

10 Quick Tips on How to Create, Distribute, and Profit from Free

eBooks

By Angela Wu

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Free eBooks are a powerful viral marketing tool that can literally provide you with an entire network of people who promote your business, absolutely free. Here are a few quick tips on how to benefit from your free eBook ...

1. Provide Real Content.

This is the most basic tip, but it's vitally important. A simple "click" of the mouse is all it takes for someone to delete your eBook. Don't offer a simple sales pitch; provide your reader with valuable information. This will both capture his interest and build your credibility. He'll be more inclined to view your other products if he likes what he sees -- and even better, he may refer other business to you.

2. Use What's Already Available.

Creating an eBook doesn't have to be a long, painful process. For example, you could put together a related group of articles and simply add a few comments or an introduction. Or if you get a lot of questions about a particular topic, pick some of them and put together an eBook that offers the answers to these questions.

3. Make Your eBook Attractive and Easy to Read.

EBooks are usually either in 'EXE' format or 'PDF' format. There are advantages and disadvantages to both formats, but regardless of what you choose, create a layout that's clean, attractive, and easy to navigate. Offer links to the major sections of your book and to places on the web where the reader can find more information. Use graphics sparingly, though; the more graphics you use, the larger the file size (and thus the longer it will take to download).

4. Provide Links Back to Your Site and Products.

For example, you can:

= Put your website URL and logo on the cover page.

= Embed affiliate links within the context of your articles, where appropriate.

- = Write up a dedicated sales page at the end of your eBook to promote a related product.
- = Refer to your own products and how it can help the reader. Keep it brief and use it only where appropriate; you don't want your eBook to sound like a sales pitch.

5. Encourage Your Reader to Pass It On.

Make it clear that your reader is welcome to distribute the eBook, so long as nothing is changed. He can put it on his own website as a nice gift to his visitors, or offer it as a bonus when people subscribe to his newsletter. The more places your eBook appears, the more free exposure you get.

6. Offer Co-Branding or Re-Branding.

To encourage other webmasters to distribute your eBook to their guests, you can offer to 'brand' the book with their URL and logo. Some eBook compilers include this as one of their features. One of them is the Activ E-Book Compiler, a solid affordable option available at <http://buildyourhomebiz.com/ebookcompiler.html> .

7. Promote, Promote, Promote.

There are plenty of ways to promote your eBook. These include:

- = Listing it in eBook directories.
- = Promoting it in your email (or message board) sig file.
- = Posting to appropriate 'announcement' groups or lists.
- = Creating a special page just for the eBook and submit that page to the search engines.
- = Offer the book to your list of business contacts and let them know that they're welcome to distribute it to their own guests.

There are many other ways to distribute your eBook; be creative!

8. Consider Selling Advertising.

If you have a heavily trafficked site and the stats to prove it, you may be able to sell advertising within your eBook. Naturally you won't want too many ads ... but a banner at the top and bottom of each page is fairly common.

You can also choose to use that space for your own ads ... or offer them to select webmasters in exchange for some additional promotion.

9. Build Your File of Testimonials.

Chances are, if people love your eBook you'll start to receive unsolicited testimonials. Ask the person for permission to use his or her testimonial within your marketing materials. It will show that you have a lot of happy customers - and help to persuade visitors to make a purchase.

10. Consider Using an Autoresponder for Follow-Up.

You may want to offer your free eBook in exchange for an email address. This gives you the opportunity to repeatedly market to the reader. Instead of giving him a free eBook and then never contacting him again, you 'grab' him while his interest is at a peak and continue to offer more free information through your follow-up autoresponder. At the end of your message, encourage the reader to take a look at what else you have to offer.

Angela is the editor of Online Business Basics, an exclusive newsletter for eBusiness beginners. OBB features ongoing tutorials on how to build a profitable Internet business on a shoestring budget. You don't need a million-dollar budget to be successful! Find out how you too can join the thousands quietly earning a living online: <http://www.onlinebusinessbasics.com/article.html>

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