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Menopause, Andropause And Other Hormone Imbalances
Impair Healthy Healing In People Over The Age Of 30!

Putting Your Website to Work

By Julie Chance

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Websites have replaced the brochure as the "must have" marketing tool for businesses large and small. While virtually every business has a website, few are harnessing the potential of their websites and the internet in general to promote and grow their businesses. So how can you be sure your website is working for you?

First, you must look at the role you want your website to play in your overall business and marketing strategy. As with any tool you use to promote your business, your web promotion activities must be built on a strong foundation. Start by determining the purpose of your website. Is it primarily informational or are on-line sales a major source of revenues for your company? Are you expecting people to find out about your company through on-line searches or are you primarily using your site as a place to send people for more information after an "off-line" contact? Other purposes for your site include:

- Building credibility
- Generating sales leads
- Developing a database
- Building relationships

Your site may also have non-promotional functions such as on-line forms processing or customer service applications.

You must consider who the target market is for your site. Is it a market that uses the web? And if so, how and for what do they use it? Some individuals may use the internet primarily for e-mail, never accessing websites. Others may use it primarily for research and never make on-line purchases.

The look and feel of your site as well as the content are key considerations. In addition, architectural concerns such as load times must be taken into account. Do the majority of your clients have high

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speed internet access or is a large portion of your market using dial-up access. It is useless to have a site with all the latest bells and whistles if the majority of visitors abandon the site without ever seeing or hearing them due to long load times.

Just because you build it doesn't mean they will come. Having a top notch website is only half the battle. Like glossy, four color brochures that sit in boxes in the storage closet or the exquisitely designed retail store that no one visits; your website is useless unless there is traffic. If you don't have a tracking program on your site than you are not capitalizing on one of the most powerful features of a website: the ability to track results. Be prepared for a big disappointment though when you begin tracking. Most website average less than three visitors a day.

It is important to use both on-line and off-line strategies to drive traffic to your site. Off-line strategies

include being sure that your website address is on all your printed materials, using direct mail to drive people to the site and personal contacts through activities like presentations and networking.

While Search Engine Optimization (SEO) is often considered the best way to get visitors to a site, it can be expensive and is not feasible for all businesses. Search Engine Optimization is the art and science (probably more art than science) of getting your site listed near the top when a potential customer searches on a key word or phrase such as "auto loans".

Search engines use a variety of ever changing factors to determine listing order including site content, website architecture, source code referred to as meta tags, and the number of links to your site from other related sites. There are companies that generate the majority of their revenues providing Search Engine Optimization services. For many smaller companies the cost is prohibitive. However, even if you are a very small company you can be sure the content on your site includes the key words you want to be listed under. Linking to the sites of businesses that are complimentary to yours and asking them to link to you can also improve search engine ranking.

Pay for performance options such a Google Ad Words or listings on Overture offer another relatively inexpensive option for driving traffic to your site. The "sponsored site" listings at the top or down the side are companies that have purchased key words in order to appear in prime locations when someone searches on that word.

There are hundreds of sites that you can post content to in the form of articles. These articles can be picked up and used by publishers of on-line newsletters - large and small. Writing articles related to your business and posting them to these sites can generate a tremendous amount of traffic and costs only the time it takes you to write and post the articles.

So you've got a great website and you're generating traffic. Now what? How do you assure that you are capitalizing on the traffic you are generating? First you must determine what action you want visitors to take. Do you want them to sign-up for your free newsletter, purchase a product, fill out a contact form or request additional information? To determine the action you want a visitor to take, look back at the role you want your site to play in your overall business and marketing strategy.

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The three key ingredients for a website that helps you promote and grow your business are:

- design and content of the site
- driving traffic to the site
- getting visitors to take action

If any one of these ingredients is missing your results will be less than optimal.

The internet has had the greatest impact on how companies market their products and services and offers the most potential for new and innovative marketing strategies of any promotional vehicle since the invention of television. And, at least for now, the internet provides a more level playing field for small companies than other promotional tools. How can your company capitalizing on the power of the internet?

Julie Chance is president of Strategies–by–DESIGN, a Dallas based firm that helps businesses from professional services firms to specialty retailers Map A Path to Success by developing more leads, turning those leads into loyal customers, and obtaining a greater return from their marketing investment. The firm provides marketing consulting, training and skills based coaching. For more

information or to sign up for their free marketing tips newsletter go to www.strategies–by–design.com or call 972–701–9311.

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Help online for free. The Stiffsteiff Bears help site.

By Malcolm James Pugh

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The purpose of this website is to help. Purely and simply to help anyone out there with anything they do not understand. Whether from a how to do it angle, or where to go to get it angle, or why are things this way angle. It tries to take away the fear of the unknown by making things clear, by putting forward people who can be trusted, by putting out opinions and possible helplines to get us all through a very tough world. It is an attempt to show that someone can be bothered to do something for you for nothing, that there are people who can help you, if you have the fire to help yourself. It is an unfair world and we must learn to survive in it and accept it as it is. There is too much emphasis placed on money and escapism, and too little placed on being happy with what you have and using your own common sense to approach problems, instead of running away from them or avoiding them via substances of one form or another.

There is also an abundance of friends websites, and their businesses, as a known place to go which is as far as I am concerned secure, honest and good.

There are adventures of a slightly sinister bunch of Teddy Bears for the kid in all of us, and for a laugh

in a grim world.

There are wonderful photos, model trains, cars of quality. There is a medieval bowman, and a wedding venue unparalleled.

There is free advice on how to build your own website, how to index it, and how to get a glow of fifteen minutes of fame when you first see your own website appear on Google.

But the main aim is HELP.

If you have any kind of problem, chances are it can be alleviated a little here, at the Stiffsteiff teddy bear site for myself and other welcome guests.

Aged 51, I have been through a tough life, if you need help Ive probably been there too.



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