

Combine Your Yellow Page Ad and Web Site for Maximum Profits

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**By Dr. Lynella Grant**

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A Yellow Page Ad isn't Enough Any More

An unquestioned "must" for any small business has been to run an ad in the Yellow Page Directory. Since most customers were local, that was enough to establish itself as "open for business." The annual Yellow Page ad represents the largest promotional expense for many enterprises.

Yet, Yellow Page directory use is declining, while expanding segments of the public don't rely on them at all. Yellow Page advertising costs keep going up, and the complicated pricing structure is difficult to figure out.

Worse yet, having a Yellow Page ad doesn't deliver like it used to. People can find most of the information they want without ever opening a directory. Your business needs its Yellow Page strategy to be in tune with the times and your market.

Like most business owners, you must squeeze maximum value from every promotional dollar spent. That requires you to move beyond treating a Yellow Page ad like it's a separate, stand-alone way to promote your business. It's not. Your Yellow Page advertising needs to work in tandem with all the rest of the efforts you pursue.

The Internet Expands Your Arena

Every business needs to put itself in front of the people looking for what it does – and that's not just through the Yellow Pages any longer. An increasing percentage of customers, who spend their money close to home, are Internet savvy. There's a major overlap between Yellow Page directory users and Internet users. That fact supports integrating your local and Internet promotional methods so they attract more new customers.

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Yellow Page users are likely to be Internet users as well. And a business that ignores online activities entirely may have a tough time getting access to or credibility with those customers. It is possible to make online and traditional (offline) methods to attract customers work in tandem – improving the effectiveness of each alone. So it's no longer an either–or, all–or–none choice whether to promote the business online or off.

People who subscribe to online services consult the Yellow Pages 23% more often than non–subscribers.

Frequent Yellow Page Users are: 18% more likely than average to be Internet subscribers 32% more likely to be among the heaviest Internet users 18% more likely to make purchases on the Internet 27% more likely to spend more than \$1,000 on Internet purchases

Source: Simmons

### Customer Behavior is Changing

More and more, people are going to the Internet to find, learn about, or select products and services. Even local ones. That doesn't mean that they will buy online, however. People still prefer to spend their money locally when they can. But, even the smallest business can do a better job of being found by those who prefer to use both the Internet and the Yellow Page directory to make their buying decisions. And, it can be done very inexpensively, too.

Even a 100% local business can pull in more business by getting its low–tech and high–tech advertising to mesh. Visit

for lots of free practical assistance. As you broaden

your visibility to buyers, your business will be found more often – by the very people you've been looking for.

What Else has Changed? Buyers are less trusting and more willing to shop around Customers have more options and ways to find what they want Availability of Internet Yellow Pages Aging population uses the Yellow Pages differently than young people Development of unique niches and specialties More choices for a "better deal" More directories competing in a geographic area More immigrants, or those from other cultures, unaccustomed to Yellow Page use Area code proliferation fragments cities Larger cities have multiple directories, rather than one large one Development of specialized directories – like ethnic, non–English, women, minority, business to business

### Become Visible Online – With or Without Your Own Web Site

If your business already has a Web site, treat it as a way to expand the reach of your Yellow Page ad and traditional marketing activities. Jettison the expectation that it should make sales – few do so. But an information–packed Web site can support your traditional marketing methods very well.

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Even without your own Web site, your small business can establish an online identity that helps buyers to find you. Get listed in a variety of Internet Yellow Page (IYP) directories Send emails to your "regulars" with special offers and useful information Position yourself for Local Search – a method whereby customers use search engines to locate local businesses by town, state, region, zip code, etc.

Expand the exposure of your business beyond your Yellow Page ad through a Yellow Page strategy that reaches the whole globe. Your operation, whatever its size, will gain more credibility and traffic locally when it puts itself in the bigger picture.

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Dr. Lynella Grant is an expert in visual communication, how printed materials send signals that reinforce or negate the verbal message. Decode and repair your unintended impressions. Author, "The Business Card Book" and "Yellow Page Smarts."

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### **10 High Powered Ways To Increase Your Traffic**

**By Steve Li**

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1. Trade links with other web sites. They should be related to the subject of your web site. Instead of trading links, you could also trade banner ads, half page ads, classified ads, etc.
2. Start an e-zine for your web site. When people read each issue they'll be reminded to revisit your web site. They'll see your product ad more than just once which will increase your orders.
3. Form an online community. It could be an online message board, e-mail discussion list or chat room. When people get involved in your community they will regularly return to communicate with others.
4. Write articles and submit them to e-zines, web sites and magazines that accept article submissions. Include your business information and web address at the end of the article.

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5. Give away an electronic freebie with your ad on it. Allow your visitors to also give the freebie away. This'll increase your ad exposure and attract people to your web site at the same time.

6. Combine your products or services into one big package deal with other businesses offerings. You could share a web site and advertise the package deal; which means double the traffic.

7. Submit your freebie to the online directories that list your particular item or service for free. If you're offering a free e-zine, submit it to all the free e-zine directories on the internet.

8. Participate on message boards. Post answers to other people's questions, ask questions and post appropriate information. Include your signature file at the end of all your postings.

9. Exchange classified or sponsor ads with other

free e-zine publishers. If there is a huge subscriber difference between e-zines, one can run more ads to make up for it.

10. Post your ad on free advertising areas on the internet. You can post it on free classified ad sites, free for all links sites, newsgroups that allow ads, free yellow page directories, etc.

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