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Pop-Up Windows: A Nuisance or a Gold Mine?

By Karon Thackston

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<http://www.ktamarketing.com>

How many times a day do you see them as you surf the Web? Pop-up and pop-under windows have become a widely used marketing tool. But do they work? Are they just a nuisance, or are they really the gold mine that all the "gurus" claim?

After doing a good deal of research, I've discovered some pretty interesting facts. After implementing my own pop-up campaign, I've had some enlightening moments. Allow me to tell you what I've discovered, and you can make up your own mind.

I started by looking to one of my favorite marketing research resources, <http://www.marketingexperiments.com>. They actually spent over \$4,000 testing pop-up windows and compiling the results. Their experiment included using pop-ups for a biweekly ezine publisher and a computer products retailer.

The results were astounding! The ezine publisher got 100 more subscribers during a one-week period WITH the pop-up window than WITHOUT. The computer retailer received over 3,700 new subscribers by using a pop-up window. That was enough to convince me to look further into using pop-ups on my own sites.

(NOTE: One thing the experiment was careful to point out is that copy plays an enormous role in the success or failure of the pop-up. I wholeheartedly agree!)

Using my KT & Associates site (<http://www.ktamarketing.com>) as the guinea pig, I added a pop-up window (to show on exit) giving information about my copywriting course. Then I waited and watched. Success didn't take long!

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While I do not conduct the "controlled" experiments that MarketingExperiments.com does, I do have some basic data to offer you. After an 11-day period, I checked my site statistics and was very pleased! I had gotten a number of page views (not "hits" – "page views") using the pop-up window. I had also seen a 50% conversion rate. (Meaning that 50% of those who clicked to my copywriting course site purchased the product.) The pop-up was working great!

What were the factors that made a successful pop-up window? For the folks at MarketingExperiments.com, it was an offer of some sort. The computer retailer offered the opportunity to win a prize. The ezine publisher offered the chance to enter a sweepstake. However, that leads to another issue (that I won't get into at the moment) of attrition. After the contest is over, and the prize is awarded, will the subscribers unsubscribe?

For me, I offered something of interest to my visitors. They came to my site seeking marketing and copywriting information. It made sense that they would be interested in the course. Viewers never read every single word of your Web site, so the pop-up window gave me the opportunity to tack a "PS" onto their visits. Sort of stating, "Oops! You might have missed this. Don't you want to take a look before you go?"

There are several things to keep in mind when creating pop-up windows (based on my opinion).

1. Do make your pop-up window visible on exit, not entry, of your site. The reason being that when people enter your site and a window flashes up immediately, it blocks their view of your index page. It also can be annoying. Allow them to browse around a bit and then, when leaving, have your window pop up.
2. Do make your message short and sweet. Giant, flashing signs and windows tend to give an overwhelming impression and cause your visitor to back away. Keeping your message short and your pop-up window small are less obtrusive and, therefore, more widely accepted.
3. Don't use multiple pop-ups on your site at the same time. That is one surefire way to send your visitors packing.
4. Don't put pop-up windows on every page of your site. Regardless of what the so-called marketing gurus tell you, it will backfire due to the annoyance factor.

While I can't tell you what would work for your site or your particular target market, I do recommend that you experiment a little with pop-up windows. You might just find another inexpensive marketing method that will increase your cash flow!

Most buying decisions are emotional. Your ad copy should be, too! Let Karon write targeted copy and ezine articles for you. Visit her site at <http://www.ktamarketing.com>, or learn to write your own copy at <http://www.copywritingcourse.com>. Don't forget to subscribe to Karon's free ezine! join-businessessentials@lyris1.listenvoy.com

Effective or Irritating: The Use of Pop Windows in Internet Marketing

By John Carr

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A few years ago, pop-up windows were all the rage in Internet marketing. It seemed that every time one opened a web page they would be bombarded with offers for this or that. It had gotten to the point where surfing the Internet was almost like playing a video game; when the ads would pop-up one would try and close them out before another one came. This is precisely why we have seen the decline in the use of pop-up windows on the Internet today; surfers simply do not even look at the pop-ups anymore. They close the windows out before even reading the ad. Very often, a surfer will even leave your site if there are too many pop-up ads. They simply do not want the hassle of closing those windows while trying to obtain the information that your site has to offer. This information, while valuable, is not as valuable as the surfers time. Studies have shown however, that even with these set backs, pop-up windows are still an effective method of Internet marketing.

Is there some way that pop-up windows can be less irritating and still be effective? Yes! What if the pop ad were seen upon exiting your site instead of entering? This would allow the surfer to obtain the information that they need from your site, feeling that they were able to come and go quickly without being hassled by other ads and offers all the while making the surfer happy. You have left the surfer with a positive attitude and therefore are more likely to respond to the pop advertisement. This is being accomplished more and more by using what is being called pop-under windows. When the surfer comes to your site, the ad is opened discretely behind the your web page. Then, upon leaving your site, after obtaining all the information that they need, will see the ad and therefore be more likely to respond. Since the surfer has the information, he has achieved his objective and is now open to do other things; ideally respond to the pop under advertisement.

Not all pop-windows are created equally. There are some things that you can do to make your pop-windows, whether pop-up or pop-under more effective. The pop-window should be easy to "escape" from. If the surfer does not want to see the add, but has a hard time closing it out, they will likely become frustrated and could leave your site all together. You should either use a button that will allow the surfer to close the window or be sure that the "x" is easily visible. Another good idea is to use a script that utilizes cookies. Cookie will prevent pop-windows from overloading the surfer since you can decide the frequency of the pop-windows, rather than each time a page is opened. Also be sure that there is no more than one pop-window per page.

When creating a pop-window, you will be asked to fill out a short information form, select the length of cookies, and choose the layout of the pop-window. When choosing the design of the pop-window, you can increase the effectiveness by creating a large headline that includes benefits that will be most appealing to the customer. You should also consider using incentives and lastly do not ask the customer to read a long and drawn out advertisement. Keep the message simple yet powerful and your pop-ads will be sure to generate profits for your site.

To find the best home based business ideas and opportunities so you can work at home visit:

John Carr lives in Perkasio, Pennsylvania with his wife and kids



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