

# Small Business Marketing **HOW TO...**

*A Business Generating Website*

*A Quality E-mail Process*

*Advertising that works?*

*Stationary Branding*

*Promotional Items*

*Vehicle Branding*

*Location signs*

*Logo = Image*

*Garments &*

*more...*

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innovative, economical, productive,  
and give results the very first time!**

**Innovative Marketing  
Solutions for today's  
Small Business Owner  
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## *10 Cheap Marketing Tips that work*

### ***The Best ways to Cheap Marketing Campaigns***

- \* A good rule is to use in all your marketing efforts your web site. Every sign, business card, letter, document, e-mail and any other possibilities need to have your web site.
- \* All your marketing materials need to carry the same look, format even font. When the amount of advertisement we get bombarded each day we become more unlikely to pay attention to advertising. It is estimated that you have to see an ad up to 13 times before you pay attention to it. The more pieces you have that look similar the more likely your client will notice. If your business cards, letterhead, web site, signs and any other marketing materials don't look similar, each of them becomes an independent effort. Pick one and stay with it.
- \* Your web site should be one of the most important items in all of your advertising, marketing materials and signage. People are more likely to remember your web site is it's easy to remember than your phone number.

### ***10 Things you should consider***

1. Logo – If you are a small business and don't have a logo get one. All of the other key points to help your business rely on branding your company. It is a very difficult thing to do without a logo.

2. Website – Every business can benefit from a well designed website. A website is an up to date presentation of your services to your clients. Let's say your company's name is Alpha Graphics, your website should be official domain should be alphagraphics.com. You can also purchase Houstonprinter.com. This secondary domain name can be redirected to your official domain name but it has three features: it's easy to remember, it tells your client your service area, and what you do. More information on websites

3. E-mail – You should use your website domain name for all business related e-mails. Every time you use your website e-mail account (sales@cervantesdesign.com) you tell your contact what your website is.

4. Stationary branding – Every document that comes out of a business should be branded with the company logo and website. If all your envelopes, letters, and invoices feature a well designed logo with a catchy, easy to remember website you are well on your way to establish your branding.

5. Web promotion – There are two types of web promotions, natural and purchased. Natural is when somebody uses a search engine to look for something. A search engine will generate and number a list of websites that meet the search criteria. A purchased promotion is when a search engine allows a business to sponsor a search criteria. That allows a business to purchase an advertising spot on a specific search.

Let's say I am a logo designer in Houston I would want to sponsor "Houston logo" from search.

6. Signage – Your place of business signage should reflect your logo and website. Internally and externally your clients should be able to recognize your logo and website. The use of neon or LED signs for night use could greatly increase the visibility of your website and logo.

7. Vehicle Graphics – Every personal and business vehicle in operation should have your logo, website and a 3 to 5 bulleted list of services. It is also much better to use a website as the contact information than a phone number. How many people do you think can remember a 10 digit number in a few seconds?

8. Promotional Items – Promotional items using your logo and website are a great way to impress your clients and improve your corporate branding.

9. Garments – Every employee of your company should have your company branding on what they wear where they are in front of the client. Nice polo shirts for sales reps and silk screened t-shirts for regular workers. This only applies if the workers are exposed to clients.

10. E-newsletter – Gather an e-mail list of your clients and send them an e-mail once a month. It is free and a nice way to stay connected.

## *A Business Generating Website*

**If** a company or individual was to ask me how I can achieve a business generating website. The total amount of funds required to saturate the market is much less than regular advertising but it's not free.

**Business Niche** - When planning a web campaign businesses have to find out where they do well. What gives them the most profit; in what area of the market do they provide the competitive product or service. These are the areas where we would gather our key words. Generating a list of key phrases is the first step.

**Key words** - Once we capture possible key words we run them by a search engine key word finder. We would run our determined key words and compared them to the nationally collected key words and determine if we are on track. Depending on the available budget and business niche we might get anywhere from five to 20 phrases to pursue. That varies with each business and budget.

Once the key phrases are determined it is not a bad idea to list them. Each individual key phrase should have its own web page on the website. Let's say we determined that "Houston web consulting" was one of the key phrases. A page with the title "Houston web consulting", and a couple of paragraphs describing the term and why this company provides the best service on it, would do great to improve that particular phrase's ranking. Keeping the entire phrases list needs to be available to the website's copyrighter in not a bad idea because we want to plug these phrases on all website text. It is good to also make each instance of the phrase on the website be a link to its own web page.

**SEO** - Search Engine Optimization should be left out to professionals. Sometimes companies what to delegate this to a member of their staff but they shouldn't. They won't know what they are doing and big

mistake could cause a website to be banned for a year or longer from search engines. The average cost is around one-thousand per year for five mainstream key phrases for a year. The more demand for a key phrase the more it cost, that's why businesses need a niche. Even the best SEO Company will take months to increase the rankings so patience is important.

**Pay-Per-Click** - The American way says "I need it now" Where SEO is an effort to increase the ranking position of a website, PPC lets a business sponsor a key phrase



advertising. Every search engine has on its top, bottom, and side non-numbered websites with descriptions and links. These are for sale to the highest bidder. Search engines are looking for popularity and relevance along with money. If a link is not relevant to the browsing audience, and they instantly go back, they will show that link less even if it pays more. They want to provide their clients with a functional link or their client would stop using sponsored link and search engines won't make money a website sponsorship was to match the search phrase with the content of the website is sponsoring, that is why the individual articles for the key phrases are so

important. Search engines allow specific web pages to be linked not just the home page so tailoring is always a great idea. Example somebody types "Houston web consulting" they see a sponsor ad's title say "Houston web consulting" and the description say "Houston top web consulting firm doing business since...", they would think in their mind "this guys read my mind they must know exactly what I need". Search engine marketing accounts help you track conversions, visits that made it to a shopping cart or a contact us page. Since these leads cost money it is not a bad idea to pre qualify them by adding in the description may or objections to the sale or the product or service. Finally, I set up a few business PPC account for local businesses, I was able to sponsor all the searches relevant an irrelevant for the city of Katy, TX for around 10 cents each. When the budget allows outreaching to all possible areas where business might be generated is a good idea. Search engine marketing also allows you to only market on your local business area, options from 25 to 200 miles around the business location are available.

**Quality Domain Names** - When the website's key phrases are determined and listed it is a good idea to go thru the list and purchase each of their domain names sample houstonlogodesign.com when available and point them to that particular page on the website, it will help that web page's ranking. Search engines like multiple domain names pointing to a website. For less than \$10 a year it is worth it to hold as many quality industry .com or .net domain names as possible. Pay-per-click accounts are more effective if the phrase browsers are using to find a business is the same as the domain name advertised for it. This is custom tailoring your web presence based on browsers known patterns. One warning when anybody searches for a domain name's availability it generated a report, it is imperative to be able to buy the domain name at the time it's searched or it might be lost.

## Test Your Website

**Relevant Link Exchange** – A good website should have a link exchange area. It will require that somebody review the links, adds them, and monitors them. A quality SEO company would build, monitor, and actively search out and request link exchanges for their clients.

**Industry Directory** – Search engines love directories. A company that own, manages, runs their business niche directory will achieve top ranking fast. Since they run the directory they can design the directory with their branding and run their advertising exclusively on it. This acts as a super link exchange listing all the businesses in the industry but advertising and promoting only the directory owner. This has to be done tactfully, not to show a great bias and still providing a service to the industry as a whole. A directory would require web programming and it's not as easy to do as a blog.

**E-newsletter** – Adding an e-newsletter to a website is a great tool to maintain communication on clients. By sending them a monthly or quarterly newsletter that contains offers, coupons, valuable information on the industry. The best thing about it is that it does not cost a thing; it can be done in as little as a few hours.

**Call to action** - All web pages should have a logo, phone number, and a link to the free e-newsletter, blog, would be a plus. Remember top ranking doesn't happen by accident, it is a methodical, labor intensive, ever changing, but achievable goal.

Why You Should Never say "Google Me"

I saw a local advertisement for a dealership that said, "Just Google (Brand Houston). Can you do that for your dealership with brand and location? How many leads would that generate for your? How many would you generate for others?"

There are four parts to most search engine pages and here is how they rank.

Sponsor listing areas are the boxes with non-numbered listing surrounding the ranked listing. Any related business is able to buy a sponsorship location. Sponsor advertising is the main way search engines make their money. You only pay if somebody visits your site and you only pay one cent above your lowest competitor bid. Sponsored listings generate 20% of the web traffic.

1. Sponsored Local listing – Search engines are sometimes able to determine the zip code of the person browsing and will give top ranking to the closest local sponsored dealership.
2. Sponsored listing – If search engine is not able to determine location it will place regular sponsored next.
3. Local business listing – Before top ranking websites search engines will give top priority to local registered business.
4. 1 to 3 top ranked websites - The top 3 ranked website will generate 60% of the traffic to their websites

If you dealership does not list on the first page of search engines your web presence is non existent. Because of the four labels of priorities viewed I would never recommend a dealership be as bold as to ask clients to search them in Google. Searching their brand and city as they recommended listed more than 30 other dealerships along side them.

90% searches in the US are managed by Google and Yahoo! They also share similar sponsorship plans. All advertising efforts in the web should be applied to both. Google is four times bigger than Yahoo! so it cost more and creates more leads.

### TEST YOUR WEBSITE

Try this: type your city and brand in any major search engine like Yahoo®, Google™, or MSN®, example: Chicago Ford. Scroll through some of your results. Did you know that 93% of customers don't look past the first two pages? Furthermore, 63% of customers will find what they need in the top 20 ranked sites. To be among this elite 20

requires a strategically active effort. Cervantes Design offers a Search Engine Optimization tool that can help you score higher and produce more leads from the web.

The other 33% of customers don't even bother scrolling through all of the suggested sites but go straight to the "Sponsored" area. The Sponsored area is located before you see the top 10 ranked sites, in a featured box at the top side and bottom of the page, usually listing many websites. The Sponsor search area works in an auction system. Top-pay means top-spot in most cases. In as little as 72 hours, you could sponsor "Chicago Ford" as long as you are willing to pay the market price for that spot (anywhere from \$.10 to \$999). Price is determined by how much your competition is willing to pay. Most sponsored searches charge only when you get a click, an actual visit to your site. Another option would be to build a special home page where you drive only your pay-per-click leads. This option gives you a way of tracking your ROI. Search engines do have a few rules for their sponsor marketing. They won't let you steal leads that are specific, example: You couldn't advertise under "Chicago Carmax" unless you are an actual Carmax store. There is also a "Local Sponsor" feature. When setting up your website on the search engine, you can define your business area, from 25 to 100 miles from your physical business address. Search engines can actually track the location of the customer and only show your ads to customers in your area. There are great benefits to this type of marketing: you know exactly what the client is searching for and you can exclude specific searches that may not be relevant to your dealership, allowing you to modify your advertising based on your inventory. All search engines provide analysis reports so that you can actually see how many searches were made last month for "Chicago Ford" and what would be the cost to advertise in it. These processes will require plenty of time and dedication since custom ads have to be written and posted to each individual search criteria. Careful attention has to be made to ensure ads contain



## *The Three Basic Website Needs*

all the key words in both the title and body. You can't use words like "number one" or "best" and any special promotion has to be found easily from the link page.

The following is a typical ad for "Chicago Ford":

Chicago's ABC Ford  
ABC Ford is a Chicago dealership that offers \$500...

(This area would require anywhere from 90 to 120 characters depending on the search engine.) Using both Yahoo.com and Google.com will cover most of the web market. Yahoo normally costs 20 to 30 percent less than Google. Between both of them, you have almost all search engine traffic. If you think about it, the Internet is quickly turning into this generation's newspaper. Are you advertising in it?

This article was tailored for car dealerships but we have satisfied customers in all kinds of businesses.

### **THE THREE BASIC WEBSITE NEEDS**

The three basics to have a functional website.

#### **Easy to use**

Always assume your clients have basic computer skills. Make it as easy for them to find your inventory, services, and contact information. Cervantes Design Website, for example, does all the work for you. Our websites are engineered to produce sales.

Every page in your website should include a phone number to call for immediate assistance. When a client walks through the doors of your dealership, chances are, he doesn't want to be bothered with a salesper-

son. However, when he sees a car he likes, he can't find a salesperson fast enough. The same scenario happens with your internet clients; once they find what they are looking for, they will want to contact a dealership right way, usually by phone or email.

E-mails from clients tend to be perceived only as people fishing for prices. We should reshape this outlook and view each e-mail as a potential client behind it. In average, luxury car dealerships took more than 10 hours to reply to e-mails and around 50 to follow-up. Using these statistics, you have a little more than ten hours to beat your competition. In the world of the blind, a one eye man is king. Do you think you can do this?

If you have a strong phone-up process, developing an e-mail process should be easy. In a recent mystery-shop study, luxury car dealerships failed to achieve a minimum score for setting appointments in both e-mail and phone calls. That's where Traver comes in but that's another story.

#### **Easy on the eyes**

Your website should be attractive but simple. Experts have found that websites need white space, areas with no graphical or text elements so the eyes can rest. You should run routine surveys of your web clients to find exactly what they think about the look and functionality of your

website. The better it is, the better it will sell.

#### **Easy to find**

Your website can have the best functionality and award winning design but if your client can't find it, what's the point? The web is slowly taking over as the preferred form of research for purchasing and servicing a vehicle.

Imagine if every time someone in your area looked for:

- \* a car dealership
- \* new car brands you carry
- \* used models in your inventory
- \* automobile service
- \* automobile body shop
- \* automobile parts

your website showed up number one in the sponsored area. Statistics show 30% effectiveness when your website shows here and 63% effectiveness when it also is in the top three rankings. You know you can have this for less than an average dealership's newspaper advertising budget with much better results. Isn't this a paradigm shift?

But remember, before you take over the web, make sure you have strong phone and e-mail processes in place. You can't clean them before you catch them.

This article was tailored for car dealerships but we have satisfied customers in all kinds of businesses.

## *Creating a Web Business Plan*

**The** two biggest misconceptions about websites are: I have been doing “ok” with out a website, and I probably cannot afford one. Every business should have a website. A business can afford one for as little as \$50.00 per year, or less than \$6.00 per month. Like everything else “you get what you pay for.” To develop a Web Business Plan requires itemizing what the website needs. A business has four main factors to there website: Information, Contacting, Selling, and Managing.

**Information** - A business website should have a wealth of information. Every service the business provides should be described in detail. Testimonials are always a great plus. A testimonial gives the website instant credibility. A specialized business could explain their service better with a couple of specific client scenarios. Selecting a testimonial that highlights the biggest selling features of the business is KEY. A business with great prices and fast service should highlight those items in their testimonials. A businesses needs to have a balance between giving the client plenty of information, and giving your competitors a blueprint of the business. The text on a website should take time to develop. It must be well prepared and planned. Developing a website that is easy to use is very important. Flashy websites only work for a narrow margin of businesses. A website should look professional. People are

cautious about obtaining a service or product from a website that gives any reason to doubt its authenticity. A professional and well designed website is imperative.

**Contacting** - No respectable business should have an email account that ends in aol, hotmail, or yahoo. Customized e-mail accounts start

credibility than anything else can.

**Selling** - Businesses that have products that can be sold online could have a fully functioning Shop Cart for about \$40.00 per month. These Shop Carts can even estimate and charge for shipping and handling. A website should have a “contact us” page that gathers the client’s infor-



at only \$9.00 per year. A personalized e-mail account tells the recipient where to find the senders website address every time an email is sent. There is no better way to lose credibility than to send an e-mail from an outside source. Every page on the website should have a phone number, and e-mail address. E-mails should be forwarded to the sales staff as soon as possible. There is nothing like a first impression. An e-mail reply or call within minutes of the initial request does more to increase

mation. The best way to get visitors to give up their information is to give them something in return. Giving them something that can help the sales process. For example: a free issue of a publication, a newsletter, a pen, a free report, or even one month of free service.

**Managing** - Big businesses need special items to help them work better and cut down on actual clerical work. An example would be a form that gathers information for a staff-

## *Creating a Web Business Plan - Continued*

ing agency. Making applicants fill in every aspect of their resume into fields. This process makes the applicants do all the inputting themselves. The cost to develop this program will pay for itself in a few months. Custom development for websites is expensive and should be done cautiously. Any sort of programming like this could cost thousands of dollars to develop. Many times businesses can find a web application for sale that would solve their needs for a much lower price than having it custom developed for their business. An insurance agency might be able to buy a website specifically designed for its field instead of having one developed from scratch. The developmental cost of a website with similar functions will be much higher if developed from scratch. Remember to think about ROI when using the web to help determine if the process is cost effective. How long until the investment pays for itself if at all.

**Web Marketing Campaign** - Having a website is only the first step. Getting clients to find it once it is built is harder than most people think. Some people think that just by having a website would make people come across it or find it. A number one ranking does not happen by chance. Every top ranking website was achieved by a monumental amount of effort. Search engines look for many things that are relevant to the search criteria and popularity of the website. The best

way to promote a website is to hire a reputable Search Engine Optimization Company. Prices vary based on the search areas that a business wants to be found under. The higher the demand the higher the price. A regular Houston area top ranking in any kind of business is around \$300.00 per month. Remember it will take a few months before results are seen. Nobody can guarantee or offer instant top placement in search engines.

For instant results search engines also offer pay-per-click campaigns. This allows clients to name their price. The highest bidder gets top placement. This process takes as little as 72 hours to be fully functional in most cases. It is great for specialized businesses that do not have many other businesses fighting for the same leads. Bids range from .10 cents to \$999.00 dollars depending on the search criteria. There is only a charge when the website is actually visited. This is the way search engines and some website make their money.

### **Web site design tips**

- \* Don't get too creative keep it simple, the most element on web design is simplicity.
- \* Go with the crowd follow the simple standards of web design. Keep the defaults, don't change the link settings, they are blue and underline people know them, don't make them guess.

- \* Use white people still read better with a white or light background.
- \* Logo top right corner of your web site.
- \* Submenus top and left margins are the best for placing navigation bars.
- \* Links It a good idea to include a second set of links at the bottom of the web page under the body copy for each page.
- \* Contact information under the links you can include your contact information, phone, fax address, and e-mail. So that every time somebody prints a page the have way to contact you.
- \* Web page size Most people can now see 800 by 600 pixels on their monitors, they can print pages better is they are designed in the smaller 640 x 480 pixels. You will see some sites have a link for a printable page, but it's better for the user to have an information web page be print friendly. Even if it's set up at a smaller size.
- \* Use small sets of text you have a few seconds to capture your reader use small paragraphs and simple text. Divide multiple features into bullets.
- \* Keep pages small if a page is longer than a scroll and a half, divide it into two pages.
- \* Nice photos and images use attractive and up-to-date photos to attract the client. Make sure name each photo with a description of what it is. Search engines like that and would give you a better score, making your site more popular.

## *A Quality E-mail Process*

**We** know that the internet is now an important part of the industry. Not only is important but it grows in importance everyday. Just like the baby boomers where the first generation in history to be dependant on driving. This generation and the ones to come will be dependant on internet and e-mail.

My wife was shopping for a vehicle online and we found out that only a few dealerships contacted us from a handful of internet e-mail inquiries.

Keep in mind people requesting information in new and used cars are skeptical about the authenticity of what they see in your website, especially in the used car department. All they want to know is if the car they see on the web is the car they will see in your dealership. Also if you

received an e-mail inquiry at least five other dealerships will receive similar inquiries.

There are two things that need to happen with every inquiry. First answer the question and if available volley to the client's objection: buying cycle, best price, one price, money, or machine. Reply as soon as possible, the sooner you answer the most likely you are to get a reply and make a good impression.

The following four days generate e-mails to the four personality types: Compliant, Influencer, steady, and dominant. How often does anybody take the time to send you an e-mail custom made for your personality? People respond so well to target marketing that they might reply just because they will feel you connected with them. Sometimes people

are looking for a sign to know who to buy from and this personality aligned e-mail might just do it.

Why is e-mail such a unique tool to reach more leads? It doesn't cost a thing. Unlike other sales processes a manager can review quality and timeliness easily. If you follow this process religiously there is no reason why you should not capitalize where so many other dealerships fail.

**HTML e-mails** - There are e-mails that look and feel like a website, It's a little complicated to set up but does wonders in making you stand out and from the rest.

It is relatively easy to set up a logo with a link to your website on every outgoing main you sent even from third party e-mail accounts like Google and Yahoo.

***e-mail us: [me@not\\_a\\_good\\_idea.com](mailto:me@not_a_good_idea.com)***

***You say the exact same thing when you e-mail a potential client using @yahoo.com, @hotmail.com @gmail.com @sbcglobal.net. I have a client that will absolutely not reply to any e-mail that does not have it's own domain name. It's a small investment, less that \$20 a year, but worth it.***