

Real World Traffic Strategies



HOW To Significantly
Increase Your Website Traffic
In Only 1 hour Per Day

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The Holy Grail of Internet traffic

Traffic is the lifeblood of any website – and is important to every single site online. Without traffic, no site can make sales, no site can offer information, and no site can, or will, stay in business or able to promote themselves to others. There's no point in producing a website without traffic – but, unfortunately for some webmasters, they just can't see beyond getting the site up. They've believed that 'if they build it, they will come' and find themselves completely unprepared for the reality that their well built, possibly 'perfect' site will see barely any traffic until it's picked up by search engines. Or worse, will be closed down because the webmaster himself feels that the site isn't as good as he'd hoped and has it removed.

But there's more to it, even than that.

Traffic is traffic right? WRONG!

The single biggest mistake anyone makes when looking at creating and sustaining a site is thinking that as long as they bring in regular traffic, they'll make money.

Though bringing in regular traffic is a key ingredient in a successful website - regular, targeted traffic that is looking for what you offer. They might only have a general idea, but still be at least in your ballpark, or they might be highly targeted, intensely focused individuals. Either way, the important thing is that they are LOOKING for you.

Traffic is the essential ingredient in any campaign and once someone has visited you once, with certain methods, you can stay in touch with them, keeping their responsiveness at a constant or increasing pitch, allowing you to offer them high quality products - when that traffic is looking for you, you can just about guarantee that you'll be able to sell to

them - or at least they'll be more interested in buying from you.

This interest will convert into being far more predisposed to buying your products.

TARGETTED TRAFFIC IS RESPONSIVE TRAFFIC!

You need people that know what you're offering, and more than have a passing interest in it, are actually actively shopping for, or have been looking for your product or similar in the past. You need people that are willing to open their wallets and their minds to your message. Which, in turn means that you'll be able to convert them to paying customers, or to people that click through to your 'ultimate goal'.

Though traffic that passes through your site whilst randomly browsing, MAY make a purchase, its more likely you'll sell to people you've positioned yourself to reach. Which is why, before you look at traffic, you have to look at niche.

Targeted traffic is actually easy to procure, as long as you know where to start - it takes a little work and a lot of patience, but you'll find that any of your planning and work pays off ten times on the effort.

Targeted traffic, of course, is easy to generate, if you know what you're doing. And that's where this workbook comes in. We touch on all of the things that you can do to generate traffic, to give you a starting point to focus on generating traffic to your sites.

THE NICHE PLAN.

Do you know what niche your 'ideal prospect' is in. Are they network marketers, parents, bloggers, MySpace users?

Do they seek information on websites, or are they more likely to be sharing that information. Are they novices, experts or somewhere in between.

Defining your niche can make the difference between creating a buzz and creating a fizzle. When you create a buzz, in the niche you're hoping to attract, the buzz ITSELF should sustain momentum and create more traffic, carrying you along as it spreads your message.

And that's the ultimate goal of traffic generation - making sure that you've got a great base to start your traffic generation from - and in turn, build on with the people linking back to you.

Your ideal prospects may not only be a customer but an affiliate - promoting your product to earn a commission, so you'll need to build a secondary 'niche' plan around attracting them. The ideal **customer** is far simpler to track down than you'd think - but it does take a little thought.

Your USP

One of the primary ways to effectively find where your traffic efforts should be focused on is to define your unique selling position.

Your unique selling position is what makes YOUR product or service the ideal solution for your targeted niche. This could be because of price, features - but most importantly, it should address what solution you're offering to a problem that all **of your niche shares**.

Primary and secondary traffic generation

Traffic generation efforts themselves can be broken down into two different types of traffic generation.

Primary traffic generation is the type where you take the action that brings the traffic itself. Primary traffic generation types include advertising, opt-in lists, social networking, and in some cases blogging for traffic or posting articles on your own sites.

Secondary traffic generation is considered to be the generation of traffic that affects your search engine ranking - so again, blogging, articles, and the less obvious, like providing content for other sites as an 'expert' - generating link backs via article databases and more. This secondary traffic generation is generally considered to be more viral, but is important that you understand how to do it, so you can play by the rules.

Where search engines are concerned, following their guidelines towards steady results is infinitely more preferable than working with black hat techniques, gaining a brief advantage and then discovering that you're banned when they find out.

The single most important thing about primary and secondary traffic generation is that you've got to know how to do it - and you've got to be willing to put in an effort. Otherwise you'll find that you lose the effort you put in on all primary 'fronts'. Traffic is a battle in many ways - and you have to choose which areas you want to push.

With this guide you can find a custom traffic generation solution that works for you, and then implement it with ease.

The Niche Plan Worksheet

Business name
Business URL
USP
One line summary of
your business
Advertising/traffic
budget

Primary niche to
target
Where to reach them
How to reach them
Cost?

Secondary niche to
target
Where to reach them
How to reach them?
Cost?

Tertiary niches
Where to reach
them?
How to reach them?
Cost?

Total cost

Keywords to use

To use this sheet simply brainstorm. You'll find a lot of the boxes help you fill in the other. There are several methods to find keywords for your niche plan. One is to think about everything your site would be searched to think about your USP - what other ways could you describe your selling position?

The most important thing to remember about keywords is that they are of use in every area of your traffic plan - from blogging, to articles, to pay per click campaigns and beyond.

A great way to choose keywords is to write words and phrases up to four words that described your product, the solution it provides, the problem it solves and the reason its worthwhile investing in.

We've included a keyword worksheet with this package, but you can use certain software that's free to research keywords.

You could use keyword specific researcher tool, such as Niche finder (<http://www.nichemarketresearch.com/nf.php>) or Keyword Station (<http://www.keywordstation.com/>) - or online sites such as <http://www.webmaster-toolkit.com/keyword-research-tool.shtml>

Once you've researched your keywords, categories them. Choose 10 primary keywords, and the rest are secondary. You can always add more primary keywords as you progress in your business. Put them somewhere safe and save them.

Now that you've worked out your niche, and where they are easiest to reach - now what?

Now you have to work out what forms of traffic generation

you're going to undertake. All of the methods we've outlined are easily used, but you'll need to make a plan.

The advertising plan

Of the following list, you have to make sure you've got time, and space to do them - so you'll need to make a list of tasks you want to complete. I don't advocate booking a separate time to write articles, post them etc - instead, I advocate setting goals and meeting them over your week.

Advertising, by and large, is a flexible part of your sales plan - traffic generation itself is also pretty flexible. You'll need to ensure that your site is ready for the traffic - which is a whole separate, ongoing project. Once you've created a site that is search and visitor ready though, you'll find that fitting in an hour of traffic generation a day will do wonders for your sites.

If you can also set up a budget to stick to, you can then plan what offers you the best bargains for your investment, which in turn, will give you an idea as to how much legwork you're doing and how much of your investment is monetary and should be evaluated accordingly.

That evaluation, of course, is subjective - what might work for one group of sites, and produce strong traffic, might not work for others, so you have to track your ads.

And though that can be as simple as installing a piece of software on your website and feeding everything through there, or as complex as making several different domains and redirects and manually tracking your traffic based on landing pages, articles and linking.

Which is less exact, depending on how you - and others link to you. From there, you'll be able to roughly estimate what traffic produced which sales - or generally, work out how worthwhile any traffic generation is based on your earnings from affiliate links and adsense earnings, if any.

Groundwork and tools

Before you dive headlong into the actually generating traffic, you may want to make a shortlist of the sites that you want to target, and HOW you plan on targeting them. If you're going to use your blog to drive traffic (more on that in part) then you'll need to post content - and set it up fully. If you want to undertake and invest in a PPC campaign, you need to do a lot of research on keywords, set and define a budget that won't break your bank.

All of it requires research and some groundwork.

Website Content:

Website content is the 'stuff' that makes up your site – it can be articles, blog posts – images or videos. And it should be as unique as you can possibly make it.

That's not to say that you shouldn't use content that people have provided from free reprint sites, but instead, that you should try to keep the overall percentage of articles and other written content to a minimum of reprints. Use them, but ensure that you've got other content that is unique and original to make up the rest of your site.

PLR is, of course, one way to achieve this, and can make all the difference, when edited and expanded upon. But if you've got no access to PLR, writing content for your site isn't too difficult. One article a day isn't all that hard to do, but will mean that unless you start writing around a month before you found your site, that you won't have the content to make up the site itself for nearly a month.

Its recommended that you start a site with between 20 and 30 articles, and then 'trickle' any additional content into the

site as you're going – that way, you'll find that your content is both regularly updated, and regularly linked to (people are more likely, on average, to link to and discuss 'new' content on websites that they visit, rather than older content. Older content gets linked to because its part of an ongoing conversation, or for reference.

Content is of course, something that needs to be optimized – and that's where one of the dangers of content production, and use, lies.

Link exchanges

Link exchanges are a great way to build strong, two way links, to sites that will HELP YOUR READER and link back to you to help THIER readers.

The key to this is to make sure that you understand the cardinal rule of link exchanges - once you do, you can apply it to blogs - information sites - affiliate sites - even E-books, if you do it right - and best of all, its free!

Once again, your keywords will come in handy whilst working on finding where you should request link exchanges – you'll need to do some research. Target the sites that you'd turn to for information first – and then search for sites that are similar to it. Check out the sites that are linking to your 'possible exchangees'.

Requesting a link exchange

Its important to remember that the link exchanges that you undertake should be done with the utmost respect and personalization on your part. You can't just BCC to a couple of dozen sites and hope you'll get hits and feedback.

Dear (name),

I have visited your website, and was hoping you'd be interested in exchanging link information with my site. We're both within the same niche, so I thought you might want to exchange links with me – to exchange traffic between our sites.

(You might briefly elaborate on how your products or services are complimentary rather than competitive)

Please visit my website at <http://whatever.com>. After you have reviewed my site and if you are interested in a link exchange, please contact me at

Your Name
Your Telephone Number
Your email address

Thank you,

Your name
Company name
Website address

Link exchanges are best undertaken to sites with a PR rank that don't have links to sites unrelated to them. This is important because your primary goal in this, is not only to develop traffic, but to develop your page rank – with a higher page rank you'll find that your site appears more often in search engines.

You should also ensure that your link exchanges is fresh, and haven't dropped in page rank – every month, you should check your linked sites. Make sure that they aren't dead, offline, or hard to access, that they haven't changed to sites that you would not want to link for, for any reason, and that they aren't turning into link farms. Doing so will preserve YOUR page rank (cause linking to lower ranked sites).

There's an important caveat to link exchanging – you can't just offer to link exchange and then not follow through. If you're not committing a two-way exchange, then you should be honest, and up front with the sites in question – and consider, instead, purchasing a link. And in which case, be aware that search engines frown on this, and feel that its an artificial way to gain page rank, so may penalize you, AND the site(s) in question if you are discovered.

Whilst there's no conclusive evidence that this is acted on frequently, there are rules in the Google Webmaster guidelines about buying, and selling links.

Is your website ready?

This is a simple question to answer - if you're planning on driving traffic to a funnel or squeeze page via PPC for example, is all of that ready?

If you're collecting emails from your visitors, are your opt-in boxes and auto responders ready?

Is there content on your site?

All of these questions are of equal importance, though having ample content and information for your visitors, your sales pages tested and opt-in boxes completely live is one of the most important steps you can make towards ensuring your traffic won't leave your site, never to return.

Once you've put everything on your site you can then start driving traffic towards it without needing to do additional work.

Though it's very hard to do so without seeing results, and can be very disheartening to work on a site that isn't showing any results at all, you'll find it far easier to sustain your traffic generation efforts if everything is in place in advance.

You'll also have to pick up a few tools - if you don't already have them. One of the biggest 'tools' you'll need to pick up is an auto responder

It might seem odd that you need to pay a site to run your email campaigns but given the way the Internet has become overrun with spam, the average Joe can't run his own auto responder. Even if you've got your own auto responder, you'll need to set up targeted collection and response systems directly designed around the traffic that you want.

Now the only question left is where to put those opt-in boxes on your pages.

Opt-In Boxes:

The placement of opt-in boxes on your pages is a vital decision and one that is going to have a direct effect on exactly how many people do, in fact, opt-in to your list.

What information you ask for is an equally important factor in your opt-in success.

You should always make sure you're not asking for too much information from your sign ups - people are becoming more and more aware and wary of giving out information about themselves to sites, with identity theft ever on the increase. So if you're asking for information, make sure you've got a valid reason for doing so - or just don't ask.

You do not need a potential customer's address, or phone number, until you have them place an order - so asking for it on your opt-in is likely to make them not sign up.

You should also always ensure that you've placed your sign up box above the fold, on every page. Make sure its in a consistent place - that way, people will eventually 'decide' to sign up, through impressions, and will know that its the same sign up every page, so know that no matter where they are, they can sign up. This impression of steadiness is important in any online company.

The Opt-In Incentive:

Its important to remember that part of what will drive your traffic is incentive. The same holds true for sign ups once on your site. Offer an valuable incentive for people to join your mailing list and they are more likely to do so - and you're on the first rung of 'trust' with them. As it takes an average of seven to fourteen impressions for a user to buy from a site, especially a site they've browsed to (with a few notable exceptions, such as pre-qualifying themselves for an adsense ad or similar or that your site offers exactly what they are searching for), then by far the easiest way to get opt-ins to your auto responder is to offer a copy of an E-book that matches your niche, appeals to your targeted prospects, and most of all, is both valuable, but very cheap for you to provide.

Do you have a traffic tracking system?

Before you even consider posting ads, you need to think about whether you can track what you're doing.

Ad tracking is important because you'll find that you can see where your traffic is coming, easily, efficiently and can work out what to continue with, and what to adjust, or ditch.

Ad tracking is important because not only can you see what is working and what isn't, but you can also refine your niche plan, and targeted areas within those niches - refining, further your information for the groups you're approaching and whether that works.

Traffic tracking isn't too hard - you can choose one of several ways to do so - either by redirecting your traffic through software on your sever, or free, through projects like 'Google analytics'.

Both will require that you change some code on your site for tracking, but will give you the opportunity to keep an eye on your best performers, and cut your losses if something isn't working.

ADVERTISING

Part 1 - Posting advertisements for your product

Advertising is a huge market - and there's a dizzying array of ways you can post adverts. So instead of discussing all of them, we're going to outline and explain some of the best ways to advertise as a beginner.

By and large the single easiest way you'll ever find to advertise your site is PPC.

Pay per click is a means of advertising on sites, leveraging a network, to spread your links to sites that 'match' the keywords that the sites are using.

This matching is done automatically by the search engines - and takes all of the hard work out of reaching niches you may have overlooked.

This works well, because they are easy to set up, and instead of paying a huge amount for possibly no return, you are charged each time someone clicks on your advertisement and visits your website, and not a cent more. Its completely targeted, as long as you've set up your ads correctly, and allows people to 'pre-qualify' themselves to your offer.

PPC search engines and networks.

The three main search engines - yahoo, MSN and Google - each have their own PPC search engine. Whilst each is separate, and reaches different groups - Google's advertiser network is, by far, one of the largest in existence.

But before choosing Google, you might want to investigate the others - there is no harm in splitting your PPC budget and choosing a primary PPC search engine and then using another one as your secondary PPC is a very savvy way of

using your budget and ensuring you're using it in a wide array of places.

PPC search engines are almost completely hands off once you've set them up - you don't need to work on them every day, and once you've set everything up you can basically leave it alone - its not something that NEEDS work to keep it ticking over.

The downside to this is its easy to forget to tweak it - and while you'll probably want to leave well alone, you need to monitor what your account is doing - and make sure its worth your investment.

Choosing your PPC venue

One of the biggest PPC based decisions you'll probably make is whether to go with Google, Yahoo, or MSN for your pay per click campaigns. Each network has its plusses and minuses, depending on who you talk to. And best of all, once you've explored one PPC venue, you'll know your way around most all of them.

Ultimately, your choice won't even be based on niche, as its pretty fair to say that every search engine will reach every niche at some point. So you should base your choice on the general costs involved - creating an account with each and seeing where your budget would be cheapest overall works well for most people.

Choosing your budget.

Budgeting for PPC is actually really easy. You set your monthly 'spend' and then start looking at how those keywords

Pay per click - or Cost per Click budgets are simply calculated by the amount per click something costs,

multiplied by the amount of clicks that you've had on your account. So by setting a budget you'll be able to dictate the amount of clicks you're going to get with ease - and estimate, roughly how much traffic you'll get.

As for deciding on your budget - when starting out, its important to remember that you're probably going to be investing into your budget and may not make your money back. Though there are lots of systems out there that claim you can generate traffic via low paying keywords and use the higher paying ones on your own page, its important to remember that this takes a fair amount of skill and though you should always look for ways to lower your PPC budget, whilst generating the same amount of traffic, you should always err on the side of caution.

Google is a hugely successful corporation, that doesn't just own search engines, but for the sake of the e book, we're going to focus on Adwords.

Choosing keywords

Remember your first worksheet? You wrote some keywords down in there (with any luck!) and these keywords are ideal for the basis of your PPC campaign. You should also brainstorm more keywords, and write them down - keywords are great for all manner of things from articles to blogs.

The primary word in your Adwords campaign SHOULD, without a doubt, be your primary keyword from your site. You can build your campaigns around one of your five primary keywords, and build several campaigns that you can activate and deactivate based on your budget and performance. Remember to generate keywords using the keyword suggestion tool - that way, you're getting a broad canvassing around all of the subjects and secondary

keywords relating to your project.

Your keyword should also appear in your headline. That way, people know exactly what you're offering - there's no exception to this, and it will increase your click through chances considerably. You shouldn't 'waste' words either - refine your message, cut the superfluous words and ensure that you're writing strong, solid adverts by removing anything that is considered 'descriptive'.

Words like 'fabulous', 'amazing' and other similar adjectives will waste space, and should only be used IF you need padding.

You should probably try to focus your ads on selling - using them for squeeze pages may attract extra sign ups, but if you've got a very limited budget, you'll want to focus on making money back from your click throughs.

You can design your campaign based on your competitors ads - to find them, search for your keywords and see what pops up. You'll be able to evaluate your competition too at this point, and see what they are doing and see what you can do to duplicate their success.

PPC advertising is a cross between art and science and many companies and sites exist to make sure you're doing the right thing, and help you to do so. They may charge, or you might be able to read up for free, but PPC campaigns are something that you should consider as learning over the same amount of time as SEO. You'll always want to keep honing your skills.

Adsense arbitrage versus paying for it all

The actual act of Adense arbitrage is simple. Find low paying keywords in your niche - and convert that traffic to your site, which, in turn you 'flip' into paying traffic. In theory, its easy - you can either use a lower cost PPC network to convert the traffic to your site and then either set it up so they can click on more PPC ads - or to sell to them via affiliate links or direct from you.

In practice understanding what clicks will 'flip' and which will 'flop' is a very hard thing to do. So paying for your adsense clicks is by far the easiest way to handle your campaign.

Flipping is also causing problems for accounts, and there are many unethical marketers trying to take advantage of people looking for ways to make money from adsense. And those people teaching adsense arbitrage are slowly finding that Google will squeeze them back out of the market - but the methodology behind it is solid.

If you are buying traffic anyway, there's no harm in also running Adwords campaigns on your site to 'recoup'. You just have to be aware that unless you're really lucky you'll probably find that you're only recouping some of the money you invest, and should NOT rely on Arbitrage to create your advertising income.

Arbitrage, of course, isn't as simple as finding low paying click areas, and 'flipping' them into higher paying sites - you've got to know how to play the 'weaker' or at least, considered weaker, areas of your sites niche and make sure that it feeds into a higher paying area, without cheating.

Your site would, of course, need to cover both the lower paid end of the spectrum, and the higher paid, to ensure that you're completely 'white hat' in your search engine dealings, and finally, you have to keep an eye on the rules that Google, and other sites impose - sooner or later they will probably change this loop-hole, and of course, until then,

others will probably start using it too, pushing up your 'minimum' bid per click.

In short, though adsense arbitrage and click flipping looks good on paper, it takes a lot of work and may actually end up costing you more money than other, cheaper means of traffic generation.

Part 2 - Other forms of ad posting.

There are other ways to post ads - some which take a bit more effort and can yield more than PPC advertising. From solo ads to sponsoring niche sites, you'll find great ways to buy and pay for advertising in your niche.

E-zines

E-zine advertising is one of the most cost effective ways to drive massive amount of traffic to your website. E-zines are one of the things that the Internet has really made work - and with that, its easy to grab the traffic filtering through the e-zines in existence each and every day. E-zines are, basically, emailed newspapers or magazines - some only email the summaries and ads - others email out the whole newsletter, newspaper, magazine - ads and all. Either way, most E-zines are actually dual fold advertising machines - the email/E-zine itself, and the archive on the site that publishes it.

People have come to love E-zines. They publications come to them on their computers and are directly related to their lives and the things that they are interested in. This relation means that the advertisements are also related, and therefore, usually have a much higher response rate - which is about the most important thing to consider when advertising in e-zines.

E-zine publishers are trusted by their subscribers. And though this may not seem important, they've taken all of the hard work out of training their subscribers to actually click through their sites. This works well for you, as an advertiser because you know YOU will not have to retrain people to click through your ads - the E-zine reader's predisposition to click anything in the E-zine is your friend

E-zine directories are usually your best place to start when

planning a campaign using this traffic generation method. Its important to remember that you've got broad scope to generate traffic with e-zines - and that E-zine readers will respond best to all manner of ads, from giveaways, to offers.

E-zine advertising allows you to reach **thousands** of people...and not just any people...but the people that your chosen e-zine serves, as a niche and in terms of effectiveness, as well as, efficiency, advertising in E-zines is the top contender for the number one spot in both. E-zines sent to an opt-in list will offer more in terms of advertising bucks than the same amount of impressions via most untargeted solo-ads or PPC clicks.

Most advertising venues available on the Internet are fiercely competitive.

For example; when you place PPC (Pay Per Click) advertisements on the search engines, you are competing with every other marketer in the universe who is selling the same or very similar items. You are competing with thousands of others for the same limited market share. Some of these competitors will have pockets that are a lot deeper than yours, too.

Advertising in E-zines is far less competitive than most other advertising methods.

E-zine advertising has the advantage of some staying power. E-zines are almost always archived and people frequently refer to past issues of E-zines when they are searching for information. As a matter of fact, archived E-zines are one of the most used research tools on the Internet. When you place an advertisement in an E-zine that is dedicated to a topic that directly relates to your product or service, you can think of it as advertising to future potential customers, as

well, making it an even bigger advertising bargain.

Just like writing a solo ad, you have to write your advertisement - being as efficient as you can with the words. Don't waste line space on words like 'great, fantastic, wonderful, exciting, etc.' Make every word of your limited words point people directly to your website and to your product.

Publishers of E-zines have permission to send email to their subscribers - which completely forgoes the problems that you'd get buying a list of unverified options of the same size. You're not going to get busted for spam writing advertisements to a list that isn't interested - and you'll not 'waste' your money.

E-zine owners also run 'solo-ads' - again, you'll be able to use e-zines to run solo ads in some cases, and reach the subscribers without the 'noise' ratio of the E-zine itself - which in turn means that its more expensive to do, but is often more cost effective.

Solo ads

Solo ads are emails that are sent to a list or lists by a company or group of people. They can be mailings to an E-zine list, outwith the E-zine or newsletter itself, or simply a collection of ads that are emailed to the subscribers.

Solo ads are basically articles or long form ads - or even short sales letters that you produce to sell your product.

One of the advantages of solo ads is that if you are in front of people, and have a headline and first couple of paragraphs that interest them, they should increase your click-throughs. This holds true of emailing your own list.

Most solo ads are presented 'one a day' at most - they aren't part of the regular emailing, and should be viewed as a

'stand-alone' mailing, just like you'd send your own list.

Solo ad choices

Safelists.

There are lots of places that offer solo ads - including safelists. Safelists are a special kind of E-zine advertising - safelists are lists that you can email, after joining - you don't own them, so you don't need to handle the maintenance.

Most safelists have a membership condition - it could be a fee, or accepting all of the emails they send. And that's where the drawback comes in. Most (free) safelists require you to accept the mailing of every member - which in turn entitles you to email your members. This might not seem like a drawback, until you consider that most modest sized safelists send up to 100 emails to each customer every day.

The chances of you attracting sales from your safelist advertising is therefore diluted. Safelists are also, obviously, full of affiliates promoting the same products, so if you're promoting an affiliate opportunity, you will find competition.

Sponsoring sites

'Sponsoring' sites can be something as simple as running your banner, button or text ad direct on the site. These advertisements are a long term investment that you should consider to be 'non ranking' links. Non 'PR' based links are, quite simply, links that don't count towards your search engine rank. Google has recently cracked down on paid text ads, and banners and buttons are probably not that far behind. Therefore any investment you make for these sites should be simply considered as primary traffic generation.

Site sponsoring is easy to do - just find the site, or sites or network that you want to sponsor and contact the owner. You can probably buy buttons, banners and text links on many sites in your niche - most popular for these forms of advertising this way is with working from home parenting sites.

ARTICLE WRITING

Article writing is a major consideration in any serious traffic generation profile - and to make sure you're getting the most out of article writing, you need to understand the basics of why they work.

Article marketing is simple, and effective basically because it's hands off. You can use articles as viral marketing - the back links that sites like E-zine articles (<http://E-zinearticles.com/>) and other article marketing sites alone make it a valuable and viable contribution to your article marketing projects.

It's important to remember though, you've got to actually work at it - article marketing is a high quality form of marketing - you've got to make sure that the final product reflects well on you - not only to get them accepted, but also because this article will be your 'face' on several sites. Article reprints spread far and wide, and the best ones can carry on for far longer than you'd normally expect.

Once you understand how they work, you can work with the methods that make them so successful, and go from standard success to stellar in a couple of simple steps.

What you'll need

Article writing or production is simple - take some PLR or an article concept, stick it into your word processor and that's about it. Depending on where you want to send your articles will depend on what exactly you'll need next.

You'll also need to get accounts with sites you want to submit your content to - and check out their guidelines. Make sure you understand the rules on keywords

specifically, as it's the single biggest ban reason - once you do, you can find some great traffic goldmines writing for other sites, with your own links in the bio.

Writing a bio

Bios are simply a brief description of who the author is, and further links to contact, or read more by them. Most bios relate directly to the information that are being shared in the articles - and will share one or two urls relating to the subject at hand - in your case, your site, or sites. Using articles to promote your sites will, of course, mean that you should promote the sites in question, without shunting traffic through intermediaries. Which, in turn, means that if you're offering reprints on your site, you should archive them on the site, with a current bio in place.

Writing:

Content writing isn't easy and for that reason, you might want to consider taking a day of time to brainstorm, write and submit. You can write articles in a couple of hours - submitting itself can be done when you have a spare couple of minutes - but the most important thing to remember, and keep firmly in site is the quality of your writing.

You may think that you're not a good writer, but anyone and everyone has some writing ability - it just takes a certain mindset to actually commit the words to paper - a mindset that professional writers take years to hone.

Hiring a writer

You CAN hire a writer - there are lots of places you can find a good writer, or writers, including Getafreelancer.com and elance.com - but for every good writer, there are tonnes of poor ones. Its important to know what to look for in a good

writer.

Can they articulate WHY they are a good writer? " I is da bomb!" really isn't a vote of confidence for anyone's writing abilities. Its important to look at how well their personality shines through their CV, and how well they express themselves.

Style or substance? If their style fits yours then they might be a better fit than someone with an impeccably written CV with no feel of style to it. Substance too is important, if they can express ideas readably, you'll find that they are entertaining, enthusiastic and engaging, and therefore, make better articles to read.

What are their clips like? - if they've got clips, review them, and get a feel for how they handle topics - if they are comfortable over the topics they are presenting, its another point in their favor.

Do they speak English, or at least pass as speaking it properly? - one of the biggest issues with freelancers that price themselves low is that they are possibly English Second Language writers. Which means that they'll either have a perfect grasp of the language and genuinely be brilliant, or more commonly, they have turns of phrase that gives them away as ESL writers. These turns of phrase WILL need to be edited thoroughly.

What are their reviews like? Do they have glowing reviews, high ratings? Information such as how they've handled previous contracts is very important.

Building a strong article

The first and most important few words of your article are in the title or the headline - they should indicate, or offer something that ties into the article itself, and makes sense

to your reader, once they've read it, which means that if you name it something like 'When life hands you lemons, build a dot com' - it should make complete sense to the reader as to why you chose that specific title.

Once you've chosen and written your title (which can be before, or after you've written the article itself), you should move on to the first paragraphs - they should explain, clearly, the message you're trying to share, over the course of the article, but to This is one of the primary methods that e-zine owners and newsletter producers, and of course, website owners use to choose content by.

Your title should be pithy and informational in itself.

If you've started your content with writing your title - you can then move on to running over the points you want to share in your article, a piece at a time. This way of sharing information makes for good, interesting articles that aren't overly long and can focus on one or two important points that you want to share.

Article writing for the net isn't complicated - a great formula and rule of thumb to remember is most people skim read content online, so you need lots of subheadings, and paragraphs of between three and eight lines long. You can write slightly longer, or shorter, for things like bulleted lists. This works well because people skim read - and have an incredibly short attention span.

Go easy on the exclamation points, as well. One exclamation point indicates importance or excitement... a half a dozen are just rude, and mark you as an amateur writer, which, in turn, will get you rejected from the article sites you've been working towards being accepted in - another sign of amateur writing is all capitals in the titles.

It's also important to remember that people will read

content by you if they've enjoyed you as a writer, or content provider, they will look for you again, and visit your site, which is why its of vital importance that you create a landing page from all of your articles, linked via your resource box.

Your resource box at the end of the article is the part that is most important to you. You'll use it to direct people to your site. Its a short biography at the end of each article you produce, which anyone using the articles has to leave in place. This is why they are so good as traffic tools - these article marketing high points are just a couple of the perks.

Submitting Articles:

Once you've written your content to submit, you shouldn't submit your article to everywhere that will take it. Article marketing has recently been crippled by the Google Slap, so avoiding, or at least accepting that your articles will be caught in the Google duplicate content filter (and on any search engine for that matter) is an important first step to relaxing where you send your content to.

You should choose five article submission sites to send your content to at most - recommended sites such as E-zinearticles.com, articledirectory.com and other, possibly niche based sites will give you excellent coverage of a vast market of potential readers.

While there's lots of software that you can use to submit and produce articles, such as article architect, that you can use to automate your submissions, and working on articles, all you need do is bookmark the sites that you submit to the most, and ensure you're building strong, interesting content on these sites, so that not only do you gain a reputation for solid content, but you're also creating a marketability platform.

Syndicating your own articles

One of the advanced methods of article marketing is self syndication. Self syndicating articles is as easy as setting up your articles on a feed - and allowing people to use the feeds to post your content on their sites. Self syndication on a personal level isn't as complex as it once was, but you need a high amount of traffic, or several interested parties to make it worth your while.

One of the easiest ways of syndicating your articles though is to use Wordpress and Feedburner - with them both you can offer your own mini syndication site, and control what articles people get, when.

There are also other scripts that allow you to syndicate articles - if you've got a lot of them on one topic to share, and you want to build your own site that shares the content with others, syndication style, you could use article dashboard. Article dashboard is free, and a great piece of software that you can build your own article based directory on.

Press releases

If you've got something truly newsworthy, or can, at least build something newsworthy around your site, you'll be able to produce and release press releases. Online, or offline, these handy little business tools are used badly by some people – and overlooked by others.

First and foremost in press release is to actually find your 'reason for release'. That reason could be a launch of a site, an expansion – an award. Think inside, and outside of the box, and see what you can find that would make a good reason to share your news with the world.

There is a universally accepted format for press releases, one which you can either use, as outlined below, or go to a website and generate one from there – two great places for this are -

<http://www.canadaone.com/promote/pressrelease.html> or
<http://www.ducttapemarketing.com/Instant-Press-Release.htm>.

Alternatively, there's this one, which is one of the basic layouts used.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact Information:

Your Name

Your street address

Your city, State

Your telephone number (with area code)

Your website address

Your email address

Your headline in bold type goes here. This headline need not be a complete sentence but it can be. It should read like a newspaper headline.

Your city, ST -The date-Begin your press release here by restating the headline or adding to it. Continue with pertinent information.

A press release can be between 600 and 1500 words long. The following is the accepted way to end a press release:

For Information: your website address followed by
Your email address

#

All press releases end with the three number symbols centered at the bottom of the release.

Press releases should be formatted correctly, and then you can submit them online at places like <http://PRWeb.com>. Submitting to this one place will usually result in it being distributed to several sites, increasing your chances of having more links back to your site.

The single most important thing though, other than having valid news to share, is to ensure that your contact details are up to date and usable. There are several press releases that I created that are still circulating, four years on. Unfortunately, because the site that it relates to is now down, we're losing all those back links and traffic.

You can also enclose them to other venues, such as newspapers. You'll need to write a cover letter and send it to the person in question that deals with these things, which, in turn, means developing contacts. You can usually find out who

FORUMS AND BLOGS

Part 1 - Forum marketing

Go to your favorite search engine and in the search box type in your key words followed by the word 'forums'. Hit search. You will be amazed at how many hits you get for your niche. And each of those forums could be a high traffic goldmine for any readers you're hoping to attract. And each forum is your chance to impress, find ideas AND, best of all, generate traffic to your site.

Finding forums to frequent

Forums that have high traffic are great places to hang out, and work with people, and discuss the niche you're in. Typing 'forum'+ 'your niche or primary keyword' into a search engine will of course give you the best results, but you might also want to hang out on any forums you already have access to, and ask people where they like to hang out.

Traffic generation for forums

Forum traffic generation is simply a case of posting and interacting on forums. If you can do that, and do it well, you will see a marked increase in traffic.

But you've got to pay attention to the sites rules - if they have any, stick to them, like glue. Be aware of any rules about siglines, and information on how to post, where to post and when to post. You'll find that, in the long run, you'll make more friends, readers, and interested other parties that way.

Discussions, siglines, and trolling

Discussions, when they get going on forums are great - unlike blogs, the ONLY reasons for forums is interaction.

Most forum programs are not Google friendly, and not only that, anyone with posting privileges can start a conversation. Posting articles on forums is a good way to open discussions, but might not always be appreciated - people go to forums, after all, to discuss, not share opinions.

And you might find on that note, that people disagree with you - or that you might disagree with them. It's perfectly fine to disagree with people - as long as you're respectful

Whether they are or not.

There's another type of forum poster. They are called 'trolls' and make most people miserable when they encounter them. They are argumentative, and in many ways, more destructive than spammers - as they don't care that people are actually civil to one another - instead, all they care about is causing a fuss.

So, as long as you're not a troll, people will read your answers with interest.

The dos and don'ts of posting to a forum for advertising.

There are several dos and don'ts when posting to forums, and if you follow them, you'll find that you'll make friends, influence people, and of course, generate tonnes of traffic, all at once.

1. Do use a sigline - always use a sigline within the remit of the forums themselves. If you're allowed to use your sigline to promote, then do so. Make sure you're using relevant urls, and keep the information current.
2. Write replies that aren't aggressive, but ARE challenging - a knack in writing information on forums, is to give people more information, and challenge them to understand and follow through on the information that you're providing, without causing reasonable

people to argue. There IS a difference between reasonable forum occupants (99.99% of them) and trolls

3. Answer questions honestly, and without promotion that is unnecessary. If you've gotten to the point where you're answering questions constantly, it's easy to slip into the habit of answering 'almost related questions' with the same information that you'd use to promote your expertise – which, in turn, can have you seen as a spammer.
4. Don't give away the farm – unless you're sure that the information is freely available elsewhere, remember that you want people to visit your site – having said that, giving people a short 'teaser' answer and then telling them to come to your site might also gain you a reputation for being a bit of a miser. So you have to find a middle ground. You can't answer every question and still expect to get business.
5. Write what you know, and back it up – if you can't back up anything that people are questioning you'll probably find that people challenge you, whether they have just cause or not (see trolls) so if you're providing information that needs documentation or backed up, make sure you CAN back it up.
6. Don't waste your time – if a forum is dissolving into pointless spamming, arguing 'etc' – walk away. You can always check back at intervals and see if things are better later, but it is a waste of your time to promote on a forum that isn't cared for.
7. Don't be a troll – trolling, or the act of specifically picking fights and arguments with others is something you should avoid, under any circumstances. If someone tries to harass you, or are looking to get a rise out of you on a forum, remember that it's better to ignore and start a new thread than fire off with both barrels.

Part 2 - BLOGGING

Customer interaction is one of the single most important areas that you can make lasting connections, and the easiest way to interact with customers, or potential customers is via one of several means.

Your mailing list (more about that later in the book), your blog, forums of your own, commenting on other blogs, or interacting on other forums.

Its incredible to see how much blogging has taken off in the last six years – weblogs were once the providence of only geeks, and are now the premiere business tool, for traffic, for relationship building – for keeping in touch with your customers.

Finding blogs that are in your niche, like forums, is as easy as goggling for them but instead of using Google's main search, use <http://blogsearch.google.com>

Once you've found them, you'll be able to see what people are doing, and see if there's room for you – even if there's a blog covering exactly the same thing as you though, consider still following through and creating a blog.

Blogging is an amazing proposition for most website owners – mainly because website owners can comment on blogs in their niche, and niches that relate to their sites. This 'relation' to your niche is an important – blogging is about the only area where you can comment in related niches without looking like a spammer. You can, of course, generate traffic in related niches, in other ways, but blogging is easy to generate traffic.

Blogs in their own right, add to the value of websites, and can generate traffic, but commenting on blogs is a quick, and easy way to generate back links, and more traffic for

your sites, and give you more 'expertise' standing. Its important to understand HOW to comment on someone's blog though, or get labeled as a spammer.

Blogging for traffic

Blogging for traffic is a great and easy way to deal with the rigors of creating a steady stream of traffic. On the one hand, they can be used to drive traffic to your site, or even be a part of your site, but on the other, they can detract from your site and drive traffic away.

The easiest way to blog for traffic, of course, is to blog in your niche and include regular links back to your site, or post reprint articles directly to your blog – that way, you're getting 'double play' from the content you're distributing. Whilst this is, of course, a common way to use articles and other content, its important to add to this content, and make sure that your content is all relevant. You can then use these blogs as link exchanges, and more.

Most blogs are primarily designed to provide content for people to read – the 'stickivity' of blogs not only offers you alternative venues for traffic generation, and another place to post and work, promote and produce content and information from.

Commenting on blogs

If you're not interested in creating your own blog, you can still comment on other people's blogs, within your niche, and only in the case of blogs, related niches that would, conceivably, need information in your niche.

Commenting is easy to do – find the blog, find something that you can elaborate on or add to a conversation and do

so. And that's the cardinal rule of posting comments – make sure it adds to the conversation on the post – as each post is a conversation, and interrupting or rudely adding to it is just like rudely butting into a conversation in real life.

You should only ever include links within the body of your comment IF you have reason to – such as for reference – always remember though, that you can add your own site in link back from the comment, as most blogging systems allow you to specify your name, and URL at the very least.

Networking and social marketing 101

Networking and social marketing in its own right, is an amazing way to drive traffic, and of course, is linked to blogging. But, because its such an effective and easy way to produce and generate traffic – and to foster links to websites and other businesses.

Halfway between blogging, socializing and link marketing, social and network marketing is a new phenomenon that came into being just before blogging became really popular. Its basic premise is the 'next step' in forum evolution, giving people profiles beyond the forum itself, and the ability to blog, update their profile and link with people of like minds.

Network marketing sites

One of the biggest booms online is that of network marketing sites. Places such as MySpace offer people the chance to interact, to talk, to market....to sell, and to be sold to. One of the biggest issues with this, of course, is that people abuse it far too often.

Network marketing is best used in traffic generation for projects that need or are built for human interaction – projects that require or are best designed for sites that require conversation off site. People like bands, and of course, Internet marketers, operate will in places like MySpace, as long as they operate within the rules.

These rules include information on how to operate on these sites, and, just like forums, should be followed.

Making networking connections

Networking on these sites is usually easier than trying to network on blogs – most sites have tools that allow you to

add friends, and network with people with similar interests. Most sites have tools that allow you to exchange messages, and show your connections to others – Ryze, Facebook, LinkedIn and Myspace all have 'networking' contact listings, so people can see whom you're networking with, and possibly contact them too.

Most importantly, perhaps, is the opportunity to contact anyone on those sites – if you've got a reason to contact them, they are more likely to respond to you, if you contact them through these sites – which, in turn means you can build connections, make friends and information networks, and in a very sideways way, reach people that might be able to help you.

Its important to remember that though the 'big names' in marketing may use these sites to promote, and discuss with other people, they might not do anything else on those sites – which means that you may be wasting your time joining simply to get in touch with those 'names'.

Its also important to remember that though most people are free members on sites such as Ryze, paying for membership will entitle you to found networks, and have more tools at your disposal, which might be important to take into account when deciding whether you want to market, seriously, on these sites.

Your profile

Using your profile on these sites is a simple promotional tool – like an umbrella page, you'll be able to post your information on these places, sharing with the others.

Your profile should outline who you are, what your expertise is and why you're an expert at that – but more importantly, it should give people a reason to want to talk to you. It is also a place that will send you traffic, though, not as much

as other methods, but can be effective in directing people to your sites after you've made an especially interesting post.

It's important to remember that you need to actually, and actively network on these sites – places like Ryze have whole mini communities based around niches, where you can share, or found your own niche based mini forums. People then register on the site and can interact on any forum that they join.

Social bookmarking

Social bookmarking is another blog based phenomenon – the ability to 'bookmark' and provide votes for information that people feel should be shared – the collective and community vote highlighting the best – and worst of the community. As a traffic generation system, social bookmarking is of course, at the whim of your community, and as such, you need to reach a catalyst of traffic before you can use the social bookmarking sites.

Many experts claim that because people are getting voted on, and bumping to the top of the list, onsite, that this is a great, viral way to generate instant traffic, but many more people are abusing this system, causing social bookmarking sites to crack down on their acceptance, and submission policies.

Digg, Implugg and a.pplaus.com are three great sites that allow you to promote your projects with bookmarking – as long as you fit with their general criteria for their submissions, you can add yourself to their sites and see what traffic it generates.

Social bookmarking sites don't just work well with blogs – anything, in fact that would require a 'vote' of any description, works well with sites that cater to people that are looking for information. And as the community will only

'rate' resources that they like, any votes you get should be genuine, generating more traffic for your site, and getting your information out there.

The most popular stories and information on Digg have several thousand votes, and sites report that the "Diggonnemon", the phenomenon of getting picked up by Digg, and then the site crashing due to overloaded traffic. While this is rare, its possible, and probable if you produce good, solid content.

Social bookmarking tools

There are several tools out there that claim to take the 'pain' out of social bookmarking, including 'bookmarking demon'. Into Version 3, some of the sites are now closing registrations, because they are seeing lots of spam from people misusing those tools.

While its true that tools like Bookmarking Demon might cut down on your mass bookmarking attempts, its important to bear firmly in mind that the object of social bookmarking is not to get listed – its to get listed AND voted on several dozen times – only then will your efforts see fruit.

List building and its place in traffic driving

List Building:

Generally, list building's primary goal is to have an email list of people, interested in what you do, in your niche, to pitch to. But List building, like any other project, is an ongoing task.

And that ongoing task will take time.

As we mentioned right at the beginning of the report, your opt in box should be on every page of your site – whether you title it 'newsletter' or 'blog feed' or 'just 'sign up for more information' – the outcome is the same – people will sign up for you, if you're providing something of value to them.

And this value is subjective – just like giveaway products, it might not 'cost' much to you to produce, but might be very valuable in your niche – and in terms of traffic generation, anything virally branded, to giveaway to your list, is about the most valuable things to be able to offer – for you and for your potential subscribers.

And while some lists operate on autopilot, the single most important aspect of collecting list members, is to make sure that you've got something that they want. Be it information, via an e course, or having sold them something, qualifying you to your list, each opt-in you collect should be considered your number one customer. Which means, in practical terms that you should keep your 'free sign-ups' separate from anyone that has purchased from you in the past.

Garnering 'free' leads

Free leads are people who have signed up via a giveaway,

promotion, or other project that has lead them to your site. While these people are probably great customers in their own right, most people that sign up for free will only ever be interested in freebies, which means no matter how often you pitch to them, they will only ever be interested in free products.

From a traffic generation point of view, this might not be a bad thing – especially if your 'product' is information.

Using free leads to promote your site and direct traffic is one of the easiest ways to use giveaways to your advantage – allowing you to use giveaways in your niche to build a list, and create a base that will view and in turn, possibly, promote your site for you.

Giveaways, or signing up for your feeds?

One of the most popular ways people have been using to promote their sites is to use giveaways – giveaways are basically the act of giving away something of little, or no value to you, in return for email addresses for people that want the products IN the giveaway.

These giveaways have been highly successful, but have produced highly unsuccessful lists. These unsuccessful lists are the main reason that people are now claiming that the 'money is no longer in the list'. Where that's true – for lists built from giveaways, their value is still a valid one.

Once you've chosen the content or product you want to giveaway, and signed up, and uploaded the content, you'll find that people will sign up with you – most giveaway sites are designed to 'rank' you higher based on your referrals, so you might find that you don't get many downloads at first, but participating regularly will mean that you can promote the opportunities to your 'giveaway' and freebie based list, which, they WILL probably sign up for, giving you more

people to bump your position in the lists of giveaways.

Another way to build a 'freebie' list, and generating more traffic is to use your blog, and have people sign up for your RSS feed based mailing list – using mailing lists such as Aweber, or other sites, you'll be able to connect your blog up to a mailing list, and, in turn, post offers to the list, alongside your blog posts.

This means that you're keeping your name in front of these people, seeking information – and will visit your site when you post relevant information on your blog.

'Paid' subscribers

Anyone that purchases a product from you should go onto a separate subscriber list (which, when using Aweber, you can also sign them up to your general, or freebie based list) which you can then promote similar products and services to, based on your niche. These products and services could be your own, or belong to someone else, but should always relate to your list.

Paid subscribers, and people who have purchased from you in the past, are worth, on average, and in general, \$1.50 – so if you've got 100 subscribers, your list is worth \$150 a month – if you've got a thousand....its worth \$1500 and so on and so forth. This 'average' is made up of the different purchases that people make whilst on a list.

In the end, whatever form of traffic generation you choose to use will work well for you, as long as you stick to it – you'll find that once you start, its easy to complete and find that your traffic increases, that your promotions are easier. Founding a new site will see very few link exchanges, so you might want to start generating links back with articles and blogging or starting out with a Press Release, and then working your way up from there. Once you have an

established site, you'll find that you can request and receive requests for link exchanges.

A final word on traffic

When you've got lots of traffic coming in, you shouldn't stop your traffic generation projects. Whilst you may feel that its a waste of time, your site will never go wrong if you're promoting it – and whether you're using lists or blogs, forums and traffic exchanges, PR or PPC advertising to promote your site, you'll always find that any traffic you generate should be targeted and responsive from the get-go.