

Build a Website and They Won't Come!

What's that expression...build a better mousetrap and they will come. If you're building mousetraps, this statement might be true. When it comes to websites, however, this is not the case.

A Beautiful Website

A beautiful website is nothing more than a "beautiful website" if there are no visitors coming to the site. A website alone does not produce traffic. Without traffic, of course, there cannot be visitors who can be converted into customers. A website can be informative, but one of the most important purposes is to secure customers...converting traffic to eventual dollars. This doesn't happen automatically or overnight. Website visitors must, also, be more than just "visitors." A website can have traffic without having any "relevant" traffic...those visitors who are likely potential customers.

Search Engine Optimization

Small businesses often times have a false impression that all that is needed is a great website and, boom, instant traffic and instant customers. Oh, how easy business would be if it was this simple, but it's not. With intense competition on the Internet, a business must be proactive in securing traffic rather than taking a passive approach that will rarely produce desired results.

A website must obtain optimum SEO (search engine optimization) to be effective. Unless a business owner has considerable knowledge in this area (which is usually not the case), an SEO expert should be consulted. So often, money is put into the development of a website with no forethought as to how visitors are going to be attracted to the website other than a web address on business cards or other printed forms of advertising. This results in an investment loss and disappointing website outcomes.

From an SEO perspective, visitors searching the Internet must be able to find websites that are "on point" for their searches. Without SEO optimization, potential customers will not be able to find a business simply because it has a website. Without SEO optimization, the most dynamic website will only be visited by individuals who already have a website address...direct traffic versus organic traffic.

SEO is a process rather than an overnight success. Keyword phrases must be studied for traffic patterns combined with content management, directory listings, and other forms of linking. Search engines are continually revising algorithms meaning that SEO is always a work-in-progress. Although a website because of proper SEO work might hit a top spot one day, it can lose its place quite quickly if the work is not continuous to retain the high ranking. SEO takes months to see real results and is never a finished product. A rule to remember is that whenever a company is at the "top of the mountain," another company with their own SEO work is ready to compete for the top spot. The space is broad at the bottom but very narrow at the top!

Pay Per Click

Pay per click (PPC) advertising is another way to secure website traffic. Keyword phrases are bid on and paid for to secure small ads at the top and sides of website searches. When a visitor clicks on the ad, they are taken directly to the business' website and the website pays for the click. If relevant traffic is directed that can be converted into something positive (sales, sign-ups, calls, etc.), then a PPC campaign can convert advertising dollars into profitable sales. If, however, clicks are never "converted," then a PPC campaign can be costly with no positive results. As with SEO, this is not an area for a novice. Costs and benefits must be constantly reviewed with PPC campaigns revised based on analytical results.

Social Media

Years ago, it was just a website. Then sophisticated SEO and PPC evolved. Now comes social media that adds a bit more complexity to the already "scientific" mix. To obtain the streaming traffic that all businesses want for their websites, it is not enough to stop with SEO. Businesses are now dependent on social media to help "spread their word" with special offers, recommendations, and content bits of information.

If a business is not taking full advantage of Facebook, Twitter, Google+, etc., they are not operating with the full power currently provided by the Internet. Social media allows businesses to make various types of contacts with geometric leaps. Rather than relying on a small circle of individual contacts, social media allows a business to take advantage of the multitude of contacts that all of their contacts have. In the context of social media, one plus one does not equal two!

Proactive Not Passive

Today's use of the Internet for business purposes can no longer be passive. Businesses must be proactive in driving visitors to their websites, and then knowing how to convert those visitors into taking some type of action desired by the business. Technology changes at lightning speed, which necessitates business to keep up with the changes. Don't be left behind in this area.