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What Are You Afraid Of: Marketing Survey Results About Business Owners Going Cyber

By Milana Nastetskaya

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Milana Nastetskaya

After two weeks of surveying my visitors, I am finally making an attempt to draw some conclusions. Reading my visitors replies to the survey questions, I sense one common concern in one way or another: lack of money and lack of profits. One person even said, "help me make money first then i'll send you a payment".

Another theme dominating in people's replies is the confusion about too many details involved in starting a web business. If you already have a web site, you know what this means. Just step aside for a second and take a look at your business from a newbie's prospective.

You had to design a web site, put it online, figure out a way of accepting online payments, find out where and how to advertise, how to capture your visitors' e-mail address and how to contact them later to remind about your products. The list can go on and on, and if you are not web savvy, you might find yourself scratching behind your ear not knowing where to start.

Here are some of the common concerns my visitors had:

- How to reach target audience
(creating a flow of target traffic)

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- How to focus their online efforts better
(web business management)
- How to make their web site to sell on the first visit
(direct marketing)
- Lack of time and how to overcome it
(efficient use of time spent online)
- Not enough customers
(finding and selling to a target customer)
- Lack of money to start a business and advertise it
- Fear of technology (general Internet knowledge)
- How to automate some time-consuming tasks
- Making a web site look more professional

Most of the people who filled out the survey are either stay-at-home moms or people with full-time jobs who desperately want to make enough money with their business to quit their jobs. Nothing new there, all right. The words "fast" and "easy" were mentioned in the replies quite frequently which tells me that most people who are starting an online business still don't have a realistic idea of how much time and energy is involved in making it a success.

They say, the first million is the hardest. So, please, do me a favor: the next time you see a "make money while you sleep" ad, pass it by.

Alarming Marketing Trend

By M. H. "Mac" McIntosh

One key discipline of successful direct marketing has been to test marketing communications tactics to continually improve results. There is now an alarming trend according to a recent survey that we conducted among business-to-business marketers who are readers of Sales Lead Report.

Only 24% of the marketing professionals surveyed said they usually or always test their marketing communications tactics before rolling them out.

The survey was completed by 280 of 940 subscribers who received and read a special edition of the newsletter Sales Lead Report.

When asked if they test marketing communications tactics before rolling them out: Less than 5% (4.5%) said they always test; Less than 20% (19.5%) said they usually test; 27% reported they occasionally test; Nearly 34% (33.7%) said they seldom test; 15% (15.2%) said they never test.

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In other words, nearly half of the survey participants (48.9%) said that they seldom or never test marketing communications tactics before rolling out their campaigns.

When asked about the reasons for not testing: More than 50% (50.7%) said they had no time for testing; Almost a quarter of those surveyed (24.8%) said they had no budget for testing; More than 16% (16.3%) said they had no systems for tracking test results; Just over 8% (8.2%) said they had no need for testing.

The survey further showed that fewer than 5% (4.6%) said they always test and more than 19% (19.5%) said they usually test marketing communications tactics before rolling them out.

Based on those who do test: A little over 41% (41.1%) percent said the audience was the most important thing to test; Nearly 39% (38.7%) said the offer was the most important thing to test; Almost 15% (14.9%) said the copy was the most important thing to test; Just over 5% (5.38%) said the media was the most important thing to test.

Successful direct marketers have always touted the value of testing in making the scientific decisions about their campaigns. In today's economy, sadly, testing appears to be considered an optional activity; one that is used only for very large campaigns or when prospecting for new audiences.

This is an alarming trend. Eliminating testing because of cost is like playing Russian Roulette with your marketing campaign. Sometimes you'll be safe, and the campaign will bring results. But you'll never really understand why. And unfortunately, one major marketing failure could put a massive hole in your growth strategy.

Think long term vs. short term to reap the sure-fire benefits that testing will give to your marketing campaign.

M. H. "Mac" McIntosh is described by many as America's leading authority on inquiry handling and sales lead management. He is president of Mac McIntosh Incorporated, a sales and marketing consulting firm specializing in helping companies get more high-quality sales leads and turn them into sales. To request a free subscription to his newsletter, Sales Lead Report™, phone 800-944-5553 or 401-294-7730, send an email to

or visit

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How To Develop A Marketing Plan That Will Make Your Small Business Sales Explode

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How to Use Your Mind for Study
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