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Speed Kills on the Web!

By Lee Traupel

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I only have to point to the 555 plus failed .com companies (according to Web Mergers) as the poster children of the "speed at any cost" business mantra that clearly doesn't work. And these were companies who burnt through significant amounts of capital (in the millions, tens of millions or hundreds of millions in many cases) while they were rushing to get to market.

Do you wonder why every time you talk to someone he or she seems to be in such a hurry that they don't really have time to talk with you? But if you want to work with them, you have to try and converse on the phone as a first step, or even worse, setup some type of a face-to-face meeting. What's going on? Why aren't we all slowing the pace down so we can focus on business processes that are based upon viable models? Especially in these economic times where relationships and processes are critical to ongoing success and/or survival!

I think we are experiencing some type of a .com hangover effect. Everyone was in such a hurry during the heady GBF ("get big fast") .com days ... trying to do the "land grab" while "driving an "online brand" that would lead to a quick "exit strategy" ... that they forgot to really define a viable business model that included development of tangible goods and services for real customers.

I still come into contact with many people that act like they've been hard wired to a double espresso. They aren't sure what they are doing or where they are going, but they want to do everything in a hurry! It seems like many are still trying to build a business the same way they did during the last two years, when fundamentals and many niceties of business went out the window, while greed became the order of the day.

We are telling our clients speed can and does kill on the web. It's time to slow down and think strategically about what they want to do and then build marketing campaigns and processes that convey tangible value to their market demographics (read customers!).

Speed Kills on the Web!

Here are some fundamental marketing rules for living life in the slow (but safe) lane:

1. Ensure all marketing collateral (web and offline) are in synch. Invest sufficient time and resources to ensure there are no discrepancies between them to build a cohesive brand that effectively communicates what you do.
2. Take time to really evaluate business opportunities. Don't just blast through relationships, meetings or assessments. Many times you can build viable partnerships by sitting down and taking a hard look at how third parties complement your business and vice versa.
3. Use the web for what's it's really meant for – as a highway for communications and commerce. It's not the "saving grace" its been touted to be by many companies; 87% of Internet users today utilize the web to research goods and services.
4. Make time to look at your competitors, whether they are across the road or on the other side of the world. The web has created a commerce model where a competitor is just a click away. So carefully analyze what your competitors are doing.
5. Communicate with your customers and partners. It doesn't do much good to build a beautiful web site that does not make it easy for people to contact your company. I've seen hundreds of web sites the last year that don't have e-mail contacts or phone numbers listed prominently. Take/make time to build a site that lets people communicate with you.
6. Hire people with some gray hairs. They may not flash the latest PDA at you or wear the latest trendy clothes, but many of them have years of experience building companies slowly and carefully, by paying attention to business fundamentals. I've got nothing against youth, but it seems like many over 40-somethings got left by the wayside in the .com mania and to the detriment of many companies.
7. Think small when you're building a business. The billion dollar days are gone with last year's PR hyperbole. I get no royalties from E.F. Shumacher, but I really think his "Small is Beautiful As if People Mattered" is a wonderful book and the forward is done by Paul Hawken, a brilliant serial entrepreneur, well known for his landmark PBS (Public Broadcasting Service for global readers) series on "Growing a Business" that inspired many of us to take the entrepreneurial plunge.

Lee Traupel has 20 plus years of business development and marketing experience – he is the founder of Intellective Communications, Inc.,

a results-driven marketing services

company providing proprietary services to clients encompassing startups to public companies.
Lee@intellective.com

Why You Should Switch To A Fast Internet Connection

By Rick Rouse

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With high-speed Internet access becoming available in more and more areas, perhaps it is now available in your neck of the woods. If it is, you might be wondering if it makes sense to upgrade from dialup. For most people, the answer is probably yes! Here are a few reasons why:

– Cost – As it was for me, your most important consideration is most likely the extra expense required to move up to a high-speed connection. But if you think about it, the extra cost is probably very minimal.

If you now pay for a second phone line just for accessing the Internet, that monthly payment added to your ISP charge is probably as much as a high-speed connection will cost you.

– Increased productivity – If you work from home via the web, you'll get more done in less time with fast Internet access.

Large downloads will take seconds instead of minutes (or even hours), and your Internet research time will be cut dramatically. And all of those huge, graphic intensive web pages that slowly creep onto your screen will pop up right away!

– Convenience – You'll no longer be annoyed by lost connections and endless busy signals. You can stop waiting around while your modem dials in and does its best to establish a shaky connection.

A high-speed Internet connection is always on, meaning whenever your computer is on you have immediate and constant access to the Internet. What a timesaver!

– Conclusion – If you work at home and high-speed Internet access is available to you, you'll almost certainly be extremely happy if you make the move. In fact, most people who try it wonder how they ever got along without it and say they'll never switch back!

Even if you use the Internet simply for recreation and pleasure, the astounding difference in speed and convenience coupled with the relatively minor extra cost make a high-speed connection a bargain!

Rick Rouse is the owner of RLROUSE Directory & Informational Resources, one of the fastest growing Directories on the web. Visit <http://www.rlrouse.com> and submit your URL!

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