

Why Autoresponders Are an Essential Tool for Every Internet

Business

By Angela Wu

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I admit it -- when I'm on the Internet, I want everything instantly. And I know I'm not alone; in our high-speed world we expect to get what we want with the click-of-a-mouse.

To help fulfill this desire for everything "now, now, now!", many Internet businesses make use of autoresponders. These programs automatically return a prewritten message to anyone who sends a message to the autoresponder's email address. They usually allow for several follow-up messages as well.

Autoresponders are a real blessing to online businesses - particularly small businesses where there's often just 1 or 2 employees and a huge amount of work! Autoresponders:

= Save time. Many inquiries are the same -- why answer them all manually when you can automate it?

= Save money. Have your autoresponder automatically provide information, instead of paying someone to do it for you. Plus it will free you up to tend to more profitable tasks.

= Increase sales. Put your sales effort on auto-pilot! Very few people will make a purchase the first time they visit a site. They want to mull it over, maybe do a little research, and come back later. But any number of things could prevent them from buying 'later'. Use a follow-up autoresponder to keep in

touch with your prospects. You're more likely to catch them at a time that they're 'ready to buy'.

- = Improve service. Visitors don't have to wait for you to respond manually to their requests for information. They simply send an email to your autoresponder and the information is mailed to them within minutes.

Now what can you use autoresponders for? It's as limitless as your imagination! Some common uses include:

- = Free reports or articles.
- = Sales letters.
- = Information about your various products or services.
- = Email training courses.
- = Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ).
- = Advertising rate cards.
- = Order acknowledgements or confirmations.
- = Newsletters.

There are loads of autoresponders available on the 'net. ROIbot (http://www.roibot.com/r_r.cgi?R46886_nn) offers a follow-up autoresponder bundled with several tools, including an ad tracker. Or try WorkYourLeads (http://www.roibot.com/w.cgi?R46886_auto) if you're looking for an unlimited number of autoresponders.

Of course, automation isn't appropriate in every circumstance. Many people have had the utterly infuriating experience of receiving a distinctly unhelpful, automated reply to an inquiry. It's important to remember that an autoresponder is only a tool; there are many situations in which your personal attention is absolutely vital. Make sure that your visitors are still able to contact you directly.

Small business owners often play the role of marketer, product developer, administrative assistant, janitor, customer support, and anything else that's required. Autoresponders offload some of that work so that you can concentrate on the important task of building your business. Try them - you'll love it!

Angela is the editor of Online Business Basics, an exclusive newsletter for eBusiness beginners. She offers a 'no hype, no bull' approach to building a profitable Internet business. Every issue is packed with helpful tips and useful tools, specially selected to fit a beginner's shoestring budget. Visit her online today at <http://onlinebusinessbasics.com/article.html>

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