

How to Get Your Visitors To "Tell A Friend"

By Dawn Gray

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Does your website offer visitors a quick and easy way to recommend it to a friend? If not, you're missing out on a potential gold mine of free traffic. Your visitors will be much more likely to recommend your website if you remind them with a link or form on your website.

The benefits:

1. Automated website promotion. You set up the program and write the message. Your visitors do the work of finding qualified leads and getting your message to them.
2. You receive higher quality visitors. Your visitors will refer people *really interested* in your products or services. These people will be more likely to subscribe to your newsletter, request your free reports, and ultimately **BUY YOUR PRODUCTS!**
3. Nobody will ever be insulted or upset by this promotion technique (as long as you make it clear that the message comes from their friend). People can only participate if they visit your website, and email will only be sent by people the recipient knows.

Reminding your visitors to recommend your website isn't enough. You need to make it easy. Offer a form on your website your visitors can fill out to recommend it to a friend. Either put the form on every page of your website, put it in a pop-up window, or link to it on every page.

There are many ways to do it:

1. Javascript. You can use the script at <http://www.javascriptcity.com/scripts/local/semail2.htm> or take a look at the other Javascript resources on my Webmaster Resources page at

<http://www.busymarketing.com/links.shtml>

2. CGI. I really like Birdcast at

<http://www.bignosebird.com/carchive/birdcast.shtml>

- it's what I use on my website. You can find more CGI website on my Webmaster Resources page.

3. A service. Many remotely-hosted scripts are available.

The most popular is Recommend-It at

<http://www.recommendit.com> (which offers a contest as an incentive and allows you to add recommendation links to the email you send out). There is also a free program called Let 'Em Know at <http://www.letemknow.com> which allows you to run your own contest for participants and probably offers more statistics. Either can be set up in 5 minutes or less.

Javascript and CGI scripts have the benefit of being completely under your control. You can customize them to work on your website and decide if and how visitors are notified about the origin of your script.

Services are easier to set up, but have to make a living somehow and may add advertising to your messages or force you to use big, tacky buttons with their name and/or logo on your website.

Don't delay! Set up a Tell-A-Friend system on your website to watch the number and quality of your visitors improve without raising a finger.

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