

Creative Contests, Profitable Promotions

By Tatiana Velitchkov

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Conducting a contest (and making sure it succeeds!) requires a lot of hard work, plenty of planning, and a significant share of your marketing budget.

So why am I recommending that you TRY it?

Because when done creatively and none too quietly, it can be your MOST EFFECTIVE tool for reaching huge numbers of potential clients at any given time -- and even for getting free publicity for your business as well!

But out of all the "enter & win" / "click & join" competitions already out there on the web, is there really any chance of YOUR standing out from the crowd and making fresh new waves on the Internet?

The answer is YES, in four easy steps:

1. Capture their imagination!

Because the last thing you want is for people to hear about your contest and shove it to the back of their minds, simply because it's something they've already seen, heard about, or joined before.

So be creative, be exciting, be interactive!

Invent the kind of contest that doesn't just promise a prize, but also an experience:

- the chance to interact with other surfers in the same industry

- the adventure of trying something that few people have ever tried before
- or simply the opportunity to have fun and be entertained for just a few minutes in their day.

If there are two things any harried business owner would welcome any day, it's the chance to be entertained AND get something useful out of it for free...

...and your creative contest can instantly do both!

2. Challenge their skills!

People are also competitive in nature, and the chance to be called "the best" at what they do is often reason enough for them to join anything.

So challenge their intellectual, physical, and even emotional capabilities and give them the chance to show off.

Ask them to answer questions, give birth to creations, or delve into strange situations. Take off from the traditional polls, quizzes, and essays, and give them something to really think about and talk about.

Then watch as your contest takes on a life of its own.

3. Explore their personal interests!

What are your target clients' interests besides their work / their business / their job?

Do most of them watch the same television show, subscribe to the same print magazine, or patronize the same chain of restaurants or cafés?

Work these other interests into your contest, and you would've captured their attention as well as their friendship, even as you're promoting your own product & website.

(PLUS! You can even propose profitable partnerships with the local distributors/owners of their favorite show, magazine, or café -- creating more benefits and opportunities for both you & your clients.)

4. Promote for profitability!

So you've come up with a cutting edge contest idea, you've challenged your target clients, and you've even tapped into their interests & needs.

The last thing to do now is to make sure people hear about your extremely exciting contest -- not just the participants, but the spectators and the media, too!

Top off your contest with a catchy name, a funny theme, a memorable jingle. Announce it in your mailing lists, in flyers, in press releases and on the radio.

Make people so intrigued & interested in your contest that they can't wait to visit your site, call your number, or sign up for your mailing list.

And if you've put in all the needed preparation & planning to make everything flow smoothly, the rest will simply become history...

...marking an upturn in your PROFITS, and your prominence on the web.

From the ancient Roman gladiators to today's "Who Wants to Be A Millionaire," contests have always drawn hordes of participants & spectators alike, and can bring much needed activity, traffic, and profit to anyone who needs it.

So it only makes perfect sense to add history to creativity, and turn contests into profitable promotional tools for you AND your business TODAY.

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About the Author:

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