population to type the words “*flight simulator*” into Google and for your website to appear right at the top of the list of websites Google returns!

This can take a huge amount of work. You must get as many one-way links to your site from quality and reputable websites as possible and make sure your website’s content reflects the topic that you want it to be found for... This is done by “*Keywords*”, which the search engine spiders use to get clues as to what your website is about.

Keywords should always be used in your websites but while you may think you are doing the right thing by adding more keywords to your content, unfortunately this can make your website’s content read badly. You MUST never sacrifice your website’s content to reach a certain mathematical keyword density.

A full overview of optimal SEO practices are impossible here (waaay too much information) but it is a combination of your websites content and your website’s relationship (through links) with other reputable websites on the internet. Please see the eBook at the bottom of this page for tons of SEO information!

[VodaHost’s VodaHits](#) service provides a flexible and full solution to the effective SEOing of your website to bring in far more visitors to your website. Visit <http://www.vodahits.com/> to experience the Search Engine Boost your website can get from taking up just a few services.

6. Use of Google Analytics

Your website must be connected with Google Analytics – you can get some great information from it to help you improve your website especially with regards your traffic and how effective the marketing you’re doing is. Google Analytics helps you buy the right keywords, target your best markets and engage and convert way more customers. Google Analytics offers website tracking statistics very similar to the statistics that you receive from within your web hosting account (how may unique visitors viewed each page, etc...) Best of all, because it’s a free service, there is absolutely no reason that you should not take it up right now.

Just visit: <http://www.google.com/analytics/>

The most common use is probably checking on how much traffic a website receives, along with the source of the traffic and which keyword someone has typed, if they have arrived via a search engine.



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However Google Analytics can provide so much more relevant and useful information, for example, 'Bounce Rate' can be a very important piece of data, this means the percentage of single page visits where the visitor left your site from the landing page without continuing to view any other pages of the site. So you might have lots of traffic, but if your bounce rate is high then this would suggest the page is not relevant to visitors and your site is probably not working for you. Conversely, this may be the very page your specific campaign is targeting. In this case the 'bounce rate' should not be discouraging.

You can also view the average time people are spending on your website, again if this figure is low and you are not receiving enquiries, just like 'bounce rate' this might suggest that your site is not perceived as being relevant by your website visitors. It could also be an indication that navigation to other relevant pages, for instance a 'contact us' feature, is not clear.

Top Exit pages can be another great piece of information, if visitors are browsing various pages of your site, but you are losing them without receiving enquiries then you may need to review your top exit pages and try tweaking/improving these.

Google Analytics is an amazing and underutilized tool with features that could completely fill a user-manual.

7. Small Web-Pages that load quickly!

I started using the Internet with dial-up and it was a completely miserable experience. Back when it seemed that every site I visited required some sort of plug-in or add-on to make it work and frankly, the slow-moving Internet was a pain. This has changed on some levels. The need for plug-ins or add-ons is greatly reduced what with operating systems pre-loaded with all the necessary support; the kicker is that some people still have dial-up. For the last six years we've used broadband and it's a dream; we're spoiled and it's easy to forget the less fortunate and load pages with heavy graphics. It's easy to forget how doing this will make for a less-than-happy experience to traditional dial-up and distant DSL users. You have to keep the weight down!

I'm not saying the Web isn't a place for heavyweights, it is, but with due consideration. If you want to offer heavyweight graphics and whatnot, let visitors navigate to them, instead of offering them on the initial page load. And warn users if something big is coming up. It's only fair to allow those who want to opt out the opportunity to do so.

I suggest aiming for an upper limit of 100kb per page of combined background and embedded images (this is testable). You can buy a lot for a 100kb. To get the most bang for the buck, reduce the overall number of images, optimize them exporting only flattened, compressed files, and please pre-size embedded images for their location (being sure to add the height and width attributes to the image element). I've seen thumbnail-sizes that were really 900kb monsters with styles off! That's just wrong!!!

8. A Helpful Error Page

If you've ever been lost, it's always nice to see some helpful soul willing to give directions (assuming you are willing to admit you're lost – I am never lost, for example). On the Web you can be that helpful soul. Not only, as mentioned in the last installment, can you offer a site map to proactively guide your visitors,



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you can offer a friendly, styled “404” error page (or pages if you want to cover more errors). Your error page should offer at the very minimum offer a link home, a navigation menu, and at least a link to the site map. If you want to be a really helpful soul, though, try combining most if not all your navigation tools and putting them on one page. Make a perfect 404 page offering a site map on the page (easy with dynamic site maps), search, even contact info, and more.

This is not hard to do. Ask your Web host for starters. Specifically ask them about custom error pages since you’ll want to provide something useful and most default server error pages, even styled ones, aren’t really very helpful at all.

9. Really Good and Consistent Headings

I have written here of the importance of using the right mark-up for the purpose at hand. I mentioned headings but didn’t go into detail. That’s because headings are so important that they deserve a heading of their own. The use of headings is logical, and styling them is wide open, just use your imagination.

What good are they? They offer section demarcation, semantics and ordering, beauty in the right hands, a search indexing benefit, greater accessibility, and even a navigation source for some users of assistive technologies like screen readers. What more incentive could you possibly need to act on this recommendation?

10. A Great Domain Name

Never ever hurry to register a domain name and always take the time to choose it wisely because a great domain name is an extremely valuable asset to your business. Always take the time to consider the many and varied options available to you. Ideally, your domain name should be:

- Short
- Memorable
- easy to spell & type
- descriptive of your website

Choose a common domain name extension such as .COM, .NET or .ORG. I’d also strongly recommended that you perform a little keyword research prior to registering a domain name as a keyword-rich domain name can help you rank better much better in the Search Engines. For example if you want your site to rank well in the Search Engines for “kite boarding”, you should try to get a domain name that contains the words “kite” and “boarding”. Once you have a few ideas in mind, go to a domain name registrar and perform a few searches. Once you found one you like and which fits all the requirements above, register it!

11. Social Media Marketing

A golden rule of S.E.O. states that: The more quality links coming into your website from outside, the better. Marketing your site through the social media and bookmarking websites can be a very powerful and really subtle method for optimizing Search Engine results as a vast amount of links to your site can be created by your social media users. The best part about Social Media is that you do not have to



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create any links yourself at all. It's pure S.E.O. on autopilot. For example, when you socially bookmark a blog or web-page, an incoming link is created from the Social Bookmarking site to the website with the blog/page that has just been bookmarked. The more people that socially bookmark the blog / page and the more incoming links that are created, push the bookmarked website further and further up the page ranking of the Search Engines.

Create new social bookmarks to social or public bookmarking sites and they will generate a great deal of new traffic to your website as well as Search Engine exposure. Eventually, as time goes on and your visitors are finding new interesting information they will decrease in efficiency, making it necessary for you to find new means of driving increased traffic. You should always make it possible to socially bookmark new content on your website in order to keep the new traffic moving at a steady pace. You should be constantly marketing, updating and making your website better and then getting your users to socially bookmark the content. If it becomes boring and cluttered with old information, you can be sure that the website of someone who is always making improvements and modifications will slip past you towards the #1 spot.

12. Your robots.txt File

I feel that it is very helpful and important to have a robots.txt file for your website. The robot.txt file provides instructions to honest indexing robots and spiders (like the GoogleBot), telling them to stay out of certain directories you don't really want them in anyway... There's no reason to have your bandwidth wasted needlessly.

Some people, I've heard, want to disable right-click on their sites thinking that they may somehow actually succeed in stopping people from copying their images (really can't be done, sorry...), yet for some reason they don't have a robots.txt file to exclude their images directory. Doing this would be far more worthwhile. It's very easy to make one; there are even tools you can use to help you get the job done.

2.9.2 Am I Done? – Is There More?

The short answer is, yes, of course. ALWAYS! Though looking into all the 12 suggestions above and making the appropriate changes to your website or blog, you will have done very well! You'll find that with a little diligence you'll be offering a quality site that is a cut above many sites of the Web. And the benefits, you may find, will actually be noticeable, and perhaps even tangible. Happy website building!



Secret 3:

Search Engine Optimization (S.E.O.)

3.1 S.E.O. OVERVIEW

Search Engine Optimization, or S.E.O., is an important and in fact vital part of any business's online presence. Put simply, S.E.O. is the "tweaking" of a website so that it'll be displayed right at the top of a Search Engine's results pages (y'know, on that first page of results you get on Google, Yahoo! or Bing etc. when you key in a search phrase or words and hit "Search"). This optimization is an important aspect of any kind of Search Engine marketing that you do; the ultimate aim being to achieving the highest ranking possible for your targeted keywords and phrases.

Basically, it works like this: When an Internet user runs a search using a Search Engine they'll more than likely only look over the first page of results laid out before them. Typically, they'll then either follow a link they found on that first page or they'll have another go and try another search. They'd only very, very, rarely make it as far as the barren wastelands of Page 3. What this means is, if your website is not among the first listed in the search results, its chances of being found by potential customers are actually quite slim. Basically, there is little point in making a website submission to Search Engines if your site will never appear in the first few pages of results. Sorry.

By taking the time to think about the writing, formatting and organization of your website and making the appropriate adjustments for S.E.O. purposes, your website will become more "digestible" to the Search Engines and will be ranked more favorably in their databases. The result is, with a little work (and it isn't that much work that you gotta do), your site will be able to climb from the depths of Search Engine results Hell (page 2,569), right to the top of the list (page 1, yeah!). This Search Engine placement will be highly beneficial for any entity seeking a truly strong presence online.

The truth of the matter is that the vast majority of websites on the Internet are not optimized with the Search Engines in mind. The result here is that your competitors who DO possess well optimized sites will dominate the web traffic generated through the Search Engines. By optimizing your own site, you and your company can leapfrog the competition and direct traffic away from competitors and toward your own site. After the site is optimized it actually takes very little maintenance to keep your company's ranking and the effect of the optimization can be seen immediately and for years to come.

Now, whether you've hired an S.E.O. guru or decided to attempt the S.E.O. work yourself, one of the major challenges of a great Search Engine optimization campaign is determining how much time to devote to specific techniques and certain areas of your website. Simply knowing what to do doesn't really solve the problem of understanding how much to do (it's that old conundrum: "how much is too much?"). Whether it's keyword research, website title optimization, content development or even link building, often the missing link is the art of knowing which of your efforts will yield the greatest return on your investment of money and/or time.



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Most of [VodaHost's](#) own optimization work (done from our [VodaHits](#) department; check it out) is performed on client's websites and in nearly every case we are working to try and achieve improved rankings and increased traffic within a budget and timeline. Our most typical scenario gives us 90 days to tackle the Search Engine Results Page (S.E.R.P.) and analytics for a group of medium to moderately difficult search terms (from a competitive standpoint).

While every project is different, when you have to show some success in a relatively short period of time it is important to quickly identify the major issues which are holding back your site. Page title optimization is always very high on the list but even with that said, when you are working on a site with hundreds or even thousands of pages, spreading yourself too thin by concentrating on only one ranking factor will usually fail. Unless you have an overwhelming number of site architecture or duplication issues, you are normally better off focusing on just a portion of the site.

Along the same line is the amount of time you spend on research compared to time devoted to actual change suggestions, on-page optimization tweaks or link building (for example). There are so many different ways to analyze a site or even one page on a site. There are also dozens of keyword research techniques and S.E.O. tools and you could spend countless hours dissecting the strategies that have seemingly worked on competitor sites. At some point you simply have to be comfortable knowing you have done enough due diligence to dive in and begin making changes that will have an impact.

Search Engine Optimization IS a science. It's not like building a Large Hadron Collider but most S.E.O.s follow a set of tried and true practices that offer the greatest chance of success. What makes it not like building Large Hadron Colliders is that Search Engine Optimization is also an art and all the S.E.O. research in the world won't do you a bit of good until you take that first step and actually begin making changes to your website. Every project and every website is different. This is what makes the process an adventure that is fun and exciting.

3.2 KEYWORDS 101

Even if you are relatively new to Internet marketing, it is very likely that you've already heard of *keywords*. They are one of the cornerstones of *Search Engine Optimization (S.E.O.)* and combined with links to your site form an incredibly important part of how it will appear in the *Search Engine Results Pages (S.E.R.P.)*.

Keywords themselves are single words, or even short phrases, which occur in a text more often than you might expect them to occur by chance alone. In terms of S.E.O. keywords are incredibly important because they actually describe the overall theme of any piece of published content such as an article, website, or blog post. The key is that they are a big part of the way the Search Engines (Google, Yahoo!, Bing et al) "*decide*" how to categorize your website; in fact the keywords in your website's content describe the "*essence*" of your website to the Search Engines. By focusing on the keywords alone, spiders and crawlers like the Googlebot can quickly pick up the "*topic*" of the content. You can think of it like the Googlebot were a detective and the keywords were its clues.



Properly deployed keywords should accurately reflect the theme of your entire piece of content or article and the point of using them is for that content to be found within the ocean of text that comprises the Internet.

Night and day Internet users across the globe are searching for information. How are they searching? For the most part, exactly the same way you do; they type specific words into a Search Engine (probably Google). If you haven't thought ahead and incorporated these words into your web content, someone-else will ... and then your reader is lost to someone-else's text. Keywords are there to help them find you and your website instead.

The fact is a poorly optimized article, no matter how well written, will quickly fade into obscurity since the Search Engines will not recognize what the content is about as easily. Through the correct use of keywords, you are, in effect, leaving those 'obvious clues' for the search engines to notice when looking for content similar to yours.

Using keywords in articles that are submitted for the purpose of online promotion is the best way to maximize the desired exposure of the article itself. By correctly optimizing any content you publish on the Internet your article will rank higher in the search engine rankings through the proper use of keywords.

3.2.1 How To Use Keywords To Optimize Your Content:

1. **Learn the buzzwords.** Every industry has its own jargon. If you're well-versed in a particular subject, it's likely that you already know the "buzzwords" and you don't need to read up on them too much. If it's a relatively new topic for you, do some research. Read four or five different articles to get an idea of the lingo used and the most popular sub-categories of the industry. I'll give you an example. Let's say your article is going to be about ... keyword articles. Some of your keywords might be: *keyword*, "keyword article", *keyword-rich*, "web content," "web article," *RSS-feed*, "keyword writing." How do I know this? In this case, not because I did a keyword look-up but because I read lots of articles. Reading is a great way to load up on catch-phrases and terminology. You can discover the keywords you need without even trying!
2. **Write the article without paying any attention to keywords.** Don't bother trying to plug keywords into an article the first time you write it. Just write it... Keep the flow going, craft your sentences without paying particular mind to word selection and be creative. It's likely that, if you know what you're talking about, keywords will very naturally fall into place as you write. Those sneaky keywords... they seem to just sneak right in without your even knowing what happened!
3. **Select your keywords.** Once your first draft is written, you can concentrate on building a list of keywords to insert throughout your text. Sit down with a pen and paper (or a blank document if you prefer) and write down words that you frequently come across in the industry you're covering. Imagine if someone were doing a search on the web for your topic. What words and phrases might they key in to the search box? Don't forget search terms that contain two or more words. Such words work together and would be placed in quotes if someone were typing them into a search engine box. Suppose you were writing an article on email marketing. You would



include terms like "drip list" and "email newsletter" to name just two.

4. **Assess the popularity of your keywords.** Find out how many times Internet users searched the web using specific keywords, with the Google AdWords Keyword Tool. The tool is free and available through this link: <https://adwords.google.com/select/KeywordToolExternal>. Just type in the word, fill in the Captcha and hit enter. The more global or local searches, the more popular the keyword and the more likely you'll want to use it in your article.
5. **Select keywords that are specific rather than general.** Let's say I'm writing an article about negotiating fees with a freelance copy-writer. My goal should be to include popular words related to that particular topic, and not just the general category of copy-writing. "Freelance copy-writing rates" is a much better keyword phrase to use because that's probably something a user would actually type in when searching for such information. "Freelance copy-writing" on the other hand, is more general and therefore might bring up thousands of higher-ranked sites than yours. Burying your article is no way to be found... so, keep it specific if you can!
6. **Scan your existing text for keywords.** Your article draft is complete and your keywords have been selected. Now, just put them together. Scan the article copy for the first keyword. Did you find it? Great! If you know your stuff, you probably slipped the keyword into a few places without even realizing it.
7. **"Find and Change"**. Suppose in your article about copy-writing, you included the word "writing" several times throughout the piece. That's no serious problem by any means, but "copy-writing" is the term of choice among marketers and advertisers. Consequently, it should be one of your keywords. Locate where you've used the word "writing" or "writer", and replace with "copy-writing" or "copywriter." Do this for each of your keywords and keyword phrases. You may have to reorder some of the sentences, but this shouldn't be a big deal.
8. **Proofread your article.** Now that you've added keywords, the article is probably somewhat different from its original form. Do a thorough read-through for mistakes, correcting as needed. Check for spelling errors, grammatical inconsistencies and repeated words. Hey, did he say "repeated words"? Yes, even in keyword articles, a good writer should try to vary his vocabulary. I said your article should be keyword-rich, not dull and repetitive!
9. **Write a keyword-rich headline.** Why did I wait until the end of this article to mention the headline? Because the best headlines usually come to the writer at the end of the writing and researching process. With all this talk of keywords, you should be primed to write hard-hitting headlines!

You must always keyword article headlines! Get right to the point with a headline that uses your three or four most popular keywords at the beginning, not at the end. Allow me to critique an article. The headline: How to Negotiate Rates with a Freelance Copywriting Expert. I confess, this headline could have been better. Why? "Negotiate rates" is not a keyword term that someone might type into a search engine. "Freelance Copywriting," however, is. The better version of this headline: "Freelance Copywriting: How to Negotiate Rates." If the words were reordered, this headline would have been that much more powerful and achieved a higher web search ranking.



3.2.2 Using Keywords the Wrong Way

When you place keywords into your content you should be careful not to overuse these words or phrases. This is referred to as “*keyword stuffing*” and the Search Engines will penalize you for this by their refusal to list your content in the search results. True as it may be that proper keyword placement is vital if you want to be found by the Search Engines to earn a higher search ranking, deliberate overuse can get the writer penalized disallowing your content to be shown at all in the search results.

3.2.3 About Keyword Density

Keyword density is a measurement or percent that reflects the use of a keyword within a piece of content. For instance, if you have a piece of content that is 300 words in length and you use a certain keyword 9 times the “*keyword density*” is 3%.

Search engines use keyword density to score keyword use within content and generally dislike any percentages that approach or exceed 5%. In fact, as a writer, aiming for the mid-range of 3% or so should keep you in good standings while still maintaining a good search ranking.

A handy tool you can use to measure the density of keyword usage in your content is <http://www.live-keyword-analysis.com/>. Just copy and paste your content at this site to check your keyword density.

3.2.4 Using Keywords Properly

Now that we've already discussed the acceptable percent range for our keyword use let's focus on the optimal placement of them within the content itself. In general, a higher concentration of keyword use at the beginning of an article as an immediate notification of their use and at the end as a closing reminder is the most effective placement for keywords.

Properly using keywords in articles can boost your search engine rankings. The higher you rank the more exposure you'll receive making your promotional efforts all the more effective.

So, ready to jump on the keyword article bandwagon?

Countless companies are using keyword articles to help their exposure on the Internet. Whether you're a netpreneur marketing a product or a writer seeking freelance work, odds are you can benefit tremendously from keyword articles.

Never written a keyword article before? Have no fear. The process isn't much different from writing regular articles. Don't let lack of experience stop you from profiting through keyword-rich content. Just follow the easy keyword-writing guidelines, and get ready to key in some great article copy!

3.2.5 A Warning on Keywords!

Remember that while the optimizing of your website is almost a science, you should never let the statistics of keywords get in the way of the art and quality of your content! If your content reads badly as a result of the keywords that you have added to it, then you have done the wrong thing. No one will



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link to content that does not read too well and this is the other half of S.E.O. You're giving your visitors the keywords so that they can find your content to link to and it'll be those links that pack massive S.E.O. punch.

That is why you must always write your excellent content first before you consider the keywords. Write award-winning content first, then once it's done, go back and optimize it.

3.3 HOW TO CALCULATE YOUR KEYWORD DENSITY

The subject of Keywords & Keyword Density is a talking point amongst SEO gurus worldwide and each has a different opinion of the right way to approach keyword density and how to deploy keywords throughout your content properly. The reason for the different opinions (and almost every SEO expert has his/her own opinion about the "*right way*" to do keyword optimizing) is that the ranking rules used by the Search Engines are a well kept secret. We honestly do not know an absolute way to use keywords the right way ... we can really only guess.

In the early days of the modern Internet (say, the mid-to-late nineties), the Search Engines used keywords and their keyword density within the content of a web page as very important website ranking factors – that is, the more times a particular keyword or phrase appeared in the content of a website, the more likely that the website would rank well for a search of that keyword or phrase. If a web-page had an enormous number of instances of the word "*Squirrels*", then the search engines made the decision "*This website is about squirrels*" and that website would rank very well when someone searched for "*Squirrels*".

These days, keywords are not such important factors and have fallen behind the significance of a large number of inbound links to your site but keywords remain a factor none-the-less. In fact, a great deal of your S.E.O. efforts revolve around keywords; they are truly the foundation of any SEO work that you do.

However, your understanding and ability to calculate your keyword density is very useful for your work as an SEO marketer. It will allow you to make informed decisions about the content on your website and how to manipulate and optimize it for better ranking in the search engines.

There are automated tools for calculating keyword density it's always best to understand the inner workings of keyword density, so you can make decisions about how to structure your content for yourself.

3.3.1 About Keyword Density

Keyword density is the percentage of times a keyword or phrase appears on a web page compared to the total number of words on the page.

Keyword density is a little bit of a tightrope walk. Too low a keyword density and your keywords will have little (or almost no) significance to your search engine ranking. Too high a keyword density and you may be penalized by the search engines for "*keyword stuffing*" (that is they will lower your placement in



the search engine results pages because you have used a keyword way too many times for it to simply be a coincidence).

Many SEO experts consider the optimum keyword density to be 1% to 3% percent and Google documentation states that your keyword density for any keyword or phrase should be less than 5%. You must make your own decisions about what is right for you but it seems like a keyword density of around 2%-3% is just right.

Here I am going to show you how to calculate your keyword density and help you optimize your website. There will be a little bit of mathematics involved but nothing more complicated than a little multiplication and division. How you calculate your keyword density relies heavily on the circumstance in which you are using your keywords.

3.3.2 Keyword Density: The Maths!

To calculate keyword density in its simplest form, you divide the number of times that you have used a specific keyword by the total number of words in the text that you are analyzing and multiply the result by one hundred to achieve your percentage.

Therefore:

$$\text{Keyword Density} = (\text{Nkr} / \text{Tkn}) \times 100$$

Where:

Density = your keyword density

Nkr = how many times you repeated a specific keyword

Tkn = total words in the analyzed text

So, if your article or piece of content (the text you are analyzing) is 500 words in length and you have used your keyword 15 times, the keyword density for that keyword is...

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Keyword density} &= (\text{Nkr} / \text{Tkn}) \times 100 \\ &= (15 / 500) \times 100 \\ &= 0.03 \times 100 \\ &= 3 \end{aligned}$$

Keyword density = 3% !!!

That's pretty straight-forward, huh?

3.3.4 POP-QUIZ!

If I have an article that is 2000 words in length and I have used the keyword "squirrel" 120 times, what is the keyword density for the word "squirrel"? – What do you think; is this too much or too little? Will I be penalized by Google for Keyword Stuffing?



3.3.5 About Key-Phrases

Key-phrases add a new level of complexity to the keyword density issue. People don't only search for one word when they perform searches on the internet. They may use a phrase which contains more than one word. Users will search terms that contain more than one word usually because they are looking for something specific.

If I were in search of a great waffle-house in my area (believe me, not such a crazy idea) I wouldn't just search the keyword "waffles" in Google... This would return me a list of millions of results. I would instead search something like "waffles in Delaware". "Waffles in Delaware" is an example of a key-phrase because it consists of more than one word as opposed to a keyword which is a single word.

So, someone trying to cater to my search would possibly try and optimize their content for that key-phrase – "Waffles in Delaware" and they would try and fine-tune the density of the key phrase to that coveted 1% – 3% range.

This changes the calculation that we must perform to calculate our keyword density, because now we are dealing with an entity that contains multiple terms.

This presents an interesting dilemma. To work out the keyword density of a key phrase, it could be tempting to use:

$$\text{Density} = (\text{Nkr} \times (\text{Nwp} / \text{Tkn})) \times 100$$

Where:

Density = your keyword density

Nkr = how many times you repeated a specific key-phrase

Nwp = number of words in your key-phrase

Tkn = total words in the analyzed text

So, again, if we take my "Waffles in Delaware" example – There are three words in my key-phrase and I have used that key-phrase three times amidst my total word count of 500 words.

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Density} &= (\text{Nkr} \times (\text{Nwp} / \text{Tkn})) \times 100 \\ &= (3 \times (3 / 500)) \times 100 \\ &= (3 \times 0.006) \times 100 \\ &= 0.018 \times 100 \\ \text{Density} &= 1.8\% \end{aligned}$$

There is a problem with this keyword density formula, however. One cannot ignore the fact that keyword density refers to the frequency of the appearance of one particular keyword. This means that "Waffles in Delaware" should be counted as if it was just one word amongst the rest of your text and not three words.

This idea brings us back to our original formula, Keyword Density = (Nkr / Tkn) x 100, and doing the calculation above gives us:



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$$\begin{aligned}
 &= (3 / 500) \times 100 \\
 &= 0.006 \times 100 \\
 &= 0.6\%
 \end{aligned}$$

...which is a little low and very different. If you were using this formula to calculate your keyword density, you would want to add a few more instances of *“Waffles in Delaware”*

Furthermore, if you think about it, these key-phrases that consist of more than just one word artificially inflate the total word count of your text and as such it can be further argued that the total word count of your analyzed text should be adjusted by removing the excess key-phrase words from the total. From this we can derive the ultimate Keyword density formula:

$$\text{Density} = (\text{Nkr} / (\text{Tkn} - (\text{Nkr} \times (\text{Nwp} - 1)))) \times 100$$

Using this formula, we can see that our keyword density for the key-phrase *“Waffles in Delaware”* is too low if we only use three instances of *“Waffles in Delaware”*.

Let’s imagine then that we upped-the-ante and now use the key-phrase *“Waffles in Delaware”* nine times, instead of just three:

$$\begin{aligned}
 &= (\text{Nkr} / (\text{Tkn} - (\text{Nkr} \times (\text{Nwp} - 1)))) \times 100 \\
 &= (9 / (500 - (9 \times (3 - 1)))) \times 100 \\
 &= (9 / (500 - (9 \times 2))) \times 100 \\
 &= (9 / (500 - 18)) \times 100 \\
 &= (9 / 482) \times 100 \\
 &= 0.0186721991701245 \times 100 \\
 &= 1.87\%
 \end{aligned}$$

That is better and within the safe keyword density to use.

This formula allows for a simple one-word keyword as well as for key-phrases which consist of as many terms as you like and as such it acts as the original formula.

3.3.6 Useful Tools

There are several online tools to help you calculate your keyword density. My favorite is live-keyword-analysis.com. It’s really simple to use. Just pop in the text you are analyzing and the software will give you percentage values for your keywords and –phrases.

It’s also really interesting to have a look at some of the *“rules”* that this tool uses to examine keyword density (which can be found here: http://live-keyword-analysis.com/keyword_analysis_rules.html). You will note, for example, that this keyword tool does not count any one or two letter words as well as certain html tags.

This MAY be something akin to the way that Google or Yahoo! view keyword densities or part of the algorithm they use in their ranking criteria. In truth we will never really know ... As this website itself points out: *“when is search engine optimization ever ultra precise?”*



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Please also visit the links below to try them out. You can use the formulas above to decide how these online tools are calculating your keyword density to decide if they are useful to you.

- <http://www.seomastering.com/keyword-density-analyzer.php>
- <http://seotools.seozy.com/tools/keyword-density-checker/>
- <http://www.seobay.com/tools/keyword-density-checker/>
- <http://www.seocentro.com/tools/seo/keyword-density.html>
- <http://seochat.com/seo-tools/keyword-density>
- <http://www.webconfs.com/keyword-density-checker.php>
- <http://www.webcaretech.com/search-marketing/search-engine-optimisation/>

3.3.7 Keyword Density vs. Quality Content

Aww, c'mon; that's an easy one ... Quality Content each and every day!

I mentioned earlier that keyword density is not that great of a ranking factor these days.

The real SEO power of your website is its ability to get your visitors enjoying and linking to your content. Take this text for example ... I haven't used a keyword formula once while I was writing it.

Always remember that keywords are secondary to the quality of the content that you offer your visitors. Make it compelling, make it interesting and make it useful ... Then go back and optimize your keyword density if you feel that it should be modified.

If I were to propose a formula for S.E.O., it may be something like this:

S.E.O. = High Quality Content + Loads of Inbound Links + just a little keyword optimizing, if required

3.4 S.E.O. TIPS AND TRICKS

S.E.O. copywriters have a pretty tough job but it's certainly not impossible to write excellent and more importantly, optimized content for your website. With this in mind, I decided to write a basic set of rules for S.E.O. copywriters to follow; rules that anyone can reference to produce website content that both readers and Search Engines will enjoy. Let's not mince words at this point ... this is by no means a complete and exhaustive list; other copywriters might have other lists or other S.E.O. tips and tricks... It's certainly not my intent to definitely "*write the book*" on optimized content. It's just a list of a few methods that have enabled us to achieve the desired results for our clients in a variety of industries.

3.4.1 Google doesn't appreciate Shakespeare – people do

Search Engines are exceptional consumers of content. They read everything on the Internet they can get their crawlers around. They've read every book in every language – twice (as well as several million books more worth of blog posts). Thing is, they don't really understand it... They couldn't tell you if the text and websites they read are any good from a critical standpoint. Google can tell you what a sentence



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or paragraph or article is roughly about without knowing whether it's prolific in a profound sense or a plentiful one.

For the most part, a Search Engine such as Google will assign value to content according to the behavior of human readers – not according to some arbitrary algorithm that projects an entry's staying power. If people like it, Google likes it. So certainly do your S.E.O. copywriting for people.

You can optimize and optimize and optimize, hoping Google will reward your efforts with premium rankings but if human readers don't enjoy it, then neither will Google. How does Google know if people like it? By following the links...

A popular saying in the S.E.O. community is that "*Content is King.*" Um, yeah but it's really not that simple. Try searching for a classic book, like Bram Stokers 'Dracula'. What ranks No. 1? The actual text of the book? A scholarly critique? An original book review? Nope. Nope. And nope! It's a Wikipedia entry. Why? Because Wikipedia has about a-billion-and-one links pointed at its site. Is this a good thing for Search Engine users? Probably not. Is it good for the tens of thousands of book reports written by students who never read Mr. Stoker's book? Certainly not.

I introduce this fact not to discourage anyone or to underscore Wikipedia's considerable advantage. This extreme example is introduced to emphasize the fact Google rewards links, not great content.

How is this valuable to you? In most cases, you won't be competing with Wikipedia but with rival companies, organizations, groups and other bloggers. So just get more links than them. It's that simple. How do you do that? Write more engaging content than them.

But isn't that contradictory? Didn't you just say content is worthless? No, S.E.O. copywriting is DEFINITELY in. What I said was to get more links. And you get links by writing better content.

3.4.2 Always write engaging content

At its very best, the Internet is a democracy and everyone connected to it has a vote. Those copywriters who compose the posts that receive the most links (or "votes" to Google) win not elections but great and powerful Search Engine rankings. Your best S.E.O. copy-writing strategy is to reach out to "voters" by writing content they will link to. You must write content people within your niche will blog about, share on Facebook or Tweet about. You must write content that gets people talking about your products, your services and your company.

Don't be frightened to take a unique stance on a familiar topic to stir up a bit of controversy. Nobody ever really stood out by being the 700th person to agree with something. The people who generate buzz about the Internet are those provocative rogues who are brave enough to support a daring, perhaps even unpopular, position. Fresh will always win the fight. New angles are always the best, even if they're seemingly ludicrous, because they'll bring in the links.

For instance, say Galileo had a blog way back when (now there's a thought!) and he wrote an incredibly controversial post about the world being round – not flat. People would think he was absolutely crazy. They'd bash him in the comments section. He'd be the laughing stock of every astronomy forum but I'm



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willing to bet that people would link to him. And I bet his blog would rank No. 1 for *“The World is Round.”* And I bet a whole lot of people would be searching for that once they realized that he was probably right.

So, WRITE ENGAGING CONTENT! Establish yourself as an authority on a subject or introduce a fresh argument.

3.4.3 THAT’s already been written about 75 million times ... but THAT hasn’t...

Everything (okay 99.9% of stuff) has been written about before at least once. The Internet is very much like *The Simpsons* where everything has been done before and yet there are still infinite questions left unanswered and there are countless arguments that haven’t been made. There are countless viewpoints that haven’t been introduced yet... As an S.E.O. copywriter, it’s your job to find them.

You can get started by identifying the hot topics and trends in your industry - then take an angle on them that nobody else has really considered.

In addition to spotting these Internet trends, perform some critical analysis yourself. Do your due diligence. Search Google for specific industry-related questions. Which ones have no adequate answers? What information might prospective clients or customers want that’s so far been inaccessible to them? Don’t know what information they want and can’t find? Then ask them.

Then, once you’ve identified a fresh topic, write the optimized content for it.

3.4.4 MY keyword density formula is WAY better than your keyword density formula

The question here is: What is optimized content? Is it content that follows an exact keyword density formula (so-many instances of a *“keyword”* per total number of words)? Should you incorporate keywords into every single sentence? Every paragraph? I heard you’re supposed to infuse one keyword into every seventh sentence – is that even true?

Not really, no ... It’s nonsense.

My own thoughts on keyword density are as follows: forget keywords and write naturally (as I emphasized). If your content is about a topic you hope to rank for, odds are you’ll use these keywords or phrases quite naturally. Injecting keywords where they don’t belong will only produce choppy and spammy content that neither Google nor your audience will appreciate. It’s a waste of time.

Furthermore, when it’s clear what your content is about, your readers will unwittingly know what keywords you want them to put in their anchor text links. If *The Incredible Car Blog* writes a blog about what cars will be like in 2020, odds are those linking to the post will put some variation of *“2020 Cars”* in the anchor text. And one link like that from a really reputable site is worth more than 1,000 instances of *“2020 Cars”* included in your original post.



So write honestly and eloquently, be informative and entertaining. One of the best ways to do that is to write something you'd want to read yourself. Don't worry about optimization when you're writing. Once you've completed the most engaging content in the world, that's when you go back and optimize it.

3.4.5 The brutally honest secret to optimized content

How do I optimize content? Well, I'd love to tell you how.

There is a huge S.E.O. Myth: Optimized content is merely content with keywords included. If writing optimized content was simply the process of stuffing a bunch of keywords between other words, you wouldn't need writers. You could take existing content and scatter a bunch of keywords around. You might find this on a car dealership's website:

"It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, it was a great time to buy New Chevrolet Cars in Miami!"

Does that mean you don't want keywords in your content? Of course, not. You MUST have a few keywords. Just don't overdo it. Let the opportunities present themselves naturally and then pounce on them, without remorse!

Let's go back to that Miami car dealership. Maybe they already have some unique web content with 5 or 6 natural instances of "Chevrolet Camaro in Miami," a phrase they rank No. 1 for in Google. Spectacular! But they're missing out on tons and tons of related searches. Why? Because they have no instances of "New Chevrolet Camaros in Miami," or "Used Chevrolet Camaros in Miami," or "Pre-Owned Chevrolet Camaros in Miami," or "Best Miami Dealerships for Chevy Camaros." There's any number of ways people in Miami will search for the same car but this dealership is only really taking advantage of one of them!

THAT is what optimized content is. It's writing naturally and then searching through your content for ways to improve it. Anticipate the ways your audience would search for you and then give it to them. Don't set out to write content just so you can stuff it with 50 instances of a phrase you want to rank for. Write something of value to prospective clients and consumers and then go back and optimize content accordingly.

3.4.6 Duplicate page titles confuse Search Engines

Attention must be paid to every facet of Search Engine optimization but perhaps no single factor is as fundamentally important to Search Engine rankings as page titles. While page titles might seem an incredibly obvious area of concern when optimizing websites, duplicate page titles can actually diminish Search Engine rankings and quite drastically too.

Duplicate page titles can be the result of laziness, a lack of awareness, a limited website publishing program, or any number of other reasons but the bottom line is it's simply imperative that unique and descriptive titles be used on your web pages in order to maximize Search Engine rankings. The more information Search Engine crawlers can deduce from each page heightens the likelihood your site will be pinpointed for a specific keyword or phrase.



There are numerous ways to determine the different (or in some cases duplicate) page titles in your website. But whether you manually click through every page of your website, explore your entire site per a “site colon search” on Google or Yahoo! (for example typing “*site:vodahost.com*”), or extract your site’s data from utilities such as Google Webmaster Tools, the first step to rectifying title page redundancy is learning exactly which pages bear what titles.

As page titles offer arguably the most telling description of page contents for Search Engine crawlers, it is essential that each page title be unique to the contents of that respective page. For instance, you should try to tailor individual pages according to topic. Therefore, a page displaying an article about the S.E.O. Value of Keyword Rich Anchor Text is aptly titled “*Keyword Rich Anchor Text for S.E.O. | Anchor Text Link Optimization*”.

E-commerce websites would be wise to title each web page according to the particular products and category being advertised on that page. This adds notable value to each page, which consequently strengthens the website as a whole.

No matter what the contents of your website are, we recommend titles that accurately reflect the page content and contain the keywords or phrases you ultimately hope to rank high for in the Search Engines. If you try any search query on the major Search Engines, you will notice the page titles cut off around 60-70 characters, so try and stay within that range. As an example, the homepage of an S.E.O. firm might have a title something like:

Internet Marketing | Search Engine Optimization | [VodaHits](#)

Again, page titles might seem such an obvious and mundane concern that little should be written or said about them; however, neglecting page titles will undoubtedly have one of the most negative impacts on even the most polished websites. Contact [VodaHost](#) if you need help.

3.5 BLACK HAT S.E.O.

Black Hat S.E.O. (named from those pesky bad guys in western movies) is a set of methods (which are seen as wholly unacceptable to the Googlebot and therefore Google) used to create false and transient valuations to confuse and unfairly influence the Search Engine ranking of the website employing black hat S.E.O. Used one at a time or together, these methods may initially result in elevated website rankings and positions but are rarely sustainable or completely ignored by the Search Engines.

It was quite common in the earlier days to use these methods to “trick” the Search engines to advance a website into a more favorable position and then to re-apply them using different values and terms (also Black Hat) before the Search Engines returned to penalize the website after running a validation script -- this was the model for the early S.E.O. services ruse: to create a monthly cycle of false favor and then to change the site dynamics once again before being caught red-handed and penalized.

Understandably, this is why these so-called “*S.E.O. Providers*” insisted on long-term services agreements and high costs associated with them: they were compelled to run a whole set of baseline values each month to install before being discovered.



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This is why Google and other Search Engines continually change their validation algorithms and evaluation techniques and despite shortening bot visits timing, some of these Black Hat methods remain “core” to unethical strategies of the majority of S.E.O. providers.

VodaHits S.E.O. is dedicated to 100% ethical and manually created Search Engine Optimization and as such, is able to create advanced values and results for client websites that is measurable, sustainable and progressively performing.

3.5.1 Black Hat S.E.O. Methods to Avoid

- Astrourfing:** This is when a false public relations campaign or fake social media in the blogosphere generate increased attention to a site, blog, or wiki.
- Buying expired domains:** Domains that have expired can carry a large PageRank. By purchasing the domain, throwing up repetitive content and linking to your other web sites and domains, you may be able to use “link juice” to distribute the page rank to those other sites.
- Cloaking:** Cloaking is when a site is designed to show one set of content to your users, while showing a completely different set of content to crawlers, robots and spiders. This is considered misrepresenting your content.
- Content spamming:** This method is implemented by leaving comments on sites with high Page Ranks. These comments can be in the form of blog comments, guestbook entries, forum submissions, wiki pages, etc. The comments are filled with high density keywords and have links back to the spamming site.
- Doorway pages:** A doorway page is a “fake” page that the user will never see. It is purely for search engine spiders and attempts to trick them into indexing the site higher. This method is dependent on user-agent sniffing.
- Impersonators:** This is when a blogger or forums user registers as if they are a person of significance, i.e. a CEO or celebrity. These people leave damaging messages that can sway a user in a specific direction about a product or service. This can swing the other way. A Celebrity or high level executive can act as an anonymous user to leave disparaging remarks about another person, company, or product, drive traffic to their site and ultimately increase sales.
- Google bombing:** This is accomplished by creating links on multiple sites linking to the same page with the same text. The text link may not necessarily be relevant to the linked site, thus creating the Google Bomb. The most common Google Bomb can be seen by searching "miserable failure" and seeing sites for George Bush appear at the top of the results page.



- Google bowling:** Google is penalizing (or even banning) sites that purchase site-wide links. A site-wide link is a link that is on every page of the entire site. Google Bowling is buying site-wide links as a competitor to get them banned.
- Invisible or hidden text:** This Black Hat method manifests itself in many forms. One method is to put lists of keywords in white text on a white background in hopes of attracting more search engine spiders. Another method is to embed and overload keywords into unseen places that crawlers look will get you banned as well. Places like alt tags, comments, JavaScript tags, noframe tags, div tags that are hidden, etc.
- Interlinking:** When multiple web sites are built by the same person or company, with similar content, with links pointing back and forth between them, in an attempt to increase each other's page ranks.
- Keyword stuffing:** This is when you fill your page with long lists of keywords in an attempt to rank higher for those words. You don't view this as high quality content and neither will Google. This method is typically accompanied with the Hidden Text and Redirecting Black Hat methods. As a matter of fact, as of October 2008 Google has reduced the SE values of KeyWords drastically!
- Link farming:** Another name for a link farm is a free-for-all site. The objective of these sites is strictly to generate inbound links to your site at any cost. This will typically work in the short term but hurt your site (or get it banned) long-term. These kinds of sites are also known as 'mutual admiration societies' and other names but the practice is uniformly penalized.
- Redirecting:** Redirects are commonly used along with doorway pages, or spam pages filled with advertising. They are designed to take a user to a page that they did not want to go to. These can be both server -side redirects, or client -side redirects. Vicious redirect pages often get the user into an infinite loop that IS difficult to break from.
- Scrapper sites:** Also known as Made-for-AdSense Sites, these pages are similar to spam pages, except that they are designed to scrape search engine results and dynamically "create" content pages. These may also be used in conjunction with malevolent software utilities (malware) that records any identifiable User Data from unsuspecting visitors.
- Selling page rank:** Sites can explicitly sell "*advertising*" (read inbound links) to your site. This essentially distributes some of the Page Rank to the newly linked site and its position in search engine results pages. This has been in the news a lot lately. Google has dropped the Page Rank of anyone doing this. Both the buyer and seller of the link are dropped in Page Rank.



- Splogs:** SHILL BLOGS, SPAM BLOGS | Spam Blogs are when one person is paid to act as a fan for those who hired them. Generating a source of positive feedback and link sharing will increase inbound traffic and Page Rank. These methods are similar in effect to a link farm.
- Spam pages:** Spam Pages are web pages that rank well for specific keywords but actually hold no content. They are typically full of advertisements, listings to other sites, or are part of a pay-per-click scam.
- Sybil attacks:** When a single user creates multiple identities to generate additional traffic. This could be in the form of multiple web sites with similar, if not identical, content. This could be in the form of multiple social bookmark accounts, multiple comments, etc.
- Wiki spam:** Wikis, just like blogs, are intended to be an easy way to create and organize content for non-developers (read anyone). But the distributed and open 'editability' of wikis make them susceptible to spamming. By placing links in wikis back to the spam site, you hijack the link juice of the wiki, pass the page rank on and increase results frequency. The subject of the wiki page is typically irrelevant. This is why large wikis like Wikipedia have added the nofollow attribute to all of their links.



Secret 4:

Your Links

4.1 LINKS OVERVIEW

In our previous Secret on Search Engine Optimization (S.E.O.) I put particular emphasis on the fact that Google rewards links before it rewards even the greatest optimized content when it gives your website a PageRank. Google is all about links (it loves 'em; eats 'em for breakfast, lunch and dinner). People click on links to visit your website and Search Engines follow them to discover your site and to learn where to list it in the search results. Links are what makes the Internet tick (they ARE the "net" itself) and every site needs them.

Links are the foundation of the Internet. They're important for several reasons:

1. People will click on them and discover your site.
2. Search Engines follow them to discover your website and to find out what it's about.
3. Search Engines consider the number as well as the quality of links to your web-pages to be a good indicator of your pages' importance.
4. Search Engines also consider the link text (the words you click on) to be important in determining what your website's about and thus in determining for which search results your site will appear.

The simple truth is, without links to your site, the Search Engines will give little importance to your site and people won't be able to find it... and will probably never find it.

4.2 THE IMPORTANCE OF RELEVANT LINKS

The Search Engines give the most weight (in terms of where they place your page in their results) to links from web-pages that are closely related to your own. These are called "*relevant links*." If you're a Surrealist painter, for example, it would be massively beneficial to get a link from a web-page about Surrealism, painting, art or any combination of the above. In contrast, a link to your painting site from a car dealer or a veterinarian would be pretty irrelevant and pretty useless.

The Search Engines consider relevant links to be very important and these carry more weight than links from websites unrelated to your own. And, if you can get a link from a relevant page that also contains your keywords in the link text, that's even better!



4.3 ABOUT LINK TEXT

Your link text (the words that you click on to activate a link), is very important, too. Having the right link text will help you get found when someone searches for those words or phrases.

You don't always have control over the words someone uses to link to your site. But if you're in a position to specify the link text (as in a reciprocal link exchange, or in a directory submission), suggest one that contains one of your keyword phrases.

Here's a quick Pop-Quiz! ... Which of the following two examples of Link Text would you use to link to the fictional Dweezil Foley's website ?...

[Dweezil Foley](#) ,or
[Dweezil Foley - Americana Singer-Songwriter](#)

The first link text doesn't give people (or Search Engines) any idea of what the site is about. The second includes some keywords.

Almost all links are good. But ones with your keywords in them pack way, WAY more punch...

4.4 TYPES OF LINKS

4.4.1 One-way links are just from website A to website B. Website B doesn't link to website A. Most links on the Internet probably fall into this category and they are the most desirable type of links. I should point out that Search Engines also consider one-way links more important than reciprocal links...

4.4.2 Reciprocal links happen when you exchange links with another website - preferably one with a subject related to yours - that's a reciprocal link. Find other sites in your field - even competitors - and offer an exchange of links.

For best success, link to the site in question before you email them to ask for a reciprocal link. In your email, tell them where to find their link. If you don't hear back from them after a reasonable amount of time (perhaps a month), you can remove the link from your page.

Reciprocal links are less desirable than one-way links (those where you don't link back); they're given somewhat less weight by the Search Engines.

However, though they carry less weight, it's still worthwhile to exchange links with sites related to your own, which may be of interest to your visitors.

Just be judicious about who you link to; don't accept every (or even most) "*let's exchange links*" offer that lands in your inbox. (Links to spammy or low-quality sites won't help you or your visitors.)

4.4.3 Natural links; Over time, people will discover and link to your site because they like it; these "natural links" are very valuable as well.



To encourage natural (sometimes called "organic") links to your site, present content that is very useful to your visitors and add new content on a regular basis (this is where the high quality content you prepared after reading **Secret 3** comes in).

It can also be helpful to present a "link to us" page with ready-to-use link code & perhaps some graphics, to make it easy for people to link to your site.

4.4.4 Paid links; It is possible to pay for a link in a web directory or on another site. Though it's usually not necessary to buy links (and Google frowns upon some types of link buying and selling), if you're going to do it, make sure to buy your link from a quality site somehow related to your own.

4.4.5 Internal links are to pages on your own website. These type of links are completely within your control and can have a dramatic effect.

Use brief, descriptive text links. For example, if you sell Voda Books, a link on your pages reading "*homepage*" is clear enough but it's better to use "*Voda Books home*" or even just "*Voda Books*". This helps the Search Engines understand that the page being linked to is about "*Voda Books*" - not about "*homepage*."

See how effective link text is?

4.4.6 Image links; Search Engines can't read images. So, if you're linking with an image (as with a navigation button), use "alt" text to describe the web-page the image leads to. An image tag might read something like this:

```
<a href="http://vodabooks.com"></a>
```

4.4.7 External Links are those to other websites. Link out to quality websites similar to your own. What will be helpful to your visitors? Don't link to spammy websites, link farms, or what Google calls "*bad neighborhoods*," because links to these types of sites can hurt you. Be very selective in your links.

4.5 SO, HOW DO I GET LINKS?

4.5.1 Social Networking: This is an absolutely beautiful way to get links. Check out: **Secret 7: Social Bookmarking** for full details.

4.5.2 Submit your site to web directories: Directory links are great. They'll have your keywords in the link text & description, on a page with a topic relevant to yours. People browsing through the directory can find your site as well.

4.5.3 VodaHits: VodaHits is [VodaHost's](#) service to ensure that your website stays as high up the Search Engine results and remains as visible to as many Internet users as possible.



Our Search Engine & Directory Submission service, to hundreds of S.E.O.-friendly Directories and Search Engines, provides the quality one-way (as well as completely relevant) links that are essential if your website is to climb above the competition.

It's quick, easy and takes the headache out of the quality link-building that is so vital and would otherwise take months or even years to get done.

So, need some help with your directory submissions? [Check it out!](#)

4.5.4 Sites in your field; When you find a website similar to yours (even that of a competitor!), or on a related topic, consider asking them for a link. Don't forget informational sites, professional organizations, & forums.

4.5.5 Go local; Your place of employment, friends, clients, school, local organizations, or businesses you deal with may link to you.

If you're an artist, ask local galleries, other artists & art supply shops. Musicians, ask local venues, music stores, gear manufacturers, band-mates. Writers can get links from their publishers & fellow writers and so on...

You know more likely places to get links than you think you do! A little brainstorming will turn them up.

4.5.6 Forums & Emails; If you participate in online forums or discussion boards, put a link to your website in your signature (if it's permitted). Every post you make will give you a link (albeit one that may not carry a lot of weight).

It will happen naturally; If your site offers something of value, folks will begin to link to it because they want to. And, some of these links will be from relevant sites.

You can encourage your visitors to link to you by including a "*link to us*" page that provides link code & some graphics.

4.6 LINK BUILDING MISTAKES

S.E.O. link-building has become one of the main high leverage activities in any online business. The simple fact is that back-links will give you a high page rank and a high page rank will rank you higher in the Search Engine R.P's. Obviously this means more traffic and more money.

Back-links make up 90% of your Google rank and because of this, link-building has taken on a life of its own. Most people seem to misunderstand it completely. For starters you should know that not all back links are good links. They can actually hurt you more than help you.

S.E.O. Link-building is all about building links that are natural. Google did not design their ranking system to be manipulated. It was designed to reward good sites that get linked to it naturally. That's why getting the right links can be incredibly difficult if you try and do it manually.



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Unfortunately, you have to build in links these days otherwise you will not be competitive. If you sit around and wait for sites to link to you, you might wait forever. The good thing is that this also gives the "small guy" a fair shake to get good rankings in Google, Yahoo! and MSN.

Most guys build Back-links "*kamikaze style*"; that is they go in there and just get as many links they can from wherever they can and at whatever cost. This is a recipe for disaster. Once your site gets marked by Google, you might as well start over again.

Rogue link-building techniques can render months of hard work useless, so be very careful when building Back-links. Here are the 7 deadly S.E.O. link-building mistakes. Avoid them at all costs.

- Mass Link Packages:** Obviously, some sleazy and unscrupulous people are out there selling link packages that are not even worth a mention. Most of the time they blast ads out to classified directories or other spam filled networks. These links are the equivalent of buying spam email lists. Don't do it. Your links might end up on banned sites that can really hurt your Google image.
- Link Exchanges:** Back in the day, exchanging links was the main S.E.O. link-building strategy. You link to me, I link to you and we both win. Right? Wrong! Google caught on to this when hundreds of link farms opened up. Google can easily trace reciprocal links and they simply don't count for much anymore. Getting links from big link exchange networks can actually hurt your business.
- Linking From Non-Indexed Sites:** Most people who spend hours building those free Back-links make the mistake of building links on non-indexed sites. For your back links to count, the page on which you have your link has to be indexed. Having links on non-indexed pages means nothing. It's a waste of time.
- Not Using Anchor Text:** At first this probably won't sound too scary but if you build 2,000 links without relevant anchor text your site can easily pass for a spam site that just gets random links. By using anchor text that is related to your site, it gives your links link-juice; meaning it makes your links relevant and increases the perceived value of each link.
- Not Being Relevant:** Google is getting smarter by the day. After all it is their business to provide the most relevant information for each and every search that is conducted. If they don't, people will stop using Google. That's why they protect it so vigorously. When you get Back-links from relevant and related sites that would naturally link to you, then the link will count for a lot. Unrelated and random links from any old site really does not make Google see your site as being important.



Inorganic links:

As I mentioned earlier, Google designed the page rank system to work organically. They are looking for links to come to your site naturally. For the most part that means, slowly and consistently over time from a variety of related sites. If you go and get 1000 links overnight from the same site then Google's alarms will go off and you might land yourself in some Back-linking trouble with the big G. Slow and steady wins the race - especially if you have a new site.

Buying Links:

High PR Back-links are worth gold. Quite literally. I've seen a single PR7 link sell for as much as \$250 per month. There are a lot of link networks out there that make it their business to sell links on high PR sites. These links have become quite expensive but the lure of instant results has people buying links like it's going out of fashion. Google is catching on and there have been widespread reports of Google slapping page rank. If links are publicly traded then Google can probably trace them and penalize you.

4.7 YOU NEED LINKS TO YOUR SITE...

...you'll be lost without them. There are many other things you can do to promote your site as well but in terms of your website being found by the Search Engines there's nothing as important as getting links to your website!

S.E.O. link-building is all about being as natural and as organic as possible. Always go after links that are 1-way, relevant and on sites with a high page rank. If you can get links on pages with a high PageRank, even better. Don't fall for the quick-fix promises of so many link building services. In the long run, slow and steady links that look natural will keep sending more and more traffic your way.

I trust this information will help you develop your web-site to a more effective and profitable site for you and all concerned!

Good luck with your site! [Please let us know](#) if you'd like to use our services, or if you have any questions. We're always glad to help & would be delighted to hear from you.

4.8 HOW TO CREATE A VIRAL MARKETING STRATEGY**4.8.1 Is there a doctor in the house?!?**

The ideas and principles of Viral Marketing have been around for a long time but it wasn't until the Internet that Viral Marketing knew its full potential. Similar marketing strategies have been called many things over the years: "word-of-mouth," "creating a buzz," "leveraging the media," "network



marketing,” etc... For whatever reason, when it got to the Internet it became known as “**Viral Marketing**” ... It proved infectious and took the patrons of the World Wide Web by storm.

You have all seen Internet content go “*Viral*”; often times it’s unintentional; there are many viral videos out there sometimes with cute cats or funny dogs on skateboards that everybody seems to have seen, that have been shared by Internet users around the world. These videos have gone viral as a result of the natural instinct of the Internet user to share content; with Viral Internet Marketing it is YOUR JOB to get people sharing!

It may not be the most “*comfortable*” of terms to use but Viral Marketing (which takes its name from something that’s pretty sinister) describes itself really well. A virus population can explode in numbers; a good Viral Marketing campaign can reach a massive number of people as content is shared between them.

The “*Virus*” (and therefore Viral Marketer) has to be admired; piggybacking on other hosts and using their resources to increase his tribes numerous. In the right environment, it grows exponentially and he wins by sheer weight of numbers. All the virus has to do is replicate, again and again with geometrically increasing power, doubling in numbers with each new generation:

Just a few short generations and a virus population can explode!

Here, I’m going to explain Viral Marketing how it can work to make you money through the example of our own free eBook, “*The Secrets to Promoting your Website Online*”

4.8.2 What is Viral Marketing?

What does a virus have to do with marketing? Viral marketing describes a strategy that encourages individuals to pass on and share marketing messages with others, creating the potential for exponential growth in the message’s exposure and influence. Like viruses, such strategies take advantage of rapid multiplication to explode the message to thousands, to millions.

It begins with one Internet user sharing a piece of content. Let’s assume that two Internet users find that piece of content, find it useful and share it on themselves. Each of these users share it with two friends also and so on... By the tenth “*generation*” of sharing, if we assume that each person who receives the content shares it with two further people, 1022 people have been exposed to the content with the exception of the original “*host*” or sharer.

4.8.3 “*The Secrets...*” Example

A great example of Viral Marketing is “*The Secrets to Promoting your Website Online*”, [VodaHost’s](#) own free report. The strategy is simple:

1. Give away free information and knowledge in the form of a free eBook;
2. Attach a simple page at the end of every eBook: “*Make \$\$\$’s Rebranding this Report! Some people are making a small fortune rebranding and redistributing this report... CLICK HERE to*



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learn how... You will love it!" and;

3. Then stand back while people sign-up for the [VodaHost affiliate program](#), re-brand the eBook and start making money by e-mailing their own network of friends and associates;
4. Who see the eBook and the offer on the back page and;
5. Sign up for the VodaHost Affiliate Program, rebrand the eBook for themselves, and then;
6. Start making money by propelling the message still wider to their own ever-increasing circles of friends and associates!

Just like waves spreading out from a stone dropped into a lake, a carefully thought out viral marketing campaign strategy sends ripples outward in all directions and extremely rapidly!

4.8.4 How to Create a Viral Marketing Strategy: The 6 Essential Elements

Accept this fact. Some viral marketing strategies work better than others, and few work as well as the simple re-branded strategy. But below are the six basic elements you hope to include in your strategy. A viral marketing strategy doesn't necessarily need to contain ALL these elements, but the more elements it embraces, the more powerful the results are likely to be. **An effective viral marketing strategy:**

1. Gives away products or services for free
2. Proves very easy to transfer to others
3. Scales easily from small to very large
4. Makes use of peoples common behavior and motivation
5. Makes use of existing communication networks
6. Makes use of the resources of others

Let's have a look at each of these elements individually:

1. Gives away products or services for free

"Free" is absolutely the most powerful word in an Internet Marketer's vocabulary. Most viral marketing programs give away valuable products or services to attract attention and, believe me, free products and services (especially the really useful ones) attract a lot of attention. Free e-mail services, free information, free *"yeah! cool!"* buttons, free software programs that perform powerful functions but not as much as you get in the "pro" version. You must use the word **"FREE"**. *"Cheap"* or *"inexpensive"* may generate a wave of interest, but *"free"* will usually do it much faster. The Internet Viral marketers practice delayed gratification. They may not profit today, or tomorrow, but if they can generate interest from something free, they just know



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they will profit. Certainly with regards Internet Marketing, patience is a virtue. “Free” attracts eyes. Eyes then see other cool things that you are selling and as a result, you earn money. Eyes bring valuable e-mail addresses, advertising revenue and e-commerce sales. You should always try to give away something first, then sell something.

2. Proves very easy to transfer to others

Viruses only spread when they’re easy to transmit and whatever the medium is that is carrying your marketing message must be easy to transfer and replicate: e-mail, website, graphics and software download. Viral marketing works famously on the Internet because of the digital nature of the content and because of the instant communication has become so easy and inexpensive. Digital format make copying simple. From a marketing standpoint, you must simplify your marketing message so it can be transmitted easily and without degradation. Short is better. The classic is: “Make \$\$\$’s Rebranding this Report!” The message is compelling, compressed, and copied on the back page of every free eBook report.

3. Scales easily from small to very large

To spread like wildfire the transmission method must be rapidly scalable from small to very large. The weakness of the Hotmail model is that a free e-mail service requires its own mailservers to transmit the message. If the strategy is wildly successful, mailservers must be added very quickly or the rapid growth will bog down and die. If the virus multiplies only to kill the host before spreading, nothing is accomplished. So long as you have planned ahead of time how you can add mailservers rapidly you’re okay. You must build in scalability to your viral model.

4. Makes use of peoples common behavior and motivation

Clever viral marketing plans take advantage of common human motivations. What made “[LIKE]” buttons on Facebook so popular? The desire to be cool. Greed drives people and so does the need to be popular, loved, and understood. The resulting urge to communicate produces millions of websites and billions of e-mail messages. Design a marketing strategy that builds on common motivations and behaviors for its transmission and you have a winner.

5. Makes use of existing communication networks

Most people are social; social scientists tell us that each person has a network of 8 to 12 people in their close network of friends, family, and associates. A person’s broader network may consist of thousands of people, depending upon her position in society. A waitress, for example, may communicate regularly with hundreds of customers in a given week. Network marketers have long understood the power of these human networks, both the strong, close networks as well as the weaker networked relationships. People on the Internet develop networks of relationships, too. They collect e-mail addresses and favorite website URLs. Affiliate programs exploit such networks, as do permission e-mail lists. Learn to place your message into existing communications between people, and you rapidly multiply its dispersion.



6. Makes use of the resources of others

The most creative viral marketing plans use others' resources to get the word out. Affiliate programs, for example, place text or graphic links on others' websites. Authors who give away free articles, seek to position their articles on others' webpages. A news release can be picked up by hundreds of periodicals and form the basis of articles seen by hundreds of thousands of readers. This means someone else's newspaper, blog or webpage is relaying your marketing message. Someone else's resources are used rather than your own.

REMEMBER: The more people that share your content, the more people that link to your content, the better SEO you get for your website!



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Secret 5:

Google

5.1 GOOGLE OVERVIEW

If you're building a website with [BlueVoda](#) or are the owner of a website then you will want people from around the world to be able to find your website on the Internet. The way that most visitors will find your website will be through a Search Engine and more often than not, your visitors will be using Google search. For visitors to find your website using a Search Engine they'll enter what they want to find and then wait on the results, which may or may not contain your website.

It is the Googlebot (Google's search engine spider) that is responsible for where your site appears in Google's listings.

The Googlebot is a very sophisticated computer program. It is a search engine spider that scours the Internet and inspects web sites in order to have them ranked according to Google's standards. It's "job" is to look at your web page, make a few notes and then report back to Google, who in turn give your page a ranking.

Here, I'm going to tell you a little about how to attract the Googlebot to your website and how to make sure it's happy with what it finds. Think of it like this: The Googlebot needs love too...

5.1.1 Read Google's [Webmaster Guidelines](#): Most of Google's algorithms (search rules) are really secret; we can only guess what they are. Their guidelines are very simple and precise, however. Following their guidelines can't "hurt" your site's ranking and Googlebot will "enjoy" its time with your website. Disregarding their guidelines can and probably will hurt you and your website in the long run.

5.1.2 Make the links in your site text links: Google says: "*Make a site with a clear hierarchy (structure) and text links. Every page should be reachable from at least one static text link.*"

The native language of the Googlebot is text; this is not to say that you cannot make your site really pretty and fill it with lashings of Java Script and Flash but you MUST have regular text and standard text links. Usually you can achieve the desired effect by having extra navigation menus based on standard text links.

5.1.3 Give every page a complete and meaningful title: This is also directly from Google's Webmaster Guidelines. Have a look at **5.1.1**.

The "title" tag is supported by every web creation tool out there and goes in the header of a web page. Make sure your title is not just a list of keywords and that it is related to the actual content of the page. Google can and will check that, before deciding on your page's 'relevance' and fate...



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5.1.4 DO NOT place important text inside images: Google says: *"Try to use text instead of images to display important names, content, or links. The Googlebot doesn't recognize text contained in images."* It is very tempting to create images with text inside them, for the very simple reason that you are not limited to the very few font options that basic HTML allows. Also, different browsers tend to display things differently nowadays, so it is much easier to create a text image, which will be shown consistently and not worry about styles, operating systems, etc. Unfortunately, the Googlebot doesn't like this one bit...

5.1.5 Use descriptive "ALT" tags: The "ALT" tag is used as a text alternative for images and image links and was designed so that text browsers do not just display a generic 'Image' for every picture link you might have. If all your links say 'Image', how would a potential visitor know what they are?

Make sure that the text description is meaningful and accurate. If the "ALT" tag only says "display", that is what Googlebot will see and index. If the tag says something like *"example of a tradeshow display design"*, that is certainly more useful to the information-hungry Googlebot.

5.1.6 Use meaningful descriptions for links: Whether you use picture links or text links, please use meaningful text inside your tags so that Googlebot can associate that text with that link.

In other words, if you intend to put a link to a set of sample coffee mugs promos, say something like *"link to samples of Y.O.U.R. branded coffee mugs"*, not just *"coffee mugs"*, or even worse, *"click here for pictures"*. Never use link text like *"read more"* or *"go here"* or *"download it"*, *"click here"*, *"don't click here"*. Googlebot will not understand what you mean...

5.1.7 Use a "description" tag for every page: Include a `<meta name="description" content="[insert your site's description here]">` tag in your page header to summarize your site. Use a meaningful one or two sentence description and certainly do not keyword spam.

Even better, include descriptive text on the site's front page where users can actually read it. It is this text will appear as the description for your site in Google results.

You should place more important content higher in the page than less important content in a page. The Googlebot does categorize text on a page based on its position, text at the bottom of a page is considered less relevant.

5.1.8 Make a sitemap: Google says: *"Offer a site map to your users with links that point to the important parts of your site. If the site map is larger than 100 or so links, you may want to break the site map into separate pages."*

A site map is just a page on your website where you guide your users through the structure of your site. The most basic form of sitemap is a page that lists all of your pages, with a brief description and a link - ALL TEXT, of course; the Googlebot cannot read sitemaps that are not in plain text. When you make the sitemap, follow all the rules above and don't forget that the purpose of the sitemap is to guide your human visitor.



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5.2 ROBOTS.TXT

Google says: *"Make use of the robots.txt file on your web server. This file tells crawlers which directories can or cannot be crawled."*

In this eBook, we are looking at length about how to give your website the best possible exposure on Google as well as on the other search engines and we have looked at the best ways to S.E.O. (Search Engine Optimize) your site. It has been a great deal of work on your part to make sure that your website is accessible to Google and its Googlebot, that there are plenty of keywords, plenty of quality links and a sitemap for it to follow. Here, though, we are not making your website more accessible to the Googlebot and the other search engine spiders. Quite the opposite...

We will be discussing the unthinkable; how to keep search engine spiders off your website or restrict them so they can only look at (or, index) parts of your website. It may feel strange to you to have done so much S.E.O. work only to hide it or parts of it. We will be looking at the anti-sitemap: the robots.txt file (or *"Robot Exclusion Standard / Robots Exclusion Protocol"* if you are a fan of particularly long phrases...).

5.2.1 Good Bots

The robots.txt file is the opposite of your sitemap and exists to stop cooperating web spiders visiting all or part of your website (because it exists to tell them where they cannot go). It was started in the summer 1994 by agreement of the members of the robots mailing list because, quite simply, it seemed like a good idea. It was made more popular by Alta Vista, then the other big search engines caught on in the following years and started using the robots.txt standard too.

While it may seem that we are actually hurting ourselves by not letting web crawlers/ spiders/ robots look at our website in its entirety, this is actually not the case. There may be pages on your website that, while essential, do not actually help the S.E.O. of your website. It might be a sales page that does not contain any of your keywords (maybe only: *"Click Here To Confirm"* or *"Enter Your Credit Card Details"*) and letting a robot look at those pages means a worse ranking on Google (more content; fewer keywords).

The information that you should be restricting using the robots.txt file is information that does not help in any way towards the S.E.O. of your website but we'll discuss that again later.

So, let's create a robots.txt file for your website...

It's a simple plain text file (.txt), so we can create one using the most basic tools on your home computer. You should note that each domain should have its own robots.txt file and that includes sub-domains. Separate robots.txt file should be created for *"yourwebsite.com"*, *"about.yourwebsite.com"* as well as *"waffles.yourwebsite.com"*.

1. Open up a text editor...

For example: Notepad in Windows; TextEdit in Mac OS X



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2. Start writing your robots.txt file...

Writing your robots.txt file is very straight forward. The first thing you do is specify which web crawler/ spider/ robot the text applies to. This is done using the "User-agent:" statement. A "*" is a wildcard and it means EVERYBODY (all cooperating web crawlers/ spiders/ robots). You then make a "Disallow:" statement telling the web crawler/ spider/ robot where it is not allowed to go.

As a result, the most simple form of the robots.txt file is as follows:

```
User-agent: *
Disallow: /
```

The above robots.txt file entry tells ALL cooperating web crawlers, spiders and robots to avoid ALL of your website. Obviously this is something you are never going to do... You can also do the exact opposite. The below robots.txt entry allows ALL cooperating web crawlers/ spiders/ robots to visit ALL of your website.

```
User-agent: *
Disallow:
```

Using the robots.txt you can keep cooperating away from specific files too as in the below example

```
User-agent: *
Disallow: /directory/file.html
```

Using the robots.txt files you can tell cooperating web crawlers/ spiders/ robots to stay away from one or several directories...

```
User-agent: *
Disallow: /cgi-bin/
Disallow: /images/
Disallow: /tmp/
Disallow: /private/
```

3. In this way, you can write more specific robots.txt documents...

In the below example, I want to keep the Googlebot out of my /images/ directory but I also want to keep Yahoo!'s bot out of the /videos/ directory. In addition I want to keep ALL cooperating bots out of my /cgi/ and /tmp/ directories. As a final stipulation, I also want VodaBot (okay, I made this one up) to stay away from an image file called pointless.jpg which is in my /images/ directory.

```
User-agent: Googlebot
Disallow: /images/
```

```
User-agent: yahoo
Disallow: /videos/
User-agent: *
```



```
Disallow: /cgi/
Dissallow: /tmp/
```

```
User-agent: VodaBot
Dissallow: /images/pointless.jpg
```

Finally, you will note that while the fictitious VodaBot cannot access the file pointless.jpg it can access the rest of my /images/ directory ... but what if I wanted it the other way round? What if I wanted the excellently named VodaBot to NOT be able to access anything in the /images/ directory EXCEPT an image file called "meaning-of-life.jpg"? Then I would use an Allow statement in my robots.txt file.

```
User-agent: VodaBot
Dissallow: /images/
Allow: /images/meaning-of-life.jpg
Note that Allow: MUST come after a Dissallow: statement.
```

You should also be careful when using "/" as depending how you use it, it can mean different things. The following denotes a directory: "/images/" while "/images" (without "/" at the end) means any file in the root directory that begins with "images". Writing: "Disallow: /images" does not limit access to the /images/ directory in any way, shape or form.

Have a look at [Wikipedia's robots.txt file](#) as an example. It uses comments (the # symbol) to explain how their robots.txt file works. This is a great resource if you're writing your first robots.txt file.

4. Save and upload...

Save your document in plain text format, as robots.txt, making sure that the extension of the text document is .txt. The file you have can be uploaded straight to the root (home) directory of the website it applies to.

5.2.2 Bad Bots

The robots.txt file is a double-edged sword however. You will notice that I make reference to the "cooperating" spiders. Many people have the assumption that the robots.txt file can be used to hide parts of their website from the search engines. I cannot stress how wrong this is.

There is no official standards body for the robots.txt protocol and there are very, very many search engines out there on the Internet and each has its own crawler/ spider or robot... These must be programmed to follow the instructions laid out in your robots.txt document. Image if a crawler or spider was programmed to visit ONLY the links that the robots.txt told it not to visit. There is nothing to stop it doing this.

Any parts of your website that you do not want to be visible to anybody should:

- a) Not be uploaded to your website at all
- b) Be password protected



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Of these two options, **a)** is by far the most effective.

In general the robots.txt file is not there for security in any way. It is there to improve the Search Engine Optimization of your site to make sure all the hard work that you have done S.E.O.-ing your website is used in the best and optimum way. It is there to stop Googlebot finding things that would hurt the S.E.O. of your website or are pointless as far as the theme or content of your website goes.

This almost ancient and very standard mechanism for directing well-behaved robots like the Googlebot will allow you to specify places where the robot is not welcome, for whatever the reason. You might want to keep the robot away from your cgi-bin directory and other places you maybe don't want available to the entire Googling population of the world. Remember this is a guideline, not a barrier; robots that are not programmed to comply will ignore it. So, use the robots.txt to guide the noble Googlebot but not for any real security enhancing reason.

5.3 GOOGLE WEBMASTER TOOLS

Using Google Webmaster Tools is a great way to find out why Google is or is not listing your website in its search results for certain searches and how to make your website as available to as many of your target customers as possible.

Google Webmaster Tools gives you tons of information about your website and how to give it the best Search Engine exposure it can possibly get. It is a fantastically powerful collection of free, online tools to let you find out by what searches Internet users worldwide are finding your site and how Google itself sees your site and places it within its search results. It lets you see whether there are any problems with your site that is stopping Google from reaching certain parts of it and lets you see which other Internet sites have links which are pointing to it (which is very important for S.E.O.). You can even submit a sitemap to Google using these tools and many believe that this makes Google more willing to regularly check up your website. We at [VodaHost](http://www.vodahost.com) believe absolutely everyone who owns a website should use Google Webmaster Tools.

5.3.1 Getting Set-Up With Google Webmaster Tools

So, let's get you set up with Google Webmaster Tools (you will need a Google Account for this; if you have a GMail account you're ready to go) and optimize your website for Google.

First, visit: <http://www.google.com/webmasters/tools/> - the home of Google Webmaster Tools.

Then, to add and verify a site:

1. Sign into Google Webmaster Tools with your Google Account.
2. Click Add a site and type the URL of the site you want to add. Make sure you type the entire URL, such as <http://www.vodahost.com/>



3. Click Continue. The Site verification page opens.
4. In the Name box, type a name for your site (for example, My Web Hosting Page). (This step is optional)
5. Select the verification method you want and follow the instructions.

Once you've verified your website, go back to the home page and click on your website domain name to get to the Google Webmaster Tools dashboard. On the main page you'll be presented with several main areas and loads of extremely useful information to help you out:

5.3.2 Useful Google Webmaster Tools Information

1. Top Search Queries

When people searched on Google, how did they find your website? Generally speaking, as you look over these keyword phrases, they should be in line with what your website is about (its overall topic) and current Search Engine rankings. What's very important is that the phrases that are here are related to your website and that there aren't any weird or unrelated keyword phrases showing up. If you do see some strange phrases, you might investigate them further to see if there are issues with your website, your website's inbound links, or if that keyword phrase appears somewhere on your website or not.

If you dig deeper into the Top Search Queries area, you'll see that there are two different sections: Impressions and Clickthroughs. Ideally, these should be very close (what's shown on the left side is also shown on the right side). There may be keyword phrases that your site is being located with but people aren't clicking through to it. By comparing these two lists, you can make changes to your pages so that they are more likely to get clicked. For some reason, users may search for a keyword phrase and they may not be clicking through to your website. If you can figure out why they're not clicking through, you may be able to fix it to attract more visitors and bring in more sales.

2. Links to your site

Remember, a golden rule of S.E.O. states that the more quality links to your site from outside, the better as a main emphasis of Google's search algorithm is the number and quality links from other websites to your website. Google publicly won't tell your competitors which other websites link to you but, they will tell you the links if you're the website owner; this is why you had to verify your site. This is very helpful, especially to see how you're doing overall and to verify that your website is getting new links--Google will give you the date that they found the link to your website. You can export all of the links to a Microsoft Excel file if you wish and then you can sort them by date, for example. We recommend that you look at the links to your website on a very regular basis, if possible. They are of great importance.



3. Crawl errors

Ideally, when Google crawls your website (when it sends its Search Engine Spider, the Googlebot, to have a look at the web pages on your website and report back) there should be no errors whatsoever. If there are errors, they'll be reported here. If your website is unreachable (say, that pesky 404 Not Found error) then it will report those errors here. If you're having issues with a lack of sales, for example, you might have look to see if there are any errors being reported and if any of your web-pages are not available to the Googlebot and to your visitors.

4. Sitemaps

A Sitemap is a listing of all of the web pages on your website and providing the Search Engines a sitemap may be very helpful to your website. It won't help you rank better but it will give the Search Engines a list of pages to crawl and look at. You should know how many web pages (and how many products) you have. If there is a big difference in the number of pages that you know you have on your website and the number that's reported in this section, there may be a problem. If that's the case, then you might want to investigate further to make sure that all of the products that you're selling, or all the web-pages you are hosting, are included.

You should check how Google "sees" your site regularly, certainly every time you make big revisions to your site and most importantly you should pay attention to what it tells you. If it tells you that your primary keywords are not yielding any visitors, then you should change them. If you find that there are links on your page that do not work you can correct them immediately without having to check that every single link on your site works yourself. You may also have an agreement with other sites that they will link to your website. You should check to see what links you have and make sure that in general these links are increasing in number. Google Webmaster Tools is very helpful for any website owner. The tools can be used to diagnose your sites problems and to help improve its performance in many ways. You don't have review the information daily but [VodaHost](#) suggests you take a look at least once a month if you were confident that everything's going smoothly with your online sales. However, if there is an issue (say if you notice a drop in sales), you might want to take a look at Google Webmaster Tools to help you identify the problem.

5.4 THE GOOGLE BAN

Now, if you wake up and find one day that your website isn't showing in Google anymore, you have likely been a victim of a Google Ban. This is the worst thing that can happen to your website, especially if you are running a business through your site. Several factors can trigger a Google Ban. Here is a list of ways you can keep your website on Google's good side.

1. Make sure you have the best uptime possible for your website. This means you must have reliable web hosting. If Google visits your website and it is not up, you may risk Google banning you site.
2. Do not use spamming techniques to promote your website. This will almost definitely lead to condemnation of your website for at least 6 months. Never use "black hat" methods like



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doorways, hidden text or cloaking. You are only setting yourself up for disaster.

3. Make sure your content is original and relevant. Websites that duplicate content are punished with lower rankings and even bans. Your content should always be made for human consumption and relate to your website's theme.
4. Linking is a two way street. Not only should the links going out of your website be quality but be certain that the links that lead to your website are from Google respected locations as well. Avoid link farms and any paid linking service. Also, excessive linking is a red flag for Google. When you add internal links on your own sites, make sure you do it in moderation and with purposeful intent.
5. Be sure your site is Google friendly. Build your website so that Google is able to index every page. Include a sitemap. Be sure all your pages are working and that there are no broken links.

If you follow the Google Webmaster Guidelines you will be fine. Don't try to fool Google with tricky tactics. The price you will pay is far greater than the effort it takes to do things the right way!

5.5 GOOGLE ADWORDS

5.5.1 An Introduction to Google AdWords

Google AdWords is a service that lets you create and run advertising for your business, quickly and simply, right across the internet and right around the world. Google's AdWords has been around for some time (*11 years now; it was launched in 2000*) and is largely responsible for Google's astronomical success; it is a multi-billion dollar industry and Google's main source of revenue.

The advertising, or "*ads*" that you run using Google AdWords are displayed within Google's search results and on the websites of Google AdSense customers.

Here I'm going to explain a little about how Google AdWords works and how to get started using it to increase the amount of visitors to your website and the amount of money you are able to make from your website by using it. Consider this a guide to help you get started with AdWords and get the best results from using AdWords. AdWords can be a very complex system and it is the basics which are outlined here. We'll look at getting started, choosing your keywords as well as developing and creating your adverts.

You must expect to have to experiment a little. You won't pick the best mixture of all the advertising ingredients that will bring sales straight away. You will have to adjust your campaigns and keywords. Fortunately, Google AdWords gives you plenty of tools to work with.

5.5.2 How Google AdWords Works

Google themselves describe AdWords as "*an automated auction. You write your ads and choose relevant keywords (a keyword is the search term – word or phrase – that a person searching on Google*



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types in which will then trigger your ad). Then, a prospective customer searches and all the ads with keywords related to their search query are put into an auction, including yours.

The top ads will appear to your potential customer under the heading 'Sponsored Links', on the right-hand side or above Google's search results. An interested customer will click on your ad and be directed to your website."

AdWords is a Pay Per Click service ... That means that you only pay for your advertising when someone clicks on your ad. If the **Cost Per Click** of the keywords you have selected is **\$0.05** and you get an **average of 5 clicks per day** over the next **7 days** Then you will pay: **$(\$0.05 \times 5) \times 7 = \1.75** for your advertising services for those 7 days.

Throughout your use of Google AdWords, you must understand that you are advertising to people and that you are on a budget! Your ads must work and be effective from the moment you launch!

5.5.3 Getting Started with Google AdWords!

1. Visit: <http://adwords.google.com/>
2. Create a new Google Account, or if you have one – create an AdWords account.
3. Log in to your new AdWords account.

5.5.4 Google AdWords Account Structure

Properly structuring your account can have a significant effect on the success of your AdWords campaigns.

Knowing what you want beforehand will make it much easier to create quality ads. It'll also help you figure out what's working for you, so that you can keep building on your most successful campaigns and maybe have another think about the campaigns that aren't working so well.

Your AdWords account is structured to help you create advertising that is extremely well "targeted" towards prospective customers. Your account is split into "campaigns" and each campaign into "ad groups"; if you like you can think of these as categories and sub-categories. Ideally, each campaign should focus on a specific product range or area of your business and then each ad group should be even more specific and focus on a subcategory of the main campaign topic. Let's say you are a Computer Seller you could have a campaign focused on "Desktops" and then the ad groups (or subcategories) within that campaign could be different types of Desktop PCs such as "Intel Tower", "AMD Tower", "Apple Macs", etc.

Take inspiration from the structure of your website when deciding what campaigns and ad groups to create. Look at how you've structured your site and reflect this in your AdWords account.

A well structured account should not only provide you with better results it will also make your advertising easy to manage!



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Before taking you through how you can improve your own account structure, let's take a look at an example of a well structured account. This example shows what an account could look like for our PC retailer.

Campaign 1: PCs

Ad group 1: Intel PCs

Ad group 2: AMD PCs

Ad group 3: Apple Mac PCs

Campaign 2: Laptops

Ad group 1: Intel Laptops

Ad group 2: AMD Laptops

Ad group 3: Apple Mac Laptops

Campaign 3: Netbooks

Ad group 1: by Asus

Ad group 2: by HP

Ad group 3: by Toshiba

A well managed account is a successful account. Use our tips below to make sure your campaigns thrive:

1. **Stick to one theme per campaign.** We recommend you structure your AdWords account similar to the structure of your website, i.e. separate your campaigns by the themes or product lines your website is divided into.
2. **Give each campaign an appropriate name.** Make sure you can identify your campaigns easily. This will make tracking and editing your campaigns much simpler.
3. **Split each campaign into ad groups.** Ad groups let you segment your campaigns into multiple parts to achieve even greater focus and simplicity.

Just like campaigns, each ad group should have one common theme. Focus on a single product or service that you offer in each ad group. This will make it simple to create focused, effective keywords and ads. For example, a PC retailer could have a campaign with the theme of "*Laptops*", an ad group in that campaign might be "*Intel Laptops*".

Try to aim for at least three ad groups per campaign. The number of ad groups you need will vary depending on the size of your product offering and business but aiming for a minimum of three will ensure that each ad group is tightly themed and will help you to write specific ads targeted to your customers.

5.5.5 Your Keywords

Keywords are the very foundation of your AdWords campaigns. They set the entire advertising process in motion. If your potential customers are Googling for your product or service, they'll locate you way



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faster if you've chosen your keywords well; they should be the ones you think they are using to search to find your products!

You should plan your keywords in the same way you planned out your campaigns and ad groups. Each of your ad groups should contain highly relevant keywords; it is nothing but the truth that a small group of carefully targeted keywords are far better than a large group of un-targeted keywords.

For example, an ad group with the theme of "Intel PCs" should only contain keywords which relate to PCs with an Intel processor, rather than a large group of keywords generally related to Personal Computers or Intel Processors. There is no absolute answer but try to aim for between 5 and 50 keywords in each group of ads.

Theming your keyword groups in this way will help you when writing your ads and, most importantly of all, make your advertising high quality — allowing your customers to find you easily.

When picking your keywords you have the choice to use different matching options. These options give you further control over when your ads should show. To reach the right customers we recommend that you focus your campaigns using broad match keywords along with negative match where needed.

Broad Match Keywords reach the most users by showing your ad whenever your keyword, or a relevant variation of your keyword, is searched for. For instance if your keyword is Intel PCs, it will trigger your ad on searches such as black Intel PCs, blue Intel PCs, etc. This is the default option for keywords.

Negative Match Negative Match prevents your ad from showing when a word or phrase you specify is searched for. If you have Toshiba Netbook as a keyword and specify "second-hand" as a negative match your ad won't show on search terms such as "second-hand Toshiba Netbooks". To add negative keywords go to the "Keywords" tab. Scroll down to the negative keyword section, click on the plus sign and add your negative keywords in the box.

If you would like to try more advanced options then there are two further keyword options which can be used. We only recommend you use these if you are confident with monitoring the success of your campaign and are able to assess keyword performance. For more information search for "keyword matching options" in the AdWords Help Centre.

Let's look at a 3 step example of how you might approach creating your own keywords. In this example the campaign is Desktop PCs and each ad group is a type Desktop PC.

1. Begin by listing all relevant keywords for a campaign:
2. Next split your keywords into your themed ad groups, with relevant ad texts.
3. Review and refine.



Reviewing the keywords you have listed, you may identify a few you would like to refine... You might find, for example:

1. "PCs" may be too general to be a good keyword.
2. Make sure you don't use the same keyword in multiple ad groups within the same campaign. (the Google AdWords system interprets this as increased competition for this keyword, resulting in a higher Cost-Per-Click for it). You don't want this!
3. Negative match keywords like "second hand" and "free" prevent your ad from showing for searches that contain those keywords. This business doesn't offer delivery or free products so they should include these as negative keywords.
4. Keywords like "best PCs" and "cheap PCs" don't give enough details about the product or products being offered.
5. Keywords like "luxury water-cooled 500W HP Tower PC" may be too specific to be effective.

Make sure your keywords are right for your business. Use our tips below to fine tune your keyword lists.

Match your keywords to your ad text. Each keyword should match the ad text that it triggers when a potential customer searches on Google. To do this, group all the keywords relating to a particular product or service into a specific ad group. You can then create an ad that matches these keywords so that whatever a user searches for, they see an ad that is very relevant to their search.

Think like your customers. How might your customers search for your product or service? Generally the best key-phrases tend to be 2-3 words long.

Try out the Google Keyword Tool if you're a little stuck for keyword ideas. The keyword tool, found within your account, provides suggestions for new keywords and can also help identify possible negative keywords.

Use negative keywords. Doing this prevents your ad from showing on a search which is not relevant for your business. For example if you sell PCs you may not want your ad to show if a user searches for PC repairs so specify "repairs" as a negative keyword.

5.5.6 Your Ads

When you create your ads they must always be designed to entice customers. Your customers choose to go to your website over your competitors' based solely on what they see in your ads. If your ads don't grab their attention, you could be missing out on valuable sales.

Your ads must always relate directly to your keywords. This means that when a potential customer searches for your product they see a very relevant ad and will visit your site.



Once you have organized your account and have your keywords grouped into ad groups your ads should be easy to write.

As with everything it is important to get to grips with the essentials first...

AdWords makes it really easy for you to test out your messaging and see which ads work for your customers. Try testing different ads in each ad group, you may be surprised at what is the most successful.

To test your messaging, write three or four variations of the same ad text in each ad group (as shown below). These ads will all run from the same set of keywords. If you have more than one ad in each ad group AdWords will rotate which of your ads is shown, at no additional cost.

The example below shows some ads that could be tested in an ad group focused on “AMD Laptops”.

AMD Laptops
Delivery & Set-Up
Prices Start From Only £150
MyPCSite.com/AMDLaptops

AMD Laptops
High Quality AMD Laptops
Guaranteed Low Prices. Buy Now.
MyPCSite.com/AMDLaptops

AMD Laptops
Free Delivery. 3 years guarantee.
Buy Online or Call Us Now
MyPCSite.com/AMDLaptops

Keywords:
 AMD Laptops, high quality AMD Laptops, AMD Laptop, buy AMD Laptops, cheap AMD Laptops

Allow your ad variations to run for a while and then check on your clicks. The ads with the highest **clickthrough rates** (CTR) are the ads users find to be the most relevant to their search. Over time you will learn what works for your business and you can edit your ads accordingly.

Below are a few examples and ideas you can kick-around; it can be difficult to know where to start when writing ads, learn what works well and what doesn't from the example below!

When a potential customer searches for Apple Mac Desktops the two ads below could appear:

Apple Macs on Sale
Special Offer on Apple Macs.
Buy Online Now. Next Day Delivery.
MyPCSite.com/AppleMac



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What's right about this ad?

- The headline focuses on the product that's for sale, and contains relevant keywords
- The description details specific benefits of buying the product from this company (Next Day Delivery)
- The description includes an instruction to customers of the action they should take (Buy Online Now!")
- Destination URL leads to a page on the company website related specifically to Apple Macs

pcSite
we sell everything
you need for your office
mypcsite.com

What's wrong with this ad?

- The headline focuses on a company description instead of on core selling points and the keywords that trigger it
- The description is too general – it would be much better if it focused on specific products or services offered by the company – and it doesn't contain an action the customer should take
- The destination URL leads to the company's home page, rather than to a page promoting the specific product or service

5.5.7 Tips for writing targeted ads

Make your ads stand out to your customers and try and cater to what they are looking for

Include prices, special offers and unique selling points. What makes the product or service you are offering better or different from your competitors? What are the benefits of using your service above theirs?

Always use your keywords in your ad. Significantly, put your most important keyword or phrase right up there in the headline of your ad.

Use a strong call-to-action. Tell potential customers what action you want them to take when they get to your site e.g Buy now. Call today.

Direct users to the page on your website which is most relevant to each ad. By using a very specific destination URL you can direct potential customers to the page on your website that is most relevant to the product or service described in your ad.

5.5.8 Google AdWords: The Basics

By now you should have set-up your AdWords account, selected the campaigns that you are going to run, decided on your main keywords and developed a few adverts ... You should unleash these upon the AdSense world now and begin monitoring your results.



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5.5.9 Google AdWords: Beyond The Basics

Okay then; let's move on and see if we can't expand the reach of your Google AdWords campaigns!...

5.5.10 The Google Content network: Reaching Customers on Relevant Websites

To say the Google Content Network is large is an understatement! The Google Content Network is a truly vast and profitable place; a diverse network of different kinds of sites that partner with Google. On this network, you can show your AdWords Ads to potential customers when they're looking at sites related to your products or services – Did you know that in addition to showing your AdWords ad on Google search, you can also show it on relevant websites that your customers visit?

The AdWords Essentials

Internet users spend the majority of their time online searching for and browsing through websites. By using Google Adwords to advertise on both search and the content network, you can reach your target audience (whoever they may be) no matter what they are doing online.

When your **Ad campaign** (a part of your AdWords account that lets you to focus your advertising on specific products or services. The ads in any particular campaign share the same daily budget, language and location targeting. Each campaign can contain multiple ad groups) is opted into the Google content network, the AdWords system automatically matches your Ads to relevant content on websites right across the Internet. This is great news, because it means your message is matched to the right audience at the right time.

If we return to our examples from Part 1 and you're selling computer systems, the Google system may place your ad next to a news article that reviews the latest Computer products. With Google AdWords, you can be sure from the very outset, that a user who is looking at this web page is likely to be interested in your product.

5.5.11 Tips for Getting the Most out of your Content Network Campaign

To get the most out of advertising on the Google content network make sure that you create a tightly themed campaign that represents your business properly.

Creating a tightly themed campaign will help the Google AdWords system match your ad with the most relevant websites on the Internet. The good news is that the tips you find here for creating effective ads and picking effective keywords on search also apply to your performance on the content network. You should continue to follow best advertising practices like always using a strong call to action in your ad (Click here!) and making sure you have clear themes in your ad text that match with your keywords.

Used together, these simple actions on your part help the Google AdWords system to determine what your product or service is and match your Ads to relevant websites throughout the Google Content Network.



5.5.12 How to Review your Performance

To really understand what's working (and in doing so to conversely understand what's NOT working) for your Ads on websites throughout the Google Content Network you should go to the "Networks" tab of your AdWords account and click on "show details" beside your content placements.

Once here, you can review all of the websites your ads have shown on and you can see detailed statistics about each site that will help you understand and assess how your ads are performing. I'll show you more to help you learn more about measuring the performance of your AdWords ads a little further down this article.

On the Google Content Network the most important statistic to look out for by far is the clickthrough rate (CTR – A measure of the performance of your ads and keywords and a measure of how relevant users find your ads and keywords to their search query based on their clicks on your Ads. CTR helps measure). CTR shows you how often folks about the Internet click on your Ad, it will give an indication of how well each website is performing. You should note here that CTR on the Google content network will generally be lower than for Search showings of your Ads.

After your Ads have been running on these websites for a period of time you will be able to use these metrics and statistics to see which are the best performing sites for you. You can then look at the possibility of individually managing your cost-per-click [CPC - The amount you pay each time a user clicks on your ad. You can set the maximum CPC bid (the maximum amount you are willing to pay when a potential customer clicks on your ad) at the ad group or keyword level] for the top websites and focus more budget on them. For more information on managed placements search for "managed placements" in the AdWords Help Centre.

5.5.13 Measuring and Understanding your Success

Google AdWords, it's all about results (you are, after all, advertising for a reason!). To make sure you're getting the best results possible you should aim to check the performance of your AdWords account on a regular and consistent basis.

As you work, you should always keep in mind what you want to achieve from your AdWords Ad campaign. Do you want traffic to your website? Do you want sales for your product or service? Or your visitors to take a specific action such as signing up to your newsletter? Once you've clearly defined your goals and know them back-to-front, you can use your AdWords statistics and the free tools available from Google to measure your success. Be realistic about what you want to achieve and try to set time aside to review your account regularly, to make sure you're reaching your goals.

What to Watch out for in your Account

The first and easiest way to measure your success is to review your AdWords statistics.

What constitutes success with AdWords will be different for each business that uses it and will depend on what your own business goals are. However, there are a few things to look out for that will indicate your ads are running successfully:



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Clickthrough Rate (CTR): To get an immediate idea of how well a campaign is doing, check out the CTR – how often people click on your ad after seeing it – for your campaign. As a rule of thumb, a Google AdWords CTR of under 1% indicates that your ads are not targeted to a relevant audience and not doing so well. Visit the “Campaigns” tab and view the CTR of your individual keywords and ads on the respective tabs.

Keyword Status: An “Eligible” state means your keyword is eligible to trigger ads. Clicking on the icon in the status column will give you more detail on the performance of your individual keywords. To view keyword status go to the “Keywords” tab and look under the “Status” column.

Average Position: Check the “Avg. Pos.” column on the “Campaigns” tab in your account to find out where your ad is appearing on the search results page. There are up to 11 ads shown on any search page so if your average position is 11 or more your ad is, on average, not appearing on the first page of search results. You should aim to show your ad on the first page of search results so your potential customers can more easily find your ad.

First Page Bids: If your ad is not showing on the first page of search results then you will see first page bid on the “Keyword” tab under the “Status” column. A first page bid is the cost-per-click you need to set to get your ad showing on the first page of search results. High first page bid estimates can indicate that your ads are not as relevant as they could be.

Quality Score: Each of your keywords is given a quality score which can be found by clicking on the icon in the “Status” column on the “Keywords” tab. Google rewards relevant, quality advertising with a higher position on the search page and lower costs, so making sure your ads are high quality is really important.

Use the tips from this eBook to help you improve these statistics.

Interested in delving deeper into your performance?

You may want to install conversion tracking or Google Analytics on your site. These free Google products allow you to analyze your account performance based on which keywords and ads convert into sales or leads, rather than purely those that direct traffic to your website.

Conversion tracking:

In online advertising, a conversion occurs when a click on your ad leads directly to user behavior you deem valuable, such as a purchase, signup, page view, or lead. Conversion tracking is a free way to monitor and evaluate how well your ad campaigns convert into meaningful actions like a sale.

Google Analytics:

Google Analytics is a free website analysis tool which can show you how people found your site, how they explored it, and what actions they took on your site. With this information, you can improve your website’s return on investment, increase conversions, and ultimately make more money on the web.



For instructions on how to install these tools visit the AdWords Help Centre and search for “*conversion tracking*” and “*Google Analytics*”

5.5.14 Checklist for Managing your AdWords account

The online world moves very quickly, so what works for you today may not be as successful next week. A weekly review of your account will help you make sure you’re getting the most out of your advertising budget.

Here’s a quick list of actions for you to follow every time you log in to your account. This will help you understand how your account is performing and whether you’re meeting your business goals. Performance will vary by account so focus on identifying your best and worst performing keywords and ads, this will help when refining your account.

Remember to repeat this process regularly to continually build on your success.

1. Check notification and account alerts on the home page.

When you log in to your AdWords account you will see notifications and account alerts from Google. It’s important to keep an eye out for these updates as they contain important information relevant to your account and will help you with your campaigns.

2. Go to the “Campaigns” tab and set the time range.

The time range setting can be found in the top right-hand corner of your account and should be set to a period of 1-4 weeks to get a good indication of recent performance.

3. Review your keyword performance.

Under the “*Keywords*” tab review:

Keyword clickthrough rate (CTR). Which keywords are receiving your highest and lowest CTR?

Position of your keywords. Are your ads appearing on the first page i.e avg. pos. of 1 -11?

Keyword status. Are your ads eligible to show?

Quality score. You can see the quality score for each keyword by clicking on the icon in the status column.

4. Review your ads performance.

Under the “*Ads*” tab review:

Ad CTR. If you are testing multiple ads in each ad group check to see which are performing best.

5. Refine your keywords and ads.

Look out for your top performing keywords and ads. Change those that are not doing well, using your best performers as a guide as to how they can be improved.



Delete those keywords and Ads that have performed poorly consistently.

Use negative keywords to eliminate unwanted impressions.

6. Finally, test new keywords and ads for your campaigns.

Use the [AdWords Keyword Tool](#) to get keyword suggestions to add to your campaign.

If you don't have multiple ads in each ad group, you should try adding some to test which work best for you.

If you have enabled conversion tracking, you should make sure you regularly check which of your Ads and keywords are best converting into sales.

5.5.15 Grow your business with AdWords!

We hope that you've found these articles helpful and that you're now fully armed to use and achieve truly great things with your AdWords account!

Finally, to make sure that you're not missing out on any of Google's online communications, check you're set-up to receive online updates from Google:

1. Log in to your AdWords account (visit: <http://adwords.google.com/>).
2. Select "**Account Preferences**" under the "**My Account**" tab
3. Locate "**Notification Preferences**" and click on "**Edit**".
4. Review, edit and save your preferences ("**Customised Help & Performance Suggestions**" & "**Newsletters**").

5.6 THE GOOGLE URL SHORTENER

Make no mistake, Google is not just a Search Engine ... It offers many, many tools and applications in its quest to fulfill its mission statement "*to organize the world's information and make it universally accessible and useful*" such as Google Docs, Google Earth and Google Maps and one of Google's newer services is particularly great to use towards the marketing and promotion of your website and its services.

Now, if you'd like to share the URL of a place you can download this eBook with your friends, you're more than welcome; here it is: <http://www.vodahost.com/web-hosting-the-secrets-to-promoting-your-website-online.html>

Good luck; that's quite a long URL, isn't it? It's 85 characters long and unless it was presented to you in a form that was easy to click, or copy and paste, it might actually be quite difficult to communicate to



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somebody else: “um ... double-u double-u double-u dot vodahost dot com forward-slash web hyphen hosting hyphen the hyphen secrets ...” etc. etc. etc. until one of you has had enough.

I went searching on Amazon.com for a new book recently and by the time I’d gotten to a relevant list of books the URL in the address bar looked like this:

http://www.amazon.com/gp/search/ref=sr_kk_2?rh=i%3Astripbooks%2Ck%3Ahtml+5&keywords=html+5&ie=UTF8&qid=1286807047

It’s verging on a little too long to be easily communicable, let’s say if I wanted to get the opinion from a friend or forum member which book would be the best to buy. Sure, short URLs like <http://www.vodahost.com/> are easy to remember and are easy to tell people about but with the Content Management Systems of today’s Web 2.0 where each URL can represent a data hierarchy, a command structure, a transaction path and/or session information, URLs can get quite long, complicated and ugly. Not to mention that some e-mail programs add breaks in long URLs, making it the responsibility of the recipient to copy and paste the link back together.

It would be better for everybody if you could shorten this and other lengthy URLs to something that is easier to communicate, say if you happened to be telling a neighbor over the fence about a website you had discovered earlier in the day.

Thankfully though, as of September 2010, everybody’s favorite web giant Google are now offering an URL Shortening Service.

Basically, what the URL Shortener does is make a URL shorter and using Google’s is incredibly easy. Check it out at: <http://www.goo.gl/>

5.6.1 Go to goo.gl and paste the long URL you wish to shorten into the input box at the top of the page. Click “Shorten” and to the right of the box you’ll see a short goo.gl URL that can be copied and pasted anywhere you’d like to share it.

5.6.2 If you’d like to track the analytics of your shortened URL, please sign in to your Google Account before shortening your URL. Your shortened URL will automatically be added to your goo.gl history.

It really is as simple as that. One thing is clear. It is easier and more useful to copy a short URL from an e-mail or blog post than a URL that is hundreds of characters long. It’s easier to read out loud too and easier to tell people about. Putting shortened URLs in your website can save on space and make your website load faster which means a better experience for your visitors.

The really great thing about this service being offered by Google is that it is assured. Suppose that you had created loads of short URLs and posted them all over the place and then the service offering the URL shortening service shut down. All the links that you had spent time creating and posting would be lost and purposeless. I think we can all agree; Google isn’t going anywhere fast.

Shortening a URL is really useful on a service like [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) (see **Secret 7: Social Bookmarking**) or any other social bookmarking service, where your tweets or posts have to be a certain



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length. There is every probability that you might want to tweet about a URL you've found than is actually longer than the amount of characters you are allowed to use to tweet about it.

Shortening URLs are great for affiliate marketing too, so that you can disguise an affiliate marketing link and make your page look less like a sales page. Of course, Google offers protection against links to spam pages or anything that may be dangerous so your safety is in good hands.

So, if you'd like to share the URL of a place you can download this eBook with your friends, you're more than welcome; here it is ... We've made it a little more bite-size using the Google URL shortener and now you can you can download this eBook from: <http://goo.gl/P6YYI>

5.7 GOOGLE TRANSLATE

Do you remember why it was that you started up your website? No doubt you wanted to reach people from all around the globe and one of the huge benefits of having a website is that the geographic boundaries between you and your visitors are reduced to virtually zero. Unfortunately one of the inescapable truths of geographic boundaries is that they DO come hand in hand with a language barrier.

We at [VodaHost](#) receive many requests for a Spanish or Portuguese version of our [BlueVoda](#) software. In fact this free .PDF report "*The Secrets to Promoting Your Website Online*" had been online for less than two days in its first incarnation when we received this comment / request from a user named Ezequiel Tun:

*"Hola,
BlueVoda, amigos,
Tiene version en español.
Saludos."*

This is one of the cons of operating a website on the world stage... Surely you didn't expect the entire web surfing population of the world to speak the same language as you? In fact, the language with the most native speakers is Mandarin (or Standard Chinese). Then Spanish. THEN English.

It may sound shocking but statistically if your website is only in English then the majority of people will not be able to read it. Sorry.

The **bounce rate** of your website is the percentage your initial visitors who "bounce" away to a different website, rather than continue on to other pages within your site. In other words, if you get ten visitors, five of whom click nothing on your website and leave straight away and five who go on to look at more pages on your website then the bounce rate of your website is 50%. To be successful, you need your bounce rate to be as low as possible.

Surely one of the simplest reasons that could possibly exist for a visitor leaving your website is because they simply do not understand it and the simplest reason for that is that they do not speak your language... It a fair trade off. I may or may not leave a website on cupcake baking because I don't



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understand the physics, but a page that is in Icelandic hasn't even the smallest chance of me clicking any deeper.

I'm going to show you how to make sure that nobody ever leaves your website again because of something as insignificant as a language barrier, thanks to everybody favorite web giant Google. I'm going to show you how to use one of Google's most exciting tools, **Google Translate**, so that no-one ever misunderstands your website again. What Google calls their "*Translate Web Element*" will allow you to instantly make your website available to your visitors in many other languages and after you enable the Element on your webpage, visitors will be given the option to view your website translated into the language of their choice.

5.7.1 Getting Started with Google Translate

Go to http://translate.google.com/translate_tools and let's get the Web Element enabled on your website.

1. From the drop-down menu, select the language that your web page is written in.
2. Select the languages you would like to make your web page instantly available in. You can pick all languages, or select individual languages by selecting the "*Specific languages*" radio button, then checking the languages you'd like to automatically translate your web page into.
3. Copy and paste the code you are given into the <body> section of web pages that you would like to make instantly available in other languages.

If you are using [BlueVoda](#), there is a great tutorial on how to add this code into your website. You can find it [here](#).

Depending on the setting you chose, the code will appear something like this:

```
<!-- Google Translate Element -->
<div id="google_translate_element" style="display:block"></div>
<script>function googleTranslateElementInit() {new
google.translate.TranslateElement({pageLanguage: "en"},
"google_translate_element");}</script>
<script
src="http://translate.google.com/translate_a/element.js?cb=googleTrans
lateElementInit"></script>
```

Visitors whose web browser language is different from that of your website will see a banner at the top of the page prompting them to translate the page. Other users can, if they choose, trigger translation from a drop-down menu on your page with a list of supported languages. When a visitor translates a page, the Web Element sends the text of the web page to Google Translate and displays the translated text without reloading or redirecting visitors from the page. If the visitor clicks on a link in the translated page and the linked web page also has the Element embedded in it, the linked web page will also be automatically translated for them, allowing them to seamlessly browse through your website in their language.



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If you are using GoogleAdSense, the Translate Web Element will not interfere with AdSense code that may be embedded in your page.

Also, the automatically translated version of your web page will not be indexed by search engines; it is only your original version that will be indexed.

5.7.2 Preventing translation of your webpages

If you would prefer your web page not be translated by Google Translate, just insert the following meta tag into your HTML file: `<meta name="google" value="nottranslate">`

If you don't mind your web page being translated by Google Translate, except for a particular section (like an email address, for example), just add `class="nottranslate"` to any HTML element to prevent that element from being translated. For example: Email us at `support@vodasupport.com`

5.7.3 A Warning: More about Google Translate

Google can translate basic to fairly complicated text with ease but if your website contains a lot of slang (like Budweiser's "Wuuuzzzaaaaaa????!!!", for example) or bad grammar it won't do so well. Remember also that languages like Japanese have such a different structure to English that you might have to bear with the way Google outputs some of the translation.

However ... Google Translate means that people will be able to read your website and its contents and if more people can read it then there is more chance of you getting more links to your website. As always, the more links you get to your website, the better the S.E.O.

It's all about making your website and its content even more useful to people so that they will link to it and share the content of your website. Every website should be translatable. If your website is available for the whole world, make it available to the whole world!

5.8 GOOGLE+1 AND THE BATTLE OF THE BUTTONS

A very warm welcome, ladies and gentlemen, to the future!

It's a future that sees Internet searching become a social experience, a future wherein there is finally a real social networking rival to Facebook and a future that sees us, the users, tellin' Big-Daddy Google about what we think is useful and relevant on the web through the *Google+1 button*. It's a future that leans towards people, not formula's and website procedures, a very important Search Engine Optimization S.E.O. factor and that makes our S.E.O. work that little bit easier (*get people to click the +1 button!*) or trickier (*how do you get people to click the +1 button !?!*). Google+ and the Google +1 button could turn out to be one of the most important changes that Google has ever made to their Search Engine Results Page (S.E.R.P.) ranking algorithms.



Here, I'm going to tell you a little bit about the +1 button, what it means for your website, why you need one and how to add a Google +1 button to your website pages.

5.8.1 Google Goes Social

At the time of writing this text, The Google+ ("*Google Plus*") Project has been around for about 25 days (the +1 button slightly longer) and as I visited Google+ I became excited at the possibility of a social network that was designed with one goal in mind ... hunt down and take out the Facebook as the planet's dominant social network. The Google+ project looks set to make quite a decent job of this goal, too; it already has 20,000,000 users – that's about a million a day so far – so at this rate, a year and a half and we'll be looking at Facebook numbers at the current rate of expansion.

The Google+ Project and its associated +1 Button bring a Social element to Internet Search. For me as well as the multitude of fellow Search Engine marketers out there, however, it is the **+1 button** which is the most radical and interesting part of the Google+ project.

5.8.2 The +1 Button

If there is one single thing that gives Google+ a realistic edge over Facebook, this is it: The Google+1 Button. Those gurus in the Search Engine Optimization game are losing their minds over this one right now.

Chances are you have already seen Google's +1 button in action as you search through Google – It appears whenever you are signed in to your Google account (you have to be logged into a Google account for the button to work) and are searching using Google, sitting just to the right of search results for each URL that you have created). It's function is very similar, in theory, to the Facebook [Like] button and is connected to your Google account. Google themselves write: "*The +1 button is shorthand for "this is pretty cool" or "you should check this out."*" – If you like a link or think it would be useful to your social friends, give it a click!

The Google +1 button also appears on website pages very much like the Twitter and Facebook [Like] buttons that you have seen all over the Internet recently – check out the top of this article and you will find a brand new and shiny Google +1 button. – Clicking it and logging in to your Google account will mean:

1. You are telling your Google contacts about this page
2. You are telling Google you think this page is (and please excuse the technical dialect) "*pretty cool*".

As you click the +1 button, you are telling those connected to you through Google as well as Google themselves that you think a particular link is worth them visiting; once a user clicks the button, a link to the content appears under the +1's tab on the user's Google Profile... When another user searches, also while signed in, their search results may include the names of their connections who have "+1'd" any particular page. When none of the user's connections have +1'd a particular web-page, the Google result may display the total number of +1's the web-page has received.



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There are, quite literally, billions of +1 buttons out there already; the very second Google made the button available to website makers it started popping up on billions of web pages. With so many billions of videos watched on YouTube each day, for example, (not all on YouTube itself — some are embedded) and with the +1 button below every single video, that means there are billions of +1 buttons on YouTube alone. Google is busy emailing all the people in its databases: every time you log into AdSense, Analytics and Webmaster tools, you are met with a prompt to install the button. Given webmasters reliance on Google and the products and services it offers, not to mention the massive amounts of traffic that Google shoots off to websites around the globe, you can imagine that most webmasters will consider it a high priority to get the button on to their site.

5.8.3 Google+1 Vs. Facebook [Like]

The Google +1 button has been tipped as a rival to the Facebook [Like] button and outside of Facebook, I'm next to positive that this will be the case. There is a simple reason for this ... Why would you click a Facebook [Like] button to create a social bookmark to a piece of content when you can click a Google +1 button to increase your websites page rank?...

The difference is, this is a GOOGLE "Like" button and because Google is the ultimate master of all things search, it is of extreme interest and importance. While the [Like] button on Facebook merely creates a social bookmark – here you are ACTUALLY TELLING GOOGLE that a piece of content is useful and relevant to you and increasing its S.E.O. at the same time!

What you are all doing as a collective, then, is actively telling Google where to place a piece of content within their results. The more +1's, the higher a page will rank – simple as that.

There's another great benefit of the +1 button: Google may crawl or re-crawl pages with the button and store the page title and other content, in response to a +1 button impression or click. This means that your content will be indexed more often by Google.

5.8.4 +1 and S.E.O.

The principles of S.E.O. change over time; this is a fact that we all must get used to. Just as Yahoo! was the Search Engine the World used before Google made an appearance and just as keyword density used to be a very large factor in where a website appeared in the page results rankings. It may turn out to be just this simple: The more +1's a website has, the higher up in the Google search results it will appear.

The Google+1 button does influence your search engine placement. Following is a quote (verbatim) from Google's David Byttow, taken from when the +1 button was first announced to the public: *"We'll also start to look at +1's as one of the many signals we use to determine a page's relevance and ranking, including social signals from other services. For +1's, as with any new ranking signal, we'll be starting carefully and learning how those signals affect search quality over time."*

Google says website makers will see *"more, and better qualified traffic coming from Google"* as your possible visitors actively see recommendations from their friends, family, colleagues and acquaintances beneath the search results that appear in their web browsers. If you're in charge of administrating a website, that's really great news.



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The very name of the +1 button is enticing – just imagine if every click of the button placed your website or web page that 1 place higher in the Search Engine Results. The very idea is too good to even dream about!

The +1 Button will be available on YouTube watch pages under the “share” feature. Consider how valuable YouTube can already be to SEO, and take then take into consideration the search implications of the +1 button.

5.8.5 How to Add the Google+1 Button to your Website

Adding a Google+1 button to your Website is very simple procedure and there are different sizes and styles of the button that you can use on your site. When a user clicks on the +1 button it applies to the URL of the page they’re on. Still, multiple buttons can be placed on a single page that all +1 different URLs (refer to the links below).

The HTML code below will add a basic Google+1 button to your website. Add the `<script>` tags inside the `<head></head>` section of your site and add `<g:plusone></g:plusone>` wherever you want the +1 button to appear on your website.

```
<html>
  <head>
    <title>+1 demo: Basic page</title>
    <link rel="canonical" href="http://www.example.com" />
    <script type="text/javascript" src="https://apis.google.com/js/plusone.js">
    </script>
  </head>
  <body>
    <g:plusone></g:plusone>
  </body>
</html>
```

Google suggests that you place the +1 button where you think it will be most effective in line with your website’s content. Google in fact suggests that the button be positioned “above the fold” (so that the user does not need to scroll down to find it), near your page’s title and close to other content-sharing links. Google also advises that it can be really useful if you add it right at the end of a document in addition to at the start. In fact, just by positioning the `<script>` tag at the end of the web-page, immediately preceding the `</body>` tag, Google suggests that you will improve the time it takes for your website to load up (which is a factor that Google takes into “consideration” in terms of where your content ranks within its pages).

Visit <http://www.google.com/webmasters/+1/button/> and follow the steps outlined there to add a +1 button to your website.

The button is supported in 44 languages – annotations only appear in English Google search results for the time being).



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You can customize the button even further if you if you feel like getting a little more technical. Documentation for the API can be found [here](#):

Finally, if you try to +1 a private, .htaccess protected URL, it simply will not work.

5.8.6 How to Add the +1 Button to your Web-Pages using [BlueVoda](#)

Adding a Google+1 button to your website (in its simplest form) using the [BlueVoda website builder](#) is a two step procedure and makes use of two of BlueVoda's features:

- Editing the HTML of the **<head>** section of your web-page (to add Google's +1 script to your page)
 - Adding a HTML element to your web-page to render and configure the Google +1 button itself
1. Start by **opening BlueVoda and loading the web-page** that you wish to add the Google+1 button to.
 2. Next select: **View > Page HTML**
 3. In the "**Between Head Tag**" section, add the following code: **`<script type="text/javascript" src="https://apis.google.com/js/plusone.js"></script>`**
 4. Using this tutorial as a reference, click the **HTML icon** to add HTML to the page
 5. Double click the HTML box that appears to open the Properties window
 6. Add the following custom HTML: **`<g:plusone></g:plusone>`**
 7. Click **OK** to return to the workspace.
 8. You can **move the HTML element to wherever you would like the +1 button to appear** on your web-page.
 9. That's it! – Save and publish.

5.8.7 Why you Need the Google +1 Button

You **need** a Google +1 button because, more than any other content sharing button available to you on the World Wide Web, this will improve the S.E.O. of your website.

5.9 HOW TO USE GOOGLE ALERTS

If there has ever been an entity that bore a great deal of resemblance to George Orwell's "Big Brother" then it is Google. Google sees everything that happens on the Internet (well, everything that isn't protected by your robots.txt file) and now Google is offering a service that gives you a glimpse of new



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posts and website updates that are related to your business or website. It keeps you posted of new web pages in your niche as well as what your competition is up to...

This service is called **Google Alerts**.

It's been interesting to find that there are a great deal of people out there that have never used Google Alerts before or really don't know how to use them properly and really make the most of the service. This article aims to remedy that...

5.9.1 About Google Alerts

Google Alerts is a brilliantly simple and completely free way to keep an eye on the presence and reputation of your blog, business or website on the World Wide Web. Google Alerts' party trick is to send you little notifications (in the form of an email, or even as an RSS feed) any time a new web page appears in the Top-20 web results or Top-10 News results for a set of search terms that you specify.

The Google Alerts service lets you know anytime new web pages are published to the Internet that are relevant to the search you enter for any particular Alert that you set up. Okay ... it probably won't catch every single new web page that appears online but it does catch a great deal of them. If you happen to be a massive business which is universally recognized, this service might not work so well, as there will be a mountain of web-content created each day using your business' name or brand. If, however, you're a smaller brand without as much exposure, Google Alerts can give you some really fantastic results.

It is one of your fundamental jobs as the webmaster of a website to stay on top of news and happenings that relate to you, your business and your site. Google Alerts allows you to create up to 1000 alerts and you can add and delete your alerts just as you need to — it only takes a matter of seconds (seriously now ... SECONDS!) to set up a new alert!

The intention of this article is to get you started with Google Alerts and to see you getting results from using the service. As is very often the case, you must be in possession of a Google account to use the service (and emails are consequently sent to that email address or Google Reader account), chances are, though, that you have a Google account already.

To set up an alert, go to **<http://www.google.com/alerts>**

You'll immediately notice a few options for the type of search you can perform although I usually suggest just choosing the "*comprehensive*" search so you cover all the bases.

The most common searches most webmasters use with Google Alerts are:

- Their URL(s)
- Their full name (usually in quotes)
- A keyword (or keywords) they are targeting.

The above are standard alerts that every webmaster should be using with Google Alerts... but let me suggest to you a few more ideas that may help — they are a little further down after we get you set-up:



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5.9.2 Making the Most of Google Alerts

1. So, visit Google Alerts and Fill Out the Form. At <http://www.google.com/alerts> there is a form you can fill out to get alerts emailed to you about new results for various search terms. Start out by listing the name of your business, select “*Comprehensive*”, “*as-it-happens*” and the email address you would like the alert to go to.
2. Confirm Your Email. Click on the link sent to your email by Google to confirm that you want to receive alerts for the Google Alert that you created using the form.
3. Do the same again for each subsequent Alert that you want to set up. Keep on reading for a few great Alerts that you can set up for your website
4. Use your Google Account to Keep Track of All your Alerts. Doing this, you’ll be able to keep track of all of your alerts in one place, and can add, edit and delete them easily.

5.9.3 Setting Up Unique Google Alerts

1. Treat the “*Search Terms*” setup on the alerts like it’s a real Google search box. It can include operators that will help you find specific things you might be looking for. If you don’t know what I’m talking about, try this page on [Google Search Operators](#). An example would be an alert like: [keyword site:www.vodahost.com] this alert would notify you every time a specific keyword was found on [VodaHost’s website](#), for example. Play around with some of the different options that are available to you!!!
2. Set up an alert that focuses on the keywords you want to rank for. Such as: ["buy computers in Delaware"]. Be sure to always add quotes (""") around your keyword phrase so you don’t get results that aren’t relevant to your keyword or phrase . A search like this is great as it will let you know what other webmasters are posting or blogging about the exact phrase that you created the Alert for. This is really great for figuring out who your competition is out there — and gives you an opportunity to check them out or even get links from them. Consider also excluding your own website address from this search so your results are accurate. Here is an EXAMPLE command: [buy computers in Delaware -www.delawarepexchange.com]
3. Set up an alert for a phrase about your community like: ["delaware schools"] or ["delaware local events"]. This will give you a heads up on what is going on in your community and this is great to turn into ideas for your blog or knowing what is trending (or popular) currently in your local community.
4. Search for your customers. This Alert is great because it gives you an idea of what it is that your customers are searching for. Are your customers querying specific things online about your business, website or niche? This requires some forethought and quite possibly a few test Alerts to be created. A few examples with regards the PC sale industry in Delaware might be: ["how do i find PCs for sale in Delaware"], ["how much is a PC in Delaware"], ["where can I find Delaware PCs for sale"], ["looking to buy new PCs in Delaware"]... This information is truly valuable and Google is do the hard work for you. Once you get an alert about someone asking a question



about your niche, or if they need some help, simply zip over to the page where they asked their question, respond and send them your way.

5. When setting up an alert for your website, don't just put in your home page, try putting in specific URL's for popular articles you've written so you can see who is writing about those specific topics.
6. For searches that aren't too important just choose the "once a week" option so you aren't buried with a million random emails every day.
7. Spy on your competition. Try some alerts like this: [link:www.mycompetition.com], ["keyword" site:www.mycompetition.com], [allintitle:"keyword" site:www.mycompetition.com]
8. Have Google alerts set up for the website and name of really popular bloggers. This is a really cool way to introduce yourself to the people of the Internet that you want to connect with. Link to the bloggers you respect and you can actually create quite a reputation for yourself before too long. This is very important to the S.E.O. of your website if your website is pretty new or if you are just starting out.

5.9.4 A Few More Great Uses of Google Alerts

1. Do a "vanity search" for your name, the name of your website or your handle "nickname" name to discover when your name or your blog is mentioned by someone else. This can be really useful if a website lists your blog or your name but doesn't give you a link.

Alert For: "first last" or first last or nickname

Create a Google Alert for each of the following: your name (first and last), your blog's name (not URL), your "handle" or nickname if it's unique, and your Twitter username. If you have a common name, make sure you put your entire name in quotes.

2. **Keep track of links to your site.** Create a Google Alert for your website's URL to track any links from other sites to your site.

Alert For: link:www.yourdomain.com

For all links to your site, insert your URL at the highest level where you have content. If you want to track incoming links to a particular web-page, you can create an Alert to your web-pages' URL.

3. **Track your content for possible plagiarism.** Sometimes when other webmasters plagiarize your content it's not a personal or vindictive act – they use robots or other software that strip out links so the content remains mainly text. I always try to interlink my posts somehow, so if someone doesn't strip out links, I'll see an incoming link in alert #2. But if they do, the only way to really track a possible post is from the uniqueness of your own words.



Alert for: *“some specific phrase from within your website’s content”*

This is slightly more difficult and works only when you can insert a really exact few words or phrase in quotation marks that is unique to your content or that specific article. Choose a unique phrase that’s part of your content as tracking a phrase like “I like meringues” will not be as effective as choosing “The meringue clouds I ate with Jennifer last summer.” The second phrase, while coming from the same post, is less likely to be replicated elsewhere as its word order and meaning is unique. I suggest you make other arrangements if you are really serious about scanning for plagiarism. There are a few tools that are available for pay, including www.copyscape.com

4. **Keep your eye on your favorite topics.** Possibly my favorite type of alert as it’s like a personal news service that is not restricted in any way. You can let your imagination run wild with it. I find it a great way to do research on a topic as well as see articles/posts that are talking about a subject that interests me.

Alert for: keywords that interest you or *“specific keywords”* or word notthisword or spelling OR another-spelling OR another

As you learn you will be better equipped to use Google’s Advanced Search options (characters like: +, -, “”, or, not) or even some of Google’s Search Operators (link:, site:) and with practice you will be able to refine your search to get the results that you are looking for.

5. **Get notified of any spam links that happen to have been added to your website.** This alert uses the site: operator to search for links within your own website.

5.9.5 Google Alerts is a Great Resource

You must use Google Alerts as it is a great resource to your website. You cannot turn your nose up at helpful information like this — Trust me — It will pay off. Use the examples above and experiment with various searches and see what Alerts you get in using them.

You may also be interested to know that Yahoo! has a similar service called Yahoo! Alerts. (hint: **USE THAT ONE TOO!**)

5.10 HOW TO MARKET YOUR WEBSITE WITH YOUTUBE

Marketing your business using a video-sharing website like YouTube (which is owned by Google) is a great way to establish your credibility and to boost your sales.

If you haven’t heard of YouTube before, you have been on a different planet and you skipped customs on the way back. It’s one of the world’s most visited websites and it has engrained itself in our society like nothing else. Today, here on Earth, the Internet is frequently used for online media streaming and YouTube is at its very heart.



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5.10.1 Broadcast Yourself

Remember Time magazine's "*Person of the year*" 2006?: "*You. Yes, you. You control the Information Age. Welcome to your world.*"

[YouTube](#) is one of my favorite websites. I find that many of the searches I start often lead to YouTube and I now often search for information in video form first. In this, the information age, we would be using our resources badly if we were to read articles using our eyes and brain like a sucker. In fact, Google estimates that 20% of all searches conducted end at a video. That is a lot of video viewers.

In recent years I have come to see YouTube as less of a video-sharing site and more of a Search Engine unto itself! That means Search Engine Optimization!

Video is great – I remember working a job once where I was shown the health and safety standards and procedures on a VHS while my boss went for a cigarette. Videos allow you to provide information that is the same again and again regardless of the viewer and with video and audio allowing for demonstrations and explanation... Videos can be paused and reviewed and the information digested thoroughly. In general – I would rather watch a video tutorial than have someone explain the same thing to me or even reading about a procedure.

If you wanted to know how to use a piece of software (let's say Adobe's Photoshop, for example), then you might easily type "*Photoshop tutorial*" into YouTube. In fact, I dare you to conduct this search. YouTube reports: "*About 134,000 results*"

YouTube has become synonymous with the idea: "*Whatever you want, whenever you want*" ... which is fitting as it is a subsidiary of Google.

Here I'm going to show you how to market your business using YouTube and make sure that you are providing the content that your potential visitors are looking for.

If you are a blogger, you should definitely expand your reach into the world of video sharing – or "*vlogging*": You still get to appear as an expert in your field and through your expertise you can drive traffic to your website.

At the end of the day, YouTube is a great marketing tool because you have the power to reach out to a great deal of people and drive them to your website. The more people that find your website, the more money you will make.

If you're not using YouTube to market your website or your blog, you should be!!! You will drive traffic to your website or blog in no time if people like your videos.

If you have a camcorder, a digital camera, a webcam or screen-capture software, you can begin marketing your business and website using viral videos today.

NOTE: You may also need a piece of non-linear video editing software or a photo editor to make your video's but you have these. Windows includes MovieMaker and Mac OSX includes iMovie.



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5.10.2 Vlogging and Building Trust: The Power of YouTube

For more information on **blogging** (vloggings older sibling), please (re-)read: **Chapter 2.5 Why You Need a Blog**

YouTube is a free-to-join video-sharing site. Essentially, what that means is that if you have a video you wish to share with the world, you can create a YouTube account, post your video and it can be watched by any Internet user that stumbles upon it.

You can show tutorials of a particular piece of software for example; maybe software you have created. You can make short films. You can show-off your music or show people how to create music the same way. Have a unique perspective on a great way to make money? Share it on YouTube and viewers will visit your site if you have included that call-to-action in your videos.

All this wonderful free information makes your video viewers trusting of you as you have shown yourself to be an expert.

Building trust with customers is essential to any successful business and utilizing YouTube can achieve just this for your company. Video marketing consisting of video has proven itself to be highly effective in generating a firm bond between the customer and your business on both a professional and personal level. Videos present the viewer with a real live person to whom they can relate and grow to trust on a more personal level.

This can be exploited to its full advantage by businesses in order to attract more clients and create a positive lifetime relationship. Using a business for the first time is always a risk so potential clients want to ensure that they are making the correct choice when it comes to the business' productivity and reliability. Through the use of videos, clients are able to develop a personal relationship with the company before any business is done. This allows you to foster a connection between customers and separate yourself from the competition when it comes to sincerity, reliability and credibility.

When establishing a marketing technique and strategy for your business and considering video as an option, make sure that you consider the following: Product and service costs are not the primary information that should be focused on in a marketing video and might not be required at all for a successful marketing campaign. The most essential component of your business is your reliability and sincerity and your video should make sure to demonstrate this as succinctly as possible.

More than likely, your clients will be far more attracted to this type of marketing video. Overall, sincerity and trust are far more important to a client than price no matter how tight a budget the customer is under.

5.10.3 Getting Started: How to Sign-Up with YouTube

Visit <http://www.youtube.com/> and click **Create Account**

Fill in all your information, including a link to your website. Keep your information keyword rich using the same keywords as your website.



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5.10.4 When Viral Marketing Videos Explode

For more information on how to create a viral marketing campaign, please (re-)read: **Chapter 4.8 How to Create a Viral Marketing Strategy**

5.10.5 How to Make a Viral Marketing Video Clip

“How-To” Videos are perhaps the best overall strategy for SEO and viral marketing and a smart move can be building out a “How-To” YouTube channel.

Whether it’s a grown man dancing in cities all over the world, two teenage girls singing a favorite song in their bedroom or a small dog skateboarding, viral marketing videos drive huge amounts of web traffic to source sites. The new kind of marketing is cheap to produce and yet very effective. If you’re looking to make your own viral marketing video clip, follow these steps.

1. Identify your market. While predicting the success of a viral marketing video is difficult, you should still shoot for a general audience type. Think about age group, cultural backgrounds and interests of your potential audience so you make a viral video that hits the mark or at least part of it.
 2. Keep the production values low. One of the most sought after qualities of viral marketing videos is real life authenticity. Use a hand held video camera and amateur actors to make a good viral marketing video.
 3. Think about the virility. The most important factor, and the one factor that is definitively an “X” factor, is the virility. Look at successful viral marketing videos and try to identify the qualities of the videos that made people want to pass them on to their friends and families. Try to include the same kinds of qualities in your viral video.
 4. Distribute the video correctly. Post the video on the usual video websites, like YouTube, and send it to as many acquaintances as you know. Also, it’s important to get the video on to blogs and websites so that many people see the video in one shot. If you see that the video is picking up traction, get ready to make a sequel so you can keep the momentum going.
- **You should always keep the material in your viral video appropriate.** You do not want a racy or explicit video to haunt you later on.
 - **You must make sure that your video is in a valid file format before it goes viral.** Typically accepted file formats include .WMV, .AVI, .MOV, and .MPG
 - **If you want a lot of people to watch your viral video, keep it short and advertise it as much as possible.**
 - **Don’t post anything that’s copyrighted or libelous.**

5.10.6 Video Responses

But even better than getting your own video views doing what you do with your videos, why not leverage the power of someone else’s popular videos to get your videos even more traffic? Increased



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traffic to your videos means increased traffic to your website, which means increased business for you. Increase your traffic and you will make more money with your website.

1. **Create a video related to your niche and post it on YouTube.**
2. **Search YouTube for popular videos in your niche.** You're looking for other people, your competitors, who are basically doing the same thing you're doing. The difference is, you're looking for people who have a ton of video views. Views in the 10,000 are good. If you can find someone in the 100,000s – fantastic!
3. **Watch the video your competitor created.** The reason for doing this is two-fold. You can only make an intelligent comment / response if you have watched the video. But even more importantly, you can learn from your competition. There is something about that video or the person doing the video that makes them successful. See if you can harness some of that popularity and change what you're doing to make your business more successful.
4. **Sign in to your YouTube account.**
5. **Create your video response.** You can do that down below the video just above where people post comments. Choose *"post a video response."*
6. **Add your video to your video response.** Click the link that says, *"Choose a video."* Remember, you must already have uploaded the video to your YouTube account. You cannot grab a video off your computer and post it as a video response without first uploading it to YouTube.
7. **Choose the button that says, "Respond with this video."** Your video will now appear as a response to your competitor's popular video. Your traffic will increase if you post relevant video responses on other people's videos.
 - **Make sure your video has relevant, useful content.** Otherwise people will not return to see what else you have.
 - **Do not spam.** Your video must be relevant. Post your video responses only when appropriate. Otherwise your visitors will not come back.

5.10.7 How to Embed YouTube Videos in your Website using [BlueVoda](#)

1. Publish your YouTube video normally or find a video that you wish to embed in your website.
2. Note the video's URL address. – Something along the lines of:
["http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QwcFJ2Mwq40"](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QwcFJ2Mwq40) – Use the LONG FORM of the embed code that YouTube provides you.
3. Click the YouTube logo within the BlueVoda website builder
4. Double click on the YouTube element you positioned on your BlueVoda workspace.



5. Add information about the YouTube video including URL of the video that you noted. Hit the [OK] button and you're just about done! – Preview your webpage to see the results.

5.10.8 SEO and YouTube

YouTube has a search algorithm that includes the optimization of the following:

- Title
- Description
- Tags
- Number of Views
- Rating

All of these items can be manipulated by the video owner, as well as the viewing/sharing audience, to determine placement in both YouTube search listings and to be carried over to Google's own universal/blended search listings.

Whenever you post videos, make sure they have been well SEOed. You have many opportunities to SEO your videos when you are filling in the information after you have posted it.

Your videos can be targeted. Make sure that you use your keywords when posting YouTube videos, in the title, the description and as the tags.

Anchor description length of 27 characters (max) – this is the maximum amount of characters you have for keyword placement before the “*three dots*” and the end of each video link on YouTube.

Include a clickable URL in the first line of the description tag. The first line of the description is what appears by (And again, if you want to avoid it looking truncated, keep it to within 27 characters.). This link could be to a blog page that contains extra information about your video.

5.10.9 A Note on YouTube Link Building

It has been shared that YouTube adds “*nofollow*” to all video titles... except those displayed under “*Recent Activity*.” If possible, try to keep most desired videos in “*Recent Activity*” section. The anchor text length on “*Recent Activity*” link is 27 Characters. Building links to these videos (embedded on-page) is ideal for SEO. Plus links to video channel helps with reputation management.

5.10.10 Optimizing your own Website with YouTube video

Embedding YouTube videos on your website not only saves on the cost of streaming media hosting, but you can also get YouTube's own tracking stats at no charge as well. Check out the below tips for on-site optimization with YouTube video.

- Create a separate text-optimized page for EACH video on your site.
- Surround the video with a description and link to your YouTube page with anchor text being the keywords you would like to rank for.
- Submit the same description to each video site (i.e. Yahoo! Video, YouTube, Google Video)



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- Use [Google Website Optimizer](#) to help you determine which video works best. You can then set up Goals in [Google Analytics](#) and learn which video was the most successful. Create different variations of the video and then simply run a test using the free Google Website Optimizer and change nothing but the video on the different versions of the pages.

5.10.11 A WARNING on Embedding Videos from YouTube

Badly deployed YouTube videos are a terrible thing, especially when they auto-play.

An auto-loading video is one that starts playing as soon as the page in which it is embedded is loaded by a browser.

YouTube makes it easy to embed your videos on your website. It's a really great feature too, primarily because embedding the video from YouTube will cut down on your page load time. I do feel a warning is important here though because you can embed YouTube videos into your website the wrong way! We have found that very often, auto-loading videos are a bad idea – for several reasons. First, your visitor feels like they have had their browsing privileges taken away. Second, the sudden volume can give a heart attack if you have your speaker system at a volume optimized for another program.

Your visitors DO want to watch your videos but they want to do it in their own time. The Internet has given people the feeling that they can do whatever they want whenever they want.

Video **HAS NOT** replaced plain text just yet and you **ARE NOT** the decision maker – your visitors are the decision makers. Let them choose to watch your video. Don't push it in their faces.

5.10.12 Beyond YouTube Marketing

Video marketing does not begin and end with YouTube (even though it is the World's most popular video sharing site). There are plenty of other video-sharing websites out there and you should market using your videos there too.

Why not check out [Dailymotion](#) and [Vimeo](#) as two great websites to use to escalate your video marketing campaign?

5.11 THE GOOGLE WEBSITE OPTIMIZER AND HOW TO OPTIMIZE YOUR CONVERSION RATE

5.11.1 Salvation by Optimization

Optimize your conversion rates, improve your website's profits AND get loads more customers with the Google Website Optimizer and our Conversion Rate Optimization Quick Start guide! If you read this entire section, you'll actually know waaay more about Conversion Rate Optimization (CRO) than about 95% of web marketers.

You always want to see a "Return On Investment" (ROI) when you invest in a website and the Google Website Optimizer is a great way to make sure that you are making as much money as possible from



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your website. It allows you to actively explore and experiment with your website and allows two different people to view two different versions of the same website at the same time!

5.11.2 The Google Website Optimizer and Split Testing

The [Google Website Optimizer](#) is *split testing software* and provides a powerful technique to optimize your website.

Split testing is exactly what it sounds like. You make a split in your website and test each side of the split on different groups of people.

If you had two possible headlines for your web page and you couldn't decide which to use, you could run an *A/B split test*. What this means is that, for example...

- **half of your visitors would be shown Headline A**
- **the other half of your visitors would be shown Headline B**

You could then count up which headline brought you the most orders and then go on to use THAT headline on your web page from that day forward, knowing that you are using the best converting ("selling") headline.

Google Website Optimizer lets you carry out tests like this. However, tests like this often take several weeks to finish as you gather all the data from different tests.

Split testing software provides a powerful technique for increasing your website's conversion rate (that's its ability to turn website visitors into paying customers). It is used by many of the web's most powerful companies, including the mighty Google and even Amazon.com!

5.11.3 Getting Started with the Google Website Optimizer

1. Visit: <http://www.google.com/websiteoptimizer>
2. **Sign in using one of your Google Accounts** – If you do not have one, you should visit <https://accounts.google.com/> to set yourself up with a Google Account. It's completely free.
3. **You NEED a Google Analytics account** to use the Google website optimizer so visit <http://www.google.com/analytics> and get your website set-up to use Google Analytics.

[Click Here](#) to learn how to get started with Google Analytics

[Click Here](#) to learn how to get started with the Google Website Optimizer

When you have a **Google Account**, a **Google Analytics** account AND finally a **Google Website Optimizer** account, you are ready to split test! Keep on reading to learn the awesome power of split testing and optimizing your conversion rates!



5.11.4 The real power of Google Website Optimizer comes from its ability to carry out loads of these tests at once!

Following my example regarding your A/B headline split above you could also test many other “*page elements*”—such as your *text, images, prices, offers, buttons*, etc.—all at the same time. Each of your visitors will see a different combination of these elements, then Google Website Optimizer will work out, on average, which of the elements performed the best. This can help you to put together a high-converting “*super-page*”.

You can test many different things all at the same time and the Google Website Optimizer will tell you which version of each page element, on average, brought in the most customers!

That’s pretty cool huh?

This type of testing is what’s called “*multivariate testing*” which means that you’re testing many different variables or variations on a theme at the same time.

5.11.5 What is Conversion Rate?

When we say “*conversion rate*”, we mean the percentage of your visitors that end up reaching a given goal during the time period in question.

Typical goals include making a purchase, submitting an inquiry form, or signing up for a free newsletter so that you can gather emails for your email campaigns for instance.

5.11.6 Why you Need to Increase your Conversion Rate

There are three very important reasons you need to make conversion rates your number one priority for 2012.

1. **There’s always loads of room for improvement!** Most websites are losing bucket loads of money each day because they do a terrible job of selling to their visitors.
2. **Pay-per-click will keep getting more competitive.** And increasing your bids is not the answer.
3. **Split testing software is now highly affordable.** Split testing software allows you to test changes to your website – and will tell you which changes brought in the most customers. (To help you decide which software is best for you, see this comparison of multivariate testing software). It used to cost several thousand dollars per month. Now it’s almost free. ***In the case of the Google Website Optimizer, it is actually free!***

Unfortunately, the Google Website Optimizer doesn’t tell you what to test. That’s what *this* section is here to do.

You have a great deal of work ahead of you. When you’re done here, you need to clear your mind and start working hard on increasing the conversion rate of your website!



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Don't be daunted by our "**Split-Testing Checklist**" below – if you do everything on it, you're the best marketer in the world! In reality though, doing just one (just about 1%) of the below things could be enough to double your conversion rate. The most important thing is to do *something* – **now!**

So, let's get started!...

5.11.7 Your Split-Testing Checklist

First you'll need to choose which split (or multivariate) testing software to use:

Time split tests (aka "*before-and-after*" tests) You should avoid these. Orders do go up and down from week to week and we've found that time-split tests tend to lead to wrong decisions.

A/B split tests – There are many occasions where a simple A/B split test (just like I mentioned with the headlines above) is all that's needed to make your decisions.

Multivariate testing – See the differences between all the multivariate testing solutions at "[Which Multivariate?](#)" which is a free resource for choosing split testing software.

Split testing software becomes much more powerful when you use it alongside other tools. Here are the other tools and techniques you need in your marketing arsenal...

Google Adwords – is often wrongly used to run split tests by creating two identical ads with different destination URL's. We don't recommend using Adwords to split test in this fashion – We recommend the Google Website Optimizer!

Live Chat – You very rarely get any information about your "*non-customers*" other than one more unique visitor on your hit-counter; as they don't buy anything you do not get any feedback! They probably will not phone you up but they might just be persuaded to use a Live Chat feature.

Web analytics – You can learn loads from your Analytics. At the most basic level, the "*site overlay*" feature tells you where people click, where they don't click and where they leave your site. Some say "*there be gold waiting for you in them log files*" and they are right.

Usability tests – these can be carried out on pretty much anyone you can get your hands on (and many people will help you out no end for beer and pizza). They are just about as valuable as gold itself.

If we could have just one testing tool, it would be usability testing. Web analytics tells you what visitors are doing, but usability testing tells you why. No other tool provides so much head-slapping and "*I can't believe I didn't think of that!*" moments.

In your refer-a-friend program, allow the customer to send a personalized note to their friend. You will have access to these notes (privacy policy permitting) and they are a goldmine of information about why the customer actually ordered. In addition, you get to see the exact words the customer uses to sell your product to their friends. It's like having a team of free copywriters on tap.



Eyetracking – shows you which things people see but don't click. And which things people don't click because they don't see. Got that? Most eyetracking is carried out using custom hardware, so you need to get [a company](#) to do it for you. However, there's a startup called GazeHawk that utilizes normal webcams to provide budget-priced eyetracking.

"Poor-man's eyetracking" – About 5 seconds into each usability test, ask the person what they have looked at so far (one of your beer 'n' pizza recruits). They'll find it pretty easy to tell you what stands out at a first glance.

Clickmapping

- [Crazy Egg](#) is a service that allows you to see the parts of your page that your visitors click on, and how far they scroll down your pages
- [ClickTale](#) is similar, but allows you to view Flash movies of your visitors' browsing sessions! You can see how far people scroll down your pages, how they interact with your forms, and many other aspects of their visit.

Customer surveys – Your customers know why they ordered and why they maybe nearly didn't. So, ask them questions about it. There are loads of survey services available. [SurveyMonkey](#) is a leader of the market.

Co-opetition is short for "*cooperative competition*", this is a technique by which you sell your competitors' products from your website (usually via an affiliate program). Co-opetition can teach you a lot about your competitors' conversion rates. And if your visitors prefer your competitors' products, this is an easy way to find out!

5.11.8 Test Changes to Your Website with the Right Mindset

Here are some tips to getting into the right mindset:

Stop having debates with your colleagues about who likes what. If in doubt, test. Your motto should always be "*let the customers decide*".

Start to think of your business as a constantly-shifting experiment. Don't just test your favorite ideas. Carry out tests "*just to see what happens*". For example, what would happen if you lowered your prices by 30%? Or increased them by 30%? It's the only way you'll learn what matters to your customers.

Learn your other new mantra: When people in your company object to the changes you're making, remind them that this is just an exploratory experiment to "learn what happens", not a long-term decision. Let this become your mantra: "*It's just an experiment*", "*It's just an experiment*".

Copy what works for others (within limits). In particular, copy companies that appear to be tracking and testing. You can spot them because they are using the techniques in this list.

Copy the techniques that have been developed by people who have been testing for decades: that is, copy direct response advertisers. The internet may be new, but your visitors aren't. For about a hundred years, direct response advertisers have been running split tests to find out what works. It's easy



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to spot their ads in magazines, newspapers and direct mail – they have tracking codes and coupons on the bottom corner. And they often look a bit cluttered.

Place bets with your colleagues as to which of your test samples will win. You'll be amazed at how often you are wrong. Only the top few percent of marketers appreciate that it's impossible to always spot the winner. Race to become one of them.

Make sure you have great people working on this project: This is the most important job in your company. You have three options:

1. Do it in-house, with your best staff.
2. Get some 'experts' in... and do it in-house.
3. Outsource it to an expert who has a vested interest in making it a big success.

Locate (or become) your company's best salesperson. Your website is your electronic salesperson. It has the advantage of being able to sell to thousands of people at the same time. However, only person-to-person selling will teach you the reactions of prospects to certain types of argument and approach. It is by far the quickest and most effective way of finding out what appeals to your prospects and what doesn't. The words on your website need to have been tested on real people. No amount of online testing will give you this gut feel. So you have a choice – either become your company's best salesperson, or seek out the best salesperson and listen to how they sell the product.

Don't test the small stuff. Test big bold changes. This has two advantages:

- You'll get your results quicker.
- You're more likely to get big improvements.

Two stages of testing:

1. Fix all the things that are "*broken*" (which you'll discover during your usability tests). This is worth doing first, because it's the easiest way to make quick improvements.
2. Testing new ideas that have the potential to significantly grow your business. Do this next.

Don't worry about temporarily lowering your conversion rate. If a test is a failure, you get one bad day of business. If a test is a success, you get a lifetime of success.

Don't end the test too soon! Make sure you have enough data! Some people say you need to test for two weeks. Some people say you need to collect at least 30 orders. Some people use "*gut feeling*". They are all wrong. The only correct answer is to use the right statistical tool.

- [Use this tool](#) for split tests of AdWords ads.
- All multivariate testing software contains in-built statistical analysis.



These tools tell you whether your results are significant – or whether you haven't got enough data yet, and they are just due to some random "luck-of-the-draw".

5.11.9 What to Focus on First

The best place to start is by identifying the weak links in your marketing funnel. Sketch out a brief overview of your marketing funnel, from advertising all the way through to closing the sale. This will include...

- Your ads
- Your force of sales folk or materials
- Your homepage
- Your product page(s)
- Your checkout page(s)
- Your order confirmation page
- The staff at your call center
- How your package is sent out

Test stuff that your usability tests suggested you change!!! (*Otherwise, why did you do it?!?!?!?*)

5.11.10 Getting your message straight before you start

What's your company's positioning? In other words, what makes you different from or better than all your competitors? Have you ever tested it against possible alternatives? Draw up a shortlist to test – then your visitors can let you know which is most important to them!

Rank the top 5 points you want to communicate to your visitors. You want to make sure that, whatever else your visitors learn from your site, they definitely learn these top 5 points.

Consider all the different types of person who might view your site – try to write for all of them. You might find it easier to use a customer archetypes (sometimes called "personas" or "avatars") for this. A customer archetype is a single person who is used to represent a certain segment of visitors.

- You may choose to use real people as your archetypes (for example, a customer you know well, who is characteristic of a certain segment of visitors)
- or you may choose to create fictional characters who embody the characteristics of a certain segment of visitors. Warning: if you choose to use fictional characters, be sure that you're basing them on an understanding of your real visitors. We don't want you sitting in an ivory tower, dreaming up people who don't exist.

For each page, make sure you know what all the "visitor intentions" are. For example, some visitors might be looking to make a purchase, some might be looking for customer support and others might be trying to apply for a job with you.

Instead of just guessing their intentions, survey them to find out for definite. The 4Q tool is a free easy-to-implement tool for getting started. Some of our clients choose to create their own exit surveys.



5.11.11 What to Test

Test everything! Or rather, test all the variables that are humanly possible for you to test. If you test it now, you will have the answer. If you do not test it, you will never be any the wiser!

Identify which products bring you the most overall profit, then put them in prime position on the page, which will be above-the-fold (that is, on the upper part of the page so the user doesn't have to scroll down to see it), preferably on the left-hand side.

Headlines are extremely important. If your visitor doesn't like the headline, they won't read any further. A simple-yet-effective approach is to express your main message in a headline that:

1. is worded in terms of benefit to the customer, not in terms of product features,
2. suggests that the person will get the results with ease,
3. is believable and therefore contains some kind of proof
4. is specific.

What you say is more important than how you say it. You'll get the biggest improvements by changing the core message of your headline, rather than just tweaking the wording.

If you don't know how to describe your product's features in terms of benefits, carry out this exercise: imagine the customer is looking at your headline and asking "*Why should I care about that?*" The way you would answer their question is likely to be worded in terms of a benefit.

Struggling for a good headline? Adapt headlines from publications such as Cosmopolitan magazine, Reader's Digest or MSN.com, who use formulaic headlines that have been proven to work again and again. Today MSN has "*7 ADHD truths you may not know*" as a headline. Replacing "*ADHD*" with your product name would give an instantly compelling headline.

I cannot emphasize enough how important Headlines really are in capturing your visitors by the imagination!

The tagline under your logo will be viewed almost as much as the headline. So make sure it clearly expresses distinct "*positioning*"; that is, describing what you do and how you fit into the marketplace.

Test high and low prices – your customers aren't always seeking out the lowest prices. Things can be "*reassuringly expensive*".

Test odd-pricing. Odd pricing is prices that end in 9's and 7's (such as ... just **\$99.99** or **\$7.99** etc.). These tend to sell better. Would you or I be fooled by that? No, we're far too smart. But someone's falling for it, because this phenomenon has been proven over and over again.

Test different offers. Here are some examples...



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- a one-month free trial
- buy-one-get-one-free
- pay in installments
- a longer commitment
- a shorter commitment
- buy now, pay later
- first one free
- automatic renewal
- holding a cheque for 30 days

In general, do everything within your power to get your product into the hands of your customers. If you're so confident in your product, prove it by taking some of the risk.

Divide your product or service into a standard version (for the prospects who are price-sensitive) and a premium version (for the ones who aren't). This also has the psychological advantage of turning the prospect's decision into an either/or decision, instead of a yes/no decision.

Even more extreme than the above two options, try changing what you sell. For example, are you selling...

- the product itself
- a catalogue of products
- a free report about the product or about the problem
- an invitation for a sales person to call

In general, the larger the purchase, the less effective it will be to attempt to sell it in one step.

Many of the visitors who leave without ordering will do so because you don't offer the product or service that they are looking for. The answer is often to start selling what they are looking for, or at least become an affiliate of a company that does sell it.

Test different premiums (the bonuses your customers get if they purchase. Free stuff like reports, gifts and accessories.

Add a guarantee or test different ones. Start with the bravest guarantee you dare test and if it should work, test an even more daring one.

Add testimonials from happy customers. In general, a video testimonial is better than a testimonial with an image, which is better than a testimonial with just a name, which is better than an anonymous testimonial.

Add testimonials from the media. If you don't have any, try giving them free stuff in exchange for reviews and feedback.



Develop a systematic way for collecting testimonials. Train your sales staff to request a testimonial whenever they receive a compliment. Email your customers asking for testimonials.

Test different “calls to action”. The call to action is what you want them to do next. It is often written on the ‘proceed’ button. Test direct ones such as “Buy Now And Get 10% Off” as well as indirect ones such as “Learn More”.

Try making the “call to action” button nice and visible. Large brightly-colored buttons often convert and sell more effectively as they are more effective at drawing the customer’s attention!

Test different reasons why the visitor should act promptly. For example, “*offer must end Midnight Friday*”, or “*just 3 units left*”. Please note, we’re not suggesting you lie to any of your visitors – your conversion rate depends heavily on their trust. However, if you look, you’ll probably find that your own business already has real reasons why the customer should act fast. If not, you can find ways of incentivizing them to do so.

Make the right stuff (your very best benefits) jump off the page! Here are several ways to make this work:

- Use **bold**,
- Use *italics* and
- **Highlighting** important words

5.11.12 Testing the Layout of your Website

A single-column layout allows you more control over the order in which your visitors view your site. When a visitor sees your page, make sure the things they see first are the things you want them to see. This is one of the reasons for the effectiveness of those long pages in the style of single-column long sales letters; because they have more control over the order in which the visitor views the page.

Where do people look? Eyetracking studies have shown that visitors tend to look first at the upper-left-hand area of the page, then at your headline, then at the left-hand side of the page. So put your best features there.

Remove clutter from your web pages! Imagine that every single pixel and every little bit of space on your web pages either increases the conversion rate or decreases it – or just takes up space. If you can get rid of things that aren’t working, you create more space for the things that are.

Put all the best stuff “above the fold”. A surprising number of your visitors will not scroll at all, so it’s best to make sure that the most important content is placed “*above the fold*”.

Decide what to feature on your homepage. Write a list of the things that your visitors are looking for. Chances are, their intentions can be divided into categories and sub-categories. Allocate space on the web page according to the popularity (and value) of these categories.



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On a similar theme, consider having a list of your top-selling items. These lists are popular, because visitors find it reassuring to buy products that others have bought.

Test different structures for the navigation of your website.

If you're confident your visitors are on the most relevant page for their needs, consider removing the navigation bar (or at least moving it somewhere less prominent). In such cases, navigation bars can be a distraction.

If your website has a "cool" non-conventional layout, try a conventional layout. Conventions are conventions for a reason – they make it easier for visitors to find what they are looking for.

Remove any distracting links that lead to places you don't want them to go! Does your site contain any gratuitous links that you never really considered your visitors might actually click on? ... Get rid of them!

Use a font for your headline that is large and clear.

Make the first letter of your body copy a large "drop caps" letter. Drop caps letters are especially good at "bridging the gap" between the headline and the body copy.

For the same reason, consider having your introductory paragraph in a slightly more prominent font size or appearance.

Test different images. The following tend to be most effective:

- images of the product
- images of the product being used , maybe by a "role model" character
- images of the successful outcome of the product
- images of happy customers holding the product (that is, a testimonial and product shot all in one).

Attention-grabbing images are great, but only if they help to communicate your sales message (which they rarely do).

Test giving your visitors the option to "zoom-in" to see a larger image of the product. (It's surprising how few e-commerce sites have decent-sized images, isn't it?)

Put captions under your images and test them. For some weird reason, people almost always read the captions under images.

Call-outs (that is, text pointing to particular parts of the picture) tend to be effective.

Test Violators which are attention-grabbing shapes such as starbursts, ovals and banners.

If your page is long and requires scrolling, consider having your call to action button repeated several times on the page.



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If your page requires scrolling, make sure that there are no “false bottoms” – that is, elements of the layout that imply the customer has reached the bottom of the page when they haven’t.

Many websites find they get higher conversion rates if their page is set out in the form of a sales letter with a personable one-to-one style of writing. Despite what your feelings might be about such websites, in some markets they often work.

5.11.13 Your Website’s Text aka Body Copy

There is a big debate about how much text to include in the body of your web pages. In general, write as much as it takes to communicate all of your “sales message” and to handle all the objections that are obvious to you. You are aiming to condense as many persuasive arguments and relevant information into as little text as possible. This will usually require more words than most websites currently use.

Use simple straightforward language. Short simple sentences are all that you need; they are not putting anybody off – Long ungainly and complicated sentences, on the other hand, are.

Fill your body copy with benefits as well as you product features. If you can, in fact, add more benefits than features because while features merely tell, benefits sell!

Include all the information that a customer could possibly require in order to make a purchase. Note that it doesn’t all need to be on the main product page.

Make sure you address all the common objections that your customers bring up. As preparation for this, you might find it useful to compile a chart of objections and counter-objections, then rank them in order of importance.

Test several different font sizes to make your text as readable as possible.

Test several different font colors. For the main text in the body of your website, black text on a white is usually a safe bet – It has been the standard for many thousands of years.

Near the end of the body copy, consider having a series of bullet points (or, even better, check-marks) that summarize the major benefits of purchasing the product that is described above.

Rewrite your article for people who skim read. Use sub-heads (that is, headlines dispersed throughout, like where we wrote “Body Copy” above) and bold to make sure the right things stand out!

Consider putting the start of your order form on the product page itself so that the process of buying your product has already begun before your visitor knows what happens.

5.11.14 Using Multimedia on your Website

Using multimedia such as Audio can be really effective at selling a product Check out: [Xiosoft Audio](#) as an easy way to put audio onto your website.



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Video can be really effective too! Perhaps the easiest way to add videos to your website is to embed video's from [YouTube](#)

One particular service, called [OnSite Videos](#), is really useful. You submit a script to them, then choose one of their actors to read it out. They then send you some code to add to your website, which displays the finished video, which hovers at the bottom of the browser.

5.11.15 Optimizing your Shopping Cart

You know from your Analytics just how many people abandon their shopping carts before they reach the checkout. Optimizing your shopping cart so that your visitors don't leave before buying your product or service!!!

Repeat your offer and main benefits on the first page of your shopping cart or order form. Some customers click on the Buy Now button just to see what the price and shipping cost will be, so you don't want to miss out on this chance of persuading them.

Don't ever ask for too much information because this can really put off your customers. Do you really need details like a fax number? Asking for more details than you need WILL result in your losing out on sales!

We have found that having thumbnail images of the products in your cart for your customers to see increases the chance of them completing the order.

Always provide timely reassurance as to why you need any and all of the information you ask for. For example,

- Under the email field, add a phrase like: *"We hate spam as much as you do"* – and consider including the HackerSafe logo.
- Under an email newsletter opt-in, you should always add a link to your privacy policy.
- Under the *"Order Now"* button, always remind your customers of your guarantee and returns policies.

Use technologies like Ajax or DHTML to hide the parts of forms that aren't needed. Both of these technologies allow sections of the page to be opened or collapsed without reloading the whole page. On the [BBC's](#) homepage have a click on those little triangles and plus and minus signs.

You should aim to replace long drop-down lists with an Ajax alternative, to increase the chance – and the speed – of the customer finding what they are looking for. Type in *"Paris"* in the *"Plan the Perfect Trip"* part of the [Trip Advisor](#) homepage, for example and see what happens.

Show additional ways to order – for example, by phone or by fax. Each customer has a way that they prefer to order. Sometimes the presence of the phone number itself can increase reassurance, even if the people don't actually phone you.

Do you have an *"enter your coupon"* field on your shopping cart? Test whether this is turning people away. (People often resent ordering when they see that others are getting a better deal).



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5.11.16 Even Borrowed Credibility is still Credibility!

Try adding a few “*reassurance logos*” to your web pages or sales pages and see what effect they have on converting visitors into customers.

The [Transaction Guard](#) Website Seals, for example, are an easy, fast and credible way to reassure your visitors (prospective customers!) that you are who you say you are. By displaying seals like the ones offered by Transaction Guard, your customers know at a glance that your business credentials and privacy practices have been verified by a respected third party. – Reassured visitors will buy more products from you!

5.11.17 The Structure of Your Website

Try out a few different versions of your “*About*” or “*About Us*” webpage – In general show yourself to be real, down to earth people and certainly not some cold, sterile and faceless corporation.

Always keep your message to your visitors consistent throughout your sales-page, website and all the way from the first Ad your customer sees right through to the point they place their order.

Immediately after the customer has ordered they tend to be in a particularly agreeable mood (we sometimes refer to this phenomenon as the “*yes set*” or “*yes ladder*”). You should always take advantage of this by making additional offers to them...

For example, adding a good refer-a-friend program to your order confirmation page can be really effective.

Your order confirmation page is also a useful place from which to sell other of your products. In sales-speak this is known as cross-selling.

Entry pop-ups and exit pop-ups should be tested but you have to be really careful how you deploy any kind of pop-up. They can work well but quite often that can be very irritating to users.

5.11.18 The “Usability” of your Website

Always check how your website looks when it is viewed through different web browsers and using different screen resolutions. This will give you some great insight into how your visitors are seeing your website. <http://www.browsercam.com/> and browsershots.org are a couple of really useful tools for doing this!

Make the loading time of your website as fast as possible! (check your site using [this handy little tool](#)).

Add a Search feature to your website. Two tools that both let your visitors search your website via Google are: [Google Mini](#) and [Google Free Web Search](#). You can then have a look at your Analytics to learn what your visitors were mostly searching for. Once you know what your visitors are looking for, either make sure that your website offers it or make it more prominent on your site so that your visitors can find it faster!



Make as many elements on your website as you can clickable. Your visitors tend to click on everything, in particular the images on your website and if they are clicking on something, it's because they are expecting something to happen.

If your site has adverts, test changes to these. You can split your advertising into two or more channels with many advertising programs (for example: [Google's AdSense](#) and [Chitika](#)). Once you have done this, check the below and start testing to see which brings in the most money

- Different ad sizes
- Different ad shapes
- Different ad positions
- Different ad color formats ("*stand out*" versus "*blend in*", for example)

Happy testing!



Secret 6:

Don't Forget...

6.1 DON'T FORGET... OVERVIEW

We here at [VodaHost](#) web hosting are Google power-users and in the last few Secrets we have focused very much on Google and their services. It would be wrong not to focus on Google; it IS the world's most used search engine and indeed the world's most visited website. It has some incredibly useful tools for your business too. Here, however, we are looking at some of the fantastic tools and services of her arch-rivals. There are some great services that are absolutely a must for the marketing of your website and should not be forgotten.

6.2 7 THINGS THAT YAHOO! DOES BETTER THAN GOOGLE

According to alexa.com, Yahoo! is currently the fourth most visited website in the world (the third most visited website in the United States) and that's a lot of visits and a massively used service. Yahoo! was in-fact, the Google of 10 years ago and had Google not appeared on the scene, Yahoo! would probably have continued to be the leading Search Engine on the Internet.

Google handles many of our daily web searching needs including email networking, GoogleDocs and Google AdWords etc. and in our opinion, it's really good; much better than most other Internet companies. However, there are a select few services that you should always turn to Yahoo! for. Why? Well because these are services that Yahoo! does way better or that Google just simply doesn't offer.

So, here are 7 things that Yahoo! does better than Google:

6.2.1 Personal Finance: Yahoo! Finance contains a massive amount of original content that easily rivals some of the biggest financial sites in the industry (and that includes sites like CNN Money, TheStreet.com, etc.). The interface is very easy to find your way around and is perfectly accessible to both new investors and longtime financial gurus. If you and your website deal in finances then you MUST reference this excellent tool. Google Finance is coming along but it just simply isn't as good.

6.2.2 Answers to Questions: Yahoo! Answers allows users to ask questions or answer other user's questions; it's a little bit like a massive forum and it's a simple concept that works really well for Yahoo! and is a wonderful way to get answers to all your questions very fast. Google has no such active service. The closest competition on the web right now is Ask MetaFilter... also a great question/answer service but Yahoo! Answers is our favorite.

6.2.3 Website Back-link Info: Most webmasters like to know exactly how many sites are linking to their various websites. Yahoo! makes this especially easy with their "linkdomain:" search operator. It quickly



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provides a full list of incoming links to any given domain. Let's say your domain name is "yourdomain.com"; simply type "linkdomain:yourdomain.com" (without the "s) in to Yahoo! search and you'll see all the pages that link to any page within your domain. For some reason Google does not publicly disclose this back-link information but instead provides only a small sample of quality incoming links to a given domain via it's "link:" search operator. Google does provide the Google Webmaster Tools service that will give you back-link information for a specific domain but only once you sign up and prove to Google that you are the owner of the domain.

6.2.4 Image Hosting and Sharing: In the same way that Google purchased YouTube for Web 2.0 video sharing, with its purchase of Flickr, Yahoo! now rules the Web 2.0 photo sharing market and Flickr is currently the king over all the other photo sharing sites out there. It's a fantastic site and very easy to get lost in for an hour or so. A great way to host images for your website and to get some quality links for your website.

6.2.5 Local Search: If you are looking for businesses around your town or city, Yahoo! Local is a step ahead of Google. While Google can perform local searches in a variety of different ways through their standard search interface and Google Maps application, Yahoo! Local is a more polished service that puts all local search capabilities on one convenient page. Yahoo! local is sort of like a digital Yellow Pages and listing your business here is a great move.

6.2.6 Entertainment Portal: From music to online games to sports, Yahoo! Entertainment provides a solid entertainment web portal capable of satisfying all the various entertainment and leisure user demographics. For better or for worst, Google isn't trying to be an entertainment portal, so it doesn't even come close to competing with Yahoo! in this regard. Another great resource for those interested in Entertainment.

6.2.7 Privacy Policy: Yahoo! is arguably better with the privacy concerns of its users. Certainly this point could be debated in favor of either company but there seems to be more public controversy surrounding Google's privacy policies. Like most, we suck it up and use Google's services anyway but why let Google have access to all your info? Use Yahoo! and this will no longer be a concern to you...

6.3 WHAT ABOUT BING?

The Search Engines of the Internet seem to have a penchant for whimsical names... Despite this, by 2006, the verb "google" had crept into dictionaries...

google (verb): *search the Internet (for information) using the Google search engine; "He Googled the woman he had met at the party"; "My children are Googling all day"*

You might actually start believing that Google is the only search engine out there...

When we discuss Internet search engines, it's usually Google and her products & services that we discuss. There's good reason for this; nearly 85% of all searches carried out on the Internet are carried out through Google and they are the world's most visited website. This certainly does not mean, however, that Google is the world's only website.



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Microsoft's Bing search engine is a relatively new service (it was launched on June 3, 2009) and is one of the really big search Engines out there (the others being Google, Yahoo! and the Chinese search engine Baidu). In terms of its global use, Bing deals with about 3.39% of all web searches.

So, Google still owns web search...

Don't be fooled by the numbers, though. 3.39% of the roughly 2 billion (2,000,000,000!) world-wide Internet users out there is still roughly 69 million users. If you consider that each of these users is a possible client or customer, you will not want to miss out on their custom.

It is as important to consider Bing as well as Google as you are promoting and SEOing your website. I consider it tantamount to negligence if you do not target Bing searchers as customers too. Regardless of Bing's relatively small market share, there are still plenty of good reasons to use Bing, especially their Webmaster Tools.

6.3.1 BING: Bing Is Not Google

In my opinion Bing's "*decision engine*" (formerly Live Search, Windows Live Search, and MSN Search) provides a very user-friendly experience for searching. Interestingly, it does provide different web search results from Google and this means that while you might be on the 3rd results page in a Google search, you might be on page 1 or page 2 for the same search in Bing! More people may actually be finding your site via a Bing search than they are via Google.

Search algorithms are not shared by the search engines; they are well kept secrets. This means that your website is seen and interpreted differently by the Googlebot and Bing's web crawler and different areas of optimization are perceived differently by these two search-giants.

Your websites inclusion in Bing, with a good PageRank, is very important. Bing is highly accessible as a mainstream search engine; it has been localized for many countries and is accessible all over the world.

6.3.2 Bing Products & Services

Bing provides a wealth of services that you should include your website in. If you snoop around Bing, you find that they have many similar products to Google. A few of Bing's services to check out follow...

Bing provides an Entertainment portal, an events portal, a Finance portal, a news portal, image search, video search, world maps, Local search, a shopping portal, a translator tool, a Weather portal and a partnership with Wolfram|Alpha, which is a particularly interesting online service that I enjoy. Like Google, Wolfram|Alpha answers any factual or mathematical question you might have.

It is all, in fact, very reminiscent of Google; certainly Bing has been competitive with Google in mind when they drew up their list of products and services.

You should visit all the above to determine where to submit your website to... Certainly your business should be included in the Local Listing Center of their Local portal as well as listed on their Shopping directory if you are administrating an e-commerce site or webstore.



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By far the most important service to you as a webmaster, though, is Bing Webmaster Central...

6.3.3 Bing Webmaster Central

Using the free Bing Webmaster tools to improve your site's SEO, you can submit your sites and XML-based Sitemaps to Bing, get data on which pages of your site have been indexed, see all the backlinks that Bing can find to your site, all inbound links to your site as well as the keyword performance of your site in users' searches.

You can get started with their Webmaster Central by visiting the following URL:

<http://www.bing.com/toolbox/webmasters/>

This gives you a "Bing-eye" view of your website (much like the Google Webmaster Tools provides you).

It will show you any crawl errors, how your website was found by users, i.e. using which keywords, shows you where your website is appearing in Bing searches and gives you an opportunity to optimize your website further to appear in as many relevant searches as possible. Are you missing out on a good page rank for a certain keyword? Bing's Webmaster Central gives you the opportunity to optimize your site further so that it can be found via this keyword with greater ease.

6.3.4 Don't Forget Bing!

In my opinion, Bing is not better than Google (it was never the intention of this text to prove that this was the case). That does not mean, though, that it is not very useful.

Overall, you should embrace and interact with the services that Bing offers. They probably will not have as much impact as the SEO work that you will do with Google in mind but it will help and does offer resources that are great to use. Always remember, despite its relative low market share, 4% of billions of users is still a lot of people.

You can never get enough SEO for your website and you should never stop finding new platforms to promote your business. Remember that it's links that carry the most SEO weight and your websites inclusion in Bing will help the SEO of your website and it will help people to find your website. You should definitely use Bing.

Regardless of the relative size of Bing's user-base, in the grand scheme of things, the important thing is that people find your website ... it doesn't matter how it was found.



Secret 7:

Social Bookmarking

7.1 SOCIAL BOOKMARKING OVERVIEW

Social Bookmarking is a way to share your website and its content with the world. Social bookmarking lets visitors to your website, who like its content, share your content with their online friends. It lets them create “bookmarks” to your website and content, through the big social bookmarking sites that you are sure to have heard of and maybe even used. [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) are the really, really big ones.

You have seen Social Bookmarking at work on the Internet many times. Many times, as you are reading an online blog or article, you will see little symbol buttons (at the top or bottom) which give you a chance to get word out about the blog or article on social networking sites like:

digg
del.icio.us
facebook
twitter
Spurl

These Social Bookmarking buttons let you tell your friends about the blog or article and let them know that is helpful, useful or interesting. You can put Social Bookmarking buttons on your web page with [BlueVoda](#) very easily by using such services as [AddThis](#) or a variety of other services available. Just do a Google search for Social Bookmarking buttons and you will get dozens of results.

When a visitor to your website clicks on one of your Social Bookmarking buttons, they will be effectively telling hundreds of people (maybe thousands) about the existence of your website and its content. If enough other people agree with your bookmark, they will mark it as useful. In the process of doing so, they are increasing the visibility of the bookmark to other users. In sharing the bookmark, they are increasing the traffic to your site.

It generally works like this:

1. A user clicks on one of the social bookmark symbols on a page that contains content they want to share. Which one they choose depends on which social bookmarking / networking site they have an account with.
2. They will edit the title, description and tags for the bookmark as they wish to best describe the blog or page to their friends and other users.



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3. They hit *“Submit”* and they have successfully socially bookmarked the content of this page and it can be shared.

“And... um...What’s in it for me?”, I hear you ask. Well, as well as a good way to advertise your website, social bookmarking is a free and easy way to get a little *“Do It Yourself”* Search Engine Optimization (S.E.O.) done on your website, pushing it further up the Search Engine results, a little closer to that #1 spot.

Basically, it’s all about the links (the social bookmarks are effectively links) that are pointing to your website. Links are the connections of one website to another and are very important to the way Search Engines (including the mighty Google) see your website and place it within their search results.

A golden rule of S.E.O. states that: The more quality links coming into your website from outside, the better. Marketing your site through the social bookmarking websites can be a very powerful and really subtle method for optimizing Search Engine results as a vast amount of links to your site can be created by your socially bookmarking users. The best part about Social Bookmarking is that you do not have to create any links yourself at all. It’s pure S.E.O. on autopilot. For example, when you socially bookmark a blog or web-page, an incoming link is created from the Social Bookmarking site to the website with the blog/page that has just been bookmarked. The more people that socially bookmark the blog / page and the more incoming links that are created, push the bookmarked website further and further up the page ranking of the Search Engines. Pretty cool, huh?

Create new social bookmarks to social or public bookmarking sites and they will generate a great deal of new traffic to your website as well as Search Engine exposure. Eventually, as time goes on and your visitors are finding new interesting information they will decrease in efficiency, making it necessary for you to find new means of driving increased traffic. You should always make it possible to socially bookmark new content on your website in order to keep the new traffic moving at a steady pace. You should be constantly marketing, updating and making your website better and then getting your users to socially bookmark the content. If it becomes boring and cluttered with old information, you can be sure that the website of someone who is always making improvements and modifications will slip past you towards the #1 spot.

7.2 THE FACEBOOK FAN-PAGE

Love it or hate it, [Facebook](#) has become one of the single most important websites on the Internet today. Fact. It has seen immense success (it is currently the 2nd most visited site on the web) and is used by a massive percentage of the online population. I have a Facebook account and chances are you have a Facebook account too. If you don’t have a Facebook account, you may have the muddy idea that it’s pretty much for teens and young adults to keep in touch, to discuss Friday night and tag each other in embarrassing pictures. Okay, true, it is for this but if you are promoting a business or organization, Facebook is much, MUCH more than this.

Facebook has become an almost universal social network and it serves both personal and business needs and can do wonders for the promotion and marketing of your business. At the end of the day, it has become an integral ingredient to your business’ web presence and will help you to capture an



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audience that you might not otherwise be able to capture or promote your business to. This means more custom... This means more money...

We are not talking about your average Facebook account here, though. What I will be showing you is how to create a Facebook fan page for your business or venture to improve the online reputation of your website and business and promote your business to an immense amount of people.

You can get started by checking out [VodaHost's](#) very own [Facebook fan-page](#).

You may be thinking ... *"Fan Page? It's a normal Facebook page..."*. It isn't. There are critical differences... Facebook fan pages are indexed (they are crawled by Search Engine Spiders like the noble Googlebot) and are also completely available to the online public regardless of whether or not they have a Facebook account. You, as well as every person on Facebook, can connect with these Pages by becoming a fan and then receive their updates in your News Feed and interact with them. You cannot do this with the *"regular"* Facebook pages.

It's really easy to get started...

7.2.1 Visit <http://www.facebook.com>. On the home page, do not enter any details yet. Doing so will just create you a regular Facebook account. Look beneath the sign-up details and you will see a link (it's pretty small and easy to miss) that says: *"Create a Page for a celebrity, band or business."* Click on this and add all the relevant details until your account has been created.

7.2.2 Spice up your fan page - Making your fan page interactive and graphically appealing are very important ways to attract new fans...

1. Making it interactive can easily be done with [Facebook's Application Directory](#) that has very many applications that can be added to your page with just a few clicks. If you have the resources (web developer/designer), or have some experience yourself, it's not too hard to develop a Facebook application. The advantage of this is that you can put your brand on the application and personalize it the way you want. I've seen people develop a Facebook application in just a few days. Putting interactive applications on your page gives users a reason to not just become fans but to continually visit and interact on your page.
2. It's important to make it look attractive and give it some personality along with making your fan page interactive. Facebook allows you to upload logos or photos for your fan page but that just isn't enough. You should give your fan page some real flare. Put a graphic linking to your website or a flashy banner along the side bar that promotes a contest. Doing something of this type offers fans and potential fans a reason to not only visit your fan page often but to also visit your company's website or blog. A great design can do this, I promise. I can't tell you how many times I've visited a website, just to leave immediately because there was little effort put into the design of the site.

You should check out these very good looking Facebook fan pages for an idea at what you should be aiming for. You should note, though, that these pages have had a lot of money thrown at them.

Starbucks : <http://www.facebook.com/starbucks>



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Red Bull : <http://www.facebook.com/redbull>
The Twilight Saga : <http://www.facebook.com/twilight>

Happily though, templates for Facebook fan pages are available to you for free but you'll have to do a little searching for them. You can find a few at the URL below as a nice place to start.

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

7.2.3 Start inviting friends. Facebook fan pages have the ability to do bulk invites, so invite all your friends in just one go. Don't stop here though. Add everybody! As many people as you can think to add and just keep adding them. The more people you add the more prospective customers you'll have access to. I'll tell you why...

Now that you have your Facebook fan page, it works a like this. Anything you post on your website and reference in a link on your Facebook fan page will appear in the Facebook news feed of your fans. They may like what you have to say ... They may click the "Like" button on your post. They may also comment on your post.

This places a link to your post on their wall and if they comment it will appear in the News Feed of their friends. Their friends may equally like what you have to say and they may also click that "Like" button or indeed comment. This is link building at its very easiest and you're letting your fans do it for you, wherever you are, 24/7. It's like a snowball effect. If you have 1,000 fans and each fan has 200 (unique) friends then you potentially have access to 200,000 people.

The more links that you get as your fans share your link with their friends will improve the S.E.O. of your website. Always, always remember: The more quality links coming into your website from outside, the better. You will get a higher ranking in Google and as well as more knowledge about your particular brand or service in your Facebook fans sharing your link.

If you are promoting a business, you should definitely have a go at creating a Facebook fan page. It won't cost anything and you can reap the benefits for yourself and your business. Always be building up your fan page, always keeping it fresh and new, so that your fans always have a reason to come back to it, to befriend it and keep telling their friends about it.

7.3 TWITTER

Now, check out [VodaHost's](http://twitter.com/vodahost) Twitter profile @: <http://twitter.com/vodahost> and you will lay eyes upon one of the Internet's simplest and yet most popular and powerful websites.

[Twitter](#) is a website for micro-blogging; the main difference between Twitter and any other blog website is that Twitter is extremely bite-size (that's where the "micro" comes in). Each and every micro-blog post that you make or read here has a maximum character limit of just 140 characters (and that does include spaces!). As an example of just how short that is, the following fictional "Tweet" is 139 characters precisely:



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“I went to the zoo today and I actually saw a Liger! It was so beautiful; an incredible reminder of life’s rich tapestry! <http://goo.gl/FbAy>”

This character limit of 140 characters is a stroke of genius (you could actually get more in an SMS text message). It’s fantastically easy to capture a reader’s attention with 140 characters; you are, at the very least, guaranteed that the viewer will read all of it. In my example above, it’s all there: The story of my day out, the exciting thing that happened to me and how I feel about it. I’ve even inserted a link to the website of the Zoo that I visited.

You NEED a Twitter account because with Twitter, you can reach out to the world, beyond just those who are your friends and through bite-size chunks of information and links and DIRECT THEM WHEREVER you would like them to go; to your website, straight to a products page if you want, to an affiliate link ... anywhere on the Internet.

I will show you how Twitter can help you market your business but first let’s get you signed up and acquainted with Twitter. Let’s get Tweeting ...

Signing up is suitably simple: visit <http://twitter.com/signup> ... and follow the instructions. If you want to add a cool username, I think this helps greatly with an overall identity as your “tweets” are so short. BEWARE: Twitter becomes really addictive, really fast — inform your significant other.

The next order of business is to get followers reading your twitter profile ... this is where the action happens:

Every post, or Tweet you make, goes straight to the home page of your followers. They can then reply to you with thoughts on your tweet or even, re-tweet your tweet and this means that your original tweet and link will appear on their twitter profile. Your tweet will be shared in a viral way as will your link and more people will be exposed to it. The more people that are exposed to it, the more awareness there will be about your particular brand or product.

It is precisely because Twitter appears to be so minimal that it is so powerful. There are so many reasons to use Twitter that I couldn’t possibly begin to note down all of the reasons to use Twitter here but below are a few of the reasons you NEED a twitter account:

7.3.1 ...For Your Business Branding. Twitter is a social media platform you can use to build your brand. It has the primary benefit of developing a casual persona and establishes you as a social personality that is connected and approachable. As Twitter adoption increases, new users will be drawn towards well established Twitterers.

7.3.2 ...You can get feedback too. Need a new, fresh perspective on how your website looks or the right course of action to take? Blast out a message and link asking for advice and you’ll receive replies from other users. This collective intelligence can be used as fodder for articles or projects and you’re still promoting your brand.



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7.3.3 ...You could actually hire people on Twitter. Need a good logo designer, marketer or programmer? Well, send out a message asking for recommendations. This is a very quick and easy way to hire freelancers or even companies based on the recommendations of fellow twitter followers.

7.3.4 ...Directing traffic is the main reason for using twitter. Twitter can be used to get traffic to your websites or even the sites of friends you are helping out. If you ask your friends to tweet about it, the message will spread faster and further as other active users pick it up. There is a viral nature to all types of news, especially on a site like Twitter.

7.3.5 ...You can read news that you wouldn't have access to otherwise. Twitter users often link to useful sites or articles and can be a source of scoops and alternative news. You can also subscribe to Twitter feeds for specific websites/conferences, which allows you to receive and view content quickly. This is very useful for active social news participants.

7.3.6 ...You will make new friends and allies. Like any other social network, Twitter has a built-in function for you to befriend and track the messages of other users. This is an easy way for you connect with people outside of your usual circle. Make an effort to add active users you find interesting. A Twitter acquaintance can be developed into a long lasting friendship.

7.3.7 ...With Twitter you'll be networking for benefits. Twitter can be used as a socializing platform for you to interact with other like-minded people, especially those in the same industry. It can be used to establish consistent and deeper relationships for future benefits such as testimonials or peer recommendations.

7.3.8 ...You'll find Twitter is a great way to keep your customers notified. Set up a Twitter feed for the specific purpose of notifying customers when new products come in, for example. Customers can subscribe via mobile or RSS for instant notification. Twitter can also be used to provide mini-updates for one-on-one clients.

7.3.9 ...Send out event updates. Businesses can use Twitter as a means to inform event participants and latest event happenings/changes. This is a hassle-free way of getting information out to people, especially when you don't have the means to set up a direct mobile link between you and the audience.

7.3.10 ...You'll be exposed to many opportunities to find prospective customers. Twitter can be used as a means to find potential customers or clients online. Do a search for keywords related to your product on Twitter Search and then follow users. Tweet about topics parallel to your product and close prospects away from public channels by using direct messages or offline communications. Discretion and skill is needed in this area.

7.3.11 ...You can provide live coverage. Twitter's message size limit prevents detailed coverage of events but it can allow you to provide real-time commentary which may help to spark further discussion or interest on the event as other Twitter users spread the message. Very useful for citizen journalism.

7.3.12 ...You can set-up meetings too. Twitter can help you organize impromptu meet-ups. For example, you can tweet a message while at a cafe, event or art gallery and arrange to meet fellow users at a specific spot. It's an informal and casual way of arranging a meeting.



7.3.13 ...you can acquire votes. Send a link to your stories you've submitted in other social news sites like Digg. Sometimes your followers will vote up the stories because they agree with it. This allows you to acquire more support for your efforts on other social media websites.

There's a bunch more useful information available at the below URL to help out those using Twitter for the marketing of their business: <http://business.twitter.com/twitter101>.

Hopefully this has given you a few ideas on how to use Twitter. If you found it useful, please feel free to [follow us on Twitter](#) and don't be shy ... say "Hello!". We're always looking to follow new people so please don't hesitate to introduce yourself. We don't bite (we're pretty friendly actually) and always open to new ideas.

7.4 FACEBOOK, TWITTER AND YOUR WEBSITE

Remember, social networking via sites like Facebook and Twitter are powerful ways to advertise your product or service in a viral way, at almost no cost and in a way that does work. In the hands of your socially networking fans and followers, the links to your website and its contents will be paraded around the Internet and the awareness of your website can increase many-fold.

It would, however, be a disastrous mistake to imagine that your Facebook fan page and Twitter account are the most important things when you are marketing your website. They aren't. YOUR WEBSITE AND ITS CONTENTS are the most important things, foremost because a well S.E.O.'d website will appear high up in the search engines natural listing of websites.

The mission should always be to get at least one person to "Tweet about" or "Like" each piece of content, each blog, on your web pages to get the network "ball rolling". You can be sure the social network users will not share your website or contents with their own friends, fans and followers if they do not find it useful, interesting or something that their friends will enjoy.

Unfortunately neither Facebook nor Twitter accounts contain an awful amount of information about your products or services independently and are intended as both a gateway to your website as well as a way to keep up with recent events from your site without them having to go looking for them. They are designed, certainly in the marketing world, as an add-on to your website to get word out about it.

So, when your visitor finds that pearl of wisdom on your website, can they easily get word out about it?

I'm going to show you how to link it all together and how to get word out about your website from its visitors and how to make it social. To do this, we will be decorating your website a little with buttons and badges for Facebook & Twitter and making it little more social-network friendly.

7.5 BADGES AND BUTTONS AND WIDGETS GALORE

If you visit [the VodaHost home page](#) you will see buttons that offer the user the opportunity to follow VodaHost on Facebook , Twitter and YouTube. They catch the eye and let the viewer know that they can



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create social network links to [VodaHost](#) when they think that this information will be useful to one of their friends and followers. It is these that we'll be adding to your website.

7.5.1 The Official Ones

There are plenty of badges buttons and widgets available for you to add to your website to advertise its social network connections and get fans and followers liking and tweeting about it. On any site like facebook, twitter, YouTube, Digg you will be able to find buttons that let you share your content on the social networking sites.

We'll look at Facebook first:

Visit <http://www.facebook.com/badges/?ref=pf> – This is the official Facebook page for badges for your site gives you the opportunity to fine tune a button for your site as you like and with various purposes. You can have a simple little advert about your Facebook page, you can have a badge that shows your status and latest pictures, your email address etc. Facebook provides extra goodies if you have a fan page that are not available for your average Facebook account.

For Twitter badges and buttons, visit <http://twitter.com/goodies> . You can add their badges, buttons and widgets in a similar fashion.

With both of these sites, their “goodies” are available with many different purposes in mind. Some of the code that you will add to your website will take your viewers straight to your twitter account ... some prompt the user to log-in and automatically mark you as a follower.

You should use these banners in different ways. You could have a simple link to your Twitter page on the front page of your website and then on each of your blogs you could have a Facebook “Like” button or “Tweet This” button. Always, ALWAYS give your visitors the chance to socially bookmark all the content on your website. Your pages should be saturated with such links but make them small and out-of-the-way, so they do not overshadow the contents of your website.

7.5.2 3rd Party – The Unofficial Ones

There are very, very many 3rd party buttons and badges you can get your hands on too for your website which have been created by a community of online users. You have only to search Google for “Facebook buttons”, “Facebook badges”, “twitter buttons”, YouTube buttons and Google will return several million results.

7.5.3 On adding HTML to your website...

Adding these badges, buttons and widgets to your website will, nearly always, involve you adding some HTML code to your website. If you're using website building power-house [BlueVoda](#), you can quite easily add the HTML code of banners and buttons ... Check out [this tutorial](#) on adding HTML to your Page (Badges, Banners, Buttons, Counters, etc...):



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Facebook and Twitter are massively powerful tools but they do not hold any significance over your website. Your website should be more impressive than either of these two things combined and the social networking aspect should be used to promote your website, not make up for its failings. Facebook and Twitter users will follow you based on the quality of your website and then will they be unknowingly be promoting you and your services. Always follow the below 3 rules of social networking. Let your website inspire the social networking crowd into sharing your site and its links and they will take care of the rest of the work. Good luck!

1. ALWAYS make sure your website advertises your connections to the social networking websites you use to advertise your business. There is no excuse! There are plenty of buttons available to download to do this or to link to.
2. Make sure that each social networking site you use has a clear link or URL pointing back at your website. This makes sure that anyone who finds your social bookmarking site first and wants to know more can visit you. If your website impresses them, they will let their friends know about it.
3. Always make sure your website is incredible first in terms of content and ease-of use.

So get out there and create accounts with “Facebook”, “twitter” and “digg” and get those social bookmarking buttons onto your site with [BlueVoda](#). As your users tell their friends around the world about your content, link after link after link will be created to your website, it will be advertised to the world and these are S.E.O. gold. Go on, try it out. Google will love it and we promise you’ll love it too!

7.6 SELL YOUR PRODUCT FOR A TWEET!

The Internet surfing public *loves* a bargain and the only thing they love more than a bargain is a free product or service. There are very many free services available on the Internet: anti-virus software, multimedia players, many, many software tools, entire office suites, multimedia players, and even entire PC Operating Systems. These are usually loss-leading products to market bigger and more expensive products. It is done this way due to one constant of the human condition: *People love free; free makes people happy.*

The free software could be a non-pro or limited version of another piece of software or a gateway to another of your products and services. A great example is Apple’s iTunes software; it’s free to download and use but it is very heavily connected, a gateway if you will, to Apple’s iTunes Store.

This all brings me neatly to another free service being offered at the moment, by *Innovative Thunder*; a service called “*Pay With A Tweet*” that allows you to get a unique kind of payment for the product or service that you offer from your website.

It works like this: Your visitor can download or partake of your “free” product and in return, as payment, they click a button to initiate the download which will post a marketing message about the product to their twitter feed or Facebook wall. Your visitor gets a “free” product and you get viral marketing and links to boost your SEO.



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You'll find that very often people are happy to promote a service that they like or have found to be useful. From its very beginnings, marketing has given stuff away for Free with the ultimate goal of making more money ... and so it continues ... because it works.

It is very often the case that word-of-mouth about your product is sometimes higher than the money you would get for it. 'Pay with a Tweet' is the first social payment system, where people pay you with the value of their social network in marketing your product.

This service has taken the traditional idea of free and turned it on its head. Of course the service you are providing is not quite free. It requires a payment (however apparently small) from your viewer in their clicking on your "Pay with a Tweet" button and then logging in to their social networking site of course. The genius is though, that this can be done at no monetary cost and it is the monetary cost that your user notices. Even if the download of your eBook was only \$0.39, it probably would not be downloaded as much as if the payment was in a tweet. It's a great deal simpler than them paying with PayPal or even via Credit Card payment where there are fees involved. They get your product; you get the chance of some extremely viral marketing. You can never market your website enough and this right here is a great deal.

I must admit the name is slightly deceptive. While the service is called Pay with a Tweet, you can also use Facebook and have your customers share a piece of news on Facebook; this service does not begin and end with Twitter.

The system is simple, straightforward and very clever. Every time somebody pays for one of your products or services with a tweet, he or she is telling all their followers and friends about that product.

Your users can decide if they want to pay with a tweet on Twitter or with a post on their Facebook wall to tell all their friends about you, your product and your brand.

7.6.1 So, who should use 'Pay with a Tweet'?

Everybody. You can never get enough marketing for your website and you can never, ever, get enough social networking links of the kind offered by Facebook and Twitter

In general all content creators and marketers that want to create buzz for themselves, their brand, product or service can use this service.

Musicians and DJ's, for example, can sell their latest mix, single or music video for a Tweet to promote your next gig, show, album, or just to attract more visitors to your website.

Authors and writers can "Sell" their eBooks or even a sample version of their eBook with a Tweet to boost your sales. Equally, Publishers and Journalists can sell their article for a Tweet to promote their periodical newspaper, magazine or charged online service.

Film-makers can sell the trailer for your upcoming movie for a Tweet as a boost to its marketing campaign.



Even scientists and other professionals can sell a thesis, a study, a paper or a presentation for a Tweet to increase their popularity in whatever their special field.

ANY Service Provider can sell a basic version of your service for a Tweet and bring more people to your website where they can learn about the benefits of your “premium” service which you offer for a certain monetary charge.

Whatever your niche your aim should be to sell your latest product for a Tweet and make it go viral!

7.6.2 How can I use Pay with a Tweet?

Let's get started, then... Visit <http://www.paywithatweet.com/sell.php> and just fill out the form and get your personal 'Pay with a Tweet' URL and download button. Your files remain hosted on your website, so you must input a URL straight to the file you want to “sell”. Make absolutely sure you do not make any mistakes in your URLs!

1. Add a name that will appear as the descriptive name of the file you are selling. If it's a music album you are offering for example, take the name of the song or if it's a presentation, take the name of that presentation.
2. Enter the URL to the file you want to sell, for example:
<http://www.vodahost.com/thesecrets.pdf>
3. Enter the text of the Tweet you want the people to post. You have 110 characters to work with and you should be aware that this text can be edited by the downloader should they wish to personalize this message.
4. Visit <http://goo.gl/>. Here, enter the URL that will be attached to every Tweet that will be posted as people download your product. This URL should point to the webpage with your Pay with a Tweet download button, NOT the URL to the actual file to be downloaded. Here you only have 29 characters to play with and that is why it's best to use a URL Shortener like goo.gl.
5. Finally, if you are indeed a human, then you should have no problem filling out the captcha and clicking: *“Create my Button”*

7.6.3 How can I track how many people paid with a Tweet?

There are several ways to get some analytics on your Pay with a Tweet campaign. You can use any of the following, alone or in combination:

1. Track and count the Tweets with a service like RowFeeder.com. As keyword to track, use the URL of your Tweet-text, because this is the only part of the Tweet that your patrons can't edit.
2. Track the clicks on your link. If you use goo.gl to shrink the URL you use in your Tweet-text, you can access a simple statistic of clicks and latest Tweets by signing into your Google account



before you shorten your link and when you want to track its usage

3. You can search on Twitter for your Tweet-text URL.

So, get out there and start selling your products and services for a Tweet. If you like this eBook, and think that it has been helpful to you, we accept payment in Tweets.

7.7 HOW TO MARKET USING FACEBOOK

If you're like many search marketers, advertising on Google and working hard to keep your website Optimized for the Search Engines, you've likely already had a go at doing some marketing on Facebook. We have discussed Facebook and Twitter marketing but now we're ready to take it up a notch and explore more of the opportunities offered by the social networking giant, Facebook. There's good news too – it's still fairly early in the game, and there are still plenty of bargains to be found by the brainy marketers amongst you out there!

Facebook is starting to really go mainstream amongst marketers right now and that's great; a recent Webtrends survey found Click-Throughs on Facebook averaging around 0.05%, and average cost-per-click at around \$0.49 last year. In fact, in just the last couple of years Facebook's top advertisers have increased their spending about 10 times. – That means that the results they are getting from marketing on Facebook are very good.

Marketing agency Efficient Frontier's March 2011 study shows Facebook on a par with Google in terms of Click-through and CPC pricing today but also shows that Facebook is a real bargain, especially for brand marketers because the value of the site's rich (and it is incredibly rich – this is the 2nd most visited website in the world after Google!) data — and its power to spread viral messages — is only just becoming fully appreciated.

Facebook is an exciting marketplace to start working in; you'll find many of the skills and techniques that you've developed and used as a search marketer will lend themselves very well to Facebook and the skills and techniques that you have learned as a website builder – such as dealing with images – may be new but you'll be equipped to deal with them.

Here, I'll show you many aspects of ad creation and optimization on Facebook, as well as testing them over time and ways to fight ad fatigue.

7.7.1 1) Set your Goals

It's important to keep in mind that Facebook is a very significantly different animal to search because consumers on social media sites have a different mindset; a mindset geared towards connecting and discovering. They're not too focused on finding and perhaps buying as they are when they're surfing around using the search engines of the Internet. As a result, you should treat Facebook as being slightly higher up in the sales funnel and you should keep this in mind as you measure your success.



The first task to set your mind to, as you would with any campaign, is to set your goals and objectives. What is it you are looking to do? Are you looking to build the list of “*Friends*” who “*like*” your brand(s) or product’s page(s)? Do you want to promote downloads of a coupon that you are offering? Do you want to send Facebook user traffic to your website? Do you have any branding goals in mind?

Whatever it is you would like to achieve, the goals you choose here will influence the tactics you choose to use as you create your ads and optimize them.

Very many marketers run Facebook ads to promote their Facebook social media marketing efforts by promoting a page, group, or other Facebook feature. There’s nothing wrong with doing that and setting a goal related to social media, like number of new fans or friends but equally, there’s nothing wrong with setting more traditional campaign goals (direct sales and traffic to your website) for your Facebook advertising efforts.

Whatever the choice you make here, make sure you keep the campaigns separate from one another. Promoting your Facebook social media will mean that different ad texts, URLs, calls to action and probably different amounts of spending will be needed than a more traditional online marketing campaign might require for driving traffic direct to your website. You shouldn’t mix and match them if you decide to market via Facebook ads for both.

7.7.2 2) Build your Segments and Create your Targets

The best possible practices in Facebook advertising suggest that you’ll probably want to begin by considering the segments (your target audiences) that you’ll be targeting with your ads so you can create customized ads a little later on with those segments in mind. You can apply many different filters to best target whatever audience you are trying to reach. Facebook defaults to people who located in your country and are over the age of 18 but you can change this as you need.

Facebook neatly organizes it’s targeting into the following sections:

- **Location**
- **Demographics**
- **Likes and Interests**
- **Connections on Facebook**
- **Education & Work**

7.7.3 Location

Facebook uses its users’ IP addresses and profile information to determine their location on Earth and because of this, you can target by country, state/ province, city, or city radius. Currently Facebook allows you to target up to 25 countries. A feature called “*City radius targeting*”, which is available in the United Kingdom, United States and Canada, allows you to expand a city target to within 10-25- or 50- miles of a given city.



7.7.4 Demographics

You MUST understand the demographics of your target audience; it's absolutely crucial for the success of your ad campaign. For some of you search marketers out there, who are used to optimizing ads in response to searcher queries, this can be a new and slightly tricky challenge. When you're advertising on Facebook, you need to know your audience demographics at the outset — where they live, what they like, who they're dating, who their friends are.

Facebook offers several demographic targeting features, a number of basic features and a number of advanced ones:

- **Age:** You can target people who are within a particular age range (say 18 – 45) or choose to target a specific age if you only wanted to reach people who are 21.
- **Birthday:** If you choose birthday targeting, your ad will be delivered to users in your target audience on their birthday.
- **Relationship status**
- **Preferred language:** Facebook has been translated into 70 languages. If you are targeting by country and want to target that country's primary language, you don't need to enter a language. However, if you want to target a language that is different from the country's official language (for example, French speakers in Canada), you'll need to specifically select that language.

7.7.5 Likes & Interests

Interest-based targeting is where Facebook ads most resemble search. With this type of targeting, you're displaying the ad to people who have expressed interest in something particular. These interests, or keywords, become a part of people's profiles in a couple of different ways – when they type in something when creating their profile, or when they later “like” something along the way that fits into a particular category.

For example, if a user “likes” the musical group “Porcupine Tree” then that is stored in his profile and ads can be targeted to him by that band, and any other advertiser that suspect he might like them, too. Interests cover favorite movies, books, TV shows, music, extracurricular activities, hobbies and other interests. They also include religion, political views and job titles.

For search marketers, it may require a new way of looking at keywords, as it's important to think in a broad sense when it comes to defining ‘likes and interests.’

It pays to be very aggressive at mining additional sources of words and phrases. Good resources for research include a thesaurus, Wikipedia, Visuwords, WordStream, and the OneLook Reverse Dictionary.

Facebook's own Suggest tool can also be a rich source of keywords, but you need to think carefully about the segments being suggested.

For example, imagine you're selling Minnesota Vikings' tickets. Start with people who like the Vikings or like specific players, or like football. Using the Suggestion tool, you start with the root interest – football – and uncover related phrases that people have chosen to put on their profiles.



Beware, though; interests may not be what they seem.

In this case, you see the word Football has a double meaning. In the U.S., it means the NFL, and what Americans call Football. Everywhere else in the world, it means what we call soccer. As soccer fans are not likely to be buyers of Vikings tickets, you'll want to make sure you don't inadvertently include those interests. Another example: to some people "*Breakfast of Champions*" might be associated with the Wheaties brand, while others think of the Kurt Vonnegut book of the same name.

To surface other relevant keywords for football, think creatively. American football is associated with Sundays (and Monday nights), so you could try typing in "*football sun*" and see what comes up.

When you're creating these interest segments, avoid grouping together interests that are related, but dissimilar. For example, if you have an alternative energy brand or client, you might be thinking about creating a segment that includes folks who like "*wind energy*", "*solar energy*", and "*green energy*."

Instead, create separate segments for each of these interests, so you can create ads targeted to each of these groups that include language likely to trigger their curiosity.

7.7.6 "Friend of a Friend" Targeting

Facebook's real "*special sauce*" is the ability to target people based on their relationships with the brand and with each other. You can choose to target "*friends*" of your brand's Facebook Page with a special offer – since you already have a relationship with these people, your ad should acknowledge that. These are your friends, after all, and they've already become brand advocates by "*liking*" your Page.

More interestingly, you can target their friends with ads. This approach is especially useful if your campaign objective is to get more friends of your brand's Page on Facebook. As the campaign goes on, and folks seeing your ad become friends with your Page, the potential audience for your ad grows. New people are continually exposed to your ad, combating ad fatigue.

A recent study by Webtrends found that having a friend who "*liked*" the ad increased ad performance. This type of network targeting increased click-throughs across the board, but the impact was especially significant among those who attended college.

Connections targeting allows you to include or exclude friends of Pages, Groups, Events or Applications. Depending on the offer and goals of your campaign, you can choose to include/exclude your fans, your fans friends, or users who are connected/not connected to your page, group, event or application.

7.7.7 Education & Work:

Education levels seem to make a difference as well. Those who attended college are twice as likely to click if a friend "*liked*" the brand, suggesting that social influence is stronger among college attendees than among those who didn't attend.

Education levels include "*College Graduate*", "*In College*" and "*In High School*". For college selections, filters also exist for specific college names, college majors and the dates attended.



7.7.8 3) Creation of your Ads

Ads on Facebook consist of as many as four different elements. Three of these are common to all:

- **25 character title**
- **110×80 pixel image** (landscape orientation)
- **135 characters of body text**

The fourth element depends on whether your ad is pointing to a Facebook Page, or whether it leads instead to an external web site. In the first case, you'll get a "like" button, in the latter, you'll get a destination URL. (Be sure to test any tracking URLs to ensure they work.)

Following are best practices for ads so that they don't get disapproved by Facebook. Disapproval on Facebook is especially onerous because, once an ad has been rejected, you can't edit it to make it acceptable – you have to start all over.

- **No symbols**
- **Full headline**
- **Full sentence in body**
- **No excessive punctuation** (exclamation points etc.)
- **No excessive capitalization** (not every word!)
- **Real URL**

Let's look at each element of the ad in turn.

7.7.9 Title

The title, or headline, strategy will depend heavily on the campaign objective and targeting. If the ad is going to people who "like" your brand's Page, it's probably a good idea to use your brand name in the title. If you're targeting based on a segment, use your title to grab the attention of the segment by mentioning their interest; you might use something like, "The Next Wind Energy," to promote a product in the alternative energy world.

In another example just mentioning "family" in the headline performed much better with moms than mentioning it in the description. The headline "Family Train Tour" produced a click-through rate of 0.054% and a CPC of \$0.64, compared to 0.026% CTR and \$1.01 CPC for the headline without the word 'family.'

7.7.10 Graphic Image

Image is of paramount importance in Facebook advertising. Affiliate marketing firm Shoemoney did an analysis of the relative importance of image versus other elements of Facebook advertising, and found that having an image of some kind made a 70% difference in click-through rate, while title made a 10% difference and description came in at 20%



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What's the most compelling type of image to use? While some may believe that a picture of a woman showing some cleavage is the most compelling image (no matter what the offer) others disagree. Here are some tips for optimizing ad images:

- **Make your image consistent with your landing page imagery**, so leads are qualified, and so that those who click-through find something familiar on the other side.
- Since images are fairly small, **use a close-up image that people will recognize**.
- **Crank up the saturation and contrast or alter colours to draw attention**. You could use a free tool like IrfanView)

Whatever your approach, be sure you assemble plenty of images to begin with, because you'll need them for testing and to keep ad creative fresh. Some common tests for images are brand vs. product, brand vs. people, and people vs. product.

7.7.11 Body Text (Description)

Put segment-targeted language high in the body text, include a call to action and create a sense of urgency. If you're trying to reach a younger demographic, don't be afraid to be fun, goofy and provocative.

You might even consider a technique called the WTF? Factor. This involves being a bit mysterious with your description and provoking click-through through vagueness.

Here's an example:

Because we are brilliant!
sampleurl.org

**Dear Santa, now I really
want to ask you
something: do you drink a
lot during Christmas? No
because in 40 years you
got it right once.**

The ad is just wacky enough to encourage you to click further to find out what it's about.

Make sure, though, that your landing page from such an ad is solid, and clearly conveys what the user is expected to do. Also be sure that the WTF? factor is appropriate for the audience you wish to target.

7.7.12 4) Workflow and Organization

Facebook's interface has some challenges when it comes to ease of use. One way to make things easier is to think of Facebook's "campaigns" as "ad groups." Then, name campaign in such a way to make it easy for you to find them later. The default organization method for ads is alphabetical, so, to keep promotions together, use an abbreviation of the promotion name as at the start of the campaign name,



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then use a hyphen and list the segment you're targeting with that particular campaign. Use another hyphen and include more information, as needed.

Another workflow tip is to create a "placeholder" ad for each campaign with the appropriate targeting for that campaign. Make sure it meets Facebook guidelines so it doesn't get disapproved, but bid only a \$1 daily budget and \$0.01 so that it doesn't run by mistake. With those parameters, it shouldn't. Don't rely on Facebook's suggested ad, as that usually gets disapproved.

The purpose of this placeholder ad is that it gives you a generic starting point when you're creating new ads for that segment. This is especially important, because, given the ad fatigue problem on Facebook, you'll likely be creating new ads throughout the run of the promotion.

7.7.4.13 Where to Send the Ad? Landing Pages

Audiences on Facebook tend to respond most favorably to something that keeps them within the Facebook experience, so using your brand's or product's Facebook Page as a landing page is a good idea. You'll need to for your account be an admin on the Page for this to be possible though, so be sure to get that squared away before you begin setting up your campaign.

When you use your Page as a landing page, and you're targeting new people – those that have not already connected with your Page – you can send them directly to a specially set-up landing tab on the Page.

This allows you to highlight special offers to that group. If you're targeting your existing friends, they will be delivered to the Wall by default.

The other advantage of using a Page on Facebook as a landing page is that your ad then displays a "like" button, and each user will see which of his or her friends "liked" that particular Page. This is a very powerful social signal.

If you choose to send traffic from the ad to your own web site, you'll have a URL displayed as part of the ad. Make sure that the URL you send traffic to ties directly to the ad copy, and allows users to take action immediately.

7.7.14 5) Optimize, Refresh, Test, Optimize, Test, Refresh, Repeat

Optimization and continued refreshing of your ads is so important on Facebook. Facebook doesn't enable frequency capping, so people can see your ad over and over again.

Try and identify ads that are winners across segments — take a look at all of them, sort by Click-Through rate, and you'll find those ads that are working and performing the best. Then, look for a specific winning combination — did one image consistently outperform, regardless of headline or copy? Did one headline outperform all others regardless of the image used? You'll likely need to test various combinations to find the winners.



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And, beware of ad fatigue on Facebook. Webtrends research found that Facebook ad burnout comes quickly — after three to five days — because, unlike search ads, they are targeted to individual people who can tire easily of seeing them over and over. Once your click-through starts to drop, Facebook considers your ad of lesser quality, and you'll have to pay more and more to get it to display.

It's better to drop the ad and create a new one after you drop below 0.01% click-through, if not before. If something is successful initially but begins to drop, take the ad out of rotation, and then consider bringing it back in after a couple of weeks pass.

If you begin seeing fatigue in the segments you're targeting in a longer campaign, you might try rotating in new interest-targeted segments. One approach would be to find movies, books, and TV shows that map well to your product's theme. For example, environmentally-themed products might perform well with people who say they like Rachel Carson's *"Silent Spring"*, or authors like Henry David Thoreau. Healthy environmentally-conscious food would do well with people who count *"Food Inc."* and *"Super-Size Me"* among their favorite movies.

Friend-of-a-Friend targeting can also be a useful technique to combat ad fatigue, as mentioned above. If you target the friends of people who are connected with your Facebook Page, your ad can potentially be continually exposed to new people. As someone *"likes"* your Page, they no longer are exposed to your ad, but their friends — potentially a whole new group of people — begin receiving impressions.

To avoid ad fatigue, you need to be nimble. Routinely change out the creative — headline, image, body copy — to keep the ad from going stale. If you can continue bringing new elements into the ad campaign — either in the creative or the targeting, you'll be able to beat ad fatigue.

7.7.15 How to Test your Techniques

When testing the headline of your ads, try testing brand mentions versus copy that speaks to the segment without including a specific brand. You could try using a question as the headline or even use a direct call to action as a headline. Until you test several different approaches against each other you'll never really know how the audience is going to respond to each!

In one campaign of note, the headline *"Martha Stewart Cookies"* outperformed *"Holiday Cookie Recipes"* with nearly double the clickthrough rate (0.119% vs. 0.066%) and almost half the CPC (\$0.29 vs. \$0.42.)

When testing the headline, try testing brand mentions in your ads versus text that speaks to your audience without including any specific brand at all. Headlines closely tailored to the segment were the winners. *"Show off Your Pup"* clearly beat out *"Fun Pet Project by Martha."*

In body copy, if you have a brand that has some sort of stigma — like *"SecondLife"* is considered by many to be for losers — trying a non-branded approach may be best.

In optimizing images, try branded versus non-branded images. Experiment with images that map closely to the interest segments — pictures of cupcakes, for example, to people who have identified themselves as bakers or cupcake fans. Try faces, or pictures of products.



7.7.16 Studying your Reports for Additional Ideas

Always keep an eye on the reports you get from Facebook for vital clues and ideas that will help keep your ads fresh, relevant and driving responses.

- For example: **In each campaign, identify winners that have potential to succeed in other segments**, and target them across additional campaigns.
- For those of your ads that drive traffic to your website, **use your own analytics to determine what time of day you see the most Click-Throughs** and then set new ads to start and end accordingly to take advantage of the best times.
- **Check out the Responder Profile report to get a few new ideas on which segments to target.** For example, perhaps you'll discover a book, a TV show or a movie that seems to be a shared interest among people who respond to your ad.
- **Within each campaign or segment, find the winners and look closely at what worked best.** Then try to copy that approach with all your new ads.

7.7.17 Okay What's Next?

Like almost any marketing effort, the answer to the question "*Which approach should I take?*" is "*it depends.*" It depends on your brand, on your product and on your goals for your campaign. Testing and optimization are your keys to success every single time.

Congratulations on being ready to take your Facebook marketing campaigns to the next level. We hope that with the ideas, techniques and tips in this eBook you'll be well able to take advantage of the tremendous opportunities available to you from the vast Facebook audience!

Good luck!!!

7.8 HOW TO USE LINKEDIN

7.8.1 Get Linked In!

More and more people are using social networks to promote their online businesses every single day, to build relationships, meet new contacts and to market themselves and their enterprises. If you're a beginner, getting started and diving into the virtual meet-and-greet in an arena the size of the Internet can be a daunting thing to do; many ask the question "*Where do I begin?!?*" For first-time users of social networking, a fantastic answer is [LinkedIn](#).

7.8.2 What Is LinkedIn?

LinkedIn is a social network developed specifically for business and the network separates your professional life from your private life. Joining a network like LinkedIn is simple (that is, it is easy signing-up with LinkedIn), but turning it into a powerful networking tool takes a little bit of extra effort and nous. This section will show how to set up your LinkedIn profile, build a network and put it all to work (saving you a little social-networking stress).



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Let's Get Started! The first thing to do is to register for a free account on LinkedIn:

1. Visit [LinkedIn.com](https://www.linkedin.com) and click "Join Now"
2. Register both your personal and business email addresses (you might consider creating a separate email account that you can use for social networking.)
3. Create yourself a public profile and choose "Full View" so you can be sure everyone out there can find you
4. MAKE SURE to create yourself a custom URL for search engines (e.g., [linkedin.com/vodahost](https://www.linkedin.com/vodahost))

Do your best to **fill out your profile as completely as possible**; according to LinkedIn, users with complete profiles are nearly 40 times more likely to find opportunities through the site. As you work, LinkedIn has a neat tool that informs you how complete your profile is and gives suggestions on what else you can do.

Make sure you always make it clear what you've done in your career —and what you want and intend to do in the future!

7.8.3 LinkedIn Profile Tips

- Use the profile to **brand** yourself and keep that branding constant through your LinkedIn profile.
- Add **ALL** of your employers, education, memberships, and interests -not just your current ones! This will make it easier to connect with former colleagues, classmates, coworkers.
- Make sure your profile sounds **human** and **interesting** (you may get discovered!).
- Use **colorful** and **exciting adjectives**, an **active voice**, and a variety of verbs.
- Use **smart keywords** which are relevant to your experience and your skills.
- Always **write in the first person**.
- Make sure that you link to your blog, personal, company or organization site so that your contacts can further research your business and to get a few backlinks for the SEO of your web property.

7.8.4 Defining Yourself on LinkedIn

When you have finished filling out your LinkedIn profile, you will find that directly underneath your name is a short descriptive headline. The words here determine how people find and actually **define** you.

For example, if you are seeking to connect mainly with others in your field and industry then a simple, explanatory headline like "*Senior Project Manager at Airbus*" is best. If you are looking to branch out into other areas, you might pick something like: "*Leader of High-Performing Aeronautical Engineering Projects*". This is a great headline that you might use to let others know of the value you would bring to an organization.

Regardless of how you phrase your headline, make sure to **use keywords** that will help make sure that the right people find you.



7.8.5 Checklist: Controlling Your Professional Brand on LinkedIn

Your LinkedIn profile can be found through millions of searches engines as well as on LinkedIn. You're in control over what others see on your profile, so you must use your profile to display your skills and talents so the right opportunities and people find you.

Make Sure You Include:

- A solid headline with keywords relevant to your industry
- A picture
- How you prefer to be contacted
- What you want to be contacted about. At the bottom of your profile, you can select interests like reference requests, consulting offers, or career opportunities.

Make Sure You **DO NOT** Include:

- Any contact information you're not comfortable having your contacts see. Your contact information will be visible only to those you are connected to.
- Anything that even begins to stray from the truth. Unlike even a resume, your profile will be seen by a lot of eyes. Did you really lead that project, or did you lead it along with several others?
- Anything you wouldn't want fellow colleagues (current, former, or future) to know. LinkedIn is for professional relationships.

7.8.6 Networking and Reconnecting on LinkedIn

With more than 30 million members, LinkedIn is the world's largest professional network. In addition to reconnecting with past colleagues, business partners and classmates, you can tap into the knowledge, experience, and connections of the LinkedIn network that you create.

On Building Your Network

Networking is only as effective as the network you have. If you think about it, it is a universal truth that: ***"the larger your net, the more fish you can catch!"***

You should make sure that while you send connection requests only to people you know directly, you should make all your connections accessible to others and always accept connection requests from people you know. You can easily find new connections by searching for their names or employer names in the search box.

LinkedIn gives you an opportunity to search their database for contacts you already know through Outlook, GMail and AOL and you should definitely use this feature (not to worry, it provides a feature which allows you to filter who you want to actually add)

You can get even more Connections using the *"Find Classmates"* feature and you can request introductions to people who are connected to your connections (a little bit like adding a friend of a friend on Facebook)



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7.8.7 Participating in the LinkedIn Community

You are always increasing the visibility of your LinkedIn profile as you participate and interact with your creations. You should ask and answer business-oriented questions within your network, for example; This builds credibility for yourself and increases your visibility.

Make recommendations for your connections. Share information you have with them and even write thoughtful recommendations for people you know very well. Request recommendations from previous managers, clients, or colleagues. Join an official LinkedIn group (e.g., alumni association, company) or start a new Group for an organization where you're a leader.

7.8.8 Sharing Your Knowledge and Expertise on LinkedIn

LinkedIn is an incredible place to share and exchange business information online; you ask a question and get answers from your network and experts worldwide. You can also build your professional credibility by showcasing your knowledge, expertise, and interests by answering the questions posed by other members.

7.8.9 LinkedIn is about Opportunities

Whether it's for a consulting gig or job offer, having a presence on LinkedIn means that those who are looking for someone with your experience, knowledge and skills will be able to find you. Likewise, when you're looking for that special hard-to-find talent, LinkedIn will help you locate and contact them.

7.8.10 LinkedIn Groups

“Connect, Communicate, and Collaborate”

LinkedIn Groups gives you an opportunity to find and join communities of professionals based on common interests you may have, common experience, affiliation and goals. Groups help you stay in touch with organizations, schools, and companies as well as network with professionals with similar interests.

Groups Directory

The Groups Directory allows you to easily find the right groups to join; just click on the “*Category*” drop-down menu to sort the groups by their various types. Once you have found a group you are interested in joining, click on the “Join Group” link to request to join the group. You can share the love too; clicking the “*Share*” button lets you invite your connections to join the group as well.

My Groups

Once you have joined a group, it will appear on your left side navigation bar under “*Groups*”. To view all of the groups you have joined just click on the Groups link to view them all. Here you get a quick overview of all of your groups and allows you to access the homepages for each of your groups. Your



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Group homepage gives you an overview of the activity in your group and allows you to take part in a private discussion.

To get more information about any particular group, click on the “*Group Profile*” link to view information about the group: owner, managers, website, and other information.

Group Discussions

LinkedIn Groups are now the best place to communicate with your group. Click on the “*Discussions*” tab on your Group to get started and view recent discussions. This is a great way to keep in touch with organizations you are a part of:

- corporate and college alumni groups
- non-profit organizations
- trade groups
- Conference
- industry-specific groups

You can discuss issues that are of interest to the entire group. On the “*Discussions*” tab, you can also use the navigation links on the right side to sort discussions by most recent, popular topics, and those that you’ve participated in.

Group Members

Your group’s Members page allows you to view all the members in your group. To get started, click on the “*Members*” tab in your group and enter in your search terms in the “*Search Group*” box. You can search by name, company, and other keywords such as specific areas of expertise. This is a great way to find experts and utilize talent from within your network.

Group Settings

The “*Settings*” tab allows you change your contact and privacy settings for each Group. You can:

- Elect to display the group logo on your profile
- Change your privacy settings for network updates
- Decide how you want group members to be able to communicate with you

Another important feature is the “*Digest Email*” option which allows you to receive updates by e-mail from your group. If you would like to change the order that your groups are displayed in, click on the “*User Groups*” link on the left-side navigation and scroll down to the “*Change display order link*”.

Creating a LinkedIn Group

Creating a Group is an easy way to bring professionals together online. Click on “*User Groups*” on the left navigation bar on the home page then select the “*Create a Group*” tab. You can:



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- Upload a logo
- Choose a unique name.
- Enter a description, summary, and website link.

If you want others to be able to find your group when they search, check the “*Display this group in the Groups Directory*” box.

7.8.11 Never Stop Managing Your LinkedIn network

- You’ll need to continually update and refine your profile and your network. The best way to do this is to add new contacts.
- Check your profile about once a month to make sure your job description is still accurate.
- Reach out to contacts even when you don’t have a business concern.

A big mistake in social networking is that people reach out only when they have an issue (e.g. when they’ve lost their job or need someone or something out of the blue). Always keep in touch with your network and groups and there should never be any drama.

7.8.12 5 Things To NEVER Do On LinkedIn

1. **Leave negative feedback.** Negative feedback hangs around for a very long time, so even if you have a change of heart, it can be very difficult to retract it.
2. **Lie.** Give a truthful account of where you’ve worked and what you’ve done. Be real. Be honest.
3. **Spam.** It’s not a push marketing strategy. Avoid drowning others in your promotional material.
4. **Gossip.** Don’t send forth news that may not be yours to share.
5. **Oversell yourself.** Stay away from arrogance or over-hyping what you do.



Secret 8:

Your Auto-Responder

8.1 EMAIL MARKETING OVERVIEW

We are regularly asked by many people how we are able to send out the informative e-mails that we do each week, to so many readers around the globe. It is certainly no small task; the server resources are tremendous. Just consider that [VodaHost's](#) own mailing list is over 1,500,000 strong... that's a lot of e-mails! By popular demand, then, we're going to share that secret with you fine folk.

An auto-responder is an email marketing program that allows you to automatically send emails to your list, right after they signed up to your mailing list, or after they downloaded a product of yours for example. Emailing your list on a regular basis is far more rewarding than sending out a few one-off promotional emails and the best way to do that is using an auto-responder. When setting up your auto-responder, always remember that value is a key to strong relationships.

You're setting up an online presence to sell your products or other people's products and you want to build a list of subscribers so that you can email them about special offers, new products, etc. You must have heard the saying: "The money is in the list!" This is true but building a large, high converting list isn't easy. You should first focus on conversion rather than size. Some large-sized lists just don't make any money, while others make thousands of dollars with small-sized lists.

Another interesting saying is: "The money is in the RELATIONSHIP with the list!" To have a relationship with your list, you can for example write an email series that you send out to every subscriber, on auto-pilot.

There are several email marketing programs that allow you to set up auto-responders and more generally to manage all your email marketing campaigns. This kind of program is a MUST-HAVE if you're serious about making money online.

[AWeber](#) (highly recommended) is one of the most popular auto-responders. This email marketing program is used by a lot of top industry players and this is no surprise when you see the list of features. You can send email newsletters, publish sign up forms to your site, create auto-responders, manage your email campaigns, email templates, etc. AWeber offers top-notch email deliverability and great customer support. You can also send out blog newsletters, monitor your email analytics and even integrate a shopping cart.

After you sign up to one of these auto-responders, you will need to create a subscription form, set one or several auto-responder emails and prepare your email marketing campaign. One of the essential steps to a truly successful e-mail marketing campaign is creating your very own mailing list.



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Every e-mail marketer knows that the key to online marketing is building a well-targeted, relevant and responsive opt-in mailing list. This is because they know that success comes from building relationships with a very large subscriber base. The relationship you build here is important and that's why I am going to tell you the difference between the Opt-In and Opt-Out mailing lists and how to create your very own mailing list using [AWeber](#).

Building a strong, relevant mailing list can take hard work and effort but the rewards are worth it. Ask any successful marketer to name his most valuable business asset and he will, more than likely say "*My Opt-in Mailing List!*"

If you want to succeed in emailing, you should always create your own list with valid and up-to-date email addresses on it. How? Keep on reading...

8.1.1 The Opt-In List

The Opt-In mailing list is perhaps this is the most straightforward one of all mailing lists. An opt-in list is one with which users must take some action to subscribe and typically, this involves filling out a Web-based sign-up form. Surely, a list consisting of people who actively add themselves to it (as opposed to a list of people who passively allow themselves to be added) is more responsive and produces more results and much fewer complaints.

The problem with an opt-in list is that third party persons can (and sometimes do) add others to lists. For that reason, there are different types of Opt-In list:

The Confirmed Opt-In: Confirmed opt-in lists confirm your subscription by e-mail as soon as your name has been added to the list. They allow you to unsubscribe immediately by replying or clicking on a link within the email, for example like this one:

You received this email because you or someone else added your email address to our mailing list. If you would prefer not to receive this newsletter in the future, please, reply with the word Remove in the Subject line, or click on the link below:

`remove@domain.com?Subject=remove`

In this case, even if someone signs you up for a bunch of newsletters you don't want, you're alerted immediately and can take the appropriate measures...

The Double Opt-In: A double opt-in list means not only must the user take an action to add himself to a list but he then receives a confirmation of his subscription. He must reply to be added to the list.

This message is to verify that you wish to have your email address `remove@domain.com` added to the MostExcellent newsletter.



You MUST reply to this message to have your email address added to our list. This is to ensure that someone doesn't add your address to our list without your prior knowledge or consent. Unless you respond to this email, your address is not added to our mailing list!

This is done to ensure that the customer did not subscribe by mistake or somebody else did not subscribe him to receive your regular email. Even if a third part person attempts to add somebody without his permission, that confirmation, that second step requiring action, means if the customer does nothing he won't be added to the list. Requiring two active and intentioned steps makes for the cleanest list possible. Raising the bar and requiring two actions means the highest response rates and the lowest complaint rates.

So ... let's do it!

8.2 HOW TO CREATE A DOUBLE OPT-IN MAILING LIST USING AWEBER

1. Visit: [AWeber](#) :: It is an incredibly useful and highly recommend service for creating and managing mailing lists and sending out promotional e-mails.
2. Create yourself an AWeber account. - You can try out AWeber for just 1\$ for the first month.
3. Once you have an active AWeber account, login to your AWeber dashboard and click on 'create and manage lists' and then click on 'Create new list'.
4. Enter list name, from name, From Email address, Contact address. You can take care of the branding of your email too. You can specify your company logo, your website URL and your signature. Once done, click on save settings.
5. Next, customize your double opt-in message: You can customize the message and give more personal touch to confirmation email. Remember this is most important setting, as most of Email subscribers never confirm their subscription. So you have to make this Email appealing so that user will confirm their subscription right away. When you're done, click on Preview and click on 'save settings.'
6. Finally, click on Web Form at the top to create the form through which your mailing list subject will sign up through and add the html code it provides you into your website wherever you would like the sign-up form to appear.

It's really that simple and I guarantee you it is massively successful.



8.3 AVOID THE OPT-OUT LIST!

You should only use opt-in mailing lists; you should always avoid using an opt-out list, even if it may be tempting to begin with or seem easier.

An opt-out list is one to which email addresses are added completely without the user's knowledge or permission. At best there was a prior relationship between the sender and the recipient. At worst it is a pure spam. For the love of God, DO NOT SPAM!

Obviously an opt-out list has the lowest response rate and the highest complaint rate. If you're going down this path, you'll have to deal with it.

8.3.1 The Confirmed Opt-Out: A confirmed opt-out list is one that sends a confirmation to intended recipients when their email addresses are added to the list. This confirmation usually lets the recipient know that his email address was added to the list and allows him to unsubscribe by replying to the email or clicking a link within the body of the message.

A confirmed opt-out list can be bad for business also if the user thinks the confirmation letter is spam and does not bother to reply to this message.

8.4 YOUR EMAIL MARKETING CHECKLIST

When you're designing emails as part of your email marketing campaign it's important that you get it right first time. The potential clients you are writing to are from many different backgrounds, different cultures, they are of different ages, do different jobs etc., yet the marketing emails that you write *must* engage absolutely everybody. Of course, realistically, it is impossible to do this... but even then getting as close as possible and attempting to entice everybody with your offer should be your ultimate goal.

The most important thing in improving the impact of your marketing emails is to know when to make changes to your emails as well as understanding what changes to make. You may think what you have written is masterful and one of the best pieces of literature ever composed but you have to understand that the writing of successful marketing emails sits somewhere between art and science, so while you may have some of the art down, the actual science may be escaping you. The truth is that a little extra thought about the contents of your marketing emails can and will increase your sales online in the long run.

It is for this reason, we have created a checklist for you to use when writing your marketing emails, to check some of the scientific ways to increase some of your sales. Use the guide below as you write your marketing emails, constantly asking yourself: *"Why would my subscribers be interested in reading this?"*. Only when your email answers positively to all the below is it ready to be sent to the inbox of your subscribers.

Follow the guide below and you will find that your emails are more successful and attract more sales.



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8.4.1 What is the ultimate goal of your marketing email? Which of the below things am I trying to achieve with this email? Am I achieving them?

- Strengthen my relationships with my existing subscribers?
- Sell a product or service?
- Collect new subscribers by giving my readers content they'll want to share?
- Offer my readers new and/or exclusive information?
- Drive traffic to my website?

Your marketing emails must have a point, a reason for being and they must have definite goals. If they have no real goal at all then they should not be sent out at all. Ideally, your marketing email should aim to do all of the above but then again even just doing one or two of the above will increase the exposure of your enterprise and can be considered successful marketing of your business.

8.4.2 What action do I want my readers to take? Have I offered them too many choices? Have I given them a reason to act this very second?

You must write a marketing email that gets its readers to do what you want. I bet you know exactly what you DON'T want ... You don't want a reader to take one look at your marketing email and delete it without pause.

Okay then, so you must also know what you DO want to happen. Most likely you want your readers to click a link ... Tell them to do it then and really do not make your marketing e-mail any more difficult or complex than that. If you are sending out information regarding a promotion that you are offering, you can put an end-date on the promotion ... that will get you readers acting now!

Also, your marketing email should not offer too many choices; ideally it should be about one subject and at the end, suggests to your readers that they should do one thing alone. Too much choice is highly detrimental and actually confuses your readers; a confused reader will most likely not buy anything from you.

8.4.3 Have I been sure to include my brand or company name in the "From" field of the marketing email or the Subject line?

Your marketing emails are not only marketing your website and your products & services ... they are also marketing your brand and company, to increase awareness of it. You will not only be interested in selling your particular product or service, you will also be interested in people remembering the name of your company. That way, any customers who do not have access to the email that you have sent them may be able to find your website from memory. They may also be able to tell their friends about it.

Adding your company or brand name to the "from" or subject line is essential. This also makes it easier for the user to create a message filter to send your e-mail to a special place in their emails so that they can keep track of your messages.



8.4.4 Is my subject line concise, compelling and straightforward?

It has to be, because people attention spans are not that long and easily distracted. Certain studies show that people give around 51 seconds of their attention to emails, so the subject line must grab them, reel them in and convince them to read the rest of it. Make it exciting and enticing but do not bend the truth of what you are offering or make it too fantastical.

8.4.5 Have I asked my subscribers to whitelist me to make sure they get my e-mails?

Making sure that your users whitelist you is a very good idea. Your prospective clients may have email filtering in place which automatically deletes mail from unknown individuals; they may not even know that it is in place if someone else set it up for them. You should try to make the aware that they should whitelist you. If your subscribers enjoy and like the content you are driving them too then they should be happy to do this for you.

8.4.6 Does my first paragraph compel my readers to read the second? And the next?

Keeping people reading is so very important. Even though the studies tell us that the average person doesn't spend more than about 51 seconds looking at a marketing email you can increase this by making sure that your text is compelling or exciting to the reader. With great text you can keep your readers reading for longer; good writing is part skill and part talent. If you know someone with a knack for writing good copy then you should get them to write your marketing material. Just remember that marketing email writing should never be style over substance and to check their writing against this checklist!

8.4.7 Is my most important information "*above the fold*" in case readers don't scroll down?

Readers may not want to devote the effort to scrolling. That's the truth and you can't really expect it of them ... They are doing you a service already by letting you into their email inbox and that is really very kind of them. There is a simple work-around to this though. Put your most important information up at the top of your e-mail so that it is read straight away. Then you needn't ask any more favors.

8.4.8 Is everything linked that should be linked? Product names, images? Do all of the links work?

In your marketing email on the web, links are how you get people to go wherever you want. A link to your website, blog or a product page on your website is the main reason that you are promoting your website in this way. If you do not take the time to check that each and every link on your email and website work, then you may not discover a mistake that you have made and a link won't work. Given that you are now advertising your company and brand, a mistake like this could mean that your readers may find that they can't click on the link that you want them to. This will appear massively un-professional and could be disastrous to your marketing efforts.



8.4.9 If my message includes images, do I use the standard 60% to 40% text-to-image ratio or the “F” viewing pattern? Does it make sense to do otherwise?

It is text that is compelling and not really images. The emails you send out must have substance and this substance comes from the text you write and not from the images you add with HTML. Studies have shown that people read things in strange ways too. First, they pay a lot more attention to the top of the text than further down and they tend to scan the image in an F-shape...

If you can tweak your email so that important text is where you might theorize a reader would look first you will be giving yourself an advantage.

8.4.10 Have I been wise with my use of HTML when writing my marketing emails?

Generally the most efficient, simple and straightforward way to write your marketing emails is in plain text but you may also wish to use HTML formatting in your marketing emails. Using HTML allows you to provide nice, pretty formatting to your message... Using HTML gives you several more things to consider, however:

- Have I included a plain text version for subscribers reading on a mobile device or with images turned off?
- How does the HTML version look with images off?
- Have I included an ALT image tag on each graphic?
- When I choose to display the images, do they load correctly and quickly?
- Does the message render properly in Gmail, Outlook, Yahoo, iPhone, Hotmail and Apple Mail?

If you can do some research to see how your marketing e-mail appears in the mail clients of your readers then it is a very good idea to do so. Writing HTML emails do mean formatting headaches; you should stick to plain text if you can.

8.4.11 Do personalization fields fill in correctly?

You certainly don't want your messages being address to “Dear `{!first-name}`” (or something like this); your readers will find this very impersonal. You should make sure that all the personalization fields in your email fill out correctly and you can (and should) check this by sending a test email to yourself.

8.4.12 What is this message's spam score? Is there anything I should change to lower it?

Our recommended auto-responder, [AWeber](#), provides a utility called SpamAssassin which assigns a spam score (0-10) to your e-mail message before you send it out. It will show you if your e-mail is safe to send (any score up to 5 is OK), how it decided what to score your email and what you can do to improve your message so that it does not end up, unread, in Spam folders around the globe. If you are using AWeber you should always check the spam score of your message before you send it out.



8.4.13 When is the best time to send this out? Are any days of the week or times of the day particularly appropriate for the content here?

Depending on the subject of your email and your intended readers, you must make sure that your email is reaching them at the right time. You wouldn't want to send a business email to a business man on a Sunday morning, for example and you possibly wouldn't send out an email about recreational activities at 9 am on a Monday morning when the majority of people are just getting back to work after the weekend. You must find the time of day that is right for your marketing email and stick to it... There will always be those of your potential clients who do not follow the standard week ... but the majority will, depending on your niche of course.

You may also want to consider the time zones around the world and find a time that best suits all of them allowing a few hours either way with. For example, if your plan to have your potential clients read their emails in the morning, pick a time to send the message so that even the latest time zone receives the message at, say 7am. Some people will get their emails in the middle of the night but statistics suggest that they will be asleep and will check their email in the morning. Also, you are not catering for ever time zone around the world but the ones that, in general, speak the same language as you as a rule, not an exception.

8.4.14 Have I proofread the email for spelling and grammar mistakes?

This is perhaps the most basic mistake anyone can make. If you send out a marketing email that contains spelling mistakes or other typographic errors then you can be pretty sure that it will not be taken seriously. It's rare that people part with their money to finance operations that have not even the consideration for their customers to spell properly. Bad grammar and bad spelling is the biggest mistake you can make and it will hurt you. If you are at all unsure, it helps to get someone to read over it for you. They will quickly point out any mistakes that you may have made.

8.4.15 Is everything in order?

If it is, congratulations!; your marketing email is ready to send. If you're not perfectly happy or if your email does not hit all the marks that it should, then it is time to make some changes. The extra time you spend on this is worth it if your marketing email is more professional in nature and attracts more customers.

Be sure to check your emails against this list in the future, maybe for your next few emails. In time and with a little further practice, you'll find that you are making these changes on your own, automatically.



Postscript

Thanks for reading “*The Secrets to Promoting Your Website Online*”! Hopefully you found it helpful and have managed to learn from it but also have put what you have learned here into practice. Remember that you won’t earn any money without taking action! If you’re serious about making money in this industry, you MUST put your knowledge into practice. By now you should have:

1. A good domain name that you registered with [VodaHost](#) ;
2. Taken up a [VodaHost](#) web hosting account;
3. Set up your blog or website ([BlueVoda](#) recommended)
4. Added quality content;
5. Done some keyword research and optimized your pages for Search Engines;
6. Started to generate traffic;
7. Started to study reports about your website from Google Webmaster Tools;
8. Signed up to [AWeber](#) and of course emailed your list with AWeber.

Now of course the Internet marketing and home business industry does evolve over time and you constantly need to update your knowledge to make sure you stay ahead of the game. So for breaking industry news, make money online tips and keys to online success as well as miscellaneous ramblings please feel free follow us [@VodaHost](#). Feel free to [Like] our [Facebook Fan-Page](#) as well as Subscribe to our [YouTube Channel](#) for extra information and cool stuff.

As often in business, networking can play a vital role on the success of your online venture. There are lots of different places on the web where you can exchange with other Internet marketers and home business owners. A really great place is VodaHost’s [VodaTalk Forum](#).

And remember...

“You never fail until you stop trying.”

--Albert Einstein



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