

"Are You Winking In the Dark ?"

By Larry Johnson

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Are you winking in the dark ?

What do you know about your website ? Are you getting the benefit of valuable input from as many good sources as possible ?

For example: Is it user-friendly ?

Does it do what you intended for it to do when you conceived and designed it ?

Is it improving as you gain experience on the internet ?

Who can provide you with the feedback that you need in order to make decisions about your site that can lead to some major improvements ?

Here are at least 5 types of feedback that you may need to consider in making those updates and/or changes to your site.

1) CUSTOMERS--These may be your most valuable source of feedback. If they have bought from you and they are happy, that is good. Can anyone say, "repeat customer"?

Be sure and collect feedback from your current customers as soon as possible after the completion of the sale. Use it to "tweak" your site for any needed changes.

2) VISITORS--Another way to think of these guys are "potential customers". You got them to your site, but they didn't buy. Hmmm....wonder why ? Be sure that you collect their valuable reason(s) for not buying and make changes to correct it ASAP.

3) SUBSCRIBERS--If you have a business online, you surely have a mailing list or newsletter that you are using to stay in touch with them. Collecting feedback about your reader's reaction to ads, articles, and your site are very important ways to gauge when it is time for the ol' site update !

4) SIMILAR SITES--Know what your competition is doing. If you don't, then you should. Do a search at one of the major search engines or directories like <http://www.google.com/> for some of your site's top keywords. Visit the sites that pop-up.

Spend some time discovering what makes your competitor's site more user-friendly. Are there things that they are doing which you can incorporate into your site ?

5) FRIENDS--Well, you may notice that I saved this one for last in my list of feedback suggestions. Sure, have the family and friends take a look at your site and offer suggestions, but please consider the source before making drastic changes to it.

Are they running a successful business online or merely casual surfers ? Depending on that answer you need to decide if their input is worth noting. Some times you may get a fresh and novel piece of input...most often you won't .

Remember this: "Running a business without advertising is like winking at a girl in the dark. You know what you're doing, but know one else does !"

Best of luck in your promotional efforts....

Larry Johnson, author

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