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Menopause, Andropause And Other Hormone Imbalances
Impair Healthy Healing In People Over The Age Of 30!

YOU AND AMAZON.COM

By Bob McElwain

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Amazon.Com has blown it big time. Barnes & Noble now has a great chance to run them out of the game.

Amazon had books locked. Committing major bucks, they successfully branded the name. Most who think of the Web and books at the same time, now think of Amazon. It's difficult to identify a Web based business as successful in branding as Amazon has been.

Heck, at first I had trouble spelling the name. But I learned. And I don't even have the site bookmarked. Entering Amazon.Com into the browser works fine.

They Have Top-Of-Mind Awareness

I asked around among my friends. "Who do you think of on the Web when you need a book?" All said, "Amazon." When I asked if they knew that Amazon now sells other stuff, most asked, "What?" Some asked the more important question, "Why?"

Apart from books, they now offer Electronics, Toys, DVDs, Video, Music, Health & Beauty, Wireless Phones, Camera & Photo, Computer & Video Games, Software, Kitchen, Tools & Hardware, Lawn & Patio, Cars, Auctions, Gifts, and Outlets.

They have made the mistake of believing they could extend their successful methods in selling books to selling most everything. In doing so, they overlooked a couple of points.

Niche Marketing Is The Only Way To Go

How does Amazon's expertise with books assure me they are also experts with hardware? Or cars? Actually it diminishes my confidence in their overall business expertise. I now have doubts they know what they are doing even with books.

Malls Don't Work On The Web

Shopping malls work great offline, particularly those under one roof where visitors can wander in comfort without concern for the weather. Once you've parked your car and gotten inside, it

is only a few steps to the shop next to the one you are in. And not that far to a competitive shop at the other end of the mall.

Amazon has overlooked the fact that the Web is one grand shopping mall. Creating a sub-mall on a single site won't work because it brings no additional benefits not offered by the Web itself. Given the URL, you can visit another shop in seconds. And you don't have to drag your kids and purchases with you.

Are They Done For?

It isn't possible to be all things to all people. Amazon can't make this happen however much they try. Even Sears & Roebuck gave up on their awesome catalog business as an increasingly urban population found shops relatively close by.

It is my understanding that in selling books, Amazon has shown good profits, at least over the last couple of years. It's these new sidelines that are killing them now. While it may take new ownership to make it happen, they might make a comeback by tossing all but books, and scrambling once more to the top of this niche. Then again, it may already be too late. Barnes & Nobel has not been idle.

If Amazon Can't Make This Happen, Can You?

No way. If you have a site which lacks focus, begin cutting stuff left and right. Amazon's only hope of survival is to drop all products except books. While the content of your site may not lead to such a clear cut conclusion, begin searching now for deadwood, stuff of interest only to off-target visitors. Find it, then cut it, for the benefit of the entire site.

What To Look For

Ah, hah. There's a piece of the stuff. That Amazon.Com button. Unless you are determined to support a losing battle, you are likely hoping to make bucks with this. How much did you make off that button last month? Five bucks would be unusually high. But regardless of income, trash that button and narrow your site focus by at least this much.

A valid purpose to link to Amazon would be to make it easy for your visitors to check out a book you are certain they would love to know about. In making such a link, make it directly to the book. I surely don't want anybody thinking even for an instant that a buck in profit off a book means anything to me.

Over Crowded Sites Abound

You see lots of sites overstuffed with all sorts of things. You can probably see in seconds several things that should go. That banner exchange. That listing of affiliate programs. And you can probably see a need for a clearer statement of what the site is all about, right up top.

It's far more difficult to look at your own site with the objectivity you have when looking at that of a stranger for we tend to fall in love with our creations. And we become accustomed to things we have seen often, even if we had reservations when we put them up.

Get around this by asking others to take a hard look at your site. Friends are hesitant to knock, but give it a try. Ask each to find three things (three to keep it simple) that should go, be improved or added. Further, as you surf, look for people offering a free site evaluation. Take up every offer you can find.

Be Tops In A Niche And Ignore All Else

It's impossible to be king of all hills. Amazon is learning this. Hopefully you already see the futility of this approach, that it is doomed to failure. If you have not yet realized this, your site may need a serious overhaul. Whatever the case, see how much deadwood you can cut from your site. A little bit of pruning can bring about solid improvement.

"But I haven't the time not to shop at Amazon for books"

By Dilip Sinha

"But I haven't the time not to shop at Amazon for books" by Dilip Sinha

It is correctly often thought that people's time is valuable and that they do NOT have the time to go shopping in the big book stores – the gas costs, getting stuck in the queues at the checkout...I know what you mean.

But there are other people – like us – online as well as Amazon. If you are looking for one of the top books, people like us display them and allow you to pay by credit card as well. So you save nothing by going to Amazon for bestsellers unless they give you over around 35–40% off paperbacks and coming up to 30% on other books.

Where I agree Amazon does score is that it displays lots of books for you to search through. Others don't either because they are not big enough companies yet or because few people enquire about most books – how often are you interested in seeing all the books Amazon has about kite flying?

They are time saving yes, but because they allow people who are interested in things like kite flying to see books at the expense of people like you who want bestsellers – you pay \$1.60 to subsidise kite flyers! So for bestsellers, there is really no need to go to Amazon.... and if you don't care about you \$1.60 and you don't need the book urgently, it won't bother you to wait a couple of weeks equally to wait while other people get you the books at a cheaper price...

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