

# Five Web Marketing Myths Exposed

By Mario Sanchez

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### Myth #1: Build it and they will come

Traffic is everything. As thousands of webmasters have already learned, you can have a catchy domain name and an impeccably designed website already on the web. You can even have it indexed by the search engines. However, even after all that, a website may only get a handful of visitors a day. After a few weeks of launching a website, you may catch up to the fact that getting people to your site takes a lot more hard work than you expected. It will take many different approaches to make your website known, and you'll have to pull all the stops: list your website in the major directories, have it crawled by the search engines, create a signature file for your emails, publish a free newsletter, exchange links, stamp your domain name in your business cards, stationary, and promotional material, advertise in traditional media, etc. But above all, it will take time, sometimes months or even years, before you're able to get significant traffic to your website, so prepare to be patient and don't give up.

### Myth #2: We guarantee top placement with the search engines

When it comes to search engines, nobody can guarantee anything. The task of search engine optimization is a lot like trying to predict the stock market. Just as no stockbroker can guarantee you a 100% return on your money (if he can, how come he still has to work?), no search engine optimization "expert" can guarantee you a top placement. Maybe he can position your website in a top spot for keywords that nobody uses, but that wouldn't be of any help, would it? All you can do to try to score big with the search engines is to follow some basic guidelines, like putting your preferred keywords in your page title, repeat them often in your web page copy, and creating a site map link near the top of the page so that the search engine can crawl all your pages. Other than basic things like that, the only other strategy that can significantly improve your ranking is to get a lot of links to your site from authoritative pages related to your topic. That means more hard and time-consuming work, but you can only take out what you put in, don't you? So, if you want good results, stop listening to the hype-masters and get to work.

### Myth #3: Make money while you sleep

How many times have you heard this?: "sign up for these affiliate programs and your website will turn into a lean, mean, cash machine: you'll be making money in your pajamas". Yeah, right. First of all, affiliate commissions are usually so small that the average affiliate will only rake in ten or

twenty bucks a month. After all, what makes you think that people who see the same links in thousands of other pages are going to decide to make a purchase from your site? The only way to make significant money is with a fairly unique product that not a lot of people sell. You may need to invest time and money to research your target market, find and get the rights to distribute a profitable product, and then work hard to promote it. If you just want to run a couple of affiliate links at your site, that's OK, but don't quit your day job just yet.

#### Myth #4: Build an opt-in mailing list and become rich

For years, we have heard web marketing gurus tell us that we just have to publish a free ezine or newsletter, collect our visitors' emails and laugh all the way to the bank. This probably originated years ago, when web advertising was all the rage, and all we needed to do to sell ad space was to get a few thousand subscribers. Nowadays, even sites with hundreds of thousands of visitors can't rely on advertising revenue for survival. Most ezines nowadays don't even reach 1,000 subscribers, and most of them won't be interested in your offers. It won't take long for you to realize that to sell something to your subscribers, first you have to establish an almost personal relationship with them. They will have to know you very well, and feel very comfortable with you before they will be ready to purchase anything. You will need to post your picture on your website, give lots of testimonials, get positive press coverage from important media outlets, have a physical address (not just an email address), and, if possible, conduct seminars so that your subscribers can get to know you in person. Again, a lot of hard and time-consuming work, but if you want the big payoff there is no other way.

#### Myth #5: Give Things Away and They Will Buy

Most people that look for freebies, and receive freebies, will always expect freebies. It is extremely hard to turn freeloaders into paying customers, especially on the web, where almost everything is free. Instead of putting a lot of emphasis on your free gifts, use your web space to explain very, very well your product or service. Try to anticipate all your customer's needs, answer all their questions, point out all your benefits, and, after that, include a short contact form so that interested parties can contact you. The time you spend following up with those prospects will give you much better results than if you just rely on showering a large pool of unqualified prospects with free gifts and see what trickles down.

Bottom line, nothing worth in life is free or easy, and marketing on the web is not different. Uncover the myths, tune-out the hype, plan well, invest time and work hard, and you'll have a better chance of getting results and being successful.

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