

Purchasing web site traffic.

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By Michael Bloch

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With increasing competition for visitors, a number of options are available for increasing traffic to your web site, but they come a cost. Is it worth it? Previously, I published an article on pay-per-view search engine options. This article can be viewed at:

<http://www.tamingthebeast.net/articles/payerview.htm>.

Another popular ploy to encourage "eyeballs" (visitors) is to purchase site exit traffic. In this strategy, you pay a web site to redirect traffic to you when a visitor leaves their site. This usually occurs with a pop-up window. Is it effective? I guess the best way to answer this is with another question. How do you feel when you leave a site and 20 pop-up windows litter your screen? While utilising this strategy may increase page views according to your server logs, I don't think that you'll make many friends or encourage sales. This option is usually charged "per view" i.e, every time someone exits the site involved, you are charged. I can think of better ways to spend your advertising budget.

Yet another strategy that marketing agencies may convince you to try is buying redirects from defunct sites, or from domain names owned by them. The domain names they own are usually generic terms, words that web surfers may type into their browser address bar in the hope that they will find something of relevance. Some clever individuals and companies have made a great deal of money through this scheme. They buy thousands of domain names, preferably those that have existing traffic and redirect those visitors to their customers. Unless the domain name that traffic is redirected from is specific to your line of business, it will probably be "low quality" (visitors not interested in your product) and once again serve only to annoy internet surfers. Again, this promotion method will "appear" to be successful as your site will gain thousands of hits. But unless the product you are offering has broad appeal, the money you spend may not be justified.

Still one of the best and most ethical ways of purchasing web site traffic is utilising pay-per-click options offered by many major search engines. It can be very expensive; so you will need to do your maths first in order to justify it. Most of these search engines require you to bid on key words or phrases that users type in. The highest bid gets the highest ranking on the search results and the

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advertiser pays the amount bid every time someone clicks on their link. In this option, you will want to be listed in the first page of results in order to be noticed.

Some advertisers go overboard in their bidding. As an example, a search I carried out today on the term "computer" on Goto.com (now known as Overture.com) showed that the no.1 advertiser has bid US\$10 for the privilege. The number 2 position was held by an advertiser prepared to pay US\$.77 per click. It's a huge difference. Coupled with the fact that not everyone who clicks on the link will purchase, it becomes an extraordinarily expensive marketing exercise.

If you do intend to utilise a pay-per-click option for gaining traffic, you'll first need to work out your current visitors/sales ratio. If on average one out of one hundred visitors to your site makes a purchase

then bidding 5 cents for a position on a paid search engine placement will cost you an estimated \$5.00 per sale. If your profit margin is \$10 per sale, then it's viable. If it's \$4, then it's very risky. These figures are only a "guesstimate", but you get the idea.

You will find it more beneficial to bid on words and phrases that are not so popular. In comparison to the example mentioned previously, a search on "computer parts" showed that the top bidder only pays US\$.36 for each click; a difference of over \$9.60 on the term "computer". Using this strategy will cut down the costs of each visitor that you acquire. Remember, customers who know what they want to purchase will be more specific in their search criteria.

For the web masters who offer a great deal of free content, as we do, a paid search engine placement is usually not an option. In fact, any cost involved with advertising will probably turn out to be a loss, especially if you rely on advertising on your site as your major source of income. If you are in this position, there are a number of other articles on our site that can assist you in generating visitors, without the expense.

To view a listing of these articles:

<http://www.tamingthebeast.net/articles/articlemain.htm>

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Michael is an Australian Information Technologies trainer and web developer. Many other free web

design, ecommerce development and Internet articles, tutorials, tools and resources are available from his award winning site; Taming the Beast.net (<http://www.tamingthebeast.net>)

3 HIGH CALIBER REPEAT TRAFFIC TIPS!

By Larry Dotson

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1) MEMBERS REVISIT

Turn part of your web site into a members only web site. Instead of charging for access, allow people to join free. You could add member only information, message boards, e-zines, etc.

People enjoy these member or club communities because it makes them feel a part of something. Most members will return to your web site again and again to be part of the community.

2) BONUSES FOR VISITS

Offer daily or weekly visitor bonuses. This will increase your repeat traffic and sales because your visitors will visit regularly to get the visitor bonuses. It could be free ebooks, reports, prizes, money, etc.

You could also offer discounts as visitors bonuses. You could offer a discount on a different product everyday or if you only have one product you could offer different bonuses with it each day.

3) E-ZINE TO WEBZINE

Publish only your e-zine on your web site. Have people subscribe to a "new issue" e-mail reminder. You'll get subscribers and repeat traffic at the same time.

Plus, when you publish your e-zine on your web site, you could use more subscriber attracting features such as graphics, audio, video, pictures, interactive communities, etc.

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QUICK READ SUMMARY

- 1) Design a section of your web site as a members only web site to increase repeat visitors.
- 2) Reward your visitors with bonuses when they revisit your web site.
- 3) Only publish your e-zine on your web site to get repeat traffic for visitors and subscribers.



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