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Social Bookmarking – The Ultimate Viral Marketing

By Matt DeAngelis

Social Bookmarking could be one of the best things that ever happened to websites and blogs.

Basically Social Bookmarking sites allow users to create a set of content bookmarks. These bookmarks are organized by tags, which are (usually) arbitrary words or phrases the user can assign to content. This gives the user a way to classify, rank and organize content using tags. The most popular Social Bookmarking Site is del.icio.us, which has millions of users.

Social Bookmarking sites have an intrinsic advantage over search engines and other bots — people choose what to bookmark rather than relying on a program to categorize and qualify content. There is an implied quality in something that someone has taken the time to select.

Social Bookmarkers read other people's bookmarks and add them to their own if they like them. There are also RSS feeds so people can see what others are tagging, which I think is really cool, and a textbook example of viral marketing.

About 4% of my referrers this month are del.icio.us related, including .8% off the home page, meaning that people click on my link when they see it pop up in their RSS feed. I get a goodly amount of traffic from technorati as well, but I would call that site a business bookmarking site, so I'm not going to mention it here.

I only provide a facility on AffiliateBlog for del.icio.us tagging. There is a terrific WordPress plugin called Sociable that allows direct tagging for tons of Social Bookmarking sites. If you don't have it as part of your blog you should get it and install it today. This blog is being redesigned and should be done in a few weeks. The new design will incorporate Sociable.

So...what can YOU do to get the social bookmarking virus ramped up? I see two basic considerations:

1. Write good content. Darren Rouse had an interesting observation about del.icio.us items that make it to the top of the site. You can take a look, but basically he observes that lists, how-tos, technical articles and humor get to the top faster.

2. Give people the tools to bookmark easily. If you have a blog, use Sociable. It's terrific. If you have a site, there are plenty of interesting tools that will help you make it easy for your visitors to bookmark your content. AddtoBookmarks.com is a good one.

There are Social Bookmarking sites popping up all over the place. Here are the Top 10. Where did I find them? In someone's bookmark list on Listable, of course.

Del.icio.us Listible Digg StumbleUpon BlinkList Spurl Magnolia Furl BlogMarks Reddit

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. Matt is the former CTO of Modem Media, a pioneer

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the top Affiliate Programs on the Net.

'Social Bookmarking' As An Aggressive and Acceptable Blog Marketing Tactic

By Greg White

By Greg White

Social bookmarking websites are becoming more and more popular. They allow you to save bookmarks online and Tag/Categorize them with keywords instead of saving them as bookmarks in the favorite's list of your browser. This is particularly useful when your browser based bookmarks have become unwieldy. It's also help since you can access your bookmarks from any computer where you have an internet connection.

I have compiled a list of Social Bookmarking websites from a number of sources. You can find it here:

<http://www.blogmarketingtactics.com/social-bookmarking/social-bookmarking-top-links.html>

Once you have bookmarked them, you can view them, sort them by category/keyword as well as see links from others that have been categorized like yours.

You also establish RSS feeds for each category (tag) that you 'subscribe' to. This alerts you to new links in your areas of interest. Your bookmark collection/RSS Feed becomes viewable to others who can also copy your bookmarks to their own collection. So now you can aggressively promote your RSS feed to the RSS Directories and Search engines, syndicate them and make them available to a much wider audience.

Social bookmarking sites also help you to meet other people who are interested in the same topics you are and who may also have knowledge of web resources that you don't.

On Social Bookmarking sites, you first create an account. Then you bookmark interesting and useful things in the area of your interest or expertise. By doing so you create a useful Feed. Once you've done that you intermittently, (or aggressively), add useful and interesting items, (that could use additional exposure), from your own content. Make an honest effort to contribute USEFUL information and links. This is all about sharing and exposure. Done properly, you can be as aggressive as you want to be about sharing information. You can share your blog(s), links to your informational/resource sites etc. Think about the fact that when you share links to other's resources, you're also effectively promoting their content as well.

This is a way you can aggressively and ethically promote your content and the content of others. I personally have hundreds of gigabytes of my own information and information of others, connected to my notebook. In the final analysis, it's doing me no good what-so-ever just sitting there. But by organizing it, online, I can help myself, (getting organized, getting my content exposed, etc.) and help others at the same time.

If you spice up your feed with too much sales and marketing related or self promotional stuff, people can and will easily drop their subscription to your feed. And instead of gaining good will and doing a service to the internet community you could get labeled as a spammer and suffer the consequences.

So while being aggressive is possible and acceptable, being careful to consider the best interest of the community is certainly warranted.

Balancing being ethical and providing a useful service to others with promoting your own content enables you to be as aggressive as you like. But remember, in the final analysis, others will make the decision on whether it's ethical and useful or spam.

Greg White, Internet Marketer, Author, Consultant and Project Manager has been running successful web projects since 2001. His sites and blogs cover Blog Marketing Tactics, Internet Marketing Tactics and a variety of 'Niche' topics, in addition to starting and marketing profitable web project.

<http://www.blogmarketingtactics.com/>

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