

Get Googled And Build Credibility

By Angela Booth

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Summary: Google.com gives you a simple and effective way to promote your business painlessly.

Category: Small Business

Words: 650

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Value your privacy? Get over it. The bad news is that thanks to the Web, privacy no longer exists. Get Googled, and within a few short seconds anyone who knows your name will be able to learn quite a bit about you.

Try it. Go to Google (<http://www.google.com>), and type in your name. I just did a search query for "Angela Booth" and Google returned a search of over 95, 000 pages. If you have a Web site, post a message on Usenet, sell on eBay, or do much of anything other than breathe, you're caught, like a butterfly in amber, in the sticky World Wide Web courtesy of Google.

Bad as this may be for privacy, this is good news if you're trying to build a business. It means that if you focus some of your marketing and promotion time on getting your name out on the Web, you're building your credibility.

Suddenly all those direct-mail letters that you've been sending out carry a bit more weight. You're more than a slip of paper, a stamp and an envelope. You're a Google-presence.

So how do you build credibility out of being Googled?

The fastest way is to write a couple of information-rich articles, and post them on your Web site. Sure, this is a little bit of work, but not much. You can write, can't you? Within a month or so, your name will appear on Google.com. Over time, your name will also pop up on the Web's other search engines.

You don't have a Web site? You need one, and if you can type and you've got an hour to spare you can get one. Many, many Web site hosting companies offer site hosting for next-to-nothing a month. These hosting companies are catering to non-technical people who want a hassle-free site, so they make it as easy as they can by offering site templates. All you do is pick a template, type in your information (or copy and paste), and in less than an hour you've got a pretty good site that works great as an online portfolio and information resource for your clients.

Continue writing articles. Write one a month, and post them on your Web site. You can also offer them to other Web sites to publish. You do this by joining a few article announcement lists and sending your articles to the lists. To find these lists, go to Yahoo groups (<http://groups.yahoo.com>) and search for "article announce". Ezine publishers and Web sites owners will pick up your articles. Suddenly, you're Google-cred goes up.

Note, that I said "information rich" articles. Some small business owners write puff pieces about themselves and their business, and guess how much credibility this builds? People search for information online, so your articles must contain useful information.

You won't suddenly get a dozen new clients directly from your online articles. You get them indirectly. For example, when someone I don't know sends me an e-mail message and I'm interested in what they say, the first thing I do is Google them. In five seconds, I know whether I want to pursue the relationship or not.

If you're sending out direct mail letters introducing yourself and your services, you can bet that those prospects who are interested in what you have to offer will Google you. If you're revealed as knowledgeable in your field, you're suddenly

credible.

So go ahead, use Google.com to your promotional advantage. It's a powerful tool to build credibility for your business.

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