

It's Not Mission Impossible To Market On The Net

by TERRY BROCK



Reality is hitting the Internet. In the old days, you know, back in the 1990s, all you had to do was start a new dot-com, use the word “cool” a lot in your promotion and watch the stock price soar. It seemed impossible that you could make money that way back then. Welcome to Mission Impossible II — no, not the movie, but the concept of making money on the Internet. To make serious money on the Internet requires some principles that are tried and true and some clever new ones. Check out this list of some important concepts and see how many you’re doing in your business.

- **Have an easy-to-access web site** — I can’t believe how many web sites have a name that stretches longer than the list of failed dot-com companies. Make sure it is easy to type in and relates to what you do. Think about it from your customers’ point of view. If you don’t have it now, visit www.register.com and get a new name. You can forward current traffic to the new web site.
- **Use a listserv for staying in touch** — This is a technique that allows you to send a mailer to



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people who have expressed interest in staying in touch. Make sure that they request it. This “opt-in” form of marketing is the only kind that works in the long run. Also, don’t make them long. Instead have hyperlinks built into your short message so that they want can access what you have for that day. Drop me an e-mail if you need more information on this and how to do it.

- **Use audio and video on your web site** — As I speak at various conferences, I see many people in various industries that have a lot of knowledge that can be helpful to customers. Why not have someone interview you asking the questions that you’ve pre-selected and record that interview? With a little editing, you can put that on your web site and it will provide value for your customers. Audio is great for now and most computers can handle it. Windows Media is available on most computers today and RealPlayer is a free download. Put the spark and magic of information delivered in a powerful audio medium to work for you.

- **Pack your web site with value** — You’ve got to give customers and prospects a reason to come back over and over. Find out what they want. Keep the information fresh and current. Find out where they are having pain and then provide the “cure” in the form of information about your services and products on

your web site. Always design your web site with the question in mind from your customers, “Why should I visit your web site today when I’m so busy?”

- **Use, but don’t focus on, positioning with search engines** — I hear people often ask for the secret to getting listed at the top of the search engines. Although this sounds like a nice idea, the best way to market is through direct response and advertising to get people to visit your site. I recently listened to an interview by Dan Kennedy with Greg Renker of the celebrated Guthy-Renker Corporation. They have produced infomercials that generate about \$350 million each year. Renker said that they have tested and tested and continually find that more business is generated through their own advertising efforts rather than through the search engines. Moral of the story? List yourself on the search engines and renew that quarterly (recommended time frame from most experts), but count on most business coming from your direct advertising and marketing efforts. Yeah, even in the New Economy, you have to

work hard to get results!

- **Focus on the right “e”** — Don’t focus on e-commerce but the “e” of p/e. The “electronic” in electronic commerce is the medium. The earnings of price/earnings is what business is all about. Concentrate on serving customers and the earnings will flow. Concentrate on the “electronic” and you’ll have cool, whiz-bang gadgets and no customers. I’ll take the customers and the earnings over the whiz-bang, gee-wow goodies any day!

- **Make the Internet an integral part of your marketing, but not the only part** — You have to use the Net to market in business today. However, it is not and should never be the only thing you do. Blend it with the other aspects of your marketing efforts (direct response, advertising, public relations, personal selling, etc.).

- **Concentrate on your customer** — Don’t focus on the technology. Focus on the people and use the technology to serve people better. This means superior customer care. Use phone, e-mail, personal visits, etc. to stay in touch with your precious cus-

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tomers and let them know that you care about them. Since so many of the dot-com companies fall down in this area, you'll shine even with moderate effort. Think what you'll do with a concerted, focused customer service effort!

There is no magic bullet. Use your efforts on the Internet and supplement them with more traditional methods of marketing, and you'll achieve the results you need. This way your marketing will be a mission possible and mission accomplished! □



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