

Marketing your Web Site

July 2007

Why & how to promote your web site

When you have spent money and time developing a good web site to support the strategy of your business, it makes sense to make sure that as many customers and prospects know about it as possible.

Our E-Business Advisers list a whole range of methods that you can use to promote your web site:

Your web site should be a key element of both your marketing strategy, and how you interact with your customers. It is vital that you incorporate it fully into how you think about - and promote - your business.

We've broken down the different ideas we've used successfully in small and medium sized businesses into 2 sections below - Online and Offline Marketing.

Firstly, though, you need to ensure that your web site is operating legally - see our Fact Sheet - "Legal Aspects of e-Business" in this series.

You don't want to promote a web site which is breaking the relevant laws - especially when it is very straightforward to comply!

1. Online Marketing

You need to:

- Use "Search Engine Optimisation" to make sure your web site will be easily indexed by Search Engines, so that you will be found when a Search Engine visitor types a query in. See our Fact Sheets - "Search Engine Optimisation" Parts 1, 2 & 3 in this series

- Consider using Pay-Per-Click web advertising via Google & Overture.

See Fact Sheet - "Pay per Click Advertising" in this series for how to utilise this low cost advertising medium.

- Consider using an Email newsletter to keep your customers up to date. If you provide useful information, your customers may well pass it on to colleagues - spreading the word about your web site "virally".

See Fact Sheet - "Email Newsletters" in this series for how to do this properly.

- Use a "signature file" at the bottom of all your ordinary company emails with your web site address on - you should encourage all staff to incorporate it in their emails.

Signature files are little pieces of text that are automatically inserted at the bottom of emails.

They usually say something like:

Best Wishes
John Smith



Director
Tel:01234 567890
Email: John.Smith@ourfirm.co.uk
Web: www.ourfirm.co.uk

They are easy to set up:

To add a signature to outgoing messages In Microsoft Outlook:

- From the main Microsoft Outlook window, on the **Tools** menu, click **Options**, and then click the **Mail Format** tab.
- In the **Compose in this message format** list, click the message format that you want to use the signature with.
- Under **Signature**, choose the signatures that you want to use for new messages and for replies and forwards. You can use different signatures for each.

To add a signature to outgoing messages In Microsoft Outlook Express:

- On the **Tools** menu, click **Options**, and then click the **Signatures** tab.
- To create a signature, click **New** and then either enter text in the **Edit Signature** box or click **File**, and then find the text or HTML file you'd like to use.
- Select the **Add signatures to all outgoing messages** check box.

This simple and free technique can be very effective at getting your email recipients to your web site - where they may learn about other products or services that they could buy from you.

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- If you are an expert on a particular subject, consider joining a newsgroup and contributing relevant answers to group queries as the occasion arises - with a discrete signature file with your web site address on it.

There are thousands of different newsgroups on the Internet, where people can discuss anything you can think of.

There is a strict "Newsgroup Etiquette" which applies - it is generally advisable to observe how the newsgroup behaves before contributing.

You can find a listing of the many groups at www.google.co.uk (or [.com](http://www.google.com)) and click on the "Groups" link above the search box.

People who are members of these groups are generally very interested in the newsgroup topic - your business might just have the solution to a problem that they face.

A good guide to "Newsgroup Etiquette" can be found in the "Useful Links" section.

The downside with news groups though is that they tend to attract people who collect email addresses. This means that you could attract a lot of junk emails (spam).

There are ways of avoiding this - dealt with in the "Useful Links" article on avoiding "spam".

- You may also consider it worthwhile to add your web site link to your www.yell.co.uk or www.thomsonlocal.co.uk listing (if you have one).
- Don't discount listings in local web based directories.



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If your business serves a local marketplace, and the directory is well used, this can be an economic means to target your market.

2. Offline Marketing

There are many ways of gaining offline publicity for your web site.

- If you tie in your web site marketing strategy with your policies and practices on Customer Relationship Management, you will be able to promote your web site as part of your overall business strategy.

See Fact Sheet - "Client Relationship Management Systems" in this series

- If you advertise in any media - always include your web site address. You may be able to reduce the cost of your advert by making it smaller - the intention of the advert may be then to drive visitors to your web site.
- There are many other free or cheap offline means to promote your web site.

See Fact Sheet - "Free or cheap offline marketing for your web site" in this series

3. Useful Links

See Fact Sheets in this series on:

- "Legal Aspects of e-Business"
- "Search Engine Optimisation" Parts 1, 2 & 3
- "Pay Per Click Advertising"
- "Email Newsletters"
- "Client Relationship Management Systems - CRM"
- "Free or cheap offline marketing for your web site"

Useful web sites:

www.ccsites.com/spamemail.html - Guide on how to avoid spam when posting to news groups

www.google.co.uk (or .com) - then "Groups" link for listing of news groups

www.google.co.uk (or .com) - then "Advertising Programmes" link for the Adword Pay-per-Click advertising programme

www.overture.com - Overture Pay-per-Click advertising offer