# Small Business Owners Guide To
# Marketing Your Business On The Internet

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## Ben Wheeler

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# Disclaimer

# About the author

My name is Ben Wheeler and I run a web design and development company in Swansea, South Wales. Since a very young age, I knew that I wanted to develop my career in the online world.

The first computer program I wrote was in school, at the age of 10 on a BBC microcomputer. My interest grew with the arrival of the internet and a few years later I went to university and earned my upper second BEng (Hons.) degree in Electronic & Computer Engineering.

After university, I started my working life with Unit 4 Agresso in 2003 developing web applications, I later switched jobs to a web design company in Cardiff, Digital Virtue. It was in 2008 that I became a freelancer and as the business grew, formed my own company, Beach Software.

My company progressed so rapidly that by the end of 2013, I had employed five staff and was working alongside a graphic design company, sharing offices. I also worked alongside 'That Useful company" a marketing co-operative providing not just website design and development but other services like graphic design, social media, online marketing, print and a lot more.

In 2014, some other companies were merged into Beach Software and rebranded to form Copper Bay Creative, one of the largest and most successful creative agencies in South Wales. We now are a company of eleven with our own, purchased premises and work with a vast range of clients from local plumber start-ups, to international organisations with multi-million pound turnovers.

Most recently in 2016, my co-director, that had joined in the merger of 2014 left to specialise in graphic design for the

charity sector, so Copper Bay Creative, once again was back under my sole control.

The importance of a powerful web presence for businesses is what compelled me to write this book. I have learned that only you as the business owner have the power to do it by educating yourself about internet marketing. Then you can take your business to the next level and achieve what you have set out to.

My book will help give you a broad understanding of internet marketing and hopefully you can then ask the right questions of professionals and know the answers to expect so that you can get an effective website for your business, market it well and make your business grow.

My advice is drawn from my 13 years' experience in the industry and many clients with successful websites and online marketing strategies. I hope you can glean some useful nuggets of information to empower you to grow your business with the help of the internet.

I firmly believe that Digital Marketing, and a good understanding of general marketing, is what has allowed my to move from a one-man-band business into the market-leading marketing company Copper Bay Creative is today, with its 12-strong team. I'm also very proud that during that time i've been recognised with many awards:

- Rising Star of Wales 2015

- National Entrepreneur Awards,
  Most Impressive Growth Finalist 2014

- Top 35 businessmen under 35 in Wales 2015

- Swansea Bay Business Awards,
  Small Business of the Year Finalist 2016

- Institute of Directors,
  Small Business Director of the Year Wales 2016

- Entrepreneur Wales Awards,
  Service Industry Entrepreneur of the Year Finalist 2016

If you would like to discuss anything raised in this book, or would like help in growing your business by using an effective website and internet marketing strategy, please feel free to get in touch with me, Ben Wheeler, by email on ask@getbensbook.com.

# The 4 M's

Before we get into Digital Marketing, there is a basic concept of marketing worth covering. Market, Message, Media, Measure.

All marketing should start with Market. Who is the target market for this particular offering, and there might well be many. For example, 34-44 year old Men, 18 - 24 year old Women, Men or Women over 65.

Then the Message should be developed specifically for the target Market, so a gym adver may well be different depending on Gender and Age as an example.

Then the Media should be chosen. What's the right media to use to deliver that message to the target market. So often, the media, for example Facebook, is chosen first, because it's the latest trend. "How can we use Facebook in our marketing".

Finally, it's one I add in, Measure. Especially with Digital Marketing, because it's so easy to do, you should plan in how you're going to measure the success of the marketing activity.

# What is Internet Marketing?

Most people just rush into creating an online presence. They see other companies having huge success online and think they need to create a website and that's that, but it's just not that simple. The problem is they are not sufficiently qualified or experienced when it comes to internet marketing, and a website on its own is not marketing, it's like opening a shop but not telling anyone. They end up relying on some so called 'experts' who are more concerned about extorting money than doing their job, and charging large monthly fees with no way of measuring returns. This is why your attempt at creating an online presence can fail or isn't as successful as you had hoped for. So what really is online marketing?

Internet Marketing, also referred to as Online Marketing and Digital Marketing is a promotional strategy designed to market your messages to target consumers. All the advertising is done solely through the internet, via computers, laptops, tablets and mobile phones for example. The main idea is to attract consumers to the business owners' website so as to sell products or services.

Initially, online marketing only referred to the presence of either a business website or promotional advertising banners placed on other websites. But with advancement in internet and marketing strategies, the horizon has widened. Now internet marketing also includes such things as Search Engine Marketing, Email Marketing, Press Releases, Article Marketing, Blog Marketing and Social

Media Marketing. These methods combine together to create an online presence that is quite literally impossible to ignore, when used effectively.

The aim of creating a strong online presence is to:

- Spread awareness about your company, its products and services.

- Sell your products and services, ensuring the clients know that they are the best and the most trustworthy.

- To conduct research that demonstrates the needs, expectations and preferences of your target audience.

The more dominant an online presence your business has, the more it will be able to recruit customers/clients for you.
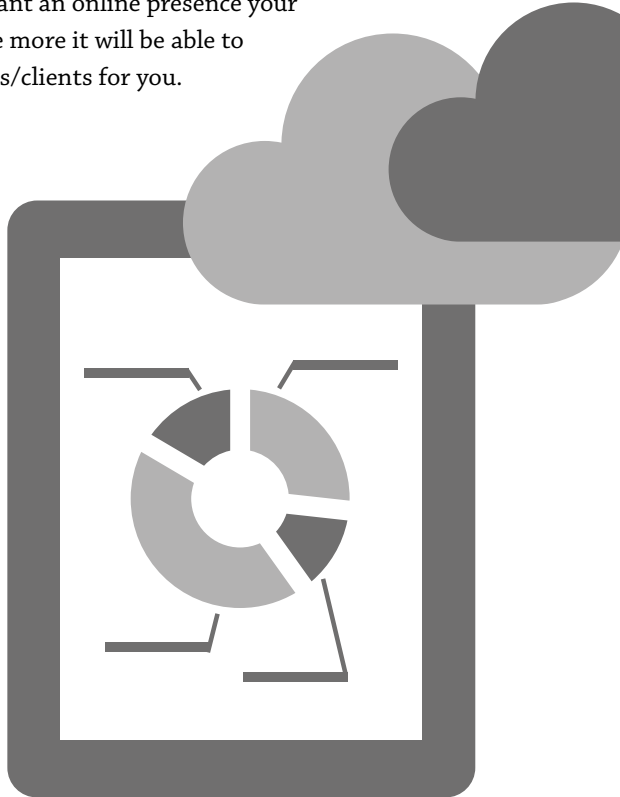
# Who is it for?

Even though internet marketing takes place online, it is not just for online businesses. Rather, in this high strung social media construct, online marketing is a must for all types of businesses. Consider this; you have started your very own interior design business. How exactly do you plan on telling everyone in your catchment area about it? You could hand out flyers, take an advert in a local paper or maybe, get your car sign written or takeout an advert in the yellow pages. All worthwhile, depending on your target market and message and should be used in conjunction with online marketing (as discussed later) but, wouldn't it be a great idea to make your own website, detailing your talents and services? Show off your skills and expertise and your portfolio of work. You could even make a Facebook page and link it to your website so that you can reach a wider audience. Add some videos of your work on YouTube and instantly you're seen as a credible established business; plus with online marketing you can adopt and refresh your information easily and instantly.

Sounds too good to be true? Well, it is if you don't follow the right guidelines. But if you know the art of focusing on the right methodology, you can easily create a web presence that will take even you by surprise! Small businesses, home businesses and start-ups, are the ones who gain most by using online marketing, primarily because they don't have the budget for other forms of large scale advertising. With the help of internet marketing, they would not have to search for their customers with much effort as its relatively easy to put your advert in front of a particular demographic, and by participating in online marketing, your target audience will be attracted to you. All that is left to do for you, the business

owner, is to create content that is powerful, engaging and truthful.

I will discuss the importance of creating truthful and captivating content further in the book. But before embarking on the need for strong website content, let us first briefly touch upon the various types of internet marketing strategies.

# Types of Internet Marketing

There are various types of internet marketing. The most commonly used ones include, SEO or Search Engine Optimization (being found on Google), Email Marketing, Paid Advertising, Article Marketing, Social Media usage and of course, Website Marketing. These different paths all lead to the same destination, informing about your business, selling your product/services and keeping you abreast of the competition. I will discuss these different types of internet marketing in detail, but here is a short view of what they do.

**SEO or search engine optimization** is the use of keywords on your website, blog, articles or press releases in such a way that it comes up on the search engine whenever a consumer searches for products or services like yours. This is exactly how people are able to search different things on search engines like Google and Bing. You must have done this yourself thousands of times. For example, if you want to search for a plumber in your area, you can simply type the words plumber and your locality in a search engine and you will be given links to dozens of websites that will guide you about who the best plumber might be. There are many other ways that you can optimize your website better, I will discuss them in detail later, but search engines today are more focused on popularity of a website than ever before and keywords in your content are no longer enough, in fact, just filling your website with just keywords will have an adverse effect. Carefully written content using your keywords is the way forward.

**Email marketing** is just like sending emails to friends or family, but on a much larger scale, they can be sales focused or used to nurture and inform. Email addresses are obtained either through request or by purchasing them. The idea is to

email newsletters and get prospective customers to notice the existence of your business, or to buy from you again.

**Paid advertising** is very straight forward. You simply pay to get in the directories that are available on the internet, enlisting yourself as an active business organization. You can even pay some websites to publish ads of your product or services on their websites. This would again result in increased activity on your own website, so long as you advertised in the right place!

**Article marketing** is like the electronic version of newspaper or magazine advertising. What you do is write articles about the product or services you offer and get them published on websites which are created for the purpose of online marketing. These articles either directly refer to your website or they contain keywords that are linked to your website so that when a reader clicks it, they are transported to your website. This helps in increasing activity or traffic on your website.

**Blog marketing** is relatively similar to article marketing. The difference is that instead of taking a professional, detached tone that mentions the merits of your business, as is done in article marketing, you write from personal experience. Blog marketing is similar to blog writing. The only addition is that you sell your product, but you do it very subtly.

The idea is not to impose, but to manoeuvre the client into believing your side of the story. You develop a relationship with your prospective clients/customers by offering a glimpse in your own life, how you started your business as well as the difficulties and joys of being a business owner. The aim is to connect with your target audience on an emotional level. This way, if they think of you as their friend, they are more likely to come to you for services.

**Social media marketing** involves the use of social media websites like Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Google+, Pinterest, YouTube, Instagram, etc. These are the places where you will be able to reach a huge demographic. From professionals to amateurs, kids to teenagers, students to working individuals, males and females , a huge percentage of the population is reachable through social media.

You only need to get creative and become active in your pursuit of your target audience. It has been estimated that out of all other internet marketing tools, social media by far is the most effective and the most far reaching, especially as search engine optimisation is becoming less effective over time.

However as the social media platforms gain investors, they need to be monetized, paid advertising is becoming the only way to ensure visibility, but it is still a very cost effective form of marketing and Facebook Ads especially, are a marketeers weapon of choice!

## Some examples

When it comes to internet marketing success stories, there are too many to name. But below are some of the people who have had great success through internet marketing, by engaging with their audience. These stories are great ideas for how online marketing strategies can be used.

**Transport for London** wanted to create awareness among vehicle drivers about cyclists on the road, only around London and its surrounding areas. They started a 'Do the Test' campaign that targeted around 150,000 people. They released a video that

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attracted a far larger crowd. By the end of the first month, the video had been viewed by more than 5.5 million people. In March 2008, it became the second most blogged about video in the world, generating 6.7 million viewers on YouTube alone!

The idea was to spread awareness only among residents of London, but it went viral and benefited the entire world.

**Neusoft Technology** is a multinational software engineering service provider firm who also used internet marketing as the perfect tool to increase productivity and exposure. What they did was to create a parody of Lady Gaga's song Pokerface. Their entire IT department featured in the video. The video went viral. The idea was not to increase sales but to become well known in the health information technology departments worldwide.

Even though the parody video was launched on their website, within no time it spread across Facebook and YouTube. It received a positive response and Neurosoft achieved its purpose of becoming noticed in the crowd. This shows that the content you display is definitely important, but using videos, animations and pictures engages the audience even more.

**Mazda UK** knew just the thing they needed to do to engage the attention of their audience. Having a look at their website homepage shows that yes, they are car dealers, but their focus is on other important things too like photos,
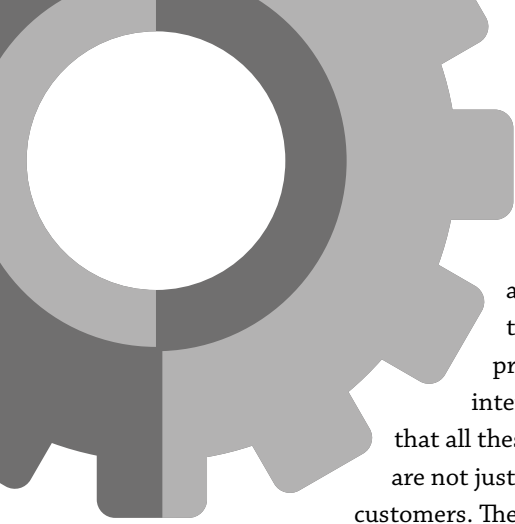
videos, reviews and even blogs.

The aim was to build a strong link with their present and prospective clients. The interesting thing though, is that all these graphics and words are not just their own, but of their customers. They encourage their clients to share images of their Mazda related events and moments.

They also have an active presence on both YouTube and Facebook which allows millions of their clients to stay in touch with them.

**Hailo - the black cab app** is one of most interesting internet marketing strategies; used by a former cabbie, Russell Hall and his partners created a Smartphone app that would make life very easy for taxi passengers. These Dublin dwellers came up with an application that allowed people to book a cab and pay for it very easily through their Smartphones. The app was launched in London but through very intelligent marketing, reached the US consumers too. How did they market their ingenious cab app? Online marketing of course! They created their very own website, had lots of press written and got involved in many campaigns associated with the social media. The advertising worked and many celebrities Tweeted about it, appreciating their intelligent and productive use of this application.
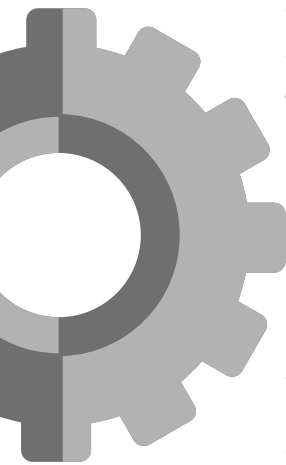
# Understanding domains and hosting

Most people get confused about the difference between domain and web hosting. Even though the concepts are tightly knitted together, they are by no means similar. There can be no website unless there is a domain name.

## Domain names

The easiest way to understand domain names (URLs), is to grasp the concept of a telephone directory. The domain name you register would be used by users searching for your website. It is your identity in the World Wide Web. Just like you communicate with people on the phone through their phone numbers, computers connect with each other on the internet through domain names. These names are constructed according to the rules set up by the Domain Name System, more commonly known as DNS.

Have you noticed the .com, .co.uk, .org or .net at the end of each website address you type in the status bar of your browser? These are the top-level domains. The major thing about domains that you need to understand is that without having a registered top-level domain name, you cannot have a proper website.

For example, when you tell your clients to visit your web page, and you give them a temporary URL e.g. mycompany. freewebsite.com, instead of a domain name e.g. mycompany. co.uk. Not only is this highly unprofessional, it is also very impractical as it cannot continue for an extended period. You can only use a temporary address for some time and would ultimately need a proper webpage with a domain name.

It is the domain name registrar that is affiliated with the accredited body Nominet (for anything ending in .uk) or Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers - ICANN (for .com, .net, etc.), who can rightfully allow the creation of any domain name. A fee is collected on the registered domain name, but the user can't really be called the owner. Authorized users of a particular domain are known as either 'domain holders' or 'registrants'. Actually, it's worth stressing here, you don't ever exclusively own your domain name, you rent it from the registrar. You should be the named registrant, never let anyone put themselves down as the registrant on your behalf. It's fine for them to register on your behalf, but use your details, they can be the admin contact, but not registrant.

Domain names can be resold to another party without anyone finding out about the transaction. But only with the registrants' permission, unless the domain hasn't been renewed.

## Which is the domain for you?

This completely depends upon the type of website you plan to launch. If you have a typical business website, you would need a .com or .co.uk (for companies in the uk) domain. Even though anyone can register a .com, or .co.uk domain, it is meant for commercial websites.

On the other hand, if its information or knowledge you want to impart through your website, you will need '.edu', which signifies education. '.net' is for network and '.org' is for organization. You can select whichever best fulfils your purpose.

There are more extensions being created every month now, which some believe will add to confusion, but it does allow

for more websites
to exist, the most
important thing is that you have an
appropriate domain name for your business that is
easy to remember.

## Web hosting

Web hosting can easily be understood by the idea of rentals. It is like renting an unoccupied, empty space. In terms of the web, it is space on a computer which you rent to upload your website. The web hosting itself is a service for organizations and individuals to use so as to make their websites accessible on the World Wide Web.

In simple words, web hosting means that your website is easily accessible for whoever wants to see it all day, every day as the computers/servers are specially connected to the internet. Most personal web site hosting is free; at most an advertisement fee is asked for. Business web hosting on the other hand requires financial support, depending upon the size and type of website, as you need ad-free, professional services to ensure a professional representation of your business. You also need to have a domain name before you have hosting and set up your email.

Depending on the usage, it can be free (for a very basic website) or would require minimal fee, normally around £10/ month for a small business website. When compared to the cost of a phone line rental, it should be comparable, after all, you need the service for emails to work – aren't they just as important as a phone line?

When it comes to web hosting, there are four types of web hosting services: free, shared, virtual server and dedicated server.

## Free hosting

There are companies that allow you to host your website for free. The catch? It lets you use only a very limited amount of services. There can be many advertisements attached to your website and it is mostly for those who don't have the finance to use paid web hosting.

## Shared hosting

This type of web hosting is connected to a server that has many other websites attached to it. There can be as few as 5-6 websites sharing your server or as many as thousands of websites linked to the same server. The software and updates offered are very controlled and inflexible. Shared hosting is the most cost effective, most common and perfectly acceptable way for small businesses to host their website.

## Virtual server hosting

One of the best forms of web hosting, virtual hosting is a great option for people that need a faster, or their own, server due to having a popular, or intensive website, or just for security reasons. It may be slightly more expensive but it is all your own server, although there are many virtual servers running on a physical server, only you have access to its resources.

## Dedicated server hosting

Your own Physical server is great for running intensive or multiple websites where you're in complete control. It is an

option many web developers use to host their clients' websites and provide a robust service; although cost and need normally restricts usage to most small businesses.

### Email hosting

Email provision can be referred to separately, however, it's normally provided by or with hosting. With a shared server you can have issues with spam, but with a virtual or dedicated server, a robust business level solution can be provided. Good hosts will provide an email that works on your computer, mobile and via a website as well, so you can check your emails whenever you need to.

A good website company will normally take care of all your domain purchases/renewals, hosting and email for one simple fee a year, giving you peace of mind and a reliable solution.

# Construction of a website

The website is the father of internet marketing. You can advertise, promote and sell your products and services through this medium easily. You provide people the simplest way to reach you and find out all about your business. But creating and launching a website is not really that simple if you want to be successful. It requires proper planning and execution. The success of a website depends upon the right efforts you put into its construction. Here are some of the things you need to consider before making your own website, or commissioning one.

After planning for a website, the next thing to do is to learn all about the key features that will help make your website a success. Without these elements you will be able to launch a website, yes, but it will never be able to captivate a sizeable chunk of your preferred target audience. To gain potential customers/clients you need to equip your website with the best working elements possible. Here is a detailed explanation of the essentials of an accomplished business website.

## Planning

Planning is the crucial element of any project. When it comes to creating your own website, planning is a must. Deciding from the type of website to the finances you can utilize, the pitch of your website to the information revealed, all needs to be clearly thought out and then implemented. Ideally, it is best that you get your website created and hosted by a professional, but even if you are, there is a lot of detailed planning you would need to do, and should do to get the best results. From a marketing point of view, understanding the target market, crafting the right message, the media is then a website, so you should first design the message, the content of the website.

The key features that you need to keep in mind when planning a website are:

## Purpose

The most important thing, what is the purpose of your website? Of course the first thing you will think of is marketing. But marketing how? By informing? By persuasion? Do you intend to sell your product/ services or simply make yourself available and see who gets in touch? Are you just informing prospective clients or reminding them what they are missing? Once you determine the purpose of your website, you can think of ways to accomplish that goal.

You, as a business owner need to be very sure of what you want to do and how you plan to do it. Otherwise, you'll just be wasting your time and money, just as with all kinds of marketing activity, it has to have a clear purpose and a measurable Return on Investment (ROI).

## Target audience

Your target audience are the people you want to visit your website. Are they male? female? young adults? parents? working professionals? business owners? Once you come up with the customers you want to target, start thinking from their perspective. How would they prefer viewing content on your website?

Are videos better than pictures? Will the written or spoken word attract them? will detailed information or light information be better? The more you keep the needs of your target audience in mind, the more effective will your website be.

To truly understand your target audience, you need to conduct some research. This can be done in two ways, one you can simply ask people what their preferences are or, you can search

on the internet. Always remember though that no matter how beautiful or attractive your website is, if it doesn't interest your target audience, its existence will be futile. The most effective websites will evolve over time with trial and error - and just because you're competitors are doing it doesn't mean you should follow suit.

## Call-to-action

The call-to-action is the task you want your target audience to perform. If your call-to-action isn't clear, how will you compel your target audience to turn into leads or sales?

Don't automatically assume that the visitors on your website know what is expected of them or what they need to do. You have to instruct them very plainly. For example, if the purpose is to promote your product or services, you can write something like 'please share our page with your friends and family'. If you want them to buy, give them clear buttons and an easy checkout process; or if you want them to phone, repeat your number regularly in the text.

Plan beforehand the kind of call-to-action you want for your website. Asking for expert advice can be helpful, as professionals can tell you what the best call-to-action might be for you.

## Keywords

Keywords (or phrases) increase the visibility of your website on various search engines. Consider this one of the most important parts of planning, as keywords are what will help the target audience reach your website. The audience that matter, not the ones who just visit your page and leave without giving a second thought to your call-to-action. This is the reason why it's important to have a website that is rich in carefully planned

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content, rich in keywords so that people, who actually need you, can find you.

The best way to get the right keywords is to think in terms of your target audience, or ask them, for example, if you're an electrician, you'll want to be using words like 'electrician in TOWN' and use both words in context. If you don't mention a word, the search engines won't know that's what you do. This also applies to the wrong words; so many times, people have told me their website is great and it appears on the first page of Google for XYZ - but that's completely pointless because no one is looking for XYZ, they're looking for ABC instead, and you're nowhere to be found to ABC! Picking the wrong words is as pointless as not optimising at all.

## Creating links

When you plan for a website, you aren't simply planning for that, you are thinking of your entire online marketing strategy. If that's not what you were doing, then now is the time to start. Having a website is simply not enough, you need to tell people it exists, websites are one of the most important parts of internet marketing, and it is something you just have to accept. If not, you might just end up at the bottom of the search results. Social media, articles, blogs are all great ways of getting links to your website from other websites, and these links are like signposts to your website so people know it exists.

What you need to plan though, is how you will connect your website with all these social media websites. The best thing to do is to let your website be a hub of information. You can be either discreet about this by linking keywords in the content or you can be upfront and state that for more information, visitors can visit your website. Both approaches work and different things work for different media websites.
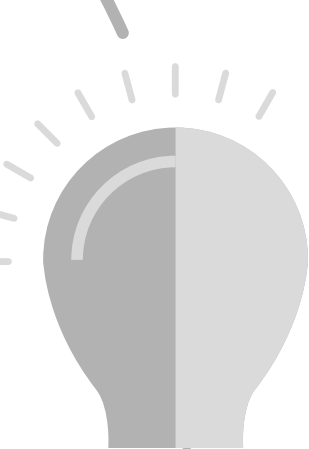
## Appearance and design

First impressions are the last impressions, and this is still very true for when it comes to websites. Think of it this way, if you are selling children's clothing, you would expect to see a website that is filled with bright baby colours, cute animations, pictures of adorable little angels and such. If you come across a website that is in tones of greys, black and browns, with mostly written content, no videos or photos and plain boring text, you will not give it a second glance right? This is exactly why appearance and design is so important. A website is just an online shop window, and you'd make that appealing and inviting too.

You need to keep in mind what you are selling and who you are selling it to. The idea is not to fill your website with glitter and gimmicks, but to make it eye catching, interesting and making the visitor feel compelled to purchase whatever you offer. Yet at the same time, all of this must be done in the best possible professional method, so that it does not seem like you are selling yourself short.

Remember, your website is how the potential customer/client looks at you. They obviously can't see you, so all the judgements they make are based on the website you put up.

So what are the things that you need to focus on? Here are the essential ones:

## Text readability

Many people think that by creating something different they will be able to grab their visitors' attention. This hardly ever

works, the first thing you have to ensure is that the written content on your website is readable. The entire website would become completely useless if people aren't able to read what you are trying to market! The text should be interesting but clear. The best font size is from 10-12 pts. Also the font type should be such that it is a common one, available on all types of computers. Nothing out of the ordinary, simplicity is key.

## Colour scheme

It's almost like picking the colour scheme for your house. You would have to select according to the mood and temperament you want to encourage among the visitors to your page. Select any 2 to 3 colours, depending on what your business is about. Make sure the colours aren't clashing or competing against each other. This would only create a garish effect and the visitor is likely to leave the website. The colours should be attractive yet not distracting enough to steal the spotlight from the written word. Normally the colour scheme is driven by the logos/brand colours, to create a coherent professional image of your company.

## Graphics

It is the graphics that make a simple web page come alive! The use of appropriate graphics is a must, for example, if you are offering plumbing services, there's no point in putting up pictures of the local landscape. Pictures of pipes, boilers, and tools are more appropriate. You could even show your products or some of your customers using them. Photos of your van, office, and staff help you build a personal relationship from day one. Just ensure that all the images you use are your copyright and of the highest quality, otherwise the potential client might assume that you are trying to hide something.

You could also make some 'do-it-yourself' tutorials that would help your customers take care of simple tasks themselves. At the end of the video, you can add a call-to-action where they can contact you if there is need. Graphics include everything from photos, videos, animations and 3D effects and even the graphics used in the website design. Don't over-do it and make sure you use graphics that support the purpose of your website.
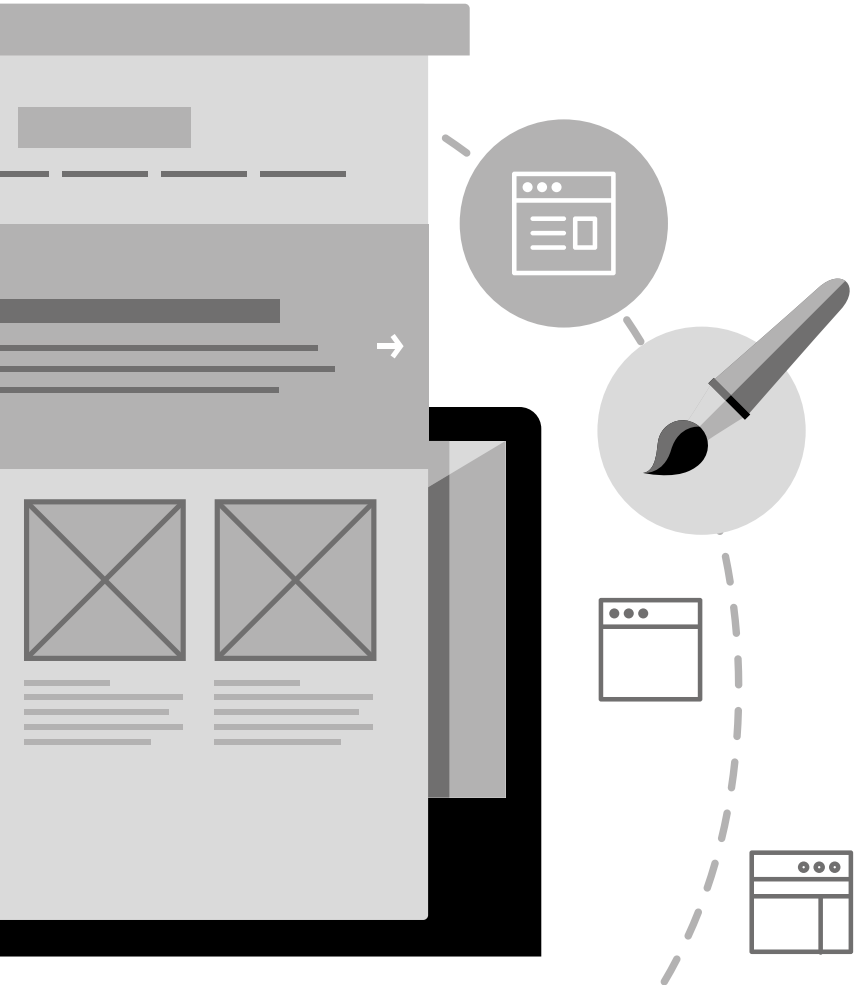
# Why use a website designer

Many people think to themselves, 'how difficult can web designing be? We can create our businesses website on our own', especially with adverts from 1&1 or wixx promoting build it yourself websites. It does work for some people, but for others, this can be their downfall. You have to understand that it is your website through which people will get to know you. If you don't put up a professionally attractive and savvy face, then they may not want to get to find out what you have to offer them. If your business is a 99% replica of every other business, and your perceived company image isn't important then you can consider a DIY website.

Think of it this way. When you visit someone, the first thing you notice is the outward appearance of their house. If its shabby, with paint peeling from various places, the lawn in a complete mess, with no proper care for cleanliness or maintenance, then you may come to the conclusion that the people inside would be like that. When actually, the people living inside might be very nice with a beautifully clean house, but that is perception for you.

This is exactly what happens when people visit your website. No matter how good your products or services are, if the first impression leaves customers unsatisfied, they may not bother to see what you have to offer. They would think that if your website looks this poor, then the products and services would be the same.

So, the idea in creating a website is to tempt a prospective client into becoming a loyal customer. And this is why it is important to choose just the right web designer.

Some other reasons why web designers are beneficial include:

## Creative and unique outlook

A professional designer is one who not only understands your target market, but also the needs of your business. Since they have already worked with lots of other organizations, they know what works for one and what works for the other. They will be able to help you create content that is unique, depicts the personality of your business and is best suited to your requirements.

## Competition

Of course yours isn't going to be the only business website that sells your type of products or services. There may be thousands of others. So why should customers come to you? This is what the web designer will make sure is prominent on your website. They will design it in such a way that people would know that you can be trusted, either through the written content, graphics or others. Your website will greet them with a smile and assure them that they will find what they seek.

## Communication

The basic purpose of any website is not only to attract customers but to also relay the information of the business to them. A good web designer will make sure that your information is displayed in such a manner that it is easy to read, understand and then use. Whatever may be the message that you want to convey to the visitors, the web designer is going to make sure that it is tactfully revealed. They would use different colour schemes, fonts, and graphics and even creatively arrange content throughout the website to gain and retain the interest of the target audience.

## Search engine optimized

This is something that most homemade websites fail to achieve. It's because amateur web designers don't know the importance or the methods that can be used to create compelling designs. A web designer would know the right way to design your website so that it is search engine optimized. They would aim to design it in such a way that it is the first to appear whenever your target audience tries searching for something that pertains to your business.

## Efficiency and credibility

A great website is one that runs smoothly and is easy to use. If the visitor has to sift through loads of information to find what they are looking for, they might not bother coming back for another visit. Web designers ensure that the website has convenient navigation and easy readability. This will not only increase the efficiency of the website, but it will also increase your credibility. Visitors to the website are more likely to take your word if you have an open approach. Otherwise, you can easily scare them off by being confusing. They might feel you are trying to hide the flaws of your products/ services by being deliberately misleading.
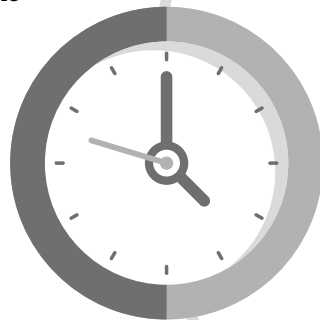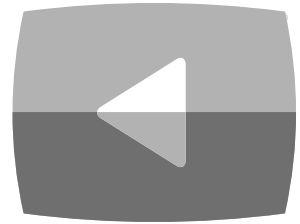
# How the process works

Hiring a professional web designer requires some sifting through the plethora that are available. It's an unregulated industry so the people may have just decided to sell themselves as a website designer and you may be their first job, or they could be degree educated in a computer related discipline, and have 13 years' experience and a large portfolio; there is a lot of risk in this industry.

How do you know which is the perfect web designer for you? Here are some tips that can help you separate the grain from the chaff, so to speak:

**Experience and expertise** is the first thing that you should ask any web designer. Are they even qualified for the job? Do they know what they are getting into? Likewise, have they ever done it before? Can they give you references that check out? Once you find out the answer to all these questions, you can decide if the web designer is for you.

**Price** is the next thing you should directly come to. Never make the mistake of hiring a designer and waiting for the job to finish and then asking his/her rates. This creates misunderstandings and hostility. Be very clear when you ask how much they would charge you, whether it would be on an hourly basis or fixed rates and how they intend to have the money taken.

**Timescales** in which the job will be completed is a must. Ask them in the first meeting how long they normally take on a project and if they can do it in that time limit. Many times, designers take on too many jobs and delay all the projects they are working on. Everyone, including you, is on a predetermined time frame, so make sure that the designer completes your website in the time range s/he gives you, ensure a payment is

held until completion.

**Communication skills** of the web designer play a very strong role in the completion of their job. Consider this; you try to explain what you want and then ask the designer what they think and if it's the right approach for your business website. If the designer is not good at communication, they would never be able to explain the strengths or weaknesses of your proposition nor would they ever be able to explain to you what the best thing for your website would be. So make sure that you notice the way they communicate with you, whether they are friendly and open to suggestions and also whether they are willing to think out of the box instead of sticking to old and outdated ideas.

**Build a relationship** with your web designer. The two of you will be working for a long time together and this can become very difficult if there is resentment on both sides. Be encouraging and clear about their work. If you don't like something, tell them politely instead of picking fights with them. Respect them and their work and you are bound to get the website of your choice!

Once you have hired the best web designer that you can find, you can start the work. If you have any ideas about how you want the website to look, list them out and share it with you designer. They will be able to tell whether what you want is appropriate for your business website or not. If they feel that your ideas are great, then they can be used.

Remember though that the reason you have hired a web designer is because you want to make full use of their professional capabilities and experience. So instead of trying to dominate the designing process, try and give the designer some space to work in.

The final yes or no is yours, and the designer would certainly appreciate your regular input and feedback, but they are the real experts and know what works and what doesn't. Go with what they suggest and let them show your ideas, layouts and designs. You can refine whichever you like the most.

There will be times, at the initial development stages of the website, when you panic and feel that this is not what you paid for. But rest assured and have faith in your designer because the final product will be exactly, if not better, than what you originally had in mind.

## The day of the launch

Yes, finally you come to the day when you have your very own business website. The launching of a website is a relatively simple task for any web designer. It only takes a few minutes. Once the website has been launched, double and triple check to make sure that it is functioning smoothly, that every link and connecting page opens swiftly and that there are no apparent errors. Its best to get colleagues, friends or family to check it over and wait a few days before promoting too hard, this is called a soft launch, and although not essential, it's a good safety net.

Don't get too disappointed when you don't have hundreds of visitors on your page the first hour! It takes time for people to learn of a new website. Be patient and wait for the power of internet marketing to start working its magic.

If you already have a running business, you can advertise the launch of your website by either emailing your current customers/clients or informing them through print advertising. You can even have a small advertisement in the newspaper to announce that your business has launched its own website and will be conducting business online as well.

Celebrate the day and thank your web designer sincerely for all his hard work. But remember the previous comment about building a relationship, the true benefit of using a professional starts now and working together in building a successful presence starts now.

# The tasks your website can achieve

Your website can be a real life saver for you in terms of finances as well as promotion. You save money by not having to constantly pay for print advertising and gain a lot by the publicity you get from going online. Here some of the advantages that the presence of a website can give you.

## Availability 24/7

There can be no better feeling for business owners than the sense that they are always available for their clients/customers. This is what having a business website feels like. Your customers can potentially check you out 365 days a year, 7 days a week and 24 hours a day, irrespective of the fact that you are sitting there communicating with them or not. They can see your products, order them and keep increasing your sales without any excruciating effort on your part.

## Free delivery services

If you run a product business, you can provide free delivery services, or click and collect, to your customers. All people would need to do is visit your website, select their choice of product and order it. This would help you improve sales drastically. Most customers are normally so busy in their everyday lives that they find it very hard to shop at all. Delivery services make lives a lot easier for them.

## Do not ignore physical stores

Just because you have an online presence it by no means implies that you should avert your eyes from your brick and mortar store. If you bring everything online, that store may remain empty of customers.

What you can do is make some things available online, while others should only be purchased when people visit the actual shop. One reason why people do not like visiting shops is because they may be difficult to find. Make a map and allow visitors on your website to print it out so that they can use it to locate your store.

Another easy way to get people to visit your online page is by making promotional offers. Like buy this and get this free, or some kind of discount on coming over and checking the new range of products. This will definitely capture the attention of the clients/customers.

## Increase in email list

Your website can help improve your email list of prospective clients. When you have emails, you can send newsletters, new promotional offers or even when some new stock comes in the store. Just make sure that you don't overdo the use of sent emails and never make the mistake of sending spam to your clients. The idea is not to harass them, but to get them interested in your business.

## Increase credibility with reviews and examples

Ask your previous and loyal customers to leave or give you their reviews for your website. People are constantly searching for places they can reliably shop from or use the services of. By reading testimonials that praise your business, people will be assured of your credibility. Ask your clients permission to upload their pictures as well; this can increase the credibility of the comments about your work and products and even show examples of the week completed. You can even have forms on your website that you can ask customers to fill after they have availed your services.

In all, having your very own business website can be just the thing to either help you start a new business or give a boost to an existing one.

## Keeping an eye on the bigger picture

Now that you have a website, what future do you see for it? There are hundreds of other businesses out there offering similar services or products, so you have to work in such a way that sets you apart from all the others. But how can you do that? Where does your website fit? What role does it play? And what effect can it have? These are all questions that you need to answer in order to maximize the productivity of your new website. Working long term with your website designer is essential for getting the most out of your website.

One more thing that I would like to emphasize is that, you need to understand that your website alone is not enough for the promotion of your business and the increase in sales. You will have to use many other online resources to promote your business. All the details are mentioned elsewhere in the book.

# Where does your website fit in the jungle of Internet Marketing?

The World Wide Web is like a gigantic never-ending jungle, which can literally swallow anything that is allowed inside. Introducing your website in this jungle is like planting a new tree. It will take the utmost care and attention for the young plant to take root and then grow.

You would have to water it, give it the nutrients it requires and wait patiently for it to become a tree and then start bearing fruit. This will take time, but the ultimate result is sweet. So wait patiently and see the end results. It may sound clichéd, but it's true, 'patience is a virtue'!

Like I mentioned before, your website alone cannot work to improve the marketing of your business. You need other helping hands to become truly successful. Ideas of other techniques you should use to increase the productivity of your online marketing strategies is given throughout this book. But before jumping into other ways of internet marketing, here are some little things that can go a long way in helping make your website fruitful.

## It is not self sufficient

Please don't for a second think that once you have a website made, it will be able to take care of itself, because that is as far from truth as it can get. Like the example of the tree above, keep in mind that your website is completely dependent upon you to take care of it and make it as useful as you can. Many business owners make the mistake of launching the website and forgetting about it altogether. This results in the website disappearing from the internet search results because it hasn't

been updated or optimized in any way.

You need to update the website with new and interesting information about the products/services or anything that takes place in your business. Likewise you also have to stay in touch with which keywords are the most useful for you so that you are always in the top ranking of search engines.

Also remember to keep archiving all the old and outdated information from your website, however you should never remove content if it helps with the search engine ranking. It can be very irritating trying to sift through which is the new version and which is the old version, so an archive is a great way around this issue. Only keep the latest news and information on the pages so that people don't get confused.

## Landing page is the honey

Yes, you read right; the landing page of your website is the honey for your bees *read target visitors*. A landing page is the conversation page where the visitors become potential/actual, clients or customers. It is the page where they can try your product, or read about your services, or additional information and buy or get in touch with you.

You need to constantly improve the construction of your website in such a way that the visitors are forced onto that page. One way to do this is by giving something away for free. Nothing attracts people more than a free item, even if it is something as small as an eBook or guide.

## Free directories

As soon as you launch your website, add it to the free directories, this can work wonders for your business as it tells the search engine that your website exists, and it also tells them a little about your business too; as when you register they often

ask for a category of business and/or description. Most people use these free directories, often without even knowing about it, so whoever requires your services would simply type in the right keywords and be sent to your website. Add your website for free to the yell.com and google 'free directories' either for your industry or location.
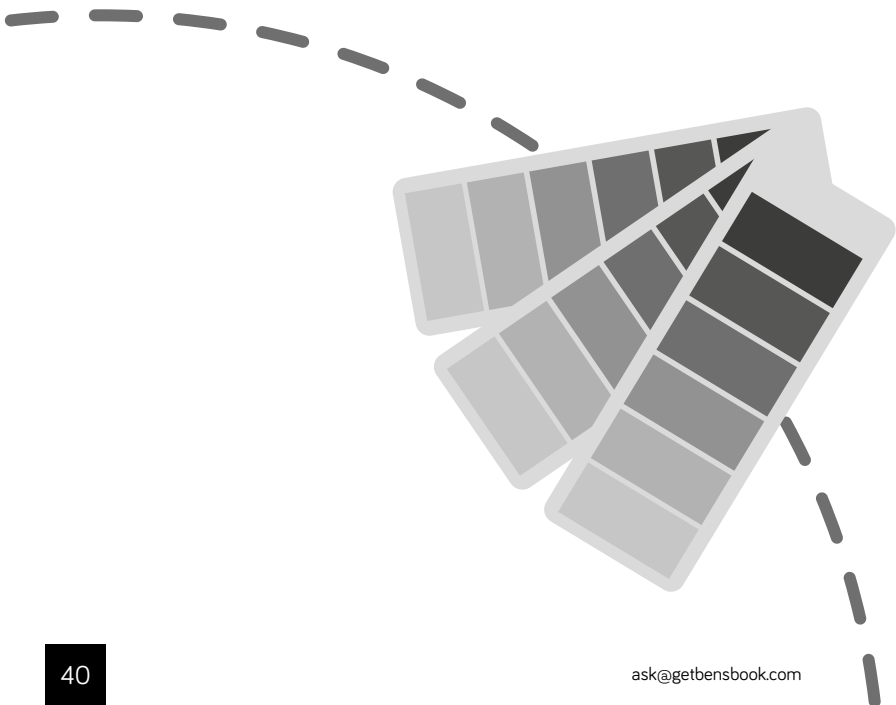
# Advertising your website the old way: offline

Once the website has been launched and is functioning properly, there is a need to ensure that you have enough traffic visiting it daily. I explained a few ways through which you can promote your website online, but that might not be enough. There are many times that your target audience might not be too internet savvy, which means that you need to give them some physical reminder about your website. How can you do that? There are numerous ways and I have explained some of them in detail below. Advertising your business and your website in traditional offline ways such as flyers, magazines and other still have a significant part to play in marketing, especially if your online audience don't know to search for you.

## Get in the news

Print media may sound like old news, but it will always have a part to play. You don't have to write a book about your business, what you can do though is to get an advertisement published in the newspaper. It can be some sort of a press release, or advert that states how your business has grown or changed and directs people to your website. Make sure you design the advertisement in such a way that it is very catchy and immediately captures the attention of anyone who sees it, and ensure the branding is consistent with your website.

If you know someone who works at a commercial/ local radio station, write a short and interesting few lines and ask them to drop it in during their show. This will gain you instant widespread publicity.

## Get business cards

If you don't have them already, get them made. Business cards can work wonders, especially from the least likely places you expect. Not only should you always hand out two business cards to your existing clients, you can also do the same when you go to events – one to keep, one to give away.

Another effective way to use business cards is by making an association with other businesses in your area. You can take a stock of your business cards and ask them to pass them on, along with their holder, and ask them to keep them within public reach.

Just make sure that your business cards contain all the relevant information that a prospective client may be looking for. It should have your basic contact information, your name, the name of your business, office phone number, business mobile phone number, email address, postal address and of course your website. Also mention what services you provide so that the card is not misleading or confusing for the target audience.

## Display your URL (website address) everywhere

If you have anything that can stand still long enough, display your website there. Car, front door, your office door, key rings, literally anything that you can think of should have your URL on it. What this does is get you noticed. People tend to remember things that they constantly come across and when they need services or products like yours, they are likely to contact you. Some places that can most conveniently and easily convey your website and business information include:

## Stationery and promotional items

One of the things that travels fast, other than light, is stationery. People tend to pick up pencils and pens, write on notepads and take their diaries everywhere. Make full use of this and use it to your advantage. Get your URL printed on pens and pencils, erasers, diaries, etc.

Make sure that you have a letter heading prepared for your notepad so that whether you write on it, or somebody else does, your business along with its website is forwarded. Even when you hand a receipt to your customers, make sure it has the website printed on it.

One other option is to have promotional key chains, mugs, T-shirts, car stickers, magnets, paper weights, etc. manufactured. You can distribute them among your existing clients/customers and also give them out as a publicity gimmick. The only thing that needs to be printed is the name of the business, website address and phone number. If there is less space, just the URL is enough, so long as you have chosen a good domain name.

Another interesting and useful thing that you can do to promote your business is to hand out reusable products. For example, if you own a boutique, instead of handing a bought item in a paper bag, you could sell it in a cloth bag. This way, people would be able to use the bag again and would always remember you for handing out useful things. Just make sure that the bag has your boutiques' name, phone number and website address on it.

## Brochures

Brochures are an attractive way of advertising not only your business, but also effectively bringing traffic to your website. Make it colourful and eye-catching. Put pictures and interesting

content on the brochure as well as providing information about your services or products. On the back of the brochure, place contact details regarding your business.

Be very clear and do not try to mislead your prospective clients. People hate the bother of reaching you and finding out that the business depicted through the brochure was not what it claimed to be. You can have it distributed to your clients, prospective clients, and local businesses. Do not forget to highlight your website URL so that people have the easiest and fastest way of finding out more about you.

## Postcards or flyers

These are like brochures, but the difference is that you can make them promotional. You can even have your friends and family distribute them among people you feel are your target market. The posters or flyers need to be professionally made and printed if they are to be taken seriously. Again, the idea is to advertise your website so be sure to mention all your basic details on the back of the flyer or postcard.

Through your posters or flyers you can also inform your clients and clients-to-be about any sale or other promotional activity you might have at either your website or your physical store.

## Get noticed

Nothing is as well remembered as when it comes as a surprise. Throw some kind of a promotional stunt. All those advertisements devised by corporate names like Coca Cola, Samsung, Mercedes Benz and others show how much people are attracted by things that take them off the normal track.

Of course as a small business owner, you cannot possibly afford something exorbitant. What you can do instead is try something that is on a small scale, yet still motivates people

into getting in touch with you. For example, declare that as soon as you have 500 sales through your website you will donate x amount to some charity or some other cause that is happening in your area.

Another thing that you can do is have a business event and invite a celebrity to it. If you don't have that option, you can always pull some stunt, or have fireworks or some other such captivating show.
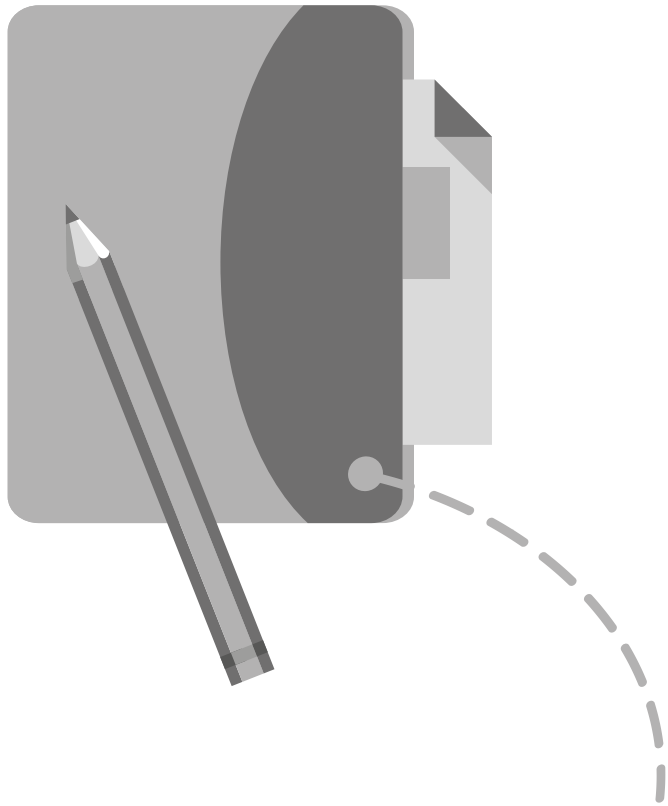
# Search Engine Marketing

One of the most widely used methods of making a successful web presence is the use of Search Engine Marketing (SEM), also known as Search Engine Optimization (SEO). In simplest words, search engine optimization is when your website is on the first page among search engines like Google, Bing, MSN, etc. It's a very difficult industry and a constantly evolving one too, you'll get the best results focusing on very specific 'niche' words and phrases and/or being geographical too - e.g. 'Worcester boiler engineers Bristol' as a opposed to 'boiler engineer'.

This is most commonly achieved through the use of keywords, which are strategically constructed and placed throughout the internet so that whenever people click them, search them or come across them, they are always diverted towards a relevant business website.

Through SEO, you increase the visibility of your website, which in turn not only gets you publicity, it also increases your sale revenue. The best part? Most of this requires no fee or payment. So how can you use search engine optimization to get the best out of internet marketing? Here is what you need to do.

## Index on search engines

This part of SEO is not as important as it was in the early 2000s, but it still makes a difference. Search engines like Google at first required that you have your website listed in their database so that when

Search

ask@getbensbook.com
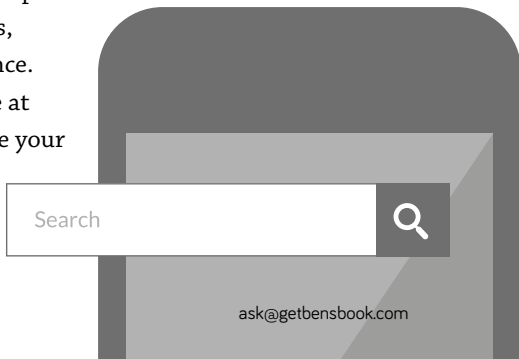
anyone tries using the keywords that your website contains, the website can be reached.

Now though, if your website is there or you have some advert placed on other websites, Google will automatically find it and bring it to the surface when your target audience searches for it. Why index then? Because indexing is what sets you apart. It might not get you the top ranking in search engines, but it will definitely get you on the list! So why take chances? Submit your URL to the search engine.

## Title tags and meta tags

Again like the index, title tags and meta tags were once considered to be the most important aspect of SEO. Not so much anymore, title tags are incredibly important and should be your keywords, but the META keywords and description are not as important as google is far more intelligent these days - they should still be completed however.

## Use of keywords

Keywords are by far the most important search engine optimization strategy. They are specially designed words or phrases that refer to your line of business and attract the audience towards your website. They can be inserted in titles,

URLs, throughout the content and even images. The idea is that when people look for certain things through search engines, they should be guided towards your business website.

Before coming up with your own keywords, you need to conduct proper research on which type of keywords are best suited for your website and are most likely to be researched by the masses. This is where you can take the help of a web designer, as well as good old fashioned research by asking people. When you have a good list of words, integrate them in your websites content.

The important thing to remember when using keywords is that too many can be just as harmful as too few. It's true that at one time a huge amount of keywords was considered to be an effective way of getting traffic to your website. But now, if you insert a high quantity of keywords in your website, search engines like Google will label it as spam and your website might get banned. Therefore, you need to be careful while using keywords. The best idea is to consult your web designer; he will know the relevant number of keywords that could prevent this situation from occurring. Two phrases per page is a good and safe bet.

## Appropriate content

Keywords aren't the only important things in a website though. Similarly, if you keep adding keywords in meta tags, title tags, URLs and images that will never be enough. The content that you put in your website and the keywords that are integrated in that content are even more important, this is because, it's the content that people read and are actually looking for. In fact, this is the most important and correct way to optimise.

Likewise, if you have content that is full of keywords but is not easy to read or makes absolutely no sense, then the entire effort at finding the right keywords goes to waste. If people can't understand what you are trying to inform them about, what's the point of the website? Make sure that you have content that is interesting and clear. "What's good for humans is good for Google".

People easily become distracted and lose interest if what they read is not easily comprehendible. So pay strict attention to the content on your website and all other online internet marketing manoeuvres.

There is also a need for the content to be updated as regularly as possible. Fresh content not only helps the target visitors, it also helps search engines in increasing your rank.

## Images with alt attributes

Many people either don't know or don't realize that search engines just go through text content. This means that all the images or other animations you upload on your web page automatically become less useful if there is no keyword oriented information attached with it.

To make your images just as valuable as your written content, what you can do is add a carefully thought out brief description that has some keywords in it. To insert keywords, add an ALT tag, which will make your image search engine optimized. Keep in mind that the description you insert should be relevant to the existing information on the page.

Another benefit of adding attributes to your image is that those who have visual impairment would not have any difficulty in reading what the image displays. This too will increase ranking of your page.

## Link building

As you might already know, or must have heard somewhere, the more links your website has, the higher your rank will be online. Links, also known as backlinks increase search engine optimization because they lead a visitor back to your page. You're better off having 10 good links rather than 100 average ones; quality outweighs quantity. There are many ways you can build links to your website. Here are some techniques for you:

## Guest posts

Guest posting refers to the publishing of articles on another website. This allows you to interact with some other users that might find your website of use.

The best way to deal with this linking process is to come up with a beautifully written article or blog and have it posted on a website that already has high ratings, e.g. news websites. This way, more people will become acquainted with your business and will notice your services or products and use them. The thing that you have to ensure is that you only send in a great blog or article so that you are able to clearly communicate with the audience.

## Keeping enemies closer

You must have heard the saying, keep your friends close and enemies closer. Well, this is applicable in linking as well. Your competitors might not really be your enemy, but there is always the race to get to the top. By checking out who is back linking to your competitors' website, you will get an idea about which websites or businesses you can target. Once you have an idea about the type of websites your competitors are focusing on, you too can do the same.

## Infographics are catchy

Infographics are tables or graphic designs that give all the information through the use of images and words arranged in such a way that they are easy to understand and very interesting to go through. You can develop your very own infographics to captivate your visitors.

Many websites share these infographics and are forced to give your reference due to piracy/plagiarism issues. This means that people who are entranced by your infographic will likely come

to your website to view other interesting information. You will be surprised by the surge in response you will experience after you upload a catchy infographic.

## Go viral

Of course nothing works as best as going viral! How can you do that? Just make sure that the content you publish on your website is so interesting that people are compelled into sharing it on social media websites like Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter etc. What you do may not be new, but how you display it, should be. The more unique and inspiring your content is, the more likelihood of it being shared on the social media websites.

If you are unable to come up with individualistic content, you can easily take the help of graphic designers or web developers for ideas. Since they are in the industry, they would know what works best for your kind of business. E.g. Plumbers guide on checking your boiler pressure. They may have already done something similar.

## Sitemap

A sitemap is a page that enlists and links all the information on your website. This means that visitors have an easier time navigating around the website, checking out the things that are relevant to them. But that isn't the only benefit of creating a sitemap. In fact, few people use them if you have a good navigation structure.

Search engines also use sitemaps to quickly decipher whether or not something is there on your page and display it to searchers. This too can help to optimize your website better.

# Email Marketing

One of the easiest and cost effective modes of online marketing is the use of emails. You must have heard many people claiming that email marketing is not as effective as other internet marketing techniques, but that is definitely not true. When used correctly, emails can not only reach a large target audience, it can also work very effectively. The best part about email marketing is that it allows your prospective clients/customers to connect with you without any hassle.

Email marketing is when you send business emails that are promotional requests, and create brand awareness. They can be sent to both your current clients and prospective customers, to get the best effect, sending to people who have never heard of you tends to get poor results as it's seen as spam.

The reason why email marketing is used includes:

- To gain new customers by making them aware about the existence of your business, what services/ products you provide and how you are better than your competitors.

- To assure your current customers that you are the best and what you sell is exactly what they need. Also to encourage them into taking a deal, offer or sale.

- To enhance the relationship between client and business owner so that loyalty increases and the customer comes back.

- Advertising about other companies, so that your own business is advertised elsewhere. This is done in such a way that it should not seem too promotional.

**Direct emails**, as the name implies are those that are sent for apparent purposes, either to communicate with existing or prospective clients or to promote your business. The promotion might not necessarily mean an introduction of your business,

it could also be about a sale you are having, some discount you might have or the new items or services you have started. Emails are sent to all those who you already know or at other times, email lists of those who can become clients in the future, are rented or purchased.

**Transaction emails** are those that are sent in response to a certain event. For example, if a customer responds to some purchase they made, then the answering mail would be called a transaction email. These are one of the best ways to communicate and stay attached to your clients. You can engage the customer in conversation and persuade them into buying whatever your business sells. Hence, transaction emails are one of the best ways to promote your business or anything you might be thinking of promoting.

**Permission email,** also known as opt-in email advertising is the form of marketing where people know that they will receive an email and have agreed to receive them. The reason why permission email is the best form of marketing is because it is the safest as clients cannot report you for sending spam emails.

Another advantage of permission based email marketing is that it leads to a higher satisfaction rate for both you and the customer as there is a greater chance of acceptance on both sides. The customers are likely to purchase whatever is offered to them and you profits.

The main aim of opt-in email marketing is a more personal relationship with clients/customers. Emails sent are more on first name basis and it is anticipated that the clients would be willing to accept more advertisements. One example of permission marketing is sending newsletters. These newsletters contain everything from information about the business, products, services, offers, sales, discount and anything new that might take place.

## Some tips for email marketing

Why do people keep saying that email marketing tends to fail? Because they don't know the correct usage! Here are some tips that will help make your email marketing a success.

## Powerful content

One of the most basic things in an email is the content you use. It has to be interesting, powerful and exact. You can't expect to weave stories and expect customers to believe everything that you say. What you write should be from the heart, accurate and all that you want to tell the customer.

## Remain clear cut

If your text is convoluted and cluttered, nobody is going to be impressed by it. Not only will it be completely incomprehensible, it will also be difficult to remember. If somebody cannot decipher what you are trying to say, then the point of email becomes invalid.

The typeface should also be readable. Use a font that is detectable by all computers and try not to use more than 3 typefaces at one time. Too many different fonts and writing styles make an email difficult to read. Add both the HTML versions as well as plain-text email so that all kinds of computer users can access your emails.

Make sure that your email is not greater than 600 pixels wide, because then readers would have to scroll horizontally to read what the next words are. This creates frustration and should definitely be avoided.

## Add an incentive

Incentives increase the chances of an email being opened. For example, if you write 30% discount as the subject line of your email, many people might be tempted to open it. This does not mean that you have to make a promotional offer every time you send an email, but make sure that you send incentive based emails at least once every three to four emails.

## State the call-to-action

Clients would not automatically know what is expected of them. So state a very direct call to action. Also ensure that the CTA is either in the subject of the email, or in the first few lines of the content. Another thing that you need to keep in mind is that the call-to-action must be repeated 3 times. This puts emphasis on the message and there is a greater chance of the client doing as you instruct.

## Logo and from names

These are important because they determine whether or not your business and you are legit. Once you have formed a logo and from name stick to it. Every email you send should have the same so that customers remember you. The name can either be the name of your company or your name. Add the logo in the upper- left hand side of the email; according to studies that is where people look to for the company's logo, and phone number, top right.

### Run a test check

Before you send any email to an existing or prospective customer/client, make sure you run a check. Send the prepared final version of the email to a friend and ask them if it conveys your message. Get them to tell you all the flaws and perfect them as best as you can.

### Mobile email

Using email marketing is ideal, but it becomes even more beneficial if you make your emails mobile savvy. You must have realised the importance of mobiles in everyday life, from kids to adults, home makers to business owners, clients to entrepreneurs, all prefer doing as many online things as they can on their smartphones. And email is one of the top things used when it comes to mobile activity.

This is an opportunity that you simply cannot miss in terms of an email marketing strategy. What you need to do is design your emails in such a way that they become mobile friendly. The mobile strategy could just be the thing that sets you apart from your competitors. Here are some steps that you can take to give a boost to your email marketing tactics.

### Subject is the key

Everything in a Smartphone is really small and navigating it can become a problem. But instead of despairing about this, use it to your advantage. The subject line, which is seen first in an email, should be very strong. It has to be eye-catching and intriguing enough to get the viewer to open it. Make it creative and interesting, yet something that is understandable in the first scan.

## Preheader

A preheader is the text that is visible above the header image. Also known as snippet text, it is the first things that viewers see on the Smartphone. If you write a preheader that evokes interest at first sight, something that is funny or inspiring, you might just acquire a customer/client! Try to add a call-to-action that can be clicked and leads to your website.

## Direct call-to-action

Keep your instructions to the clients direct; the call-to-action should be a bold and clickable text or image so that it is reinforced and people are more inclined to check it out. Make sure you keep in mind the size of the fingers of Smartphone users. Therefore, your clickable call-to-action should be large so as to accommodate all finger sizes.

## Images

Images are catchy; it is as simple and plain as that. People are more inclined to be interested in your business if you provide them with some images. The image of course should be relevant. It should be in connection with the content you put in your email. This way it would not look awkward or out of place.

## Responsive email design

This hasn't become very common yet but more and more people are becoming aware of the importance and advantage of responsive email design. This allows a more optimized performance of email use. It is not easy to construct but you can take the help of your web designer and ask them to provide a template that can be best used for your email.

# Paid advertising

Paid online advertising is a specific genre of advertising that is relatively cheaper than any other form of marketing strategy. Yes free advertising works, but the speed and productivity of paid advertising cannot be compared. There are literally many options when you consider paid advertising. Here are some of the most popular ones, but i'll pick on some in more depth later in the book.

## Pay per click

One of the most effective, cost-proficient and easiest forms of paid advertising, Pay per click works by placing advertisements on search engines, websites and other online sources. Whenever someone clicks on the ad, the business and owner has to pay for it. Some of the most successful tools for Pay per click include the following:

## Google AdWords

Google AdWords is the most famous when it comes to Pay per click advertising. Google allows advertisers to post their promotional text that is saturated with the right keywords, which lets the masses become aware about a certain business. The result can be a huge amount of traffic on your website.

## Bing

The second most used form of Pay per click advertising, Bing works like Google AdWords, but it posts ads on Bing. This is excellent for small business as it requires less money and of course you only have to pay when someone clicks on the advertisement.

## Pay per impression

Pay per impression is the type of advertising where the advertiser has to pay whenever the advertisement appears on any web page. This is more controllable as compared to pay per click, because you can request that your advertisement be shown only a certain number of times. These ads are also usually visually stimulating, and contain a direct call-to-action.

## Pop up ads

These are ads which open a new window in front of the one being currently used. It can also be an entire webpage instead of just an advert. Pop-ups can contain text, images, video or all three of them. You can choose them according to your business requirements.

## Pop-under advertising

Similar to pop-ups, the only difference in pop-unders is that they don't come in front of the open window, but rather go behind them. So when you close your current window you are able to see the advertisement that's behind.

This can work better than pop-ups because people are more likely to close a pop-up window without actually looking at the advertisement. Pop-unders on the other hand, are checked out more often because when people are done with their work they may be more interested in viewing what the ad is about later.

## Banner advertisement

One of the oldest forms of online advertising, banner advertisement is simple and productive. All you have to do is develop a banner, which is informative as well as attractive, and put it up on websites. You can either get it on a search engine, on a specialist website forum, or on a social media website like Facebook, YouTube etc.

The main thing that you need to keep in mind when creating a banner is that most internet users have developed a type of banner blindness where they chose to ignore the banner instead of clicking on it. To prevent this from happening, make sure that you come up with something that immediately captivates the attention of the audience and compels them to click on it.

There is a new strategy called banner remarketing that is worth looking into, where the advert 'follows' the user around. Consider you search on Google for a new sofa, DFS are paying Google for advertising. You later go to a website related to your hobby that displays Googles adverts and an advert for DFS appears, it's very clever, and can make a small business look large due to the sites advertised on.

## Trick banners

It is the type of banner that has been designed to look like a dialogue box, to trick people into clicking on it. It is mostly used when an advertiser is trying to entice a prospective client into viewing the website for some price, discount or other such offer.

## Other banners and ads

Floating banners are banners that keep changing its position on a webpage. It floats around the screen which means that the visitor of the website is forced to take notice and click on it. Pay per action advertising requires that you only pay for the advertisement when you have made an actual sale. These are ideal for all those who are on a budget.

## Affiliate advertising

The best example of Pay per action advertising is affiliate programs. For example, another website can put up your advertisement where you require visitors to sign up for your newsletter. Once a new prospective client signs up for your newsletter, you have to pay for the advertisement. The best thing about affiliate marketing is that you don't really have to pay until and unless someone purchases your services, products or whatever else you advertised about.

## Email marketing

The type of paid online advertising that is sent to prospective clients via an email. It can be in the form of hyperlinks or banners. All you would need to do is ask email generators or newsletter owners if they are willing to sell you some space for your advert. Just make sure that your space is used cleverly by wording the text of your ad simply and creatively.

## Social media

One of the fastest growing places for internet marketing as well as paid advertising, nothing can compare to the power of social media. Websites like Facebook, YouTube, LinkedIn and Twitter can successfully be used to advertise what you do. All you would need to do is create an advert that mentions the services or products you provide and how you can be reached. Give the URL of your website along with your phone number and the physical location of your store, if appropriate.

## Renting websites

There are also some websites that provide space that you can rent for your advertisement. All you have to do is pay a fixed amount and they will allow you some space on a blog or their own pages.

If you can't afford this, you can even try directly contacting bloggers you know. You can request that they give you some space for your business ad and in return you can either mention their names and blogs on your website or you can pay them some money.

# Blog Marketing

Weblog, or blog for short, is a wide spreading online marketing technique. It has been gaining a lot of popularity in recent times, because the act of making personal connections increases the chances of people becoming aware of your business.

It is a well-established fact that people are more interested in knowing who you are rather than what you do, and by giving them an inside look in your personal life makes them connect with you on a whole new level. This results in an increased interest in what you do and how you do it. From becoming your blog reader, they will hopefully become your customers or clients.

So what are blogs and how do they help as a marketing tool? Blogs are like diaries or journals, maintained by the blogger on a regular basis. These mainly contain personal accounts and information that are directly published on the blogging website. There are different types of blog marketing, which are explained below.

## Ads in blogs

This is a very simple process, all you need to do is formulate an advertisement for your business, and have a blogger place it in their blog. The ad can be made of either plain text, a banner, streaming video, flash animation, images, audio clips or text links. You can pay the blogger in money or some other way, like referring your clients to their blogs.

If you don't know any bloggers, you could just search for relevant blogs, contact them directly and then ask about the placement of your ad on their blog.

## Reviews from a blogger

You must have seen many companies using this strategy. What they do is hire bloggers to write reviews about their products. Some companies pay the blogger while others pay them with their own products. Since these bloggers are trusted by their readers, sales drastically increase if the blogger gives positive reinforcement about the product. You can use this marketing technique too by hiring blogger to give reviews about your product or services.

## Becoming a blogger

By far, this is the most productive blogging strategy. When you become a blogger yourself, you are directly in connection with your current clients or future customers. The idea is to let them see who you are as a person, how you live, what you do and at the same time make them aware about your business. You can talk about the struggles, motivations, aims and aspirations that lie behind your company.

## Why blog?

Some other particular reasons why blogging is an excellent idea for businesses are:

## Spread news, events and everything new

The great thing about a blog is that it can feature anything, a news piece, some information you want your customers to know, an event that you might be organizing and other such things.

You can blog about any updates or changes that you introduce in your business. Share anything and everything that you want with your clients very easily and without spending a penny!

## Higher ratings on search engines

Search engines prefer new content over old. So if you post regular blogs search engines will target you favourably. All you have would need to do is to write fresh content in the form of a blog and post it on your website. This does not mean that you have to write a blog daily. Instead, what you can easily do is write a few blogs a month and make sure that you consistently keep doing it.

The best part about a blog compared to a webpage though, is that once read, the webpage becomes old and boring, while the blog can be read again and again, as long as you update it regularly. This will keep driving traffic to your website.

However there is an equal benefit in writing regular and more formal articles for your own website, but it's a different tone to use when writing.

## Become the expert

If you keep trying to write about your company, products and services, there will come a time when it all becomes extremely dull and you will run out of things to say. So how can you progress with your blogs? Write about other things too. Discuss the industry you work in, the requirements of your field, basic information and tutorials. These will keep your audience hooked and will mark you as the expert in your field.

This also gives you an ideal opportunity to engage with your readers/customers. Answer their questions, connect with them on a personal as well as professional level and ask them to come see you for more advice.

## Tweet about It

Blogging gives you the perfect material to Tweet about. Use Twitter and Facebook to spread the word about your blog posts

and get the audience to visit your website. Make sure that you add a link in your social media pages so that everyone can easily access the blogs.

There are many online tools that allow you to create your own blogs. WordPress is one of the easiest to use and gives great results. But blogging is not simply writing whatever comes to your mind. You need to be knowledgeable about a few points. Below I have mentioned some good things to know about creating, maintaining and successfully running a blog.

## Tips for blogging

When you start blogging, make sure that you write things that are interesting and informative. If you keep on harping about yourself or your business without adding any actual useful material in it, people will not bother reading the blog.

So here are some tips that can improve your blog posts

**Originality and individuality** are the two things that will set your blog apart. If your blogs are like all the rest who write in your business, then why should anybody read yours? Try to create a difference and bring some new ideas. Maintain your individuality instead of becoming mainstream.

**Target market** has to be kept in mind. If you are selling jewellery but focusing on the annoyances of the local council, then you are as off the mark as you can get. You do not want to waste precious time or money by not keeping the target audience in consideration.

**Tone makes a difference**, if your blog sounds too rigid or too superficial, people will feel it. A great blog is one that has a conversational tone, which informs but is not condescending or arrogant. Determine all the things you yourself would like to know about a certain topic and answer those questions for

your readers. Don't use long or convoluted sentences. Keep your words simple and connected.

**Your audience are not experts in your field**, you understand the technical terminology and concepts, and they don't. Your job is to make things sound simple and relatable. Remember that all kinds of people will be reading your blogs, so you have to write in such a way that all can follow it. Always keep in mind that you aren't the only supplier in the market.

**Always be honest**, don't try to hide things or deceive people. You have to build a relationship of trust and reliability. People are not foolish and the internet has all the information within easy reach. So make sure that the information and ideas you give your clients are factual and realistic.

# Article Marketing

Article marketing has been in the field as long as print media has. It started off as a news piece or info piece in newspapers that business owners used to give. Now with the power of internet marketing, article publishing has also gone online.

The basic concept of article marketing is simple. You write an article and put it on your website, as well as give it to other article directory websites to publish. When writing an article for your own website, you don't have to follow any particular rules, but the article must offer solid information.

On the other hand, if you are writing articles that you want published on another website, then there are many things you have to keep in mind. But wherever the article may be for, the core idea is to give out information in such a way that the user is convinced into coming to you for help.

Most articles are search engine optimized, with choice keywords that are relevant to the business field of the article owners. The articles that are published on directories have a call to action with a URL directing readers to the writers or business owners' website. Why use article marketing when you already have blogs?

Since articles are informative, they increase knowledge of the consumers. They also help to spread awareness which is good in building the reputation of the business. When your name is splashed all over other websites with honest and accurate information, people are more likely to trust you and seek you in their time of need.

Of course, increasing traffic to the website is one of the best aspects of article marketing. The more article directories know

about you, the better your search engine results will be. It will also make your website more useful.

The traffic that comes to your website will not be just random people that read the article and left without actually turning into leads. Instead, only the target audience, who actually need your services and products will visit your website.
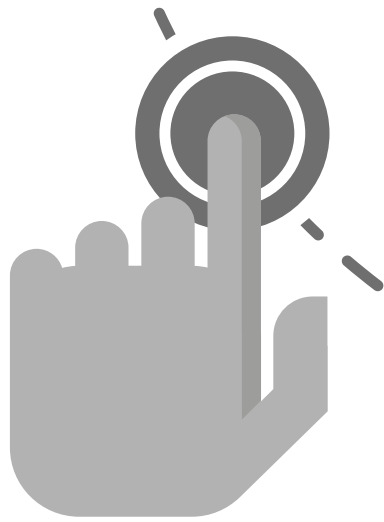
## Article writing: the dos and don'ts

But you have to realise before going ahead and writing your own article, is that there are some key elements in a well-functioning and productive article. Here are some things that you should know about article writing:

## Intention is key

When writing content or having it written, make sure that the article is not simply randomly collected information. The intention should be to give your readers some solid advice or ideas. If there is no connection within the written content, meaning the article hasn't been properly planned out, then it becomes senseless.

For example, if the article is about the importance of consuming organic food, then make sure that you stick to the topic. Only mention why it is important and what it does to the body. Don't start harping on about the types of organic food, their prices and the expenses of consuming inorganic products. This only makes the topic irrelevant and boring. Keep in mind that the reader is there because s/he wants to

know about the importance of organic food, nothing more, and nothing less.

## Don't try too hard

If in every other phrase, your article mentions how good your product or services are and how nothing else can compete with it, then you are trying way too hard. Sell your business, but do so very subtly. Don't automatically assume that by pushing the client you will get what you want. When you keep on about how great you are, you are in reality irritating the reader, who came to the article for information! Try to give information and convert them instead of forcing them to acknowledge your product/service.

## High quality is a must

Just because you are getting your article published in many directories, it by no means implies that your quality should suffer. Make it a point to ensure that the article content is 100% professional, up-to-date and excellent. Be it the language or the writing style, all must be top quality. Don't ever try to use slang words or derogatory terms in your article.

## Use keywords wisely

The use of keywords in an article is important but if you stuff too many, your article will be rejected. They should be related to your subject and the percentage should not be too high. Do your research about the topic and then come up with the most used keywords possible so that your article gets a high ranking on search engines.

## Invest in article marketing

Article marketing can do a lot of business for you and increase your sales. Therefore, you need to make sure that the writings you publish on your own website as well as in the article directories should be interesting, catchy and informative. If you aren't sure about your writing skills or don't have the time to sit down and pay specific attention to the art of writing an article, consult professionals.

Professional writers have been there and done everything. They know that your target market require some specific pointers and will be able to give you an article that will double the money you invest in the advertising.
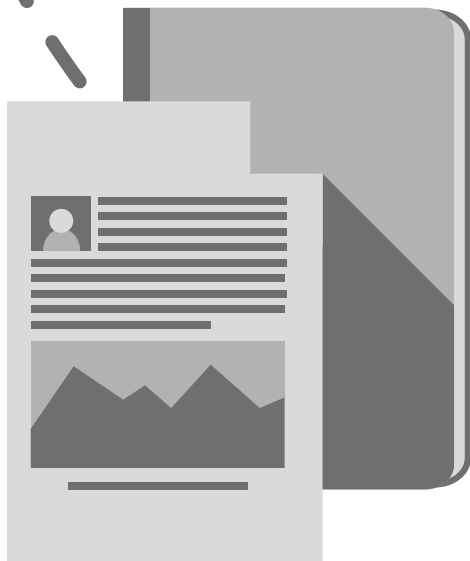
# Press Release Marketing

Another form of content internet marketing is press release marketing. Press releases are news pieces that are either published on your own website or submitted to online newspapers, print media, social media, or published in online directories. It is an announcement about something new or newsworthy so that target audience might learn about it.

The main idea is to create a sensation or sense of urgency among the target market and the media. But the key thing to remember is that a press release is not just about promotion, it is actually about the news itself. If your PR simply focuses on the promotion of your business, then there is very little chance that it will gain as much attention as you may wish for.

There are many advantages of having an online press release. First and foremost is that it helps in increasing traffic to your website. If you mention the name of your company, have the press release search engine optimized and have backlinks to your own website, people will pay attention to you.

Secondly, if you are new to the world of business, then a press release will help introduce your company into the business world. People will find out that there is a new organization in the market that is providing expert services and products. This will help with your publicity, as well as increase your reputation.

But all of this can only truly be achieved when your press release has the required elements to be noticed. Below are all the points that you need to keep in mind when you use press release marketing.

## Headline, keywords and quotes

A headline is the one thing that caters to the success of your press release. This is the only thing that is going to capture the attention of the reader. If it fails to do so, then your article has failed.

Make absolutely certain that your press release contains a keyword so that it is search engine optimized. Keywords, as I said above, are a must for press releases. But this definitely does not mean that you have to stuff the PR full of keywords. What you need to do is pick the best 3-4 and insert them in such a way that they subtly blend in with the text.

A press release is not authentic until it has a direct quote in it. You can take the statement of any representative of the company, including you as the owner and insert it in the release. A direct quote gives authenticity to any press release and strengthens it.

## Links and contact information

If the press release does not have contact information and links in it, it becomes pointless. How is a prospective client supposed to contact you after becoming aware about you? Keep in mind that by not providing this detail, you are frustrating the reader. Give a direct link that refers to your website so that getting in touch with you is as easy as clicking on a mouse.

## Consult a professional

If you don't have any writing experience, don't try to write a press release yourself. Creating a press release can be relatively technical and instead of trying and failing, contact a professional. You will have to pay some money, but the end result will be a higher number of leads and increase in your profit. Make sure you hire the best so that the outcome exceeds your expectations.

Give some pictures and videos, if you have any, to the expert and ask them to add that to the press release. This will make the PR more digestible.

## Send it to the right people at the right time

When submitting your press release, don't only put it up on your website.

Send it to as many online directories, magazines and newspapers as you can. Try to remain consistent in your press release marketing strategy. Remember, this is not just a one-time thing and will not work effectively enough if you only send in a press release once in a while. Your timings should be such that they immediately take in the target audience. Do try not to make your press releases time constricted though. Internet marketing is all about keeping information specific yet general enough that it should apply to any time period the readers decide to pursue them in.

# Social Media

Free, speedy and one of the most effective forms of internet marketing, social media websites can be one of the best tools for your business advertising. You can use them at any time without having to pay much, if at all. The reason why social media marketing is so effective, is because people from all over the world, no matter what age, religion or race they come from, use it. It is a part of so many people's lives and continues to grow so much so that there is a greater possibility of finding out about something on Facebook then there is of getting to know about it from the newspaper.

This is the reason why more and more entrepreneurs, business people and marketers are starting to expand the way social media websites are used for business advertising. It can safely be said that those who are not on social media websites, are sure to remain unnoticed, if not fade away completely over the decades to come. With the help of social media you can popularize your business, connect with your target market and learn all there is to know about the current trends.

The one rule that has to be followed with social media is that you have to remain in touch. You can't expect to Tweet one day, upload a video on YouTube the other, update a status on Facebook the next and put an image on Pinterest the following day and then forget about all these things for the upcoming month. You have to answer and get in touch with those who have left messages for you. Only then will you be able to get something out of your social media marketing. If you remain consistent, you will see a rise in popularity, productivity and overall success of your company.

Below I have explained in detail some of the things that can help with the major social media networks.

Don't forget it's called Social Media for a reason – socialise and engage with your followers, don't broadcast to them.

# Facebook

The world's biggest social networking website, Facebook, currently has more than 1.8 billion users all over the world. What could be better for a business person? So how can you use Facebook for the growth and prosperity of your business?

The main thing that you need to keep in mind is that even though you should stay professional as a business owner, Facebook is an informal platform, where people will joke, get offensive and even make fun of you. So be prepared to deal with all that.

At the same time, you will need to maintain the perfect balance between professional, friendly and informal. Do not try to become a friend to your prospective or current clients, yet at the same time don't push them away. Make a healthy and comfortable relationship so that there is no communication gap and ensure the business transaction is smooth. Never, ever try to take advantage of your customer as you will lose credibility and trust. Here are some ways you can use Facebook as an internet marketing tool.

## Make a business page

Instead of making a profile, create a business page. This is because with a profile you can only add a specific number of friends, whereas a Facebook page will allow you to have unlimited followers.

Initially it will take some time for people to find out about you and become your follower. This is the time where you can take the help of your family, friends and acquaintances.

Another perfect marketing tool to promote your Facebook page is the use of your website and email list. As soon as you create a

page, send out an announcement that you are now on Facebook and your customers/ clients can reach you there too.

On your page introduce everything from your basic information to who you are, what you do, where you are located, as well as the link to your website. Include photos, images, videos and anything else that will capture the attention of visitors. Don't think that once you have uploaded these things, you can forget about the page and become famous. This will never happen. You have to stay constantly connected to your page and keep updating information and answering your audience.

## Updates and status

As mentioned above, updating is a must on Facebook. That is literally the only way to retain the attention of your clients or prospective customers. Keep in mind that there is a lot of competition on Facebook and users are like kids, who are easily distracted. To keep them hooked to your page, make regular updates and statuses. Give out as much information as you can and give a direct call-to-action.

Try to use an image or video along with your status. Video is more likely to captivate an audience. Another benefit is that, images/videos are easy to share. Just make sure that your image/video is relevant to your page and update.

## Remain original and creative

There are too many people out there who make the mistake of copying from others. You need to come up with something that is creatively original. Remain honest and never make fun of other pages. If you can't support them, then just ignore them. Ridiculing someone else will be taken negatively and create a bad name for you.

## Hold off on questions

If you have just started a Facebook page and have only a limited following, do not make the error of asking questions in your status. It will look very embarrassing when only one person answers back, or when nobody does! Try to keep the questions to a minimum even when you do acquire a huge fan list.

## Always answer when asked a question

Following up and remaining in touch with your fans is a must if you want to have a large fan base. When you don't reply, people automatically assume that you are unapproachable and don't want to remain a part of your page. Be polite and friendly to your potential clients.

# Twitter

Unlike Facebook, Twitter is a relatively professional domain. It is the place where you can share your views, ideas and generally speak about whatever is on your mind. In terms of internet marketing, Twitter is great because not only do many people use it but also because it's a great platform for getting your voice heard.

Therefore, people who are looking for a particular business are more likely to come looking for you. So how can you make yourself stand out?

### Tweet often

By tweeting regularly, you are optimizing your online presence. Try to use keywords that are related to your business so that you become visible on search engines. Another benefit of tweeting often is that it allows people to remain attuned to the progress of your business. You can include anything in your tweets from news to promotional offers, discounts to sales and everything in between. You can even have run competitions to increase sales. Just try not to exaggerate or lie when you use Twitter because that can make you seem unreliable and dishonest.

### Follow others to gain more followers

When you follow other businesses or people on
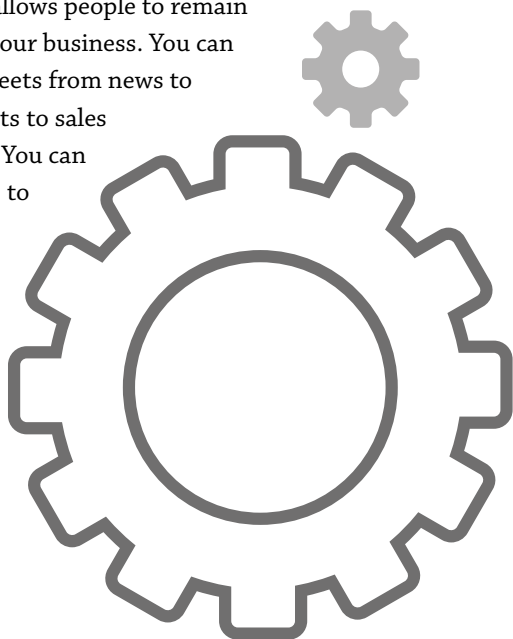
Twitter, they mostly follow you back. This can increase your following and help spread the word about you. Don't just follow others, also Tweet to them and promote their businesses. This too will have a reciprocal effect.

## Remain in touch

Like Facebook, this is a must on Twitter too. If you tweet one day and disappear for the next three days, a lot might happen that you would miss out on. Listen to what your customers say so that you can improve or satisfy them. This is one of the best opportunities to stay connected with your clients. If a current customer has something negative to say, don't get upset; instead try to appease them as best as you can.

You can also send links of your other social media profiles, as well as the link to your website. Make sure you give a very clear call-to-action so that people know what they are expected to do.
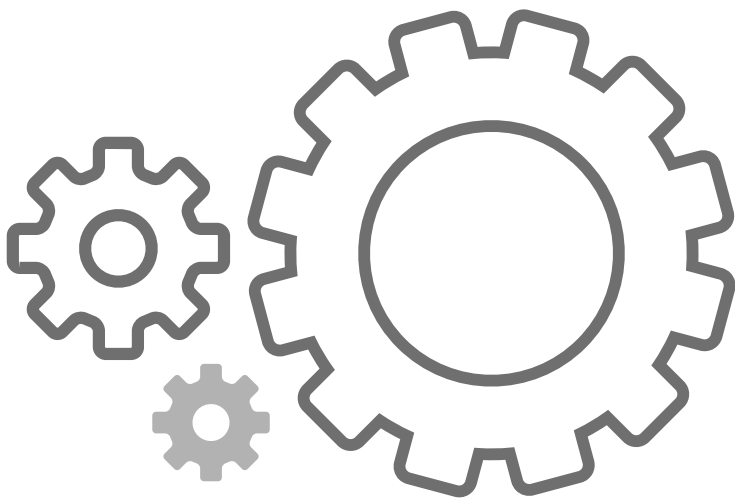
# YouTube

If pictures are powerful, videos are even more so! Since the time of its rise to fame in 2006, YouTube has become the top choice for people who are looking for videos. This is why it has become a number one video internet marketing tool.

YouTube allows you to upload videos that include everything like TV/movie clips, original videos, educational videos, music videos and video blogging. All an individual needs to do is create an account and start uploading whatever video s/he has developed.

The advantage of becoming accessible on YouTube not only shows diversity and increases ratings in search engines, it also allows all kinds of people to become interested in your business. By going on this social media website, you have an even greater chance of getting noticed by your target audience.

So what are the ways that you can best use the video site in such a way that your business gets maximum exposure and coverage? Below some the ideas you can use to become YouTube optimized.

## Create a channel

By creating a channel, you can upload a video anytime you want, without having to worry about time or place. You have your own channel, as long as you remember your password and have a prepared video at hand; you can simply upload it, no matter where you might be.

The channel icon is somewhat like the display picture of your profile, therefore you need to make sure that it captures attention instantly. Also, instead of using your own name, give your channel the name of your business.

When you create videos for YouTube, try and upload ones that are 2560px by 1440px. YouTube itself recommends these pixels because they work best for all kinds of devices be they laptops, desktops, tablets or phones.

## Focus on the content

It's not just the written content you need to keep an eye on. Videos are just as important. Your videos have to be interesting, informative, useful and creative. Of course, you should never make the mistake of uploading spam or videos that violate copyright issues. Keep in mind that you are not just selling your product or services; rather you are creating a video log that is as per the needs of your client/customers' requirements.

You can develop videos that teach some task like DIY tutorials or have an online Q&A session, where you answer the most frequently asked questions in your industry; you can make an arrangement of your new products or services and talk about them, or even create videos of how your office staff celebrated Christmas or Halloween. Not only do personal videos attract people more, but it gives them something to relate to.

## Interview clients

One of the best ways to attain a higher percentage of traffic for your channel as well as website and get increased sales too, is by referral. People will give more credibility to what others say about your business as opposed to you blowing your own trumpet. Don't make up fake reviews, instead interview existing clients.

An easy way to do this is to interview a few of your clients and post videos on your YouTube channel. You can also ask your clients to make videos in which they use your product or show the result of your services and how satisfied they are with the job. This way, more people will be inclined to consult you when needed. Mobile phone quality is fine and an amateur video actually adds a personal, authentic touch.

## Search engine optimized videos

If you have videos on YouTube but nobody is able to locate them, what's the point? You get no coverage whatsoever. To make your channel more easily accessible, put keywords in the title of your videos. By adding a colon after the keyword, your title will become more highlighted. Be descriptive and add your entire website URL in the description. But don't forget to link to your channel from your website or even embed videos from YouTube straight onto your website.
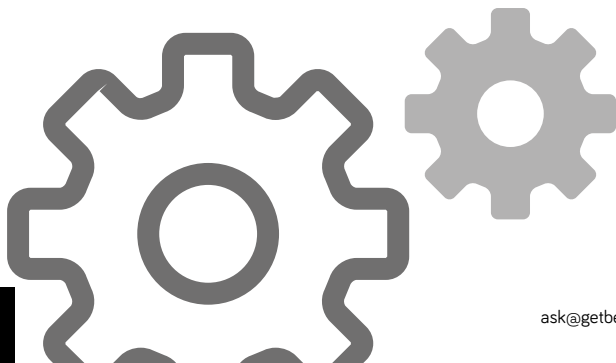
# Pinterest

Another social media website, Pinterest is where you can display the beauty and creativity of your business brand. This platform allows you to showcase images in a unique fashion. Pinterest allows you to post pictures like you do on a pinboard.

The best part about Pinterest is that it allows businesses to promote their business by making a type of visual store, where people can look at the products and services and decide whether they want to shop or not. You can add the price of your products, and a short description.

The thing that comes to mind is this; how can you use Pinterest to attract the maximum number of fans? Here are some tips you can use to enhance your experience.

### Make a business profile

Make your own business profile and name it after your business. Add an About You section so that people can know who you are and what you do. The photo should either depict your logo or the picture of your physical store. Add the URL of your website in the contact information so that prospective clients can easily reach you.

### Pin and create

Your pinboard should be colourful, thematic and have lots and lots of pictures. You will have to come up with names for your board, so come up with ideas that are unique and catchy. These are the words that will get the audience hooked to what you do.

Pin up lots of pictures and other content constantly. If you pin up pictures only once a week, and then forget to do so for the next three week, your Pinterest marketing will not work. Make sure that the content you pin is top quality. There is no point

of an image that is blurred or offensive. You will reduce your number of visitors if you post these up.

## Tutorials work

Add tutorials to your pinboard. The videos that you put on your YouTube channels can also be pinned here. Make lots of DIYs, even on topics that might not be directly related (but closely related) to your business and put them up. These will get you many fans and heavy traffic on your website.

## Be vigilant

Keep a regular check on your followers' pinboards. That will make you aware about their needs, requirement and interest. Once you know what people like and are looking for, you can update your Pinterest profile accordingly. By showing consideration, you also flatter your fans.
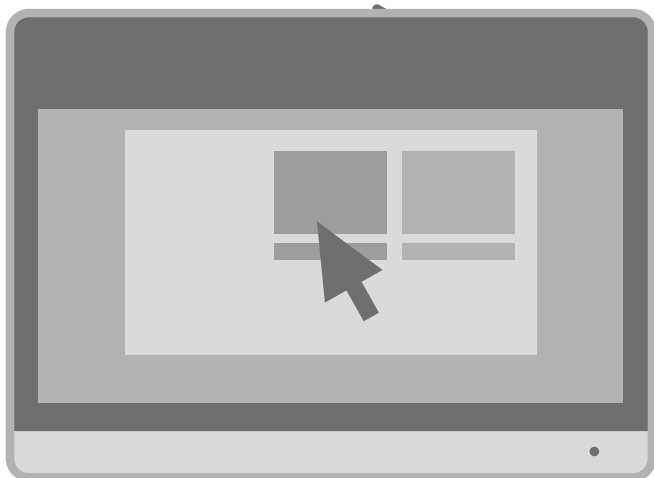
# LinkedIn

LinkedIn is considered the hub for all those who are serious about their business, it's the Facebook for business/professionals. It lets you create your work related profile, what you do and all your expertise. This is the reason why LinkedIn is one of the best social media marketing tools.

Here are some ways you can use it to promote your business:

## Be thorough and compelling

When using a professional website such as LinkedIn, it is a must that you be very thorough with your profile details. Put up all the information about yourself, what you do, what you sell, your location and your contact information. This is because professionals are going to be looking for you and you need to act like a true business person to let them know of your existence.

If you don't create an interest for the reader, you are likely to lose them. Make sure you add a unique storyline with a compelling tone so that prospective customers are drawn towards you.

## Join groups and get in touch

This is important because the more you connect, the more your business gets exposure, which is the key to a successful business. By joining groups and connecting your people, you never know where you will come across your target audience. They will come to you with opportunities that you wouldn't have even thought of. And make sure you promote others so that they are compelled to promote you back.

# A Bit More on Pay Per Click

I wanted to go into more detail on a few elements of Pay Per Click, because of the fantastic results that can be had currently. Now these are only introductions, whole books have been written on each part, but hopefully it's enough to get you started.

# Google AdWords

With Google, you can pay to advertise in the Search Results, Shopping, Display Network, Gmail, YouTube and more is being added every year.

Google AdWords Search is when you pay for your advert to to be shown at the top of the search results, so you know that someone is actually looking for your product or service. The only other ways to be seen in this instance would be through SEO or Google Maps, both of with you're relying on Google to decide to show your listing or not.

Google is all about relevance, what they show you (the results, maps, and ads) when you search has to be relevant to what you typed in, the page you click through to has to be relevant to what you typed in; the more relevant, the happier you are, the more you use them - it's how they became so dominant.

When you pay to advertise, the more effort you put into making your advert as relevant as possible to the keywords you're bidding for, then the more relevant the page on your website is to the keywords you bid for, the more Google will reward you. They do this by raising what they call your Quality Score, this in turn lowers how much you have to pay. So someone why is quick to setup their adverts may well be paying more than the person who

puts in the effort. To a certain extent, you can just throw money at Google, but ultimately, relevance is more important, because they want their customers, the searchers, to be happy, and they're happy when the website they click through to is relevant to what they searched for in the first place.

You can also show products on the Google Shopping system, which automatically updates based on your eCommerce website. These costs can be a heck of a lot cheaper than search results and can work well for one-off purchases, when people are searching for specific things. A great part of Google Shopping is that the price and an image are shown, helping with the conversion process of people actually buying.

Google Display Network is when banner adverts are shown, either to people who have or haven't been to your website. So you could advertise on other people's websites, that are part of the network, your products and services. Quite often seen on blogs, articles websites, newspapers, classifieds, directories. The person who owns the website where the ads are shown gets commission every click, which is their incentive for showing them. This can be great when you need to educate people that you exist. You can also show ads to people that have been to your website, called remarketing, and even get more specific, such as people that have been but not purchased, or not signed up for your free eBook!

YouTube is very interesting at the moment, because of the importance of video on the web. You can show your video at the start of other videos, and also in other places, but this is the main one. So on relevant videos, based on what google knows about the video and about the person watching it, your video ad can be shown, you only pay when someone watches the video, not if they skip it.

# Social Media Pay Per Click

Now you can advertise on LinkedIn, Twitter, Pinterest and others, but i'm going to focus on Facebook Ads here, because that's where i'm seeing fantastic results for all companies, irrespective of if your customers are the public, business owners, charities, or anything else.

Facebook is like leaflet drops, only better. Imagine if you could do a leaflet drop to only the households that had 24-34 year old 7 females without children, or household where business owners lived - wouldn't that be fab targeting!

Well with Facebook, you can show an advert to people of certain demographics, and there's a lot of them. I could target men over 55 who speak Welsh and like playing board games. People who have Facilities Manager as their job title.

Facebook ads work best with video or eye catching images, and they're pretty cheap still. Again they reward you on relevance, with lower costs, just like Google. You can run Facebook Ads to get more likes on a page, click through to websites, watch videos, download eBooks, and much more.

Going forward, just like with Google and SEO, natural posts on Facebook from businesses are going to be harder and harder, it's all about the paid ads - that's what's going to get seen by users. Remember, people on Facebook are pretty much always on their phone, there's lots of photos of their friends food you have to compete against, let alone the back to school photos, broken arm photos and dancing pets! To get seen be your target audience, paid ads are

going to be the way forward. The more you can understand your target audience, publish the most relevant message to them on a medium they use, the cheaper it'll be for you and the more impact you'll have.

# Stories

Google AdWords can be very beneficial to a business, but also a massive drain on cash if setup incorrectly. It's very easy to setup an advertising campaign, but also very easy to set it up poorly, which is where money is wasted.

An example of this, is for an eCommerce website selling gifts. Google rewards relevance, the more relevant the user's keywords are to yours, your ad, and your landing page, the better your Quality Score, the cheaper your costs. If any part of the chain of relevance is weak the costs rise. In this particular example, the chap had a video being shown demonstrating his products on YouTube and it was initially costing 3p a view. But then the advert stopped showing, he rang Google for their advice, and was told the solution was to increase his budget to 5p a view.

The actual problem was the video wasn't really that relevant, it had no call to action. People were watching the video wanting to find out what it was about, not to click through to buy the product, so people watched the video, but didn't click, therefore the quality score went down, costs went up, so the short term fix was to increase budget. But all that would happen is that this would keep happening, he would have ended up paying more and more to get more views, yet still no sales, because the video wasn't relevant in the first place.

A better video, with a proper call to action, understanding who the target audience are, what the right message is to deliver to them via the media of YouTube would have sorted the issue and kept costs down at 3p, or less.

The beauty of Digital Marketing is the precise way you can measure your marketing return on investment. If i said to you, spend £250 and you'll make £5,000 every time, would you do it? That's what happened in this next example, after some planning and experimentation, some Google AdWords Search campaigns were setup, along with some Facebook Ads, pushing people to a page which showed video, testimonials, content, and a very clear call to action - fill in this form and we'll send you the information you need. Upon completion of the form, an email goes off with a brochure and the user details are logged. A few nurturing emails and phone calls later, and some leads would become sales.

Now this was then refined further to investigate, of the people that actually bought, what time of day and day of week did they first fill in the form on the web page. It turned out that 90% of the people who ended up buying (for £5,000) came on a Tuesday evening, Thursday evening or Sunday morning. So all other times were stopped and all marketing budget poured into these 3 time slots. The result, a highly efficient campaign that was so measurable, that for every £250 spent, it lead to a £5,000 sale. Now that's a return I would happily spend more on!

A lot of marketing these days is focused around a soft sale, capturing data, nurturing relationships and then letting the sale happen naturally. In this example, people were driven to a web page offering a free eBook download. Upson signing up, the eBook

was sent, then an automatic nurturing email every 4 days for at least 6 months. In a day of prep time, the adverts were created, page setup, download email written and 42 emails written. This process was then completely automated. After some optimisation, it cost £1.05 for every eBook signup, for every 75 signups, 1 would become a paying client, worth £3,600 a year - £78.75 to make £3,600, not bad really!

Facebook Groups are providing a lot of marketing power at the moment, and it's only growing. People are starting groups on Facebook for audience capture. There's one where people post pictures of their beloved Whippets (it's a breed of dog for those wondering) - a picture in there of an injured dog will get tens of thousands of likes. Now to me, it's more interesting who the group admin is. Most people leave their Facebook profiles exposed, so with some investigation, surprise surprise, she owns an eCommerce shop selling dog accessories. They've got a wonderful line in Whippet collars, jumpers, beds, etc. Now she's not selling to the group yet, but i have no doubt that shortly, she'll just start dropping in a few sales posts, or getting other friends, staff, group members, posting about the amazing collar they found on a website, and posting the link.

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# Last Words

Many of the topics deserve more information, some are just a brief overview and could warrant a book of their own. Not every topic is right for every business. The thing that works best is trial and error. You should make use of the different types of internet marketing to see what works best for you. Do your own research and consult a professional to promote your business successfully and increase the overall sale of your products or services.

## Get in Touch

If you would like to discuss anything raised in this book, or would like help in growing your business by using Internet Marketing, please feel free to get in touch with me, Ben Wheeler, by email on ask@getbensbook.com.

**Internet marketing is a vast and daunting subject that causes much confusion amongst small business owners. So many just don't know where to start and often end up doing nothing or wasting time on the wrong things.**

This book aims to give an overview of the options available in the field of digital marketing and allows you to make a decision as to what to investigate further and utilise for your own business.

**❝** … at last a book that is aimed at us small business owners that is plain and simple to understand …

**About the Author**
Ben wheeler is a multi award winning entrepreneur, marketing consultantand managing director of a digital agency with over 14 years experience of marketing small businesses using the internet.

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