

Have You Captured Me Today?

By Alexandria K. Brown

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Boost Business With Your Own E-zine <http://www.boostbizezine.com/>

There are many Web sites I visit every day and will probably never return to again. It's not that I didn't like the site, or that I wasn't interested in the topic, services, or products offered. It's just that I wasn't ready to take action right now. So I clicked away and will probably forget about them.

The danger of this happening at YOUR site is that you just lost a great prospect. After all, I'm pre-qualified. I was already interested in what you had to offer. I likely found your site via a search engine, Web directory, advertisement, article, or another promotion. I clicked through to your site because I wanted to learn more.

But studies reveal that I'm most likely NOT going to take action the first time I visit your site. Have you heard the statistic that it takes about *seven* contacts before prospects are ready to buy? (That's a lot of times!)

So how can you get the chance to contact me another *six* times? The answer is to CAPTURE me then and there -- that is, get my e-mail address. To do this, you'll have to offer me something valuable in return. If you just tell me to "sign up for our mailing list," you're not going to get squat.

So what can YOU offer me? Here are some ideas that have been proven to work when done well. Of course, the *content* for all of these should tie-in to your business focus:

1. A FREE MINI E-MAIL COURSE.

These are becoming very popular right now. You simply create a few e-mails' worth of content to spread out over a certain amount of days. You'll need an e-mail autoresponder to do this, which allows me to sign up for your course automatically. Many sites seem to offer five- or seven-day courses, and many of them are awful. So here's a chance for YOU to stand out: Make sure yours offers really useful or interesting content that's more "how to" than

salesy. Then in the last e-mail, tell me how your services/products will further help me -- lead me on to the next step.

2. A FREE E-ZINE (e-mail newsletter).

If you can produce new content on a regular basis, this is your BEST option, because you're receiving permission to contact me (and market to me) again and again! You'll always be on my mind. And if you're a solo professional who is marketing your own services, this gives you *multiple* chances to prove your worth and gain my trust over time. The only drawback to this option is that publishing an e-zine requires a good amount of time and effort on a regular basis, but the rewards will be worth it.

3. A SPECIAL VIP/PROMOTION LIST

If I like what I see, and you give me the chance to receive *special offers* that will save me money at your site, I'll be sure to sign up for your list. For example, one site I love buying from is <http://www.BlueFly.com> . They offer designer clothes and accessories (e.g. BCBG, Fendi, Prada - I'm salivating right now!) at discount prices with exceptional customer service. Throughout their site and when you place an order, there are invitations to sign up for "discounts, exclusive offers, and first looks." Count me in!

4. A FREE SPECIAL REPORT OR E-BOOK.

Here's another neat idea -- give people a special report or short e-book related to your topic of interest. Not sure where to start? Try a top-10 list of tips, a list of relevant resources, or a collection of articles you've already written. The more "how-to," the better -- give me real, useful information. But of course make sure it implies that YOU and YOUR BUSINESS are the best resource in the end. This is a delicate balance to achieve, but it's not as hard as you may think. And at the end of your content, tell me how your services/products will further help me. (Again, lead me on to the next step.)

5. DON'T FORGET TO FOLLOW UP!

Once you capture a list of prospects, you'll need to contact them again. We'll cover the art of follow up in an upcoming article. Of course, if you're publishing an e-zine, that's already set. (Hooray for e-zines!)

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Alexandria K. Brown, "The E-zine Queen," is author of the award-winning manual, "Boost Business With Your Own E-zine." To learn more about her book and sign up for more FREE tips like these, visit her site at <http://www.ezinequeen.com> .

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