

How Local Retail And Service business Owners Can Use

By Bob Brolhorst

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A-1 Internet Marketing Newsletter <http://www.wave5marketing.com/newsletter.htm>

How Local Retail And Service business Owners Can Use
The Internet To Increase Traffic And Sales
By Bob Brolhorst

Just because the Internet is global, doesn't mean it isn't local. In preparing your business to be online, you will need a website. Now, the purpose of your website will be a little different than the purpose of a website owner who sells to an international or national audience.

People call and ask for sales information or to get more details about what you sell. They ask routine questions like:

- "What time do you open?"
- "What time do you close?"
- "When can I schedule an appointment?"
- "What forms of payment do you accept?"

These are questions your website should be handling for you. If you had a commonly asked questions section on your website, you could simply direct potential customers there. In all of your ads you would have your website address listed so that prospects could find the answers to these routine questions so they don't ask you.

Believe me, most people will go there first to learn more about your business. Especially, as your local area gets more connected to the Internet each day. This ultimately means less people will call you to ask these routine questions.

Your sales literature changes constantly. Prices change. The types of services and products you sell change. So your sales literature is never really up to date. If your sales literature was online, you could easily change prices, products and services offered, office hours, etc - and it wouldn't cost you a penny.

You aren't as prompt with mailing sales information as you would like to be. Here's where your website would come in handy. Instead of mailing your sales literature or explaining what you do over the phone you could direct people to your website for these details. When they call you, after visiting your website,

they will be better informed about what you do, how you do it, and when it can be done. This means you will spend less time explaining and more time providing the actual service or selling the item desired.

* Frequently asked questions about each product or service you provide. Again, for one week write down all of the questions and concerns people have about the products and services you offer.

Give details such as available sizes, colors, styles, etc. Talk about the limitations of each product and the best way to use them. If you offer a service, do the same for each service.

Basically what I am saying is that your website should be an extension of you. It should be an extension of your staff. Look at it this way, your website should contain as much information to service potential customers so that you or staff will be of very little need.

The purpose of your website is NOT to sell your product or service directly. Remove all thoughts of selling your product or service directly from your website. Most commercial websites are trying to sell a product or service directly online to a national or international audience. This is not necessarily your goal if you only want to sell to people in your local area.

The main goal of your website should be to EDUCATE your website visitors about what you sell and how you sell it so well, that when they do call you or come into your shop or office - they are ready to buy!

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