

puretalentreview

Q U A R T E R L Y N E W S A N D P R O M O T I O N A L T I P S

Maximizing the Web for Business: Networking Opportunities on the Internet



It has long been established that networking is beneficial to entrepreneurs.

The practice can be very effective in forging relationships and building business opportunities. Successful entrepreneurs use networking as a means to build a source of contacts, referrals, resources, and clients as well as a method for trading information and ideas.

Traditional networking is done through membership organizations, conferences, meetings and social gatherings. But the Internet has advanced to a place where online networking can be done effectively from the comfort of your home or office.

The younger crowd has demonstrated how socializing online can be rewarding. Sites like MySpace.com and FaceBook.com are popular

and offer users the opportunity to make friends and share their stories. Today many networks for entrepreneurs are available online as well for the purpose of forming business relationships and promoting your business to others.

Most business networking web sites offer entrepreneurs an opportunity to post information on themselves and their businesses and meet other entrepreneurs. In addition to networking opportunities, these sites provide sources of information on running a business and discussion boards for exchanging advice and gaining knowledge.

Sites like Ecademy.com offer you opportunities to market your products and services through their marketplace. The StartUpNation site lets you bid on sales leads. Visit the sites listed at left and find one that works for you. Pass out and collect electronic business cards to grow your network of valuable contacts.



Online Networking:

- BizNik.com
- Ecademy.com
- FastPitchNetworking.com
- iZania.com
- LinkedIn.com
- Ryze.com
- Spoke.com
- StartUpNation.com

Winterize Your Business

Get Prepared for a Holiday Rush or an End-of-Year Slowdown

As the year comes to an end, businesses typically experience either a slow down or a significant increase in activity. In either case, it pays to be prepared.

If you are susceptible to a downturn during the holiday season or winter weather, now is the time to take action. Sell more aggressively now in order to stockpile revenue that will see you comfortably through the slow months. Run special promotions and offer other incentives to get clients to make purchases before the end of the year. Take this time to seek out new opportunities for your business.

If your business increases considerably during the end of the year, now is the time to

get prepared for the rush. It is essential that you maintain a quality level of customer service and be able to deliver your products and services during the increase in business. Give clients an incentive to order now and "beat the rush." Utilize temporary employees or consultants to handle the extra work and make sure your client's needs are met to their satisfaction.

If you plan to intentionally slow down business during this season, (so you can spend more time with your family enjoying the holidays), now is the time to prepare your clients. Let them know that you will be offering limited services during the holiday season. Encourage them to place their orders now!

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MAKING WAVES BY DESIGN

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Recent Pure Talent Projects



Client: The AMDA Foundation

Project: Awards Announcement

Situation: The AMDA Foundation researches methods for improving the quality of life for residents of long-term care facilities. Together with Evercare, a health plan and services provider, AMDA formed a new awards program to recognize innovative programs in nursing homes that improve the quality of life for their residents. Three \$10,000 awards will be given each year to the winning facilities chosen from qualified nominees.

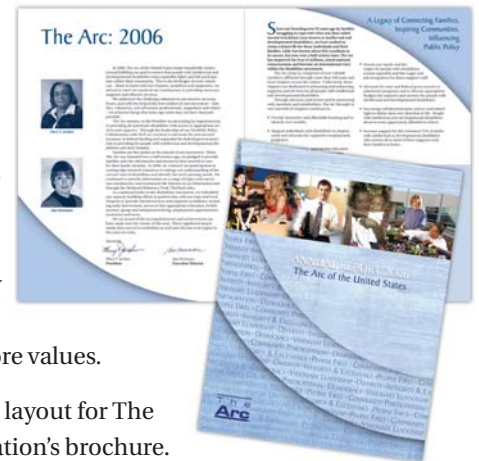
Solution: Pure Talent developed a graphic and self-mailing announcement to create awareness of the awards program and to solicit nominations from the organization's target audience.

Client: The Arc of the United States

Project: 2006 Annual Report

Situation: The Arc is a national organization that serves the needs of individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. The organization's annual report documents their work and commitment and is published each year. Their 2006 annual report needed to work graphically along side their new brochure (Summer 2007) as well as appeal to potential supporters of The Arc's mission and core values.

Solution: Pure Talent designed a cover and an eight-page layout for The Arc's 2006 annual report to visually work with the organization's brochure. Together the pieces can be used to promote the organization's efforts and appeal for support from their target audience.



Client: Grady Environmental Services, Inc.

Project: Corporate Web Site

Situation: Grady Environmental Services, Inc. is an eight-year-old company specializing in professional pressure washing services for commercial buildings, parking garages, and residential decks. Owner, Michael Grady, was maintaining sales through existing clients and networking activities. He needed to establish a marketing plan to increase sales and secure customer loyalty for long-term contracts. To reach the company's sales goals, a professional brand image, marketing campaign, and web site were needed to increase awareness of the company and promote their quality services.

Solution: Pure Talent first developed a company tagline to sum up the value that Grady Environmental offers their clients. A corporate logo was designed to support the tagline as well as the company's desired image. Business cards and a web site were designed to brand Grady as an established, successful business and to help propel the company in their industry. The new identity will help Grady Environmental successfully compete with more established businesses and gain a larger share of the market. (www.gradyenvironmental.com)



Marketing Focus: Email Marketing

The Internet provides several different ways to promote your business. Email marketing is one of the most successful methods being used by both large and small companies. Sending your marketing communications to your prospects and existing customers using this modern method of direct communication is a lot cheaper than regular mail or tele-marketing. There are no printing, postage, or telephone expenses and delivery is faster and more reliable.

Adding email to your marketing activities can work successfully to direct visitors to your web site, showcase products or services, increase visibility and credibility, boost sales and encourage customer loyalty.

Email campaigns are proactive as you work to deliver your marketing message to your prospects instead of waiting for them to track you down on the Internet.

Response email marketing is used to send promotional messages that are designed to get an immediate response from the recipient in the form of an order, a registration or visit to a web site or physical location. They can include special limited offers, coupons or event announcements. Retention email marketing is used to maintain communication with your target audience through regular contact. These emails are sent on a schedule and usually include newsletters, daily tips, or weekly specials.

With email, your messages are delivered in minutes and you can easily track the results to determine which were successfully delivered, who opened them, what links were accessed and who unsubscribed. With this information, you can test different messages and clean up your mailing list efficiently.

Effectiveness:

More than 50 percent of Internet users log on daily to check their email messages and response rates to email campaigns are typically higher than they are to direct mail campaigns. Surveys show that 78 percent of recipients have

made a purchase as a result an email message and 59 percent have used links in a message to visit the sender's web site. Emails are often forwarded on to others by recipients, which work to increase the exposure of the message. It is an effective delivery method for any type of business communication including newsletters, tips, contests, case studies, invitations, promotions, reviews, product or service announcements, coupons and discount offers.

Level of Difficulty:

The complexity with email marketing can range from extremely easy with a simple text message sent by you through your email to a more complicated graphic email sent through services like ConstantContact.com or VerticalResponse.com. Email services offer marketers valuable tools to create a successful campaign. Use them to benefit from graphic messages, automatic tracking, list management, and informative reports.

Difficulty in email marketing comes from the time and effort required to generate new messages, building a permission-based email list, adhering to the strict anti-spam laws, designing your message to get a desired response, creating a compelling subject line that doesn't get snagged by spam filters, and measuring and analyzing results. Email services help you set up your email campaigns so that you stick to the rules and avoid any penalties.

Cost:

If you create your own email message and send it yourself, you can do so for free. If you want to automate messages or manage an extensive list, you may be better off investing in an email service. They are designed to work automatically in delivering messages on a schedule, track responses and update your mailing list. These services range from 3 to 10 cents per email.



Marketing Minute

Quick Way to Make Waves
Send a quick email message to customers and contacts you haven't heard from in a while. Find out what's been happening with them. Pass along industry news, let them know about a new product or service you offer, or just let them know you're thinking about them. Hearing from you can work to generate some business.

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Turn Traffic into Profit

Advertise Your Business During Your Commute

If you drive your vehicle in typical metropolitan traffic, it is exposed to over 5,000 viewers every hour. By simply adding an advertisement to your vehicle, you can take advantage of this opportunity to reach these prospects. You already own the advertising space, why not add your business name, slogan, phone number and web site address to your car or truck and put it to work for you.

Vehicle advertising options range from a simple bumper sticker to an extremely effective full-vehicle graphic wrap. Bumper stickers can



be printed on adhesive or magnetic paper from your desktop printer. Metallic decals

available in chrome or gold tone are available for under \$40 from domainnameplates.com. They are designed to match your vehicle's trim and provide enough space to present

your web site address, telephone number or email address.

Cling-on or magnetic signs are another option that can be customized into any size or shape and provide more space for information.

Vehicle wraps, like the ones shown at carwraps.net, are the most expensive but also the most effective option. The creative vinyl coverings are partial or all-over vehicle graphics that stand out in traffic and capture attention. They provide adequate space and can be designed to support your business brand as well as deliver your marketing message with impact. Vehicle wraps can be applied and removed without any damage to your automobile and can last up to 5 years. They range in price from \$2,000 to \$5,000 yet can pay off with a huge return from your investment.

It's your choice. Speak quietly with a bumper sticker or shout loudly with a full-vehicle wrap. Either way your automobile will be working to promote your business while you commute through traffic.

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