

Ab Gizmos and Other Assorted Snake Oils

By Elena Fawkner

Ab Gizmos and Other Assorted Snake Oils

Elena Fawkner
jan@ahbbo.com

A Home-Based Business Online <http://www.ahbbo.com>

Ab Gizmos and Other Assorted Snake
Oils

© 2002 Elena Fawkner

Big news this week. The FTC's going after the companies behind the ab gizmos. You know the ones - develop six-pack abs in 6 weeks without doing a single situp. All you do is strap on this belt gizmo and it sends hundreds of electrical charges to the abdominal muscles causing them to contract. Voila! All the benefits of hundreds of crunches without any effort.

The FTC's claiming millions of dollars from these companies. This is just to disgorge the money these companies received from customers.

Why? The ab gizmos don't work. It's all a big fat lie.

Well ... duh.

So why, then, have these companies made hundreds of millions of dollars?

Because there are an awful lot of people who want something for nothing. They don't want to have to wait, they don't want to have to expend effort. They desperately want to believe it's possible to get something now and without working for it.

So, they'll fork over \$99 in 3 easy instalments for a gizmo that will give them rock-hard abs in six weeks while in the meantime they sit around the pool doing nothing but sipping Margueritas. No matter that it won't work. Hope is alive and well and that's what they've paid for.

And that's what these marketers are selling, after all. They're

not selling an ab gizmo. They KNOW they don't work. But that's OK because what they're selling is hope. The hope that maybe, with this doodad, you won't have to get in shape the way all those other poor schleps have to. You won't have to go on a diet to lose fat and exercise to build muscle. Nosiree, not you. We're going to give YOU a magic wand!

Sound familiar? What was in your inbox this morning after you finally downloaded all your mail? How many emails did you receive telling you that you can make \$3,000 a week doing nothing? Or you can earn a full-time income with part-time work? Or, how about this, "We'll do all the work!"? (After you pay us \$60 for your place in the matrix, that is.)

Or maybe you've written ads like these yourself. Smart marketer that you are, you know that the best way to sell your product is to market it as something that will take away pain. You know that for your target market, working in a J.O.B. (just over broke) day after day is painful. You offer a way to escape that pain.

But take a closer look at your ad. If you're pushing a matrix program, you know, deep down where it counts, that you probably got in too late yourself and anyone who comes in under you is even further down the pyramid (er, matrix). You're not only engaging in an illegal activity - a pyramid scheme (and no, sticking a matrix label on it doesn't change what it is) - if you're advertising it as a way for someone to invest \$30 and take away \$30,000 in 30 days (or ANY time period for that matter), you're doing exactly the same thing as the ab gizmo companies. You're selling snake oil. Think the FTC won't come after you? Think again.

Or maybe you're not promoting a pyramid scheme. Maybe you're promoting a legitimate network marketing program. I'm all in favor of network marketing as a business model. I'm involved in one myself. But I don't go telling people they can get rich overnight just by slapping up a website and spending a couple of hours a week sending email. I tell people it takes a five year commitment, and long, hard hours. Think that loses me sign-ups? You bet.

But I don't want get rich quick types in my organization. Nor do I want those who are not prepared to invest any time or money in their businesses. This is NOT a free ride. There ARE no free rides and I don't want passengers. I want drivers. I want people who are prepared to invest in their businesses and their futures. Because that's what it takes to make a success of any business. An investment of time, an investment of money and an investment of directed effort.

Or maybe you're not promoting a network marketing

program OR a pyramid scheme. Maybe you're promoting a great new book you've written (or someone else has written) about how to generate bucketloads of cash running an Internet business. Have YOU generated bucketloads of cash from this book? Then don't sell others the hope that they can either.

You may think those people who spent hundreds of millions of dollars on a gizmo that was never going to work got what they deserved by looking for a free ride. And maybe they did. I don't have any sympathy for them. But that doesn't let the companies who conned them off the hook. They exploited weakness in others for their own pecuniary gain and they did it dishonestly.

The FTC will make them pay for their deceptive and misleading advertising. And it can do the same to you, too.

**** Reprinting of this article is welcome! ****

This article may be freely reproduced provided that: (1) you include the following resource box; and (2) you only mail to a 100% opt-in list.

Here's the resource box to use if reprinting this article:

Elena Fawkner is editor of A Home-Based Business Online ... practical business ideas, opportunities and solutions for the work-from-home entrepreneur.

<http://www.ahbbo.com>

[Get-Articles.com : 1000's of reprintable business and internet marketing-related articles.](#)

[Submit your article for reprint.](#)