

Interviews With Successful Ezine Publishers - Pamela Geiss

By Ken Hill

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Pamela Geiss is the publisher of LotsaPerks Newsletter which offers tips and articles on the best ways to advertise online. Pamela publishes twice a week with an occasional Sunday tutorial that teaches her subscribers something they have asked to learn about. She also has a classifieds issue on Saturdays where subscribers can place a free ad.

To subscribe visit <http://www.lotsaperks.com> or <mailto:subscribe@lotsaperks.com> with your first name in the body of the email.

KH: How important has publishing an ezine been to your business?

PG: It has been the most important thing I have done online. It's the best way to develop relationships with people. The Internet is so impersonal and so many people have been scammed online that you really need to give them a chance to get to know you before they will think about trusting you enough to purchase anything from you.

KH: How long have you been running an ezine and how many subscribers do you have?

PG: I have been publishing the LotsaPerks Newsletter for over 3 years now and have over 10,000 subscribers.

KH: Do you submit your ezine to directories and/or announcement lists and if so how effective has this been in gaining new subscribers to your publication?

PG: The first thing I did was to go to www.google.com and put in ezine+directories and then I listed my ezine in every one of them. I recommend listing your ezine everywhere you can find. You can never get too much exposure!

If they had had Ezine Announcer when I first started, it would

have saved me hours and hours of time, but it didn't exist then.

KH: Do you write and use your own articles to promote your ezine? How valuable has writing articles been in promoting your ezine?

PG: Writing articles is the best free advertising you can get! You not only get your business out there in front of many people, but you also get links to your business, as many ezine owners keep copies of their ezines on their sites, which helps you with link popularity in the search engines.

Plus, you allow people to get to know something about you and your business which allows you to develop a rapport with potential customers. In addition, I have met and established some great business contacts and met some fine people by writing articles.

I remember the first article I wrote, I thought, "If I know this, EVERYBODY must know it!" Well, I found out that not everybody knew it. There is always someone out there who knows less than you do, so never be afraid to write about things you know.

KH: What methods do you use to promote your products or services within your ezine?

PG: I have a Recommended section in my ezine where I put my links. I try to find good business opportunities for my subscribers. If they look really good, I'll sign up for them and try them out to see if the company is paying commissions on time. If the product turns out to be easy to sell, etc., and if I like it, I'll put it in my Recommended section. If I'm holding a sale, I will announce that close to the beginning of the ezine.

KH: How do you go about preparing your ezine for publication?

PG: Well, I host my ezine with Constant Contact, because it is very easy and fast to use and because it will send out my ezine in text to those who need it and HTML to those who can get that, so I don't have to worry about doing 2 versions. I have a basic format that I set up when I started using Constant Contact, so that saves me a lot of time also.

I usually start with what article I'm going to put in my ezine. When I write an article, I'll usually use it in my own ezine and then send it out to other ezines. If I haven't "been inspired" or had time to write, I have many writers who send me their articles, so I'll choose one of their articles to run first.

I try to put as much viable information in my ezine as I can and keep the ads to a minimum. That way, advertisers don't have a lot of competition and their ads get to show up well. Plus, I really don't want the ezine to become a classifieds section! My main purpose in publishing it is to inform, and I hope it does that.

KH: Any advice to future ezine publishers? Things to look out for or things to concentrate on when publishing an ezine?

PG: Always keep your subscribers in mind in everything you do, whether it's your ezine or your site. Never forget that your main reason for doing your ezine SHOULD be to help them not you. Make it your business to focus on helping others not the dollar.

Of course, we all are in this to hopefully make some money, but I think where people get into trouble with their businesses is when they let the dollar take precedence over their customers. In other words, greed will be your downfall if you let it become all important.

Things to look out for...first of all, don't ever recommend something unless you truly believe in it, because your business reputation is at stake. Next, don't overload your ezine with ads, whether paid or free. When I first started out, I told my subscribers to send in their ads and I'd publish them once a week, but now that my subscriber base has grown, I had to change it to the first 5 who send in their ads would get their ads published.

You can get overloaded with ads and then no one will want to read your ezine; so if you want to give free ads in exchange for subscribers to get you started, that's fine, but don't sign up with a lot of services or you'll be overrun with ads! They are a great way to begin getting subscribers; just don't let it get out of hand!

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