

The Right Track

By Bob Osgoodby

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There's an old saying - "Even if you're on the right track, you'll get run over if you just sit there." How many people try to set their business on the "right track" and just never make it? Just what is the "right track"?

You can be relatively sure you are on the "right track" when your business is starting to generate income. Some things you do will be good, and while others may sound good, in reality may not be. Let's take a hard look at one of these strategies.

Did you know there is software available which will allow you to automatically submit your ads to web sites that accept free ads, and to newsletters that do likewise? This software will submit any number of ads you wish, in any frequency you desire.

"Wow - what a great idea!", you might think. I can submit my ads to thousands of these sites with a single keystroke. "What a time saver!"

Some people send out a dozen or more like this everyday. Is this doing them any good? Well maybe yes, and maybe no. Let's first examine the different types of web sites that accept free ads, and why.

Many web sites that accept free ads, do it purely to collect email addresses, which they can then sell as targeted lists. They don't really care if your ad is ever seen. In fact, many have a high limit between 50 and 300 ads. When the next one is submitted, the oldest is dropped, and the process continues.

With thousands of ads submitted hourly, how long do you think your ad will remain on their site - a minute or two - hardly worth your time. The flip side is you will suddenly find a lot more unsolicited email arriving daily from those who bought your email address. If you like receiving unsolicited email, I guess this is good.

Other web sites do care if your ad is seen. So what is their motive? They are trying to build an advertiser base, and hope you will purchase a paid ad from them. Ads submitted to sites like this usually have a life of a week or more, and can be renewed indefinitely. Their goal is to attract people to their site and hope that you do business as a result of your ad. Some people report great success with this. Others post an ad here and there and wonder why they don't make sales.

Newsletters published on a regular basis that allow free ads, are a different story. When they

receive ads, each one is checked manually. They usually only permit one ad per cycle, and if you submit 7-12 ads a day, you will quickly overwhelm their processing capabilities. To them, this is spamming. Because they might receive 500+ ads a day, their only recourse is to "fight fire with fire". What they do is automatically filter out the ads submitted using this type of software. They will never see your ad submissions.

So what does this automatic submission software do for/to you. In the first example, your ads might have a useful life measured in minutes. In the second case your ads are "blocked" from the sites that will produce your best results.

Once you are blocked (depending on how they do it) you may never be able to submit ads to these quality sites again - even if you do it manually. Some block at the email address level. Once an address is blocked, their filters will automatically delete your incoming email, whether it is an ad or not.

Maybe that automatic submission software isn't the best hundred bucks you could ever spend.

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