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Levelling The Playing Field For Small Websites

By Ian G Williamson

There is a common misconception that all you have to do to "make it big on the web" is throw up a website and then sit back and watch the sales roll in. This "build it and they will come" mentality is as effective online as it is offline – i.e. not at all.

Although the internet has, to a certain degree, levelled the playing in terms of allowing small businesses to compete with larger ones on a more equal footing it is not a miracle cure.

In order to succeed on the web you need three basic items:

1) Good product 2) Good price 3) Customers

The Internet has certainly made obtaining items 1 and 2 easier – you can now become an "affiliate" for world beating products and profit from what others have developed or you can market your own products.

However good your product is and how keen your price you still need that third, vital, element – the customer. For larger companies with large marketing budgets they can create online and offline campaigns that drive customers to their website. But what about the little guy – the guy who has not got the resources for a TV advert or banner advertising campaigns on Ebay !. I am talking about the guy like you and me – a shoestring budget and no idea where to start. Of course there are the usual routes of banner advertising, FFA, safelists etc but who has ever got real, sustainable traffic from any of these sources.

So what is the alternative? – Well surprisingly simple actually – traffic exchanges. What are traffic exchanges? – Websites that you can join and view or "surf" other members websites and in return they will view your website – your free visitors!. To see how a traffic exchange works (and start getting visitors to your site) I suggest you visit

<http://www.321hits.com>

and check it out.

One of the down sides of traffic exchanges is that if they only have a small membership base then it will be the same people who are visiting your site over and over again. This is less than ideal because you want your product exposed to potential new customers rather than the same person all the time.

A major advantage of an exchange like

<http://www.321hits.com>

is that not only does it have many

thousands of members but it also employs "vs-ten" technology from varisearch. To cut a long story short this means that members from other traffic exchanges visit sites listed on 321hits. In effect this means the potential user base of this exchange goes up from thousands to tens if not hundreds of thousands of users – more potential customers for your product.

In summary – it is difficult for small, emerging websites to bring visitors in but traffic exchanges can offer a quick, easy and free way to get the hits flowing. They are not perfect and need to be used in conjunction with other marketing tools but you should be checking them out now – your competitors might be already !

This article was writtem by Ian Williamson of

<http://www.321hits.com>

– free website traffic.

Barone Drexel and Harris – My Mentors, Teachers and Coaches

By Aron Wallad

Barone Drexel and Harris – My Mentors, Teachers and Coaches by Aron Wallad

My life was always about playing ball, mostly baseball as I grew up. Therefore, I was always at the playground on Chancellor Avenue. This was a hotbed for sports activity in the Weequahic section of Newark. From Monday through Saturday there were countless games taking place. Baseball on the dirt field and softball on the blacktop. Basketball games, and volley ball games were always being played. Mr Barone, Mr Drexel and Mr Harris oversaw the games that were played. Sometimes they played in those games. They ran the show. Organizing teams for a given game or creating teams for a new league they took charge and got things done. I did not realize some of the things they did that impacted my life until I left the playground scene many years later.

I looked up to all three of them, for being fair, for listening when I had a problem and for being funny.

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Each one of them was unique. Each one of them was taught me in their own style.

Mr Barone or Mr B as most of us called him was about five feet. The only thing that was small about him was his height. Playing ball with the teenagers was one of his favorite things to do. He often was the director that played in the games when we needed another guy. I would also see Mr B talking to some kids in the batting cage teaching them some fundamentals about batting. He always made himself available either on the playing field or by helping some kids with their homework. I appreciated that he gave of himself. So did many of the other kids. A great guy.

Mr Drexel or Billy Boy as we sometimes affectionately called him was the jokester. No matter how serious I thought the situation was Mr Drexel had his way of making the incident a little less severe. His lightening up of the moment always made us laugh. I loved that about him. He was noted for his chicanery on the field or court as well. He would find an edge and use it. All within the rules. A Drexel play was referred to bending the rule as far as you could. Hidden ball tricks in baseball and sneaky out of bounds plays in basketball were two of his specialties. What was great was how often they worked. He knew just when to use them. A great guy.

Mr Harris seemed like the leader of the group. The other directors called him Bucky. I always called him Mr Harris. He spoke sternly and was always fair. He was the law. He had a little bit of a snarl about him. I had the utmost respect for him. I thought it was an honor to go to the store and buy him his Garcia Vega cigars.

When he asked me to go I felt like I won something. He was a great guy.

For me these three guys were my mentors as I was growing up. Providing me with guidance on and off the field. There was always one of them at the playground to talk to or get things going so we could play an organized game. I learned about fairness, being stern and about taking the edge off in a seriousness situation from them. Felice Barone, William Drexel and Bucky Harris will always be in my hall of fame. They meant a lot to me.

Aron Wallad has been a baseball lover for over 40 years. Writing about his favorite subject, baseball, has been a blessing. You will enjoy the heartwarming stories, the unusual statistics and inspiring quotes. But mostly you will love the heartwarming stories that hit a home run to your heart. Join his ezine <http://www.baseballsprideandjoy.com/index.php?tag=goart>



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