

Human Tactic Advertising? It's Free and It Works!

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**By Gloria Cohen**

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You're probably wondering what the heck I'm referring to when I say "Human Tactic Advertising?" Let's face it, just having a site on the web does not guarantee that people will find it, even if it's filled with great content and products. You want people to find your site among the millions of others that are out there, but how can we use the various proven techniques of advertising to reach our visitors and offer a `human' connection that general advertising can't offer? What many website owners or members who participate in live discussion forums, tell-a-friend programs, offer article feedbacks, or write reviews as well as rate websites they come across, all these are great ways to get your website noticed.

Take some time going online, check out the sites are successful and you won't be surprised that the good ones out there are the ones participating in the `human' factor form of advertising. By participating in forums, write reviews, rate websites and drop feedbacks on articles that you've read are great ways to get visibility for your site. Not sure what all those things mean? Read on to get simple definitions of what all those `human' forms of advertng can do for your small business.

#### Message Boards

Much like mailing lists, message boards and chat rooms are a great way to network with people. Most message boards allow you to include a link to your site. It is strongly suggested that you visit sites related to yours and answer questions on their message boards. Being helpful can go a long way on the web and people will remember you and your site if you offered something that was of value or helpful to them.

#### Web Rings

Web rings are just what they sound like--rings on the web. Each site links to the next or previous member site in the ring. Member web sites have banded together to form their sites into linked circles. The purpose of that is to allow more visitors to reach them quickly and easily. What a great way to increase traffic to your site. Most people place the web ring code on their main page so that users can see it and may opt to participate in a web ring if appeals to them.

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### Tell-A-Friend

Good information, articles or content will get people inclined to tell their friends about it. The tell-a-friend program allows a visitor to enter a friend's email address into a form. When the visitor clicks the 'submit' button, a message about your site is automatically sent to that friend. This is a smart way to attract visitors to your site that you wouldn't otherwise be able to reach.

### Drop Article Feedbacks

Many websites and website owners want users to offer feedback about articles or content provided by them. It allows users to offer input or suggestions or even give a good testimonial about what you have to offer. This tactic allows other users to read what others have to say about you, which may help them make the decision to purchase something from you. More importantly website owners really care about what others have to say and more often than not, will take users suggestions and feedback to make necessary changes for the better.

### Write a Review

Why not write a review on something that really got your attention or you think a product out there is just the thing to have. Write a rave review for others to see and if they see a particular review written by someone in their own field of expertise, readers will take your word seriously. Not to mention if they find that they respect what you have to say, these readers will find their way to your website to read further, hence bringing you traffic to your site and a potential customer.

### Forums

Forums are communities where people discuss topics of interests, concerns, controversy, offer helpful suggestions and tips for doing business, offer valuable resources to others and sometimes really give their opinions about products, services and businesses that operate online. Some are good and sometimes negative. Many online businesses have taken advantage of having forums since they strongly believe that keeping in constant contact and communication lines open with customers and potential customers is the way to increase their client base and it fosters trust and loyalty between the two parties. It's also a great opportunity for business owners to get to know customers on a more personal level and to learn something from their target market needs.

There you have it. There are many ways to promote your site on the web. The great news still remains the same. It doesn't cost much money if at all. Who knows, if you explore your options and take advantage of these marketing mediums, add your own twist to these concepts, might just get you that big jackpot you've been searching for. Expand your visibility as much as you can and don't limit your thought process. Many online companies have snagged huge accounts and partnerships by engaging in the 'human' factor-marketing trend! Always think outside the box and you will find ways to get target traffic flowing to your site and truly enjoy watching your bottom number slowly inch it's way up. Go ahead, splash a bit of human element in your marketing plan, and watch your customers fall in love with you!

Gloria Cohen has a strong background in Internet marketing in helping businesses find new customers by using effective marketing strategies. Gloria is currently an editor of eMarketingAnswers.com, dedicated to providing free emarketing resources and online promotion tools. Reprint Rights: You are free to reprint this article in your web site, newsletter, e-zine or ebook. However, please keep the

author's section at the bottom of the article as is.

## **10 Beer Budget Event Marketing Tips**

**By Sharron Senter**

Are you planning an event or participating in a trade show any time soon? If so, consider the following 10 low-cost marketing tactics before mailing your payment.

Event Marketing Tactic #1 — Is the purchase decision-maker attending the event? Are you certain? Let's say you sell gifts that help increase employee moral and you're considering exhibiting at the National Association of Human Resources annual conference. Is your decision-maker attending? Who attends this event — HR directors, managers or VPs? Perhaps all, or a small percentage of all three attend. If your decision-maker is a human resources director, then you'll want to make sure the event management company can provide you statistics supporting what percentage of the participants have director-level titles. You need to drill down to your target audience. It's not good enough to say that it's a human resources related event; rather, is the job title you're targeting attending? And if so, what percentage of the attendees hold this title? I recommend at least 50-60% before spending any money.

Event Marketing Tactic #2 — What value-added benefits is the venue [trade show organizer] making available to your business? Will they allow you access to the attendee mailing list so you can implement a premailing promoting your one-day trade show special, as well as the location of your booth? Well organized events, at minimum, provide a list of attendees after the event so exhibitors can follow up. More organized events provide participant contact information BEFORE the event as well as after. Other value-added benefits to inquire about include: being included in participant email distributions promoting the event, as well as an advertisement in the event show guide.

Event Marketing Tactic #3 — Target your event qualifying questions around the "who?," instead of the "how many?."

Event Marketing Tactic #4 — Giveaways should be relevant to your business. Don't give something away for free just for the heck of it. Who cares if you collect 10,000 names because you ran a really cool promotion giving away a free 48" TV. If you're a personal chef, what does a TV have to do with your business? Nothing! [Unless you're Emeril.] Therefore, you've just collected 10,000 NON-qualified leads. Instead, as a personal chef you could try, "Sign up to receive our special report, "How to Live Like the Rich; Tips to Hire an Affordable Personal Chef." One can assume the majority of business cards deposited in your fish bowl have an interest in personal chefs.

Event Marketing Tactic #5 — Location, location, location. If prospects can't see you, then you're wasting your time. Don't be fooled into purchasing a cheap booth at a last-minute special, such as "One booth remaining at 50% off." Chances are no one will be visiting you, since your booth will be tucked away hidden from all eyes. The most ideal locations are found at the entryway to the event and near the pathway to the food stations and restrooms. Corner booths between major walk-throughs are ideal.

Event Marketing Tactic #6 — Some of your most qualified event leads come from networking with other

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exhibitors. Therefore, secure the exhibitors' list several days before your event. At minimum, you want to know what competitors will be there so you can mystery shop. What's more, you want a plan

outlining what exhibitors you intend to approach to either pitch your services, or secure an informal partnership. Prepare your plan and your sales–spin before the big day!

Event Marketing Tactic #7 — Would you like to participate in more events but don't have the budget? Try approaching complementary exhibitors and ask if they'd be interested in sharing booth space with you. Split the costs. Moreover, you can cover for each other when you need a break. Or, look around for hidden advertising money. If you're a distributor, perhaps you've accrued MDF funds [Market Development Funds] a.k.a. advertising coop money, unbeknownst to you. Many companies will allow resellers to spend MDF funds to pay for event booth fees.

Event Marketing Tactic #8 — Save yourself a lot of time and only approach event passersby who make eye contact. People who don't look at you or your booth are not looking for a reason. Remember, you can only speak to so many people at an event, therefore utilize your precious time wisely. Target those who make eye contact.

Event Marketing Tactic #9 — Make sure you're allowed to display signs, posters, banners, etc. Treat your signs as miniature billboards. No more than six words and make sure it can be read from at least 10' away.

Event Marketing Tactic #10 — Don't pay full price. Remember, almost everything in life is negotiable, including booth fees. Always ask for a price reduction; you'll be pleasantly surprised. Printed advertising and/or booth fees are just a starting point for negotiations.

P.S.....Stand up, don't chew gum and try not to talk too much to the other people working your booth. The latter makes you appear unapproachable. Finally, your attire should be slightly better than what you believe attendees will be wearing. For example, if you're attending an event whereby most of the attendees are engineers, don't wear a three–piece suit!

Sharron Senter is a New England–based marketing consultant, speaker, writer and founder of Senter & Associates, a marketing communications firm that helps small and home–based businesses deploy low–cost online and offline marketing strategies. She's well known for her free weekly emailed marketing tips found at

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