

Internet 101: The Great FREE Myth!

By Dave Turner

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Years ago, when the Internet was really in its infancy, some brilliant person created the myth that the secret to success on the Internet is to give everything away for FREE!

The original theory behind this myth was that people on the Internet wouldn't be willing to pay for information, so by giving away the farm, you'd attract a ton of visitors to your website and thus make a killing from all the advertisers who would be clamoring to put their advertising message in front of all those eyeballs.

There's only one problem with that theory. It's not true. Yahoo discovered that the hard way. So did Encyclopedia Britannica. Yahoo made the correct adjustments and is doing quite nicely, thank you. The verdict is still out on Encyclopedia Britannica.

The point is, you just can't give everything away for free. It's just not good business! And its been proven, many times over that people will pay for information, just like they would anything else. And that includes ezines and newsletters!

So, what's wrong with depending on advertising revenue?

Advertising revenue just isn't reliable. If a company has a bad quarter or even a bad couple of months, they immediately panic and guess what they do first. That's right. They cut back on advertising.

I'll never understand the logic behind that, but that's a subject for another day.

Actually, the idea about giving away stuff for free is a sound one--give before you take. However, it needs to be executed correctly. But in order to execute it correctly, you first have to know why the majority of people use the Internet in the first place.

Do you know why the majority of people use the Internet?

The majority of people use the Internet to do some type of research. In other words, to read.

Now, how can you use this knowledge to your advantage?

Simple. Give the people what they want! Provide plenty of good, quality, free content on your website and refresh it regularly.

What's free content?

Well, free content can take on many forms, from e-books to free advice and everything in between. However, what I'm talking about is free content in the form of articles.

But they shouldn't be just be any kind of articles. The articles should closely match the theme of your website. For example, if your website's theme is about Internet marketing, then you would have articles relating to advertising and marketing. If your website's theme is about pets, then you would have articles relating to the health and care of pets, and so on and so forth.

So, where do you get free articles?

Well, you could always write your own. It's really not that difficult. However, if you find writing your own articles too daunting a task, there's a million places on the Internet that can provide you with free content. Here are just a few:

<http://www.freesticky.com>

<http://www.ideamarketers.com>

<http://www.isyndicate.com>

<http://www.marketing-seek.com>

<http://www.findarticles.com>

Also, capture your visitors names and e-mail addresses. How? Start your own weekly, monthly, bi-monthly or quarterly ezine or newsletter and ask your visitors to subscribe.

Since people rarely purchase anything the first time they visit a website, capturing their names and e-mail addresses will give you countless number of opportunities to keep your name and the name of your business fresh in your customers and prospects minds.

And don't be afraid to have a fee-based ezine or newsletter. Remember, the true value of anything is in the eye of the beholder!

By giving before you take, you'll put your visitors in a much better frame of mind to receive your offer. And that is good business!

Til next time...

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