

Fair Measures Corporation: A case study in online "thinking outside the box"

By Philippa Gamse

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Fair Measures Corporation is a nationally recognized management training company made up of attorneys and professional speakers. They consult with companies such as Oracle, Sun and Cisco around preventing employee lawsuits by treating employees with respect.

Their Web site, at <http://www.FairMeasures.com/> contains over 500 pages of free in-depth legal information and analysis, provided for both employers and employees. It includes a monthly e-newsletter, and an "Ask the Lawyers" page where visitors can post additional questions. The site attracts frequent media attention, and has been featured in "HR Magazine".

Last year (2000), we completely restructured the site to add content for the many employees who come there looking for information. Previously, we'd been concentrating on the traditional markets for Fair Measures - human resource professionals and managers who hire them for workplace training programs. But we realized that in doing so, we were missing out on a very different audience for their expertise - and one that really only exists in the online context.

How did we know this? In two main ways:

1. by looking in our traffic analysis at the key search phrases that brought visitors to the site; and
2. from the content of questions submitted to "Ask the Lawyers".

We could see that many visitors were looking for information around sexual harassment, overtime exemptions, Internet e-mail monitoring and privacy issues, and wrongful termination. Employers wanted to know how to create policies and practices that would protect them against costly lawsuits, and employees wanted to enforce their rights.

So, we created a whole series of new products - instantly downloadable online guides and sample policies around these topics. They are available in Word, pdf, and html formats - at the buyer's choice, and come with a full money back guarantee. The price point - currently \$10 for the guides, is intended to encourage impulse purchases.

The latest of these products - a "Wrongful Termination Guide" was added in April, and is now achieving a nearly 5% conversion rate in sales. This is far higher than the average 1-2% that is typical of most e-commerce sites (and perhaps indicative of the current economic climate!) And, with real-time traffic analysis from Hitbox, we are tweaking the language and length of our selling pages to see what's most effective with each audience.

Our downloadable products are now generating a steady additional revenue stream, from a source that is very different from the traditional markets for this company.

So, lessons learned (and still being learned) from this exercise:

1. Be open to new and different potential audiences for your online business;
2. Study your traffic analysis - there are many valuable clues as to visitor needs that can be translated into new products and services; and
3. Keep monitoring your visitor response and try new spins on your content.

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Philippa Gamse, CyberSpeaker, is an internationally recognized e-business strategist. Check out her free tipsheet "Beyond the Search Engines" for 17 ideas to promote your Website: <http://www.CyberSpeaker.com/tipsheet.html> Philippa can be reached at (831) 465-0317 or <mailto:pgamse@CyberSpeaker.com>

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