

It's All in the List

By Rosalind Gardner

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If customers must be exposed to a product an average of 7 times before they buy, and you don't have a way to contact a surfer after their first visit to your site, how do you remind them about your product six more times?

Do you simply hope they'll remember your name, your company name or your URL? Do you invite them to use a 'Bookmark Now!' link?

Have you ever seen a typical file of 'Favorites'? I use the term 'file' very loosely. Filing is rarely involved, and it's unlikely anyone will find your site again amidst his or her 500 other 'favorite' sites.

Even if those methods did work to bring your visitors back, how would reading your sales copy six more times convince them to buy?

It wouldn't.

That's why Internet marketing experts all agree, without an opt-in list or email newsletter, you are losing sales and money. Put simply, having your own ezine is absolutely essential if your online business is to achieve its maximum potential.

'Ezine' is essentially a contraction for the term 'electronic magazine'. They are also known as opt-in lists, email newsletters or simply 'zines.

Ezines allow you to contact your subscribers via email without spamming, as they've 'opted' to receive your information. In other words, interested prospects have given you permission to send them news and information.

Publishing an ezine that captures and holds your subscribers' interest takes some time and effort. You must commit to a schedule, and give your readers attention-grabbing, useful information in an easy-to-read format. Your objective is to earn your readers trust by establishing yourself as a credible source of valuable information.

Does that sound like too much work? Are you not convinced that publishing an ezine is worth the effort? Consider this.

What is the first thing most people do when they turn on their computers in the morning? They read their email! If your newsletter is in their Inbox, your product gets seen before the competition's site is visited. Browser windows may be closed without book-marking, and names forgotten, but your email is still in your subscribers Inbox!

The ezine itself is relatively simple to set up. Do not use software that resides on your computer to build your mailing list. As your list grows in size, you run the risk of having your ISP shut down your connection for excessive bandwidth use or allegations of spam. It happened to me and it's a costly mistake that you can and should avoid. Instead, purchase a service from one of the many companies offering mailing lists and autoresponders.

As your autoresponder or mailing list service charges remain the same, your customer acquisition costs decrease as your list grows. That makes publishing an ezine the most inexpensive way to build relationships with your website visitors.

Your effort and investment will pay off. Sharing your knowledge to help others is both good for the soul and financially rewarding. A newsletter that readers look forward to can grow to thousands and tens of thousands of people. An average conversion rate of one percent on a very large list can be a large reward in exchange for the time it takes you to write your newsletter.

Communicating with your customers on a continuing basis builds trust, goodwill and increases their willingness to buy from you. Remember that it is 7 times less expensive to market to an existing customer than it is to acquire a new one.

Start your own ezine. The effort will be well worth your time.

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Rosalind Gardner is the author of '123eBusiness: A Beginner's Guide to Online Profits' and the 'Net Profits Coach' ezine.

Her online success has been profiled in 'Secrets to Their Success' and 'Six Figure Income' magazine. To learn more about how you can build your own lucrative eBusiness, please visit:

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