

The Ten Commandments of Internet Marketing

By Craig Lock

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"We share what we know, so that others may grow"

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS OF INTERNET MARKETING

by Craig Lock

"Give a man a fish and you feed him for a day; teach him to use the Internet, and he won't bother you for weeks."

- anon

Introductory Thoughts:

I hope that the following article based on our experiences may be informative and/or helpful in your online marketing.

A successful online business isn't built overnight; but is the result of many late nights. If anyone says that they can teach you to make a substantial amount of money without hard work, realize they are talking through "a hole in the head and are out of their trees".

After four and a half years doing it, here are my TEN COMMANDMENTS setting out how to conduct business online (in spite of the recent demise of so many "high-profile dot-bombs"- ready availability to large amounts of capital, I believe, can be a big disadvantage to the small/home business cyberentrepreneur):

*

Now time to "get straight into it"...

1. Understand that technology should help you achieve your business and personal goals. It is merely a tool to move you forward with your vision: a "means to an end" to HELP and enable you, rather than being an end in itself, (or perhaps even be a disabler to "untechnos" like me). So make modern technology work to it's highest potential for you and your business. Spend time learning about various computer programmes and applications (hard though it may be for the 'technically challenged'). Then "use it repeatedly , so you don't lose it!" Accept that the vast majority of www. users are not "technofreaks" (like my "geek associate", Bill) and have great difficulty learning new computer procedures. Well, I certainly do (just ask Bill)!. However, by making a conscious effort and with discipline and effort the habit ingrained makes it easier and easier, as your confidence grows in leaps and bounds.

2. Don't take the competition for granted...and don't "knock" them. Never ever! Accept that no business can be the best in every facet. The convergence of computer, media, entertainment and communications means the underlying structures of the computer world will change rapidly and soon... or so my "technogeek" associate, Bill (not Gates) says. The TV/computer/music center is not far away, I hear.

The net is a world wide market-place, so don't be too xenophobic (now that's a really big word, that I tried very hard to bring in). I think many Americans (and New Zealanders too) think that theirs is the only country on earth in which to trade and is the centre of the world... and we're nearly falling off the bottom near Antarctica!

However, we can all compete fairly ("fairly") against the competition by transcending international boundaries on a "global level playing field" - whereby even the "little guys" can take on the big corporations around the world (except for their massive marketing budgets, of course!) . It may mean adjusting your marketing efforts to take into account some cultural differences (like my rather 'weird' sense of humour, or different spelling -

although it's the same English language). However, I believe people around the world have more in common than their differences. Common aspirations, eg. security, to do their best for their children, etc. Enough philosophical digression, Craig... and back to your point...

Here in "Sleepy Hollow" (with one of the highest unemployment rates in the country) in little provincial New Zealand near the bottom of the world, we sell our various products around the globe in response to customer needs.

3. Consolidate your business by focusing on what you do best. Don't try to be "all things" to your customer, nor try to offer too many products. Concentrate on perfecting and marketing your "best sellers" in your CORE business activities. That is the area which produces the most profitable results for your organization. (remember the "80-20 rule" - 20% of your activities produces 80% of your results/profit and vice versa!). For us it's creative writing courses.

Now for one rather more philosophical...

4. Honour your parents, your teachers and your communities and especially your family. Family is most precious of all and strong and stable family units make for a strong and stable country. Parenting, I believe is the most noble occupation of all - and parents want their children to be safe on line, so supervise them closely. Teach them responsibility in internet usage... so they don't push your telephone bill sky high (as my dear boys do - but then that's the price of having and educating children - a tax on sex!). Teach your children well (as Crosby, Stills, Nash ... and Young used to sing so melodiously) and wisely. Let them learn that the net is a great EDUCATION tool for the present and the future and they could be learning "practical skills on the job" and preparing for a future technological career.

5. Do not send spam (sending masses of unsolicited e-mail) - under any circumstances. You are likely to be cut off by your server. I find it rather irritating receiving "mountains" of spam and simply delete all unsolicited e-mail selling products and services... and wouldn't you do likewise; because it just clutters up your mailbox?

6. Do not launch your product before the market is ready for it. Test the market first by doing a survey. Ask yourself: Is there a NEED for your particular product? In what way is it distinctive (and superior) to the competition (world-wide, remember!)? Have all your systems in place to market it... then always remember, all products have a definite life cycle...and some are

relatively short.

7. Take the business of internet marketing seriously. The world online population is exploding daily and exponentially (big word, eh...but what does it mean?). I'm not sure how many people are online world-wide, but think it may be in the order of 150-200 million at present and increasing daily. In addition, I "guess" there are a similar number of web sites (and many more pages) "up there in cyberspace". So the competition is "pretty stiff"! As the "cyber-revolution" gathers momentum, imagine if everyone is online one day? Impossible perhaps, but who knows! What will that do for your business and you? An unlimited target market for your PRODUCTS - if you are still going strong by then. VERY EXCITING!

8. Have an effective web presence. Your site should explain immediately what the visitor will get for their time online. If it is not clear WHY they should stay, they'll leave before they try to find out. Therefore make your site as interesting and informative as you can. I've seen many sites, where I don't know the webmaster's objective, their purpose. Are they purely for information, or trying to sell something? Make sure your site loads quickly, because people soon get tired of waiting in today's fast /instant (coffee) world.

9. Always remember **MARKETING YOUR PRODUCT EFFECTIVELY** is the key to the success of your business. If you don't get adequate results, you'll soon be out of business... as recurring bills in the post-box without income to pay them soon take all the fun out of your venture into "cyber" self-employment.

I spend at least two hours a day purely on internet marketing: mainly through my various article submissions. Most effective!

Don't forget to use traditional methods of marketing to promote your business, as in advertising (radio, newspapers, brochures, and the most effective of all, word of mouth in your local community). The two strategies (both on-line and off-line), I believe, work best together in your marketing plan. I plan to do more off-line advertising, by allocating a portion of revenue to marketing, as it comes in.

Even if you have the greatest product in the world, you will never sell anything if you don't tell people about it. It's like having a billboard in the middle of a forest or a desert. An example: Just because you have a phone number in the phone book, doesn't mean that a stranger will call you. So it is absolutely vital that you advertise

effectively to bring people to your site; because without advertising, there will be no TRAFFIC... and without prospects there will be NO SALES. And without sales there will soon be no business!

....and finally and most importantly,.

* 10. Use the Internet to build a better world. We are at the forefront of one of the most innovative and far-reaching inventions in human history. The net is the most cost-efficient, INSTANTANEOUS, EXCITING and effective way of marketing products and services around the globe through modern telecommunications. We live in one of the most exciting times in human history; so exploit the AMAZING POWER of the internet to reach hundreds of thousands of people and perhaps even millions around the world. Use your creative energies and imagination to the fullest, by thinking of new ideas of how to market your particular products. I keep a notebook by my bedside and leave to my creative subconscious mind just before I go to sleep. And we all have great powers of imagination as the source for creative ideas, through the amazing power of the human mind.

SUMMARY:

I believe INTERNET MARKETING is the KEY to internet success, especially if you have a limited marketing budget, like us. As mentioned, I allocate at least two hours a day purely to internet marketing, through submitting my articles on numerous subjects to various ezines and publishing resources. I find it by far the most effective way of free advertising to get traffic (= SALES) . Always remember to have a resource box at the end of each article, together with your web site address.

Carefully monitor what's working for you and what's not on a regular basis. REVIEW YOUR STRATEGIES REGULARLY.

FOCUS ON WHAT ACTIONS GET THE BEST RESULTS.

Remember Bill Gates's wise words: "There'll be two types of business in the year 2000 : those online... and those out of business.

A few final words to summarize...

There are no 'magic secrets', and there is nothing mystical about making money online. Other than the advertising budget, it's a level playing field around the world and anyone, like the self-employed entrepreneur working from home, like you and I, can compete with the "big guys".

And we have ONE BIG ADVANTAGE: These corporations are too unwieldy to react swiftly to changing circumstances and markets. So we "one and two man bands running our technology through number eight fence wire* have got the jump on them".

* Only joking, but Kiwis (New Zealanders) have a reputation for ingenuity (big word) - mainly caused by our geographical isolation near the bottom of the world.

(Note correct word order!)

With heaps of hard work, dedication, discipline and a little perseverance, I believe absolutely anyone can achieve online success, even taking on the big corporations. At Eagle Productions, working in association with Bill Rosoman of the New Zealand Enterprise Centre and Nugrow Technologies, we've done it all on an absolutely "shoestring" budget (no-one could believe the story!), lots of hard graft and heaps of pure faith. We have been reasonably successful to date (the past four years), but have hopes of far greater success in the future. No matter, we are enjoying the journey in a totally new field and are having great fun learning and extending ourselves each day. I hope you too take pleasure and have great success as you travel along your very individual journey in "cyberspace".

No matter where you may live on this planet, cyberspace can produce income to so many "budding netpreneurs" . The www gives 'ordinary people' without much capital, like you and I, a great BUSINESS OPPORTUNITY: the opportunity of self employment(and of a life-time) by reaching out to a GLOBAL market-place. Each one of us has a responsibility to ourselves and our families. It is up to each one of us to reach out and help many people around the world through being innovative and original in our ideas... and the money we earn from selling our array of unique products can be used for many good purposes, like perhaps even helping others achieve their dreams. In doing that, WE WILL BE MAKING THE MOST USE OF OUR UNIQUE (God-given) ABILITIES.

The successful cyber entrepreneur of today could well be the equivalent of the Rockefellers, Vanderbilts, Kennedy's, Paul Getty's and Henry Ford's of yesteryear, especially in the new ENTREPRENEURIAL (nice big word) AGE, which I believe, is even more important (and a more appropriate term) than the information age.

What you do today could repay you a hundred-fold tomorrow...and there is just one rule:

If you really BELIEVE in your product, then get onto the playing field (or perhaps you Americans call it "the ball-park") of cyberspace. Then as the famous shoe ad says,

JUST DO IT WITH EVERYTHING YOU'VE GOT AND BE HAPPY!

GOOD LUCK

Craig Lock

P.S: * "We can all use the internet to reach out to the "global community" and build a better world in this new "Information Revolution" that is upon us. Let's use it wisely, respect our diversity and unique cultures; but celebrate a new world in union. One where, like your founding forefathers in America, you can first celebrate the Independence Day of the strong burning creative spirit that lies deep within every one of us. If this spark is set alight, it is a flame that will burn long and brightly for future generations and make your personal VISION of the future a REALITY... and perhaps even fulfil YOUR UNIQUE DESTINY on this planet."

Craig Lock

"You will do foolish things, but do them with enthusiasm."
- Colette

"Do not go where the path may lead, go instead where there is no path and leave a trail."
- Ralph Waldo Emerson

About the author:

Craig Lock has been successfully marketing products online for the past five years. Craig is a writer, who believes in sharing information, as well as encouraging and helping others to find their talents and gifts, to strive for and accomplish their dreams in life - whatever they may be.

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<http://www.nzenterprise.com/writer/creative.html>

Craig's various books are available at:

<http://www.nzenterprise.com/writer/books.html>

<http://www.bridgeniche.com/CLOCK/zaniestbooks.htm>

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