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**Selling – Blending E–Commerce and Store Front Sales**

**By John Warzecha**

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There seems to be the misguided suggestion that e–commerce, buying or selling on the Internet, will very soon surpass regular means of retail such as department stores. Nothing could be further from the truth. The e–commerce industry should check out the number of people that wander through shopping malls on weekends. Is a company like J.C. Penny, Zellers or Wal–Mart closing their doors and meekly walking off into the sunset? No– they are expanding, rebuilding, renovating and opening new outlets in an attempt to maintain and expand their customer base.

Internet marketers must do the same thing. Even though the electronic medium is gaining increasing importance, and there are some very impressive numbers being put up, there is still a major concern about such things as transferring credit information and dealing with an impersonal operator attached to some keyboard across the world. Not every business can have a retail outlet, because some businesses are only amenable to on–line sales, but those that do have a retail outlet, should not only be involved in directly marketing their products through their web sites, but the sites should be constructed so that buyers who want to see the product will go their outlets first. Many people want to see the products in front of them. They want to see them, compare them to other products, perhaps see how look beside other items, especially if they are outfitting an office. They may even want to do a little haggling which is difficult to do on–line.

For example, if you have an Internet site where you sell computers and also a retail outlet, you must be prepared to deal, not only with the customer who is willing to buy on–line, but also the customer who wants to go and kick the tires–so to speak. Provided that the techno–babble has been kept to a minimum, an individual, after checking the web–site, will come to you with his initial request. Now that number that has been recorded as a hit on your web site is someone standing in front of you.

He wouldn't be there unless the web–site had done an initial selling job. He is there to buy. This is where the true selling begins. As I discussed in previous articles– this is the opportunity to learn something about the customer. Some of the best sales individuals I know have a tremendous capacity to ask questions and then shut up and listen. They know who they are talking to; know what they want, and they have learned this by listening after asking some questions.

You now have that same opportunity. While you are finding out what he wants, you must also discover his hot buttons. You must assess his needs, but more importantly, listen to what he wants. It has been the case that quite often a sale will occur, not based on what needs are met, but on the extras that come with the package. The only way that you

can find out the bells and whistles that will sell your system is by listening. Someone can have features similar to IBM, Compaq or Panasonic, but they can sell their own system by emphasizing features that fill a need that the customer never knew he had– his hot buttons. These needs are discovered by asking questions and then listening. Here are a few cardinal rules: don't be patronizing or condescending– don't assume that you always know what is best for the customer, or that your superior product knowledge entitles you to decide what is best for him. More importantly, don't try to sell the most expensive item on the market. This is very short–sighted. It has been shown that an unhappy customer can affect up to two hundred potential future customers. For example, a store owner was looking for a new cash register. He came into our showroom looking at some very sophisticated Point–of– Sale systems. He was impressed with the flash, bells and whistles. I listened to his needs. I could have sold him the \$4,000.00 piece of equipment, because he wanted it, even though he didn't need it. His requirements were assessed and he was told that all he needed was a three hundred dollar cash register. It was essentially a cash box that would give him a total sales printout at the end of the day. When it was explained to him that his needs were for a simple cash recording system, he appreciated the fact that we had looked beyond his enthusiasm and sold him an appropriate item. Eight months later, when his business had expanded dramatically and he needed an expensive system– where did he go? He came back to us and ended up buying \$14,000.00 worth of POS equipment. An initial small commission turned into a very sizeable order a short time later because the customer had been listened to. People resent being patronized or treated as if they are not aware of their own needs. They appreciate your advice but that advice should never be stated as an imperative. You may get the initial sale because of pressure tactics but the long term ill–will can result in missing out on substantial commissions. There is also another interesting fact: once someone has come to you after checking out your web site, and they have

bought from your retail outlet, their next purchase will probably be from your web–site. This is providing that you have sold them what they needed, and not what you wanted them to buy.

John Warzecha, sales trainer, educator, and speaker, who holds a B.A., B.Ed., and an M.A., is V.P. of Communications at Wyka–Warzecha Enterprises, <http://www.wyka–warzecha.com>, a site devoting to helping website designers achieve amazing special effects with easy to use Java based products.

## **THE 10 STEPS TO GETTING YOUR OWN WEBSITE/E–COMMERCE HAPPENING**

**By Bill Rosoman**

### 1/ Introduction

This is a guide for those who want to get into e–commerce and to build a website, but who have little money or do not wish to spend that much. It is assumed however that you have a computer and the Internet or have access to them.

We have a site [www.novelty–gift.com](http://www.novelty–gift.com) which so far has cost \$US35.00 (the cost of the name). The rest is free and the only other cost has been my sweat and experience. When we increase our sales we will automate the sales.

The only other actual cost is maintaining an EFTPOS terminal to process the Credit Cards. That is \$US40.00 a month. But we have this for several sites and businesses.

### 2/ .com Name

Get yourself a name at [www.networksolutions.com](http://www.networksolutions.com) cost \$US35.00 per year.

### 3/ Host for your site

We use several some as main host and others as mirrors of our main sites [www.hypermart.net](http://www.hypermart.net)

[www.easyspace.com](http://www.easyspace.com)

[www.bizland.com](http://www.bizland.com)

[www.xoom.com](http://www.xoom.com)

[www.prohosting.com](http://www.prohosting.com)

[www.geocities.com](http://www.geocities.com)

[www.webhostme.com/](http://www.webhostme.com/)

We also use Internet drives like [www.driveway.com](http://www.driveway.com) to store stuff online.

In fact you should sign up with the host first after finding that the name is available.

I hope this article may be helpful to you getting started with e–commerce on a minimal budget.

NOTE: Things are changing fast, daily, on the WWW with many free resources no longer free. The policies of some of the web sites mentioned in this article may have changed since this article was written.

END OF PART ONE

Bill Rosoman has been involved with computers (and even email!) for over 20 years. He is the "technical associate", friend and business partner of international author Craig Lock. He developed Craig's famous and original online creative course :<http://www.nzenterprise.com/writer/creative.html>.

## THE 10 STEPS TO GETTING YOUR OWN WEBSITE/E–COMMERCE HAPPENING

E–commerce Solutions For Your Business

Significance of E–commerce for Web Development

E–Commerce, Earn While You Learn!

Your Online Business...Just Like Any Other Business...Almost!

How To Win The War Of Internet Marketing

Super Charged Linking

Create a Website in 5 Days

Scams Exposed

Ebook cover Software



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