



OFFLINE MARKETING TIPS

Offline Marketing for your web site...-by Vince Marino
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We have all heard the Internet Gurus preach of the importance of search engine positioning and on-line promotion. Yet many web site owners forget the very simplest of ways to promote your business offline.

Why do I need to do offline promotion when I'm promoting an online business? The reason is simple. The concept of a paperless office is all very well, but your potential customers live in an offline world. To get their attention, you need to reach them where they live.

Here are a few simple techniques to get you started:

LETTERS AND INVOICES

Every item of stationery or paper that leaves your office is an opportunity to promote your website. Make sure your website address (URL) appears on every single piece of paper leaving your office. Invoices, customer letters, billing statements etc...

BROCHURES

Brochures are an effective way to create a professional image and promote your products and services at the same time. Give them to prospective customers for a quick overview of your business and to give them a reason to visit your website for more information.

PRODUCT SHEETS

Product sheets are a way for you to make new and existing customers aware of what other products and services you offer in addition to those they have recently purchased or inquired about.

PROMO ITEMS

Tangible promotional items that people see or use every day are a great way of keeping your name in front of your customers and prospective customers. Make sure your URL appears prominently and it will be a constant reminder to visit your website.

COUPONS

Coupons are great to use as incentives for future purchases. Offer a range of coupons including percentage off orders (for example, "20% off your next order of \$50 or more"), free shipping or free items included with a purchase

ADVERTISING

Advertising can be as simple as placing classified ads in your local newspaper or as grand as purchasing television advertising slots.



WRITE ARTICLES

Many newspapers and business magazines accept article submissions. This is a great way to show you are an "expert" in your industry or service and shows potential clients that you are knowledgeable in your field. It also lends credibility to your business if you are willing to put your reputation into print.

PRESS RELEASES

Press releases can act as a form of de facto advertising. Send your press release to the editors of print periodicals and local newspapers such as the Business Journal.

CLASSIFIED ADS

Place small classified ads in your local and city newspapers and include the URL of your website.

YELLOW PAGES

If you purchase display advertising in the Yellow Pages, be sure to include your URL.

FLYERS

One-page flyers advertising your product or service and including your URL can be printed cheaply and left on car windshields or distributed via letterbox drops in your local area.

DIRECT MAIL

Mailing lists of various sizes are available for rent or purchase for direct mailing your offer to prospective customers.

NETWORKING

Any local community offers ample opportunity for networking. Each networking function you attend is an opportunity to publicize your business and your website. Perhaps the most effective and under-appreciated tool of them all is word of mouth. Talk about your business and your website at every opportunity and encourage your customers, friends, family and colleagues to do the same. You would be surprised at just how many businesses out there owe their success to little more than word of mouth referrals.

LOCAL TV GUIDE

Your local TV guide or cable guide can be a good place to advertise cheaply if your product or service is of particular interest to a local geographic target audience. Again, be sure to include your URL.

RADIO ADVERTISING



Radio advertising can be an excellent buy for many small businesses. Call the sales department of several radio stations that target your demographic.

TELEVISION ADVERTISING

You may be surprised at how affordable advertising on your local cable channel can be. Contact the sales department of your cable provider for details.

EVERY CHANCE YOU GET

Last but not least, getting the word out should be a daily habit. Every time you answer your business phone be sure to give the caller your website address so they can find out more information about you and your business. Make sure your website address is included in the message recorded on your answering machine.

Successfully promoting an online business requires a sound understanding and application of the principles of online marketing and promotion. Focusing only on online methods to the exclusion of offline does only half the job. Give the proper attention to offline methods of promotion in conjunction with your online promotional efforts to ensure the widest possible coverage of ALL of your potential markets.

With 10 years web design and marketing experience, I have seen it all from Feast through Famine. From the Dot Com Darlings to Dot Bomb Destitution. They failed because of ego, lousy business plans or just plain greed. There are many ways to succeed online, if you are willing to take the time to learn and educate yourself, you will be much more likely to succeed. We can help educate you... resistance is futile...

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