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Relationship selling through usenet newsgroups

By Jeff Gilman

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90,000 newsgroups on usenet offer something to everyone. Use relationship selling to promote your web site and business. Get noticed on the internet for free.

News groups, or usenet, is the internet equivalent of a bulletin board. It was also one of the first internet technologies preceding the world wide web by years. There are over 90,000 DIFFERENT NEWSGROUPS covering every subject under the sun and this article will tell you how to get connected to the millions of people who interact through Usenet daily. Here are a few examples of the kinds of groups there are and the opportunities you have to market your services:

Groups with the word health in them

alt.health.fasting

biz.health

christnet.healing.herbs

Groups with the word business in them

alt.business.internal-audit

seattle.business

us.sc.charleston.business

Words with park in them

gov.us.topic.nat-resources.parks

rec.arts.disney.parks

semcog.pub-facilities.parking

Groups are set up and maintained by special interests including, but not limited to gov (government), us (local governmental or quasi governmental entities such as a state university or city), biz (business) or alt (for alternative – any thing goes). Some of these groups are deadly serious and aimed at specialized markets. For example, you can read the business process reengineering group news for a year without smiling. Some are pure commercial – seattle.business and alt.business.franchise are about commercial transactions only. Some are for making public announcements such as

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gov.us.ed.announce and comp.windows.x.announce which are the internet equivalent of the public announcement section of the news paper. People with common and specialized interests join these groups to share their stuff. The groups are a meeting place and a place you should go to meet people who need you.

Groups are either moderated or unmoderated. A moderated group has a one member who reads everything to determine if it is appropriate to be posted to the group's bulletin board. Unmoderated groups allow anyone to post anything. The success of a moderated group depends on the quality of the moderator. If junk is let in, the value of the group goes down. The success of unmoderated groups depends on the group's community. A serious community will write some very nasty letters to people who post off message subjects to their group. My caution to you is to stay on subject for each group.

To my mind there are three key reasons to participate in newsgroups. First, you might learn something about your line of work or about the environment in which you function. Business and organizations monitor newsgroups for the explicit purpose of learning about their environments. Intel famously watches groups relating to its products and often hears about bugs and issues before they become generally known. They use the groups, in part, as an extension of their quality control system. The CIA monitors terrorist groups to get a handle on that famous buzz. I monitor non-profit organization newsgroups because I do a lot of work for non-profits and am a student of their management. We all learn something.

The second reason to participate is to market. Some newsgroups permit posting of blatant advertisements. Most of these groups are full of bottom-feeder-multi-level-marketing-pie-in-the-sky-scams. Posting stuff to these groups isn't marketing. It is, at best, advertising (which isn't to say you shouldn't do it – more on that later).

Real marketing on Usenet news groups is done in the classic model doctors, lawyers and professional service firms used back in the days before they were allowed to advertise. (Does anyone other than me remember those days? That was before professional athletes were allowed to wear Nike swooshes on their arm pits.) In this model, you met someone, listened and talked to them and attempted to form a relationship. This was when actual human communication – or more technically a single-threaded-bi-synchronous-data-exchange-process-between-liveware-unit-interfaces – was used to market. Marketing on Usenet groups is a one-on-one, relationship-building, thoughtful-and-fulfilling way to work.

The third reason to participate in newsgroups is to play the search engine game. The fact is, if your URL is in usenet postings it will likely get picked up by some search engines. A fascinating example of this is the Green Eggs Report (<http://www.ar.com/ger/>). Green Eggs uses a Rumor database system that monitors newsgroups. It identifies urls contained in postings and indexes those web sites. It is a hugely different model than the 'submit a web site to Yahoo for a couple of hundred bucks' approach. And of course, the more places you are listed on the internet, the higher your ranking will be in many searches.

So there you have it. All the newsgroup news fit to print. And three powerful reasons to participate. So get out there and learn something, build a relationship, and slip into a search engine through the back

door. There are four places I can think of to find news groups. First, your ISP. Your internet service provider can give you the news server address for your system. The address will be something to the effect of news.yourisp.net. You put this address into your newsgroup reader (often Outlook or Outlook Express for Windows users). Directions for setting up accounts is included in the on line help systems of most programs and access to usenet is generally free. The second place to learn about usenet is www.topica.com. The third is www.groups.yahoo.com. Both Topica and Yahoo are a little more vanilla and maybe more commercial than the original usenet. But they haven't been at it as long. The last place to learn about usenet is to visit your search engine and search for usenet. You'll get lots FAQ's, information, and opportunities to subscribe to third party usenet service providers.

Comments on this article? Contact me!

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## **If You Do Research On The Web You Really Need An Internet Spam Filter**

**By LeeAnna**

Spam has got to be one of the most annoying things on the Internet today. I remember when pop-ups first came on the scene, every website I went to was inundated with tons of pop-ups, I hated them, and I'm sure I wasn't alone. Spam flooded the Internet with so many copies of the same messages, it's a very shameful attempt to force the message on people who would not otherwise choose to receive it. Most spam is commercial advertising of get-rich-quick schemes, or products for younger looking skin. There are basically two types of spam and they affect Internet users differently. Cancelable Usenet spam is a single message sent to many Usenet spam is aimed at people who read newsgroups but rarely or never post and give their address away. Usenet spam robs users of the utility of the newsgroups by overwhelming them with a barrage of advertising or other irrelevant posts. Email spam is another type of spam that targets individual users with direct mail messages. Email spam lists are usually created by scanning Usenet postings and stealing Internet mailing lists, or searching for Web addresses. What ever IT is, it's not wanted and thank goodness there are plenty of websites were they will allow you to download free spam blockers.

Internet spam filters are a good way to block those pesky spam pop-ups, in fact, without them, there really is no way to get from website to website without Internet spam filters today. Even with spam filters, some pop-up can still get through. However, most Internet spam filters can recognize more than 98% of all incoming spam. There are Plugins that can be installed on your computer that will increase your Internet spam filters to the program. A Spamihilator does just what it says, it annihilates spam and e-mail spam. Most are freeware applications that works in conjunction with other Internet spam filters and some will send you a daily report by e-mail if you want that will tell you how much spam you receive during that day while you were online. This way, you can restore false-positives or add the

senders to your friends or block them completely. You can create your own language file by editing an XML file. There are many good Internet spam filters you can trust to download on your computer today. It is a Federal offense for anyone who knowingly, with the intent to carry on any activity which would be a Federal or State crime of fraud or identity theft. Also in one "creates or procures the creation of a website or domain name that represents itself as a legitimate online business, without the authority or approval of the registered owner of the actual website or domain name of the legitimate online business and uses that website or domain name shall be fined under this title or imprisoned up to five years or both.

Leeanna is an expert author who writes for Internet Spam Filters



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