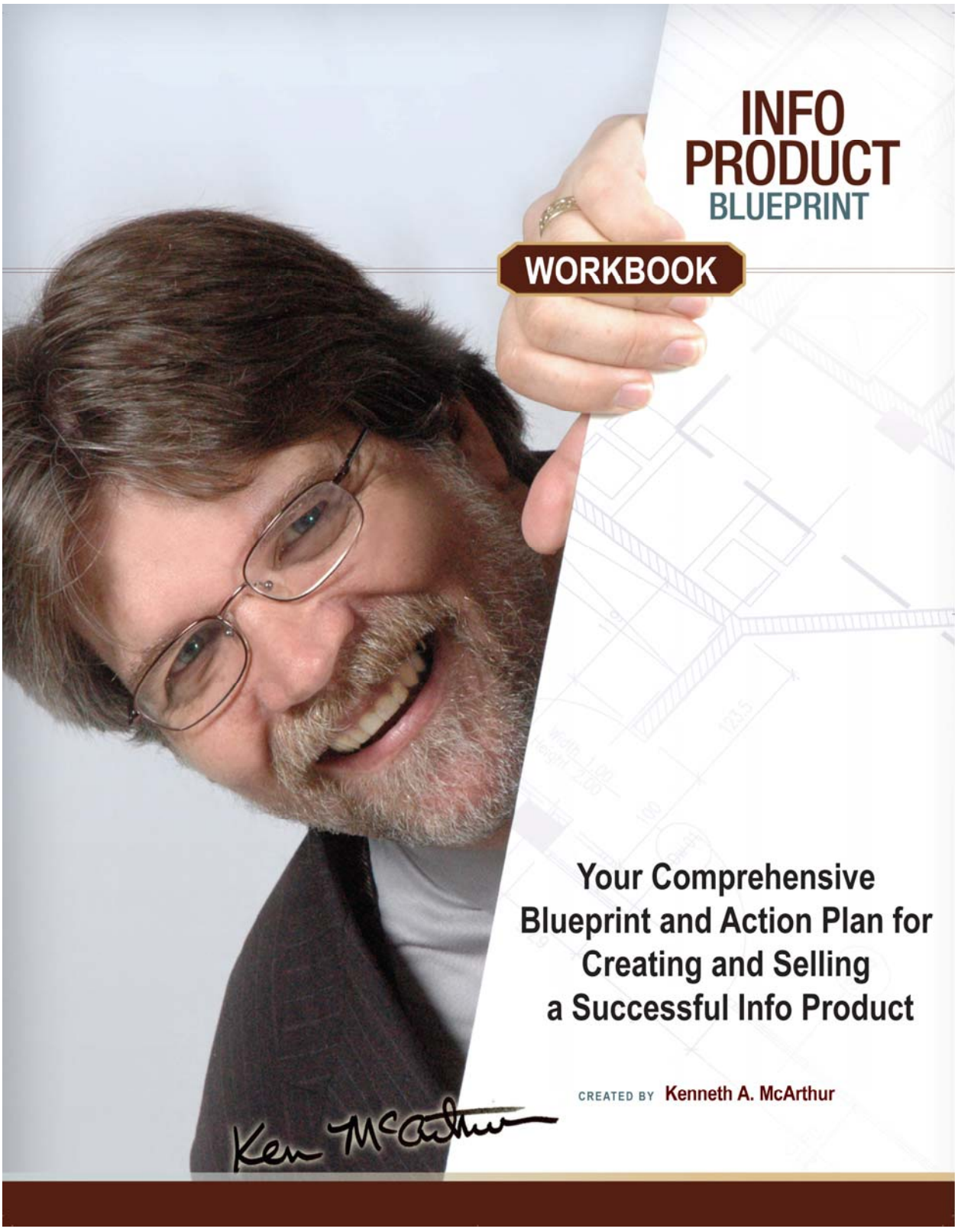
INFO
PRODUCT
BLUEPRINT
WORKBOOK
Your Comprehensive
Blueprint and Action Plan for
Creating and Selling
a Successful Info Product
CREATED BY Kenneth A. McArthur
Ken McArthur

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INSTRUCTION SHEET

Congratulations on taking action and starting your journey to create your Info Product!

One of the first things I would like for you to realize is that this will take work. For some people this will be one of the toughest things you have ever done in your life.

Build A Success Path

In order to get the most out of this workbook you will want to study it several times. I recommend that as you are going through the workbook you take notes and use highlighters.

As you go through each module, break the sections down to see if each area is one you personally want to tackle or will hire or partner with someone who is an expert in that area.

Answer the Questions and Design Your Plan

As you proceed through each module make sure you pay attention to the questions. As you answer each question follow through with the action steps. These actions steps are designed to make sure you stay on track and accomplish your goal-your very own info product.

Tips And Hints

Italics: Throughout the workbook if you see part of the article in italics, this means that section is from Dan Giordano the workbook editor. Dan will sometimes introduce a contributor, give an overview of the section, or add some comments at the end of a section. It's just our way of letting you know a different person is writing, not the author of the section.

Section Overview: At the start of each section you'll have an overview of the article. As we have many contributors, you'll receive a brief introduction of the author. (For a more detailed contributor information go to the Appendix for information on Info Product Blueprint Contributors).

Things You Will Learn: In the boxes at the start of each topic you will find a list of key points covered in the section. Other points will be covered, but the section emphasis is on the ones in the box.

Notes: Take notes as you read. This is designed to be a working tool for you. So mark it up, highlight and write notes. We want you to succeed and noting important or ah-ha's will help you when designing your plan.

Questions: In the workbook, there are questions included to guide you in the development of your own info product. Take the time to thoughtfully answer the questions. This is the basis of your plan. Some questions will look simple and even repetitive. But it's all part of the blueprint. So take the time and invest in yourself. You will use the information to develop your product and your action plan.

Be patient with yourself. There's a lot of information included in Info Product Blueprint. We've included audios, video and plenty of printed material to help you in your product development. We're already planned on some more updated material that will be posted on the resource page. So make sure you register for the updates (www.infoproductblueprint.com/developer).

We want this to be your reference tool, your guidebook.

YOUR Blueprint for developing an info product.

Seize your opportunity and share your success with us.

The Info Product Blueprint Team

Kenneth A. McArthur

Alysan Delaney-Childs, Project Manager and Editor
Dan Giordano, Workbook Manager and Editor
Michelle Alvarez, Design, Layout, Copy Editor
Ben Blakesley, Audio Editor

Info Product Blueprint
1st Edition

Designing Your Website

Module 6

Module 6: Designing Your Website

Info Product Blueprint was created by
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Info Product Blueprint
1st Edition

Designing Your Website

Module 6

Section 1: Websites That Sell

By Adam Ray

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Section 1

Websites That Sell

Your website is your salesperson for your info product. Make sure your website is created to sell, not just inform. Whether you use a program like Dreamweaver, a template or hire a website designer you need to understand what to include and expect from your website. Adam Ray of PageOne Real Estate takes you through the critical points you need to include in your website.

What you will learn in this Section:

- Why you need to give your web designer the sales message to include on your website
- Why tweaking a website can improve your conversion

There are literally millions of websites out there. Perhaps you even have a site for your business. When creating a website with the intention of generating leads and increasing sales, several important factors must be taken into consideration. Your business is sure to see the profits once you understand the correct process for building a successful site. To produce a website that sells, keep the following points in mind:

- The Website Itself
- Driving Traffic to the Site
- Converting Traffic into Leads
- Follow-up
- Testing

Before shopping for a site designer, create a general layout. What type of feel do you want for your site? Consider your sales message and imagine how it will look on a screen. Prepare an effective sales scrip prior to building your site, this will pay off tremendously in the end. Remember, it is not the job of your Web Designer to sell your product.

The website itself should be visually appealing. Colors and images are important, but should not distract from the overall objective of the site, your product.

It is important to keep both the content and aesthetics of your landing page as simple and concise as possible. A potential customer should be able to easily navigate your site without feeling overwhelmed by information. If a visitor has any reason to leave your site, you have lost a sale.

Driving traffic to your site is the next step building a successful website. After all, what is the point of having a website if it is never seen? The easiest way to promote your website is by accessing your existing database. Let current customers, as well as prospects, know that you have a website as a new source for information. Describe the content and be sure to tell them the web address.

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Another important way to get hits to your page is through search engines, such as Google, Yahoo, or MSN. The beauty of the search engine is that it is direct marketing in its purest form. You are on the path to success if your site is in front of a person searching for your product. The hardest part is getting your site to the eyes of the consumer.

Once a query is entered, a search engine results page (SERP) comes up with websites that best match the keywords. Although several pages of sites come up, users rarely advance past the first or second page. Being on the first page of a SERP means more visitors, and ultimately, more sales.

There are two ways to get your site on the SERP. The first is by paid placement and the second is through natural, or organic, results.

Paid placements are the highlighted sites found at the very top and to the right of the SERP. Search engines charge an exorbitant amount of money for these slots, depending on the competitiveness of the search terms. A major benefit to this type of marketing is that right away, you are on the first SERP. Being on the first page equals more traffic to your site. Paid placements are great if your budget allows you to pay for each visitor. However, it does add up.

Natural rankings are all of the other sites, usually 10 per page. The search engine has determined these websites provide the very best information for a given search term. The good thing about a natural ranking is that there is no charge for visitors; unfortunately, getting to the top is a bit tricky. In order to be in the top 10, a search engine must determine that your site is the best on the Internet.

The easiest way to get your site recognized by a search engine is through Search Engine Optimization (SEO). SEO is a technical process involving coding, site content, and the number of other sites with links pointing to your page. There are several companies out there that specialize in this service and can effectively drive your site to the top of the search engines.

Converting these visitors into leads is the next step. Capturing contact information is the most proficient way of achieving this task. Most people are unwilling to give out personal information unless they get something in return. Have the prospect fill out a contact form with their name, email, and phone number in exchange for something free. You will see a much higher conversion rate by offering a reason to fill out a form. Web surfers want something free and they want it instantly. By giving a little, you get back so much more.

You have a lead, now you must develop an efficient follow-up plan. You can probably handle writing individual emails to 20 leads. However, what happens when you start receiving

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hundreds, or even thousands of leads? You no longer have the time, energy, or resources to respond to each and every one. Implement a method that will systemically respond to new leads.

There are programs that will send a series of emails tailored to fit an individuals request. This type of automation means a prospect will be contacted immediately and you will have more time to run your business. Communicating proficiently with thousands of leads is a necessity to any great sales page.

So, you have a visually clean website, focused sales message, and traffic is being driven to the site. Contact information is being captured and your database is updated constantly. Prospects are receiving an automatic follow-up, but you still have one more important step.

With any great marketing campaign, testing and measuring the results is key. To further increase sales, you might need to adjust one or several parts of the page. This could be as simple changing a color or as in-depth as re-writing your sales message. Sometimes, a small, seemingly insignificant change will yield a much greater response. Remember to keep a close eye on traffic logs and calculate conversion rates on a regular basis. You always want to try and improve your visitor to lead ratio.

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Now that you have a website equipped to sell, you can sit back and let the power of the Internet work for you. Your 24/7 sales presentation is ready for the world to see.
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Websites That Sell Self-Assessment Questions

1. Are you going to do the site on your own? If not, who is the #1 person you will delegate this task to?

2. List 3 URLs of websites that have a proven record of selling effectively. (If you need help, ask a friend, a JV partner or someone how has a proven record of a site that sells effectively.)

3. Spend some time reviewing the three websites to determine what you think makes them so effective.

Next . . . How To Capture Leads

Info Product Blueprint
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Designing Your Website

Module 6

Section 2: How To Capture Leads

By Eddie Zimbardi

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Section 2

How To Capture Leads

In the world of ecommerce, millions of sites are fiercely competing with each other to gain new clients. For any ecommerce site to succeed, it must capture the interest and the trust of its visitors. It is not enough that your site is impeccably designed or has the latest in animation of content.

What you will learn in this Section:

- Tips on picking an autoresponder company
- Things to include in your contact strategy plan

You should focus your efforts not only in attracting visitors but also in leading them to make a purchase. There are dozens of marketing strategies you can use to attract more buyers and pump up your sales. One of them is by establishing an excellent and professional reputation for prompt and efficient response.

As more potential customers visit your site, you should expect a flood of inquiries and requests for information. This is an excellent opportunity for you to capture more clients and lead them to buying from your site. Thus, it is important that you carry out an efficient and prompt response to every email you receive. The fastest and most effective way to do this is by utilizing Autoresponder services.

Autoresponder services use a computer program that automatically returns a prewritten message to anyone who sends an email to your site. It is widely used for responding to consumer inquiries and visitor comments and suggestions. Autoresponder services are also used by e-zines in responding to people who subscribe or unsubscribe to their online magazines. Companies, who send out their e-newsletter regularly, also use autoresponder services.

How can effective Autoresponder services help?

The answer lies in its ability to return a prompt response to any e-mail the site receives. By responding rapidly and efficiently, you create a very good impression on your potential customer. Good autoresponder services help you get important information back to these customers immediately. An effective autoresponder service helps you communicate your message promptly, creating a sense of professionalism and efficiency that your clients will definitely appreciate.

Another very important advantage of autoresponder services is that it saves time with multiple marketing tasks. Certainly, you do not have enough time to personally make and send all correspondence. Autoresponder services allows you to send

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thank you letters, newsletters, product information, brochures, orders, et cetera, to hundreds of clients almost immediately and simultaneously. Autoresponder services are also indispensable in any email marketing campaign.

Choosing an Autoresponder

Choosing the right Autoresponder services is very important. What then should you look for in an autoresponder service? First, you should pick an autoresponder service that is reliable and can give you 24/7 service. You cannot afford to lose a customer because your autoresponder service failed to answer his query or request for information. The ability to respond promptly is the first thing you must look for in any autoresponder services.

Another key factor you should consider when choosing autoresponder services is flexibility. Good autoresponder services allow you to customize unique responses that will have maximum effect on the customer. You should avoid creating an impression that the customer is communicating with a machine instead of a real human being. Excellent autoresponder services lets you provide the information that is specifically targeted for what the potential customers are looking for. Because any email from potential customers essentially represent the customer's intent on getting more information about your product, which can ultimately lead to direct sales, all emails are important. Thus, a top autoresponder service must fulfill all of these duties to help you boost your business.

There are many autoresponder services out there. Here are three of the ones we know have worked effectively for us – 1ShoppingCart, Email Aces and AWeber.

Developing a Contact Strategy

After you have selected what system you are going to use, the next step is to layout your business strategy to begin building your list.

NO matter what business you are trying to build online, you will need sales leads if you are ever going to make sales, and sales leads are what you are trying to generate if you are marketing on the Internet. In order to survive, any website needs a steady flow of qualified leads.

The aim of any lead generation campaign is to build your mailing list. Internet marketers often say, "The money is in the list," which is totally true. A list of responsive buying customers that trust you is worth its weight in gold!

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While spam filtering has lessened the impact of email marketing, it's still a viable means to getting your sales messages out there. In theory, email marketing is free, although of course its costs you in terms of your time. The theory behind email marketing is that by using a "hook" such as a free product or some other incentive, you can "funnel" interested parties onto specific products and services.

When you consider generating leads via an email campaign there are basically three avenues you can explore: email signatures, joint ventures and safe lists. One word of warning though, and that is avoid spam at all cost. One spam complaint can seriously damage your online business. You should familiarize yourself with the laws concerning spam, and at the very least ensure you include a un-subscription link in ALL of your marketing emails. Due to spam, it is advisable that you avoid buying leads, no matter how reputable the company. Buying leads can easily lead to a spam complaint – you have been warned!

In its simplest form, email marketing is a matter of putting a signature in all your emails that contains a link to your main product.

JV's

If you are looking to vastly increase your list quickly then a joint venture (JV) may well be the key you need. In its simplest form, in a JV you supply the product and a fellow marketer supplies the leads and you share the profits. Hopefully, you will then get the emails of your fellow marketer's customers, so you can then mail them with further offers.

When considering a joint venture there are many considerations you have to think about, but the main one, before you consider contacting anyone about mailing to their list, is "what's in it for THEM," not "what's in it for me." NEVER write to a fellow marketer unless you can offer them something of value in return for their help, and that is not necessarily just a share of the profits. Be inventive!

Safe List

Finally you have safe lists. A safe list is a list of people that have agreed to receive marketing emails in return for being able to send their own marketing email. The value of this form of marketing has never been that good. After all, you are trying to sell to people who are only interested in selling to you!

Forums

One other highly effective way of generating interested leads is posting in forums that are related to your area of business.

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Include a link to your site in your signature and people interested in your sphere of business will often click it if your forum post was interesting.

Other Means of Lead Generation

Three other popular sales lead generation techniques are submitting articles to e-zine publishers and article directories, press releases and testimonials for products in your target market. You can use pay-per-click advertising such as Overture or Goggle AdWords to advertise your site and draw in interested leads.

No matter what lead generation technique you employ, you will need a way to capture your leads email address when they arrive at your site.

Pop Up and Pop Unders

The traditional method has been to use a pop up or pop under which contains some incentive to get someone to sign up. With the invention of pop up stoppers, their effectiveness has dwindled and therefore unstoppable pop ups (also know as hover ads or slide in ads) have evolved. This new generation of pop ups are built into your webpage and as such cannot be stopped. Simply do a search on Goggle for "unstoppable pop up" and you are sure to find a software solution to produce these types of pop ups for you. You may personally hate pop ups, but they do work.

Name Squeeze Page

The other alternative is to use what is called a "name squeeze page."

In essence, a name squeeze page is a web page whose sole purpose is to capture an email address.

They generally contain a small amount of information about the product or service you are selling as a "teaser" for the reader and will contain a sign up form, with a message like "to find out more simply fill in the form to be immediately directed to further details on this amazing product."

A name squeeze page not only helps build your list, this information can also be used with certain software to help personalize your site for your visitor, a technique that has been shown to increase sales. Again, simply do a search for name squeeze page generators.

No matter how you generate sales leads there is one thing always to bear in mind, and that is to be effective your leads must be in your targeted market. If, for example, you are selling

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Internet marketing products, then it's no use advertising on a site that is all about scuba diving!

When you start to build your online business, ensure you include a well thought out sales lead generation strategy from the beginning. Do not make it an afterthought; this should be in place from the very beginning if you want your business to be a success.

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Make sure you mastermind with other successful marketers to determine what will work best for your product and/or services that you will offer. You may have a certain type of lead capture page in mind when a few simple variations may work better for your site.

Test, Test and more testing! And you will deliver customers and sales to your business.
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How To Capture Leads Self-Assessment Questions

1. What three strategies are you going to use for lead generation?

2. What do you need to do to implement those strategies? (Write an ad? Write an article?)

3. Get an autoresponder company and write a series of emails?

4. List the steps for implementation. Now pull out your calendar and put a time on your to do list.

Next . . . How To Work With Autoresponders

Info Product Blueprint
1st Edition

Designing Your Website

Module 6

Section 3: How To Work With Autoresponders

By Tim Cleaveland

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Section 3

How To Work With Autoresponders

Tim Cleaveland, of TheWebSkeptic.com, is an IT pro with a difference. He can talk 'people talk' and explain technical issues in easy to understand words. Tim will go over what you need to do to use autoresponders on your website.

What you will learn in this Section:

- How autoresponders work
- Types of autoresponders
- Criteria you use to choose an autoresponder
- Strategies to use with your autoresponder

Autoresponders – A Key To Your Business Automation

Autoresponders are one of the most important tools for your business. Without them, you are doing more work than necessary. Without them, you have the potential to lose prospects, thereby making it harder for you to grow your lists for your Internet business. Using an autoresponder correctly can automate a great portion of your Internet business, thereby freeing up your time for other things in your life.

We'll discuss the following:

- What is an autoresponder?
- Types of Autoresponders
- Criteria you can use to choose an autoresponder
- Strategies you can use with your autoresponder service

What is an Autoresponder?

So what exactly is an autoresponder? It is a piece of software that originated from the very popular fax-on-demand software. It is designed to automatically respond to an email message sent to it. It can also be used in an ongoing fashion to simplify and automate many communication tasks in your business. We'll go over specific examples later.

Types of Autoresponders

Autoresponder programs can vary in terms of their cost, capability, and function. In terms of costs, you can receive autoresponders for free. You can also purchase some at a specific price, where others charge a monthly fee.

In some cases, you may receive an autoresponder service with your hosting service. In general, you would want to avoid these types because they offer only basic functions. Also, if you switch hosting later on, you will either lose all your lists or have to migrate them to another autoresponder service. Likewise, all

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of the scripts you have set up will need to be rebuilt as well. These migration activities are not always easy.

The majority of successful Internet marketers choose to use a separate auto responder service to help manage their business. The most popular services are AWeber (AWeber.com) and GetResponse (GetResponse.com). Another good option is AutoResponse Plus (AutoResponsePlus.com). You pay one price for this product and it is yours for lifetime use.

You can also choose to purchase an autoresponder service that is a separate component of a complete ecommerce solution like 1shoppingcart.com. This is a viable option as well. You may want to choose this option if you want to eventually use the entire ecommerce solution for all your Internet business as it grows.

Criteria to consider when choosing an autoresponder

So how do you know what features in an autoresponder are valuable to have? There are many factors that need to be taken into consideration.

The autoresponder service you select should provide many of the following features:

Personalized Responses

Instead of sending out generic messages to a prospect or a customer, wouldn't it be better to use their last name and/or first name? This goes a long way to build and maintain rapport with your list members. It makes them feel like the message was personally sent to them.

Spam Tools

When you compose a message to send, you want to make sure it gets to the person you want. You don't want email services blocking your messages because they think you are sending Spam. A good autoresponder service will have Spam tools that will assist you when you compose messages. For example, in AWeber, it has a tool called *Spam Assassin* built into it. It grades your message and its potential for Spam. This is especially useful.

The ability to create and maintain multiple autoresponder lists at the same time.

This means you can create a list for whatever purpose you want. I do some autoresponder work for Ken McArthur. He has things categorized by projects, products, and internal communication. You can do the same thing for your Internet business.

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The ability to create an autoresponder series within a list YOU create.

This allows you to create multiple messages in a list and that can be sent out in a timed sequence. This is also known as a sequential autoresponder series. You should be able to indicate the interval in days between messages as well.

Having this one feature alone allows you to preprogram a series of messages for a list, potentially for years in advance. Can you see how having an autoresponder can save you tons of time and make your life easier?

- The ability to test your message or message series before you actually activate the message(s) and send them out.

- The ability to create your autoresponder messages in either text or html format.

If you give a person a choice, they'll be more responsive and appreciate the choice. Some people are more visual-based and will appreciate the html format. Others like text based messages. Just remember that you'll need to test both types if you are going to use them.

The ability to send out broadcast messages at will.

This feature enables you to send out an email to a list instantaneously. Because you are sending it out from an autoresponder system, you can keep all of these messages to refer back to later.

The ability for Subscriber signup via a web form.

This enables you to build a form you can incorporate into a web page to capture lead information. After the info is entered, the lead information should be recorded in your autoresponder system.

The ability to captured those people and their relevant information that subscribe to your Autoresponder list.

You want to be able to capture all this data for people who are on your list, whether they are prospects, customers, affiliates, or former customers. Having all this information stored automatically eliminates the manual task of keeping track of all this information.

The ability to easily import and export opt-in subscriber lists.

This allows you to use the data from your list for your own analysis. You can also export the data to another autoresponder system if the need arises.

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Automatic removal links within each message

If this feature is included, the process of unsubscribing a person becomes automated, hence saving you time.

Statistics and graphs

A good autoresponder system will have reporting and tracking features built into it.

Functions that can be automated with an autoresponder

An autoresponder service used in the correct way can not only automate the daily tasks of manually replying to requests for information, but also provide a means of instant response to the recipient.

Autoresponders can be used in an unlimited number of ways. Here are some of the following ways:

- Sample e-zine or newsletter for potential subscribers
- Offer free content-filled reports on various subjects.

Use your signature file at the end to promote your business offering to them. Also, use links within the report to promote your business as well as affiliate business.

- Offer a free resource list with information about your site, product or business included with it.
- Product listings
- Price lists
- Welcome letters
- Thank you letters
- Order confirmations

Manually sending an order confirmation for each customer after they order can be very time consuming. Create a standard confirmation response template and place it within an autoresponder that allows personalization. By doing this, you can increase response time and, at the same time, provide good customer service.

- Advertising rates for ads

Strategies you can use with your autoresponder service

Below are examples of strategies you can use with your autoresponder service.

Distributing a newsletter

Keep your visitors informed about your products or services. You can also relate to them personally about your what's working for you as well as your own life in general. This helps to

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build credibility as an expert in a particular area and hopefully build you a long-term relationship with your readers.

Distributing an affiliate newsletter

Provide tips, advice, and techniques your affiliates can use to promote your business. Remind them of current and future promotions you're running.

As affiliates sign up for your affiliate program, add them to a separate autoresponder list for affiliates only. Use this list to communicate with them frequently so they are more likely to promote your products or business.

Later, if you wish, you can separate your affiliates into separate lists by level of activity or level of income produced.

You can then provide targeted additional training and communications to these sublists. Anik Singal's course at AffiliateManagerSecrets.com, and Russell Brinson and Stu McLaren course at AffiliateInferno.com are excellent resources for affiliate management.

Post Sales automation

When you make a sale, as we mentioned earlier, you can automatically send out thank you letters, and order confirmations. A good strategy is to then add them to a separate autoresponder list for follow-up communication.

Veteran information marketers like Armand Morin use the immediate time after the sale to instantly build up credibility and user loyalty. After a sale is made, they use an autoresponder series to keep in contact almost daily after the sale is made. The first messages sent explain specific features of the product or service that was just purchased. If the purchaser has questions, they can contact customer service immediately. As the weeks pass after the purchase, contact becomes less frequent, but contact is still being made with messages so the purchaser does not feel forgotten.

During the initial months after the sale, it provides an excellent opportunity to cross-sell any other products or services that may complement the initial purchase. Armand Morin has products in his business that all complement each other so it definitely makes sense to use this strategy. You can use this strategy as well. Give them the opportunity to learn about your other products and services. Can you see how this means of promotion can help build customer loyalty?

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Customer Service

If someone logs a customer issue, an automated message with their assigned ticket number, stating someone will be responding soon an be produced.

Following up with your customers on an ongoing basis helps to develop a good relationship and enable you to introduce new offerings to them.

Automatic distribution of information from a blog

As I do auto responder work with Ken McArthur, I noticed that anytime he updates one of his blogs, the contents of that post automatically go out to one of his lists.

Distributing articles

You can send an article you recently found or that you recently wrote. Allow your readers reprint rights on the articles, if they are your own. This will bring you some additional traffic and potentially increase your exposure throughout the Internet.

Also, look to promote your readers articles if it makes sense for both of you. That way, you end up in a "joint venture" with each of you being in a win-win relationship.

Creating and distributing reviews

If you buy other people's products, write a review and then distribute it with your autoresponder. If you approve of the product, include your affiliate link for the product so you can make potential sales.

Offer a product trial or service period offering

Give your visitors a snippet of your e-book, script, or membership site. For a membership site, either limit the functions available, or limit the time available before charging full price for the offering.

For an e-book, you can include the first one or two chapters to be read by a potential buyer. An alternate option would be to have your e-book listed on Amazon already. Then, send potential buyers to Amazon through a link where they can read the first one or two chapters, and then purchase the book.

Distributing excerpts from your E-Book

If you have a new e-book coming out, start including excerpts in your autoresponder messages. Include a link to purchase the e-book in each message.

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Using eCourses

Smart Internet marketers like Cody Moya and Willie Crawford know and use this valuable technique. When a visitor opts-in, they opt-in to an free ecourse you offer them. The course, though, is offered over multiple weeks, so they are constantly seeing your name and content, generally a new lesson, every week in their email mailbox.

As the course content is sent over 20 or 30 weeks, you have an opportunity to offer them the course in its entirety for a full price. You can periodically market your own offerings, as well as affiliate product which you have signed up for and believe in.

Using Goggle AdSense

As you send your correspondence, don't forget to include your AdSense code. This creates the opportunity for you to earn additional revenue as your emails are read. Even if a reader clicks out of an email through an AdSense ad, they can still go back to the email over and over again since it stays their in their inbox until it is deleted or moved.

Minimize Spam

If you want to really minimize Spam, insert a link for the reader to click on which takes them to the actual message you want them to read. That way, you aren't sending them the entire message, subject to Spam, in the email. This increases the chances the email will reach the reader.

Using Sub-lists

If you choose, you can use the characteristics of a list's members to move some members to other lists that you want to promote to. For example, let's say someone signs up for an free ecourse. During the 20 weeks it is promoted, they end up buying a $97 product.

Then, you ID all members in the free ecourse list that have purchased $97 products. You now copy their data to another list that promotes products greater than $97. Next, you promote to them on that list as well and they buy a $299 product.

Now, you would move their name to the next list and start promoting higher priced products. This can continue over and over again.

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Now that you learned about autoresponders, go out and automate your business. It will save you time and money many times over. Utilize some of the strategies and grow your business making smart use of automation.
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How To Work With Autoresponders Self-Assessment Questions

1. What are the main features you want your autoresponder system to accomplish?

2. Do you want an all-in-one system (including shopping cart, tracking tools, etc.)?

Next . . . Forums

Info Product Blueprint
1st Edition

Designing Your Website

Module 6

Section 4: Forums

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Section 4

Forums

What you will learn in this Section:

- Why having a forum encourages visitors to return
- How to get traffic to your forum
- Why forums can help site ranking
- How Google AdSense can fit into forum design

Having your own Forum (also known as Bulletin Board or Web Community) is an excellent tool that you should definitely consider adding to your marketing efforts if you have not already done so.

Forums are a perfect way to generate valuable content that will entice your visitors to come back time and again and will be regarded by the search engines as perfect information suited for indexing.

Increased new, targeted traffic, along with the ability to grow your list all can lead to more sales and also help spread your name and branding to other parts of the Internet that may have never heard of you before.

Be warned though, while starting a forum isn't a hard thing and is pretty quickly set up (many web hosts even offer 1-click installations and your Bulletin Board can be up and running in less than 5 minutes) that does not mean you will have hundreds or thousands of active members flocking to your cyber-doors to read the latest posts and participate in your conversations.

Creating the buzzing hotbed of gossip, advice, burning questions and a loyal following that you really want as part of your Internet presence is not impossible though and we are going to look at some of the tips and tricks that can make this happen sooner, rather than later for you, but never forget that it will require some work and dedication from you as well as some patience.

There are a lot of different tools you can use to create your own Bulletin Board, from scripts installed on your server to third-party service providers.

All of them have their pros and cons and each one will definitely need some customization to give it the look and feel you want everyone to associate with your site and branding.

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Which one you use is not the most important thing though, because almost all of them allow you to create a wonderful site (with some work) that has a lot of potential and can be an incredibly useful resource to your visitors, providing the answers to the questions they may have.

Your first priority after setting up you forum, if you haven't already done this, is to choose the overall topic of your community site. Even better would be to choose a couple of different sub-topics or categories that are part of this topic or niche (don't start out with a ton of different categories, most surfers won't stick around or participate when they see a bunch of silent (no posts) categories).

Let's assume for a minute that your topic and overall niche is the Hobby Gardener that is looking for information on Organic Gardening or Environmentally Friendly, Pesticide Free, that sort of thing.

The overall topic of your community site might be Organic Gardening, but then you could choose (remember, only a couple to start with you can always add more later) a couple of sub-topics as the individual boards in your site. In this example, perhaps the categories of Pesticide Free Gardening and Soil Types might be a good fit (just make sure you've done the research on your niche and you will know what the most burning questions are and what hot buttons are affecting your target audience and you will already know exactly which sections to set up on your Bulletin Board).

Don't forget to have some terms and conditions on your site to make sure all of the legal aspects are covered and you, as well as your visitor are protected.

Offering access to your 'Special, Members-Only Forum' would make a great bonus to any product and is also an excellent way to grow your opt-in list. After all, not only will you be providing great content on your bulletin board, but you are also providing a resource, where your visitor can come back time and again, ask their very own questions and even help other members of the community out.

Essentially what you are trying to create is a place online that your visitors can feel at home at, that gives them that sense of community. A spot where they can come to time and again and find great information, like-minded people that share the same interests. An online oasis where they can feel comfortable asking questions and can easily help the new friends they are meeting.

Now that you have a good idea of how to get things started and what topic to choose, let's take a look at how you are going to get your soon to be friends to stop by your bulletin board and how you can ensure they come back time and again to visit for

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the latest news. Some forums are so popular that the site owners have developed almost a cult-like status and you can be sure that if they make a recommendation to their community site, their visitors will definitely listen and quite often, the response rates are incredibly high.

There are two different aspects we need to take a look at, because just driving traffic to your new forum is not going to magically cause new posts to be added, intriguing questions to be asked, you have to help it along a little.

So, to get things started, you will need to add some posts and comments of your own, as well as some questions you are seeking answers to, after all, no one knows everything, so don't be shy yourself, but definitely post your own questions.

When you originally researched your target audience, your niche, you most certainly came across some questions other people that are passionate about your topic have. In some cases you may already have some helpful tips and advice for these burning questions, in other cases you may not be sure yourself, but that doesn't have to stop you from using it.

One thing you could do is to post that question to your forum and perhaps even run some searches through your favorite search engine or do a little digging at some of the article directories to get some suggestions on how to tackle your question. Here's the good part, if after you've posted the original question you follow up with some information you've found, you're showing that you are indeed interested in the topic at hand, not just some marketer.

And there's no reason you shouldn't take advantage of the articles you find in the article directories. They make excellent content for your new forum and you could even add your own thoughts (as an intro or perhaps a closing summary) to each one, just to show your expertise or that you don't quite agree (great way to start some controversy or showcase an alternate viewpoint).

Depending on which software or solution you chose to set up your forum, check the settings because most have the option to make each page search engine friendly, with easy to remember URLs that are often based on the name of the title.

Setting it up this way, and even better, perhaps adding a site map, allows the search engine to come by and grab all of the latest information and posts and index your site. Most forums are excellent showcases of questions and answers, controversy and discussion and as such make a great source of high quality content the search engines love to showcase on their results pages.

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Over time, you will see new targeted traffic coming to your forum, courtesy of the search engines and your job is to convince your new visitors that you are a qualified and respected source of help and advice.

Now you may see some people suggest that when you start your forum, you should create fake identities and start posting with them as well as your own name, essentially, having some conversations with yourself, but honestly, do you really feel that is needed? If you post questions you have come across, along with information you found while researching these questions, or some opinions you have seen, you can generate interest in your topic without having to deceive anyone. Be honest and your visitors will appreciate it a lot more and you won't have to worry about anyone ever catching on to your little deception.

There is nothing wrong with telling your visitor that this is a new web community and that you look forward to sharing information, as well as important questions you come across and that you want to also get their input. Honesty always pays off in the long run.

Controversy or something that makes your visitor stop and take a minute to think something over is an excellent way to get some people motivated to participate. You don't have to be negative about anything to stir up some controversy, but let's assume that you hear someone say you should use some fake personalities when you first start your forum (and in this example, let's assume that is the topic of your board, your own web community), why not make a post that talks about using fake identities and then subsequently add your own, personal thoughts to the thread? A couple of days later take a look at the pros and cons and add them too. Ask your visitor what they think and you will definitely find that they have different and varied opinions about it.

As the host of the forum, you definitely need to keep contributing, and if you can answer a question, by all means do so. Sometimes having an online business can become very time consuming, so make sure to block some time in your calendar on a regular basis to stop by your forum and add a couple of posts or add some questions.

Not everything you post has to be your own original idea, as we've talked about already, you can visit other sites to get ideas for questions to discuss or grab an article that allows you to reprint it (don't forget to leave the author's resource box in place) that might answer a question or give some tips.

Over time, and keep that in mind, it doesn't happen magically overnight, you will have a valuable site with targeted visitors, regulars who participate and make posts (giving you even more

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new content), a place where you have established your own expertise and branding and people look forward to your latest posts.

Earlier, we briefly mentioned that you should add some terms and conditions to your forum. For example, do you want to allow your members to advertise their own offers using your site, or do you want to restrict open advertising to just one particular section? Perhaps you don't want any advertising, or you allow a signature, but it can only be two lines long. It's your board, you define the rules. Share the vision you had in mind when you started your forum and tell your visitors what you expect, such as no flaming or verbal attacks.

Keep in mind however, that you will regularly have to also check the forum's posts and police the users to make sure everyone is following the rules and not just doing whatever they want.

Also keep an eye on the posts themselves because there are some tools out there that spammers use to spread all over the web and forum communities are not immune to them. Depending on the software you chose when you set it up, there are quite a few tools and plugins you can add and customize that can help you keep that under control too, and if all else fails, you can require that each comment has to be approved by you before it's posted.

Getting that first trickle of traffic to your new site can become frustrating, but here's a simple way to start getting some interested visitors to stop by…

Write about 3 or 4 articles (more if you feel like it) on a very specific question your target audience deals with. The more urgent or burning the question, the better your results will be.

These articles don't have to be long, they can be as simple as a few bullet points and a couple of lines of details for each bullet, but the key thing to keep in mind is that you want to leave the reader wanting more. If you can, you want to maybe stir up some emotions with the reader too, maybe some controversy, it's totally up to you. The really important part of your article is going to be the ending that invites them to come to your site to talk about it all.

Let's take a look at a quick example…

Assuming your topic is organic gardening, write an article on the top 10 tips to make your organic garden grow and blossom. Now write a couple of sentences about each of the 10 tips and at the end of the article, add a resource box (or About the Author) where you tell the reader that for more detailed

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information about each of the 10 tips, they should visit your site and they are welcome to share their own experiences and ask their most urgent question to get some help.

If you create a few articles using this method and then start distributing them to the article directories as well as any e-zines or websites and blogs that are in your target market, you will start to see some traffic heading your way pretty quickly.

On your forum, add your own article and then in some extra posts for that topic, add some extra information or some controversial thoughts you have seen or heard about as they pertain to each of the ten tips that you wrote about.

What you have done is gotten your reader interested enough with your article to stop by and check out your forum, and the extra information you have shared there, especially if it makes them stop and think a little bit, can be all you need to entice your visitor to share their thoughts or ask their own questions.

Here's another benefit of using articles to jumpstart your site. The Search Engines will probably grab the article content from the article directories or the other sites that you have submitted it to, and since you have a link back to your own forum at the end of each article, they will follow that on over to your bulletin board and grab all of the content there too for indexing, and since a lot of the search engines consider links that point from other sites to you as an important indicator, the more of these you can generate, the better. By having 3 or 4 articles out there at the start and submitting them to as many directories or newsletters is only going to help you have things happen faster, rather than slower.

Keep in mind, however, that you don't want to post your article on a site that has nothing to do with your topic. Let's look at the Organic Gardening topic again. If you wrote about the 'Top 10 Ways' you wouldn't want the article to show up on a site that's all about cars. So carefully choose the categories that apply when you submit your article to the directories and sites.

Of course, if you already have your own newsletter or opt-in list, all the better. Tell your readers about your new site and tell them a little about the topics or questions you have already added there.

Okay, so now you have a new community site with some traffic and a few visitors are starting to post as well. Most of the battle is done – the hardest part and biggest hurdle overcome. Now it's time to take a quick look at why you would put yourself through all this trouble, your reward…

With an active forum community, you can easily weave in suggestions or reviews of products and service that make a good match for your visitors, but you can also warn them if

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you've come across something that you feel didn't work well for you, a product that didn't deliver what it promised perhaps. Your visitors will appreciate your honest candor and you will be able to save your readers from wasting their money.

If you are an affiliate for that product, created it yourself or perhaps have the rights to sell the service, you can easily generate some revenue to help you towards your own goals and dreams.

Another thing you can do is to add content-related advertising, such as Google AdSense, that will contain ads targeted to the topic of the post and each click generates you some extra income.

These are only a couple of ways you can monetize your own forum and how you can get it all started. Make sure to take a look at other bulletin boards on your topic and see what they are doing and incorporate the things you like in your own community.

With patience and dedication you will soon have a thriving web community with a lot of active visitors that come back time and again. You will be able to grow your own opt-in list and generate new subscribers for your newsletter by adding opt-in boxes throughout your forum and giving your visitors an extra incentive to sign up. Perhaps a special report or some content/articles that you've not posted on the forum yet, the choice is yours.

Ask your visitors questions, such as what their biggest challenge is and you can use the information to create your own products and special reports to ensure your readers come back again and again.

For example, if the biggest challenge you see asked often about your 'Organic Gardening' topic is which plants can help keep your garden free of pests, then you could use any of the information you have already researched, or any answers you see posted by other members to create a special report. This special report could be used as an extra incentive to get your visitors to sign up for your newsletter, or as a lead in to your recommendation for a product, perhaps a thorough e-book about the best plants to add to your garden to keep pests under control and your special report talks about just a few of them.

You could even take it a step further and do the research and work yourself (or hire a ghostwriter) and create your very own book or resource that you can sell for a handsome profit. You already know there is a market hungry for the information you can provide, so why not give it to them?

Here's another thought to close out our look at forums and bulletin boards that you can use to grow your business and

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increase your revenues. Take note of all of the questions you come across over time that relate to your topic, and if you notice certain individuals always answering and providing high-quality information, why not invite those experts to participate in an interview and co-produce a product, such as a teleconference or online web-conference series?

Over time, with the help of your dedicated visitors you could easily create a whole series of products and special reports that will all bring you revenue for years to come, new subscribers that you can market to time and again and new, targeted traffic that is very interested in your topic.

One thing that may surprise you is that you just might make some new friends, too, and what is better than to meet like-minded individuals that share your passion and help each other succeed?

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Forums Self-Assessment Questions

List two benefits a forum would have for your product website.

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Next . . . Blogs

Info Product Blueprint
1st Edition

Designing Your Website

Module 6

Section 5: Blogs

By Craig Childs

Info Product Blueprint was created by
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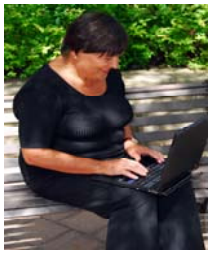
Ben Blakesley, Audio Editor

Section 5



Blogs

What Is A Blog?

Back in the 1990's blogs were first introduced to the online community. Originally web logs were designed as a techie administrative thing for logging requests into a server. They have since expanded and changed. Today, blogs are everything from a personal journal to a corporate communication tool.

What you will learn in this Section:

- Promoting your blog
- Getting traffic to your blog
- Making your blog search engine friendly
- Building readership
- How to set up a WordPress Blog

For those of you not familiar with blogs, they are a website set up like a diary. The latest entry is at the top and usually written by one person (or one group of people). Focusing on one subject or topic the person makes an entry or post. The entries or posts are added to the blog with a title and a date and time stamp. Then the person writing the blogs generally invites comments to the topic or post they have written.

What Can A Blog Be Used For?

People write blogs to inform the online world of their thoughts, views, philosophies and rants. Another use for blogs is to use them for marketing and promotion of your info product. Because of the personal nature of blogs you can really connect with customers and potential customers. Brian Edmondson, in the List Building section, talks about getting your list to know, like and trust you. A blog offers you that opportunity.

Let's Talk…

Blogs let you promote your products in a conversation with the online word. The key word is conversation. You want to establish a two-way conversation with your readers. You want to persuade people to become frequent visitors and involved with your blog.

Fresh content such as articles and inviting comments will bring your visitors back again and again. The fresh content is a plus with search engines that like new content and will help with your page ranking on search engines. The possibilities are endless.

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Endless Possibilities

Following this section, you'll have the opportunity to set up your own blog to promote your info product. All of the work you did earlier in the research section is about to be used again. Now let's talk about the ways a blog can help you with your product.

Product Promotion and Education

Write posts to promote your product. Not the "Buy now" type of post. Include a post that shows a customer how your info product helps solve their problems, issues, hopes or dreams. You can do this by telling customer success stories or use articles or tip lists.

When writing your posts include the keywords you chose earlier in the Research section. The search engine bots will love to see those keywords and will reward you with higher search engine ranking.

Take your keywords and write fifteen to thirty short articles (200-500 words). You will be able to use these as posts on your site. You can also work to have them included on other sites and blogs or submit them to article directories. Having an article in reserve is great for those days when you are busy. Just pull out an article and post it on your blog.

Suggested Topics

Since a blog is a conversation with your online niche (and the world) you can use the blog to talk about how you came to develop your info product. People are always interested in 'the rest of the story.' With your posts you can tell them the "how's and why's" behind your product.

As people buy and use your product, you can talk about successes of people who bought. You can invite people to share their successes. Alex Mandossian, in his Teleseminar Secrets, suggests teaching people how to 'consume' your product. You want people to know how to use your product. You can use your blog as one of your product resources.

New Product Development

You are developing new content each time you post. With the questions and comments you receive from visitors and customers, you will start to get information you can use. Are there improvements you can make to your existing product? Is there a backend product that will add to the value of your existing product?

Many people have bundled their posts together over a period of time to build an e-book or offline book.

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Newsletter Articles

Looking for content for your newsletter? Your blog posts and the comments can be part of your newsletter. Add some tips and you're done for the issue. It's like Jeff and Lori said in Module 2, "Recycle, repurpose and reuse."

Lazy, Time-Crunched Or Both?

Not sure you want to commit to a weekly newsletter to stay in touch with your customers? Use an autoresponder to initially connect with your customer. Then use your blog as a newsletter.

Getting Traffic

You can get traffic to your blog in a number of ways. Pick one or two techniques and focus, as Workbook Editor Dan Giordano says. Learn the techniques and then move to the next. Starting everything at once will lead to frustration and little accomplished. Search engines, article writing, submission to directories and search engines, traffic exchange, and posting on other people's blogs are all ways to bring traffic to your site.

Blogs And Search Engines

Blogs easily attract search engine traffic. The design of the blogs with clearly defined navigation and links make them a natural favorite of search engines. By using some of the following tips you can design your blog to meet the search engine requirements. The bots sent out from search engines look for keywords and new or updated content to a website.

- Design of your blog: Use your keywords for your post titles and category names.
- Have your webmaster or you include keywords in your URL page names.
- Stick with your niche. Use your research to reach your niche with articles, posts and keywords. Having a consistent theme will encourage indexing by the search engines.
- Use keywords as headlines for your post. In search engines, RSS, and XML feeds your headline is shown. Keep it short and relevant and it can help to send traffic.
- Set up your blog to 'ping' the blog tracking sites. Pinging is a way of notifying a number of services that track blogs and their content. It is an important tool for blog promotion. It lets the services know it's time to send those automated crawlers out to check out your site. The crawlers or 'bots' will index your site and publish your content increasing the popularity of your blog.

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- Consider Ann DeVere's advice for finding your most profitable customer. Use keywords that deliver traffic and then analyze your traffic using one of the metrics programs available. This will let you find the words bringing in the majority of 'buying' traffic. You want repeat visitors who will turn into customers. Huge numbers are fun, but unless they can be converted into customers, you have just a hobby or platform for your thoughts.

Submit Your Site To Search Engines and Directories

Much like a website is submitted to a search engine, you can submit your blog to a search engine. Follow the directions for each search engine as they vary slightly in their requirements.

Articles

Articles can be used to promote your blog. Have at least 15 to 20 short articles ready to go at all times. Include your keywords as part of the articles. Periodically repeat your keyword search to find new keywords to include in your articles.

Have your blog included as part of the resource box on the article. That way people reading the article in someone else's e-zine or website will know how to find you.

Go to the online resources page for the latest updates for blog tracking.

Traffic Exchange

Together with other bloggers you can build traffic to your blog. This is done through traffic exchanges. Traffic exchanges are communities that use a trading system to build traffic for many people. You earn credits by visiting other community member's blogs or buying credits. These credits are then traded in so other people visit your site. It's trading your time for visitors. Test out how the community works for you before you buy credits.

You may find the visitors you get are not appropriate for the market you are working to reach.

Get Off Your Page and Go Visiting

One way of getting more traffic is to go visit other blogs. Go to a blog directory such as Technorati.com or type 'blog directory' into your browser search box. Look for blogs in your topic or niche area. Visit the blogs. Take a few minutes and read some of the posts. If there is a post where you can add a comment, then post. Avoid the 'Come see mine' type of post. Don't forget to include your name on the post. Have an article or post that might be helpful? Include a link to your article in your post.

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Others will read and potentially visit your blog or website.

Visit and participate in forums. Include your blog in your signature file. People who are interested will come to your site.

What Next?

You've worked on traffic to your blog. Keep the visitors on your site with good content. Personalize your site by including your photo. A photo links the offline and online world. It also says you are a real person and not hiding.

Include some information about you. Let people know how you developed expertise in your topic. Is it formal education, life experience or a journey of self-education?

Tips for Building Readership

- Keep postings short and avoid jargon. The most successful blogs sound like a friend just sat down to talk with you.
- Make it easy to subscribe. Make your signup obvious, such as above the fold so people don't have to look all over to find where to join to post.
- Vary the content and postings. Add photos to increase interest.
- Include short audio and video clips related to your product. You can even use a video as a teaching guide for your product.
- Build content of interest for your visitors. If you write short articles, consider adding them as a post to your blog.
- Build interest and readership with a regular schedule of posts. Once you encourage readers, they will begin to look forward to your posts. Don't disappoint with a lack of posts or they will move on
- Classify your post by category so your visitor can easily skim through many posts quickly.
- Consider letting people post without your having to review or moderate comments. When you moderate, you have to approve each comment before it is officially posted to your site. This saves time on your part and encourages community. You can always delete a posting. Will there be weird or spam postings? Probably. That's part of the joy and the pain of blogs.

It's Up To You

Blogs are a great way of promoting you and your products. You don't have to be a technogeek to have a successful blog. So turn the page and get your blog started today. You can do it!

Notes

First Decision.

The first decision of a blogger is determine which type of blog they want to produce. A personal blog can easily be produced at any one of many free hosting sites.

The free blog hosting sites are great. However, the free blogs are usually limited in the features you can add. Also, the free hosting sites have a habit – if your blog is very successful with many postings and comments, they might shut you down for spamming. Even if you were not spamming. Few people have been able to get their blog restored once the host has shut them down.

So a business blog promoting your information products should be hosted on its own server. Your web hosting company can usually handle this. This allows unlimited expansion of functions for the blog and little threat of shut down. Though if you are spamming, any host will shut you down.

Types of Blog Software

The three most popular blog software programs are Blogger, WordPress and Typepad. There are also many other quite powerful blogging software programs. Here is a list of some of the blogging software sites you can visit. Determine which one best meets your needs.

- Blogger.com
- WordPress.com
- TypePad.com
- B2Evolution.net
- Geeklog.net
- BBlog.com
- MovableType.org

For the individual who has little or no HTML and PHP experience, my suggestion is to stick to WordPress or Typepad. Both are easy to administer and use. And depending upon your host, can be extremely easy to install.

Installing Your Business Blog

To install your blog, you must find a web host. Almost any Linux host will work. Most of them have a control panel with that will easily install one or more of the above blogging programs. Just be sure to ask them before you purchase the hosting account. Ask them if they will install your chosen software, or tell you if it is easy for you to install it.

Notes

I am going to take you through the process of installing my favorite – WordPress. One of the hosting companies I use is eHosting4U. Remember, you can use any Linux hosting package and this process will be similar.

eHosting4U has a control panel with a program called *Fantastico*. *Fantastico* is designed to automatically install a number of programs for you. In my case, *Fantastico* will install b2evolution, nucleus, pMachine free or WordPress.

Each step will have a separate page for you to look at. (Go to the end of this section and pull out figures 1-17 as you will use them as you go through this section.)

Purchase a hosting package and then log on to your control panel. (See Figure 1 and Figure 2.)

Locate "Fantastico" and click on it. Then click on "WordPress." (See Figure 3.)

In figure 3, I have already installed WordPress for online-acne-guide.com. But we want to install WordPress on a different site. Next click "New Install" under WordPress. (See Figure 4.)

Now you must make some decisions, most of which can be changed later, so don't worry about making a mistake.

The first decision is to decide where to install your blog. Pick the domain you want to use. A domain is the web address you type into a browser so you get to the site you are interested in, such as WordPress.com or in this example Create-Your-Blog.com.

Do you want to install your blog by itself (host a blog only)? Or in a website folder (website and blog combined)?

If you have only purchased hosting, you will have only one choice. I have already created a website called Create-Your-Blog.com. I want to add a blog to that domain, so I will place the blog in a directory called "blog." (See Figure 5.)

First, I must pick an administrative login user name (called administrator login name). I chose "admin," but you can use any word you want. This administrative login user name will be permanent.

Next choose a password. This can be easily changed later.

Third, fill in your "base configuration." Add a nickname for the administrator that can be used as the author of your blog or in your email, contact email address, blog name and description. All of this can be easily changed later.

Notes

Finally, fill in the "e-mail account configuration" section. This will be used later as part of the email posting service. Again, this can be changed later.

Once you have filled in all of the required information, press "Install WordPress." If you have not filled in a required field, it will ask you to go back and fill it in.

But once all of the required information has been filled in, you will see something like figure 6. (See Figure 6.)

If everything looks okay on figure 6, all you have to do is click on the "Finish Installation" button. (See Figure 7.)

Congratulations! You have successfully installed WordPress. Now print the page.

Next, place your email address in the box at the bottom and press "Send E-mail." This will send the information on this page to your email. You do not need to email this information if you have printed it, but I always do. That way you have a reference copy on your computer.

Managing Your Blog

Now log on to your new blog. In my case, the URL was Create-Your-Blog.com/Blog/. (See Figure 8.)

On the right-hand side down towards the bottom of the page, click on the "login" link. You will be asked to type your administrative login name and password. Then press the "login" button. It should look like figure 9 now. (See Figure 9.)

Welcome to the administrative side of your new blog. Take time to look it over each page and sub-page. You have a lot of power to control your new blog. Let's go through some of what you will find here page by page.

Click on "Write." You will go to a screen similar to Figure 10. (See Figure 10.) This is where you write your posts and pages. A post is what you write to share with your visitors.

For each post you will type in a title for the article (or post) and then what you want to say in the article or post. You can use the icons (similar to Microsoft Word) of the post section to change how your words/post looks. Try using bolding, italics, numbering, etc., to see what your post looks like. After you have created your post, click on "save and continue editing."

Once you have done this, notice a preview of your post is available at the bottom of this page. You will have to scroll down to see it. Continue to work on your post and "save and continue editing" until you are satisfied with its appearance in the preview pane. Then just save it (WordPress saves all posts

Notes

and pages in a database on your site) or publish it. Once you publish your post, your visitors can see it.

If you click on the "Write a Page" link, you can write a page. Think of a page as reference information you want to share. One page might be an "About You" page. The process is similar to writing a post.

Now click on the "Manage" link at the top of the page next to "Write." Your screen should look like Figure 11. (See Figure 11.)

"Manage" is where you can add new categories and edit almost everything on your blog. The first subcategory is "Posts." As you can see, the default post (Hello World) is there. You can view, edit or delete it. You can also edit, delete or unapprove the comment associated with this post.

If you want to change one of the "reference" pages such as "About," click on "Pages." This works similar to the "Posts" page – viewing, editing or deleting choices.

Categories are ways to organize your posts. Under the "Categories" submenu, you can edit, delete and add categories.

These will also be used to search for your posts. So try to set up appropriate categories for your blog such as "Business Blogging" if your blog is about business blogging. Remember, you can edit, delete and add new ones at any time.

"Awaiting Moderation" is used when you require comments to be approved before they are visible to the public. This can be a lot of work on your part and probably should only be used after you find a lot of comments you want to delete. You will get spam, so be aware.

The "Files" subcategory allows you to review and edit some of the files used to create this blog. If you want to make any changes, read the files page carefully before making changes.

Now click on "Links" category. Your screen should look like Figure 12. (See Figure 12.) You can manage your links here. Notice the default links are listed here. You can edit or delete these links. Blogroll links are URL's to other blogs you would like your readers to be aware of and potentially view. Think of it as "your favorites" bookmarks.

Under "Add Links" you can add more links.

Under "Link Categories" you can add link categories, which are used to help you organize your links. You set the criteria. Therefore, over time you can add more appropriate link categories to your blog to cover a variety of topics.

Notes

"Import Links" allow you to import links from other sites.

Now click on "Presentation." (See Figure 13.)

Themes are a collection of images and other pages that control the appearance of your blog. Themes, Theme Editor and Header Image and Color are the three powerful pages, which allow you to change the appearance of your blog. WordPress has many different themes you can use. It offers two themes to start with. Just click on the one you want to try.

At the bottom of the "Themes" page is a link to where you can find many more options. Once they have been installed, they will show up on the page. Try them out.

Even if you don't want to add a new theme or edit one, try the "Header Image and Color" page. You can easily make some changes to color and appearance of the blog theme header (top of each page). You can always go back to the original color and image.

Now click on "Plugins." (See Figure 14.)

Plugins are small programs that add functionality to your blog. On these pages you can add new plugins, edit them and activate them.

For example, you can add a calendar or survey poll to your blog. There is a link on the bottom of this page for more plugins and basic instructions for installation.

You do not need to activate or install any plugins to have a perfectly functioning blog. They are just extras to add functionality to your blog as you need or want it.

The number of plugins is increasing every day. Be sure they are compatible with your version of WordPress (Remember that page you printed earlier – Figure 7).

Now click on "Users" in the top tool bar. (See Figure 15.)

Your "Profile and Personal Options" page is where you can change some of the information, including your password you entered originally. If you make changes, be sure to save them. There is an "Update Profile" button on the bottom of the page.

In most blogs, a person who wants to add a comment must register as a user before the comment can be entered. Under "Authors and Users" you can edit, delete or add users. That way, you know their name and email address. You can allow users to self register so you do not need to add them.

Click on "Options" next in the top tool bar. (See Figure 16.)

Notes

Under “General Options” you’ve already set up most of the basic options for your blog. Much is now pre-filled, as you can see in Figure 16. (See Figure 16.)

You may need to reset the time at the bottom of this page. The defaults are usually okay, but the time zone may be off. Eastern standard time is about “–6” in the hours box. Experiment until the time reflects your current time. Remember to click on the “Update Options” button to save your settings.

The “Writing” subcategory allows you to set the size of the post box (the number of lines seen before you have to scroll), set up posting by email and set your update services.

You can email in a post and have it visible to your readers. To do so, just set up this part of the options. This way you can add posts while traveling.

The “Update Services” are used to announce your new posts to blog directories (search engines). This helps visitors find your blog. The default service announces your post to multiple directories. However, you can add specific update services if you desire.

The “Reading” options page enable you to change some basic options such as how many posts are shown on a page and the syndication feeds properties. The only one I find I need to change is the number of posts to be visible on a page. I usually use 5, but you can use any number you wish.

The “Discussion” page has a number of options, such as when to email me and the usual settings for an article. The default settings will work for most of us.

Permalinks are URLs back to your posts and pages. The “Permalinks” allow you to change how they look.

The “Miscellaneous” page has the uploading options you can change. Try changing some of the options to see how you like them. If you don’t like them, change them back.

The last link is “Import.” (See Figure 17.)

As you can see, you can import posts you have made on other blogs. This can be helpful if you are moving your blog from one host to another. You will not lose your posts this way. If this is your first blog, you won’t use this page right away.

What do you do next?

To blog, all you need is a blogging site or host, software and the desire to blog. Blogging is fun. You can use your blog to promote your products.

Notes

Just like a website, you need to get the attention of the search engines and draw visitors to your blog. Add your blog to any number of the blog directories. Write an article about your blog topic and submit it to the article directories with a link to your blog.

To develop reciprocal links, read other blogs on your topic. Add a link on your blog to the best blogs you find. Add comments to other people's blog posts. Soon you may have reciprocal links.

All of this can add traffic to your blog. Then it's up to you to convert a visitor into a customer.

Notes

Included below are the Figures referred to throughout the Blogs section.

Figure 1

Figure 2

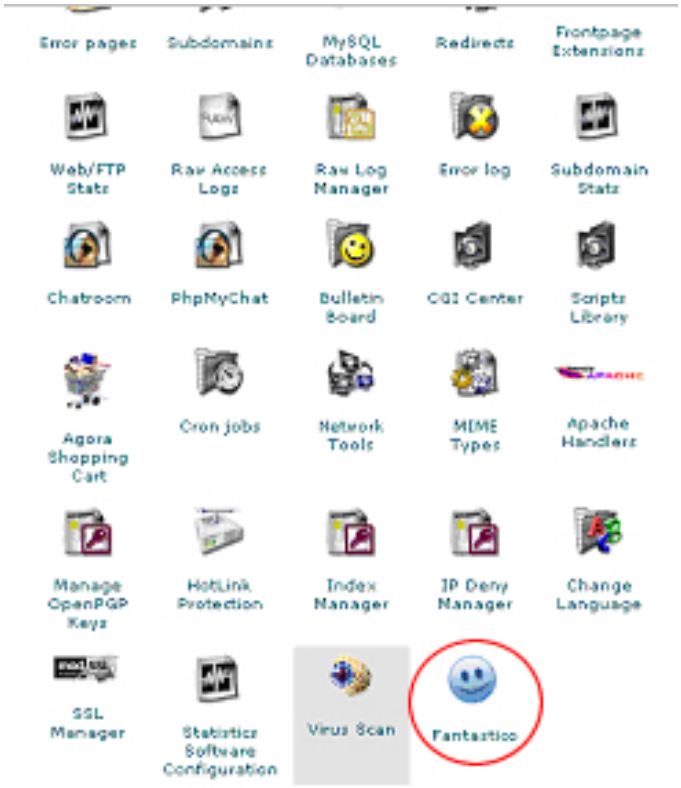


Figure 3

Figure 4

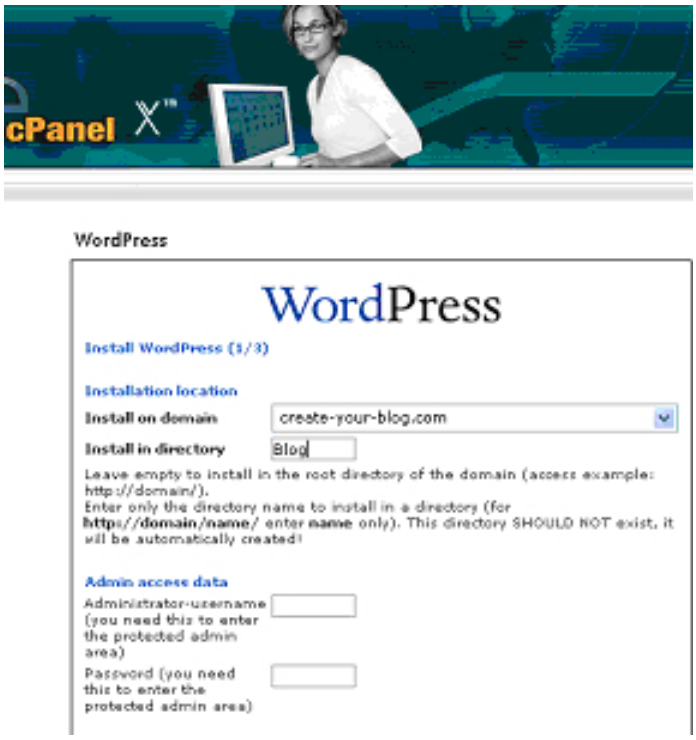


Figure 5

Figure 6

Figure 7

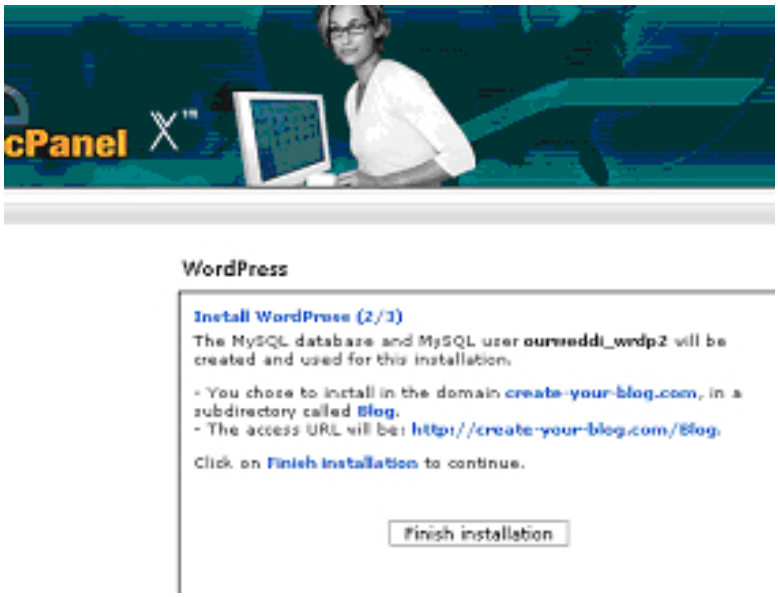


Figure 8

Figure 9

Figure 10

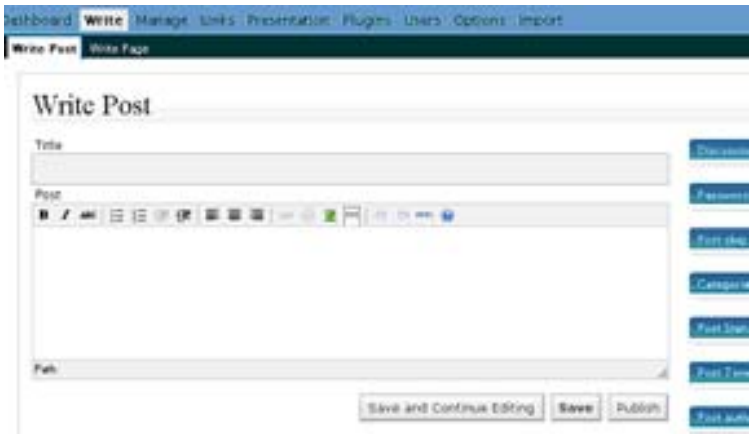


Figure 11

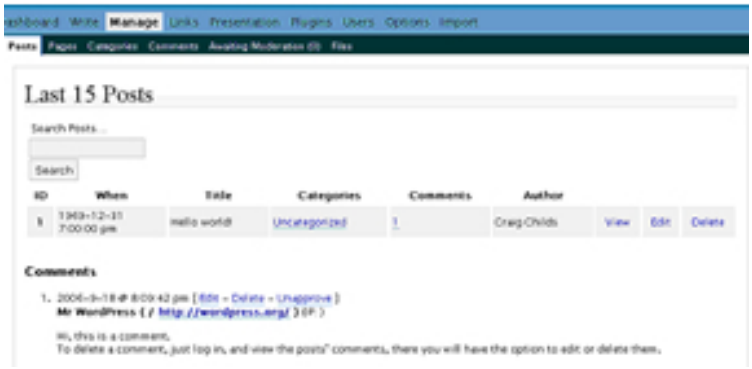


Figure 12

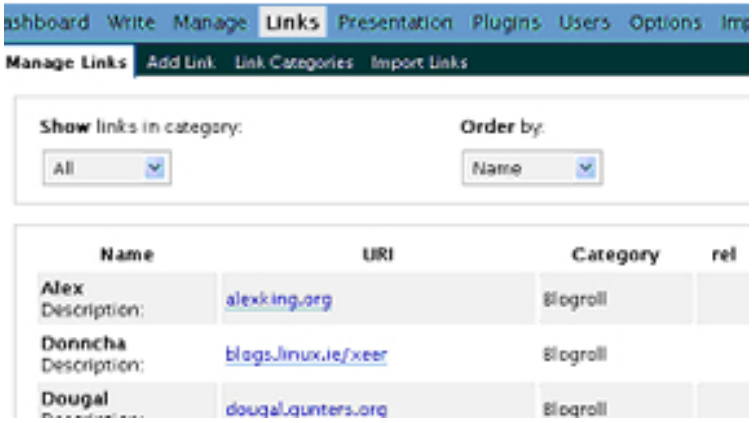


Figure 13

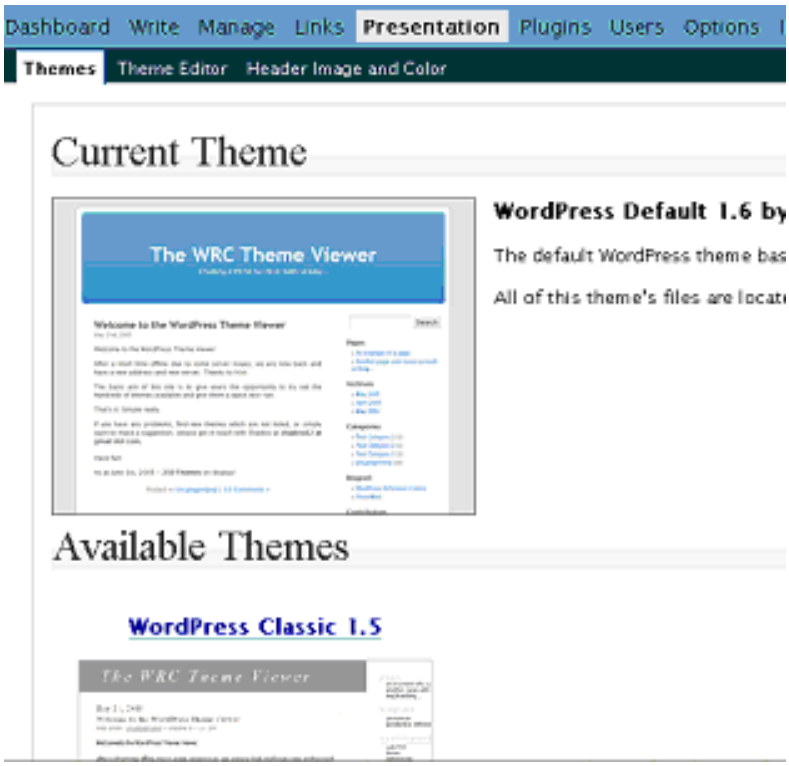


Figure 14

Figure 15

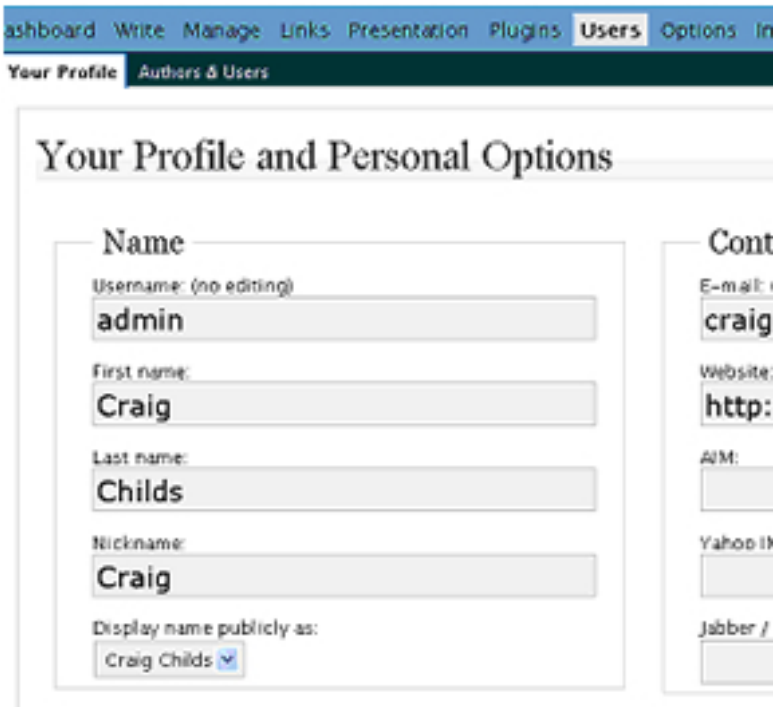


Figure 16

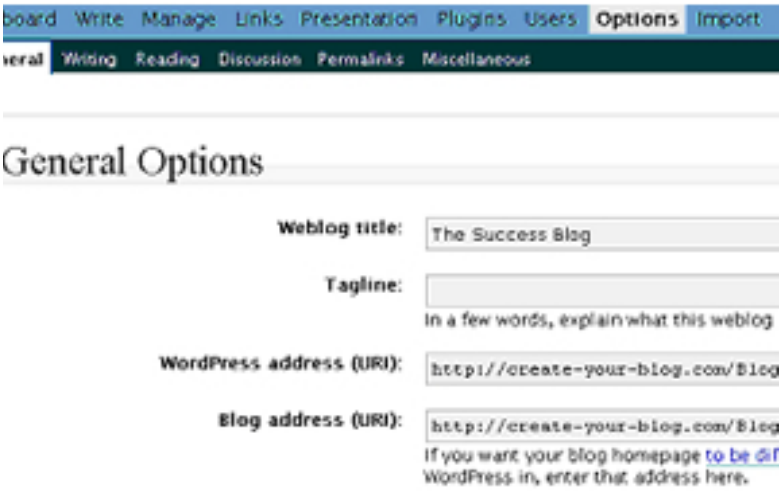
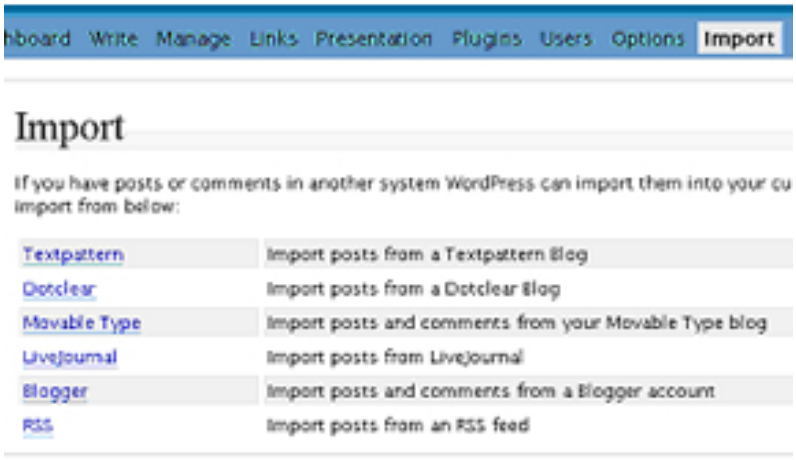


Figure 17


nboard Write Manage Links Presentation Plugins Users Options Import
Import
If you have posts or comments in another system WordPress can import them into your cu
import from below:
Textpattern
Import posts from a Textpattern Blog
Dotclear
Import posts from a Dotclear Blog
Movable Type
Import posts and comments from your Movable Type blog
LiveJournal
Import posts from LiveJournal
Blogger
Import posts and comments from a Blogger account
RSS
Import posts from an RSS feed

Blogs Self-Assessment Questions

1. Write 7 short articles (200-500 word) about your niche topic or product. Use your keywords for topic suggestions.

2. Go to Technorati.com and find 3 other blogs talking about related topics. List the blog URLS here.

3. Write the name for your blog here.

4. Set up your blog.

5 Write your first post.

Next . . . Module 7: Selling And Delivering The Product

Info Product Blueprint
1st Edition

Designing Your Website

Module 6

Section 6: Google AdWords For Info Products

By Simon Leung

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Section 6

Google AdWords For Info Products

You'll want to read this next section very carefully as our next writer is the former team leader for Google in the AdWords section. Simon Leung of AdWordsOptimization.com shares his insider hints on using AdWords to promote your info product. Don't forget to grab your highlighter.

What you will learn in this Section:

- What Google AdWords is
- How AdWords can benefit you
- High-level keyword and ad text strategies

Welcome to this next section of the Info Product Blueprint!

In this exciting module, we will discuss how to maximize your return when promoting an info product with Google AdWords.

What is Google AdWords?

Google AdWords is Google's pay-per-click (PPC) advertising program.

The reason that this is called pay-per-click is that advertisers are only charged when users click on your ads, and not necessarily how many times they are displayed.

When you perform a keyword search on Google, the ads that appear on the top and right side of the search results page, labeled 'Sponsored Links,' are Google AdWords ads.

Currently, thousands of big and small business owners are advertising with Google for the following reasons:

- High Traffic – Google.com receives over 200 MILLION search queries in their database per day. In addition, their bots have crawled and indexed over 25 billion webpages, 1.3 billion images and 1 billion usenet messages.
- Instant Traffic – Within minutes of signing up for your Google AdWords account and creating your first campaign, your ads can be up and running, and you will start getting traffic to your website!
- Targeted Traffic – When you create your campaign, YOU select the most relevant keywords, as well as the most relevant ad text. After that, ONLY users who search on your specified keywords will see your ad, and ONLY those who are interested in what you have to offer will click on them.

Notes

- Affordable Traffic – The only thing standing in your way when you set up your account is the low $5 set up fee. After that, you can literally start getting traffic to your site for pennies on the dollar. In many cases, you can even get a decent amount of traffic to your website for as low as $0.01 per click!

Understand the AdWords Product

Before diving full steam ahead into the account preparation and creation process, it is very important that you understand at least the very basics of Google AdWords.

If you haven't already done so, be sure to use the various resources available on Google's website. Everything you need to know regarding the basics and setting up your account is available at AdWords.Google.com.

More importantly, you're going to need to understand Google's policies. There are so many advertisers out there who jump right into creating their accounts, and not only do they not follow the appropriate steps (which I have outlined for you in this workbook), but they also skipped right past all the policy guidelines.

As with most advertising services, Google does have a list of editorial and product policies that you need to follow. Each and every single ad is reviewed by an Editorial Specialist at Google, so you have a violation, they will find out, and they will suspend your account until you make the changes.

To ensure that you get everything started off on the right foot, be sure to review Google's advertising guidelines at: AdWords.Google.com/Select/Guidelines.html

How Can Google AdWords Help You?

By now, you should have a pretty clear understanding of how Google AdWords can benefit a business. But I'm sure you are interested in learning specifically, how can AdWords help YOU?

Well, before we answer that, a better question you must first need to ask is – *How can you help yourself*?

You see, you need to determine what your primary advertising goal is.

For example:

- Generate as much traffic as possible to your website
- Get visitors to subscribe to your newsletter
- Increase exposure of your website to a particular niche

Notes

- Capture leads that you will follow-up with over the phone
- Get potential customers to download a free trial version of your product
- Sell your product or service on your traffic's first visit
- Brand yourself or your product to the public

Determining your goal will set your strategy for the most effective way to build out your Google AdWords campaign.

Exercise #1: Determine Your Goal

In the space below, write down what your primary advertising goal is:

Set Up Your Landing Page

Now that you have set your goal, you should focus on maximizing your conversion results. While Google AdWords is a powerful advertising medium, it ultimately acts as a traffic generation resource.

At the end of the day, it is the job of your website to convert your traffic into subscribers, buyers or clients. For this reason, it is imperative that you produce an effective and converting website before spending a single dime marketing your URL by any paid marketing means.

Now, keep in mind that the highest converting webpage for your campaign may not necessarily be your homepage. As a matter of fact, I would actually recommend that you have a completely separate page dedicated only to your AdWords account.

For example, you can use the URL YourDomain.com/AdWords as the main landing page for your campaign.

To maximize the quality of your landing page, there are a few things to keep in mind.

- Make sure you don't have any editorial or product violations on your landing page. For example, if your original page includes a pop-up or a pop-under, remove it on your page, as this is strictly against Google's policies.

Notes

- Make sure that the information you are providing is relevant to what the users are searching for. For example, if someone is expecting to find information on how to build a house, don't send them to a page advertising contractors for hire.

- Make sure that the resources available on your website are valuable to the user. For example, don't simply refer them to other links or resources. Whenever possible, have the resources available for use or download directly from your landing page.

- Make sure that your content is unique. For example, don't simply copy information from articles or other websites. Have distinct and useful content on your site that gives users a reason to come back for more.

At this time, please refer back to Exercise #1: Determine Your Goal.

With your goal in mind, create a new webpage specific to this goal to be used as your landing page.

For example:

- To get newsletter subscribers, include an opt-in form
- To get trial version users, include the link to the download file
- To get a sale, include the actual product or service for sale

Exercise #2: Create an AdWords Specific Landing Page

Based on your advertising goal, create an AdWords specific landing page that you will send users to when they click on your ad. Remember to include relevant, valuable and unique content to maximize your quality.

Find and Build Out Your Keywords

If you haven't already done so, now is as good as ever to conduct your keyword research.

Nowadays, there is no shortage of keyword research tools. If you are unfamiliar with the resources available, check out Overture.com, GoodKeywords.com, Nichebot.com and WordTracker.com, just to name a few.

To start doing your keyword research, simply type in a term or phrase that best describes your info product, and click on the submit button to see what terms might generate.

Notes

For example, let's say you are selling an AdWords e-book. This e-book would contain tips and tricks about maximizing your results with Google AdWords.

The keyword research tool may generate the following terms:

- adwords e-book
- free adwords e-book
- google adwords e-book

Now, one of the most important keys to success with Google AdWords is keyword relevancy. Why? Well, as we discussed earlier, you only want to appeal to users who are searching specifically for your product.

Primarily with an AdWords campaign that focuses on selling info products and converting your visitors to buyers, keyword relevancy is especially important.

So, in the three keywords above, can you identify the term or terms, if any, that are NOT relevant to a campaign in which you are selling an AdWords e-book?

If you say that all three of them are relevant, you are absolutely – WRONG! ;)

Here's why…

You are SELLING an AdWords e-book, right? Therefore, while 'adwords e-book' and 'google adwords e-book' are relevant, 'free adwords e-book' is not.

Let me explain.

If users are searching for 'free adwords e-book,' chances are that they are not looking to buy anything. While what they are searching for is indeed related to the product you are selling, this would not make a difference to someone who is not intending to buy anything in the first place.

While this is a very minor example with just one word that separates its relevancy, you will often run across a lot of terms in your research that are clearly irrelevant to your overall campaign. If the terms are not relevant to your info product, do not add them.

Now, with selling info products specifically, you may even want to add certain qualifier terms in front of your keywords to increase your chances of targeting the right audience.

For example, you may want to add the terms 'buy,' 'order' or 'purchase' to the relevant keywords identified above:

- buy adwords e-book

Notes

- order adwords e-book
- purchase adwords e-book
- buy google adwords e-book
- order google adwords e-book
- purchase google adwords e-book

With these more targeted terms, not only are you better qualifying who sees your ads, but you also minimize your cost-per-click (CPC) as a result of having fewer competition for the specific keywords.

Exercise #3: Build a List of Relevant Keywords

Using your favorite keyword research tool, generate a list of potential keywords for your AdWords campaign. Be sure to pick out only the relevant terms.

Now, double, triple or even quadruple your keyword terms by adding an additional variation with 'buy,' 'order' or 'purchase' in front of the original keywords.

Notes

Write Ad Text That Sells

And now, for the most important aspect of your Google AdWords campaign – writing your ad text.

Why would I say that the ad text is the most important part of your campaign? Well, the answer is relatively simple, and logical.

You see, the ad text is the ONLY component in your account that is visible to the user.

Can a user see your keyword list? No.

Can a user see how much you're bidding? No.

Can a user see the name on your account? No.

Can a user see your billing information? No.

Can a user see how long you've been an advertiser? No.

Can a user see what other campaigns you are running? No.

Well, you get the picture.

As if the pressure of making your ad text sell isn't enough, Google has made it even more challenging by offering only 95 characters of space for your ad: 25 characters for the first line, 35 characters for the second, and 35 characters for the third.

So the real question is – *How do you make these 95 characters sell?*

Fortunately, for the purpose of selling info products with Google AdWords, there are several strategies to keep in mind for maximum performance. Let's say you are using the term 'adwords e-book' in your campaign:

- Write ad text that is relevant to the product. You can do so by inserting keywords into your ad text. For example, you would want to include the phrase 'AdWords Ebook' in the ad text for maximum relevancy.

- Use an attention grabbing headline. You can do so by using terms that trigger savings, such as 'low cost' or 'sale.' For example, you can have 'Low Cost AdWords Ebook' or 'AdWords Ebook on Sale' in the ad text.

- Provide a clear description of your product. You want to make sure that the users understand exactly what you are offering. For example, you might say 'Learn Insider

Notes

Strategies to Beating AdWords' as part of your product description.

- Use special offers in your ad text. This can usually be done by giving users an incentive for purchasing your product. For example, if you offer bonuses, you can say 'Free Bonuses with Order!' or 'Free Newsletter.'

- Include a strong call-to-action phrase with a sense of urgency. As with traditional marketing, it is much more powerful if you can communicate to the users what you want them to do. For example, you would want call-to-action phrases that convey a message of purchase, such as 'Buy Today!' or 'Order Online Now!'

- If you are in a competitive industry, include the price of your product. For example, if you are aware that your product is selling for more than your competitors, state your price in the ad text. While you may receive fewer clicks because your price does not appeal to certain users, you know that the ones who do click are much more likely to buy.

Exercise #4: Write Your Ad Text

Keeping in mind the ad space character limits, write several AdWords ads that utilize relevancy, attention grabbing headlines, clear description, special offers and strong call-to-action phrases:

Line 1 (25 characters): _____

Line 2 (35 characters): _____

Line 3 (35 characters): _____

Line 4 (35 characters): _____

Please note that line 4 is reserved only for your URL link, i.e. YourLink.com/AdWords

You can have as many ads rotating between each other as you like. Please feel free to write a few extra ads so that you can test performance between them.

Line 1 (25 characters): _____

Line 2 (35 characters): _____

Line 3 (35 characters): _____

Line 4 (35 characters): _____

Notes

Line 1 (25 characters): _____

Line 2 (35 characters): _____

Line 3 (35 characters): _____

Line 4 (35 characters): _____

Line 1 (25 characters): _____

Line 2 (35 characters): _____

Line 3 (35 characters): _____

Line 4 (35 characters): _____

Line 1 (25 characters): _____

Line 2 (35 characters): _____

Line 3 (35 characters): _____

Line 4 (35 characters): _____

Line 1 (25 characters): _____

Line 2 (35 characters): _____

Line 3 (35 characters): _____

Line 4 (35 characters): _____

Account Management Tips

Many people are under the impression that once you have created your Google AdWords campaign, the flood of traffic will start pouring in like magic.

While Google AdWords does provide a channel for traffic with the potential of immediate results, you need to understand that it is a little more complicated than that.

You see, Google AdWords is indeed pretty easy to set up, but is not a 'set it and forget it' system. And quite honestly, you don't want to put it on auto-pilot.

Notes

There are many factors that you need to consider in order to upkeep a successful campaign – quality, return on investment, conversion rates and costs, just to name a few.

If you don't keep a close eye on your campaign, you may not be performing as well as you could be, or you may be paying more than you need to.

For this reason, use the following tips to manage your AdWords account:

- Tweak your landing pages to increase conversion rates. This is nothing new. If you are a Marketer, you should be familiar with making changes to your website to increase your results and bottom line.

- Test new keywords and delete poor performing ones. Ultimately, you want to make sure that you are profiting from your terms. If certain keywords are costing too much and not performing well for you, delete them and replace them with new ones.

- Test new ad text for increasing performance and clicks. Try a different offer, or a different attention grabbing word, or a different promotional language, or a different call-to-action phrase. You need to find out what your market responds the best to, and you won't know unless you test.

- Adjust maximum cost-per-clicks (CPC) for budgeting and positioning. For example, if you are tight on budget, you may want to decrease your CPC to lower your costs. Alternatively, if you are willing to bid a little bit more in an effort to increase your ad's positioning on the page, you may want to increase your maximum CPC to see if this ultimately pays off for you at the end.

- By all means, stay within your budget. You can do so by adjusting your maximum CPC and daily budget values to the amounts that you are comfortable with. Make sure that you are not spending more than you are making. Obviously, you want to make a profit!

Exercise #5: Manage Your Account

While this is the final exercise of this workbook, it is going to be an ongoing effort on your part.

Do not set up your account and forget it!

Hire someone to manage your account if you have to, but make sure that it is being handled at all times. There is simply too much to lose if you don't!

Notes

Conclusion

Remember, at the end of the day, Google AdWords is a traffic generation to your website. It is ultimately the job of your website to convert these visitors into customers of your info product.

Use the strategies outlined in this workbook to set the appropriate user expectations to your website. This will ensure that you maximize your chances of a successful conversion once the visitors know what to expect.

Throughout the days, weeks and months that follow, be sure to keep a close eye on your account performance, as well as your competition and industry. If you are on top of the latest developments and make the appropriate changes to your account and your website, you will surely increase your bottom line and maximize your return!

Notes

Next . . . Module 7: Selling And Delivering The Product