

Promotional Offers: Sometimes You Can't Give it Away

By Heather Reimer

Promotional Offers: Sometimes You Can't Give it Away

Heather Reimer
heather@thewritecontent.com

The Write Content <http://www.thewritecontent.com>

Publishing guidelines: You may publish this article as written with no changes to article or resource box. Please notify me when and where you will use it. <mailto:heather@thewritecontent.com> Word count: 550

Promotional Offers: Sometimes You Can't Give it Away
Copyright (c) 2002 by Heather Reimer

So, the marketing gurus have convinced you that you need some kind of free offer to be successful online. It doesn't matter if you create your own giveaway goodie or use an existing one, you need a "draw".

What they often forget to tell you is that HOW you promote your freebie is just as important as WHAT you give away. Here are a few cautionary tales to illustrate the perils and pitfalls of free offer marketing:

CHALLENGE #1: Sometimes you can't give it away. This happened to a friend who runs a cafeteria. A soft drink distributor had some extra product so, as a good-will gesture, he gave her a dozen bottles to do with as she pleased. She put them in a box with a sign reading Free Coke Products. At lunchtime, she was inundated with customers asking "Whaddya mean, free?" and "Is this some kinda gimmick to get us to switch brands?" and - my favorite - "Free? How does that work?"

You can assuage the Doubting Thomases and Tinas by explaining your offer clearly and stating WHY it's free.

CHALLENGE #2: "If it's free, it must be garbage." This is an extension of the previous example. The fact is that people aren't used to getting something they actually want and need without paying for it. But they ARE used to getting free junk they don't need and didn't ask for, so they assume your gift must be substandard.

You can combat this reaction by ensuring your promotional item has real value. Also, consider displaying testimonials from satisfied recipients of your freebie and, if possible, placing a dollar value on it. For example, I tell my site visitors that other writers charge up to \$600 for the website content analysis I give away for free. And I tell them WHY I do it that way.

CHALLENGE #3: Free is good but you gotta pay the bills. A webmaster recently asked me to help him figure out what was wrong with his website. It enjoys a high search engine ranking and decent traffic but has yet to generate a single sale. One quick look at his content told the story. His message was entirely focused on his free services with only one small link at the end of the page to alert the intrepid reader to a shopping opportunity ahead.

Yes, freebies make people very happy, but a quality product sold at a fair price by a vendor who offers great service with a guarantee also makes people happy. So don't bury your sales pitch under your free offer hoping that people will take the time to dig it out. They'll just grab the freebie and run! Your offer should either bring people to your product pages or put them on your opt-in mailing list for future contact.

To ensure that your promo gift is actually performing, look at it through the eyes of your prospects. If you find yourself thinking, "Hmm, that's not much of a gift" or "What's the catch?" it's time to redefine the way you give away your giveaway.

Get a FREE content/design analysis on your website from:
<http://www.TheWriteContent.com>

The Write Content delivers action-inspiring web content, sales letters, newsletters, press releases and more. Painless pricing. Money-back guarantee. Fast, personal service.

[Get-Articles.com : 1000's of reprintable business and internet marketing-related articles.](#)

[Submit your article for reprint.](#)