

Follow-ups with Autoresponders

By Richard Igoe

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Anyone who gets involved in marketing products on the internet will know that follow-up is VERY VERY important. Most sales occur after the 3rd, 4th, or 5th follow up, and doing this manually can become very time consuming.

If your site suddenly gets a high ranking in the search engines or you put out an advert, you will have to be prepared to deal with the traffic and to reply to your enquiries.

Now you will need to follow up 3 or 4 or even more times in most cases before a prospect becomes a customer. It makes sense to use different emails in each follow up, and each time describe some extra advantages of your product that you have left out in previous emails. This can become very confusing if you have new enquiries each day. You will have to send each of your follow-up emails to a different group. You will have to keep track of which follow-ups were sent to which groups.

There is software available that allows you to personalize your messages by merging your emails with your recipients names. You have to add the names and addresses to your groups, but after this, it can send out your message to everyone in a particular group, and filter out certain addresses if you want. This can be useful if you want to avoid sending a message to those who may have already received it in a previous mailing.

However even with such software there is still quite a lot of work to be done. Email addresses have to be collected and added to your mailing groups, and you have to keep logs

of who has received a particular message. You also have to make your own record of which messages have been sent and to who so as not to send the same message to the same group twice. If your follow-ups have to be done at specified intervals after your initial enquiry, you have to make sure you remember to run your mail program on those days.

The answer is to use autoresponders to do your follow-ups, and leave a minimum of work for you to do once a prospect has become a serious lead or even a customer. An autoresponder allows you to set up your follow-ups to go out at various intervals after the initial enquiry. You can set different messages up on the autoresponder and specify when each message should be sent after receiving the enquiry. To see how they work send a blank email to <mailto:wsc@quicktell.net> and you will receive a series of emails with my 5-day website success course.

It is often a good idea to set up two or more autoresponders to handle the initial enquiry. The first autoresponder will be in reply to your ad, and will give some details about your product or service. It will also ask the recipient to reply to a second autoresponder if s/he wants more information. The second autoresponder can include some advantages that you only hinted at in the first reply, and then follow up with the remaining messages. This has aroused your prospects' interest and is part of the sales process.

In one of your follow up messages you will need to make a call for action. If you don't ask your prospects to buy, the chances are they won't. One of the best ways to do this is to let them know that for a limited time they will receive a certain discount or that the offer will only be available at a certain price for a limited period.

Some people argue that autoresponders don't allow you to deal with each prospect individually. However it is easy enough to set your autoresponder to personalise the replies to address your prospects with their first name for example. You set up your autoresponder so that if a prospect replies to the message, the email will come to your own email address and you will be able to reply personally.

If your business revolves around sending and receiving a lot of email, autoresponders are an essential tool.

- 1) They drastically reduce the amount of work.
- 2) They reduce the possibility of making mistakes sending out the wrong reply or to the wrong address.
- 3) They do not rely on a person being at work at a certain time to send out email.

- 4) They allow you to make follow-ups efficiently.
- 5) They give you more time to concentrate on promotion and marketing.

If you are hosting your website on a full-service web host, the chances are they will provide you with an autoresponder. However you don't need a website to have an autoresponder. You can use an autoresponder service. If your business needs more than one autoresponder or autoresponders that send out more than one reply at intervals, we have listed some good services here: <http://www.thewebseye.com/autoresponders.htm> .

Autoresponders have already become an essential marketing tool, and their use is likely to increase as more and more businesses realise the necessity to automate.

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