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MARKET YOURSELF THROUGH PERSONAL COMMUNICATION: Create an Image That Enhances Sales

By Ron Sathoff

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One of the problems that I've seen with Internet business is the isolation it can create. Of course, some people may see this as a positive. In fact, I've even read articles that claim that one of the biggest advantages of running a business over the Net is the fact that you don't have to deal with anyone face-to-face. These articles make it sound like personal communication is something to be avoided or feared.

All I have to say to this is "Nuts." EVERY BUSINESS, whether it is a roadside apple stand or an Internet Solutions Center run from a cave in Tibet, can benefit from simple human contact and communication. In my opinion, one of the biggest ways you can benefit from "the human touch" is when you begin to market yourself.

Now, when I say, "market yourself," I mean just that; I don't mean marketing your business, your product, or your opportunity. I mean marketing YOU.

Think about it: What do successful Internet businesses have that the losers don't? In many cases, the answer is simple: a person behind the business who has a reputation for being a trusted expert.

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Someone who knows what they are talking about, and is seen as trustworthy, has a definite edge over a nameless, faceless person lurking behind a business front. People want to deal with PEOPLE, not with corporations, and definitely not with just a web site.

So, how do you create the kind of image that will make customers feel comfortable and secure dealing with you? I've found that there are many different ways of doing this, but here are three tried-and-true techniques:

1) Share your expertise: You can help build a reputation by simply offering your knowledge to others. If you have a lot of experience on the Internet, share your stories. If you have knowledge of marketing, teach people how to be better marketers. How? Well, you can offer this information on your web site. Or,

you could go onto discussion boards and share your knowledge with other participants. You could even write an article sharing your experiences and opinions!

2) Share your enthusiasm: Your clients will almost always feel more comfortable when they know they are dealing with a real person — someone who has feelings and opinions. So, express your feelings when you can and when it's appropriate. If you are really excited about your product or opportunity, tell them WHY. If your business has improved your life dramatically, let your audience see the joy, gratitude, relief, etc. that you feel (within reason, of course!). Some cynics may say that expressing your feelings is unprofessional, but I say it's just a matter of being a human being, and your customers will appreciate seeing that part of you.

3) Reach out to people: Customers love it when they are treated like people and not just customers. Take some time out of your day and write personal emails to your clients (and NO, auto responders don't count!). These could just be follow-ups, asking how things are going, or to check to make sure that there are no problems with their purchase. When you write these, it might not seem like you are being productive, but you will be surprised by the goodwill (and repeat sales) a simple gesture like this can create.

Remember that most sales in this world are made face-to-face in stores, markets and bazaars. One reason why some people may balk at buying on the Internet is the fact that it seems so

impersonal. You can help relieve these anxieties, however, by doing everything you can to show your customers that they are dealing not only with a REAL person, but with a person who has the ability to solve their problems and who enjoys helping them.

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How to Choose Stock Photography for Your Ebook Covers

By Leva Duell

Choosing the right images for your ebook is important to convey the message you want. Stock photography is an effective tool for your ebook covers.

Here are some tips to help you find and choose stock photos.

1. Photography agencies have many selections. Stock photography is more cost effective than custom photography and will work for most ebook covers.
2. Be flexible. Don't expect to find the exact image you want. For example, if you provide information about home schooling, you may want to find an image of a woman with a child. The images you'll find may not be the size, color, or position you're looking for and the child may not be the right age for your topic. Determine what message you want to convey. Then search for an image that conveys that message. If you don't find the right image, you may want to take your own pictures with a digital camera or hire a photographer.
3. Use a free comp image to try out the image. Most stock agencies offer a free comp image for position only so that you can try it and see if it's going to work for your purpose.
4. Buy the size and resolution you need. Don't pay more than you need to. So don't pay for 300 dpi resolution when you only need 72 dpi resolution for an ebook cover image.
5. If you don't find what you need, contact the web site. They may have images that are not featured on the site.
6. Know how to search. Try different keywords. If you are looking for a woman in the woods, try keywords like "women woods, women trees, women forest."
7. Consider combining two or more images. Sometimes you have to put two or more images on top of each other to create the image you want. You can use a graphic program to do this. In the example above, you may find a great image of a forest without a woman. You may want to put a picture of a woman on top of the forest image.

8. Check the "Terms of Use." Some sites only allow you to use their images for personal use, while others allow commercial use (which is what you will want for your ebook that you are selling). Other sites let each contributor of the images determine what kinds of usage will be allowed. If you're using the image for an extended period of time, you may have to pay every year.

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