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Internet Business Doomed by Grand Theft

By Pamela Heywood

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Every ezine I read these days, including all of my own, the editors are having to waste valuable space reiterating the rules or tightening them up because of the variety of abuses that they suffer from unscrupulous subscribers. Listen up, because even if you are only guilty by association, you are contributing to the death of your own business online.

It's not a few who are too selfish to read the rules, it's a daily deluge. It ought to be punishable as theft. It's so prolific, so large-scale it amounts to Grand Theft.

I reckon an editor's time is worth the same as the next person's and I presume that those of you who still go out to do a 9-5 don't say "Oh, that's OK, don't bother to pay me." at the end of the week or month. Do you refuse all money in return for your online efforts? Not bloody likely!

OK, so why then are ezine editors different?

What do we get in return for our time? That's many hours spent handling all the list admin tasks that are necessary, keeping up with our subject matter, doing research, writing stuff, dealing with correspondence, scheduling ads, formatting it, making sure it has value to the readers, sending it out on time ...

Yeah, we might get a few bucks worth of ad revenue, but don't ask me to work out the hourly rate, my calculator doesn't have that many decimal places!

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No, we get bombarded with autoresponders, counter offers and "vacation" replies, we get false email addresses that bounce on us, we get free email addresses that are over the limits and bounce on us, we get spammed to death to our email addresses because some idiots think that a subscription to our ezine constitutes a "business relationship", moaners and whiners who don't like the rules and cant follow them ...

All of this clogs up our email accounts, has to be dealt with and ROBS us of our valuable time. Felony, theft, plain and simple.

Oh, that's on top of genuine feedback from actual humans that are

subscribed — the only sort of mail we do want, thank you.

There are also a breed of sub-humans who conveniently forget that they subscribed and accuse us of SPAM, which mean we have to spend half a day or more trying to clear our name. If an ezine requires that you subscribe to it, believe me it is NEVER spam.

I know who these characters are: they are the same sort that resort to road rage, the psychologically immature that just have to find someone to blame — for everything. They look to make trouble: like all perversions, they get kicks from it.

Then there's ads. We have to have rules to make it fair to everyone, but will people read and adhere to those rules? Nope! They'll spam us with ads too frequently, too large, illegal, wrong format ... Quite apart from the 95% that are a total waste of time and space because they are all for the same thing.

No wonder so many ezines that once offered free ads are now discontinuing this service. The time spent weeding the chaff from the wheat simply cannot be justified. We set up to help others and it's the old story, "Give a hand and they'll take an arm".

It's selfish, counter-productive and foolish. No-one is that desperate to make a living that they can steam-roller over fellow humans in their way. Always be careful what you do to people on the way up, because you never know — you might meet them on the way back down.

So how's this dooming your business?

Well, it should be obvious, but I'll point it out for those who

need help; that if there is less free advertising available you'll either have to pay for all of it and go broke or you'll never get to promote your business at all and still go broke.

If ezine editors have to spend all their time on admin, they'll never have time or space left for useful content and you'll never learn anything — that is presuming you bother to read in the first place? If you think you know it all, very likely you have the most to learn.

If you use autoresponder addresses, free addresses or any other of the nasties I've described, you've already labeled yourself as uncaring and unprofessional. You've doomed your business right off, no-one will deal with you. Many editors are now banning those addresses, so you won't get their value and assistance anyway. At the end of the day, you've only robbed yourself.

Well, it has to stop. Quite apart from what I have mentioned above, various services on the net are having to tighten up rules and policies in a response to the level of abuse. If you don't do your part in stemming it, by acting responsibly and not allowing others to get away with it, then commerce on the Internet will be effectively outlawed and your business will be doomed. Take heed.

Pamela Heywood is webmistress of <http://www.tucats-design.com>— Building Your Online Business Instinctively. Subscribe to the weekly TuCats Mewsletter (sic) <mailto:subscribe@tucats-design.com> and get regular FREE hints, tips, articles and resources.

The Motion Picture Association Of America And Copyrights

By Charles Weber

The MPAA

The MPAA (Motion Picture Association of America) is the national voice of anti piracy laws. The MPAA defines copyright theft as: signal theft, theatrical print theft, digital picture theft (from the internet), unauthorized public performance of copyrighted work, and optical disc and videocassette theft. In the recent years the MPAA has played a major role in identifying and filing lawsuits against people who are liable for these kinds of thefts.

Some people may ask: "what constitutes these kinds of thefts?" or "does the MPAA really go after the small fries?" The truth is that the MPAA considers any kind of illegal duplication or performance of copyrighted pieces of material theft punishable to the full extent of the laws broad arm. And yes, they

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will go after the "small fries" as well as the big profiteers.

Here are some definitive answers to what constitutes some kinds of actions considered thefts by the MPAA:

- Theatrical print theft: Stealing the physical film from an authorized showing establishment, or straight from the studio. This form of theft is serious because it allows the thief to make high quality duplicates of the film for personal use or to resell for profit.
- Signal theft: when someone illegally taps into cable TV systems and receives programs usually paid for by the viewer at no cost. Many thieves have made substantial amounts of money selling devices specially designed to tap into cable or receive unauthorized satellite transmissions.
- Digital picture theft (via the internet): the internet can be easily utilized to download stolen or decoded movies. Some people are unaware that this kind of action is a theft! These things are considered a theft because they are taken from the internet without prior consent to the copyright owner. Just because money was exchanged (which many internet download sites and programs may ask of you to do to trick you into thinking it is a legitimate service) DOES NOT mean that it is legitimate. Even illegally hosting and streaming music for others, who did not purchase the music, is considered illegal.

The MPAA goes through great efforts to catch and prosecute offenders. Besides, how would you feel if you spent millions of dollars and thousands of hours producing a movie to sell to the public and instead of seeing profit for your hard work and time spent, you see nothing? This is why the MPAA considers such acts as those stated above as stealing.

Charles Weber is an upcoming writer who researches various topics concerning the internet, media production, and other current events topics. Content should be taken as information and not legal advice. His website with more information about copyrights can be found

. Must include link.



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