

Viral Marketing

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What is Viral Marketing?

“Viral marketing is word of mouth marketing on the web. In other words it is the “e” term for word of mouth marketing.”

Viral marketing was born in 1996. Viral marketing messages receive 5 –15% click through rate. 57% say word of mouth or viral marketing is their main source of information about new websites.

The Classic Example...

The classic example of viral marketing is Hotmail.com, one of the first free Web-based e-mail services. E-mails sent using this service contain an advertisement for Hotmail at the bottom of the message.

Power of Viral Marketing...

This medium could be used to spread the word about your business among the target audience. The essence of it is that you empower visitors to your website to tell other people about your company and your site. You provide something that encourages people to spread the word, and momentum builds. What’s great about viral marketing is that it is low effort and low expense.

Viral marketing is more powerful than third-party advertising and you can expect a good conversion rate because it conveys an implied endorsement from a friend. People who visit your website as a result of viral marketing will have good impression about your company or the product because someone has recommended it to them.

Forms of Viral marketing...

We can identify two most common forms of viral marketing as service and incentive based models.

Service Based

In the service based model consumer has to spread the information about the company or the product to his / her friends in order to get the service.

Netscape Instant messaging is an excellent example of a service-based model. Also some search

engines and directories use this model to list websites. Some companies use this model to provide access white papers.

Incentive Based

Incentive-based models provide consumers cash, credit, or other rewards for spreading company information to friends. This model is encouraging people to spread the message actively because of the incentives. Incentive based viral marketing campaigns will cost more than the service-based campaigns.

Viral Marketing methods and techniques...

Viral Marketing works best in combination with e-Mail marketing, since e-Mail marketing provides Viral Marketing with a great communication medium. You can use e-mail to spread the message. This could be done by sending e-mail messages to individuals or by joining e-mail discussion groups. Most of the service based viral marketing campaigns are using e-mail as the main technique.

Another medium to carry out your viral marketing campaign is through message boards and discussion forums. It is important to identify message boards and discussion forums relevant to your industry, product or service. By participating in these message boards and discussion forums you can create awareness of your company among the target audience.

Writing articles is one of the powerful ways to spread your message. All you need to do is allow people to republish it for free, as long as they include a paragraph at the end of the article containing details of your company. This method is widely used by companies providing professional services like search engine marketing and web advertising.

Freebies, Giving something away for free is another powerful marketing method available. Giving away a free something like e-book, mouse pad will encourage people to spread your message.

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