

Starting a New Business Online?

By Jim Edwards

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It seems everybody has a "can't miss" idea for starting a new web-based business, despite innumerable news accounts of most web businesses going belly-up in a short time.

Most folks still think, mistakenly of course, that a website alone somehow magically produces customers who will buy even the most off-beat items and services. They fail to realize that buying or building a website represents only part of the overall online marketing equation.

Anyone considering starting a new online business or taking an existing business online should heed the following advice to avoid many heartaches and an empty wallet.

Target your audience.

What exactly do your customers want and what words do they use to describe the products and services they will purchase? Don't assume you know how and what they want to buy - ask them! From this research you will determine the "keywords" your customers will use to find your business while surfing and using search engines. You should then focus completely on these keywords while constructing your entire web presence.

Build a focused site.

Your website should center exclusively on those issues directly related to what you sell online. If you sell "orange baskets" then only write about the characteristics, features and benefits of using your orange baskets.

Take great care in writing your copy to keep your text focused on one subject per page and make liberal use of your keywords and their synonyms. Constructing your pages in this manner will aid you greatly in achieving good directory listings and attracting search engine traffic.

Use search engines effectively.

If building a highly focused, relevant site to display your products and services gets you to first base with the search engines, then building "bridge" pages will get you rounding third and headed for home!

The term "bridge page" characterizes a web page that focuses on one keyword phrase throughout the entire page. You should build dozens, if not hundreds, of these pages, each of which focuses on one keyword phrase a potential customer would use to find you in a search engine. You should then submit these pages to the individual search engines and monitor them for the traffic they produce.

Accept Change As a FACT of Life!

Understand that creating a successful online business requires commitment to a process of constant promotion and continuous education. You must stay current on cost-effective search engine and directory promotion techniques for driving traffic to your site as well as any factors specifically affecting your industry online.

Accept the fact that change happens online at two speeds: fast and faster! Just when you think you have everything figured out, a search engine changes its rules, or starts charging for services, or goes from important to irrelevant in the blink of an eye.

Your ability to predict change, master it, and "roll with the punches" will determine your long-term success or failure online.

Jim Edwards is a syndicated newspaper columnist and the co-author of an amazing new ebook that will teach you how to use free articles to quickly drive thousands of targeted visitors to your website or affiliate links...

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