

The Art of Promoting Your B2B Website

By Brian Su

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Many business-to-business (B2B) website owners spend thousands of dollars on advertising and yet found out that their sites have not generated many leads as they expected. Some of my clients ask if there are better ways available for targeting the right audience. Well, I can tell you honestly that I neither solely rely on search engines nor printed media. Before I spend big bucks on advertisement, I make sure that my website is professionally designed and easy for visitors to navigate. In addition to search engines submission and traditional advertisement, I also implement alternative approaches that are proven to be more effective. Though my approaches may not be suitable for every single business-to-business website, but it works for most smaller sites. I have prioritized the following methods for your reference.

1) First of all, identify your potential clientele, and then find out the Internet directories or portal websites that serve such clientele. Make sure your website get listed with them. For instance, if you are in agriculture field, then submit your site to eHarvest.com; if you are running a resort or guest ranch, register your site with ResortLocator.com. Choosing the right directories will boost traffic immediately.

2) Publish your own industry newsletter to communicate with other business executives in your field. It will get you a steady stream of traffic and sales to your website. Your newsletter keeps your potential clients informed about industry news, new products and technology, trade shows, of course, your own new products. The easiest tool to create and manage an online newsletter is ListBot.com.

3) Start your own affiliate program for your site. We have successfully developed our referral partnership program that is effective and does not cost us anything to set it up. Once you initiate the program, simply register it with Refer-It.com or AssociateProgram.com. Let other people to do the work and make sales for you!

4) Email signature file is another excellent way to promote your business. Every time you send or reply an email, your email signature file will automatically attached with the email. Signatures should be about 2 to 5 lines in length, and include a short advertising message and your website address. If you use Microsoft Outlook or web-based Yahoo Mail, they allow you easily to setup your own signature. A good signature grabs immediate attention. For instance, our Email signature displays "Save 40% for Website Development" and our website address <http://www.smartechlab.com> that makes our email recipients want to visit our site right away.

What about banner exchange programs and reciprocal links, as my clients ask? I can tell you that

banner ad's click-through ratio rate is usually below 1%. I do not recommend using banner ad on a B2B sites. In addition to the low rate of click-thru, it will also make your website slow to download. That will turn your visitors away. Reciprocal links are not popular among business-to-business websites.

In conclusion, I have seen many small business websites with chaotic layout and large photos. It really turns visitors away. The first step that you shall take is to review your entire website, or have an independent consultant to audit your website, and then have it improved with clean and simply layout, easy navigation, and user-friendly functionality. B2B websites do not have to look very fancy. The friendly functionality is one of the most important factors that keep your site visitors stay longer and have them keep coming back.

About the Author:

Brian Su is a senior consultant and of <http://www.SmarTechlab.com> - an Illinois-based consulting firm that specializes in e-business development and marketing strategy. He manages a popular portal at DollarTemplates.com at <http://www.DollarTemplates.com> that provides pre-made e-commerce and portal web templates to entrepreneurs around the world. He is a frequent contributor to many online newsletters and publications. Mr. Su advises small business owners on marketing and promotion strategy. He can be reached at his websites.

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