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By Bob Osgoodby

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With the coming of the holidays, many home based entrepreneurs are getting caught up in the spirit of the season. Instead of approaching their business with the same vigor and vitality as usual, they have dropped their guard a bit and think they can coast through the end of the year. They might figure they've got to buy presents for family and friends, and funds will be a little short. After all they reason, everyone is doing this and December and January will be slow anyway.

Nothing could be further from the truth. Now is the time to double, and maybe even redouble your efforts! The people who feel they can renew their advertising efforts after the first of the year, will miss this boat.

Your plan at this point should be to aggressively advertise your business. Think about it. Many people will be short of funds, or overextended due to the holiday gifting, and won't be standing in line during the next few weeks to take advantage of your opportunity. But, we all know it takes between 5 and 7 exposures to get someone's attention. While the ads may not pay big dividends in December, you will be reinforcing your branding with your potential clients.

Take a lesson from the "brick and mortar" establishments. They will be pounding us with their ads now more than ever, trying to get their share of our holiday shopping dollars. And they will continue this until well in January realizing that some people have more expendable income after the holidays than before.

But, how about all those people getting first time computers? Don't forget that the Internet doesn't take a holiday. There are thousands of prospects going online everyday. If you relax now, you may be missing those prospects that you might otherwise get.

If you are in an affiliate program or in multi-level marketing, now is the ideal time to make yourself known. Many of these programs allow participation with little or no up front expenditure. If yours is one, feature this in your ads.

The design of your ads is critical at this time of the year. The question you should pose is not "can you afford it now, but can you afford not to".

The concept of advertising is sometimes difficult for people to understand, especially by those

involved for the first time. The most important time to advertise is when business is slow. The pre-holiday season will be slow if you market an online opportunity. Now, many people will not realize this and curtail their activities. The smart ones will and increase their ad expenditures. They will get the "lion's share" of the business available.

Some people will receive money as a holiday gift, and now is the time to get their attention. The winner of this race will be the first person they think of when the funds become available.

PC's currently exist in the majority of U.S. homes, and the number of first time users increases everyday. Because of the downturn in the stock market and slowing economic growth, PC makers will most likely try to boost sales by cutting prices, leading to a major price war. While this is bad for the PC makers, it is good for those in business on the net as the number of new people coming on, who are your prospects, always increases when this happens.

Two-way satellite services is now a viable broadband alternative to cable modem and DSL service. The satellite is likely to appeal to consumers who want high-speed Internet access, but who either face long waits trying to obtain cable modem or DSL access, or live in a rural area where it is not available. This will also increase the number of people coming online.

If you are in business on the web, or planning to do so, now just might be the time to take advantage of the lethargy that others will face. The "Holiday Season" is not the time to slow down or discontinue your marketing efforts.

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