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**APPENDIX**

**—IMPORTANT—**  
**READ THIS FIRST!**

Dear Friend,

Your decision to purchase this course may be one of the smartest moves you've ever made!

This book delivers on every promise I've made in my advertising. Every money-making idea you're about to read has been tested and is proven to work. These ideas have *already* made vast amounts of money for myself and others I've taught, and I'm confident you will make money too once you know my secrets!

There are so many great ideas in this course that they can't be organized into entirely distinct sections. You'll find lots of tips and techniques throughout each lesson that will relate to a variety of topics, so don't be thrown off if an idea seems a little off the lesson title at first.

You will notice I say, "we used" some technique or another, but this is not technically correct. Initially, I did everything in this course on my own and I ran all of my businesses personally. But because sales grew so much, I first had to hire a secretary who came in a couple of hours per day to handle the administrative work, then later growing to an office of over 3 employees and now an office of over 20 staff members. This is why I often use the plural when talking about what I do.

I come up with ideas and know what I want done, and my employees complete tasks like placing ads, testing banners, surfing the net and tracking orders. This makes it easier for me to use my time efficiently so I can spend it where money can be made. Whether that means developing new ideas, testing ads, writing copy or exploring new marketing methods, I do it all, and you can too!

It doesn't matter if you're only interested in certain aspects of online marketing...

## **READ EVERY SECTION OF THIS COURSE**

### **FROM COVER TO COVER!**

**There will be many, and I mean *many*, tips in all the sections that apply to everyone.** If you're not interested in BB marketing for example, you will be tempted not to read the section on Bulletin Boards. But you will also find many more tips and techniques that apply to approaches such as Newsgroup Marketing as well, since they're a similar media, so like I said, **be sure to study this course as a whole!**

I structured the lessons this way because I didn't want to waste space repeating the same techniques when using them in more than one area of online marketing. You will benefit more if you study this course lesson by lesson **from beginning to end** rather than hopping from one section to another. Some lessons may seem boring if you're not interested in a particular subject, but there are "tidbits" of information you'll find truly amazing even if you just skim to sections that are of more interest to you.

In this course, you will discover *the most advanced* ideas, tricks and techniques of on-line marketing used by the top people in the field. And you will soon discover how your business can be one of the very few successful companies on the Internet as well.

I've tried it all - the conventional, the unconventional, the risqué, the complicated, the simple, the common and even the crazy. And today, of my four successful businesses, three of them are **100% online**. What I mean by that is that not one sale comes from conventional magazines, newspapers or direct mail advertising in three of my successful business ventures. And I now make more money in a single day than I used to in an entire month! The bottom line when it comes to online marketing... **I know my stuff!**

Between my four online businesses, I have over **6,000,000** visitors (yes, that's six *million*) come to these sites each year. Can you imagine owning a retail store where over 6 million people come through your doors every year? This shows how powerful the Internet can be. There is no "magic" to it, just a few simple formulas and techniques that anyone can do with the right time and commitment. And I am going show you step-by-step how to create your own successful business online.

You may have seen the bank statement I post at my **marketingtips.com** website. This is for real, and not just a promise from someone who claims to be making gobs of money online without providing evidence. I do, and have proven it.

Many people who market products similar to this keep talking about how much money they “generate” online per month or year. Well, you and I don’t care about this. What we care about is “net profit.” Yes, people who advertise “I can show you how to generate \$7000 - \$10,000 a month” are twisting the facts. They can show you how to generate these figures in sales, but stop and ask yourself how much of that is *net profit*? It sounds like they’re saying they generate a profit of \$7000 - \$10,000 a month, but you will find they’re talking about *gross sales* to make themselves sound more successful than they are. If of that \$10,000 a company is only making \$2000 profit, it’s nothing much to brag about and not the place for you to go for advice!

Somewhere along the line you might wonder why I’m revealing all these secrets. Well, you see I’m angry. Quite frankly, I am as angry as I have ever been about anything. I get calls everyday from clients and subscribers who have been burned by fast-buck artists selling hype and saying how easy it is to make big money in electronic marketing. In fact, electronic marketing can be the *fastest* way to *lose* a lot of money quickly.

I know dozens of business owners who have lost thousands of dollars using these supposedly “no cost” forms of marketing. People put up websites, do some advertising and expect the profits to roll in; only to lose their investment later. I can help you avoid that fate if you apply the advice I am providing you within this course.

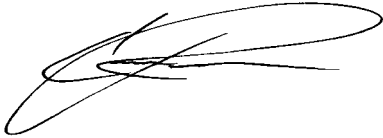
You could get this information elsewhere, but with great difficulty and at an outrageous cost. One of the seminars I recently attended only revealed a small portion of what you’re about to read, but cost \$7,000 per person to attend. It really bothers me to see the consumer blind-sided like this, and it’s time for someone to be on your side.

When I write, it is in a no-nonsense, straight forward, and highly enthusiastic manner. I am enthusiastic, but I don’t have a Ph.D. in English (which I’m told means Piled Higher and Deeper!), so if it's literary style you’re looking for, you might find my writing unusual or even annoying. But if it’s information you want and not stylish prose, then this is the course for you!

I have spent more than 4 years researching and practising the secrets in this book. You see, I actually practice what I teach and you will see that throughout this course.

I have owned several companies since the age of 16, I sold 2 of them when I was 23... and then I started four more which you now see online. I have talked to the “best of the best” in online marketing and have spent hundreds of thousands of dollars investing and testing my techniques and strategies... so you will learn what does and doesn't work in online marketing. You see, I don't give you “theoretical approaches” to starting and promoting a business on the internet like all the books you see out there... I actually practise my tips and techniques every day online (that is how my businesses have been so profitable) and will show you which techniques are profitable and which ones are a waste of your time. **All of this knowledge is now yours! All you have to do is read on.**

And with that, the ball is in your court! I wish you all the best in your online ventures.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Corey Rudl', with a large, sweeping flourish at the end.

Corey Rudl, President  
Prestige Auto, Money Savers Group, New Age Publishing,  
Car Secrets, Internet Marketing Center

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Blaine, WA  
98230

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# Lesson #1

## Overview - Concepts to Understand

We decided to use a ring binder design for this course to make it easier for you to move information around, as well as making it into a custom reference guide for later. We also incorporated large margins on the edges to jot down ideas. You may not want to “mark-up” the course... **but please do!** Actually, this is critical in making the course a valuable tool for later when you are busy running your online businesses. When you’re reading a lesson, think how you can incorporate every idea into your business, and when an idea pops into your head jot it down on the side and read on.

This may seem obvious, but let me tell you, this approach works. If you stay focused and jot down ideas as you go, they will all come together and you will have a great marketing campaign in the end. I cannot stress this enough... it works!

You will notice that throughout the course we recommend certain companies ... for questions you may have, or services you may need. Because the Internet changes so fast, we sometimes change companies we are dealing with in order to get better service, a better value, or better price. If we publish someone's URL or email address in the manual you **would not know** that we were now recommending a different company.

This is why you will see us sending you to a URL at our site ... which will forward you to the company we are currently using for that service you need, or the question you are asking.

We learned to do this after a few incidents happened. For example, one person we were dealing with tripled their prices overnight and because we published their URL our customers had no way of knowing that we stopped using them and started doing business with someone else. By sending you to a URL on our site that redirects you to the company we recommend, you



immediately get the newest information without hassle. And we know that you are getting our best and most current recommendation.

So for example ... <http://www.marketingtips.com/sehelp.html> used to go to Client Direct, but now goes to Advanced Networks because they offer a better service at a better price ... and if we find a company that puts Advanced Networks to shame we can immediately change this information for you. I am sure you get the picture ... I just didn't want you to get confused as to why we were sending you to URLs at our site, but recommending another company's name.

Over 94% of all online small businesses are currently **losing** money. But it is **very easy** to earn a substantial six-figure income from your home or office computer with an online business. This will become overwhelmingly evident as you get into the first 50 pages of this course. Just follow my lead and I will take you through everything you need to know to be a success on the Internet.

As a successful online entrepreneur, I can guarantee you the promises a lot of fast-buck sleaze-balls are making are completely worthless. While it is true that millions of computer owners are now online, it simply is **not true** that they're just sitting there waiting to send you money the moment you contact them. It is, in fact, *harder* to get someone to buy on the Internet than in a normal business environment.

Now, don't get me wrong. There are ways to reach bona fide buyers and make some serious money using electronic marketing. But the vast majority of the people you will encounter claiming to offer you help are "get-rich-quick" con-artists who have a purely theoretical approach and no clue what the real-world techniques I'm about to show you are all about.

I know they don't. I have personally spoken with most of the biggest names in electronic marketing today, and frankly their track records are pathetic. Most of them sell very little (if anything) online themselves.

They make all their money selling useless advice to unsuspecting people who want to take advantage of such an exciting and confusing medium.

Have you ever seen one of these “consultants” show you what they are supposedly marketing online... and all the profits they are making? **No!** Well, that’s because the *only* thing they are marketing online is their “get-rich-quick” information and nothing else!

The best advice I can give you is to learn as much as you can and stay up to date on new developments in the computer industry. Less than a year ago I would have never been able to keep up the sales if I had to process them manually. But the programs and new technologies that have since become available for automating my business not only make my companies much more profitable, but a breeze to run as well.

I run four online businesses that are extremely busy and only spend roughly an hour a day online attending to my chores (chores that can generate as much as \$3,000 a day!). Plan on setting everything up to be **automated right from the beginning** and let your computer do the bulk of the work for you. **Why do the work when a computer can do it for you?**

For example, I have programs that will:

- Continually visit my competitors’ websites and perform price comparisons of sales or promotions they have on. This program will also check for changes in their sites and notify me so I can inspect new marketing directions to stay one step ahead of the competition.
- Automatically process orders for my products, approve credit cards online, deposit money in my bank, send confirmations, and “thank you” notes to customers for their orders, and forward shipping information to my fulfillment house to send the product - and all this is done in a matter of seconds!
- Turn on after 1:00 a.m., log onto the Internet and process my orders into my database, gather details

on my competition, post to newsgroups and send newsletters, etc. while I sleep.

- Calculate orders to determine which ads made money at the end of each month to help me target profitable areas and eliminate losers.
- Filter my email to take newsletter subscriptions, remove spam, flames or bombs and file messages (copies of my orders, etc.).
- Monitor the net 24 hours a day for keywords (like my company name or competitors' names) and notify me if there is anything said about my company, product, or competitors' names or products in newsgroups, forums, discussion groups, etc. *Can you image how powerful this is? Bad news travels fast and good news never travels and this gives you a chance to monitor and immediately respond to any critics or competition that might pop up.*

All these programs reduce my workload and give me more leisure time to race my car and do the other things I love to do, but they are not complex programs. Many are available on the net as public domain, some are \$50 to buy from shareware, and some have been custom made for me at a very reasonable cost. You will see mention of where to get programs like these throughout this course. Once you have these contacts, you will never believe how you did business without them!

Let's move on... you are about to become a 'Netpreneur'. Thomas Edison said, "genius is 1% inspiration and 99% perspiration". This is true, and I will tell you right now you *can* make a million dollars on the internet (heck, I have!), but you won't make it overnight. It is a lot of hard work at first.

The secret is to set your business up to run by itself so you can concentrate on marketing instead. Once you have the market saturated, you can start another business online and make it hands-free as well. This will provide you with multiple streams of income to fall back on if there is a shift in the industry and one of the businesses doesn't do well. I don't believe in

putting all your eggs in one basket and advise everyone to **diversify... especially on the net.**

Once you put in the hard work to get a couple of businesses making money, you can take more time off and enjoy life, which is what this course is all about. You will pay the price by working very hard long hours at first... **but the pay-off can be huge.** Soon you'll be able to start enjoying a luxurious lifestyle knowing there's enough money coming in, even if you're away on vacation somewhere else on the planet.

I do most of my business while travelling. I could be in L.A. on holiday and bring my laptop to log in every couple of days to make sure there are no emergencies for me to attend to, and no one online would even know! **I can run my businesses from practically anywhere**, and all that is required is a laptop and a telephone line. No other field of work offers this much flexibility, - that's for sure.

If you really look at the Internet profile, it represents an almost perfect market. Most of the users are educated and can at least afford line charges and a computer, so they have a measure of disposable income to buy what you are selling. They are all curious and literate, almost all of them have credit cards (most pay for their Internet access this way), and because they're "netters", they are generally impatient and impulsive buyers.

## **Who Is Making Money On The Internet?**

There are only four basic types of companies doing business with any impact in cyberspace today:

### **1. Large Corporations — "Fat Cats"**

Many of these companies don't do anything to promote online, perhaps thinking their URL and external promotions are sufficient. And they are probably often correct in approaching the net this way. The ones that do promote online prefer to purchase banner advertising on high traffic sites; a tactic that

apparently pays off (We are talking here about huge companies like *Pennzoil*, *Nike*, *CNN*, etc.).

## **2. Medium Net Savvy Businesses — “Risk Takers”**

The companies referred to here are the electronic cowboys like *Yahoo* (the search engine), *Netscape* (the browser) and *Netcom* (the ISP). These companies took a very different approach to business on the net hoping it would pay big dividends in the end. Many failed, but a few succeeded and grew to enormous size, such as the ones listed above.

*Yahoo* for example, gave away free listings anticipating people would come and the net would “catch on” with the general public. They lost a lot of money with no revenue stream in the beginning, but once the internet grew, they could charge big dollars for advertising on sites with as many as 15 million hits every day. They got so big they were able to go public and make billions with their stock offering.

*Yahoo* took a big risk and a loss in the beginning only to reap huge rewards in the end, and the same thing happened with *Netscape*. They gave their software away to become a dominant force and create a monopoly on web browsers and then made their money by selling advertising packages, and co-partnering with other products later — a risky strategy that has paid in the *billions*.

## **3. “Gold Rush” Companies – “Miners”**

These are small companies run by individuals who are inexperienced in traditional business or the ways of the Web (“Ways of the Web” – sounds like a soap opera!). They are of the gold rush mentality discussed above and make the same miscalculations made by inexperienced people in any business venture.

The Miners often think there is one secret to success. They think if only they could just find that one trick, their work would be done and they could then lie on the beach with an ever-growing bank account. But as

we will see, there isn't any one big secret — just a whole bunch of little ones!

#### **4. Small Savvy Companies – “Winners”**

The “winners” are smaller companies run by experienced business people who exhibit a high level of awareness and hard work promoting their website. These companies are currently having the best success on the Web, just as this type of business operator is having the most success in your local neighborhood. They usually start as one-man operations and can grow enormously into outfits with many employees.

But whatever approach you decide to take, learn from others' mistakes. Don't reinvent the wheel. If you try to, you are taking a big risk. Model your business after another that has already proven to be successful and yours likely will be too.

Some keys of any successful product or service:

1. Go after a very specific “niche” market (I did this with my Kit Car business). Try to offer a specialty product or service that is generally unavailable through traditional retail channels. It is *critical* that the target market be specifically identified and located online.
2. Go after the general public - something everybody wants - and try for high volume, not the profit margin or specialty product angle. *Example: An online, CD store with a selection like no other and better pricing to boot.*

In my opinion, running two or three websites and targeting a niche for each one is the **easiest way to make money on the net**. Everyone is looking for the “big buck” makers and often niche markets are ignored. **This is how I have made most of my money online.**

I offered something in demand for a small market, and expected only to make \$20-50,000 a year from it. But I soon learned that if I set everything up to be

completely automated, I could run three or four businesses this size. Combining several small incomes like that now earns me **in excess of \$200,000 a year**, all for investing an hour a day on the computer now that everything is up and running smoothly!

If you really want to “retire” after you set up your businesses, hire a manager to work a few hours a day to take care of the daily chores that need to be completed. I know many homemakers with kids who would be thrilled at the opportunity to bring home fifteen grand a year... and often have lots of free time between 10am and 3pm when their kids are in school. Your help could be doing all the routine chores and you could be traveling around the world or just sitting on your patio knowing you’re making \$500 to \$1,000 a day doing absolutely nothing. This is not a “pipe-dream”... with today’s technology you really can do it.

There are two main approaches to making money on your website.

1. **Directly offer a product/service for sale at your website.** You can offer a product or service on your webpage *or* you can offer free information to lure people to another where you then have a product or service available. This is the most popular way of making money on the net because it’s easy to set up and you can get the profits rolling almost overnight.

Or,

2. **Get as many visitors to your site as possible** by enticing them to come with something special you offer (Such as cool graphics, valuable information, help, files, etc.). Then, once the visitor counts are high enough, **you can sell advertising space on your site as sponsorships or banner advertising.**

The above aspect of online marketing, with the intent to sell advertising space, is not talked about as much because it doesn’t generate instant cash and requires an investment of time and money of at least six months. Once these sites are successful however, they

pay off big and the time commitment and maintenance from that point on is minimal. A good example can be found at <http://www.theautochannel.com>.

The autochannel site has been a success because it offers daily news on the automotive industry and free information on all things automotive (including new and used car prices and dealer invoice costs).

Autochannel generates over three hundred thousand visitors a week (that's millions of hits a month) and can sell premium advertising space. They generate over \$100,000 each month in advertising fees from corporations like *Pennzoil* and *Auto Advantage* alone, regardless of what else they are able to sell.

Another extraordinary example of this is the *Netscape* site which gets over five million visitors a week and is now selling banner links for a whopping \$35,000 per month. Just think; if you have just 30 pages, each displaying a banner that companies are paying you \$35,000 per link per page ... that's over **a million dollars each month in advertising revenue alone!** Of course, the chances of you or me getting as big as *Netscape* are slim to none... but this example does show you the potential I am talking about.

For another example, I have a friend who has a website that entices a great number of people to come because of a free service he offers. He devotes about one hour every couple of days or so managing the site, and sells banner advertising to various corporations. He is making **in excess of \$90,000 in advertising revenue...** and still working his regular full-time job which pays him another \$37,000. If you are willing to invest the time and effort with the realization that you could do this for six months and get nowhere then this approach may be for you. The chances of making a success of this type of site are much smaller than simply selling a product or service online. But if you have a successful site, the initial time commitments are well worth it since **the site can pay off in big profits with a minimal maintenance commitment afterwards.**



## NOTES:

Let's discuss method #2 above (attracting volume to sell advertising space). Assume for example sake that you have 10,000 visitors to your site per month. If you had multiple sub-pages on that website, you could be generating hundreds of thousands of hits every month (the sub-pages could be separated sections of material or information, chapters or whatever). Now, it is not unreasonable to charge \$250.00 to place a banner on each of the sub-pages in a scenario like this, so assuming I have 15 sub-pages and am keeping my price list at a measly \$250 per banner (one at the top of each sub-page).

That's \$250 times 15 which is... hmmm... about \$3,750 per month — just for letting a few people have the privilege of placing their ads! I no longer have to take orders, ship anything or provide any customer service... we just collect advertising fees, every month.

***Note:** Smaller sites charge a flat fee, but the larger sites charge \$20-\$40 per 1000 impressions of your banner. The more targeted the market, the higher the price.*

The following are examples of organizations that will broker space on your site if you have high enough visitor counts to justify banner ads:

**Burst Media** — based in NY; steep commission (50%) unless you do an exclusive. Burst Media sells banner space based on demographic, category, etc. but will not represent your site individually.

**<http://www.burstmedia.com>**

**Real Media** — based in NYC (another banner rep firm). Same as above but better rates (30 % commission) and has the option of signing a non-exclusive deal.

**<http://www.realmedia.com>**

**Network 1.0** — now handling AT&T's new online service. (Ziff Davis owns this as well as Interactive Media Sales, and I suspect the two will merge in the near future).

**DoubleClick** - A Poppe Tyson subsidiary that is probably the most known banner advertising agency on the net.

**<http://www.doubleclick.net>**

**Interactive Connection** - will partner your site (or “co-brand” it) with another to increase traffic for both of you.

**<http://www.interactive.line.com>**

Because of the time commitment required to set up a website with the intention of selling advertising space as the primary source of income, just about everyone decides to start selling their products or services first so they may begin to see the sales roll in right away. It is not until later that they go after the advertising income.

There are other significant advantages to setting up your business for basic product or service promotion online compared to a traditional business, such as:

- It can be completely automated to demand very little of your time.
- It can be worked on at your own pace and whenever you choose.
- Lowered lead costs — the expense of getting new customers is a fraction of what it costs using traditional media.
- Low staffing costs — your products and services are available 24 hours a day without having a retail location.
- Access to more customers — you can attract a broad customer base from around the world that is normally not available via traditional advertising vehicles.
- Testing — it is easy to find out what your customers want by tracking what they do at your Website. This allows you to be more profitable by adjusting your business to offer what your clients really want and are willing to pay for rather than what you *think* they want.
- Low risk — you can invest very little money testing new ideas and if they don't work, you really haven't lost very much (other than your time).

There are so many great things about Internet marketing I could fill an entire book just with comments like these. The above however, are some of the highlights that have brought you and I together in this course.

In my opinion, the best aspects of marketing a product or service online are that **start-up and operational costs are minimal** and it is possible to **access potential buyers at an unprecedented speed**. What I mean by “speed” is that you can actually start earning income 24 hours after you launch your online business. And you can also test your advertising in a matter of days, whereas conventional media advertising takes months to conduct a single test.

Internet marketing and running an Internet business is a fantastic way of life if you do it right. Do you have any idea what kind of dollars it costs to advertise in a print magazine? For example... you all know the magazine *Car and Driver*. **It costs \$34,152 for a one-page ad in that magazine... PER MONTH!**

You obviously need to sell a lot of product to make up that kind of advertising cost. And not to mention that you have to get that ad to the magazine at least one month before the publication date and you don't see results until 30 days after it is published. That's two months without any income, and a \$34,152 expenditure.

At that point I would have calculated my responses, order costs and general expenses, and found out what profit I made (if any). And I could have tested 30 to 40 different online promotions within that period of time to find out which ones are the most profitable. Compared to print, online marketing is ridiculously quick, cheap and easy. **On the net you can test what works in a matter of days... and all for peanuts.** Where else can you place an ad and have orders rolling in 24 hours later?

You may be asking how much money you need to start your Internet marketing campaign?

## NOTES:

The truth is, you can start it for under \$50.00 (but at that rate you will be doing everything yourself and it will be a very slow process).

For under \$500 you can be up and running with a fantastic site and online advertising campaign within two weeks (this includes e-mail promotions, websites, co-op linking, newsgroups, BB's, autoresponder campaigns, library and article campaigns, etc.).

If you have \$1500 or more in start up capital, you can sling-shot your online promotion into high gear by buying advertising, purchasing the right software to automate things and promote your business, and hiring people to do such things as search engine submissions, professional website design, etc.

In a matter of days you can start an online promotion, receive orders, ship the product and calculate what kind of profit was made from the campaign. This process *can* be extremely fast.

To get a truly incredible online marketing campaign started, there is no reason to spend thousands and thousands of dollars (like many people do... heck, I know of a company online right now that charges \$6000 just for a standard website with no extra... a rip-off if you asked me). I will show you how to have no inventory, no capital investment, and almost no expense with lots of cash flow. You can get literally thousands of leads and hundreds of sales in a few short weeks like I did!

Remember a complete online promotion will cost you less than a few hundred dollars if you do a lot of it yourself. Now compare that to a magazine ad, which often runs at \$5,000 or more per page. Even a low budget infomercial will cost at least \$30,000 (some of the bigger ones are \$250,000) just to develop, and that's not including air time.

The net simply works better than traditional media, but it is new, so you will have to use some imagination to envision your role and character online. There are two basic attitudes towards online marketing:

1. **The Silent Marketer** — gets sales directly from websites, newsgroups, BB's, and email without any direct interaction with the customer. You get the customers coming to you.
2. **The Mouth Piece** — gets sales from active participation in newsgroups, mailing lists, etc. (i.e. stating your opinion and helping others with advice in forums, thereby building a relationship with each potential customer individually).

I prefer the silent method, but have done both, and of course you can do a combination of both if you so choose. I prefer the silent method because it requires no major time commitment. If you plan on giving advice or participating in discussions, you have to invest a lot of time to consistently read and post appropriately every couple of days. With the silent method, salesletters and websites are fully automated so you can concentrate on bringing people to the site and let the automated order system take over. There is no direct contact with the customer (like email or phone correspondence/questions) in closing the sale – the computer does it all!

## **In What Order Do You Plan Your Marketing Attack?**

There are a few different ways to attack the market, all with their own appropriate time and place so you will need to strategize and develop a marketing plan.

It can take up to a couple of months to begin getting substantial amounts of reciprocal links from other related sites and to get good placement on search engines, make these your first priorities. We will talk about how to do this in the next few lessons, but I am telling you now how important this will be so you can get an idea of what order things are best done in.

Once you have submitted your site to the search engines and started to communicate with other sites to get reciprocal links, you want to focus your time on emails, newsgroups, classified ads, BB's, mailing lists

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and commercial online services to get immediate cash flow. These are “instant” marketing tools that will literally generate income in a matter of days allowing you to test ads, slogans, salesletters, and your website design to get a winning combination before you really start to get traffic from reciprocal links and search engine listings.

You will find that as time goes on, other sites in your industry will put links to yours without you even knowing (assuming they find something valuable worth linking to). As you grow, you will get email from people wanting to exchange links with you, and others who might want to distribute your product in mass quantities (i.e. a joint venture). You will be surprised who contacts you once you are well known, but realize that this takes time and nothing but time... there is no way to make this part of your campaign go faster than what I am telling you here. You will soon find out that when your online business starts to take off you may not be able to keep up with the pace. That’s why you must plan from the beginning.

Be sure to put your website through a rigorous testing period before you submit it to search engines, and begin to ask for reciprocal links from other sites. Click each of the icons and links to make sure they work. Carefully examine every page to make sure it is displayed without errors or omissions. Ask friends to test the website from different types of computers and web browsers and report anything that seems unusual. And for written material like sales letters or email campaigns, have friends proofread to make sure it is all understandable, consistent, and free of errors.

I made the mistake of getting too excited and launching a sales letter as part of a major CompuServe promotion only to receive replies from potential customers saying “Why do you expect me to buy from a company that can’t even spell correctly in their sales letter?” I will never know how many sales I lost because of those errors, but I do know the promotion was not profitable. What is more ironic was the fact that I proofread this salesletter three times myself and still didn’t see the mistakes. It goes to prove that you

can't see the forest for the trees if it is your own creation, so have a friend or two go through your material.

## **The Importance Of Testing**

Many people are scared to test a lot of marketing ideas because they know they can lose sales if they go in the wrong direction. Some feel it is better to stick with the best idea if it's making a profit. **That is the wrong attitude!** You want to be on the quest for bigger and better profits no matter how great your campaign is. **Test everything.** Test your price, layout, headlines, copy, ordering methods... everything!

You may not agree with this perspective, therefore, let me tell you a story to convince you. We had a banner campaign that was reasonably successful. The few strategically placed banners were making about \$1,000 a month in net profit. Now...most people would just move onto the next marketing project (which could be bulk email campaigns or newsgroups promotions). **This is wrong!**

Even though the banner was pulling a 4% click-through (which is good on the Internet), we wanted more! We redesigned the banners and tested them, and they pulled **double** what the old ones did, representing an **instant profit increase of \$12,000 a year for being persistent!** I think we can all agree the extra four hours spent redesigning the banners were worth the \$12,000 a year increase in net profit, right? (The exact details of what banner changes we made and why they worked so much better are explained in detail in a later lesson).

This might seem a little off topic at the moment (I told you that would happen!), but I want you to understand that you have to test everything. When you think you have a winning ad, banner, headline, setup, etc... *test it again* to make sure you can't do better. You want to test now, before you start to get a lot of traffic from search engines and reciprocal links. It will take a while for your site to get a substantial number of visitors

(you really have to build it up), so test everything early so when you do become big, the orders will really start to roll in. You will have developed a proven method for creating sales.

So many companies rush onto the World Wide Web thinking the only way to do online marketing is to build a website and wait for the customers to come. **This is the wrong approach as well.** Your website should be a tool for collecting customers and sales, but remember, **email marketing, newsgroups and mailing lists are extremely powerful tools for generating income online as well.**

**Don't go public with your online business until you are ready.** Let me explain. You don't want to announce your site to the world and tell everyone how great it is until you have one that is proven to generate sales. While testing, you may be working with small numbers, but it is the visitor-to-sales conversion rate you are interested in, not the total volume when trying different approaches at first.

For example, when you're testing, you may only get a few hundred visitors to your site or a few people responding in newsgroups, emails, discussion list, etc. But if one out of every 50 of those visitors purchase your product or service, you know you are on the right track.

Don't be concerned that you may be losing a few sales by testing failing concepts, sales letters, or prices. You must be willing to sacrifice these few sales for the enormous amount of sales that are possible in the future. If you lose a few sales, but through the process of testing find a winning sales strategy, you will also begin generating a **very substantial income** when you start to really promote your website and are generating high volumes of traffic. But if you don't test and start bringing thousands of people to your site, your potential customers will not buy anything (say one out of every 700 or so) because of your poor sales strategy. You could be wasting the opportunity to make a lot more cash!

You may have to spend weeks or even months designing websites, sales letters, promotions, etc., but



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this will pay when your site really starts to take off. A solid planning process (like reading this course and making notes as well as testing your site) is crucial to your success.

I cannot emphasize how important it is to look at alternative solutions and ideas throughout the development of your business no matter how odd they may seem at first. From a different angle a problem may make complete sense and surprise you. Let me give you an example from a familiar service industry scenario.

I am sure most of you have heard about (or were around) when Hugh Hefner's *Playboy* clubs popped up around the country about 25 years ago? These clubs were immensely popular and had a rule you might think would drive customers away, but in the end actually brought more in. The rule was from management — none of the “bunnies” were to fraternize with any of the clientele outside the club, and if she did... she would be fired.

Now this means that individuals going into the club knew they wouldn't get anywhere with any of the sexy “bunnies” they would meet that night without laying out a substantial sum of cash. At first you might think that would drive business away — but the facts are astonishingly different! The rule gave a legitimate reason for the girls to turn customers down, thereby allowing them to retain some self-respect. That way all the men could boast to their friends “she really likes me but we can't date because she could lose her job over it”. In the end this quirky policy actually attracted more customers because they didn't feel “rejected”. They would very seldom lose their self-respect or confidence when a playboy bunny turned them down because of the “rule”, which turned out to be the **solution** that made the clubs catch on.

To sell a product or service, you must present the customer with a **solution**. You may be offering a product or service, but do so under the guise of offering a solution to someone's problem. Let's use my

**Car Secrets Revealed** book as an example.  
(<http://www.igs.net/carsecrets/>)

**Problem:** People are scared of paying too much and getting ripped off when buying or repairing their car.

**Solution:** I reveal all the tips and tricks of the trade for buying cars under dealer cost and avoiding repair rip-offs. My customers are then protected and have an advantage over the car dealer.

**You may truly have a great product or idea, but it does not earn you a nickel until you convince your prospect that they need it, want it, and can afford it.**

Many netrepreneurs fail because they consistently spend their advertising dollars on ineffective marketing campaigns. A business lives or dies on marketing and getting the word out. If a marketing effort fails the first time out, **most** independents without a big budget cannot afford a second effort. But you will be shown throughout the course how to track every single advertisement and promotion to know where every sale came from. This approach will point to the most profitable campaigns and show you which ones are losing money. By tracking orders, you can eliminate non-profitable promotions and simply “roll out” the ones that are proving successful. That is one of the main keys to success... **eliminating non-profitable campaigns and multiplying profitable ones**. It sounds simple, but **be prepared** to spend the time to do the tracking to find out which strategies are profitable and which are not (I will show you very easy ways to track all your ads and order in the lesson “Our Secret Weapon for ad tracking”).

Be very skeptical of what your friends and non-professional acquaintances may recommend. Usually someone will say, “I tried classified ads in *CompuServe* and they did nothing for me” or “that mailing list was a waste of money for me”. It is most likely that they were targeting the wrong people, not using an effective sales letter, or making other common mistakes.

You can't imagine how many times people have told me a certain marketing promotion did not work for them, only to find they didn't really have a decent promotion in the first place. It never ceases to amaze me how often sales material lacks necessary marketing ingredients; showing no benefit, no headlines, no compelling reason to buy...just nice pictures and a few pleasant words. **Remember, just because a certain marketing method did not work for someone else does not mean it can't work for you.** If you take the proper steps, I will show you exactly which promotions are most profitable and which are a waste of time.

I will also warn you of a very common mistake... **Don't try to be everything to everyone.** You want to concentrate on **specific niche markets and cater to unique needs.** The problem is that often you are so close to the product and your marketing campaign that it can be hard to make a non-biased decision on whom to market your product/service to. But let me give you a perfect example of how we turned a big mistake into something very successful.

My book, ***Car Secrets Revealed*** was first designed to be the "mother of all car books". I wanted to have every money-saving tip, trick, and technique for everyone's automotive needs. It covers such things as reducing your car insurance by 50%, how to beat repair rip-offs, "insider" maintenance tips, increasing your gas mileage by 30%, selling your car for more money and buying new and used cars at wholesale cost. In other words, we figured if we covered everything automotive, every owner of a vehicle in the country would feel a need to have a copy of the book (over **150 million potential customers**). But after launching the marketing campaign and testing different headlines, we were **completely shocked by what we discovered...**

We assumed people would be buying the book in order to learn how to save money with their automobile expenses. What surprised us was when we surveyed our clientele (done easily by email), we discovered 73 % of them bought the book because **they wanted to learn how to buy a new car under dealer cost.** Only

40 of 211 pages in the book were devoted to buying a new car, but we then changed our headlines and banner advertisements from “Money Saving Tips on Buying, Leasing, Repairs, and Insurance Reduction Tips” to “How to Buy a Car at \$50 over Dealer Cost” and **sales increased over 300% within 48 hours!!**

This showed us that we were targeting the wrong market from the beginning, and we learned how powerful the right headline or slogan can be. I will say it again; you can not be all things to all people. We thought we would get more sales by having broad topics in our book, but sales tripled when we discovered and targeted the niche market of “new car buyers”.

Our target market for new car buyers was only 2 million people as compared to the entire automotive market of 150 million people... but we still brought in more sales by targeting the market **that wanted to buy our product, not the one we thought needed our product!**

## **Bring out your “Unique Selling Proposition”**

If you have a lot of competitors in your specific industry, you should have a unique and attractive selling advantage above anyone else’s. What makes your business better than all the rest? Let your customers know the answer to that question right from the start.

Here are a few examples:

1. Your product/service might cost less than others
2. You may have a higher quality product or service, and can accordingly charge more, (make sure your customers understand the value and quality in your product/service)
3. More guarantees than anyone else
4. You might target a specific age group, industry or type of person
5. Special knowledge, or advice no one else can offer (*like the course you’re reading!*)

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6. Special incentives no one else provides
7. Better customer service than the competition

Whatever your spin, the bottom line when promoting your product or service as something unique is to find an obvious void in the marketplace you can fill. Adjust your company or product to meet a specific need. I cannot emphasize this more... specialize, specialize, specialize.

I hope you have been teased enough to be excited about reading the following lessons. When I teach you something or give you an example, think how that idea could be applied to your product, service or website. Remember when you have an idea, write it down in the margin or the “notes” sections of the binder no matter how silly or small it may seem. Then, when you finish the lesson, you will be able to go back with the knowledge you have gained and expand it to combine with other ideas that came up while reading the lesson. **Don't take this lightly... DO IT AND PROSPER!**

**Let's get into the goods. . .**

## **Lesson # 2**

# **Your Website – The Key To Success**

The first part of this course is on websites for a reason; no matter what internet marketing technique you choose, your website will be **key to your success**.

The phrase "surfing the net" suggests how visitors of your site approach the net in general; they come in, sniff around and move on. If you don't snag them immediately you have lost them forever. That's why it is **so important** to follow every step in this lesson... if customers don't stick around to buy what you have to offer, **you won't get a second chance**, so pay attention if you aren't already!

Many of the ideas and techniques for headlines, design and copy you will see in this lesson will apply to other lessons on email, newsgroups, BB, etc. as well, so read carefully and build your skills as you go. I have divided this lesson into a few sections to make it easier to read and understand, but don't skip any, and remember to take notes for integrating into your business plan later.

### **Website Hosting**

Small business owners continue to bounce from web host to web host trying to find the best deal at the lowest prices. Many of them started with one web host, got poor customer service or discovered they were being dinged for extra charges they weren't aware of and yet others got

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poor connection times. There are dozens of reasons people jump from host to host.

Getting a reliable web host is extremely important to running your business for a multitude of reasons.

One of the most important reasons is because you need to have good service from the people supporting your business. They can perform a number of different and interesting tasks for you. For example, if you need a small program that does something special for your business you can hire your web hosting company to create that program and get them to install it on your system for a very reasonable fee.

Your web host should provide you with good security. They should have all the big security issues worked out so that people can't hack into your website and do nasty things to your information. You cannot imagine how easy it is for someone to hack into systems and destroy your stuff or get confidential information... you want a host that knows how to protect their system... someone who is completely on top of all the things that hackers can do.

Getting reliable connection time to all your customers is **extremely important**. If you have a web host that has poor connectivity to the Internet you have a problem in getting reliable connection times. Your customers maybe have to wait 30 seconds for a page to load one time and then only a few seconds for that same page to load another time. And of course the biggest problem is that people don't wait for long download times. Your web host has to download fast.

A really important factor is to make sure your web host has a connection to the East Coast

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backbone and the West Coast backbone. Most web hosts don't have this. What often happens is a fiber optics cable gets cut on the West Coast which means that all web sites and web hosts on the West Coast of the continent go down. The East Coast is fully operational. So people from the East Coast can't reach your West Coast website, they can only reach East Coast websites. And vice versa. So in order to make sure you have continuity of service, what you need is a backbone to both the East Coast and the West Coast through your web host.

They should have a minimum of a T1 going to both East Coast and West Coast backbones. And you have to make sure they are truly going to each of the backbones because it can get very confusing as to who is connected to what.

We've been involved with a couple of hosts in the past who have said they had a separate connection to both the East and West Coasts. What they didn't know was that their East Coast host was actually their upstream West Coast Host. So when the West Coast went down, their entire network went down... because their East Coast connection was routed through a West Coast provider. I know it's a bit confusing but bear with me... the bottom line is that it's important for your website host to have separate connections to the main backbones in both the East Coast and the West Coast.

Having this capability means that if for some reason your West Coast connection goes down, all the people on the East Coast can still access you because you are also connected to the East Coast backbone.

It is really important to have this capability.



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Don't get fooled by all the FREE web hosting there is out there. There are a couple of problems with free web hosting:

If you have your website set up on something like Angelfire, or Geocities or any of the free web site hosts it is pretty easy for your customers to see that you have a free web site. When people see that you have a free URL or free web site, you've lost credibility instantaneously. You start out with a strike against you because if you can't afford the \$25 - \$45 to get a web site **how in the heck can they believe in your product, or your credibility or in anything you are selling them?** They don't perceive you as a real business... if you can't even afford a small web hosting fee.

The second problem is if you have a domain called [geocities.com/gardeninginfo.html](http://geocities.com/gardeninginfo.html) everyone gets to know you at that address. When you become popular and get busy, people know you as that address. If you ever got into trouble because of Spam you can get shut down immediately. Or maybe your free website host will start charging you. Or they could go out of business. If anything at all happened to your URL, **you've lost all the business you've worked so hard to get.** It's the same thing as building traffic to a store front, and then moving your store without telling anyone about it. You get the same kind of problem on the internet. People know to go to your address, everyone has linked to that address, they search for that address. Once the address disappears for some reason, then you are in serious trouble. **If you plan on going big on the internet, never ever go with free web site hosting!**

The third problem about free website hosting is that many of them have different stipulations

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about what they require you to do in order to get free web site hosting with them. For example, some of them require that they can have their banner at the bottom or top of your pages. Basically the deal is that you display their advertising at your site. That's why you get free web hosting. They can sell that advertising space and you provide the visitors. You don't want someone else to control the advertising at your site. You work hard to get people to your site... why should you send them away by exposing them to other people's advertising?

Free web site hosting is great for people who want to put up a personal web page or who want to sell a vehicle and they temporarily put up a web page on the vehicle. If you are going to do business on the web seriously, spend the \$25 - \$45 a month and get real web hosting.

Some of the free website hosting companies will allow you to use your own domain. However they will charge you for any extra services you need... so you end up paying anyway.

And in addition to everything I've already talked about, free web site hosting is not always 100% reliable. You need reliable service, it's **critically** important to your business.

There's another level of web site hosting. You go from the free web site hosting to the budget type or very inexpensive, low cost web hosting. They will charge you anywhere from \$9 a month to \$20 - \$25 a month. Again, you'll run into a couple of problems.

The biggest problem with these web sites is that they deal in quantity. Therefore they don't have time to give you a lot of support. So if you ever run into a problem, they may not return your phone calls for days, or reply to your email for

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days because they have a very inadequate support schedule... which is one of the reasons they can offer a very low price.

You may experience slowdowns because they oversell their services and are putting too many sites up on their service to try and get the price down lower.

Your web site is your whole business and if your web host doesn't back up properly, if they don't offer the right access and if their web server goes down and crashes, **that stops your business from running!** You can't have this. You have to deal with very professional people because they are dealing with your business.

What it comes down to, is that the few dollars you are saving per month will actually end up costing you hundreds of dollars if not thousands of dollars in business, because you will have frequent down times, slowdowns and overloads on servers. You're going to have slow support and a multitude of other problems that will come up at the worst possible time. Be aware of this!

We've tried budget web hosting in the past and it has caused us a lot of problems. Based on my own bad experience I do not recommend budget hosting.

There are a very few web hosting businesses that I would recommend.

The few we do deal with we do a lot of business with and are extremely reliable... not to mention they are very honest and straightforward. They have connections to both the East coast and the West coast just in case something goes wrong... and have the equivalent of over 30 T1's for internet connectivity. They're up on what hackers are doing and they make sure their sites are protected. They are backing up all the time.

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They can run your main site and take care of all your secure servers and credit card processing for your merchant accounts (which we will get into later). And on top of all that... they also have reasonable prices!

Most of the companies we deal with charge approximately \$35 a month for a web site to be hosted with them. If you have to switch over from another server, they'll do all the work for you, just tell them you want to move your domain and they'll help you do everything. They'll make it completely hands free for you. This is what web site hosting should be all about.

You shouldn't have to get your life caught up in the details of web hosting. Let them do the job, you should worry about marketing and promoting your business.

If you are looking for reliable hosting with great customer service, go to <http://www.marketingtips.com/isp.html>. Fill out the form and depending on what services you need, we will forward it to the hosting company we recommend for the services you are looking for. They will normally get back to you within 48 hours.

What it comes down to, is that your business is way too important for you to be dealing with budget or free sites, your site should be hosted with someone reliable and service oriented.

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## **Website Design**

First let's go over some of the basics of successful websites.

- **They are well organized and easy to use.** Keep your home page simple with a table of contents design that is simple and easy to use. Use simple words and short paragraphs to keep the reader interested.
- **Simplicity Works (Keep It Simple Stupid).** How can someone follow your sales pitch and buy what you're selling if they can't understand what you are trying to say? It is very easy to use "big" words and ramble on about your product or service that you know so well, but you have no idea how many people go to websites and don't ever understand what they're about! You may have a great product or service, but nobody will buy from you if they:
  - a. don't know what you are offering, or
  - b. cannot understand the benefit they can get from it.

Remember, when someone visits your website they have no idea who you are or what you offer (what the site is supposed to be about). You must make this **very clear** to them in a short period of time. Keep sentences short and precise and keep your design pattern consistent through all sub pages (webpages linked from your main home page).

- **Ease of Navigation.** Have text links or icons on every sub page so people can click back and forth through your site without having to use the *back* and *forward* buttons on the browser. Remember also to have "text alternatives" for all graphics and links on your site. These are the words that appear in place of graphics if the graphics

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option is turned off on the browser or if the stop button is pressed before the page is fully loaded. For example, the HTML code would read

```
<IMG SRC="graphic 1.jpg" ALT="text goes here">.
```

*Speaking of HTML; If you are not familiar with HTML code (it is extremely easy to learn!), there is a great site that will explain everything to you step by step. Check it out at <http://www.davesite.com/webstation/html/>, it has an excellent interactive tutorial for HTML. It is very important that you have the basics of HTML "down pat" as I will be making references to it throughout this course. You don't have to know how to use HTML fluently and build your own webpages (although you are encouraged to), but you do have to understand the basics so you can explain what you want to do to your web page designer.*

- **Fast download time.** Don't expect everyone to be using a 56.6K modem. Would you wait for a site to download for five minutes before you can enter? Of course not, so don't expect your potential customers to wait either. Remember that 30 seconds of waiting online can seem like 10 minutes. Use graphics for pleasant decoration or functionality, **but don't let them dominate your site**. If you need huge graphics or large pictures on the home page, have a little icon that will link to the big graphic and warn the visitor there may be a wait.

As cable connections and fast phone connections (500 K + connections) become more prevalent having videos and audio on your site will be more of a selling tool. So keep these in mind, however don't use

them yet because most people are still using 28.8, 33.6 and 56.6 modems.

- **Content not image.** Many people use animated 'GIFS' and Java scripting that will make logos spin and characters walk across the screen or whatever. This not only increases download time, but distracts from your sales message as well. Internet people are **information people**, so make sure you spend your time with quality content and not an overbearing image.
- **Easy to follow "sales processes"**. This is where the most common mistakes are made in web design today. Make sure the benefits of your product or service are very clear to the visitor and make sure it is **easy** to order them. Have you built credibility with the visitor before you asked them for their order? Have you created excitement and desire before you asked for the order? Have you given the visitor several clear ways to order the product or service both on and off line? And have you guided the visitor through all of this step by step? Sales are like sex - you have to romance the customer before you both get what you want!

Remember, on the Internet thirty seconds feels like five or six minutes. When you are sitting in front of a keyboard and screen waiting for everything to load, a few minutes can seem like an eternity. Have you ever noticed how some sites are so quick to download while others take forever? This is not usually because of the speed of the server, but because of the design of the website and HTML code used.

The time factor is very important because as I mentioned above, people are very impatient on

the net. If your site is taking just a little too long to load, it is very tempting for them to click a button and keep on surfing. You have **only one shot** at keeping the customer at your site, so make sure you don't lose them because your webpage doesn't load fast enough.

You can speed up the transfer of your pages by:

- 1. reducing the file size of graphics on your page**
- 2. specifying the dimensions of a graphics file in the HTML code**
- 3. decreasing the amount of graphics you have that are not necessary for the presentation, and**
- 4. decreasing the number of files which your webpage consists of (both HTML and graphics files combined).**

Many graphics files do not have to be the size they are on common webpages. You only need 72 dpi for screen resolution, and graphics only need to be 256 colors. A small 4" by 2" graphic shouldn't be any bigger than 10K.

If you specify the graphical dimensions of all your graphics files in HTML code, the web browser will "draw" out the size of the page needed and where the images will go, display the text and leave room for the graphics files to load in place. The HTML code would look like this:

```
<IMG SRC= "graphic 1.jpg" H=240 W=65>
```

This allows the user to see the text on your page and read your message **while** the graphics files are loading.

Decreasing the number of files contained in your webpage is a page management technique too frequently overlooked. Most people have a default maximum of four socket connections in



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their Internet web browser. Each "socket" allows one file to be transferred to your computer, so if you have four sockets, you can download four files simultaneously. If you have six images on your home page and one HTML file, that is seven files that need to be downloaded. The browser will download the first four, and then when the first one is *completely* downloaded, it will make the socket available for the 5<sup>th</sup> file to download.

In other words, your fifth file (or graphic) that loads into a web browser (with the defaults set to four sockets) won't start loading until the first file (first picture or graphic) has finished loading. Your sixth file does not start loading until your second file is finished, and so on. This can be a lengthy process if there are too many files to load, especially if they are very large. As a rule, (assuming your graphics are a moderate 5 - 12K size) keep less than five files on each page if you can.

I will say this again because it is so important...  
**you have one shot and one shot only to keep a visitor at your site. Be careful not to screw that up by having long download periods.**

Picture this: you do a search on *Yahoo* for business software for which there are 2560 results. You now have a choice of 2560 sites. If the first site you click on is taking too long to load, it is very simple to click on the next search result, - which is exactly what potential customers will do. Try to keep your pages under 50 or 60K in total size.

If you have valuable content on your site, make it **easy to read**. Long paragraphs are a major turn off. For quotes and important segments, use the

<blockquote> </blockquote>

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tags in the HTML code to indent the whole section. Bold other important sentences in any paragraph and don't be afraid to dress them up with a little color.

Substitute text coloring for a graphics file if possible. In other words, instead of using a graphics file to bring attention to something, use a different colored text.

The titles of all your subsections could be a different color. To see an example of what I am talking about, go to

<http://www.marketingtips.com/assoctracfaq.html>

This is not fancy, but it "breaks up" the page and makes it easy to read and understand.

On that note, do not use more than three colors of text in any page (preferable only two), it will make your page look cheap and it will be hard to read.

Don't feel that you have to have the most advanced site on the net to be noticed. You don't need any Java scripts, spinning GIFS, Flash, Shockwave, audio files or fancy gadgets to sell your product or service. Look at my **Car Secrets** site (<http://www.igs.net/carsecrets/>). This site generates **almost half a million dollars every year** and is a **very simple page** in regular HTML with no special graphics, Java scripts or specialty features. **It's what you say in your webpage that will sell your product or service!**

I can't make this any more clear - getting your message across is key. We will be discussing how to write good copy later in this lesson.

As far as layout is concerned, you have to test what works with your site as well. You might want to give away free information in the form of

## *NOTES:*

articles or reviews, and then try to make the sale. If you are going to provide the user with usable information at your site (with the intention of attracting them), add substance not "smoke". In this case a word is worth a thousand pictures (no, that is not a typo, read it again).

Or, you might want to have a sales letter right up front and go for the more aggressive approach of trying to sell without first offering a sample of free information.

You may even want a site that is little "flashy" (sites with flashing icons, bold statements, etc.) to attract people to continue further to where your product or service is. It is your job to test what brings in the best results from your website visitors.

All this will depend on the product or service you're selling and the type of people you are marketing to (your target market). If you are marketing to a very young crowd, then "flash" will bring you more sales. But if your customer base is college-educated business people, this makes you seem like an unprofessional hype-artist. With this type of clientele, you want to create rapport with facts, figures, honesty and lots of obvious benefit to the potential customer.

Again, don't feel like you need to squeeze every ounce of "coolness" out of each webpage by making it "dance", "sing", or "spin on its head". This is called the "**look at me**" syndrome, and it originates from childhood when we jumped up and down in the middle of the room to bring attention to our latest toy. It wasn't cool then, and it isn't cool now.

Minimize the graphics size and color depth. People simply don't want to wait around while fancy and overly colorful graphics download.

## *NOTES:*

Keep your graphics and background image resolution settings at 256 colors. If a large graphic or product screen shot is really necessary to make your point, provide a small thumbnail version with an option to continue to the larger graphic. Provide your visitor with a choice.

If you use tables, consider carefully how they will look when viewed through all types of browser (i.e. Internet Explorer, Netscape) and in all resolutions (i.e. 640X480, 800X600, 1024X768)

**Carefully proofread all content.** If you can't be bothered to correct your spelling, your users will think twice before giving you their money or their trust. I have personal experience with this. As mentioned in the first lesson, I have lost sales in the past because of poorly spelled sales letters. Have a friend or colleague proofread it, as they will find mistakes you never would have caught.

Before going live, set up an off-line testing site so you can test your pages (links, navigation, load time, etc.) and try different approaches.

You have to design your webpage with what works best for selling your product or service as the primary consideration. You also have to be willing to "go against the grain" and do what is considered both "incorrect" and "wrong" in conventional marketing.

Putting a lot of marginally related information on a single page is considered a "no-no" by most marketers. The web was meant to be broken down into "pages" they will say. These pages are not a fixed size, but can contain any single complete thought.

## NOTES:

To use **Car Secrets** as an example, we have always had a direct sales letter on our home page that is about eight pages long. This is a "no-no" according to most conventional marketers. Most people assume that this is ineffective and does not produce many sales, but in fact they are quite wrong.

The reason we let the **Car Secrets** presentation consist of a single eight page letter is because people see there are almost 10 pages of text information and **assume** we are giving away lots of automotive tips and secrets. They're "hooked". Nowhere *until* the end of the text does it mention we have something for sale. It simply appears we are listing the benefits of what could be learned at our website (not product features).

By the time the readers get to the part where it is explained that there is a book and software available with this information, they have already read all the benefits and advantages with an open mind, not on a presumption that we are selling them something. The only reason they even start to read pages of information is because most of them assume they are getting free automotive tips. Once they have read what they can learn and the money they can save by purchasing our products, **they are in fear that they will pay too much or get ripped off** on their automotive purchase *if* they don't buy our "solution".

We tested a multi-page website with **Car Secrets**, but when we broke the website down into four or five separate webpages, **sales dropped by almost 70%!!!** Can you see the impact this has? For our **Car Secrets** webpage it was better to have a long home page with no sub-pages than a bunch of smaller links. With our **marketingtips.com** site, it was much more

*NOTES:*

advantageous to have multiple sub pages and give away free information.

The lesson once again is **test, test, test!** Don't listen to other people's recommendations unless they have a product or service exactly like yours, at the exact same price as yours, with the exact same target market and marketing history as you. And even then, think twice.

Here's a story that will amuse you and illustrate my point. I received emails from two different design companies within a week of each other, both telling me one of my sites had shortcomings they could correct. When I went to their sites, what I found was appalling! One site took over four minutes to download and was written in HTML 1.0. The second site was just as ridiculous - it was simply impossible to read. This goes to show you **not to listen to what others say about the Internet** unless you have a reason to respect their opinions. Very few people have the expertise you are gaining by taking this course.

It is important that you don't tell your visitor up front that you are trying to sell them something. No matter what you have, how good it is or what a great deal it is, **most people will not stay at your site if they know they are being sold to.** I cannot emphasize this point enough either. You want them to read on, see the benefits of what you may have **and then and only then** let them know the product or service is available for sale. If you do this, there will be almost **no "selling" to do... your customers will have done this by themselves.**

If people know you are offering something for sale, they will be skeptical and somewhat distant when they read what you have to say. But if they don't know you have anything to sell, they will

## NOTES:

be more receptive to what you have to say and more likely to believe your pitch. Information is **more easily absorbed by an open frame of mind**. You want to "lead them in", be careful not to push a sale on your potential customers right away.

Another simple success factor in online marketing is that you **must** be able to accept online purchase transactions. You want to come across as an internet based company, not simply a mail-order company trying out the internet. Also, if you have any kind of information product, try to make sure that you offer it in an electronic format via email.

If a webpage is larger than 50K, put a little note on the top of the page urging visitors to be patient while the graphics load (this should be displayed while your webpage is loading). Even though your webpage may not take very long to load at your test site, keep in mind that your customer may have a slow node (or connection) increasing download times. You don't want to take the chance of someone leaving because it took too long to load and nothing showed up right away to explain the wait.

Click on the following link to view an example of my **Car Secrets** page to show you what the result is when you apply the above marketing principles:

### [Car Secrets Screen Capture](#)

The top two lines of text are displayed while the graphics are loading. I specify the size of the graphics files in the HTML code (as mentioned previously).

 [Top of Page](#)

## Prepare to do Everything Yourself!

Because you will be testing many different ideas on your webpages and changing the site quite frequently at first, I suggest you do the HTML programming yourself. If you have to wait for your webmaster or ISP to make the changes, you will have the following problems:

- 1. changes will not happen on time,**
- 2. you will not be able to make the quantity of changes you need,**
- 3. the changes may not turn out the way you pictured them since the programmer may have a different concept of what you are trying to accomplish,**
- 4. but most importantly, they will charge you an "arm and a leg" for the work. You can do all of this yourself for free.**

Learning HTML is easier than it might sound. Unlike learning French or some other language, most of it is self-explanatory. Most of you already know that there are programs available called HTML editors, which allow you to design a webpage with little knowledge of the HTML code itself. These programs will make your job 100 times easier. You just have to know the basics, and the program will do the rest for you. An editor will allow you to take a document, highlight where you want it bolded, centered, etc., and with a click of a button it translates into HTML code for you.

Also, newer versions of *Microsoft Word* and *Word Perfect* will allow you to create a document in the regular *Word* or *Word Perfect* environment and



## NOTES:

save it in HTML code. In other words, it will take the DOC or WP file and convert it into HTML so the document displayed on the webpage looks exactly the way it does in the word processor.

HTML is a very easy language to learn. For example `<b>` means start bold and `</b>` means stop bold. That's what I mean by easy. If you read the sample documents that HTML editors provide, you will see the codes for bold, underline, center, end paragraph, link, display image, etc. very clearly.

I have used a lot of HTML editors, and these two are by far the best:

Homesite

<http://www.allaire.com/products/homesite/>

HotDog

<http://www.sausage.com/>

Download these two programs now, and you will learn a lot in an hour. If you want to look at some HTML code, go to any webpage and click on the option "View Source Code". In Netscape it is under the "View" menu option. This will show you all the code that the webpage you are viewing was created with.

Click the link below to view a screen capture of *Hot Dog*. I cannot list all the great benefits it offers, but a few highlights are: You can view what you have coded by pushing one button in its built in browser; it color codes the HTML so it is easier to decipher; it automatically calculates many of the necessary items when coding... Just trust me when I say it is better than all the rest. *Hot Dog* makes HTML coding a breeze.

**[Hot Dog Screen Capture](#)**

*NOTES:*

If you don't know how to write HTML code, go to the following website. It is a free site that will teach you HTML in a couple of hours. The address is:

<http://www.davesite.com/webstation/html/>

The following are a couple of quotes from the front page, which introduce the site:

"HTML stands for Hyper Text Markup Language. You have the ability to bring together text, pictures, sounds and links... all in one place. This tutorial is for anyone who is serious about learning HTML so they can have their own home page, and maybe eventually their own website. This tutorial is not for those who are HTML experts, but you might have fun and learn something new anyways! You need not have any prior experience in HTML, but I am assuming you know how to do basic things with your computer such as word-processing."

Check out the site and you won't be disappointed. It is a great HTML tutorial.

Some website designs are very hard to do yourself so you may have to hire a professional website designer. If you want to do this, we use a few website design companies that are excellent (which is hard to find these days) and reasonably priced.

We have set up a special form to help you with this. If you need your website designed, the few companies we deal with are the best in the business, know how to build websites that generate sales, and are very customer service oriented... plus they are very efficient, very creative, and reasonably priced. They can design everything for you from scratch including all the

graphics and logos you need or just build from what you have already.

The address is

<http://www.marketingtips.com/websitedesign.html>

Just fill out the form and we will forward your request to the company that is best at what you have requested on the form. It seems like website design companies are popping up all over the place and there are real differences between the companies, their skills, their qualifications, and their work. I recommend you go with a company that we have dealt with in the past to ensure you get your money's worth and that they do a fantastic job.

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## **Complete Automation is the Key**

Remember the net is an international medium and is open 24 hours a day. My strong belief when selling in cyberspace is to be "completely automated" so you can work on your own time and choose your own hours. I can travel **anywhere** in the country **any time** and run my entire business from my laptop and my voice mail...on my own time. **If you're not going to be fully automated** and process everything manually, **you must:**

1. be prepared to check your email every day of the week, including weekends and holidays,
2. be prepared to confirm and process every order within 24 hours,
3. be willing to give up your valuable time to fulfill orders and do paperwork when you

could be marketing your business and increasing sales.

If you do go fully automated, be prepared to spend a little more time in the beginning setting your business up and spend a little more money on your website (to get the automated system fully operational).

Don't wait until the orders start rolling in to figure these things out. **All repeat sales depend on your professionalism and ability to handle the first sale quickly and smoothly.** As I will show you later in this course, repeat sales will be a big part of your net profit, even if you don't have anything else to sell right now. I will show you how to recommend other products/services for a portion of their profits in a later lesson.

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## **Ordering Processes and Payment Types to Offer**

The ordering processes and payment types you offer are key to your success. If the customer is confused about how to order or you don't offer a payment type that is convenient... **you will lose the sale.** I cannot stress how important this is. I have seen too many people have a great product or service and sales-letter, only to miss the sale because the order process was not simple and the payment options were not convenient enough for the customer.

Because there is so much to discuss about ordering and payment, I have broken the information into a few categories to make it easier to read.

## **1. The All Important Basics**

Ordering goods and services online is a very new thing in our world. Many people have never ordered anything online and can be nervous or uncomfortable doing it the first time. Explain every aspect of the ordering process to build customer confidence. Tell them how to fill out the form, how the product is shipped, any special features, etc. Even explain to the customer that the order form isn't processed until they click the "send" button at the bottom of the screen and anything else you can think of, that a "first time" electronic buyer might not know. Click on the following link to view a copy of the secure order form I use for ***Car Secrets Revealed***:

### **[Secure Order Form Screen Capture](#)**

Also make the customer feel at ease by confirming every order by email. After a customer places an order, they really don't know if it was received or if the product is being shipped until they hear back from you. Remember online marketing is not like a retail store where you get to talk to a cashier. Don't overlook the psychological impact a simple electronic "thank you" can have on the customer.

Confirming an order also gives the customer the confidence that you're are a legitimate company. If you are using an automated ordering system, the confirmation will automatically be sent to the customer via email moments after they order.

If you are using a manual order system where the order is simply emailed to you (so you have to process it manually), try to send an email

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confirmation within the next 24 hours or have an autoresponder "triggered" to send a confirmation right away (discussed in the next paragraph).

I bet you're wondering how to set up this automated process and reduce your workload, right?

Well, there are many ways to automate the receipt of email or orders. For example, if you look at one of my manual order pages for the **Car Secrets Revealed** book (<http://www.igs.net/carsecrets/order87.htm>), you will see in the HTML code that the order is sent to two email addresses (remember to click on "view source code" in your web browser menu to display the HTML coding). The first one is our customer service representative's, and the second could be the autoresponder that sends a confirmation to the customer within seconds.

***Note:** Autoresponders will be explained in a separate lesson. Basically how they work is when an email is sent to the autoresponder's email address, it will email the person that sent the email whatever document you have set up to email back (all within seconds).*

Another example of how orders are confirmed is by using a **completely automated service** at the server. We will use **Car Secrets Revealed** as an example.

With the secure server that I use, the process is set up so as soon as the customer orders:

1. the credit card is approved in "real time" while the customer waits for a few moments,

**NOTES:**

2. the money is deposited to my bank account,
3. the order is emailed to a fulfillment company who ships the hard copy of the book,
4. the customer is sent a confirmation of the order by email,
5. the customer is sent the software version of the book via email within a couple of minutes, (I offer software delivery by email, and the secure server processes the transaction automatically for me)... of course this is only relevant if you are selling software or electronic information.

In the email confirmation to the customer, I repeat the contents of the order and the price, and then state when and how the order will be shipped. Your customer will appreciate the follow-up and the professionalism of this approach. Here is an example of the letter I use for ***Car Secrets Revealed***:

To: customer@domain.com  
From: Car Secrets <carsecrets@igs.net>  
Subject: Confirmation and Thank You

Hi,

Thank you for your order. This email is just to confirm that we received your order and it will be shipped via Priority US Mail within 24 hours (weekends excluded). You should receive the package within 3-4 business days.

As an additional note: If you used your credit card for this purchase, it has been charged the special price of \$27.00 plus \$2.95 shipping. It will appear on your credit card statement as

THE INTERNET MARKETING CENTER from  
Blaine, WA (our main company).

Enjoy the book, the information can be quite an  
"eye-opener".

Nick

## **2. Make It Easy for Customers to Pay**

**If you don't accept credit cards because you don't have merchant accounts, forget it!**

You **MUST** be able to accept credit cards online if you plan to do business on the net. If you can't, you **will lose over 60% of your business**. Customers on the net are impulsive and want everything **NOW**. If they have to get off the net to phone you (most families only have one phone line in their house)... *OR*, if they have to write a check, fill out an order form, address an envelope and put it in the mail... you can forget about doing any kind of volume. You have to make it **easy** for them to order! Would you believe that over 85% of the orders I am currently receiving for my products are placed with credit cards?

Credit cards will also give you a measure of credibility because your business will not seem like a "basement operation". They will not only **quadruple your business** because credit cards offer convenience, but they make your job a lot easier as well:

- 1. not as many trips to the bank  
(everything is deposited electronically),**
- 2. easier and "cleaner" paper-trails for sales records,**
- 3. no bounced checks (credit cards are almost like getting cash),**



**4. easier to trace orders for customer service,**

**5. ...and many other benefits.**

I will show you how to get your own credit card merchant accounts for only \$30 a month in a later lesson. The broker we deal with has a 98% approval rate and can almost guarantee to get you merchant accounts at extremely low rates.

### **3. Automation Is Crucial For Your Success**

There are three ways people should be able to order, all of which have to be automated if you truly want to be successful. As I mentioned before, if you don't do this, you will be a slave to your business every day (including weekends and holidays) just processing orders. That leaves little time for marketing your business, most of your time will be spent doing administrative work.

In brief, customers should be able to order:

- a. Directly Online,**
- b. With an 800 number (24 hours a day, seven days a week with live operators),**
- c. Postal mail ("snail mail") or fax.**

Lets go over each of these in detail:

**Online:** My orders are accepted and processed on a secure server while the customer waits online. Then, software charges the credit card and deposits the money directly in my bank account within 48 hours. The order is automatically emailed to my fulfillment company who ships the order the next day and also sends me a copy of the order by email for my records. I also allow the customer to order with a non-

## NOTES:

secure form as well, which will be explained later in this lesson.

**Note:** *A secure server is a computer server that can accept and transmit confidential information (like credit card numbers) without the risk of someone intercepting the transmission and "stealing" the information. It is all done through encryption techniques. Almost all browsers (unless they are **very** old) support secure server transactions.*

**800 number:** I deal with a company that accepts phone orders 24 hours a day on a 1-800 line with live operators (this is the same company that processes my email orders too). They also process, pack and ship my orders. I send them a few hundred items every couple of weeks so they can maintain their stock, and I get an email (or fax if you prefer) every night telling me what 800 number orders came in the previous day, what was shipped, and how much was deposited in my bank account. You will find it will cost you between \$5.00 to \$7.00 per order to fill an order using the 800 number (they charge about a buck a minute to take the order over the phone 24 hours a day, 7 days a week). Please note that when you are starting, you may just want to get an 800 number attached to your regular business phone numbers and take orders 9-5 when you are in the office (your local long distance carrier can arrange this easily. Then as you get more orders, transfer this responsibility to a company like the one mentioned above).

**Snail Mail or Fax:** My customers can also send a check or money order by mail or fax the order form with their credit card number to me (fax orders are rare). Most people will order online, and if they feel uncomfortable giving out their

credit card number they will call the 800 number. The fulfillment-company receives a copy of the order, ships the product and then mails me the order forms and checks they receive once a week.

**I do nothing** but get a report of what was sold through any of the ordering techniques, and **everything is done automatically**. I can go away on a vacation for a week or two and **the whole system runs as though I was there, doing all the work myself**. I can't emphasize how important this is. I just look at my accounts at the end of the week (or end of the day) to see what sales I have just made.

Why is this so important...?

**You want to concentrate all of your time on marketing your product or service, not on paperwork, processing and shipping orders... especially when you have a successful product or service!**

With my four successful businesses online, I would have a full-time job just processing orders if I had to do them everyday. There would be no time to market my products and increase my sales, let alone time to try new marketing possibilities.

Let me repeat what happens: The orders are placed by your customers, the money is deposited in your bank and the product is packaged and shipped without you touching anything. The only thing I have to do is drop by the bank once a week in order to deposit the checks my fulfillment company forwards me, for incoming orders. You don't have to answer the phone or even log on to the net every day to check orders. Everything is done automatically.

#### **4. The Perfect System**

I will explain exactly how most of my operations are set up. Every user has three options for ordering as mentioned above (online, 800 number, and snail mail/fax). I want them to order directly online with our secure server if possible because:

- a. **you will get more orders from people buying on impulse.** If they wait to call your 800 number or mail a check, they might have second thoughts or simply forget to do it,
- b. **everything is automated** with the secure server ordering process, so it is *completely hands free*,
- c. **the most profit is made from online orders** because I am not paying fees for live operators with the 800 number or wasting my time processing manual order-form orders.

To encourage customers to order using my secure server, (which is fully automated unlike the manual order form where we have to manually process the credit card and fax the fulfillment company the order), we offer the added benefit of receiving the email version of ***Car Secrets Revealed*** within ten minutes of the order being approved. If they order by any other method, they would not get the email for 72 hours.

When an order is placed on the secure server, the secure server calls the bank and authorizes the credit card while the customer waits on line for a few moments. While they are waiting, a screen is displayed explaining everything that is going on (that their credit card is being approved and to wait for a moment). Once their order is approved, a screen comes up explaining that the

**NOTES:**

order was approved, tells them when their product will be shipped and what email address to contact if there are any problems.

The money then gets deposited in my bank account, the one megabyte software version of **Car Secrets Revealed** gets sent to the client's email address, my fulfillment house automatically receives the shipping instructions and I receive an email with the ordering information to confirm the order. In other words, I have not physically touched a single thing and the entire order has been processed automatically.

If you want to see a copy of the online order form, there is a copy of it at the beginning of this lesson. Or go to <http://www.marketingtips.com/jumporder.cgi> and see it right on your monitor.

For reasons I cannot understand, most people think that to get a secure server they have to move their entire site to an Internet Service Provider (ISP) that offers a secure server. This is not true. You can stay with your current ISP and simply link to your order form webpage provided by a different ISP with a secure server. I do that with all my products.

**Note:** *I highly recommend a company called Interlink Advertising for your secure server connection (this is who we presently use). They will customize almost anything to meet your needs and their customer service is not only outstanding but lightning fast as well. They also support real time transactions so credit cards are processed automatically within seconds. Go to <http://www.marketingtips.com/isp.html>. Fill out the form and someone from Interlink will get back to you within 2 days via email.*

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The second way to order online is through a non-secure server, which is, basically, just a regular order form, exchanged online. I recommend offering a non-secure form as an alternative for two reasons:

- a. The browser or local host the customer is using may not support secure servers and they might not have access to the secure order form.**
- b. The client may feel uncomfortable leaving their credit card number on the internet with the secure or non-secure order form, but wants to place the order online anyway... so they use the non-secure order form and pick the option for you to call them for their credit card number.**

When customers use the unsecured order form, they have the option to enter their credit card number directly, fax the order form to us or fill it out with the credit card field blank, when we call them for the missing information. Although this is more of a hassle than the secure server, it will still cut down on the cost of paying live operators through your 800 number. It also offers the advantage of facilitating impulse buyers since they can order your product or service right on the screen instead of having to log-off to call your order desk at the 800 number.

Click on the following link to view what a copy of our non-secure order form looks like (you can also view it by going to

<http://www.igs.net/carsecrets/order86.htm>):

**[Non-secure Order Form Screen Capture](http://www.igs.net/carsecrets/order86.htm)**

Some people will call the 800 number no matter what you offer them online, because they feel

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uncomfortable not talking to a real, live person or entering their credit card number online. This 800 number is assigned to me by my fulfillment house. They answer the phone 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and take orders for the products that I offer. For this they charge fees, the most significant being \$1.20 per minute while taking orders. The average order takes 3 to 4 minutes, so it costs me approximately \$5.00 for every order placed through the 800 number (plus a few small fees that are "tacked on" my monthly account). This fee represents extra profit I could have made if they ordered directly online, and that is why I encourage online ordering as much as possible.

Once an order is placed through the 800 number, the client is told they will receive the software version of the book within 72 hours. The next day all the orders for the previous day are printed off at the fulfillment house. My representative at the fulfillment house charges the credit card from her location, packages and ships the order, and faxes me a copy of all the orders. Within 48 hours of receiving the order via fax I must manually email the software to the clients who have requested it (this again is a hassle that can be avoided by encouraging customers to order online with the secure server).

I have used a few different fulfillment houses and the company I most highly recommend is *Mountain West Communications*. Their number is 1-800-642-9378 (ask for Jeannie, and tell her Corey sent you - she will get a kick out of that).

*Mountain West Communications* also has merchant accounts you can use if you are just getting started. In other words, you do not have to host your own merchant accounts. They pay

**NOTES:**

you once a month for the sales you have charged on their account minus their fees. Note that if you use their merchant credit card accounts, you will not be able to charge online orders to that account. That is because all orders must go through their 800 number as required by their bank. Also note that the discount rate (the rate that the credit card company charges you) is about 5%, whereas you can get it at 2.5% or lower if you use your own merchant accounts.

The customer can also write a check or send a money order via snail mail for fulfillment. You could either give the address of your home/business, or give them the address of your fulfillment house and they can take care of it all. The fulfillment house will just send you the original envelopes and checks you received once a week (or whenever you ask them to). Again this makes it "hands free" for you. If you are consistently home, you could have the orders come to you and then fax them to your fulfillment house for shipping.

Here is a copy of the order options and how they are worded on my ***Car Secrets*** webpage (underlined words are links to the order pages):

Act now, the second edition sold out quickly and the third is expected to move just as fast. There are **three easy ways to order**.

The first and fastest way to order is directly online with our SECURE SERVER or if your web browser will not support secure servers... use our other order form. Keep in mind that when you use our order form on our Secure Server, we can email you the software version of the book within 10 minutes so you can start putting cash back in your pocket tonight (the printed soft-cover book will still follow in the US Postal Mail). If you order with our "other order form", the software will be emailed to you within 72 hours.



## **NOTES:**

Or, you can use your credit card and order by phone. When you order through the 800 # your software can still be emailed to you; but within 72 hours, not 10 minutes like ordering online via our secure server. Or if you don't want the software emailed to you, you can have the software on diskette sent with the book via US Priority Mail. You can call anytime, 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and the number to call is: 1-800-255-1914. To get this special price when you call, please tell the operator the "publication number" is #86. Remember to give the operator your email address if you want the software emailed to you.

The last way to order is through "snail" mail. All you have to do is write your name and address and the words "Car Secrets Package" on a piece of paper, and send it, along with your payment of \$27.00 plus \$2.95 shipping and handling to: Car Secrets, 812 Proctor Ave. Suite #86, Ogdensburg, N.Y. 13669

### **5. Payment Types To Avoid**

There are other ways to collect money other than using credit cards, or mail and a check or money order.

Receiving checks by phone/fax sounds great in theory but in practice it is not so great. It is generally very time consuming and can be a big hassle. For those who do not know how this works; you basically take the bank and account information from customers by phone or fax. You then produce a check on your computer printer from check writing software that is "supposed" to be valid at a bank. This is a very similar technique to a "debit card", where customers authorize you to take a certain amount of money directly from their bank account.

## *NOTES:*

There are two ways to take checks by fax. You can get your own software that prints checks, or you can have a service bureau take the information from the customer and produce the checks for you.

Sometimes you end up **waiting for months** to get paid for fax checks because they are not considered a legal form of tender by some banks. There is also a big problem with illegibility, incomplete info, etc.

If you still want to collect your money using the method above, I strongly recommend getting your own check writing software. That is one way of avoiding the service problems (you are in control instead of depending on another company to handle your transactions), and to get prompt turnaround at the banks. Do be aware that some banks are not very fond of this scheme, and some will not honor the check unless the customer **verbally approves** the transactions (again, another hassle as it is unlikely you will get a hold of the customer when you want to).

Keep in mind that this method is usually more trouble than what it is worth. Most people have credit cards and will use them. Those who don't will be confused by the process, which they have to go through to effectively use checks with the phone/fax method of ordering. I have used a couple of different systems in the past (with two of them I had to pay a \$495 "set- up" fee just to become a user) and as I said before, in my opinion it is a waste of time and effort.

### **6. Accepting Credit Cards (and Alternatives)**

As mentioned above, it is absolutely critical to have a merchant account so people can buy your product or service with their credit card.

*NOTES:*

There are however, a couple of different ways to this as well:

- 1. You can get your own Visa/Mastercard/AmEx/Discover accounts with a local bank,**
- 2. You get Visa/Mastercard/AmEx/Discover accounts through a broker (these brokers are all over the country),**
- 3. You can hire a fulfillment house and use their credit card accounts, or**
- 4. You can use "third party" merchant account providers such as Ibill and NetSales.**

**Details of #1:** If you have a **very good relationship with your bank**, and they don't require a security deposit, it is best to get the merchant credit card accounts through them. Because some banks only deal with two out of the four major credit card types, you may have to deal with two different banks to be able to process all four major credit card types (usually one bank will have Visa and Mastercard, and another will have AmEx and Discover).

The problem with local banks is they are set up to serve retail stores and not mail order or Internet based businesses so they either charge a very high "discount rate" or require a very large security deposit (between \$5,000 - \$10,000). For those who don't know what a discount rate is, this is the percentage you pay on each transaction for the privilege of using their credit card services. In other words, if you have a discount rate of 2.5 % and you put through a sale of \$100.00 you will only receive \$97.50 and \$2.50 goes directly to the credit card company.

**NOTES:**

**Details of #2:** Going through a broker is my personal preference. It is usually very easy to get approved, there are no security deposits required, and they can get you a great discount rate. I personally recommend *Merchant Account* at:

<http://www.marketingtips.com/merchantaccount.html>

They are Internet based and you can apply directly online. They **specialize** in getting credit card accounts for online businesses. They have a 98% approval rate. Even if you have been bankrupt, chances are that they can probably get you approved. If you are a foreign company that wants to get US merchant accounts, they can help you.

We have had great success with them and I **highly** recommend them. They charge a \$125 application fee (all brokers charge a fee to set you up... this is how they make their money). Some others charge as much as \$400.00. The only other expense will be that you need a terminal or software product to process the credit cards, which you can lease from them for about \$30 a month (*this is what we do and this is what I recommend you do*). You should be able to get a discount rate of 2% to 3%. They will provide you with a fully turnkey package for the Internet (including a shopping cart if you need one) so you can start taking orders online right away. They do everything for you to get your business set up and have great customer service, I cannot recommend them higher.

We have been so happy with them that we just started a strategic alliance with them and are now hosting some of their webpages on our website (see

<http://www.marketingtips.com/merchantaccount.html>).

If you don't want to use this company, there are literally hundreds of different brokers out there. Just look at the back of DM magazine (Direct Mail Magazine) and you will find handfulls of advertisements of brokers who want your business. We recommend the company previously mentioned, as they specialize in online and home based business. We have used them many times with great success.

**Details of #3:** A fulfillment house is a company that is designed to do all your "dirty work". They will take your orders through an 800 number with live operators who will keep track of your customer data base, provide some customer service, process credit cards, and ship out orders. In other words, they make running your business **completely hands free**. These companies have their own merchant credit card accounts and will let you use them to process your orders for a fee. The fee is usually a 5% discount rate instead of the normal 2% to 3% you would pay if you had your own accounts.

If you are only processing a few thousands dollars' worth of orders every month, this is the way to go. But if you are doing more business than that, it is more cost effective to get your own credit card, merchant accounts. Also, please note that most fulfillment houses will only allow you to charge orders to their credit card account when the orders come in through the 800 number line (they will not let you use their credit card account for direct sales from the Internet), which can cause problems if you are doing any kind of volume.

**Details of #4:** Companies like Ibill and NetSales let you use their merchant accounts. The upside

## NOTES:

is that you can be set up to take credit cards within 3-5 days because you are using their merchant accounts. The down side is that they charge you a processing fee of 11-15% of the selling price (percentage depends on the volume you are doing). This is how they make their money. VISA/MC charges them 3% and they take the rest of the fee for managing your account, setting your order forms up, processing your orders, and managing the hassle of paying out checks to you for orders processed. Also note that you will not get paid for the sales for up to 60 days after your customers order.

When you get can get your own merchant accounts like in option #1 or #2 for \$30 a month and only pay 2-3% of sales... you can see why option #1 and #2 are a much better route (and a lot more inexpensive!).

### **7. What to Expect**

With an order system setup as in #4 on page 28, "The Perfect System", you can expect your orders to be broken down approximately as follows:

- 80% through the secure server
- 2% through non-secured server
- 13% through the 800 number
- 5% through regular postal mail

But what do these numbers have to do with your life? Well, as you probably already know, I run four businesses on the net, **Car Secrets** being one of the most successful of the bunch. Let me show you what is possible. It is almost impossible to get someone to actually share the exact figures from their business ventures... well... I AM!

**NOTES:**

Just for Car Secrets, I get a \$2,000 check every two weeks from my fulfillment company. This is for all the 800 number orders they process on their merchant accounts less their fees (in other words, it is all pure profit, minus the cost of my product). The credit card sales for Car Secrets are approximately \$20,000 to \$22,000 every month. You do the math.... it is **very profitable!** And this is for only **ONE** of my businesses. Keep thinking of how these tips relate to your business venture, put them into practice and I *will* see you at the beach.

I want to state again how crucial it is to have the ability to accept credit cards for your orders. As astonishing as it may sound, **credit cards will increase your orders by a proven 400%** (compared to just offering the option of sending in a check or money order). These simple things mean the difference between making a profit of \$100.00 a day or \$400.00 a day.

There is one more thing I want to say in the closing of this section... it is to "ask for the order." Create urgency. Ask for the order. Make it easy for the customer to buy. Ask for the order. Offer a strong guarantee. Ask for the order. Use testimonials. Ask for the order. Offer a bonus for a quick response. Ask for the order. Tell them how they are going to benefit by ordering now. Ask for the order. Tell them what they stand to lose by not ordering now. Ask for the order.

This may sound a little "corny," however, it has been proven by top salespeople throughout this country (including names such as Brian Tracy and Zig Ziglar). You will increase your closing ratio **by at least 80% by simply asking for the order.** It is one of the **most commonly overlooked items.** Many people are so busy

## NOTES:

trying to show the benefits of the product or service and why it is so great, that they assume people will just ask them how to order, thus missing the boat entirely.... YOU HAVE TO ASK FOR THE ORDER!

**Net Fact:** 70% of people say they shop on the net, while only 23% buy on the net. It is our job to get people to make that purchase on the net by offering something they cannot get anywhere else and by making it **extremely easy and simple to order. This is the key to increasing your sales!**

**Side Note:** *Because many people have multiple products, they need what is called "shopping cart software". This allows a customer to pick up certain items throughout your site and put them in a virtual shopping cart. Before they exit, they confirm what is in their shopping cart and pay for the merchandise.*

*I have seen this software selling for ridiculous prices of \$3,000 - \$5,000. When you get your own merchant accounts through the company I recommended above, it comes with the service free of charge in your monthly fee. If you already have merchant accounts, there is a lot of good shopping cart software out there for \$100-\$300.*

## **More Design and Navigation**

Make it easy for the visitor to navigate anywhere on your site by the use of buttons. At the top, bottom or side of each page there should be a row of buttons or links visitors can click to jump to different parts of your website. You want to make sure your customers feel comfortable navigating your site. The more comfortable they feel in general, the more comfortable they will feel **buying** from you.



Click on the next link to view an example from my marketingtips.com site that will show you what I am talking about.

### [Navigation Screen Capture](#)

The second reason for this is that people will enter your site on webpages **other than** your main page (explained in the Search Engine Secrets lesson). So you want to show them what other information you have on your site and make it easy for them to get there.

### **Avoid using image maps for your home page.**

Many people have a large graphic that can be clicked in different areas to send visitors to different parts of a website. The problem is, big image maps take a long time to load and your customer cannot do anything but sit and wait. It is much better to use small graphics or icons to represent each of your departments or sub pages.

Graphics don't sell... **words sell**. Good website-design presents graphics and words in a visually pleasing way, but don't confuse the two. You want to design your site to:

- 1. Create interest,**
- 2. Generate desire,**
- 3. Produce action (i.e. order).**

Don't overlook the simple fact that all browsers may not display your page the same. **You only have one shot** at showing the customer what you have to offer. Don't miss out on a possible sale because your webpage is not displayed properly on someone's browser.

Make sure you test your page on new and older versions of all major browsers (i.e. Netscape, Explorer, AOL, etc.). **Don't overlook this...** I

## NOTES:

just had a client who had a lot of tables in his webpage with stats from an article he had written. He used a new "colored" table command where the color of the inside of the table is different than the color of the page to make it more pleasant. This HTML command only works with newer browser, and many people have older browsers. The page wound up looking very boring when you viewed it through any browser other than the newest versions.

*Note: A little known secret is that AOL web browsers are just private labeled version of Internet Explorer. For example, AOL 3.0 browser will display things exactly like Internet Explorer 3.0. So when you are testing to see what your site will look like to different visitors, remember this.*

There is another design trick that I highly recommend. When it comes right down to it, your goal is to sell the visitor something at some point or another. Whether you use your webpage just to gather leads or to sell something directly, you are inevitably trying to sell the customer something. If you can't sell a visitor on your product or service, **capture their email address** to follow-up on later by using autoresponders at the bottom of any articles you have on your site.

For example, you could have the following text at the bottom of your page. "To receive your own copy of this article, please click here and enter your email address". The word "here" would be a command that triggers your autoresponder to send the article if activated. Note that when they do this, their email address is stored in your autoresponder log so that you can email them in the future with offers of products/services you carry or even just follow up on their opinion of

the article (which reminds them of your company and or product/service).

This and other autoresponder techniques are explained in greater detail in the last section of this lesson.

## What Price?

One of the biggest mistakes made when marketing any product or service is the pricing. **Pricing should never be based on cost.** Always charge the maximum any given customer is willing to pay and base it on what the competition is getting for a comparable product or service (in a mass market this means whatever price will bring marginal profitable business).

A very simple trick for getting a higher selling price than your competitors with a similar product or service is to somehow **add value your competitors do not provide.** For example, free bonuses, special customer service, special information to make your product or service more useful or efficient, specialized knowledge about the product or industry... whatever you can offer your customer that the competition can't.

It's *easy* to sell for more than the competition if you have a higher perceived value. Don't take this lightly, every dollar you add to your price is profit in the bank for you.

Lets go over an example to illustrate this point. You sell an online service that will search all the databases in the world for a certain type of collector's coin that a customer is looking for. You can either charge a percentage of the value of the coin or a flat fee for providing them with

**NOTES:**

it. For argument's sake, say you were charging a flat fee of \$120 (remember, some coins are worth thousands of dollars). This would attract the larger coin collectors, but not the small guys.

If your competition is providing this same service for \$79, you have to add more than \$40 of no cost value to your service to compete. This could be done by offering special services that are not offered by the competition that the client finds important, or you could offer a free coin worth \$20 plus a special report giving insider tips on investing in coins. The report may only cost you a \$1.00 to produce and the coin you give away may only cost you \$13.00 to buy... which still leaves you \$26.00 more in profit than the competition for providing the same service.

**Be imaginative and apply this idea to your own business. What can you give away that is of value to the customer and doesn't cost you too much to throw in?** This is the key to outselling the competition, and it is very easy to do.

Just get-up and make it happen, instead of waiting until they beat you to it and "scoop" the market.

My ***Car Secrets Revealed*** book offers another great example of what I am telling you now; there are books similar to mine that sell for \$12.95. **Why do I sell ten times more than they do at double the price?** Because I have great sales copy that creates a desire, offer a software version of the book that is delivered minutes after ordering (instant gratification), and I offer special reports on how to buy a new car at dealer cost and how to drive a new luxury car free every year as extras with the package.

*NOTES:*

The "bonuses" (software and special reports) I give away cost me about \$1.00 to produce, but allow me to charge \$29.95 for the book because the customer is getting much more value. These are items the customer can't get from other car books and this is why I not only sell ten times more product than the competition, **but also make \$20.00 per book sold instead of \$5.00 a book like they do** (the book, extras, packaging, and processing costs have a production cost of about \$7.00). Let's see... I am selling ten times more product than the competition for fifteen dollars more profit per book than they are... **that is exactly 40 times more net profit than the competition (the competition is making \$10 a day and I am making \$400 a day).**

Let's go over some pricing points and see which are the most profitable. If you are using an 800 number fulfillment service, it is difficult to make money selling something at \$19.95 or less, unless you are doing high volume. This is because of the expense of taking the orders - a fulfillment service will charge between \$5.00 and \$7.00 per order through the 800 number as mentioned previously. If you are offering online ordering option as well, you will make money at \$19.95 for the online orders, but only break even on the 800 number orders.

- a \$19.95 price will always outsell \$12.95
- a \$29.95 price will always outsell \$19.95
- other price points are \$39.95, \$69.95, \$97.00, \$197.00, \$297.00 and so on (these ones have to be tested to see which one will pull better for you).

This is due to "perceived value". If you present your product or service with a lot of perceived value, you can always get more money for that

product or service. The concept is that most people think that if somebody sells something for more money... that product or service **must** have more value, better features, more information, or better quality (or whatever applies to your product or service). That is why you can get away with charging more.

Once you get over \$97.00, the most efficient price points are at every hundred ending at the 97<sup>th</sup> dollar. This has been proven by millions of dollars in advertising tests performed by one of the Direct Marketing Greats, Ted Nicholas.

You will have to test which price brings in the most profit for your product or service. For example, you may find that if you sell it for:

- \$29.95, you get 8 orders per 1000 visitors to your site,
- \$39.95, you get 10 orders per 1000 visitors to your site,
- \$69.95, you only get 5 orders per 1000 visitors to your site.

As you can see, the \$39.95 price pulls the greatest number of orders, **but is not the most profitable**. If the production cost of the product or service is \$15.00, per 1000 visitors you are making \$119.60 at the \$29.95 price, \$199.60 at \$39.95, and \$274.75 at \$69.95 price (even though you sold half the quantity of units at this price compared to the \$39.95 price). **Make sure you look at the profitability of price points, not just the quantity of sales.**

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## [What about Online Malls?](#)

## NOTES:

An online mall is not like your local shopping mall down the road. In a traditional shopping mall, you walk past other shops on the way to finding what you need. A large tenant base in the shopping mall is important to attract customers since so much shopping consists of 'browsing'. But in an online mall, it is quite possible and very easy for people to come to your page and leave without viewing **any other store** in the mall. The real people that make money with online malls are the **mall owners**, not the store owners, as there is an absence of the "just looking" customer you find at a regular shopping malls.

The online malls advertise that they get millions of visitors every month... and they are quite right. But what **they don't tell you** is that these are calculated by counting the hits to their customer's pages, most of which will come to the page and then leave. They are not visitors who come to the "front door" of the mall to see the different products inside... but in fact visit just a collection of individual "stores" associated only by an administration (mall owner).

There is nothing wrong with buying a "mall" package that is worth it... if it has webhosting, customer service, autoresponders, secure servers, and a host of other features for a reasonable price. But do NOT pay higher prices because you think they will bring you traffic.

Let's go through an example.

Say someone is searching the web for fishing and finds a fishing site that resides in an online mall, and they visit it. Now why on earth would they then link through the mall to visit your health products site? They WON'T! The visitor is interested in fishing, not health products.

There is almost NO cross traffic, so don't get tied up in this.

Also, many of the malls allow you to have your own domain name. Once you do, you're not really part of the mall anymore other than getting your name listed on the "mall store list page" which gets almost no traffic.

To summarize, signing up with an Internet mall **is generally a waste of time**. Don't fall into the trap of thinking that if you are in an online mall people from other stores will come and visit yours. If they are interested in fishing and visiting a fishing store in that mall, why would they want to come to your store to buy office supplies? Do you see where I am coming from? Visitors most likely found the fishing store by doing a search in the search engines for "fishing" or by following a link from another site. That is how a potential customer will find your store as well (by searching for "office supplies") not from "cross-traffic" in the online shopping mall or searching for "Joe's Mall" in a search engine.

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## **Other Miscellaneous Tips**

- Here is a **tricky and effective way** of not only increasing traffic and sales, but will double your chances at getting located in a search engine as a result. In essence, you replicate your original site with a different domain name. Change the title of the site and a few sentences on the main page, and submit the new URL to the search engines. This has been done by a few of the online shopping malls. They just replicate 20 of the shops, copy the files, and go online



## NOTES:

- with a new presence. If you have the time to replicate your site, it will be worth the effort in the long run.
- A growing problem in the industry is that it is so easy to "steal" pages and sites. As many of you know, with any major web browser, you can view a site... then view its source code and copy and paste that to a new file on your hard drive. Then you modify some of the information before re-posting, and you have effectively "stolen" that webpage. There is no perfect solution to keep this from happening to your site, but there is something you can do to protect your investment from the competition by creating what is called a "published" page.
  - The HTML editor *HotDog* has what's called a "publish" command. Basically, you design your page through *HotDog* like you would normally and when it is complete you store it as a "published" HTML file in a separate directory (this is "saving" option in *HotDog*). The only difference between your regular HTML file and the "published" HTML file is that the published version has all the carriage returns removed so your file is only one line long and seems to go on forever and ever. This makes it very difficult to decipher because lines are not broken into readable format and most people won't bother to copy it. If they did copy your website, they would have to spend hours and hours going through every "published" page adding carriage returns manually.
  - Subscribe to every marketing/ advertising/ promotional/ publicity list you can find

and absorb the information there. Much of the information you find will be of marginal use, but some of it will be absolutely priceless and cutting edge information. It is obviously worth searching or digging through the garbage to find an idea that will make you a fortune. Go to <http://www.liszt.com> for a posting of over 84,000 mailing/discussion lists available on the net.

- I am still dumbfounded by the fact that there are so many companies on the net with a one or two page description of the company and a phone number to call for products/services and pricing. No specific target market, no benefits, no streamlined and easy way to order... and probably **no sales either**. This is simply a ludicrous waste of our time, search engine space and bandwidth. **If you are going to set up a webpage, do it right or don't do it at all.**

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## Domain Name

It seems like everybody is in a hurry to get their own domain name. It costs approximately \$70.00 so it is cost effective, and there are a few advantages to setting up this way.

The three main advantages to having your own domain name are:

- 1. You are not held hostage by your Internet service provider (ISP), since you can move your domain name to any host. You may find that the original ISP may not offer the services, quality, or**

- speed you need as you grow so you want to change your ISP.**
- 2. It makes it easy for a customer to find you again (assuming you have a easy domain name to remember).**
  - 3. If you have a "slick" domain name, it can entice people surfing the web to visit your site before someone else's. For example, if you performed a search for the keywords "Internet business marketing" in a search engine, in the results you would get hundreds of sites to visit. Let's say the following sites come up at the top of the search results:**

**<http://www.abc.com/nrl/stevespage>,  
<http://www.zenith.com/help.html> and  
<http://www.marketingtips.com>**

Which one would you go to first? You can see the domain name **marketingtips.com** explains exactly what they are going to get when they visit the site, and therefore it generates far more traffic.

I should explain why I don't have a domain name for **Car Secrets**. When the Internet was much younger (back in 1995), there were not nearly as many companies online as there are now. Many people assume that a domain name that ends in **.com** has something to sell and most people are looking for **free information** when they are on the Internet. By having a longer URL, it looked like I was an individual with a simple webpage who was just giving away information.

That's why we have always used the URL <http://www.igs.net/carsecrets/> for the book and software package **Car Secrets Revealed**, as opposed to <http://www.carsecrets.com>. (by the

*NOTES:*

way, we just purchased the domain <http://www.carsecrets.com> to complement our first domain purchase of <http://www.cartips.com>).

But as you can see, I ran into a problem as time went on and the Internet changed. Once I became well known on the web and everyone was linking to me (and my URL was set up to get great results from the search engines), I couldn't change my ISP if I was unhappy with their performance (which luckily, I wasn't!). If I gave up this URL to get my own domain name or change my ISP, **I would lose all those visitors and the "foothold" I had in the market.**

Everyone knew me as the URL <http://www.igs.net/carsecrets/> and all the work I did to get reciprocal links and great ranking in the search engines was pointing to the URL <http://www.igs.net/carsecrets/>. That is why I have never changed it.

I could always go back to **every** site that is linked to me and ask them to change the listing... and resubmit my listing to **all** the search engines. But it is just not worth the time and effort and the chance of some sites not re-linking to me once I notify them of the change in address.

The concept behind this webpage was to keep people who are surfing the net "hooked" by letting them think they might get free information regarding automotive tips without letting them know we were selling something until they get three quarters of the way down the page. We used a marketing concept that suggests by the time they got  $\frac{3}{4}$  into the page they would have read **all the benefits** of what can be learned and therefore be much more

inclined to buy the book. The moral of the story is **IT WORKED!**

Please keep in mind that as time has passed, having a long URL instead of a domain name has become a less important factor as many of the new sites ending in **.com** are not always trying to sell something. Many of your customers will be new Internet users as well, and will not know or be worried about how the address looks. This was more important in years gone by since so many customers were long-time Internet users and wise to this.

To summarize: get your own domain name and get it quick... they are going **REALLY FAST!** At this point it hard to find a really good one.

So that you can understand how the sales process works at my **Car Secrets** site and how they do not know they are being sold something until 3/4 down the webpage, click on the following link to view a copy of the site (it is 3 pages long):

[Car Secrets Sales Process Screens](#)

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## **The Importance of Tracking**

Although conversion-to-sale figures are very important for analyzing the effectiveness of your sales presentation, it should be noted that a close analysis of profitability should be included as well. Remember too that "repeat customer value" should be seriously taken into account (we will get more in depth regarding this concept in a later lesson). This is **commonly**

**overlooked**, and profits are often lost because of it.

In other words, don't get caught up in what it costs you to get the **first sale**. This is very short sighted. You should also look at the figures to see how much an average client will buy from you over a given period of years. This is what the real customer is worth, not the profit or cost of the first sale you make.

So what is considered a good sale conversion ratio? In direct mail, an average of 3% of the people that receive the mailing will order (assuming it is a good sales letter). It is even harder on the net because it *so easy* for a prospect to click to another webpage, and once they do, **they are gone forever**. It is not like a piece of paper that stays in your prospect's hands for a few moments. On the Internet the **average conversion ratio** is 0.2%. In other words, for every 1000 people that visit your site, approximately 2 will buy. I will show you how to **easily increase this to 1.5 - 2% (a 1000% increase)**. You can get it as high as 4%, but anything higher than this is extremely rare.

Don't take this low purchase ratio as an insult or a sign that you are a failure. If you owned a store in a physical mall and 99% of your potential customers walked out the door you should be very concerned. With a virtual store **this is normal**, so be prepared for it and **don't take it personally**. abc@aol.com is not a walking, talking person and you don't have the person to person contact so that you can bat your eyes and "charm wallets out of pockets" (a little joke on my part just in case you were taking me too seriously... but you get my point).

What if you are selling a product that could be found in any local store? How do you get

## NOTES:

customers to buy from *you*? The key is to offer something that they cannot get locally.

For example, if you were selling music CD's, instead of just offering the titles and prices, you could have a background page available for each major artist. When someone clicks on Michael Bolton's new album, there might be a link to a short stats page, biography, or even fan club page (if there is one - ha!) for Michael Bolton. You may even have a certain section of your webpage for what you recommend as the "great albums of all time". You could have a special deal where after the first 4 CD's are purchased, the fifth one is half price or something to that effect. All of these items will add supplementary value to your product that **will entice consumers to buy from you instead of at a local store.**

When music shoppers go into a retail store, they are going to find the CD that they want and leave. But if they come to your virtual store, you can educate them, tease them, give them information and bonuses they cannot get at the retail store, offer selection the retail store cannot, and make the purchase interesting. This will keep them at your site and entice them to explore, buy more, and come back next time they're in the market for compact discs.

It is absolutely necessary to collect and analyze website statistics in order to plan your future marketing strategies. In other words, you want to keep track of (at a minimum):

- who is viewing your website (i.e. what domain name they are registered at such as AOL, Netcom, MSN, etc.),
- the number of visitors and pageviews you receive per day/week/month,

*NOTES:*

- which pages are accessed the most,
- what hours of the day your site receives the most traffic,
- what website did the visitor come from?

Most ISP's will supply you with this information.

There are many different statistics you can receive. For example, some will only give you the number of files that were accessed (how many hits you had per page); others will let you know how many people went to that page, did not download the whole thing and went somewhere else. It is detailed information like this that you need to improve your site. It may for example, show your graphics are too big and people are not waiting to download and leaving.

Let's say that your business offers two products that are accessible from your home page; bookshelf brand A, and bookshelf brand B. Unfortunately, sales of Brand B (although product quality and brand name recognition is similar) are slumping severely. By viewing your server logs you might find out only 1/3 the number of people visiting brand A's page are even hitting brand B's link! This problem can be addressed in a number of ways - page layout, creating different graphics for the two products, etc.

If you go ahead and alter your site, you can then monitor the traffic and see how the changes have affected sales. It might turn out brand B is simply not as desirable as brand A, or it may turn out that an adjustment to the site structure was all that was necessary for boosting sales of B.

We have tried many website statistical programs... and by far the best is a product



called *WebTrends*. Some of you may have heard of it.

You get some of the information from the ISP, but not the "really good" information that you can use to really improve your site and make it sell better.

Here are some of the things that it can tell you from your website logs:

- How many unique visitors you had, how many page views, how many people visited more than once... all per day, per week, or per month
- How long people stay at your site (and how long they stay at your most popular pages) to see what pages are the most interesting to your visitors and which you have to improve on
- What are the "least requested pages"(i.e. which pages to change or get rid of)
- What are the "top exit pages" - where your visitors are getting bored... so change that page
- Tracks "flow" through the site... what path people take through the site (where they enter the site and what pages they go to from there). This is critical to make sure you are leading people to your salesletter
- If you have downloadable files (like software, video files, etc.), it will show you the stats on what files are downloaded the most/least to tell you which ones people are "hot" for
- How about a list of client errors your visitor encountered so that you can fix them (so visitors do not have this problem again)

## *NOTES:*

- What other websites sent you the most traffic. It will check to see where the visitor came from and keep track of all this - critical to your success and see what links are making you money
- What keywords and key phrases people are using to find your site through search engines... how many of each search engines sent these customer to you and under which keywords - this is critical information for search engine targeting. Knowing how high you are ranked in search engines under certain keywords... and how many people are actually clicking on your link for each search engine is a different story.
- How many spiders visited your site (i.e. did AltaVista or Infoseek re-catalog your site this month?)
- What were your most popular pages (and how long they stayed there for)
- What pages visitors found your site through at first (which webpage they come to first in your site). And which was the least popular entry pages
- What webpages visitors came into the most and just left without surfing the site (these are the pages you need to change to keep visitors at your site!)
- Where your visitors are coming from (what country and what states)... gives you great stats on targeting your market based on geographical location
- What were you busiest times of the day, week, weekend, etc.

## NOTES:

- Letting you know what "page not found" errors your visitors were getting and what page they were trying to access (so you can build that page or redirect that page so you don't lose visitors).
- What percentage of your visitors are using what browsers. For example, you may find that 10% of your visitors are using Netscape 3.04 which does not support Flash... or you may find that 3% are using IE 2.0 which means they cannot see your website properly if you are using Javascript. This also allows you to make educated judgement calls on future website designs... for example, if you know that 90% of all your visitors are using IE and Netscape 4.0+ then you know that if you use Shockwave or Flash in the future, that only 10% of your visitors will not be able to view your special presentation... not 50% of your visitors (which it may have been if you didn't have these stats).
- What percentage of your visitors are using different operating systems... how many are using MAC, Windows 95, Windows 98, Windows NT, Windows 3.x, Unix, etc.
- It will even automatically download your log files at a certain time of the month and extract the information for you automatically!

### **Can you see how important some of this information could be to your success?**

Note that all these stats that *WebTrends* produces are just not "the most popular" or the "least popular" *blah, blah, blah*, but actually give you all the exact counts so you know exactly how many visitors for "page not found errors",

## NOTES:

how many people visited one page and left your site, how many people were sent to you from Yahoo (and how many per keyword), exactly how many people were sent to you from other top-referring websites, etc.

The only unfortunate things about *WebTrends*, is that it is not cheap... it's \$400.

I am not saying that you need to have this software to be successful... don't go out and buy it tomorrow unless you can afford it, your ISP should give you the main information and stats you need. But as you get more into promoting your site, this information will be very valuable (let the profits from the site pay for the software). What I am trying to say it that when it is time to buy website log analyzer software, this is the only one you want to buy... we have tried over 15 different ones and by far this was the **best**, hands down.

On a side note, if you do want a copy at some point, we talk to *WebTrends* to see if we could arrange for you to buy it directly from them at a better price... but they just wouldn't budge.

Let me say these guys know how to build fantastic, useful software... but they just don't know how to market it. When we contacted them and mentioned we would have hundreds and hundreds of customers wanting to buy this software from them (so we wanted them to give our clients a special price for these quantities), the salesman acted like he didn't care if it sold us one copy much less a thousand copies... he just couldn't care less!

It was unbelievable... I could only imagine how well they would do with a great sales force.

They did say **we** could buy it wholesale (which is not much of a price break by the way) and then

resell it to our customer for a lower price. To be frank, we didn't want to get in the middle of this, but this is the only way we can get you a better price. We are trying to negotiate a better price all the time so I don't want to print a price of what it will cost in this course as it may change in the near future (but it will be definitely lower than \$375). If you need a copy, go to <http://www.marketingtips.com/webtrends.html> and there will be more details on the software and the lowest price humanly possible that we can get for you.

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## **Common Mistakes to Avoid**

Some of the mistakes to avoid when building your website are:

1. Forgetting to test your ideas out on live customers. No visitors means no traffic, and no traffic equals no feedback. Don't be afraid to lose a few sales testing different marketing approaches. Once you find a sales approach that pulls the best, you will make these lost sales back ten-fold on the increase in orders you will get over the next few months with a winning sales approach.
2. Scaring a visitor off with a great big ad. In other words, don't make it too obvious that you are trying to sell them something right up front. Selling is like the tedious art of seduction - if you move too fast you'll turn them off quick and lose the deal. You want to create credibility for yourself and your business and make the customer aware of what they will gain by getting

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- their hands on your product before you actually try to "sell them something".
3. Creating great traffic but failing to ask for the customer's money. Quite often we lose out on a perfect job of generating traffic but fail to ask for the order, ask for the order, and ask for the order again. You cannot fathom how much your sales will increase by just simply asking for the order... and of course as mentioned before, make it extremely clear, simple and easy for them to place their order.
  
  4. Neglecting to continually promote your site is another pitfall to avoid. Without generating leads and website traffic, you are out of the game even before it ever begins. There are so many things you can do to create traffic, all of which are listed throughout this course. Just for example, you could be posting classifieds and creating some active discussions in newsgroups and mailing lists; posting announcements on online classified websites and mailing lists; registering your site in the top ten search engines; exchanging reciprocal links with non-competing sites in your industry; purchasing sponsorship banners on similar and non-competing websites; posting lead generating articles in online libraries; publishing articles and submitting them to magazines, newsletters and radio; or you could be using conventional methods of advertising like publishing your email address and URL on brochures, business cards, letterhead and press releases etc.

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5. Creating flash and not function. There is a big misunderstanding wherein people think that the more interesting and "cool" their site is, the more people want to hang around and purchase the products/service. This is completely false. Not only do fancy graphics take a long time to download (so you lose customers that do not wait for the download time and move on), but they can detract from the sales message you are trying so hard to relay.
  
6. Bad HTML coding and incompatibility with any major web browser is another major mistake. Make sure everything is simple, nicely laid out and easy to read. Don't use anything but light colored and solid background colors and dark straightforward text (preferably black). Anything else is difficult to read. Also note that some HTML coding will only apply to certain browsers. It is important to keep your pages simple so things look the same through a Netscape browser as they would if viewed using an AOL or Internet Explorer browser.
  
7. Failure to automate right from the beginning. Many people presume that since they are small, they don't have to invest their time in automating, thinking it would be better to process all their orders manually. Even if you can afford the time, it is very easy to get bogged down in the processing of orders and customer service. This is time you could have spent marketing your business and earning income. This is the incredible importance of complete automation, and you'll become especially aware of it when your business

## *NOTES:*

- starts to grow. You want to spend your time marketing and promoting your business so it grows, not just doing paper work and filling orders.
8. Sending your visitors away as soon as they get to your site. Since you worked so hard to get them there in the first place, don't have unnecessary links away from your site on your home page. Every day I see sites that have logos and links to sites they recommend right on their main page. It is perfectly fine (and recommended for reciprocal links) to have a webpage on your site that is devoted to links to other related sites, but for goodness sake don't do this on your main page. Introduce your company and produce the sales message before you give visitors the alternative to leave your site. I see sites that have a little notice that reads "This site works best with Netscape: Click here to download a copy now". This is what I am talking about, and is an easy way of shooting yourself in the foot. You have worked so hard to get the customer to come to your site, and the first thing you tell them is to go away and download somebody else's product? Don't think so.

## **Reciprocal Links: How Important Are They?**

For those that have not been on a "link hunt" before, what you do is search the same keywords that you have for your own site (and other similar words) and surf all the sites that the search engines come up with.



## NOTES:

Manually surf all the sites and get the name and email address from each site you would like to exchange links with, and write them all a personal note (this note will be the key to getting the "right" links, and will be discussed in the following few paragraphs). Please note that you should only be writing down sites that are good match for your operation and are generating traffic. You don't want to be contacting sites that have only had 600 visitors in the last 3 months; it's not worth your time and effort.

Now, I do recommend that you do this manually. It will take you a few days (and depending on your industry, over a week) to surf all the sites and it can be very time consuming. However, there is a way to have your computer automatically do this for you. You can use a program like *SuperSonic* which automates it all for you. This program will simultaneously search up to 27 search engines and make a list of up to 1000 sites per search engine. Turn it on before you go to bed one night and it will crawl through all those websites that are related to your industry and come back with all the website addresses, site titles, and email addresses for the people you are looking for. It will save these addresses into a file for you to send a message to the next day. This is a real time saver... **but** understand that *SuperSonic* cannot tell if the site it retrieved is: (1) your competition, (2) a site that doesn't have a lot of visitors, or (3) a site that is not really related to your industry/product (even though it was on the list from the search engines). That is why it is better to take the time and do it manually... but if you want to use *SuperSonic*, for your convenience, we have made a webpage at our site that explains the software and has a link to the order pages. Check it out at:

<http://www.marketingtips.com/supersonic.html>

**Almost everyone** simply asks for a reciprocal link with the other sites they find. Many people just send an email mentioning they think it would be nice to link to each other (in more or less words). Many people don't even target their reciprocal link offers and just offer it to any site in the hope of gathering more traffic. The trouble is, anyone that has a valuable high traffic site **will ignore these types of requests**. You have to work to make **an impact** with the sites you are approaching, because you will be contacting sites that most likely have more traffic than you and are more established than you will be.

You can get an **enormous** amount of business from links, so spend a lot of time on this and don't take it lightly. If you set your reciprocal links up correctly, **they will bring you continuous sales for years and years to come.**

The **key** to getting a site to say "yes" to a reciprocal link is to suggest all the **benefits** of doing so for the sites you are contacting. Don't just offer them a reciprocal link. You want to show the other parties *why* it would be advantageous for them to link to you. Offer something your competitors can't. This demonstration of benefits is **especially critical** since it is your job to link with the larger sites your competitors are not on... or sites that generally do not often exchange reciprocal links with others. These are the sites which, if you are persistent and create a relationship with them, will provide the links you need to make lots of money for years to come.

The key element in getting reciprocal links is *persistence*. It may seem like a waste of time to be petitioning sites you want at first, but it will pay off in the future when the orders start to roll

## NOTES:

in from those links. Remember, once you are up on someone else's site the chances of them pulling you down is almost **nil**. To put it another way... once you get situated in a good reciprocal location, you will have orders generating from that **spot for years to come**. You have to look at reciprocals not just as an exchange of links, but as a \$5,000-10,000 deal because if you get the **right** reciprocal links... *each one can bring you \$5,000-\$10,000 or more in net profit each and every year.*

You may get a lot of reciprocal links and true, most of them will not bring you much in the way of large volumes of sales. But when you combine those links together, you will find that it will generate a good volume of leads/sales. You will also find that about five or ten links will **really pay big**, compared with the rest. That's why you should spend some time trying to get reciprocal links with the bigger sites... they can really make you tons of money in the long run.

Also note that you will get a few pleasant surprises... one or two small sites you thought would not be good performers will turn out to be **some of the best**. This is because the owner didn't know how many visitors he or she was getting when in fact it might be a lot, this has happened to me more than once.

There are a few things you must do to get these all, important reciprocal links. First, your request must be personalized. Address them by name or mention their URL so your prospects know you are emailing them individually. You don't want to "spam" them, since they will notice you are mailing a lot of people and your message will get ignored.

**Note:** *A program such as Mailloop will individually email every site and personalize the*

**NOTES:**

*email to address the owner by first name, URL, or whatever*  
[\(<http://www.marketingtips.com/maillloop.html>\).](http://www.marketingtips.com/maillloop.html)

A lot of people are trying to get reciprocal links between sites, so you will have to come across a little different than the rest to get the attention you will need. Again, you want to present them with benefits the others don't. For example, if you were in the laser printer business, you could write and email all the sites saying you have some really informative articles on printer cleaning and maintenance that will make it last **twice** as long. You would mention to the prospective link that 'their visitors' would be very interested in this subject and appreciate the information. Then you suggest they provide a link to your webpage with the maintenance articles, while at the same time providing a link back to them from that same page. Explain that the visitors you both get are very similar target groups, and that it would be **beneficial** to offer links to each other so you **both** can grow from each other's visitors.

Once you have responses and are set up with reciprocal links to the people who accepted your offer, remove these people from your long email list and send the remaining people a polite "follow-up" letter. Tell them in the note that you did not hear back from them and were disappointed because you felt the visitors to each other's sites were similar and a **perfect opportunity** for increasing traffic at each other's sites. Mention that you look forward to hearing back from him or her, and ask them to send you a quick note even if they're not interested so you can know why.

If you are contacting a site that has very large traffic or is very hard to get a reciprocal link

**NOTES:**

from, you could mention in your "follow up" email an offer that would be **hard for them to refuse**. Offer to put a **big** "write-up/review" with your **personal** recommendation to visit their site on your main page in exchange for a simple text link to your site. Tell them that's how much you like their website and you feel it would be mutually beneficial to exchange links. This will give you an advantage over anyone else trying to secure a reciprocal link to them.

**Important Tip:** *In the Banner Lesson we will talk about contacting sites to sponsor or advertise on. If they do not accept your offer for sponsorship or advertising (which we will review in a future lesson), you can contact them and offer a reciprocal link as a "last case scenario". This way you are maximizing your contact with every related site to yours.*

## **Lesson # 3**

# **The Sales Process - Creating Killer Copy**

Creating a successful sales letter is one of the most important aspects of your business' success or failure.

This lesson will cover the tips and tricks of building a sales message, whether it is on your website, autoresponder, newsgroup posting or wherever you are presenting your sales message.

We have discussed sales letter techniques in the *Website Lesson*. Not everything could be covered in that lesson, so this lesson is designed to build on that information.

One of the most important things that cannot be taken for granted when marketing online is that **you must really believe in your product or service**. If you don't, forget it... people will pick up on it in an instant, and it will reflect on all your sales dramatically. If you truly believe your product or service is something very special, everything you write, say, or do with it will be done with enthusiasm. This enthusiasm will be read in your sales letter, literature and even simple email... and it is very difficult to fake.

Before we get into the meat of this material, I should mention that the word "copy," as used in this lesson, means the "body" of your sales letter or your "sales pitch" to avoid confusion. In other words, instead of saying, "I want to rewrite my sales letter," I may say, "I need to redo some of my copy." Or I might say "this is good copy," instead of "this is a good sales letter."

### **General Tips**

- Don't use all capital letters in the text of your sales message. It slows the average reader down 30% and can be very annoying. Only use caps when you want to emphasize a point, but also consider using

**bold** text.

- Make the sales letter or sales message enticing. Either make it interactive or use exciting words so the reader doesn't fall asleep reading a bunch of sterile text.
- Use short words and short sentences if possible. People can't and won't read long complicated copy.
- Make sure everything is done in a logical order so one point flows naturally to the next, making the offer simple to follow. Explain to the prospect who you are. Explain the benefits of the product or service. Be clear and proactive about asking for the order. Ask yourself "Is everything explained in detail about how the order works so the customer feels comfortable? If they have any questions, do I ask them to contact me?"
- Get testimonials and publish them. It is easy to email your past customers asking them to rate your service or product. By posting these comments in your sales message it creates credibility for you and your business. There are many ways to get testimonials, but one of the easiest ways is to offer your product free to a few people "in exchange" for their comments on it. Explain that their testimonial could be used in your national advertising campaign, or in magazine or TV ads (assuming that you will grow big enough to advertise in these mediums).
- Write your sales letter as though you were talking **to** somebody, not **at** them. Use informal language and keep everything simple and easy to understand. It is difficult to make a sale if the customer does not feel like they are getting personal attention. Stay clear of big words and complex concepts. Once you are done with the letter, read it out loud and ask yourself "does this sound like me when I am talking?"
- You are what you write. Make sure all your information is clear, concise, effective, and error

## NOTES:

free. Simple things like poor spelling will convey unprofessionalism. Vague writing style will not only cost you sales, but also cost you extra time answering questions that should have become clear the first time.

- “Free” is a very powerful word. Do not advertise “free samples” if you expect the user to pay for postage or something else. If you abuse this word you’ve lost your credibility and your sales will plummet. Free means “without any cost to the consumer”.
- Describe your products using benefits rather than features. For example, don’t say “ this xxxx has a,b,c,d....instead say the xxxx will save you time and money because it has a,b, and c features. Define the ultimate benefits your clients want by putting them into terms they can easily understand (i.e. “laymen’s” terms, no big words or difficult sentence structure).

Your potential customers do not care if your product is “super-strength” or if it will last longer, look better, what it is designed for, or every feature it has... what they care about is what it will do for them (i.e. benefits, benefits, benefits!). Show them how your product is a solution to their problem. By offering benefits instead of features, you are creating a higher perceived value, **which translates into more sales.**

The real question at hand is “how to get these benefits” (also known as a "hot-button"). It is relatively easy. List your product or service’s features on a piece of paper. On another sheet of paper list all the benefits affiliated with each feature. If you can’t think of a benefit for a feature, don’t even bother listing that feature in your sales literature.

When you create your sales letter, briefly list the feature and then give a detailed description of the benefit.



Let's think about how important this is by examining a quick example:

Did you buy a car with air conditioning just because it had a/c or because it would keep you very cool and comfortable on hot days? Did you buy it because it had antilock brakes and airbags, or because it was very safe for you and your family? See where I am coming from?

Benefits are not "quality and service" or "cheapest". They are the answers to "what's in it for me" or "why should I keep reading?" or "why should I order?" If you are selling a service that will increase your client's sales, give specifics. Don't just say, "by using this product your sales will increase", specify that "your sales will increase by up to 22% in 30 days or less".

- Try to place yourself in the position of the buyer and understand what they want, then show them how to fulfill that need. It is **much easier to sell a solution to a problem than it is to sell a feature or benefit**. Your marketing should highlight some of these problems, and then offer your product or service as an ideal solution.

For example, if you are a florist, instead of stating how low your prices are or how fresh your flowers are, you should realize that most people buy flowers to enhance their romance. So your slogan may say "Beautiful flowers are a way to put more romance in your life... and we can help".

People do not want shampoo... they want clean, great-looking hair! Some shampoo companies have generated profits by assuring that the shampoo cleans hairs, but then stressing how it solves the problem of unmanageable hair... a benefit and a solution to a problem.

- Be careful with the words you use. For example, saying "We are the best and we are cheaper than everyone else" is too strong, and poorly written. It makes you look like a cheap small business. Saying "Serving you with quality and low prices" promises

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or conveys a benefit to the reader. Also it uses the word “you” and the promise is not overstated (not too hyped).

There are certain words that have the power to turn prospects on and **motivate them to buy**. Some examples of words that make people want to read on are:

Free	Sale	Discover	Natural
Love	Now	Introduce	Fast
Safe	Value	Easy	Precious
New	Fun	Your	Secret
Benefits	Save	Proven	Solution
Right	Gain	Penetrate	Magic
You	Money	Suddenly	Comfortabl e
Alternativ e	Happy	Proud	
Security	Advice	Healthy	
	How to	Guarantee	

Some **words to avoid** because they make people want to stop reading are:

Buy	Failure	Cost	Loss
Difficult	Decision	Sell	Hard
Death	Fail	Taxes	Contract
Obligation	Bad	Liability	
Wrong	Deal	Worry	

- Always **transfer ownership** in your sales letters to make them more personal by using “*you*” and “*your*”. Say “*You* will learn...”, not “the book has...” or “*your* widget will be delivered in 5 days”, not “the widget will be delivered in five days.” Count the number of “you’s” and “your’s” in your sales material. You should have at least twice as many “you’s” and “your’s” as “I’s”, “we’s”, “me’s”, “our’s” or the company’s name.
- “Fear of loss” and “desire of gain” should be something that is utilized in all sales material. “Fear of loss” is much more powerful though. This is what you may lose, risk or waste if you do not buy. What capital you gain or save if you do buy the product is based on desire as opposed to fear. This desire should still be considered a remarkable

**NOTES:**

sales tool.

- Offer a “no questions asked money back guarantee”. Be very specific, explain every detail and use the guarantee as a condition of doing business. If you have a good product you won't have many returns.
- Be very clear about how to order and exactly what they will receive. Come up with a really dynamite reason for someone to respond to your sales letter. Offer some kind of bonus or discount if they order immediately.
- Make sure that you have multiple ways of ordering including directly online, 800 number, fax, and/or snail mail.
- Develop a relationship early. Don't be afraid to tell a story so that the prospect feels like they know you or your business. For example, with two one-hour photo stores, one store charges \$3.00 more for processing. When one of the customers asked “why?”, the more expensive store gave him a tour of their facilities, pointed out their \$80,000 piece of machinery, explained how they were specially trained to operate that machinery. He then pointed out their special print and chemical recycling program (environmentally friendly), and their policy of redoing prints at their own expense if the photos weren't up to their demanding standards...

**Do you have a story to tell? Tell it in your sales material. Don't jump into the presentation too soon... build rapport first.**

- If you have a local business, use the Internet to do what you currently can't. In a retail environment you cannot explain every feature and benefit of a product, exciting developments, and describe the culture and history of the product. But on the web you have the time and room to get into all this. By

## NOTES:

telling your story the customer feels more comfortable and therefore will be more apt to buy your product (however, don't bore them to death — make sure you keep everything lively).

- When you have finished writing sales material... **NEVER** send it out immediately. Always put it aside for a day or two and then rewrite it to make it simpler, clearer and more enticing. After that, have a couple of affiliates or friends read it to make sure everything you are trying to get across to the reader is creating an impact. There is a definite advantage in a fresh pair of eyes looking over your sales material.

### Specific Website Tips

- Avoid using bright colors on your webpage, especially for longer text because it causes eye strain very quickly. Reserve color for small graphics or to attract attention to what you want people to do (i.e. order, register, more info, etc.) (highlighting commands).
- Think of the poor sap running with a 14.4 modem and test each of your webpages at this speed. Also, look at your webpages with your monitor set to 640 by 480, 800 by 600, even as high 1280 by 1024. This will allow you to get an idea of how it will look on other monitors. This is commonly overlooked... and you will be very surprised at how many problems you will find. **So do it now!** Failure to do so can cost you a lot of sales!
- Make sure that you have an email link (or access to a “contact” webpage) on every page of your site so people can contact you if they have questions. Although this may sound strange, it is more inviting and personal because it shows you are not hiding from the public.

## NOTES:

- At the beginning of your site or sales message, suggest "bookmarking" your site. This encourages repeat visits (and therefore repeat sales). Also make the title of your page descriptive as to what's on it. Therefore, it is certainly useful when among a long list of bookmarks.
- If you are giving away free information (i.e. tips or an informative article), present hyper-links that lead to your sales message within, or right after each piece of content you give. The perfect time to present your sales message to a customer is either during or right after you have presented them with interesting content. If you were selling your product and you had an informative article about that product or about the industry, you could say something like: "This article is written by John Smith of ABC company... [Click Here](#) to find more information about John's solution to a problem". The solution to the problem may be John Smith's product and this link would go directly to his sales message.

If you are selling an information product, whether it be software, book or a newsletter you can say, "this article was an excerpt from John Smith's book, *War of the Ages*. To find out how to get your own copy, [click here now](#)." Note that the words "click here now" is a hyper-link to the sales message.

Make sure your webpage site is well-organized and easy for people to find their way around. Have a link to your home page, contents page and ordering instructions on **every page**. People may enter your site on webpages other than your main page because they come by it via search engine or a link from another website. Make sure they can get to the rest of your site with ease.

## **Importance of Testing Your Offer**

Many people think there is one 'magic pill' or 'silver bullet' that will get instant results when marketing online. While there are a few techniques that do bring incredible results, there is no one magic pill that will make you rich overnight. **It is the process of testing, evaluating, changing, and re-testing that will ultimately bring you the maximum profits. Don't ever forget this.**

When trying to increase the response to your offer, you want to test three items.

1. Change the headline or opening sentence (this is the first impact you have on a potential customer).
2. Change your offer (make your offer the most appealing it can be).
3. Change your pricing (if it is too cheap, some will think it is no good... if it is too expensive, some will not be able to afford it or think it is not worth it).

Make sure you do these three things one at a time so you can measure the results.

Also remember to test on a small scale and then roll out to a big emailing once you have a winning ad.

If you are not getting very good results, I **highly recommend** that you pick up the phone and call some of the people who you sent your offer to. This may be uncomfortable to do, but it is **critical** because you will find out exactly where you are going wrong and how to correct it.

Call them and simply state that you are trying to improve your business, and customer relations and you would appreciate it if they could answer a few questions. This helps in understanding what your customers want and don't want. State that you would

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appreciate an honest answer, no matter how good or bad it is. You will want to ask them such things as:

Did you get my letter?

Did you read it?

Did you find yourself interested?

What kept you from ordering?

What would convince you to order?

What did you not like about the information I sent you?

What did you like about the information I sent you?

Do you have any concerns or questions that were not answered in the information I sent you?

I will admit, it is not easy to do this... but what you will learn from this will **skyrocket your profits** with the adjustments you will make to your marketing campaign. I can't stress this enough.

Another great way to test a salesletter is to give it to a few strangers and ask them to read it (this is an old Gary Halbert technique). Then ask if they think it is a good salesletter. You can do this in a pub or restaurant... just try to pick people who are your target market (the type of person who would be purchasing your product.). Here is the trick answer... yes, trick "answer" not trick "question." When you ask if it is a good salesletter, if they reply "yes, that was a great salesletter"... **you just failed - go back to your keyboard and write it again.** You want them to answer "where can I get this?" If you get that answer, the sales copy is perfect... run it!

There is no such thing as an "unsuccessful test." You always learn from every test if you do it right. Every "failed test" brings you one step closer to the "winning ad or salesletter." With a "failed ad," you are always finding out something: you need to increase your price, you need to lower it, you need to present your offer differently, you need to target a different market, you need to pay less for your advertising to make money, you need to develop an easier ordering system for your customers, you need to improve your website

and make it easier to navigate, you need more compelling sales copy, etc. **You will always learn something from a test!**

## **Targeting Is a Key To Success**

“Targeting” is a very big key to your success on the Internet.

**If you offer the right product to the right audience, you will get orders. It’s that simple!**

The fact is that if you have a decent product to sell, you don’t have to use a lot of gimmicks to sell it. All you need is to write a strong sales letter that shows the benefits to the potential customer (which makes them want to order) and then get it out to the **audience** that wants to buy your product — that is the formula for success!

There are two major mistakes that people make when targeting.

First, many people want to serve everyone all of the time. The problem is that they are letting 20% of their prospects take up all their time. In other words, 80% of your customers will come very easily, but there will be a small percentage that you will have to work for or will require a lot of customer service (that is just business). For example, if 20% of your customers are overseas, don’t speak English, and have different cultural backgrounds you will need a different approach. You can maximize your potential if you cater to these customers by offering websites and sales messages in different languages, or special incentives or options for foreign orders.

Be creative but **don’t compromise your efficiency by doing so**. It may be the case that these overseas customers require a lot more correspondence to close a sale. They may not feel comfortable buying overseas or they may be more demanding of your time because



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of long distance customer service or technical problems once the product is received. This can take up a horrendous amount of time and effort.

Concentrate your efforts on the majority of your client base. **I would rather work 1 hour a day and make \$100,000 a year instead of working eight hours a day to make \$120,000 a year. Know when to cut your losses!**

And don't think your product is suited for everyone in a certain industry. **This is the most common and biggest mistake you can make when targeting. It is better to find a niche market and dominate it than trying to market your product to a wide range of people.**

In other words if 80% of your client base is American males between the age of 25 and 40 who have an interest in home computing... this should be your target market, not every single human being on the earth is interested in home computing!

It is absolutely critical to have **a real target market**. It is very easy to lose sight when you are consumed with your own business and products. Thinking that your product applies to everybody or a huge segment of people (otherwise known as "you can't see the trees for the forest") can be costly. You have to define one or a few small target markets that will bring in the majority of your sales.

Let me give you a perfect example:

As you probably know, I wrote the book called **Car Secrets Revealed**. It was designed to be the "mother of all car books". It has fantastic money saving tips if you were trying to buy a new car, owned a car and were looking for tips on repairs, insurance and everyday driving. It contained the answer to reducing every automotive expense you could imagine. In other words any one of the 200 million car owners in North America should have this book, right? Wow! I was

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thinking, "this should be a huge hit! This is a huge market that the book **directly** applies to...If I sell it to only a small portion of the market, I will be very wealthy".

But after the book was published and we sold a few copies, we noticed sales were not anywhere as high as they should have been. We couldn't understand why people that owned cars would not want this book... especially with the diversity of the information and the lifetime money-back guarantee. We issued a survey via email to the first 500 people that bought the book. A copy of that survey follows:

To:  
From:  
Subject: Your Help

Dear Friend,

Thank you for ordering "Car Secrets Revealed" in the past.

I am Corey Rudl, the author of the book/software you received. I am sending out this email in hopes that we can get feedback from you on our product and service (and how to improve).

Since no one likes taking the time to fill out a survey... I wanted to motivate you by offering a free 6 month subscription to the new CarTips(TM) newsletter. This will feature money-saving tips and tricks on all aspects of car buying, car repairs, car insurance, and more. These subscriptions normally sell for \$49.95 per year, but by completing this survey and emailing it back to us you will receive six months FREE with no obligation to purchase any further issues. The new CarTips(TM) newsletter is due to be released in one month.

I really appreciate your time and help to show us what you enjoyed about our product and service... and what we can improve on.

I also should make it clear that the information you submit to us is completely confidential and your email address has never, and will never be given to anyone or any mailing list.

This survey is just to help us better understand our clients and what they want from Car Secrets. We want to serve you better.

Just type your answers below the questions.

Please answer the questions honestly... even if what you have to say is "bad". We want to know what our strengths and weaknesses are.

= = = = =  
Survey Questions  
= = = = =

#1) Did you buy the book/software because:

- a) You were buying a new car in the near future?
- b) You were buying a used car in the near future?
- c) Interested in repair rip-offs?
- d) Interested in general cost-cutting techniques?
- e) Interested because there were so many topics about cars covered in the book?
- f) Wanted to know how to drive a luxury car for free every year?
- g) Liked that you could get the info within 24 hours via email?
- h) Other?: \_\_\_\_\_

Note: If you bought the book for multiple reasons, try to rate them on a scale of 1-5, 1 being the most important and 5 being the least important. You can just mark 1-5 beside each reason you bought (listed a-d).

#2) What would you change about the book/software if you could (what did you not like)?

#3) What did you like about the book/software the best?

#4) How was our service?... Was everything delivered on time?

#5) *(This question has been omitted from this reprint as it is not applicable anymore)*

#6) What other kind of automotive information would you be interested in (we are trying to come up with new products all the time)... in other words, what would you want to know more about?

#7) Do you have any opinions about our webpage: Good? Bad? Changes?

#8) What is your age?

#9) Are you male/female?

#10) Do you have an automotive related website on the Internet (either a commercial or personal site)?

#11) Do you own an Internet business of any kind?

#12) When you bought "Car Secrets Revealed", did you buy any other products near the same time frame that are in any way similar to "Car Secrets Revealed" (i.e. Car pricing reports, other automotive books, etc.)

= = = = =  
                  END OF SURVEY  
= = = = =

Thanks for filling out this survey, your input is very much appreciated. Please email your responses to [nicholas@igs.net](mailto:nicholas@igs.net) or simply reply to this message.

By completing this survey, you will automatically receive 6 months of the CarTips(TM) newsletter FREE OF CHARGE.

Thank You Again.

Corey Rudl  
Author

In our survey, 73% of the people who bought **Car Secrets Revealed** stated they bought it because they were buying a new or used vehicle in the next two weeks. This came as an incredible shock to us because we thought the majority of people were buying the book for the vast array of money saving tips in every category (whether it was buying, repairing, insurance, maintenance, etc.).

Because of this newly found marketing information, we changed our campaigns and went directly after new car buyers. **Within one month our sales jumped by 356%**. This goes to show you how important defining a target market really is!

On that note, make sure to survey your customers to find out why they really bought your product; don't just plan based on why "you think" they might have bought. **I cannot emphasize the importance of this** — you could find out you have an entire market you were neglecting with huge profit potential (like we did with **Car Secrets**).

There is no excuse for not doing this. With the Internet it is incredibly easy to send your customers an email message with the survey attached. Remember, it is the "quality of leads" **not** the "quantity of leads" that will bring in sales. For example, it will be easy to get 3000 people to request information from an autoresponder when you have a huge market with no targeted audience. But from this you'll probably get **zero orders**.

With the same sales letter, a **targeted market** that requested the information, and only 150 leads, you could generate 6 or 8 orders. You have to qualify them as quality customers and market your product to the proper target audience.

Let me give you another example from a retail perspective. There are many car detailing shops all of

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which charge about the same price for similar washing/waxing. So why did I pick *Attention to Detail* when choosing a company to clean my car?

Because they came to my house, picked up the car, did the work I needed, and returned it. I didn't have to waste my time trying to schedule when I could take my car down.... All I did was make a simple phone call and everything was taken care of. The funny part is that they **did not even offer that service** when they first started out. They surveyed the customers to find out what they wanted. They found out that people wanted the detail shop to do the work when the car was in their parking garage at work so they didn't have to waste their time taking it to the shop and wait for it. They immediately implemented this and advertised it. Their business has grown to an enormous size because of this!

The moral of the story is to watch what your competitors offer and see if you can get an advantage over them (i.e. faster service/delivery, on-site repairs, installation, longer guarantee, free gifts, more personal attention, superior quality, better trained / more knowledgeable employees, gift wrapping, and so on). And then use that as your main benefit to your clients.

And of course, don't ever "bad-mouth" your competition. This is not only bad business etiquette, but it will haunt you later as it dramatically decreases your credibility in the long run. You are **free to compare features and benefits and show why you have the better value**, but don't "slam" your competition. It makes you look very unprofessional and unethical. If you truly have a better product than the competition, with the right sales letter, the customer will know it.

## How to Write Killer Copy

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**Don't be afraid to get personal.** Would you rather buy something from a machine or a person?

The first thing I am going to mention has the most impact on the potential customer, even through it is not at the beginning of your sales letter. Ask for the order! Ask for the order! And then ask for the order again! As I said earlier in this lesson, I cannot emphasize this enough. You have no idea how many people simply do not ask for the order. It has been proven by marketing gurus, time and time again that sales can increase by at least 80% **by just simply asking for the order**. Notice how in all my webpages, I ask for the order, back it up with an extraordinary guarantee, and then guide them through step by step on how they can order. You can be very subtle... like a P.S. at the end of your letter stating your guarantee over again and explaining that they have nothing to lose by ordering. It could be as subtle as saying "your" book, or "your" product to transfer ownership.

Don't give the customer a monologue about your company. You want to "zero in on" **specific hot buttons** and show them the benefits they will get from your product or service. For example, if you were selling software, you don't want to tell them your software has features X, Y and Z; you want to **show them how those features will save them time, save them money, and make their life easier etc.** Show how your product or service can specifically benefit the customer, not just its features.

There is a real trick to guarantees. You may not know this, but with mail order, by Federal Postal Law, there is an automatic 30 day money-back guarantee you **must honor** to your customer if the product is shipped by U.S. or Canadian postal services. However, a real entrepreneur turns this guarantee into a marketing weapon by enhancing it and not just letting their customers know about it... **insist** this guarantee is a condition of doing business. This lets the customer know that you stand behind your product or service.

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In other words instead of just saying satisfaction guaranteed, you might want to make it a condition of the purchase. Let me give you an example. Here is a copy of my other book called **Secrets of Buying and Building Your Specialty Car on a Small Budget** book guarantee that has worked so well:

*If you want to order, I insist you do so entirely at my risk. That is why the book comes with a... **No Risk, 100% Unconditional Money-Back Guarantee.** There is absolutely NO RISK on your part with this **Lifetime** 100% Money-Back Guarantee. What I mean is, I want you to order without feeling you might "get taken." After all, I am a very respected consultant and my reputation is on the line. Therefore, I want you to order this material today... read it, use it... **if for any reason you aren't completely satisfied**, simply return it for an immediate refund of your purchase price. You simply can't lose.*

Let me guess what you are thinking... "What are you doing offering a LIFETIME guarantee?"

What I think you will find to be a very surprising fact is **that the longer your guarantee is for, the less the returns you will have.** In other words you will get less returns if you offer a one-year guarantee instead of a 30 day guarantee.

This instills two concepts:

1. the customer feels more confident that your product or service will live up to your promises because of the long guarantee you had the confidence to offer,
2. the customer does not feel that they are on a strict time limit to return the product .

What this means is that the customer does not feel rushed into having to review the product in the first



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couple of days after receiving it to qualify for the 30 day return period. With a one year guarantee (or more), even if they want to return it, it is easy to put off because they know they have a long period of grace... and it is then easier to forget about and it may never get returned.

You also want to put 'glamour' words in your guarantee. For example, "no risk", "no hassle", "100% unconditional", etc. makes your guarantee seem much more powerful.

Time is a very precious commodity on the net. You should be able to describe your company or what your company is about on the **first page** of your home page. Once you have a few sentences that work well, you can use them as a basis for email responses, newsgroup postings, mailing discussions, etc.

One myth about Internet marketing is that "hype" does not work. **This is completely false.** The theory was, most people on the Internet were college educated and quite intelligent and would therefore listen only to a more academic approach to selling a product or service than they would a flamboyant sales letter. The plain fact is that words such as "amazing", "astonishing", etc. pull in way more sales. Yes, there are a few out there that will be "turned off" by this type of approach, but my testing showed that the average number of orders **doubled and almost tripled** when we used glamour words and a very exciting sales letter. Words like "fantastic" and "free" increased our sales 200-300% as soon as the sales letters were redrafted.

We also have tried the "cut and dried" or "level headed" sales letter after the "hyped" approach to be sure the increase in sales was the result of the approach in the letter, and our sales plummeted by **a whopping 52%**. We then changed a few sentences to make the reader more involved emotionally, and our sales increased again. Observing this phenomenon will *absolutely* "blow your mind!" Long copy sells. The key here is that

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if people are interested, **they will read as much as you can write**. I have proven this time and time again.

And of course, your "hook" (or headline) is the most important text your customers will read. Headlines can increase your response by as much as 1700%. This has been proven over and over again. You can have the exact same body (called copy) in an ad and just change the headline to dramatically increase your sales. They say **headlines pull in 80% of the orders if done correctly**.

Let me give you an example. John Edward is a commodity broker who arranged for 2/3 bank financing on gold purchases. In other words, if you wanted to buy \$10,000 in gold, you would only have to come up with \$3333 in cash, the bank would finance the rest.

His headline read "Buy gold with two thirds bank financing". This headline accompanied by good ad copy, made thousands and thousands of dollars every month. When you are making \$10,000+ a month, you're generally happy and don't think about ways to improve your profits even more... MISTAKE.

John snapped out of his trance and decided to test some other headlines. He ran a few different ones, and each one pulled a little better (about 10%). However, about 3 weeks later, he ran this headline:

"If gold is selling at \$330, send me \$110, and I will buy all you want"

Well, **this headline increased sales over 500%!** Yes... all those months he was making \$10,000+, he could have been making \$50,000+. This is just one more example of how important a good headline is.

**Think of a headline that offers a benefit to the reader and creates enough curiosity to make them read the salesletter...** just like John did.

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Let me give you another example, this time from my experience with **Car Secrets**.

We tested a bunch of headlines and found the following headline was the most successful (it was used for online classified ads, newsgroup posting, descriptions in search engines, etc.):

*“Learn hundreds of money-saving tips on car buying, leasing, repair rip-offs, insurance reduction tips, and more”.*

This was shortened for classified ads to read;

*“Tips on car buying, leasing, and repair rip-offs”*

These headlines were always profitable for our promotions. Then we asked our customers to complete a survey so we could determine what their interests were and how to serve them better with our services, and we were shocked!

We discovered that over 70% of our customers bought the book because they were interested in buying a new car in the next 30 days. This made us realize that we had been targeting the wrong market the entire time. Over 70% of the people who responded had been buying the book for a benefit that we were not even concentrating on. **Can you imagine the sales we could have had if we actually targeted that niche market?** We re-analyzed our marketing headlines and came up with a few new ones that specifically targeted this market. The following headline performed the best;

*“Learn how to buy or lease a new car \$50.00 over dealer cost”.*

How well did it do, you ask?

**How about tripling our sales overnight!!!**

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That simple change made our sales jump 317% *instantly*. We were now earning over triple what we were **just a week before** simply by changing the headline.

Now can you now see how powerful headlines are?

### **Customer Service**

Something I really believe in is having **the best customer service you can afford to give**. I say this because if you have great customer service, people will buy from you again and again, no matter what you are selling (as long as it still applies to them in some way).

Imagine this; we might have originally sold someone an exercise machine. They may have bought it from us because we were the experts in exercise equipment and they trusted not just our company but our opinion as well. If we had great customer service and treated them with personal attention, you can bet that if they need more exercise equipment, they would buy from us again.

Even if I try to sell them a separate, somewhat unrelated product like a diet book, customers would feel very comfortable buying it as he or she has experienced our customer service, speediness, and professionalism already. You see, we're not experts in diets, only in exercise equipment... but people would still buy our diet products because of **our relationship**.

Good customer service starts right from the beginning and continues even after the sale is closed. This can be as simple as making it easy to order or to get answers to questions before ordering, having adequate stock levels, proper packaging, using a reputable delivery service, shipping orders promptly, and keeping accurate billing records.

Once you have made the sale, send a thank you note,

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email your customers on holidays, or send them any special announcements. You can also keep in touch via a newsletter (mentioned in a later session). This presents an opportunity for repeat sales from your customers as well. And remember, if a customer has a question or complaint after the sales, it is **extremely important** that you take care of it immediately.

If your customer has a complaint, do **whatever is necessary** (within reason) to make them happy. Some of your best and most loyal customers could be the ones you help resolve a problem. If a situation is addressed courteously and promptly, most customers will continue to be loyal. However, after they are gone it is almost impossible to get them to buy from you again.

Here are a couple of tips to keep in mind when dealing with complaints:

- Don't make excuses and be prepared to take responsibility if you are at fault. If you don't have an immediate answer, at least tell the customer their inquiry is important to you and that you will get back to them within 24 hours.
- If it is your mistake, admit that you are human and make mistakes, but do everything possible to correct the problem.
- If you are not 100% sure what the customer is "really" upset about or what the problem is, **ask questions** to pinpoint it so there is no confusion. Don't assume anything.
- Resolve the problem as best you can and make sure you make it clear to the customer that you are doing the best you can. Let them know that, their business and patience is appreciated.
- Always follow up to make sure the problem is solved in the customer's eyes and they are happy

with the results

As a side note, once in a while you will get a customer who you simply can't satisfy regardless of how hard you try. Sometimes the cost of dealing with them is just too great. In this case, decline to sell to them in the future. Sometimes it's better to sever your relations with a customer who cannot be satisfied. However, don't be too quick to judge this.

## **A Final Story**

I want to tell you a true story that will show you what I mean by "looking at alternative ways to market your product" and how to "reach your prospect when they are most vulnerable" (and therefore more open to what you have to offer).

Please note I am not condoning the ethics in this story, I am just showing you the power of alternative marketing and presentation timing, and it is quite an interesting example. Also, I will not reveal the actual person who did this marketing tactic as I would not want you to think of that person in a lesser way because of the business tactic they used here (which, by some people, could be conceived as "unethical" or "heartless").

As you know, it is very difficult to sell life insurance. One man brought his life insurance sales from rock bottom to be **one of the most successful salespersons in the history of the company** — all by using a single alternative marketing technique.

The life insurance salesman used to cut out the obituaries every day. He would wait three weeks until after the death (to let the grievance period pass) and then find out the names of the immediate family, close friends, and even pall bearers who attended the funeral. He would then go to the library and do a "cross-reference" to get all the addresses for the names

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he collected and show up at their doorsteps and give his life insurance pitch.

Now, follow me on this. Tacky as his approach might have been, he really did know how to hit a **really hot target market!** Even people that were dead set against life insurance may listen to what the salesman has to say and consider the benefits life insurance has to offer in light of their recent experience. The salesman really didn't have to "sell" anything. The potential clients wanted to hear what he had to say and they basically sold themselves!

So, what were the results? **He set a world, insurance sales record...** 52 policies sold in a single day!

The moral of the story is to always think like a *marketer*, not a salesman! Approach the customer from a different angle and at the right time for them to really listen to what benefits your product or service has to offer.

It is like two men with backpacks hitching a ride on the side of the highway. One holds a sign that says "Dallas", and the other one holds a sign that says, "To Mom's for Christmas". **Guess which one gets a ride!**

## **Lesson # 4**

### **Banners**

# **How to Make Money From Them**

A banner campaign is a marketing device we use whereby advertising fees are paid to sites for displaying a header linking to our site. We will be getting into a lot more detail regarding this later on, but for now, let's discuss some basics. There are a couple of very simple, but key things to consider when making a very successful banner.

1. It must have an attention grabbing headline,
2. It must be simple and get your point across,
3. It must invoke action (i.e. "Click here").

Based on some of the biggest banner advertisers on the net, the average click-through rate from a banner is 0.8 %. A very good response is considered to be around 2%. This applies to "semi-targeted" host sites that at least deal with the subject of the banner sponsor site in some general way. With the techniques I will show you, your site should be getting a **minimum of double and as much as ten times the average click-through value**. My banners get, on average, 4-10% click-through (depending on the banner), and sometimes as much as 24%. Generally speaking, when I place banner ads with sites or through advertising agents, they say my banners get some of the highest click-through rates they have ever seen. Take my advice, and yours will too.

A Banner Campaign can be one of the most profitable marketing techniques on the Internet if you:

1. have a banner that meets the above requirements to get a good click-through rate,
2. that targets the market so you are displaying your banner to prime candidates, interested in the



product you are offering, and

3. if you have a webpage that gets the visitor interested, creates desire and follows through with a simple ordering process.

Many people ask about banner exchange programs such as “link exchange”, “banner swap”, “smart clicks”, etc. This is a great way to promote your site without any out of pocket expense. However, once you have enough traffic so that you can begin charging for banner space, consider that as a revenue stream for your site. If you are interested in some of these banner swap programs, you can see some for yourself at pages such as:

**<http://www.linkexchange.com>**

**<http://www.hyperbanner.net>**

**<http://www.123banners.com>**

**<http://www.bannerswap.com>**

**<http://www.linktrader.com>**

**<http://www.net-on.com>**

**<http://www.smartclicks.com>**

Most banner exchange programs work on a “two to one” ratio (or there about). That means that for every two banners you display at your site, one of your banners will be displayed on someone else's site.

Once you get above 5,000 impressions of your banner appearing on other sites every month, you can justify either dropping the banner exchange program and begin to charge advertisers to display their banner at your site. Or keep the banner exchange program and just adding more banners locations to your site that you charge for. You can charge anywhere from 10 to 40 dollars per 1,000 impressions of a banner, depending on how targeted the visitors to your site are. This would give you 100's of dollars in revenue just for posting banner ads at your site!

If you use the banner exchange program, you will have to justify the loss of advertising revenue in sales that you otherwise would not have made. In other words, ask yourself if you will profit more from the visitors that link to your site (and buy your product or service)

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via the Internet link exchange banner... *OR...* if you will you profit more by selling the banner space, that you are using for the banner exchange program, to advertisers that are willing to pay you an advertising fee.

Keep in mind that some of the banner exchange programs will not target your banner, so if you are selling office supplies you could end up getting your banner displayed at a gardening site which would obviously get you a very poor click-through rate. Make sure you join a banner exchange program that will target your banners to websites related to your industry.

If you display 5,000 Internet link exchange banners, they will display 2,500 of your banners. Because many of them display your banner at random or non-targeted sites, based on a 1 to 1.5% click-through, it will bring you 25 - 38 visitors, of which a **maximum** of one will buy. **Is it worth it?** Figure this out before joining any banner exchange program.

Another very important tip to consider about banner advertising is to make sure that you have an alternative "text tag" in the coding for your banners displayed at other sites. The reason for this is that many people turn off their graphics when surfing and it is **critical** that your slogan appears with the link in place of the graphical banner when the graphics are turned off. If you don't put the "text tag" in the HTML coding for your banner, **NOTHING WILL BE DISPLAYED** when someone views that page.

Here is an example of the coding I mean:

```
<a href="http://www.coffehouse.com/">  
</a>
```

Notice the wording of the slogan above (this should also appear in the banner graphics and the text tag). This is another important point... it's **very important** to make a *benefit* to the surfer clear in the banner as well as to make a statement of *action*.

## NOTES:

In this example, if you were an Internet coffee store, you could have a draw that would give away one year of free coffee to the winner. You shouldn't say you have a draw that gives away coffee because there is no "benefit" in that for the customer. You should say "Free coffee for a year"... then once they are at your site, explain that there's a free draw to win free coffee for a year. Your banner would consist of a logo and the slogan "Free coffee for one year—Click Here" (now there is a slogan that will pull a lot of click-through!). Then you not only have the benefit of offering something free, but have a statement of action ("click here") as well.

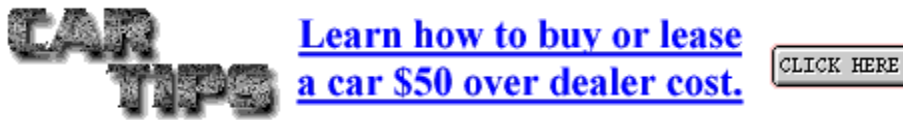
Another way to get attention is by posting a banner that has animation or an image that alters once a cursor is moved into the banner area. The animation is "flashy" so it makes the user at least notice it, or the user becomes a participant in the ad when the mouse positioning changes the banner. Remember **the ultimate goal is to get more people to click through, so make sure your banner is different than the rest.**

Here are the three banners we used for **Car Secrets**. We will go over the pro's and con's of each one, and why one of them pulled double the sales than one of the others.

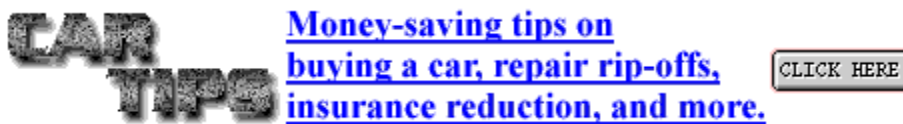
*Banner #1:* This banner got a lot of complements with its "gold block" look and with the text "stamped" in black letters.



*Banner #2:* This was an animated GIF that had a red "glimmer" to the 'click here' button.



Banner #3: Same as banner two, but different wording for targeting a different clientele.



*Banner #2 and banner #3 are animated, so please load the file BANNER.HTML on the CD provided with the course into your browser to view them. Don't procrastinate, do it now before you read on so that you will know what I am talking about in the next few paragraphs! It will help to see the colors and the animation. It makes a big impact compared to the way they are displayed on paper (or in print).*

The reason why Banner #2 was twice as successful as Banner #1:

1. **It showed a benefit to the client in the title** (it didn't explain everything the book has to offer, but it offered a benefit). When we surveyed our past customers, we found to our surprise that 73% were buying the book because they were buying or leasing a new car in the near future (we thought people were buying it because of the great information we offered). We were actually targeting the wrong customers until we found this out — a very big mistake!
2. **Banner #2 looked like a link (the blue underlining on the text)** so people did not mistake the banner for a regular graphic on a site (which according to our survey was very common).

*NOTES:*

3. **It also had an animated “click” button to attract attention to itself**, it was very clear that people should click on the banner if they wanted to "learn how to buy a new car at \$50 over dealer cost."
4. Banner #2 was **actually smaller in disk size** than the old Banner #1 because it had a solid background. More people saw this one because it loaded faster.

Banner #3 was worded a little differently for use at sites that were automotive oriented, but not new car buying oriented (in other words, more “general automotive”). It worked better than Banner #2 at those types of sites because it was more closely targeted to that market.

I also realized that I was losing the potential business of those who were buying used cars. A friend developed the following banner to attract those types of buyers (Banner #4 below). I tested this banner and it pulled **much better** than Banner #2 or Banner #3 on the “used car” sites. I used Banner #2 and Banner #3 on most of the sites, but used Banner #4 on the used car sites where I found it out-perform the others.

Banner 4: mentioned both new *and* used car prices



**Important Tip:** *Always have "Click Here" on your banner. This will dramatically increase the response. You literally have to tell people what to do — don't just assume they will click... tell them to.*

**You should never be satisfied with the successful results you are getting.** This may sound a little self-defeating... but it is this attitude that will make you successful. That is why I kept developing banners even though the first ones seemed to work fine.

## NOTES:

Let me give you the details of my experiences so that you can understand how important this is — and the money involved. You must first test every advertising and marketing idea and then even if it is successful, keep testing new ideas again and again!

When I first started Car Secrets, I was using Banner #1. Once we found the right websites to place it on, it was making about \$1,000 a month net profit (not sales, but money in my pocket). I was only advertising it in a few locations and was very happy with the results for those limited spots. For some of the banner spots I was **paying as little as \$20 and was generating \$400 in sales.**

But, being a real “netpreneur”, I was not willing to accept that this was the best that I could do for this project. So we designed a few new banners and tested them as well. The results: Banner #1, that was originally making us approx. \$1000/month, was replaced with Banner #2, **which pulled over twice the response.** The testing took us two weeks, but we increased our income by \$12,000 instantaneously with this new banner design.

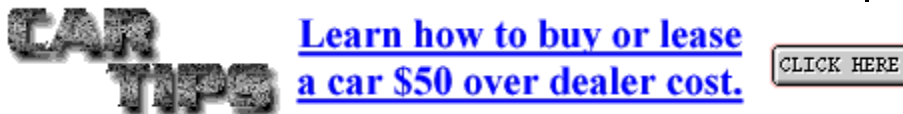
Now that I am advertising this banner in five times as many places, that \$12,000 extra net profit **has turned into \$60,000 extra net profit every year.** Not bad for waiting two weeks to test some new ideas!

Remember this \$60,000 is only for the banner advertising I do. Because I came up with a better slogan, I use that in my other advertising... just think about adding those profits to those generated by newsgroups, email, search engines, ezines and other advertising campaigns you will have going on at the same time.

The moral of the story is don't think small... if you have a winning campaign, you can roll out and make some serious money. For those that are not familiar with the term “roll-out”... it means that after you have tested and found a winning combination, you “roll-out” into bigger exposure and advertising to reap the benefits of the winning ad campaign and multiply your profits.

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Let me go even one step further... even though we had a very successful banner campaign, we still tested new designs and ideas to improve our results. One of the new ideas looked like this:



Money- Saving tips emailed to you within 10 minutes

As you can see, underneath the banner, we put a text hyper-link that told customers that they could receive these tips in just ten minutes (a real “hot button”). Our click-throughs **skyrocketed** and sales jumped immediately by *another 34%*. I am giving you these examples not because I want to boast, but to show you the type of unconventional thinking you must be aware of to truly bring success to unimaginable levels. I have set **the new standard** for banner click-through percentages out of the hundreds of thousands of people that run banner ads.

The key to finding appropriate spots for banner advertising takes a little work in the beginning, but it will really pay off in the end. This is because once you have it set-up, the banners keep bringing people and sales to your site for years and years to come.

First sit down and figure out what types of visitors you would consider your “perfect target market”. If you are selling greeting cards, you might want to find sites that have to do with all the major holidays. You also want to find sites that have “reminder” services for birthdays and such. Visitors to those sites are the ones you want to sell your greeting cards to.

To find appropriate sites, just type the appropriate keywords into a search engine and get the results, and start surfing those sites to see which would be applicable to advertise your banner on .

**Manually go through and visit all the individual sites**, and then rate them on a scale of one to ten. Considerations to make are, what types of visitors go there, how pleasing the site is, how big is the site, how many visitors do they get (if they have a counter on the main page), etc. Find a contact email address and write it down.

***Note:** make sure to mark down any sites that are in direct competition to you, as we will use these later in this course.*

Once you get all the contacts' email addresses, it is time to email them all a message offering them money for placing your banner on their site. For those that don't have a bulk-emailer like *Mailloop* (which I will mention throughout this course because it really makes you life a lot easier when it comes to doing business on the net), I will show you how to do bulk email without it.

Without getting into all the boring details, you create a message like normal, but address it to another email address in the "TO:" field. Paste the entire list of email addresses (up to 28 K – or about 2000 of them) into the "BCC:" field separated by commas. "BCC" stands for "BLIND CARBON COPY", and it means that everyone in that field will get the email, but it will be addressed to the email addresses in the "TO:" field. There will be **no record of the large list of addresses** in the "BCC:" field on the reader you are sending that email to, which is meant by "blind". If you had put this huge list of email addresses in the "TO:" or "CC:" field, every person that gets the email **will** get a copy of that list in that field. They would have to wade through all the email addresses to get to the body of the message (**a big hassle!**).

The reason I recommend using *Mailloop* instead is because most people that have a website get a lot of junk mail and know to look in the "TO:" field. If a message is not addressed to their specific email address in the "TO:" field, they know it is spam and trash it even before reading it. Some savvy website owners have set up an automatic filter so as soon as



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email comes in without their address in the "TO:" field, it is automatically deleted **before they even see it**.

*Mailloop* sends to each email address separately so that the recipient's email address is in the "TO:" field and it looks like a personal message. This will get a much higher response ratio for obvious reasons. Go to **<http://www.marketingtips.com/mailloop.html>** for more information on this program.

For those of you that know how to send bulk email through a regular email program (using the BCC field), I am sorry to bore you, but you would not believe how many people do not know how to do this.

This is what the header of your email will look like:

```
TO: carsecrets@igs.net
FROM: nicholas@igs.net
SUBJECT: sponsoring your site
CC: (blank)
BCC: hello@home.com,next@nobody.com,abc@xyz.com,
zzz@aol.com,notme@compuserve.com, etc. etc. etc.
```

Notice that the email-list just goes on and on separated by commas. That list (it may be as long as 2000 people) will disappear once it is sent so recipients don't know who is on the list or how many people the email was sent to. But any savvy Internet user will know this is a spam by not seeing their email address in the "TO:" field... that is why I recommend using a program like *Mailloop* to avoid this.

Also, I should note that new software is being installed on many mail servers that will automatically delete any email message that has over 15 - 20 people in the BCC field. That means your email can be deleted even before it is sent from your server (if it has over 15 - 20 addresses in the BCC field). This is the ISP's attempt to reduce spam and another reason why *Mailloop* is **so valuable** (as it sends an individual message to each recipient – therefore not getting your bulk email message deleted by your ISP).

The subject and body of your email should read something like the following example. This is exactly

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what we used for **Car Secrets** (use it as a template and modify it to fit your business description):

Subject: sponsoring your site

Hi,

I am inquiring about your automotive website. I am interested in sponsoring your webpage where we would pay you for displaying our banner at the top of one (or a few) of your pages.

Let me explain what we do. We have a book/e-pub called "Car Secrets Revealed." It reveals hundreds of money-saving "insider" automotive secrets on buying, servicing, and everyday driving. The tips and secrets will help the readers save thousands of dollars. They'll find out such things as: how to cut their insurance by 50%, how to get free repairs after their warranty expires, how to get hundreds of dollars back on their next tax return by simply using their car, how to easily beat the police radar speed traps, how to buy cars at wholesale prices and so many more. It can be seen at <http://www.igs.net/carsecrets/>

What would you recommend for the best exposure at your website (best value for the dollar) and what would be the cost. I would even consider being linked (or listed) from multiple sections of your website or having you sell the books directly; do you have any other suggestions?

I am looking for a long-term advertising relationship, so keep that in mind when making your suggestions. I am ready to start ASAP, so a quick response would be appreciated.

I do have a few other questions. First, how many visitors do you get a week?

Second, how many visits do you get to the individual section(s) you are suggesting I link from? Lastly, do you accept credit cards for sponsorship payment, or is a business check better for you?

Thanks for your time and help. I look forward to doing business.

Corey Rudl  
(604) 730-2833  
carsecrets@igs.net

You will get a lot of replies if you use a format similar to the one above.

Keep in mind that you will have some “undesirable” replies. What I mean by this is some sites will have almost no visitors (you don’t want to sponsor a site that has less than 3000 visitors a month... it is just a waste of time) OR you will get website owners who want ridiculous amounts of money for displaying your banners... and you will get some “corny” replies too.

The objective of this mass email campaign is to find 10-40 sites that have cheap advertising rates or do not currently offer advertising (so they don’t know what it is worth) but willing to try it. You will be surprised at how many people there are out there with sites they constructed on a “whim”, not in it for money, which one day turned out to generate a large number of hits. Some people are simply amused by the whole thing and are happy that people want to come to their site regardless of how much money they make from it.

**These are the types of sites you want to get a hold of.** I have sites that get me over 11,000 visitors a month that **only charge me \$30 a month** for advertising. You will find some sites that want to charge you \$800+ for this kind of traffic. This is ridiculous, which is why they probably do not have a sponsor currently.

The going rate is \$20 - \$30 per 1,000 pages viewed. Some people charge as high as \$120 per 1,000 views and others as little as \$2. It really depends on the site, how big they are and whether or not they are really savvy on the net and know what is going on.

Your goal is to find the sites that are not aware of current advertising prices and may only charge you

**NOTES:**

\$20 - \$50 for a banner on a site that gets 10,000 visitors a month. All these site owners want to do is recover their costs for hosting the site, and really don't know what banner ad space is worth. These types of sites **are goldmines** — just agree to pay them once a month and you are ready to go.

Many people will say they offer banner advertising and will quote you numbers they pulled out of the sky. They have **no idea** what banner advertising is worth and just guess at what you are willing to pay. I would say **90% of all the people that contact you are willing to negotiate price**. Some will discount it as much as 70%, while others will only move 10-20%, so remember to **always** ask for a discount... **but do it politely**. You could email them back with the following statement:

Thanks for replying. I am interested in doing business.

I am dealing with over 50 sites right now and I want to spend my advertising budget wisely. My plan of action is to advertise on as many sites as I can possibly afford for the first 2 months and then see which of them is the most profitable for me. With the ones that are profitable, I will want to do business for a very, very long time.

I was hoping that we could do better on the pricing you quoted me. I understand that you have to make money... and so do I. I can assure you that if you can come down in price I will pick you as one of the sites I start with. If things go well after 2 months we can re-negotiate and you may raise your price if justified. I ask this because it seems as though there are so many price ranges... I have people offering me space for \$20 a month for 5000 visitors, and others want so much money for the same amount of visitors, it is almost embarrassing to mention it here.

As one small website owner to another, I hope we both succeed and I hope that you can help me by lowering this price temporarily to help me "spread my money as far as possible" in the first few months of my banner ad campaign.

If you feel that this is not possible, please consider using my banner in your banner "dead space". If you do not have a sponsor for a certain period of time (whether it be a week or a month), I would be willing to pay to fill those "dead spots" if we can come to an agreement on price. It would be better to have a little money in your pocket, instead of no money for the "dead space" you have, wouldn't it?

I look forward to hearing from you and I look forward to a mutually profitable relationship.

Don't hesitate to call me if you want to talk in person. My number is (604) 730-2833. Thanks.

Corey Rudl  
President

Once you get through this first stage, you will want to do a "follow-up" email to **maximize your results**.

This will require you to do another mass-email broadcast to the list again. Approximately two weeks after the first email broadcast, take all the email addresses out of the initial list that responded. Re-email the remaining people, and mentioning you did not hear back from them and are **still** interested in doing business with them. Include a copy of the last email at the bottom so they know what you are referring to.

This will get you **many more replies** (and usually more qualified ones) as many website owners will have deleted your first email thinking it was junk mail — A follow up means **you are serious**.

Here is what you could say:

Subject: Follow up

Hi,

I sent you an email 2 weeks ago about advertising/sponsoring on your website. I did not hear back from you and I would like to do business.

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I have pasted a copy of the last email at the bottom of this email so you can review it in case you don't recall the content.

Could you send me a quick email just to let me know if you are interested or not interested.

I look forward to hearing from you and I wish your website the best of luck.

Thanks.

Corey Rudl

----- (COPY OF FIRST MESSAGE GOES HERE) -----

I asked you earlier to rate the "compatibility" of these sites to yours because the ones that have a very high compatibility, you will want to email again and again until they reply. These "perfect matches" could be so valuable to you that you will want to pursue them **aggressively**.

Always look at all of the options when someone contacts you. If they say they don't offer banner advertising at their sites, **offer to trade reciprocal links. Offer to share customer lists, as well...** there are lots of options when working with other sites. Remember if they say "no" to banner advertising, **always** look for other ways you can work together and offer each other a "win-win" situation. **Try to maximize every contact you make.**

Other methods of getting banner advertising include contacting an advertising specialist that manages banner space on the major search engines and other popular sites. For example; if you owned an online coffee distribution store, you could pay sites like Yahoo, AltaVista, HotBot, Excite, etc. to display your banner every time the keyword "coffee" is used in a search. This will effectively target your market if the keyword used is specific enough.

**Important Tip:** *It should be noted that your banner is much more effective at the top of a page than at the bottom. This difference in click-throughs can be as high as 100% between the two locations. There are a few reasons for this. The most important two being many times the banner at the top of the page is the first and only thing a visitor sees if a site is loading and the rest of the graphics take a long time to load (this brings a lot of attention to your banner); and the visitor is more likely to pay attention to graphics and text at the top of a page (to see what the page is about and how to navigate your site) compared to when they are closer to the bottom of the page and are just “scanning” after absorbing what was at the beginning. Make sure when you are setting up your advertising to ask the webmaster where the banner is being displayed. If you can’t get the position near the top of the page, think about advertising with someone else.*

Lets go over the three main type of banner ad promotions you can do:

### **Pay-Per-Impression Banner Campaigns**

This is the most common way of banner advertising.

Unknown to most, **it is the most risky type of banner advertising but also the most secure type of banner advertising for the website owner.** The website owner is getting paid for the number of times someone sees your banner (pay per impression of your banner). They are not guaranteeing results; you are not guaranteed how many visitors will come to your site from the banner. Instead you are paying for the number of time the banner is displayed no matter if it brings you a 0.1% clickthrough rate or a 10% clickthrough rate.

You can waste a lot of money here if you are not careful.

The cost is quoted in CPM (which means cost per thousand impressions of your banner on their site). The average prices for this have changed drastically

over the last year online.

The average price used to be around \$40-\$50 CPM (\$40-\$50 for 1000 impressions of your banner), but that has dropped to about \$20 CPM lately. There are still a few sites who charge upwards of \$60 CPM, but it is rare now and they are not getting much business. The only companies willing to pay those kinds of fees are the big fortune 500 companies who spend \$100,000 a month just on banner advertising - they are looking more for "brand recognition", not how much profit they make on their banner advertising.

You can buy banner space as low as \$5, but it is rare... however \$15 CPM is quite common, so shop around.

When buying banner space, **never pay the published rates!** Call the website owner or the banner broker directly, you will always get a better deal. Ask questions like "What is the real price?", "Do you honor the 15% agency discount?" (ad agency discounts are for those placing the ad directly for themselves and not going through an ad agency, you technically have an in-house ad agency so you can get the 15% off - what the ad agency would normally make on the sale).

If you really want to play hardball you can say that "You won't pay more than \$12 CPM as you don't make any more... you want me to be profitable so I keep buying from you month after month, right? You want our business, right? I will buy \$XX of banner space if you can give it to me at \$12 CPM". You get the idea. Bargain, but be polite.

There are a few tricks you have to watch for when you are buying "pay per impression" banner space.

You are paying for the number of times the banner is displayed on the site. The problem arises if the visitor to that site goes through 20 pages and your banner is on every page. You have used up 20 impressions on just one visitor... which is a waste. Some sites have tracking software that will only display your banner a certain number of times to each IP address (otherwise



known as "unique visitor"). **In other words, you can limit how many times each visitor sees your banner so you are not wasting impressions.** Most people set this at 3... that is 3 times maximum a visitor will see your banner so you are not wasting too many banner impressions on just one visitor.

The trick to buying banner space is to find related sites to yours which your target clients would be visiting and approaching those sites about advertising your banner on their site. You will get some incredible deals... and some will be "out to lunch" with their prices. You know we are still paying one guy \$40 a month for a banner on a webpage that gets over 14,000 visitors a month - a fantastic deal. It just takes time and patience to find them... but once you do, you can advertise there for years... really cheaply!

Another way to buy banners is from a banner exchange program. They can charge anywhere from \$10 CPM to \$25 CPM. We use <http://www.smartclicks.com> and <http://www.le-express.com>

### **Pay-Per-Visitor Banner Campaigns**

You can buy a guaranteed 10,000 visitors to your site for \$4100 which is 41 cents a visitors. Also, please note that this price can change at anytime (it is likely to go up as they are having so much demand for their service... it is just a super value). It is only for those who can afford it, as \$4100 is a lot of money to spend just on just banner advertising.

I should explain that this is **super cheap banner advertising** if you learn some inside information which I will give you in the next paragraph. The only down side to doing this kind of banner campaign is the high minimum buy price... so it is for only those who can afford spending that kind of investment in banner advertising. But, the good news is that if your website is set up properly to turn visitors into sales, you will make a good profit (yes, even after spending \$4100). I

will show you how to calculate if you will make a profit before you place your banner ads near the end of this lesson.

Let me give you some inside information... you are paying per visitor, not per impression... and the people displaying your banner have to display the banner no matter how poor the click-through rate. They have HTML code on their site that allows the banner broker company to put whatever banner on the site they want, and the owner of the site has nothing to say about it - it is all in a banner rotation.

**This gives you a major advantage.**

You want to make your banner as **TARGETED and PRECISE** as possible so you are almost **turning visitors away**. This insures that you are getting only really quality visitors. Where in most banner campaigns your job is to get the person to click the banner... this is not the case in this type of banner campaign. You want to make the banner so it reveals almost everything about what you are trying to sell them so that only REALLY qualified people are clicking through.

You see, it doesn't matter if the banner brokering company has to post your banner 100,000 times to get the 10,000 visitors or 1,000,000 times to get the visitors, you are paying for "visitors", so get the most qualified you can by making your banner as precise as possible.

In a regular banner campaign the banner may say, "Learn how to unlock your TRUE inner potential within a matter of minutes, click here". This is to get people intrigued and bring in possible visitors that may be interested in your offer. In the "pay per visitors" campaign your banner may read "Learn how to tap into your TRUE potential for your life, career and relationship... all for under \$25". You just gave away that it is some self-help information, what exactly it will fix in your life and that it will cost up to \$25. So if the person does not have one of these problems or is not willing to spend \$25, then they will

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not click through... you only get the people that are truly and really interested and willing to spend \$25 to learn this.

But, you would never have this kind of banner in any other type of banner campaign because it would pull such a horrible clickthrough rate - but remember you are paying for visitors here, not impressions of your banner. That is the power of this "pay per visitor" campaign.

There are a few companies that do this. They are called "banner brokers". Basically, they have contracts with thousands of websites throughout the net for banner advertising space (all these websites are clean, professional in appearance, and have highly desirable content). The good banner brokers do semi-targeted ads. They place 80% of your banners on sites that have the target market you are looking for (so you can have your banner on sites that are applicable to your target market) and the remaining 20% on a general rotation of all the sites (without charging an extra fee).

Make sure you know what market you are trying to target. The categories are:

- Arts & Humanities
- Autos Boats & Planes
- Business
- Computer & Internet
- Culture & Religion
- Education and Reference
- Entertainment and Leisure
- Family Issues
- Games
- Health & Fitness
- Hobbies & Interests
- Money & Finance
- Movies & Television
- Music & Radio
- Non-Profit & Resource Org.
- Personal Homepages
- Pets Home & Garden
- Science & Technology

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- Shopping & Services
- Society & Issues
- Sports
- Travel

Please note that the Internet changes on a daily basis and that the prices quoted above could change at any time!

The company we deal with is one of the least expensive of all the companies and charges \$0.41 per visitor that clicks through the banner to your site.

Their minimum buy is 10,000 visitors (\$4100). It does not matter if they have to display 100,000 banners or 500,000 banners to get you that number of visitors... you only pay for the visitors that come to your site (the flat rate of \$4100 per 10,000 visitors!). So sit down and figure out how much of a profit margin you have in your product and how many visitors it takes to get one sale. Then figure out if you can still make a profit at \$0.41 a visitor. If you can and want to place an order, we are a representative of the company that does this banner campaign and will forward your order (there are only a few companies in the world who do this). Visit

**<http://www.marketingtips.com/bannerad.html>** and fill out the form with the number of visitors you want to buy, the categories you are interested in. We will be in contact within 48 hours to get all your details and banners, etc.).

### **Pay-Per-Click Banner Campaigns**

This is almost identical to what is above as you are paying per visitor, but these sites which display your banner GET TO CHOOSE the companies and banners they put on their site. **If you don't have a banner that pulls good clickthroughs, then they will pull you off and not use your banners again.**

Before you ask me "isn't pay-per-click and pay-per-visitor really mean the same thing?"... yes, you are

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technically right. I have just named them differently because with pay per visitor you can use whatever banner you choose and the site owner has no control of what you display (so you can really target the banner and get only super qualified people to come to the site). In the pay per click banner campaign it essentially runs the same way where you are paying per visitor, but the site owner has control over what banners are displayed at their site. If your banner is too targeted and does not have a high clickthrough, they will not want to display your banner because they will not make as much money because they get paid per click.

So there is a "fine line" here.

You want to pull a decent clickthrough rate, but do not want to have your banner attract the general market which may have no interest in what you are offering... which means you would have a lot of visitors, but not many sales (which means, you are losing money!). If you have a banner which said "Win a FREE trip to Hawaii", it would have a great clickthrough rate and the site owner who is displaying it would be happy because he is making decent money. However, if at the site you had a contest for a Hawaii trip, but your main objective was to sell a pill that reduces your cholesterol, you will not make a sale.

You will generally pay \$0.03 to \$0.14 per visitor, but they will not be as qualified as the above "pay per visitor" method... but the minimum buy is only \$75... so it is a little more reasonable for most of us. There are only a few companies that do this. My favorite is *PennyWeb*.

Here is how it works:

You buy clickthroughs (or visitors) in advance from *PennyWeb*. You have to pick a price you are willing to pay for each clickthrough (yes, you choose the price). The prices start at \$0.03 per clickthrough (2 cents goes to the advertiser who is posting your banner, and 1 cent goes to *PennyWeb* for their service)... up to \$0.145 (9 cents goes to the advertiser that is posting

## **NOTES:**

your banner, and 4.5 cents goes to PennyWeb for their service). There are quantity discounts. Of course, the higher the price you are willing to pay out per clickthrough, the more websites that will want to display your banners and the faster you will go through your pre-purchased visitors (or clickthroughs).

**PennyWeb takes care of paying the advertiser...** you just sign up with PennyWeb and they take care of everything. You fill out their order form, tell them where your banner is on your site, and tell them what to announce to the advertisers in their "banner pool". The banner pool is a section on the site where their advertisers visit to pick which company and banner they want to host on their site based on how much the company (you) are paying per clickthrough and how high your banner's clickthrough rate is.

As I mentioned before, note that the advertiser has the choice not to advertise your banner (if you are offering a price that is too low, or if your banner doesn't pull a very good clickthrough rate).

The prices start at \$75 minimum buy and go as high as \$2000 for quantity discount (we usually buy a few hundred dollars worth of visitors at a time). Just go to <http://www.marketingtips.com/pennyweb.html> to check them out and then click on the "Advertisers Account" section on the right to buy some clickthroughs. From there it is self-explanatory.

I highly recommend their service. We use them on a consistent basis and always make money with their service.

### **More Tips on Banners**

I showed you how to build effective banners and have given you lots of examples. As you may already know, the average clickthrough ratio on banners now is just under 1% (in other words for every 1000 impressions

**NOTES:**

of your banner, less than 10 people will click through). You have to have at least a 3% or higher clickthrough rate if you want to make money with banner advertising.

There are lots of new banners, which pull well aside from the ones I've already mentioned. Let's go over some of them.

The "fake" windows banner with the right "benefit" statement will pull between a 3 - 8% clickthrough rate. Here is an example of fake banner we use for Mailloop:



Another type of banner that is pulling really well (between 6%-13%) is "fake drop down box" banners.

Here is an example of a few we use for the Internet Marketing Center:



The banners that pull the best clickthrough rates right now are "real HTML" banners. They are real drop down boxes that actually work. The only problem is that most banner brokers, banner exchange programs, and for that matter, most websites that offer banner advertising do not support them yet, but that may change soon. What I mean is that they can do them, but their software that tracks the banners stats don't support HTML banners - so they don't offer the option of providing HTML banners to advertisers. That will change over the next few months as they are becoming more popular. We have seen clickthrough rates as high as 14% for a banner rotation... which is unheard of in banner advertising.

The banner looks very similar to the banner above, but

## NOTES:

you can actually click on the “arrow” and pull a menu down to pick the option you like. To see it in action, go to the banner.html file on the CD that came with the course. Here is the code we use to make it work.

```
<form action="http://www.marketingtips.com/" method="GET">
<table width="428" border="0">
<tr>
<td valign="center"><font size="-1">Promote my website with:</font></td>
<td valign="center">
<select>
<option>Choose Selection
<option>Effective websites and design
<option>Search engines
<option>Newsletters
<option>Newsgroups
<option>Online service (ie: AOL)
<option>Online classified ads
<option>Discussion lists
<option>Responsible bulk email
<option>Autoresponders
<option>Bulletin boards
<option>Electronic malls
<option>Killer sales copy
<option>Banner ads (tips and tricks)
</select></td>
<td valign="center"><input type="submit" value=" Go "></td>
</tr>
</table>
</form>
```

If you understand HTML, you will notice that all the options in the drop down box point to the same URL... but you can have it so that every different option in the drop down box can go to a separate webpage.

Just as a friendly reminder - make sure that you always have a benefit in the banner!

Advertising on the net is a numbers game. Once you figure out how many visitors it takes on average to get a sale, how much click-through your banner brings, you can figure out what price you have to pay for your banners for you to break even. If you are not making money with banner advertising, it is one of three problems... so you can either:



## NOTES:

- 1) Negotiate a better banner space price
- 2) Fix your banner for a higher clickthrough rate
- 3) Fix your site to convert more visitors into customers

I will use the "pay per visitors" model to show you how to figure out if you will make money BEFORE you place your banner ad.

Let's do some numbers:

Let's say your site is proven to sell 1 out of every 100 visitors (which you should be doing or there is something wrong with your website, copy, or order process) and you make \$50 in net profit per sale.

If you spend \$4100 to buy 10,000 visitors, based on the fact that you sell one out of every 100 people who visit the site, 100 people out of 10,000 visitors will buy your product (and you will make \$50 per sale). That is \$5000 in total gross profit, less the \$4100 you spend on advertising, still leaves you with \$900 net profit!

And that is only the start. You have not calculated how many people will come back and buy from you again and again. This is where the real money is! If you only break even on the promotion, **YOU STILL MADE LOTS OF MONEY...** because you have gained new customers you can sell to again and again.

If after testing your backends you find that 30% of your backends will buy again from you 3 times and you will make an average profit of \$120 over the next year from 30% of your customers, the promotion which "supposedly" broke even just made you another \$3600 in backend sales over the next year. I will talk about the importance of backends in another lesson, so at this point just trust me that this is VERY important!

Are you starting to see the picture?

Let me tell you a little secret.

We are actually willing to lose money on some of our banner advertising!

Why?

Because we see the **lifetime value of a customer**. If our stats show that we offer great customer service and our clients believe in us, they will come back to buy and buy again. I am willing to lose a little money today if I know I will make that back three times in the next 12 months. **Think of your long-term goals...** not just how much money you are making today. *The true way of getting very a large business on the Internet is to think about the long-term impact of what you are doing, not the impact of today's sales.*

Think that through and take it to heart... it is not something to just skip over... that is how I have built a multi-million dollar business online, so listen to what I say.

You will notice that I will say this again and again throughout the course... but if I keep repeating it, you know how critically important it really must be.

### **Your customers are your gold mine!**

You always treat them the best. Give them the best service and only sell products that are truly fantastic, truly a good value and something you use yourself. This attitude will have your customers stay with you forever. Do this even if you lose money in your banner advertising, as you will make money in the long run with repeat and backend business.

## **Lesson # 5**

# **The Power of Email**

Efficient use of email is critical because you can expect to receive 50 or 100 email messages **everyday** when your business is up and running. This lesson covers many different aspects of email management to conduct your business with ease.

Don't overlook some of the simpler things, since they can be very important for your success. An example of what I mean can be found in the use of an "electronic signature".

Most of you should know about signatures, but for those who don't...you should because it's critical for any campaign forum and newsgroup posting success. "Sig" file (as it is referred to) is a three to six line "footer" at the bottom of all your email messages and all newsgroup postings.

A signature is the information displayed at the bottom of your email message. It tells the person you're writing to who you are and how to get a hold of you. It is a **universally accepted** way of advertising your company, product or service.

You can even include your autoresponder address, 1-800 number or office telephone in the signature.

The following is an example of a good signature:

Sincerely,

JP Vaughan

.....  
Creative Real Estate On-Line  
<http://www.real-estate-online.com>  
JP@real-estate-online.com

"How to Make Money In Real Estate"  
Free how-to articles, moneymaking ideas, expert advice  
.....

It is critical to at least include the URL, email address and a slogan or description of what you have to offer (including some kind of benefit to the reader for contacting you).

Many people don't want phone calls but don't deny a potential customer the opportunity to talk to you for personal service. Also mention your physical address in your email if there is room, in order to give your business credibility (you are not just an anonymous email address and website).

Try to limit you signature to six lines - more than that is not only considered bad etiquette, but many of the mailing lists you post to will cut it off after six lines.

Another way to approach signatures (especially when it comes to newsgroup, forum or mailing list postings) is to make your message noticeable by placing text around it. You can do this by creating "ASCII text art" (sometimes called line art) or a border around your signature.

You can use interesting art that reflects your business, such as the examples following:

```

- / .--.-.-
  ./ ~ ~ _ " ~ - . . _ " _ .
  / _ ) " - . \
  / : ~ - ! )
  \ * { / ) \ John Doe
- | . - , ( _ ) " ; ) ^ john@elephants.com
( ) \ _ ) | / . ~ \ . ./
\ . _ _ _ . - \ . \ . ./
  \ _ \ _ . \ \ http://elephants.com
  ( ( ) ( ) lots of elephant toys
  { . . . . ( . . . . ) ( . . . . . ) } for your children

```

You can use a text art version of your company logo to attract attention:

```

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```

John Doe  
john@alliedoffice.com

Allied Office Supplies  
http://www.alliedoffice.com

FREE merchandise with every online order

And you can even use some humorous art to attract attention:

```

          \ | | | /
           ( . . )
-----o000---000o-----
John Doe          Let's Talk Business Profits.
john@abc.com      20 Birch Place
phone (212) 555-1212   New York, NY, 10005
fax (212) 555-1212
    "Your One-Stop Entrepreneurial Community"

```

Notice that almost all of the text art above is over 6 lines long. It is hard to create text art and get the information you need into a signature using 6 lines or less. Most people will ignore the 6-line rule if you have interesting art, but just make sure your contact info and slogan is **no more** that 6 lines long.

Here are examples of borders that attract attention to your signature:



## NOTES:

You always want to use characters in your border that have a lot of “ink space” and have a lot of “lines” in the character to make it look blacker. For example, the “m” has one more line than an “n”, so it will look “blacker” and make a thicker border and is therefore, better to use. Likewise, the “@” is a lot “blacker” when you put a row of them together than the letter “a”.

Using a border will bring more attention to your contact info than any text art. The only exception to this would be to have a simple text art company logo and a border around that logo and your contact info (like the *Allied Office Supplies* signature on the previous page).

### **Modify your signature to suit different marketing needs;**

promoting your website, autoresponder, contest or special offer, or specific product or service. Use one “Sig” to target the market in a certain discussion and another to target different customers in other newsgroup postings (can you see where I am coming from?).

Tailor your email signature to test different promotions OR tailor the slogan/message in your signature to a specific target audience.

By the way, try not to use titles like President or CEO in your email signature. This doesn’t impress anyone but you.

The formatting of your email messages is also something to pay attention to. Not everyone uses the newer email programs that “wrap” around the text in their viewing box. Depending on what email program you are using, some can insert carriage returns at the end of each line which can cause line breaks making your message very hard to read. If someone can’t read your email, how can you sell them something?

In your settings menu of your email program you want to **have approximately 70 characters per line in outgoing and 80 characters for incoming email** (the box that you actually view and read your email in). The reason for this is because some people are running in 640 X 480 pixels, which means you can only get about 78 character per line after you shave off other junk like window borders. If you don’t do this, your email may look great when you send it, but the received file might look something like this:

Hi ,

Thanks for your inquiry. ABC Inc. is here  
to help  
you with  
all your advertising needs. We deal with

**NOTES:**

many Fortune 500 companies to very small businesses. No matter what size your business is, we can tailor a advertising campaign to fit your budget and your needs.

... etc., etc., etc.

Another reason for setting your outgoing email window to 70 characters is so there is enough room to insert the “>” character when your post is quoted (or replied-to) without forcing line breaks (as in the above example).

I know this may seem trivial but, **how can someone read your messages (much less buy your product or service) if they can't read your email?**

If you want the view box in your customer's email reader to be a **certain size** because of what you are displaying, you can always have a “size ruler” show them how big the box should be. A size ruler would look like this and be found at the top of an email message:

```
=====
<<----- EXPAND WINDOW SIZE TO LIMITS ----->>
=====
```

It is impossible to make line art (text art) work under all conditions because of the different fonts and spacing of email programs, but tabbing seems to hold up pretty well. The only time you really need to use a hard carriage return is when you are tabbing or indenting on the next line.

**Try to personalize your email responses as much as possible.**

This can be as simple as changing the address from something generic, to “Hi John” at the beginning. It makes your message much more powerful to the reader, as he or she then feels important.

I highly recommend the email program *Eudora*. The freeware version of *Eudora Light* will do, but if you can afford the \$39.00 for *Eudora Pro* (<http://www.eudora.com>), it has a few extra features that I feel are worth the cost (i.e. it will encode attachments in UUE, has a built in spell checker, and much more).



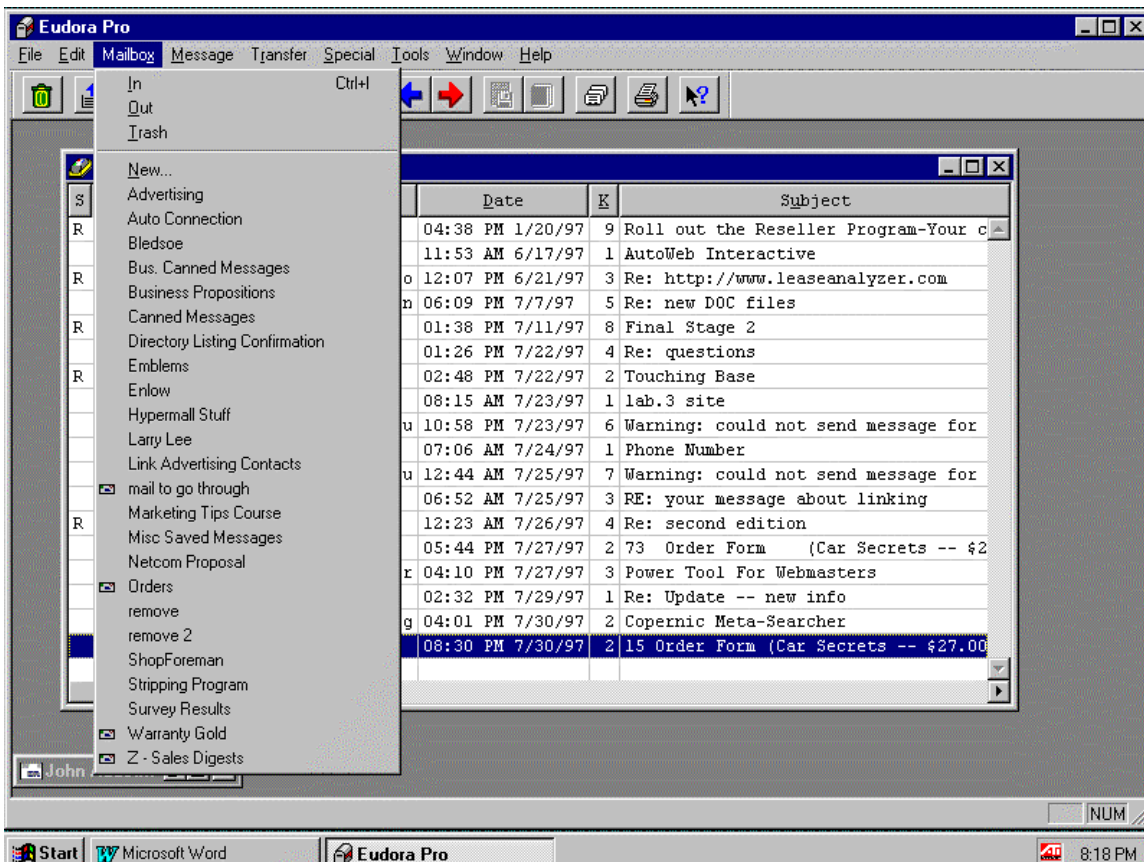
**NOTES:**

In my opinion, it is the easiest and most productive email program on the market. Daily email management can be very time consuming **or it can be a very easy task.**

I will show you how you can use *Eudora* to lessen your workload every day and how to sort your email.

It is important to save your email into different “mailboxes” for reference later. In *Eudora* it is as simple as highlighting the email message in your “IN” box, clicking on the menu option “TRANSFER”, and then clicking on the appropriate box you want it to go to. This organizes all your email in an orderly fashion. I have a separate *Eudora* program running for every business I have, which keeps emails organized for each business separately.

Below is a screen capture of one of my older version of Eudora Pro showing you the 19 extra mailboxes I have set up. Throughout this course I will be using screen capture of the older version of Eudora as now that I have a large staff, each Eudora is set up specifically for them... but I wanted to give you an idea of what it looked like when I was running the entire business myself – like you will probably be doing):



## **NOTES:**

**Advertising** is for examples of advertising, email promotions, contracts, or correspondence I have used in advertising.

**Auto Connection** is for all correspondence with this particular affiliate of mine.

**Bledsoe** is for all correspondence that I have with another business affiliate named Bledsoe. We do a lot of cooperative campaigns together.

**Bus. Canned Messages** is for all the pre-formatted/pre-written messages I have for replying to other sites that want to do business with me (this is explained in detail later this lesson).

**Bus. Propositions** is for copies of all the email I send to people who I propose to do business with, or for people who propose a business relationship with me.

**Canned Messages** is for all the pre-formatted/pre-written messages I have ready to send (I have about 30 messages in total that are preformatted for common questions, problems, correspondence, orders, etc. I run into. This is an **extremely important mailbox** and will be covered in more detail later).

**Directory List Confirmation** is for copies of all of the confirmations I get from directories and search engines so I can verify which search engines have entered or missed my listings.

**Emblems** is for all correspondence regarding a side business I run, involving Ferrari and Lamborghini badges and parts.

**Hypermall Stuff** is for all correspondence with this affiliate I deal with.

**Link ADV Contact** is for all correspondence with people who want to do reciprocal links and for banner/website advertising contracts and proposals. I list reciprocal links correspondence here so I can go back and verify later that these people are still linked to me as they promised.

**Mail to go through** is for less important email to look at when I have time. This allows my "IN" box to remain clean and uncluttered from unnecessary messages.

**Misc Saved Messages** is for messages that are important for me to keep record of when they don't fall into any particular category.

**Orders** is where I keep copies of every single completed order for *Car Secrets Revealed*. Because there are thousands of orders for *Car Secrets Revealed* I renew this mailbox and start from scratch once every month. It just gets too large. (I will show you how to save the orders in a text file and make it “searchable” later in this lesson).

**Remove** and **Remove 2** are for transferring all messages of people requesting to be removed from emailing lists when you do mass email or autoresponder campaigns. With the email stripping program that was provided with this course, you can go into this file and strip out all the email addresses that want to be removed to make it easy to recompile your mailing list and delete people who do not want to be there.

**Shopforeman** is for correspondence with the company that supplies us with a back-end product for *Car Secrets*, called *ShopForeman*. Once a client buys *Car Secrets Revealed*, *ShopForeman* is another product we tried to sell later as a back-end (back-end products are explained in a later lesson). We have since stopped doing business with them.

**Stripping Programs** is a folder for correspondence we have had during the designing of over 20 “email stripping” programs and “order client info striping” for us. I believe in full automation, so there have been programs built to create mailing labels, emailing lists, count orders, etc., **making everything very fast and efficient**. I talk about how to get some of these customer programs built for you (if you need them) free of charge... all in my private “Cutting Edge Newsletters” that you can read after you finish this course.

**Survey Results** is a box for all email responses to any surveys we do. Analyzing your surveys is important, since they tell you why customers are **really** buying your product and what they **really** want from you as opposed to what you **think** they want or need.

**Z Sales Digests** is where I store all of the daily and weekly mailing lists and digests I receive to read at a further date.

And of course, you could have many more or different mailboxes. You could, for example, have separate mailboxes to organize email threads of discussion lists you are participating in while promoting your product or service. This will allow you to **tailor your attack** to specific discussion groups or forums. Or if you sell a couple of different products, you could store all the communiqués and inquiries in specific mailboxes for each. Then, when it comes time to do an emailing to that specific group (or just a simple monthly

**NOTES:**

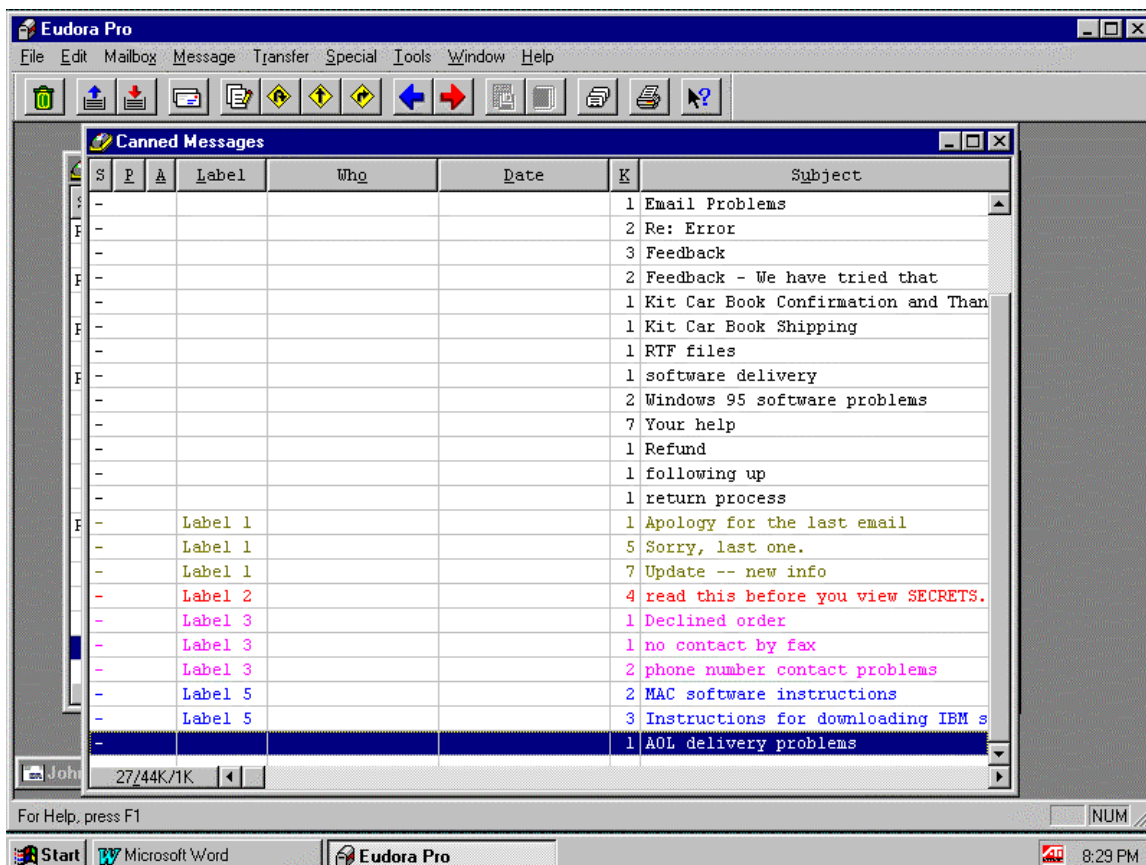
follow up email letter), it will be easy to organize and email them.

This is how to sort your email efficiently. I use my “IN” box only for messages I have to address immediately. Once they are read and then taken care of, I either delete or transfer them to the appropriate place. I never have more than 20-30 messages in my “IN” box — more than that will get you confused and lost in a pile of email daily. Then you might miss the important email and get yourself into a jam.

I have a separate Eudora program set-up for every business so everything is organized and efficient.

One of the most important mailboxes mentioned is “*CANNED MESSAGES*”. This mailbox contains a lot of pre-formatted messages to take care of my daily tasks. In other words, you don’t have to write an email to each person, you can just have “canned message” set up so you just click and send. **No more work!**

Following is a screen capture of all the messages I have:



Here are some examples of canned messages I use. Most of them are generic, so we just have to paste in the email address to send it (in addition, some of them have a blank space open at the top

***NOTES:***

addressing it to a first or last name to make it more personalized).

The next few pages are print outs of most of the canned emails I have, so you can use them as templates for messages you might want to create yourself. We will discuss how to draft them later in this lesson.

**Example # 1** - Offer which is bulk emailed to related sites to seek cheap advertising space.

To:  
From: Car Secrets <carsecrets@igs.net>  
Subject: advertising inquiry  
Cc:  
Bcc:  
X-Attachments:

Hi,

I am inquiring about your automotive web site. I am interested in having my web page linked from yours with a small description of what my page is about.

I have a book/e-pub called "Car Secrets Revealed." It reveals hundreds of money-saving "insider" automotive secrets on buying, servicing, and everyday driving. The tips and secrets will help the readers save thousands of dollars. They'll find out such things as: how to cut your insurance by 50%, how to get free repairs after your warranty expires, how to get hundreds of dollars back on your next tax return by simply using your car, how to easily beat the police radar speed traps, how to buy cars at wholesale prices and so many more. It can be seen at <http://www.igs.net/carsecrets/>

What would you recommend for the best exposure at your web site (best value for the dollar) and what would be the cost? I would even consider being linked (or listed) from multiple sections of your web site for total exposure.

I am looking for a long-term advertising relationship, so keep that in mind when making your suggestions. I am ready to start ASAP, so a quick response would be appreciated.

I do have a few other questions. First, how many visitors do you get a week? Second, how many visits do you get to the individual section(s) you are suggesting I link from? Lastly, do you accept VISA for payment?

Thanks for your time and help. I look forward to doing business with you.

Corey Rudl

**Example # 2** - *Follow-up letter to negotiate price of advertising space if it is too high.*

To:  
From: Car Secrets <carsecrets@igs.net>  
Subject: re: advertising  
Cc:  
Bcc:  
X-Attachments:

Hi,

Thank you for getting back to me.

I am interested in advertising on your site. However there would be a few things to work out.

I am in the midst of advertising/linking with about sixty sites. With this many sites, the rates vary widely and the terms also vary widely. Because of the number of sites I am linking to; so I don't spend my entire month figuring out who to pay when and what is due, I have designed a system that will make it easy and efficient on myself and the people I do business with. Each person I advertise with will be mailed a check (or my VISA or First Virtual Account charged) on the 15th of each month for payment of the next 30 days of service (or link I should say). This way I don't have to follow what contract was for how long and when the payment is do for every individual. I run two companies and I don't need bill payment taking up too much time.

As far as the price is concerned, I have to spend my money where it gets the best impact or value... it just makes business sense. I am looking for a long-term relationship with as many sites as I find are reputable and worth the time and money.

I respect your prices and respect your services... and I don't want to haggle for price. I want to advertise with your site, but most other sites are offering better rates. If you can stay in the same range as them, I would be happy to do business.

Because the nature of the internet and how everyone wants something for nothing (not that this is bad, it is just the nature of the netters...it is only recently that the net has become somewhat commercial) I have to watch my expenses when I try to increase the number of hits. I am not sure if you have sold a product on the net before, but the "conversion to sales" is very, VERY low. People are generally very skeptical about buying on the net.

I respect your prices and I understand you are in business to make money, I would never want you to do anything for free or for you to lose money in any way. I do have to keep my costs down initially until I determine what sites are having the most impact for me and continue a heavier advertising campaign with those sites. Since you are getting about 5000 hits to your automotive info page, and hopefully of that, 1000 people will link to my site; I was hoping that you could live with \$35/month for the first 2 months and then we can increase it accordingly after we see the response. Again, I am not trying to haggle with you. I am linking to sixty sites and my expenses are getting over \$2500 a month just for this one form of advertising. All I am asking

for is a small link with a short description of my site, nothing too fancy. You make a few extra dollars for taking the time to add a small "one-liner" to your HTML and after the two months are up you can increase the rates to what you feel is appropriate.

Does this sound fair?

Let me know either way; and if it is a go, I need to know how you want to handle payment (i.e. mailing address, etc.). I look forward to a mutually profitable relationship. If these terms are not acceptable, I do appreciate your time and wish you the best of success on the net.

Sincerely,

Corey Rudl



**Example # 3** - Details of how to link to *Car Secrets* after a site has let us sponsor them.

To:  
From: Car Secrets <carsecrets@igs.net>  
Subject: Sponsorship Files & Details  
Cc:  
Bcc:  
X-Attachments:

Hi,

Sorry for the delay in getting everything set up, I am dealing with over 40 sites and it is very time consuming to get all the details worked out with everyone. Thanks for your patience.

The rest of the letter after the asterisks will explain the attached files. The URL you should be using for the link to Car Secrets Revealed is:

<http://www.igs.net/carsecrets/>

I have sent out the check to you already. My understanding of our agreement is that you will also list me in any collective automotive "links" page you may have (just a text link OR a link with my logo would be great).

The rest of this message is generic to all 50 sites (it explains the attached files, billing, etc.)

\*\*\*\*\*

You may want to print out this email for reference when programming your site.

There are three graphics files attached to this message. They are called LOGO1.GIF, BANNER1.JPG, and BUTTON1.JPG. Depending on the agreement for your specific site, you will use one of these for the hyperlink. They have been encoded in MIME. If your email program does not decode MIME and you have Netscape, you can directly download the files by going to our GRAPHICS www site and use your web browser to download the graphics. Just go to <http://www.carsecrets.igs.net/graphics.html> This page will display the three graphics and the instructions for downloading them.

If you need the graphics in any other GIF, JPG, PXC, etc. file format or cannot use the files from this email or the GRAPHICS www site, please email me as to which ones you need (and if you want it in MIME, BinHex or UUE encoding). I will send them to you ASAP.

LOGO1.GIF - this graphics file is the logo of *Car Secrets Revealed*. Please make sure this logo stays in GIF format if possible (it has a transparent background, and only GIF format will support that). If you have an agreement to have a logo and link, it is vitally important that you have some kind of explanation beside the link in text. There are two options for this text. 1) The longer one is "Click here for hundreds of "insider" automotive secrets on buying, servicing, and

everyday driving." OR 2) the shorter one is "Click here for money-saving "insider" auto tips". If for some reason you cannot have this text beside the logo, please inform me right away. The reason for the text is that we want to let people know what is at that site instead of them just linking there which eats up lots of our server time (there are a few graphics files on the main page that take a while to load). It would be nice if you could make the logo AND the text word "here" both linkable to the site address I have specified above. For the command to make the logo "linkable", use the command `<a href="www.carsecrets.igs.net/"></a>` The command to make the word "here" linkable, use `<a href="www.carsecrets.igs.net/"> here </a>`

BANNER1.JPG - this graphics file is the banner for Car Secrets Revealed. If your site has an agreement to use a banner for the sponsorship, please use this file. The HTML command to make the banner "clickable" would be `<a href="www.carsecrets.igs.net/"></a>`

BUTTON1.JPG - there are a few sites that have agreed to have a linkable button to my site (i.e. small banner). Use this file if you are one of those sites. The HTML command to make the button "clickable" would be `<a href="www.carsecrets.igs.net/"></a>`

For those sites that I have a logo/link agreement with, but you like the look of the banner better (eg. it suits your site better), feel free to use the banner instead.

If I am sponsoring your site and you do not have a sponsor currently on that page right now, a suggestion would be to put the words "Check our sponsor!" OR "Visit our friends at Car Secrets" above the banner/logo (just a suggestion to make your page look a little more clean).

If there is any confusion, please email me.

All the payments have been mailed from my US office on Thursday. You should receive them in a couple of days. All future payments will be mailed the 15th day of each month. All invoicing should be done for a period from the 15th of one month to the 15th of the next. If this is not possible, please contact me at [carsecrets@igs.net](mailto:carsecrets@igs.net)

All invoicing should be sent via email to [carsecret@igs.net](mailto:carsecret@igs.net) or to our mailing address at:

Car Secrets  
123 Fir St.  
Blaine, WA  
98230  
(604) 730-2833

Please email me to let me know when the link(s) are active so I can test them (however, please test them yourself too).

I thank each and every site for their time and patience with this project. I look forward to a long, mutually profitable relationship with each of you.

Corey Rudl

**Example # 4** - Emailed to sites that will not accept advertising or that we couldn't come to an advertising agreement on.

To:  
From: Car Secrets <carsecrets@igs.net>  
Subject: new info  
Cc:  
Bcc:  
X-Attachments:

Hi,

I have an 18 page consumer-oriented article called "Everything You Wanted To Know About Service Centers But Were Afraid To Ask" that is freely distributed and available to anyone that wants it.

I was hoping that you could provide a link to the website where it is available. Here are some of the topics it discusses:

- > The Federal Trade Commission estimates 40% of all auto repairs are unnecessary (that's \$20 Billion) - learn how to avoid being part of this statistic.
- > You have probably been ripped off many times this year without you ever knowing!... how to stop this immediately - crucial information
- > Where do the best mechanics work? Where is the best place to get your car serviced? How to find an honest, good mechanic you can trust (he can save you hundreds of dollars)
- > 4 questions you should immediately ask your mechanic before you even consider letting him work on your car
- > Do large auto chains (i.e. Goodyear, Midas, etc.) do good work?
- > Where will you get the best deal? And where will you get ripped off?
- > Why many shops only hurt the customers they know best... and how to protect yourself
- > Discussion of the different types of service centers and exactly what types of repairs they are best at

...and more tricks of the trade.

This is very valuable information to just about everyone who owns a car. Can you provide a link from your site to mine (<http://www.igs.net/carsecrets/article.html>) so they can get this article? Let me know if you can. And if there is anything I can do for you, let me know.

Enjoy the information (it can be quite an "eye-opener")

Nick

**Example # 5** - *When a customer has a firewall that blocks large email files, we send this:*

To:  
From: Car Secrets <carsecrets@igs.net>  
Subject: Email Problems  
Cc:  
Bcc:  
X-Attachments:

Hi,

We tried to email you the software, but your server has a firewall that will not allow big files to be emailed to you (this is to protect you from email bombing).

I will send you instructions on how to download the software directly from our website with your web browser in a separate email.

I have included a copy of the email we received back to inform us that your server will not allow us to email you the file (at the bottom of this message).

If you have any questions, feel free to ask.

Thanks.

Nick

**Example # 6** - *When people email us asking why the secure order form keeps giving them an "error" message (making it difficult to order).*

To:  
From: Car Secrets <carsecrets@igs.net>  
Subject: Re: Error  
Cc:  
Bcc:  
X-Attachments:

Hi,

Thanks for letting us know about the error when you tried to order the book. There are only a few things that will cause an error... but the screen should have displayed what that error was.

- 1) Not filling out a field correctly (i.e. not entering your address or phone number)
- 2) Entering an incorrect credit card number (i.e. typo)
- 3) Having your credit card declined from the bank.

In any of these cases the computer should tell you where the error is on the screen.

Please try it again. The URL is:

<https://secure.hypermall.com/carsecrets/gen.cgi?REF=86>

Or you can email me the info directly and I will process your order manually. I would need the following information: your full name, address, credit card number and expiry date, if you want the IBM or MAC software, and if you want the software sent by email or on diskette with the book.

If you are concerned about emailing your credit card number, split the number up into two email messages.

Thanks.

Nick  
Customer Service

**Example # 7** - *Sent to anyone that sends a product back for a refund.*

To:  
From: Car Secrets <carsecrets@igs.net>  
Subject: Refund  
Cc:  
Bcc:  
X-Attachments:

Mr. ,

I am sorry that you were not pleased with the information, the response we've been having is overwhelmingly positive.

As per our money-back guarantee, we have refunded your order and it should appear on your next credit card billing statement.

Your credit card has been refunded for your total purchase price of \$27.00 (note: the \$2.95 shipping cost is not refundable since it has been used). If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

Thank you for giving us the opportunity to show you our product and we are sorry that it was not what you were looking for.

Sincerely,

Nick  
Customer Service

**Example # 8** - *Used to follow-up on people who email us saying that they were going to order then we can't find any record of their order.*

To:  
From: Car Secrets <carsecrets@igs.net>  
Subject: following up  
Cc:  
Bcc:  
X-Attachments:

Hi,

I just wanted to make sure everything was answered to your satisfaction before I erased your email message from our "in" box (we get over 100 messages a day... so we have to erase old ones often). Send me a quick email just to let me know... we really believe in customer service and following up.

Thanks.

Nick  
Customer Service



**Example # 9** - *Sent to people that request instructions on how to get a refund.*

To:  
From: Car Secrets <carsecrets@igs.net>  
Subject: return process  
Cc:  
Bcc:  
X-Attachments:

Hi,

I am sorry that you were not pleased with the information. However, it's easy to return. Just send the book and software back to:

Car Secrets  
1123 Fir Ave.  
Blaine, WA  
98230

Please put a short note inside the package with your name, address and mention if you ordered online or through the 800 number as it will help us process your refund more quickly.

Once we receive it back, we will process the return and email you a confirmation of the refund to your credit card within one week.

Thanks.

Nick  
Customer Service

**Example # 10** - *For declined credit card transactions.*

To:  
From: Car Secrets <carsecrets@igs.net>  
Subject: Declined order  
Cc:  
Bcc:  
X-Attachments:

Hi,

We went to process your order today so we could email you the software and ship the book, but your credit card was declined.

Would you like to use another credit card? We accept all major cards (VISA, MC, AMEX).

You have a few options for submitting the card information to us.

- 1) You can email me the card information directly (split up the card number into two email messages for security reasons).
- 2) You can call our office directly at (604) 730-2833 (call collect)
- 3) You can fax the card information to (604) 730-2480
- 4) You can email me your phone number and I can call you directly

Let me know what you would like to do and I will process your order within 12 hours.

Thanks

Nick  
Customer Service

**Example # 11** - *For people who used our non-secure online order form and were going to fax their credit number to us, but we have yet to receive it.*

To:  
From: Car Secrets <carsecrets@igs.net>  
Subject: no contact by fax  
Cc:  
Bcc:  
X-Attachments:

Hi,

We still haven't processed your order for the book Car Secrets Revealed. You stated you would fax your credit card number to us, but we haven't heard or seen anything from you.

You can fax the information to (604) 730-2480 or email it to me.

If you want to cancel the order, please let me know as your order will remain in the "in-process" bin and we will keep trying to contact you otherwise.

Let me know what you would like to do and I will take care of it within 12 hours.

Thanks

Nick  
Customer Service

**Example # 12** - *For people who use our non-secure order form and ask us to call them for their credit card number but have not returned our phone calls (if we have left messages).*

To:  
From: Car Secrets <carsecrets@igs.net>  
Subject: phone number contact problems  
Cc:  
Bcc:  
X-Attachments:

Hi,

Thanks for your interest in our product Car Secrets Revealed.

As per your order form, we have tried to contact you by phone to complete your ordering information. We have left several messages, but with no reply. The number we are calling is \*\*\* \*\*

You have a few options for submitting the card information to us.

- 1) You can email me the card information directly.
- 2) You can call our office directly at (604) 730-2833 (call collect as our 800 number does not work to the computer office))
- 3) You can fax the card information to (604) 730-2480
- 4) You can email me your phone number and I can call you directly
- 5) As a last option you can call 1-800-255-1914 and re-place your order. However if you do this, please send me a quick email to let me know. If not, I will not know you called the 800 number and probably try to contact you again.

Let me know what you would like to do and I will process your order within 12 hours.

Thanks

Nick  
Customer Service

P.S. If you want to cancel the order, please send me a quick note. Otherwise it will stay in the "in process" bin until it is fulfilled or canceled. Thanks.

**Example # 13** - *For people who email us and say that we should give away a few tips as an example of the information offered in the book. Or for people who say they will buy if we can show them a few tips in order to make sure we are not a “scam”.*

To:  
From: Car Secrets <carsecrets@igs.net>  
Subject: Feedback - We have tried that  
Cc:  
Bcc:  
X-Attachments:

Hi,

You do have a very good point and that is why we designed a promotional version of the software that has two chapters free of charge and the rest are locked out (I will show you where to go to download this version). We have used this type of marketing in the past (giving away the promotional version of the book), but it did not work very well. After consulting with some people who downloaded and read it, it became very apparent that the people who were downloading it just wanted something for free (for that fact, anything for free). I do not have a problem with this because, of course, that is what we were doing; giving away free stuff. However, the people who seem genuinely interested in the material just could not bother downloading the information. Their attitude was that if it was free, there was either some "catch" to it OR the information was not worth anything (because it is free).

Since then, we have gone back to the webpage and sales have been skyrocketing. We have changed the page a few times, and the sales always respond in a positive way. We actually even had a very large publisher who wanted to buy the rights to the book.

The promotional version of the book can be found at  
<http://www.igs.net/carsecrets/download.html>

All you have to do is click on the file called CARINFO.ZIP and your browser will download it directly to your hard drive.

Enjoy and thanks for your feedback.

Nick  
-CSR

**Example # 14** - *For people who complain that we are only out for their money by selling the book instead of truly caring about people being taken advantage of in the car business....if we were really trying to help the public, we should give the book for free (you will get a few people like this).*

To:  
From: Car Secrets <carsecrets@igs.net>  
Subject: Feedback  
Cc:  
Bcc:  
X-Attachments:

Hi,

Thank you for your feedback. We appreciate any feedback, whether it is good or bad.

I am sorry you feel that way, the response we have been getting has been overwhelmingly positive. To "ease your sores" and show that we are not just "out for your money", let me give you the promotional version of Car Secrets Revealed. It is the software version of the book with two free chapters. The first chapter is called "Everything you wanted to know about repair centers but were afraid to ask" and the second is "How to easily beat the police radar speed traps". You will be able to see how useful this kind of information is; and if you don't agree, then you had nothing to lose because it's free.

To download and access the promotional software version of Car Secrets Revealed via our website, you must follow these instructions. Go to web page:

<http://www.carsecrets.igs.net/download.html>

Once you have followed those instructions and downloaded the file CARINFO.ZIP to your hard drive, exit windows and use your zip utility to unzip the file. By unzipping this file you will automatically decompress two files; one called RUNTHIS.EXE and the other called SECRETS.EXE.

Ignore SECRETS.EXE for now, you will not be able to run it. Type RUNTHIS and <enter> and the program will begin. The program/book is easy to run, it is just point and click - it will guide you step by step.

Enjoy the information, it can be quite an "eye-opener".

If you have any questions email myself or carsecrets@igs.net

\*\*Oh, by the way. If you are downloading the file and it "cuts off" half way through the download, you might want to check your disk and memory cache in your web browser. If you don't know what this is, it is just the limitations of memory your browser will use. There is always a selection somewhere in your web browser menu that allows you to clear the memory or increase it. Your "memory cache" should be set to 1.3 Meg; "disk cache" should be set to 5 Megs. If for some reason the file just "cuts-off" somewhere throughout the download, it means your memory or disk cache is full and you will have to clear the memory and disk

cache (there is a button to clear this in your web browser menu). This will solve your problem.

Nick\  
CSR

**Example # 15** - *This is when my office manager gets an email that has to be answered by me - but I am not available for a while.*

To:  
From: Car Secrets <carsecrets@igs.net>  
Subject: Corey will know...  
Cc:  
Bcc:  
X-Attachments:

Hi,

Thank you for your email today. As I do not have the knowledge to answer your questions, I will be sure to pass this message along to Corey.

Please note that unfortunately, Corey will be out of town until XXX. Within that time, I will be forwarding messages to him via email.

We realize your message may be urgent, but we ask that you please be patient with us. Corey will get back to you within 4-5 days of my receiving this message at <carsecrets@igs.net>.

Thank you once again for understanding.

Jason  
Customer Service



**Example # 16** - *We use this when someone uses one of our manual non-secure order forms to confirm the order.*

To:  
From: Car Secrets <carsecrets@igs.net>  
Subject: Confirmation and Thank You  
Cc:  
Bcc:  
X-Attachments:

Hi,

Thank you for your order. This email is just to confirm that we received your order and it will be shipped via Priority US Mail within 24 hours (weekends excluded). You should receive the package within 3-4 business days.

As an additional note: If you used your credit card for this purchase, it has been charged the special price of \$27.00 plus \$2.95 shipping. It will appear on your credit card statement as THE INTERNET MARKETING CENTER from Blaine, WA (our main company).

Enjoy the book, the information can be quite an "eye-opener".

Nick  
Customer Service

**Example # 17** - *We have a common problem with AOL where they take a long time to get the **Car Secrets** software to the AOL member because of traffic congestion (we promise it to be delivered within ten minutes of ordering).*

To:  
From: Car Secrets <carsecrets@igs.net>  
Subject: AOL delivery problems  
Cc:  
Bcc:  
X-Attachments:

Hi,

I checked our order and the software was emailed within seconds of your ordering. We have been getting a lot of complaints from AOL users that they are not receiving their software... we are checking into why AOL is not delivering it to you on time.

I will send another copy of the software manually in a couple of minutes.

Thanks.

Nick  
Customer Service

**Example # 18** - *For people who email us stating they have not received their software within the ten-minute time frame promised.*

To:  
From: Car Secrets <carsecrets@igs.net>  
Subject: software delivery  
Cc:  
Bcc:  
X-Attachments:

Hi,

I checked the logs and the software was sent 3 seconds after your order was approved. However, some of the larger (and busier) servers are very slow at routing the email so it takes a long time for it to get to you. Let me use AOL as an example; even though we send the software only moments after you order and the AOL main email router may get it in about 5 minutes... it could take up to 2 hours for them to route it to the actual AOL user (their specific email address) because they are so overcrowded lately.

You should have the software by now. If you don't, please email me and I will send you a copy manually ASAP.

Thanks.

Nick  
Customer Service

**Example # 19** - *For people who had problems with getting MAC software via email, so we show them how to download it from our website.*

To:  
From: Car Secrets <carsecrets@igs.net>  
Subject: MAC software instructions  
Cc:  
Bcc:  
X-Attachments:

Hi,

Thank you for your order.

With your web browser, go to <http://xxx.com/> (URL omitted for security reasons).

You will see the file name MAC\_CARBOOK.BIN underlined on the first page. Click on this file name (do not worry about the BIN prefix as it only tells the computer it is a binary file... it will be downloaded to your computer as MAC\_CARBOOK). Depending on the browser you are using, it will either directly download the file to the folder you have preset for all your internet downloads OR it will ask you what folder you would like to download the file to.

Once the file is completely downloaded to your computer, just double click on the file MAC\_CARBOOK and the program will run.

**\*\*Oh, by the way.** If the file "cuts off" half way through your download, you might want to check your disk and memory cache in your web browser. If you don't know what this is, it is just the limitations of memory your browser will use. There is always a selection somewhere in your web browser menu that allows you to clear the memory or increase it. Your "memory cache" should be set to 1.3 Meg; "disk cache" should be set to 5 Megs. If for some reason the file just "cuts-off" somewhere throughout the download, it means your memory is full and you will have to clear the memory and disk cache (there is a button to clear this in your web browser menu). This will solve your problem.

If you have any questions feel free to contact me at [carsecrets@igs.net](mailto:carsecrets@igs.net) or (604) 730-2833.

Enjoy.

Nick  
Customer Service

**Example # 20** - For people who cannot get the IBM software via email, we send them download instructions.

To:  
From: Car Secrets <carsecrets@igs.net>  
Subject: Instructions for downloading IBM software  
Cc:  
Bcc:  
X-Attachments:

Hi,

To download and access the software version of Car Secrets Revealed via our website, you must follow these instructions. Go to web page:

<http://www.xxx.com/> (URL omitted for security reasons).

Enter username XXXXX and password XXXXX.

Download CSR.EXE if your browser will allow you to download EXE files (some browsers are set up to "run" EXE files when it sees them). The SECRETS.ZIP is just in case your browser will not allow you to download the EXE file (but with the ZIP file you will have to UNZIP it with an UNZIP utility like PKUNZIP.EXE)

The CSR.EXE file is a self-extracting zip file. Remember that this is large file and will take a few minutes to download to your hard-drive. Once you have downloaded CSR.EXE, just double click on it and follow the series of steps it will take you though on your screen to install the software on your computer. It is all "point and click" from there.

If you cannot download SECRETS.EXE because your browser will not allow EXE files to be downloaded, then download SECRETS.ZIP (remember you must have a ZIP utility like PKUNZIP.EXE to allow you to unzip this)

Enjoy the book and if you have any questions email myself or carsecrets@igs.net

\*\*Oh, by the way. If the file "cuts off" half way through your download, you might want to check your disk and memory cache in your web browser. If you don't know what this is, it is just the limitations of memory your browser will use. There is always a selection somewhere in your web browser menu that allows you to clear the memory or increase it. Your "memory cache" should be set to 1.3 Meg; "disk cache" should be set to 5 Megs. If for some reason the file just "cuts-off" somewhere throughout the download, it means your memory is full and you will have to clear the memory and disk cache (there is a button to clear this in your web browser menu). This will solve your problem.

Nick

**Example # 21** - Used for manually emailing people a copy of IBM software (we attach the 1.3 Meg file to the message).

To:  
From: Car Secrets <carsecrets@igs.net>  
Subject: read this before you view CSR.EXE  
Cc:  
Bcc:  
X-Attachments:

Thanks for your order. Here is the software version of Car Secrets Revealed. The attached file CSR.EXE should be downloaded to your hard drive. For those who have not received an attached file before, most email programs will either automatically decode and download the attached file (ie. Eudora) OR list this text message and the file as two separate parts to the email (ie. Pegasus Mail). If your email program lists the two parts separately, when you click on the part of the email that lists the file it will most likely ask if you want to "view it" or "save it to disk." You want to save it to your hard-drive.

Depending on the mail program you are using, it should automatically decode the MIME format the file is sent in. MIME is standard on the internet and most email programs automatically decode it. If your program does not, please check which encoding it supports and email us so we can send it to you in that format (you can find out which encoding type your email program handles by trying to attach a file to a "dummy" email you are sending out and see which type of encoding it allows you to choose from).

\*\*\* For all AOL (America Online) users, a button will appear at the bottom of the screen for you to download the attached file. Your email program will automatically download the file to your hard drive (it will take about 10 minutes to download).

Once you have the file CSR.EXE on your hard drive, all you have to do is double click on the file CSR.EXE and follow the instructions that will appear.

As an additional note: If you used your credit card for this purchase, it has been charged the special price of \$27.00 plus \$2.95 shipping. It will appear on your credit card statement as MONEY SAVERS GROUP from Ogdensburg, NY (our mother company).

Please note: If you get just a bunch of "garble" after this email, it indicates that your email program does not decode MIME. For example, MSN will only decode UUE attachment, Prodigy will not decode anything (you have to use Wincode... a program found on Prodigy to decode attachments separately), and CCmail will not decode any attachment. If this happens, please email us so we can re-send it in a different format or send you download instructions on how to easily download the software directly from our website with your web browser.

If you have any questions, you can email me at carsecrets@igs.net or call (604) 730-2833.

Enjoy the book, it can be quite an "eye-opener".

Paula  
Customer Service

P.S. The softcover book will appear in the mail in approximately 2 weeks (It was shipped via Book Rate U.S. Post).

**Example # 22** - Survey we did to past customers to find out their interests and why they bought the book - so we could target our market more effectively in the future.

To:  
From: Car Secrets <carsecrets@igs.net>  
Subject: Your help  
Cc:  
Bcc:  
X-Attachments:

Dear Friend,

Thank you for ordering "Car Secrets Revealed" in the past.

I am Corey Rudl, the author of the book/software you read. I am sending out this email in hope that we can get feedback from you on our product and service (and how to improve).

Since no one likes taking the time to fill out a survey... I wanted to motivate you by offering a free 6 month subscription to the new *CarTips(tm)* newsletter. This will feature money-saving tips and tricks on all aspects of car buying, car repairs, car insurance, and more. These subscriptions normally sell for \$49.95 per year, but by completing this survey and emailing it back to us you will receive six months FREE with no obligation to purchase any further issues. The new *CarTips(tm)* newsletter is due to be released in one month.

I really appreciate your time and help to show us what you enjoyed about our product and service... and what we can improve on.

I also should make it clear that the information you submit to us is completely confidential and your email address has never, and will never be given to anyone or any mailing list.

This survey is just to help us better understand our clients and what they want from Car Secrets. We want to serve you better.

Just type your answers below the questions.

Please answer the questions honestly... even if what you have to say is "bad". We want to know what our strengths and weaknesses are.

= = = = =  
Survey Questions  
= = = = =

#1) Did you buy the book/software because:

- a) You were buying a new car in the near future?
- b) You were buying a used car in the near future?
- c) Interested in repair rip-offs?
- d) Interested in general cost-cutting techniques?
- e) Interested because there were so many topics covered about cars in the book?



- f) Wanted to know how to drive a luxury car free every year?
- g) Liked that you could get the info within 24 hours via email?
- h) Other?: \_\_\_\_\_

Note: If you bought the book for multiple reasons, try to rate them on a scale of 1-5, 1 being the most important and 5 being the least important. You can just mark 1-5 beside each reason you bought (listed a-h).

#2) What would you change about the book/software if you could (what did you not like)?

#3) What did you like about the book/software the best?

#4) How was our service... was everything delivered on time?

#5) What kind of other automotive information would you be interested in (we are trying to come up with new products all the time)... in other words, what would you want to know more about?

#6) Do you have any opinions about our webpage: Good? Bad? Changes?

#7) What is your age?

#8) Are you male/female?

#9) Do you have an automotive related website on the Internet (either a commercial or personal site)?

#10) Do you own an Internet business of any kind?

#11) Because of the great success of *Car Secrets Revealed* on the Internet (the # 1 best selling car book on the Internet), we will be introducing an "Internet Guerrilla Marketing" Course soon... would you be the type of customer who would be interested in this. This course will show all the tricks of marketing on the Internet, what works and what doesn't, and show examples of successful campaigns, etc. But most importantly it will guarantee that you will triple your online profit (assuming you have an online business) within 90 days or your money back. The course will sell for about \$250.00. Would this be something that would peak your interest? Again by answering "yes" to this question, we will not try to sell you anything, we just want to get an honest idea if our customer base is interested in this type of product.

#12) When you bought *Car Secrets Revealed*, did you buy any other products near the same time frame that are in any way similar to *Car Secrets Revealed* (i.e. Car pricing reports, other automotive books, etc.)?

==  
 END OF SURVEY  
 ==

Thanks for filling out this survey, your input is very much appreciated. Please email your responses to [carsecrets@igs.net](mailto:carsecrets@igs.net) or just reply to this message.

By completing this survey, you will automatically receive 6 months of the *CarTips(tm)* newsletter FREE OF CHARGE.

Thank You Again.

Corey Rudl  
Author

## NOTES:

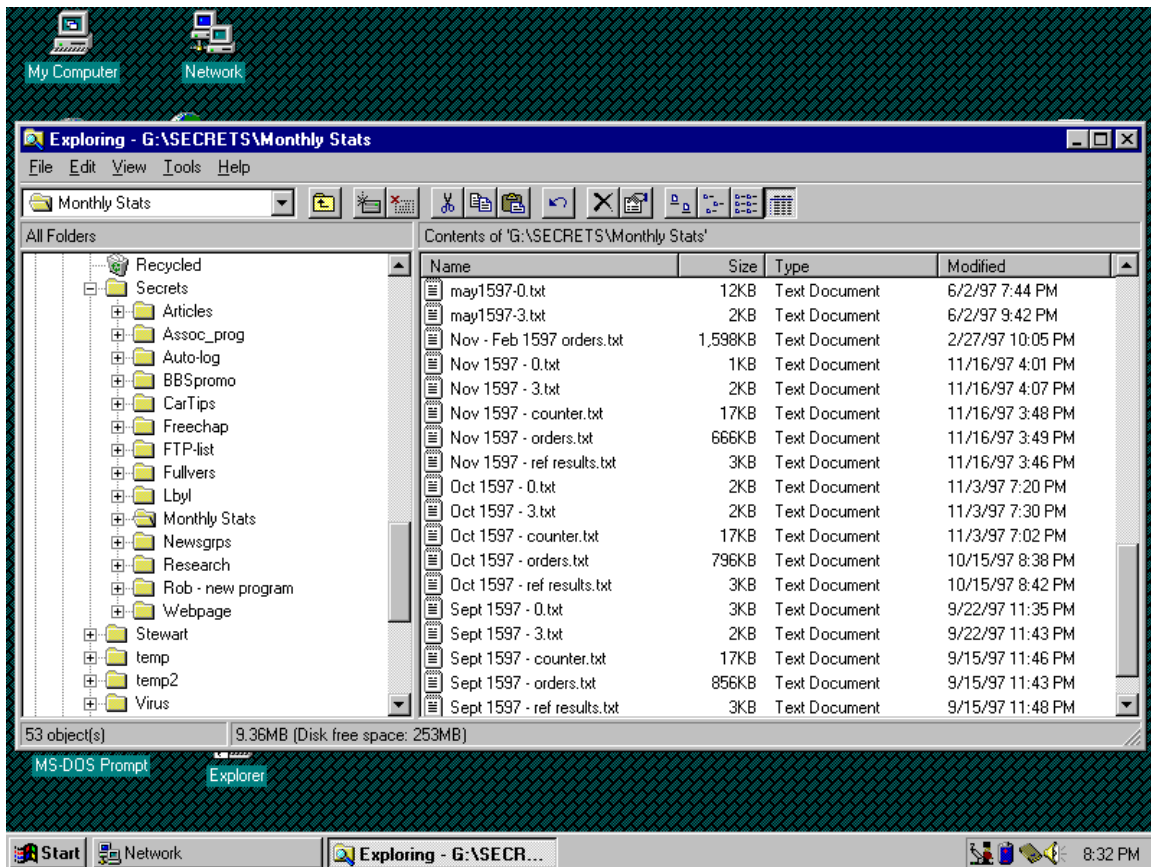
Before we go any further with our discussion on mailboxes, you need to understand how they work (i.e. how they organize and store information). If you don't, you won't be able to do simple things like search for orders, etc.

If you go into the directory where *Eudora* is stored, you will notice each mailbox has two files (one ending with “.mbx” and one ending in “.toc”). MBX stands for “mailbox” and TOC stands for “table of contents”. The table of contents file is very small and just tells Eudora where each email message starts in the large MBX file. The MBX file is a large ASCII text file that has all the email messages stored one after another.

This large text format makes it great for extracting email addresses and mass email campaigns. It also makes it **easy** to strip out things like names, addresses, and card numbers to create a customer database. And it also makes it very easy to search your files for orders (you need this for returns and customer service) because you can load this “.mbx” file into any word processor and use the “find” command to look for names, address, emails, etc.

With regard to your “orders” mailbox, you are going to want to “refresh” or “clean out” your records every month or two. Just copy the *ORDER.MBX* file to another directory/folder called *MONTHLY STATS* (or whatever you want to call it). Rename the file as a text file and call it what it refers to (for example, the orders for July 1999 could be called *july99.txt*). This is the file you will use to search for orders or extract email addresses or customers names to build a database.

The following is a screen capture of my Monthly Stats directory to show how I organize my files for future reference:



There are 5 files of stats per month. For example, "Sept 1597" stands for September 15<sup>th</sup> 1997, as I do my stats on the 15<sup>th</sup> of every month:

<i>Sept 1597 - 0.txt</i>	log for autoresponder "0"
<i>Sept 1597 - 3.txt</i>	log for autoresponder "3"
<i>Sept 1597 - counter.txt</i>	counter logs for hits to my site
<i>Sept 1597 - order.txt</i>	log for all the orders from the previous month
<i>Sept 1597 - ref results.txt</i>	lead and sales conversation ratio calculations for the month

*Note: we will discuss autoresponders and conversion ratios in a later lesson*

Then go back to *Eudora* and delete every order in the *ORDERS* mailbox using the delete/trash button. For those who don't know how to select multiple messages at one time, use the shift key. In other words, if you want to delete every order in your *ORDER* mailbox, you click on the first order to highlight it, go to the bottom of the mailbox, hold the shift key down and click on the last order. That will highlight every order in that mailbox. All you

**NOTES:**

do then is click the delete button and every order will be deleted (but you will still have a copy of the orders in your *MONTHLY STATS* directory).

While we are on the topic of orders, I should talk a little about how *Mailloop* can handle this for you. It will "blow your socks off."

*Mailloop* has a very powerful "web form processor" that can automatically process web form submissions (like orders, applications, leads, etc.) and convert them to an "email merge data file" that can be used for personalized mailing or for importing into your normal database program. **This is incredibly powerful if used correctly!**

Let me give you an example; someone orders a product at your site and you get a form via email with the order. That email body may look like the following:

```
Firstname: John
Lastname: Smith
Address: 123 Elm St.
City: Chicago
State: IL
Zip: 12345
Email: john@aol.com
Phone: (203) 555-1212
Product: Handle Guard
Price: $29.95
Date: June 22, 1998
```

Now, for those who have never seen comma delimited files, or don't understand how a database saves information, don't get frustrated if you don't understand the information/formatting below... it is just there so you can see how it is stored; you don't have to understand why at this point.

**NOTES:**

So... as soon as you receive that email, *Mailloop* will **automatically** take that information in your email and save it into a file that would look like this (ignore the word wrap here):

```
"[email]", "[firstname]", "[lastname]", "[address]", "[city]", "[state]", "[zip]", "[phone]", "[product}", "[price]", "[date]"
"john@aol.com", "John", "Smith", "123 Elm
St", "Chicago", "IL", "12345", "(203) 555-1212", "Handle
Guard", "$29.95", "June 22, 1998"
```

Note the first line of information that is at the top of the example above (i.e. "[email]", "[firstname]", ...). This is a "designation line" that just lets *Mailloop* know what order the information is in so you can use it later on. For each order you would get, *Mailloop* would insert another line of information into that file for that next order. For example, if you got another order that looked like this:

```
Firstname: Jane
Lastname: Doe
Address: 123 Apple St.
City: New York
State: NY
Zip: 91234
Email: jane@ix.netcom.com
Phone: (619) 555-1212
Product: Golf Swing Pro Videotape Package
Price: $19.70
Date: June 23, 1998
```

The mail merge data file that *Mailloop* will automatically make and save for you would look like the following (again, ignore the word wrap):

```
"[email]", "[firstname]", "[lastname]", "[address]", "[city]", "[state]", "[zip]", "[phone]", "[product}", "[price]", "[date]"
"john@aol.com", "John", "Smith", "123 Elm
St", "Chicago", "IL", "12345", "(203) 555-1212", "Handle
Guard", "$29.95", "June 22, 1998"
"jane@ix.netcom.com", "Jane", "Doe", "123 Apple St.", "New
York", "NY", "91234", "(619) 555-1212", "Golf Swing Pro
Videotape Package", "$19.70", "June 23, 1998"
```

**NOTES:**

And the database would just get bigger and bigger as you added people to it.

Not only does this give you the power to import that customer information into a database (like *Microsoft Access*, *FileMaker Pro*, or whatever you use... if you use any) but it also allows you to create completely customized personal emails for follow-up sales as *Mailloop* has full "mail merge" capabilities.

For example, if you wrote an email that looked like this in Mailloop:

Hello [**firstname**],

I am emailing you to thank you for your purchase of [**product**] on [**date**]. I noticed you lived in [**city**] and wanted to offer all our customers on the East Coast a special price on our new software product that is just being released this week. It is called *The Golf Pro SwingMaster* and is a great tool for improving your golf game. It is state of the art software that allows you to analyse your golf swing right from the comfort of your own home. We have been working years on it and have had some of the finest golfers testing it for the last 4 months with fantastic results. Take a look at <http://www.golfing.com/master/> and see how it improves your stroke in a matter of minutes; you will be truly amazed. We have set up this special webpage for you because you are on the East Coast and as a preferred client, we wanted to give you a special 30% discount. Check out the webpage and if you have any questions feel free to contact me directly.

Thanks.

Chuck Peterson  
Director of Sales

Now *Mailloop* will merge in all the appropriate information for each client and individually send each customer a personalized email... **all with the push of one button... and all automatically.**

For example, Jane would see this email:

Hello Jane,

I am emailing you to thank you for your purchase of *Golf*

*Swing Pro Videotape Package* on June 23, 1998. I noticed you lived in New York and wanted to offer all our customers on the East Coast a special price on our new software product that is just being released this week. It is called *The Golf Pro SwingMaster* and is a great tool for improving your golf game. It is state of the art software that allows you to analyse your golf swing right from the comfort of your own home. We have been working years on it and have had some of the finest golfers testing it for the last 4 months with fantastic results. Take a look at <http://www.golfing.com/master/> and see how it improves your stroke in a matter of minutes; you will be truly amazed. We have set up this special webpage for you because you are on the East Coast and as a preferred client, we wanted to give you a special 30% discount.

Check out the webpage and if you have any questions feel free to contact me directly.

Thanks .

Chuck Peterson  
Director of Sales

Now that is just the start of it... this feature is not just used for orders and customer followups. It could be used to send completely personalized bulk email, newsletters, lead follow-up, applications you get... and so on. See the power of this... and it is all done automatically!

We will talk very extensively about how to "backend" a product and follow up **and how that can skyrocket your sales (and profits)**.

For more information on *Mailloop* and why it is so powerful, go to <http://www.marketingtips.com/mailloop.html>

I am sure you are starting to see why *Mailloop* is an important tool for online marketing (and how it can increase your sales and save you incredible amounts of time). It does **a lot more** than I have mentioned so far and we will discuss how to use some of its other features later in the course.

OK, back to the *Eudora* mailboxes we were discussing.

Lets move on to how to design a "canned message" (a message that can be sent over and over again) and how to send it. **This is surprisingly easy** and will save you an enormous amount of time



when handling your email.

If you haven't already set up a mailbox called *CANNED MESSAGES*, here is how to do it. Click on the file option *MAILBOX* and pull the cursor down to the *NEW* option and click. Fill in the name of the mailbox (i.e. "*CANNED MESSAGES*") and follow the simple short instructions. To see if your mailbox was created, just click on the menu option *MAILBOX* and you will notice that *CANNED MESSAGES* has been added as a mailbox below *IN*, *OUT*, and *TRASH*.

Putting messages in this mailbox is quite easy:

- 1) start a new email (under the menu option *MESSAGE*).
- 2) type the subject line.
- 3) type in the body of the message as usual.
- 4) do not fill out the "*TO:*" field.
- 5) click on the menu option *FILE*, pull your cursor down to *SAVE*, and save the message.
- 6) click on the menu option *TRANSFER*, pull your cursor down and click on the mailbox *CANNED MESSAGES*. This will transfer the message into your *CANNED MESSAGES* mailbox. If you want to verify a message has been transferred, just click on the menu option *MAILBOX*, pull down the cursor and click on *CANNED MESSAGES* and you will see your first email with the subject heading listed in that mailbox.

Now how do you send copies of this message without deleting it? This is a good... and **very important** question.

To send a canned message, you want to click on the menu option *MAILBOX*, pull the cursor down and click on *CANNED MESSAGES*. Click once on the message you want to send to highlight it (**do not double click on this message because it will send the original message instead of copies of it!**). Click on the "redirect" button (on the tool bar) to copy the message and put the cursor in the "*TO:*" field. You can then either type in the address or "paste" it in if you copied it from email you received from a client. Click on *SEND* and the message is sent. It is that easy... you have just sent a **copy** of that message.

The original copy of the message still stays in your *CANNED MESSAGES* mailbox for later use. You can use the "redirect"

## NOTES:

button as many times as you like to send multiple copies of the canned message to clients. You can also personalize the message by saying “Hi Tim” (or whatever) but just typing in the top of the “redirected” message (everybody appreciates a personal touch in the anonymity of cyberspace... it makes them feel the message is for them alone).

*Note: If you are going to use a standard greeting, don't use “Dear Sir or Madam” or “To whom it may concern”. That went out years ago. Try a simple “Greetings” or “Hello”.*

If you only check your email once a day, you may be sending 20-40 replies out at once. I recommend that you log-off to answer all your email. Once you are ready to send your 20 or 40 messages, log back on to the internet, open the *OUT* box, and highlight all the messages that are to be sent. Remember, you can do this by clicking on the top one and with the shift key depressed, clicking on the bottom so they will all be highlighted, as described above. Once all the emails are highlighted, click the menu option *MESSAGE* and then on *SEND IMMEDIATELY*. *Eudora* will automatically send the messages one immediately after another until they are all sent (so you don't have to send them individually).

For those who know these steps... I am sorry to repeat so many of the basics, but you will be surprised how many experienced internet users don't know this stuff, and it does save **so much** time.

One additional note; you may have the need for a permanent email box service. This is an ISP (Internet Service Provider) that will assign you a permanent email address you can use for the rest of your life if you like, no matter how many times your email address changes or where you might move. They charge a nominal fee between \$5.00 to \$15.00 a year for this service. This permanent email address will forward all your email wherever you are and whatever new email address you are using.

If you already have your own domain (which I highly recommend getting), that is your permanent email address and website, so you don't have to worry about getting another. However, if you are hosting as a directory on an ISP's server instead of having your own domain, you want to consider getting a permanent email address.

Here is a list of some companies that provide this service:

PoBox.com	<a href="http://www.pobox.com">http://www.pobox.com</a>
Net Forward	<a href="http://www.netforward.com">http://www.netforward.com</a>

**NOTES:**

Mailbank <http://www.mailbank.com>  
A.K.A. Mail <http://www.akamail.com>

An organized and prepared email account is so very important because **quick responses build trust!** If you are prepared and organized, you will give great customer service and **the sales will follow.**

Many customers will be delighted when they get a response from you the same day because most of your competitors won't do that. The sooner you respond to your customers' inquiries, orders, or other communications, the more comfortable they will feel and the more your business will grow. This may seem trivial... but it is **more important than you can imagine.**

When you get leads by email, they are usually very vague. You have no idea who they are, their age, sex, or what they like or want. Here is an example of a reply you might get from an ad you placed from someone who has seen your website:

```
To: info@marketingtips.com  
From: nobody@abc.com  
Subject: (no subject)
```

```
Please send more info
```

This makes it difficult to respond in the most efficient way since you may have many services to offer.

I suggest you set up an email similar to the following template:

```
Greetings!
```

```
Thank you for requesting information on The Internet  
Marketing Center. (now give them general information  
about your company; like what you do and some of your  
customers, etc.).
```

```
I have attached a file that describes many of our  
services and pricing. For more information on a  
specific service or if you have any questions, feel  
free to email us or call us at (604) 720-2833 and we  
would be happy to answer any and all questions you may  
have.
```

```
Thank You.
```

```
Jason <Jason@marketingtips.com>  
Customer Service  
http://www.marketingtips.com
```

## NOTES:

P.S. We also design custom promotional services for clients, so if you have something in particular you want to focus on, please contact me for availability and pricing.

Make sure that when you are listing website URLs, the address is in the right case. Your domain name can be in any case (because it is actually translated into an IP address), but the last part of the URL is case sensitive. For example, if the real URL is **http://www.marketingtips.com/HELP/**, then listing **http://www.MARKETINGTIPS.com/HELP/** would get me there because the “HELP”, which is after the domain name is in the right case. However, if it was listed as **http://www.marketingtips.com/help/**, the browser would say, “file not found” (it will be looking for “HELP”, not “help”). **Try to keep everything lowercase to avoid this confusion.**

Don't list a period after a URL. The “hotlink” feature in most email programs will take the period as part of the address and it won't work either.

*Note: A "hotlink" feature is where you can double click on a URL in an email message and the computer will automatically load your web browser and go to that site*

There is a way around this. For example, instead of saying:

Visit our website at `http://www.marketingtips.com.`

You could say:

Visit our website at `(http://www.marketingtips.com).`

That way the period will not affect the hotlink to the site.

On that note, don't put a period after a URL in a sentence if possible (in printed material – like this course or reports you may have). You will notice when I end a sentence in this course with a URL, I am grammatically incorrect and do not put a period to end the sentence. Some people will think that is part of the URL and type in the URL with the period at the end (and of course they will get a “*page not found*” error as the page with the period on the end of the URL does not exist).

And finally, I want to talk about customer service. Most of your customer service will be done via email. No matter how well you run your business, you will always make mistakes and you will get

## NOTES:

customer complaints. It is how you handle those complaints that will affect your profits!

Explain your return policy in detail at the website and in all your promotions. Make it easy for customers to return a product if they do not like it or it was not what they were looking for.

Many people take customer complaints as a personal insult. This is the **wrong attitude** since they can actually get you **more business in the future if handled properly**. The customer is not angry with you. They may not have understood your offer, the product did not suit their needs or they simply didn't like it for some reason. If you help them by being prompt and courteous, **you will gain their trust and respect** and they will know they can depend on you to help them with their problems in the future.

Answer all return requests and complaints immediately (do not put them off!!). The faster you reply, the more concerned about the customer you seem (which allows them to build trust in you). Do whatever is in your power to make the customer happy (within reason). You may even lose money on the product just to make the customer happy, **but that is business**. The goodwill and good word of mouth you will get from that effort will pay off in the long run, and yes, I talk from experience.

I have had many products returned throughout my years in business and **almost every one of the people that have returned a product have bought something else from me in the future**. This is because they had trust in me and knew that they would be taken care of if they were not satisfied with anything else I sold them. I have even had people email me back after I have processed their return to say that they were impressed with my speed and courtesy and wanted to know what other products we sold since they enjoyed doing business with a company that really puts their customers first.

**Final Tip:** Sending holiday greetings to existing customers via email is a great way to keep in touch. You can extend your holiday good wishes to update on new developments at your company. If you haven't been keeping in touch with your customers on a regular basis, this is a perfect chance to rekindle the relationship. Remember email is free!

## **Lesson # 6**

# **The Right Way to use Autoresponders**

I have mentioned "autoresponders" in the past couple of lessons, and now we're going to discuss the most powerful techniques I know about how to use them in the most efficient way when marketing your business.

An autoresponder, also called a *Mailbot* or *Infobot*, is basically a small program that will get a service provider to **automatically send a document** (a simple email or any kind of file) to any user who sends a request to its email address.

Autoresponders are **an absolute necessity for doing business on the Internet**. They are just one of the things you need to make your business fully automated. But the problem is, most people either misuse them **or** do not use them to their full potential. I am sure that most of you are at least somewhat familiar with autoresponders, but for those that are not, let me quickly run over some basics.

Not all autoresponders are equal, and simply shopping for the lowest price is **not** the best way to proceed. Here are a few considerations when shopping for autoresponder service;

- You must have **personal control** over your autoresponder documents. In other words, you should have the ability to upload new autoresponder documents **anytime** you want (via FTP... File Transfer Protocol). This allows you to change your documents 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, instantaneously.
- The autoresponder **must be** user friendly. Some services require you to specify an exact "subject" or "body" message in order to retrieve the document you want. Although these work, they are difficult for the user to understand and customers must follow instructions **EXACTLY** or they will **get nothing** and you take a chance of losing the sale.

To keep things simple, use an autoresponder that will send a specific message back to the requester no matter what is in the subject or body of the email message that was sent. In other words, you don't have to explain how to retrieve a document because **ANY** (even a blank message) email to that address will trigger a response. This type of autoresponder will require you to have a separate email address for every document you may want your customer to retrieve.

As an example, with separate autoresponder addresses, if your customer wanted information on your product X, they would just send any email to x@xyz.com and for information on product Y, just send any email to y@xyz.com (a separate address).

With "non-user friendly" autoresponders, one email address can control more than one document. For example, to get info on product X, they would have to send an email to product@xyz.com with the word "product x" typed in the *SUBJECT* heading. If they wanted to get info on product Y, they would have to send an email to product@xyz.com with the word "product y" typed in the *SUBJECT* heading. If these exact instructions are not followed, the potential client will get **nothing**. In other words, if they typed "product x" in the *BODY* of the message (instead of the *SUBJECT* heading) or made a typo like "productx" (no space) or **any other kind of mistake** they will get **nothing**.

I know it doesn't sound like much... but I speak from experience... you can't imagine the number of people who email you saying **your autoresponder does not work** and upon investigation the **error is on their part** in one way or another. With separate email autoresponders... they just send an email to the address (no matter what is in the email) and the autoresponder sends them back the requested document.

- Most autoresponders will **only send** up to 32 K of information — but you **don't** want one of these (it may do for now, but when you grow and try new ideas, it may cause you problems). Make sure your

**NOTES:**

autoresponder has the capability of sending any size email **and** attachment so you can send graphics, software, and detailed assistance manuals for your product or service, etc.

- Be sure you know **how fast** your server will set up additional autoresponders if you need them. For example, if you are testing an ad, a request to your autoresponder xyz@domain.com may indicate a response to your ad at site #1, while a request to abc@domain.com may indicate a response to your ad at site #2. You may need additional autoresponders quickly in order to trace advertisements, so your ISP will have to set these up quickly or give you access to set them up yourself.
- Will the autoresponder **capture and log every email address** that requests a response? This is a **critically important** question because if you have a list of email addresses you will be able to follow up on all of your customer leads. Another consideration is whether these logs show the time and date of the request so you can track activity as well. **Do not** get an autoresponder that does not have these features!
- Make sure the ISP's autoresponder software will allow you to download the autoresponder log (I download mine every 21 -30 days) and **rebuild a new log automatically so you don't wind up with duplicates**. This allows you to strip out email addresses from each log and correspond with the potential customers again.



On the "down" side, beware of autoresponders that:

- charge high set up fees (i.e.: \$25-75 is unacceptable),
- charge more than \$10 per autoresponder per month,
- charge a “per hit” charge each time a document is requested,
- require you to submit your document to the ISP for uploading instead of giving you the ability to control the upload and change the document yourself.

**Note:** *I will write a little later about how to get unlimited autoresponder service for free.*

Most people use autoresponders for sending out free articles, sales letters, etc. They post ads in newsgroups, discussion lists, forums and classified ads, asking people to email their autoresponder for more information. This is great and **will** make you money... but it is also a **limited way of thinking**. I will show you how to **really** use autoresponders in ways that almost **nobody else does**.

Autoresponders are designed to handle large volumes of requests for certain information, by sending it out at specified intervals. This allows you to follow up with your customers **on time, every time** without bogging you down in email — it is all done automatically by the autoresponder.

There will be examples throughout different lessons of unique autoresponder techniques that will skyrocket your sales. We will not discuss those here as they belong in a later lesson. Instead of me preaching to you about the different ways of using autoresponders, let me give you some examples of how I use them myself to show you how **powerful they can be if used properly**. You will get ideas on how they can save you a mountain of time, stress and increase your sales without much work. Apply the use of autoresponders to your business by copying my techniques.

**Example #1**

When someone orders ***Car Secrets Revealed***, exactly 3 days later the server remembers the email address and sends a message to the client (that looks like the following):

Subject: Information Updates

Hello again,

This letter has two purposes. First, to thank you for your business by purchasing "Car Secrets Revealed".

The second reason is to inform you of new developments and new information to help you in reducing your car expenses. Here is a list of the updates for Car Secrets Revealed that I have for you.

=====

1) We get letters from readers all the time. Recently we received a letter that we feel is worthy for all our readers to hear. He shows his method for \*owning\* his car for less money than leasing it. He saves almost \$5000 over his loan term as compared to leasing it over the same term! In his exact words... "I have taken a very different path to the one in your book. My method allows you to buy a new car every 2 years or so, from whomever you choose, pay no money down and save thousands over the cost of a lease." As the Internet allows us to share information very easily, we want to make this available to you. This information is quite lengthy and is too long to put in this email. The document is available to all Car Secrets readers. All you have to do is send a blank email to free@igs.net and the document will be emailed to you within a couple of minutes.

=====

2) If you have read the chapter on "New Car Buying Tips and Tricks" in my book, you probably know my opinion of Extended Warranties or Service Contracts (two different words for the same thing). We have set up a webpage that reveals tricks that the dealers play with warranties, what to look for in a warranty, how dealers get paid twice for one repair, how you can have a hidden "extra" deductible, why "bumper to bumper" does not always mean what the name implies,

and lots of great info regarding warranties. If you are buying a new car, the dealer will really push their service contract as they make a lot of money on it. You definitely want to read this page before you go into the dealership to buy your new car. The URL is:  
[http://www.igs.net/carsecrets/warranty/warranty\\_faq.html](http://www.igs.net/carsecrets/warranty/warranty_faq.html)

Well, I still despise the extended warranties that the dealers offer... but I have discovered a company that truly offers "good value" for your dollar when it comes to extended service.

The best part is that they will REFUND YOU 85% OF THE WARRANTY COST IF YOU HAVE NO CLAIMS BY THE END OF THE CONTRACT! Now that is true value! And that is one of the biggest reasons I recommend them.... you can't lose with their service... no other service contract will give you any money back if you don't use it... THEY WILL!

Here are the other reasons that set them above the rest:

- They are available for new AND used cars.
- They are almost HALF THE COST of a contract that the new car dealers offer (the new car dealers really mark them up to make a lot of profit)
- You can cancel the contract at any time you wish and get a refund for the unused portion! Just think, if you feel that you are not getting your money's worth, they will refund you and cancel the contract!!!! Try to find anyone else that offers this.
- There is not a "wear and tear" exclusion. In other words, almost everything is covered; unlike most warranties that void most claims by stating they are "wear and tear". This is a fantastic benefit.
- There is not an "overheating" exclusion either. This is another trick used by dealers. If you are having problems with your engine, they can claim that you over-heated it and it is not covered under warranty. This warranty will cover overheating.
- You can get your repairs done \*anywhere\* in the country at \*any\* shop you choose, not just "authorized" dealers that most warranties specify.
- Lots of extra coverage like "seals and gaskets" that other warranties will only cover for an extra charge. They even cover you for rental car, meals, and lodging reimbursement.
- It is transferable to the new owner if you sell your car. This adds a lot of value to your used car so you

can get a higher selling price for it.

They are truly in for the "long-haul" with great customer service and great value. They will give you a free, no obligation quote instantaneously when you access their website... so I recommend you give it a try. You can get a warranty for your new OR used car.

We have set up a webpage for them on our server and the quote will be displayed right on your screen within 3 seconds after filling out the form. Go to:  
<http://www.igs.net/carsecrets/warranty/information.html>

Even if you are not interested in getting a quote, check out the webpage as there is lots of info and warranty tricks that dealers can pull... and much more. It is great reading if you want to learn the truth about extended warranties.

=====

3) Many of you out there are buying a new car only because the one you have now is costing too much money in repairs. There is a way to get around that problem at a fraction of the cost of a new car. The webpage mentioned above has service contracts to cover your used car to protect you from costly repairs in the future. Their warranties are bumper to bumper so you don't have to worry about anything. That URL again was:  
<http://www.igs.net/carsecrets/warranty/information.html>

It may save you having to buy a new car.

=====

4) If you want to get a car at a great price from a local dealer without the haggling, visit the URL below and you will get their no-haggle lowest price emailed to you from your local dealer with no obligation to buy. This company below has "haggled" for you so you don't have to.  
<http://www.marketingtips.com/autovantage/>

What do you have to lose... it is free. Go to the site and fill out the form to get a quote on a vehicle from a local dealer.

Note: Instead of trying to re-type these long URLs above,

just "copy" and "paste" them into your browser.

=====

Well that's all the updates. We will be keeping you up on any new updates in the future that are interesting. Thank You.

Corey Rudl  
Car Secrets

In other words, I get the autoresponder to send customers a sales letter for my 'backend products' automatically. We will discuss how **very important** this is and how much money you can make from it in the Backend Products lesson, but let me say here, everything I have listed in this letter (except #1) makes me a profit. However, it is #1 that makes the email **look like** I am just emailing them helpful information and there is nothing in it for me.

The fantastic concept behind the example above is that it sounds like I am "doing them a favor" by updating customers with new information. It doesn't sound like a sales letter at all, does it? Yet this letter earns me **an extra \$3,600 pure net profit every month, and I don't have to do a thing...** it is all done automatically with an autoresponder. We will go over every detail on how I make money from this letter in the Backend Products lesson.

***Note:** Please note that what I am talking about here is not a regular autoresponder... it is a modified one. A regular autoresponder simply sends out the document you specify to any person that emails the autoresponder's email address. If you cannot get your ISP to modify your autoresponder to do such tasks, go to **<http://www.marketingtips.com/autoresponder.html>** and we can help get it set up for you (state you have purchased the course and are emailing us regarding this as mentioned in the course).*

Think about the potential here for your business... Say you sell an 'anti-aging' cream in 60 and 120 day

supplies. After every customer who orders a 60 day supply, you might have an autoresponder **automatically** email them 45 days later to make a special re-order sale offer on the same anti-aging cream (**perfect timing**, right?). The result: **A lot more orders**... you wouldn't have to do anything else as the **entire process is fully automated**. Are you starting to see the power that autoresponders can have?

Let me show you **another** angle using the **same** example.

Five days after your client orders their anti-aging cream, your autoresponder automatically sends them a letter on a weight loss program you are offering at a discounted price to all your past customers. The weight loss program is a great **complementary product** to the anti-aging cream. And if you didn't have a weight loss course to sell them, you could go find a good one from someone else, buy it wholesale and resell it to your customers for a handsome profit. Again, the result: **more profits for absolutely no work on your part as the entire process is fully automated** (which is why I believe in fully automating your ordering process).

Again, **are you starting to see the power of the autoresponder?** You don't lift a finger... all you do is make a lot **more profit** for **no extra work** other than what it takes to initially set it up.

### **Example #2**

You are doing an advertising campaign (this could be classified ads, forum marketing, newsgroup promotions or whatever) that directs people to your autoresponder for more information. **This is where most people stop.**

You want to **maximize all your leads so** always send a follow-up email to **all** of the people who have requested information from you. These are people who have shown an interest in what you have to offer, so don't just let them fade away... aggressively - go after the sale.

## NOTES:

Many people are nervous about “bothering” these people again. It is not like you have to sit and speak to these people... you are just sending them a follow-up letter to remind them of who you are and asking for the sale again (in a polite, and roundabout manner). There are examples throughout this course of “follow up” letters and the different styles to use so I won't bother repeating them here.

Every Friday you can “groom” your autoresponder logs before you send a follow-up letter to the previous week's leads.

**Note:** *What I mean by “groom” the list is that you remove the people from the autoresponder logs who have already ordered so you don't email them and ask them for the sales again... that would look very unprofessional.*

Download the autoresponder logs via FTP (your ISP will tell you where they are and how to get them). These logs store all the email addresses that the autoresponder sent information to and what time it sent that information. Strip-out all the email addresses by using the email extractor program "*stripem.exe*" that was included free of charge with this course (or if you have *Mailloop*, you can use it). You have to strip out the email addresses because the logs will have times, dates, and other information that you don't need.

The extractor program *stripem.exe* will make a file with all these email addresses prepared for emailing (it will also sort and eliminate duplicate email addresses).

Write a follow-up email message (discussed in detail later in the course) and copy the email list that the extractor program made for you into the BCC field of the email (but remember you take a risk of getting your email deleted if you have over 15 – 20 people in the BCC field, as discussed in a previous lesson). Use a program like *Mailloop* as discussed before to solve this problem.

This follow-up letter could be just a reminder of your services. Or you could be blunt and ask for the order again.

Maybe offer a special or limited deal for the same product; or maybe even more free info... **anything to give you an excuse to contact them again so they have another opportunity to order.** Once you've got 'em, keep them on the hook!

Again, the result: **you get more orders!**

### **Example #3**

Many people use an autoresponder in their advertising campaigns. Whether it is newsgroup postings, mailing list postings, discussion list postings, classified ads, or ezine ads... they all tell people to email their autoresponders for more information. Customers are told that they will have the information within moments (possible only if you are using an autoresponder).

This is all fine and dandy... but the biggest problem is, to get big sales and big profits, you have to get thousands of people emailing your autoresponder. The plain truth is, you cannot get that on a constant basis from your advertising **unless you work very hard at it.**

Here **is a way** to get thousands of people to request information from your autoresponder **each** and **every** month **without** having to advertise **or make any effort.**

**This is where most people fail and do not truly see how powerful autoresponders can be.**

There are many ways of doing this though newsgroups, forums, mailing lists and cooperative arrangements with other sites. I will cover newsgroup and mailing list applications in a different lesson, but let me give you an example here of a cooperative arrangement with other sites;

At one point not too long ago, there was a large surge



**NOTES:**

of websites that offered free price quotes on new vehicles. These people would usually get a thank-you letter emailed via an autoresponder that would inform them that their request was received and that they would be getting a quote by email in a few days.

I had arranged with some of these sites that instead of them sending a simple thank you note, **we** would send **every person** the “thank you” letter **and include** a copy of half of the chapter titled “Tricks and Secrets of Buying a New Car” from the book ***Car Secrets Revealed, free of charge.***

So, you are probably wondering how hard this was to do, right?

It was as simple as adding my autoresponder address to the recipient list of the submission form (which takes about 5 seconds). The only real work was to contact all the price quote sites and present the deal to them.

The smaller sites were **happy** to do this as it offered extra value to their service (i.e. the customer did not just get a price quote, but tips on buying a new car). For the bigger sites that were sending out **tens of thousands of letters a month**, we had to pay them a portion of the profit for all sales we made from the letter.

Here was what the letter, mailed to everyone who requested a price quote, looked like:

Hi ,

Thank you for your submission at AutoBuy.

Your request for a price quote has been submitted to our staff and you should get a reply very soon. If you do not get a reply it is because none of the dealerships we are associated with have the specific car you are looking for in stock.

I also wanted to mention that since you are in the market for a new car, there is a new book available on the market that you should read. It has my highest

recommendation. The book is called "Car Secrets Revealed". We have arranged with the publisher of "Car Secrets Revealed" to give you a long excerpt from that part of the book called "buying a new car".

The book will save thousands of dollars in the purchase of your new vehicle; not to mention the hundreds of tips on repairs, repair rip-offs, insurance reduction tricks, how to get free repairs after your warranty expires, and much more.

I have enclosed a 15 page excerpt from the book on buying a new car. I was personally very impressed with the last 7 pages... real interesting stuff.

Please understand that it is a chapter halfway through the book and without reading the beginning of the book, some of the things the author refers to on buying a car may not make much sense (unless you read the chapters before it).

Thanks.

Ross Kemp  
AutoBuy

=====  
This file is best viewed on a word processor with 80 characters per line. Please keep in mind that this chapter is in text format with no bolding, no fancy fonts, no underlining, or graphics. We can only send plain text in an email message. The real software version of Car Secrets Revealed is all point and click software and supports all the fonts, graphics, etc. (unfortunately it is over 1 Meg large and would take a while for you to download).

Corey's writing style is in a no-nonsense, straightforward, and sometimes enthusiastic manner. He doesn't have a Ph.D. (which I've heard really means "Piled Higher and Deeper"), so if it is literary style you are looking for — you may find his writing annoying, confusing and a bit out of the ordinary. However, if information is what you want... he's your man. You see, he has spent more than seven years worldwide researching all the secrets found in his publications. He has owned two specialty car companies since the age of 17, talked

with over 100 manufacturers, suppliers and experts, and consulted with literally thousands of car enthusiasts. All of this knowledge is now yours! Although you are only reading one chapter from his book, you will see what I mean.

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TRICKS AND SECRETS OF BUYING A NEW CAR  
- DON'T GET RIPPED OFF  
By Corey Rudl

*... and the chapter continued for another 15 pages.  
... and then there was a salesletter (almost exactly like the one at the website) that told people how they could order the whole book if they liked what they read so far.*

This was emailed to thousands of people every month that requested a free price quote, and **it was all done automatically** once it was set up.

This made for the perfect arrangement. It's a **win-win** situation for everybody. The client requesting the quote was happy because he got some valuable information for free. And we're happy because we got to give thousands of people every month a sample chapter of the book followed by a short salesletter **so they could order the rest.**

The thankyou letter accompanied by the free chapter is automatically sent out by the autoresponder, the orders from this are processed automatically (they all go through our secure server or the 800 numbers), **and all we do is count the profits.** That means free money for us!! (money that we would have never seen

if we did not have this arrangement with the website).

Again, see the potential of autoresponders?

I can hear you saying “But Corey, I sell golf clubs, not information...I can’t give away a ‘free chapter’ of a golf club.” You are absolutely correct... **however** there is a simple and easy way to get around this challenge...

The Internet is a communications medium based on the transfer and sharing of information, and that’s what you have to be offering to have an edge on the competition.

You might write a three or four page informative article on the quality of clubs, how they are designed and manufactured, and how the quality of a club can improve your golf game. Or you could have a top ten list of tips for improving your golf swing. Then at the bottom of the article, you either have a sales letter for quality clubs, or you have a “Sig” file (Signature file) or “Bio” showing them how to **contact you** for more information about your products/services.

When most people make a success out of their autoresponder campaign, they are satisfied and **don’t look further** for new and innovative ideas. In the next example I will show you how we maximize our profits from people who receive the sales letter from the autoresponder and didn’t buy our book ***Car Secrets Revealed***.

#### **Example #4**

Here’s a slick thing to do to maximize your profits...

As mentioned before, almost everyone who uses autoresponders neglects to “follow up” on the sales letter. **This is one of the most overlooked profit generators**. These are potential customers who have shown interest in your product or service... it is your job to show them how they **need** your product or service (notice I did not say "sell" them a product...

that is the **key to selling**... you just show them the **benefits** and they sell themselves). If the customer did not buy the first time, often times, poor marketers consider them a loss. As I have mentioned before, you should always send a follow-up letter... **but** there is a little (and profitable) twist to doing it the right way...

The autoresponder logs capture **every person's email address who requested any of documents/sales letters** that were promoted in **any** of my advertising. I strip out the email addresses from all the autoresponder logs with the *stripem.exe* software so I have a huge list of **every person** who sent a request to any of my autoresponders (let's call this file *list.txt*).

I then strip out the email addresses (with the *stripem.exe* software) from my order logs (the order file I have called *orders.mbx* in the *Eudora* directory as mentioned in the Email lesson). Let's call this list *orders.txt*.

I subtract all the email addresses in *order.txt* from *list.txt*. This gives me a list of all the people who received a document from any of my autoresponders who **did not** end up ordering my product.

**Note:** *You can manually subtract the email addresses in orders.txt from list.txt (this is very time consuming!)... but if you have Mailloop software, it will do it all automatically for you.*

I do this every 2 weeks (you could chose the appropriate time for the product you are selling), and it only takes me about 15 minutes for the whole process.

Let's step back and look at the big picture for a second. These people **are prime candidates** for a sale. Because they have responded to my advertising, they are interested in buying a new car very soon. All these people know about **Car Secrets Revealed** because they have either read the free chapter I gave them (with the salesletter after it)...or only read my salesletter (depending on the autoresponder they used). In either case, they did not buy! But because I have a record of all the addresses, **I have a chance to**

**sell to them again.**

I could do one of a couple of things:

1. Send a follow-up letter (as described earlier) to remind them who I am and ask for the order again,
2. Or I could be less direct and use the email as a disguised salesletter by asking for feedback on our article,
3. Or I could make an entirely new offer to them (see letter below).

Here is the message I sent them (**don't skip over it — you *will* be surprised!**);

Dear Friend,

You recently received a text copy of half a chapter from the book *Car Secrets Revealed*. I know your time is valuable, so I won't waste it.

I just wanted to send you a quick note letting you know that we are trying something new that you might want to know about. This is **ONLY** being offered to those who had received our free chapter via our autoresponder.

Just as a refresher, in case you forgot what was covered in *Car Secrets Revealed* — here are a few things — how to get free repairs after your warranty expires, how to reduce your car insurance by up to 50% using one of 19 techniques, how to get 20-40% off auto parts... for life, tricks on how to buy cars (new and used) at wholesale prices, should you finance or lease?, how to talk your way out of almost any traffic ticket, how to get hundreds (even thousands) of dollars back on your next tax return for just driving your car, and hundreds more.

It is now the most popular car book/software on the Internet with tens of thousands of copies sold!

...and it still includes the two special reports (offered at our website) absolutely FREE.

The first one reveals 8 different state-of-the-art

techniques to... DRIVE A LUXURY CAR FREE EVERY YEAR!  
Remember, Corey drives a Porsche 911 at almost no cost every year and he shows you how it's done (it is so simple, you will hit yourself on the head for not thinking of it yourself).

The second report reveals HOW TO BUY ALMOST ANY NEW CAR AT \$50.00 OVER DEALER COST.

We have reduced the cost of Car Secrets Revealed to the lowest price humanly possible. To do this we have had to make a few adjustments.

Therefore, this offer will only be for the software version delivered to you by email (in other words, you will not receive the printed soft-cover version in the mail). However, don't worry — the information in the software and the printed edition is EXACTLY the same. The software is unlike the 1st chapter of text information you received, it is an actual program that is all 'point and click' with graphics, etc. It will be available via email for a special price of \$17.70 (no shipping and handling). As you recall the internet introductory price offered at our website is \$29.95 (includes S&H)... so this is a 40% SAVINGS. At this price, this information is a MUST BUY for anyone that owns a car. This special price will only be available until July 25th, 1999.

We have 'scaled down' the package to just the software so that you could get all the "hard-core" information that is covered in *Car Secrets Revealed*, but at the lowest cost possible. Besides, as mentioned at our website, Corey wants you to purchase the book at HIS risk. That is why it comes with a Lifetime 100% Money-Back Guarantee. Order the material today... read it, use it... and if for any reason, you are not fully satisfied with the material, we will immediately refund your purchase price. You simply can't lose.

Here is what the Oklahoma Car Club had to say about *Car Secrets Revealed*: "We experienced car buffs even gained some valuable tips. There are not too many books out there that deal with these kinds of dazzling topics, so when a good one comes along, we need to grab it!"

But the best part is that you can have all this information WITHIN 10 MINUTES. You don't have to wait 4-6

weeks for it to arrive in the US mail. We will email you the software within 10 minutes of receiving your order. That means you can be learning these car secrets and start saving hundreds of dollars by tonight. Corey shows you how to eliminate most of your current car expenses so that you can take that money and spend it on things YOU REALLY WANT.

If you don't remember what is covered in the book/software, just go to <http://www.igs.net/carsecrets/> or email me and I will send you more info on what is covered (make sure you say "more info" in the subject heading of the email).

Unfortunately, because of the high cost of live operators and 800 numbers (and the extremely low cost of the offer), this offer WILL NOT be available through our 800 number.

There are two easy ways to order.

If you want the software within 10 minutes, order your copy through our secure server. The address is:

<https://secure.marketingtips.com/carsecrets/secrets/index.cgi?REF=01>

Or, the second option is to email or fax your order using the order form below (please note that all orders placed by this method will be sent within 48 hours — the 10 minute delivery option is only available using our secure server mentioned above).

We send this software as an attachment to an email message (you will receive instructions on this in case you have not received an attached file before) or you can directly download it from our website with your web browser. It is as simple to download as 'clicking' on a file name.

Thanks and don't miss out on this opportunity.

Nick  
Customer Service

P.S. That's it, your order will be emailed to you within 10 minutes. Order the information today... read it, use it... and if for any reason you are not satisfied, we will refund your purchase price. Please remember this



special price is only valid until July 25th, 1997.

P.P.S. This is the only email you will receive from us.

=====  
=====EMAIL ORDER FORM BELOW=====

RUSH ORDER FORM for *Car Secrets Revealed* software  
(shipped via email).

Email this information to [carsecrets@igs.net](mailto:carsecrets@igs.net) or fax it to  
(604) 730-2480

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_

State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Type of Credit Card: \_\_\_\_\_

Card #: \_\_\_\_\_

Expiry Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Type of software: \_\_\_\_\_ IBM \_\_\_\_\_ MAC

If you do not feel comfortable sending us your credit card number via email or faxing it to us, you have three options:

- 1) Email us your phone number so we can call you for card information
- 2) Call us collect 9-5pm Mon-Fri at (604) 730-2833 (we have only 3 lines in our computer office. If they are all busy, you will get our voice mail. Please be patient and try again later — we are very busy after sending out this email to the first group of people)
- 3) Mail this form and a check or money order for \$17.70

to Car Secrets, 1123 Fir Ave, Blaine, WA 98230. Don't forget to give us your email address to send the software too.

Of course, you can use our secure server order form as mentioned above where you can get the software within 10 minutes and your credit card number is secure. The internet address is  
<https://secure.marketingtips.com/carsecrets/secrets/index.cgi?REF=01>

=====END OF ORDER FORM=====

Do you see what I am doing here? I am offering the same info in a different format (“software only”) for a lower price to attract people who were not willing to spend the \$29.95 on the ***Car Secrets Revealed*** book and software.

Now, what if I told you **I make just as much money selling the “software only” at \$17.70 as I do with the software and book for \$29.95?**

The cost of printing the book, postage, packaging and fulfillment costs amount to almost \$12.00. The cost of sending the software via email at \$17.70 is about **50 cents** (other than the original one-time fee to develop the software, which was \$700). I don't do a single thing. The order is automatically processed at my real-time automated server, the money is deposited in my bank, and the software is delivered by my server... **all automatically!** Seconds after the order is approved, I get an email that confirms the order was processed; no money to collect, no book to ship, no postage to take care of – **IT'S ALL HANDS FREE!**

Out of every 1000 email addresses, roughly 6 to 10 people buy the email only version for \$17.70. That amounts to about \$120 profit for every 1,000 people who email our autoresponder (plus the original profits we made from the people who bought the entire package for \$29.95).

If we have 10,000 people triggering our autoresponders every month (I will go over the specifics on how to get this number of people triggering your autoresponders later in this lesson), from this, **we generate another**

**\$1200 in net profit every month.** Just for taking the 30 minutes to compile the mailing list and sending it out to every person that responded to our autoresponder in the first place.

Let's see... **\$1200 for under an hour of work...** Not bad, don't you think?

If you want to do this type of follow-up but don't have a product or service you can reduce the cost of or split into pieces, you can always throw in an extra 'freebie' or give it some kind of extra value to make it more attractive to the consumer.

For example, if you were selling something that included a few items, you could pull out the most important item **and sell it alone for a reduced price** to make it more attractive to consumers.

These are the kinds of marketing techniques I am talking about when I say you **must think unconventionally**. Don't be narrow-minded. Always be willing to test and explore new ideas and concepts.

It's mandatory that you follow-up with people who request documents from your autoresponder on some kind of regular basis. **These are hot leads**, and you shouldn't throw them away.

You can send a standard message such as "Did the information meet your needs?" - or something to the tune of "I just wanted to thank you for your interest and wanted to know if I could be of any extra assistance"...or any of the other approaches I've listed above.

## **How To Include Autoresponders With Your Webpage and Catapult Your Sales**

There is a couple of ways to **capture the email addresses of visitors to your site**. This is important, because if you don't "sell them" on the first visit, you have their email address to send a "follow-up" letter and have another chance to sell them something.

A lot of people ask me if you can build a program to capture the email address of every visitor to your

website. This is impossible. The browsers they are using to view your sites will tell you what domain they are from, what was the last URL they visited, but will not give you email addresses. The only way to get email addresses is to:

1. offer a guest-book for visitors to sign in,
2. offer a contest or draw where contestants have to enter their email address to qualify,
3. offer a newsletter or something else by email that you can provide for free that they have to submit their address in order to receive, or,
4. offer a copy of an article published on your webpage via the autoresponder.

The first mechanism for gathering email addresses mentioned above is just an electronic guest-book like the one you would see in a hotel. Visitors sign with their email address and submit feedback and comments on the site. You need a special CGI program built to do this, but there are some software packages available. Try <http://www.download.com> or <http://www.shareware.com> and search for the words “guest book” or “guestbook”.

The second point is self-explanatory. You offer a draw for free product, service, a vacation or whatever, and to enter, visitors to your site have to enter their email address.

The third strategy is to offer a free newsletter or something that you can transmit by email. An example of this approach can be found on my webpage at <http://www.marketingtips.com/subscr.html> where the free *Marketing Tips Monthly Newsletter* is offered.

The fourth and last way of gathering email addresses mentioned above is rarely used **but very powerful**. For any article on your website, you can have a little statement on the bottom where you say: “If you would like a copy of this article emailed to you to keep for reference, click here”. Doing this would send an email to an autoresponder, which would email them a copy of the article and you would **capture** their email

**NOTES:**

addresses in your autoresponder logs.

This will give you a chance to send them a follow-up email letter at a later date. I empty my autoresponder logs once every 14-21 days and email that list with a follow-up letter. This letter gives you a chance to remind visitors of your service, and perhaps get them back as buyers. You want to remind them of your website, **but watch the wording of the letter:** they will be upset if you directly try to sell them something.

Your letter might read like the following:

Subject: Update - new info

Hi,

Recently you requested a copy of an article entitled "How to buy widgets cheap". I hope you enjoyed it.

This email is just to remind you that we are here for any help you may need with your widget and to also inform you of our new widget cleaning service.

We have decided to offer a special price to those people, who requested the article from our site, as we know you appreciate your widgets. Our cleaning is more comprehensive than anybody else in the market - we even check and clean the gadget and whatchmacallit.

The regular price is \$49.95, but we will be offering it to you for the special price of \$29.95 if you order within the next 10 days.

We have set up a special webpage just for this offer. It is at:

<http://www.widgetsRus.com/special/>

Please visit us and see how we can help keep your widget running clean and free from repairs.

Our goal is to create a long-term relationship with any of our customers so please feel free to contact me with any question you may have. We are here to help.

Sincerely,

Joe Doe  
Widget Express  
(800) 555-1212

This follow-up letter will bring in sales you would have never received before... and you can also generate customers you will be able to sell to **again and again**. Repeat business is a very profitable venture.

Some of the good autoresponder/ mailing list programs allow you to see how many names are on the list, add and delete names, remove duplicate or incomplete addresses, sort alphabetically, and even send out a follow up letter — all with a touch of a button (*Mailloop* will do all of this –

**<http://www.marketingtips.com/mailloop.html>**).

One of the most important ways to *keep* sales coming in is to stay in touch with people. An autoresponder and follow-up letters let you do this. We will be discussing more details on how to set them up in one of the following lessons.

## **Use Autoresponders to Lighten Your Workload**

I know I have mentioned this many times, but I cannot stress how important these autoresponders are. **It is just free money to tap into**, so use them to your advantage by employing a little imagination. The different techniques for using autoresponders I have been mentioning in this lesson are by no means the only ones.

There are other effective approaches as well (some of which you will see throughout this course), and only you will know which will work best for your product or service. Experiment, test and dream, and you will find out how to tap your customer base.

You can also use autoresponders to lighten your workload. Examples of this are:

- If your customer base is prone to ask a lot of questions before they buy, you could have an autoresponder set up that has FAQs and answers that can immediately be sent without you having to take care of this yourself.
- If there are various services or products that you offer, it is possible to have 20 or 30 preformatted letters or sales letters sent out from 20 or 30 different autoresponders, making it easy for clients to access the information they want (and the information *you* want them to see).
- If you have a product or service that requires technical bulletins or problem solving solutions, you could have different autoresponders set up at your webpage for their distribution. Customers would then simply go to a page that lists the different bulletins, and when they click on the appropriate icon the information is sent to them automatically.
- And yet another example; I use an autoresponder to send out the software for ***Car Secrets Revealed*** so that after someone orders, they get their software delivered within 10 minutes, which is a big incentive to order in the first place. For my other products, I use autoresponders to send a confirmation that the order was received and processed... all within a few minutes after an order is processed. This gives my customers **a lot** of reassurance, and me **a lot** of credibility.

All these ideas eliminate a lot of work for you and give customers instant access to the information they want. The idea is to keep everything automated and hands free so you can spend time marketing your product or service **instead** of answering questions, filling orders or replying to requests for information.

You could even have an autoresponder set up so that when someone emails your business email addresses

**NOTES:**

for support or help, they get this message:

Date: Fri, 15 Aug 1997 21:32:23 -0400 (EDT)  
To: info@marketingtips.com  
From: Car Secrets <nicholas@igs.net>  
Subject: Email receipt verification

Hi,

This email is an automated response to inform you that we have received your email message. We try to answer all email within a few hours. However, please note that sometimes we can get backed-up as we get hundreds of email messages per day... and it can take up to 48 hours for us to respond.

Thank you, your business is important to us.

Nick  
Customer Service

This many not seem like much, but without this you will be surprised how many people will email you once and then **again** 30 minutes later saying that you didn't email them back soon enough... and then start questioning whether you are a legitimate company or not. This may seem a bit ridiculous, but trust me, **it happens quite often**. The auto-response message avoids this problem, **and it instills credibility and professionalism** in the image of your company.

Automated response capability also gives you time to go away for a few days once in a while without having to answer your email. If you were going away on a vacation for a week, you could just change the message so it says the office is closed from Thurs. Aug 4th to Wed. Aug 10th, and then have some frequently asked questions posted, your 800 number order line listed, and any other pertinent information that may be of use to your clientele. This will help maintain that professional image and keep your customers happy while you are gone.

**Note:** *Even if you have someone answering your email a few times everyday, experience has taught*



*me it is still a good idea to have automated message capabilities.*

If you want to **automate even more**, in your "Email Verification" message you could list other autoresponders, containing information on common problems, frequently asked questions, ordering info, technical questions, etc., in the response from your business email address. Customers could then email the appropriate autoresponder with the click of a button for an **instant answer, instead** of having to wait for you to get back to them.

This can really reduce the time and effort you put into answering email. It may not seem important now, but as your business grows, you can get 100-200 emails every day (for example, just **one** of my online businesses receives over a hundred emails every day).

**Note:** *Many people state in their advertising to send a "blank" email to their autoresponder address (any email, blank or not will trigger the autoresponder). You can avoid having this statement by posting a simple "mailto:" link for people to click on. The reason this is better is because Netscape and some of the other major browsers will quiz your customers to death about whether or not they really want to send blank email, and it could stall the sale.*

Remember, autoresponders are not rocket science — it's no problem learning how make them perform to meet the needs of your business.

I personally recommend having your current ISP set one up so that you can customize very easily. Besides, that way you are just writing one check to one ISP for all your services instead of having to have write multiple checks to different ISPs around the country for websites, email, autoresponders, secure servers, etc.

## **Getting Free Autoresponders**

There are however, two ways of getting unlimited autoresponders use **for free**:

1. **Use the *Procmal* program** (you can find documents and the software itself right on the net). It is free software. Once *Procmal* is running on your ISP (which many have already), all you have to do is manipulate one text document to make changes for incoming requests. The document (or body of the email message) that is to be sent out is stored in a directory in your account called "filesaver." That is where you upload new documents you want to send out. You can add and subtract autoresponders at any time **and have as many as you want.**
2. **Use software like *Mailloop*.** If you already own *Mailloop* for its other features, it has built in **unlimited** autoresponders... **and they are all free!**

You can also get a limited number of autoresponders for free when you sign up with an ISP. If you are willing to commit to a long-term agreement (i.e. a one year contract), you can easily **get them to throw in a few autoresponders for free.**

Here are a few autoresponders you should consider setting up:

1. One autoresponder to send a response to every person that emails you which lets them know you have received their email, their business is important to you, and that you will answer it in 48 hours (very professional appearance!).
2. One autoresponder set up to answer frequently asked questions that customers ask (saving you incredible amounts of time).
3. One autoresponder to send back free articles or sales letters to clients who have responded to your ads or postings. You can set up as many of these as you like so you can track each advertisement separately (very powerful!).
4. One autoresponder to send out a letter to people who have ordered your product that confirms their order and gives them peace of mind.

## The Key Is To Get THOUSANDS Of Hits

As we all know, these ideas are fantastic, but let's face it, if you want to make money, it hinges on “**the numbers game**.” The plain fact is that because only a few people out of every thousand you send a message to will buy, you have to get thousands and thousands of responses to make it worth your while.

You will have to be patient and work hard to generate the volume you'll need to make any serious money.

Let me summarize a few ideas to get people to email your autoresponders for information (and your salesletter).

Getting thousands or even tens of thousands of requests to your autoresponder is actually quite easy. Here are five of the easiest and most powerful ways of doing this:

- a) Posting messages in appropriate newsgroups related to the subject matter of the free informative article you offer via autoresponder (discussed in great detail in the Newsgroup Lesson).
- b) Announcing a sale or free article via bulk email to a targeted market.
- c) Contacting other related websites in your industry and asking them to post a link to your autoresponder's email address as it has free informative information that their client base would appreciate. This link would trigger your autoresponder with the article (and salesletter blended into the end of it), bringing you **thousands** of potential clients month after month for years to come... with no work on your part.
- d) Placing classified ads in AOL classifieds or free classified ad webpages that require someone to respond to your autoresponder for free info.

- e) Cooperative arrangements with other websites. These are the **most powerful ways to get tens of thousands of requests every month**, because once you initially set it up, you will get thousands of clients every month for years to come without you having to do a single thing.

You are **letting them do all the work in getting the people to their site to respond to whatever they offer... and you get to piggyback on their hard work and effort.**

Find sites that are not using autoresponders to follow up or confirm information with their customers (just like I did with the new car price quote services). Offer to provide them one for free if you are allowed to mention your product or service in the email... or you can offer their customers a free article or information (and of course, mention your site/product at the end)... or if they are producing a lot of leads and you really want the leads badly, you may want to pay them a percentage of the sales you get from the leads (this is real motivation for the site owner to do business with you).

**Now do you see how easy it is to get tens of thousands of requests through your autoresponder with very little work?**

Sit down, look at these examples again in the lesson, and figure how they can be used (or modified) to best suit your business.

## Lesson # 7

### Does Bulk Email Really Work?

Bulk email can be used for many things. It can be a mass mailing to your clientele list, newsletter list, opt-in list or it can be unsolicited email (which has earned it the reputation of being “spam”). We will be talking a lot about the different kinds of bulk email throughout this lesson.

There are as many good ways to use bulk email as there are bad. Bulk email is often used to describe spam; however, **they are not the same**. Bulk email is sending email to a group of people and spam is sending mass quantity of email to people whom you have no relationship with whatsoever. **Please understand the differences**, as we will be discussing the various types of bulk email in this lesson... from opt-in to spam.

I will also be using the word “bulk email” and will refer to people as “bulk emailers” throughout this lesson. Please note that I am, most of the time (until near the end of this lesson), **not referring to spam**, but to sending mass email (a.k.a. bulk email) to a list of people... which could be customers, leads, autoresponder follow ups, newsletter lists, opt-in lists, etc (all of which are all 100% ethical and not controversial at all). If I am referring to spam in a sentence, I will call it by its name “spam”, not “bulk email”.

On that note, there will always be extremely opinionated people who will go overboard to fight spamming of any kind... and there will also be others who will do anything to fight for its legitimacy. Be prepared to meet both of those types of people (and lots of others in between). Everyone has his or her own opinion about spamming.

In past editions of the course some people have got the “impression” that I endorse spam. So I want to make a few statements as to why that **is simply not correct** and why we discuss spam in the course. You see, my job in this course is to show you **all** the marketing techniques being used on the

Internet... good or bad, ethical and risqué. Is this because I want to teach you bad or risqué techniques?

**No!**

It is so you know what to look for if your competitors are doing this, know what techniques will make you money, what techniques to avoid... and more importantly so you become an internet expert at all the different promotional techniques that are out there so that you can make your own decision on what you want to do.

Here is my thought... if I don't tell you about spam... what it is, how it is done, and the pros and cons of it, you will just surf the net to find info on UCE. You will then most likely find some bulk email / spamming website that will build it up to be the "end-all be-all" of marketing online... and pitch you on how it will make you rich. You will end up spamming millions of people (or at least try to), get yourself in a lot of hot water, **and not make a dime**. In this lesson I will tell you the truth about bulk email (different kinds like opt-in and unsolicited). I will tell you some things you don't want to hear and others that you do... you can then make your decision on what you want to do, and not base it on someone else's false promises or figures.

I could sit here and preach to you how spamming is evil and how it will certainly lose you money, but if I did that I would be lying ... I have seen people make a lot of money by spamming. But then, if I sit here and tell you it will make you a fortune, I, again, would be lying... as I have seen so many people lose their shirts by spamming.

So, I am not here to "sell" OR "deter" you from using either bulk email or spam... My goal is to show you the "ins" and "outs" of both. I want to educate you on the truth behind bulk email (the different types) and how it is done so you can understand it. Don't fall for all the sales hype that these "spam friendly" websites will try to convince you on (I will show you why later on in the lesson). Spamming is not as easy as they claim.

## NOTES:

They will also try to get around the word “spam” by using words such as Targeted Email, Commercial Email, Bulk Email, Email Marketing, etc... they will misuse these words when they are actually disguises for spamming.

It is a shame because now many people affiliate the word Bulk Email or Email Marketing with spam, and it shouldn't be that way.

You see spamming or UCE (Unsolicited Commercial Email) is a very controversial subject and can get you in very hot water.

Here are my thoughts:

I know all of you will use bulk email for your Internet promotions and you should, as it is very profitable to:

- a.) use opt-in lists
- b.) email your customers and leads
- c.) follow up on autoresponder requests, etc.

But no matter what I say (whether it be good or bad) about spamming, I know some of you are still going to... so at least I will:

- 1.) warn you about what NOT do with spam **if** you decide to do it;
- 2.) show you NOT to believe the spam bulk emailers who will try to convince you that emailing hundreds of thousands (or millions) of people will make you rich... **they are lying;**
- 3.) make sure that if you are going to do it, you do it as ethically and responsibly as possible.

For those who hate spam, this is a great lesson that will allow you to learn what others are doing (maybe even your competition!) and some of the tricks they are getting away with. It will also explain how these people get your email address... and the technology behind how they are emailing you messages (including your legal rights).

## NOTES:

So with that said you are probably wondering “What is Corey’s opinion or stance on UCE and spam?”

I am **100%** neutral. I couldn’t care less if I got spammed, nor could I care less if it all went away. It really doesn’t bother me whether it stays or goes.

The other reason I am so neutral is that most of the people who seem to be “policing” the industry are so opinionated and judgmental. I don’t want to be affiliated with either side. They are so “left wing” and “right wing” that I could probably never agree with either side... so I hold no real opinion on the subject. I respect their opinions, I just don’t agree on every point from either side.

For example, if I had an employee go to 300 websites manually and determine they are a great site for us to advertise on, record the email address, URL, and name of the owner... then a week later I would send out a bulk email to all 300 sites telling them I want to pay them to advertise on their site and to please email me rates... that is considered “spamming” by some anti-spammers. Yes, **can you believe it?** I am emailing them trying to give them my money, but I am spamming? Go figure!

On the flip side, there are a lot of pro-spammers who have the same sort of very obscure opinions and beliefs in the opposite direction.

Can you now see why it is hard for me to agree with either side?

So just to make that clear...

I AM RIGHT IN THE MIDDLE!

**I neither condone nor condemn it.**

The only problem I have with UCE is the way some people use spam... the people who are dishonest, make false claims, try to hide their identity, and steal other’s resources to send their email... this bothers me and it has to be stopped.



## NOTES:

But the spammers who do it responsibly and email me once or twice... I couldn't care less. Just don't email me 5 times a day for 10 days in a row (that is how they will really get me angry - and hundreds of thousands of other people too)!

Whether you bulk email or not is your choice, and I do **not recommend** spam anywhere in this lesson (or the course for that matter)... I just want to make that clear as I have been accused before of condoning spam by simply "making this information available." I explained why I am educating everyone on spam at the beginning of this lesson I think these are VERY valid reasons for any pro- or anti-spammer.

As a summary, let me say that bulk email can be a lot of different things. As mentioned before, you can email **your** customer base (which is completely acceptable), but it is still considered "bulk email". Here is a risk chart to give you an idea on what to expect:

**Low Risk** - bulk emailing your customer base, your lead lists, ad respondents, autoresponder leads, newsletter subscribers, opt-in list, etc. You are literally free from complaints.

**Medium Risk** - emailing people you have no direct relationship with but who are highly likely to want to hear from you (i.e. email addresses that were harvested carefully from the internet - either manually or with harvesting software). You will have a varying degree of complaints... not severe, but you will definitely get some. The exact number depends on the purpose of your email, and how you word your letter - for example, if you were asking to advertise on their site, the risk is quite low... but if you were trying to sell them something right in the email, the risk is much higher. If your email was personalized, lower risk... but if you email was generic, higher risk.

**High Risk** - buying large email lists that are untargeted and harvesting email addresses from newsgroups or forums, harvesting addresses carelessly, using some "so called" professional bulk email services (that are actually not so reputable and will mislead you). You are in for a lot of

complaints and a lot of trouble no matter how you word your email. You will probably lose your Internet account and get yourself into a heap of trouble.

I am going to be very general throughout this lesson so many of the things I talk about can be used for whatever type of bulk emailing you are doing. Whether it be completely opt-in safe bulk email, or whether it be very risky spam bulk email – many of the sections and strategies will be talking about both acceptable bulk emailing (your customer list, etc.) to outright spamming.

## **Renting Targeted and Opt-in Lists**

You can rent targeted lists from certain bulk email services. They generally charge 5 to 20 cents per deliverable message. If you decide to use a service like this, there **are two very important questions you will want to ask:**

- 1) How were the email addresses obtained? (this will tell you how suitable they are for your product or service... and make sure you avoid lists that were harvested from newsgroups and similar areas on the internet)
- 2) Are they lists of people who **voluntarily** subscribed? (this will bring you a much better response than blind emailing)

A few companies that offer “opt-in” lists (the person on the list has requested to be there) are:

The Postmaster	<a href="http://www.postmasterdirect.com">http://www.postmasterdirect.com</a>
E-Target	<a href="http://www.e-target.com">http://www.e-target.com</a>
WebPromote	<a href="http://www.yesmail.com">http://www.yesmail.com</a>
Targ-it	<a href="http://www.targ-it.com">http://www.targ-it.com</a>
BonusMail	<a href="http://www.bonusmail.com">http://www.bonusmail.com</a>
Targeted Email	<a href="http://www.targetedemail.com">http://www.targetedemail.com</a>
Bullet Mail	<a href="http://www.bulletmail.com">http://www.bulletmail.com</a>
Bulk Email Ad	<a href="http://www.webthemes.com/email.html">http://www.webthemes.com/email.html</a>

They can be very effective, but you will have to test and make certain you have a good “sales process” (I will discuss

this later in the lesson), as it can get expensive to email thousands of email addresses.

Some of these companies above will let you rent the list. You will then need to send the list through your own email program. Others will email the list for you (this is the way with the majority of the services).

## **Bulk Email (Advertising) with Ezine Classified Ads**

Many people's first experience with bulk email is through ezine (electronic magazine) classified ads.

I put this topic in this bulk email lesson rather than in the newsletter lesson because you are basically advertising to an opt-in list... and much of the advertising for ezine classified ads make it look like bulk email (i.e. a slogan may look like "get your ad emailed to 50,000 people for \$25").

It is the price that is so attractive — usually under \$75 for exposure to hundreds of thousands of recipients. It sounds like a fantastic deal, but what they do not make clear is that you are just one of 20 - 50 other electronic classified ads in the **same** email.

Don't get caught up in buying classified advertisements in ezines that are just purely classified ads with no article content. You see some ezines contain just classifieds ads, while some have an interesting article or two and then the classified ads.

Generally, unless you have a spectacular ad, placing it in an ezine that only has classified ads will not make you any money. Most people who receive ezines like these do not even read them, if they do they briefly scan them and trash them since they contain so many ads.

Ezines that have informative articles followed by classified ads are much better buys for your advertising dollar. People read these because they have free and informative articles and are likely to pay more attention to your article. After

## NOTES:

you have a successful classified ad that has been proven to work in places like AOL, on large classified ad sites, test this medium out (but remember, only use the Ezines that have informative articles).

You can usually place an ad for under \$50 that will “technically” reach hundreds of thousands of people...the **real question** is how many people **actually look** at the thing... I think you will be surprised by **how few** there are- but you will still make a few bucks if you do it properly, heck... we do it consistently.

### Emailing Multi-level-marketing Program Offers

Whether bulk emailers are sending out spam email on an MLM opportunity, offering it to an opt-in list, putting an ad in an ezine classified, or whatever... they often make sure **not to mention MLM** in the teaser email or it will kill their responses. When people respond to bulk email, it is because MLM was never mentioned in the sales letter until after the explanation of the product or service’s potential. What this means is that MLM is never mentioned until usually halfway through the sales letter, and never in the initial email teaser. Here is an example of what is often used in a teaser email:

To:  
From:  
Subject: A team of business people

Hi,

I am a business owner from California State and I am looking for a few people who want to work from their home and make \$400 per sale with my business. I am trying to put a few people together on this from across the country.

## **NOTES:**

If you have some extra time in which to learn about a very profitable venture (you make over \$400.00 per sale), then reply to this email and request more information.

John Walsh  
jwalsh@abc.com

Network marketing is founded on the fact that there is **personal contact that builds trust between two individuals**. This contact is often lost online, and many bulk emailers find it very difficult to build trust and create a bonding, profitable relationship. This is one of the reasons why many find it difficult to sell MLM programs over the Internet.

The second problem is that there are **too many people** trying to sell their MLM programs on the net... so that the market is getting saturated. More importantly, some naïve people are promoting their MLM on the net **the wrong way** and angering a lot of Internet users... giving MLM a bad name.

So be careful and make sure you approach it in the right way... put all the odds in your favor.

## **Testing and Creativity**

These techniques and examples help illustrate how bulk emailers work, often by **testing** their ideas in small mailings until they have come up with a successful one, which, more often than not, is very creative.

Usually instead of collecting thousands of addresses (if they are spamming) or using/buying a huge opt-in list and blasting them all at once; emailers will send to maybe 1,000 people at a time, testing different subject lines, different opening sentences, different wording, different offers, etc.... until they find a successful campaign. Once they have the sales letter that makes them money, they roll it out by **emailing their entire list**.

## NOTES:

A concern for some is that they don't have a large enough email list and therefore just mail a letter they "think" will do well to their entire list. This is a mistake that often costs them a **lot** of money.

Often, campaign letters are tested to groups of 1000 at a time. As business ventures progress, **new places** to extract email addresses for potential clientele (if they are spamming), and new services that will sell or rent targeted lists of the clientele they seek will be discovered. There are lots of places on the Internet bulk emailers find addresses and they will continue to find more of them as their business grows. 'Huge' has taken on a totally new meaning in cyberspace.

The bottom line in all electronic marketing is the marketing letter. Success or failure hinges on this single element; **I cannot emphasize this enough**. If bulk emailers send a bad letter to 10,000 people, **10,000 times \$0.00 is still zero**. This is why they often test the letter before they mail it to an entire list.

The first paragraph is often very strong. Strong enough to make the reader to say "Wow!" Only then can they be certain that people will continue to read the letter.

### **And the winning formula Bulk Emailers use is...?**

Most send an unsolicited teaser — a short 2 - 4 paragraph note and make it as exciting as possible. They close by telling the reader to reply for more information. At this point, once they have asked for the information, it is no longer considered unsolicited... **this is why they send them as much as is needed to close the sale after this point**.

They give all of their contact info in the teaser and sales letter. This includes their phone number, email address, company street address, etc. **Once again, nothing gives them more credibility than for the reader to be able to contact them directly if they so choose**.

## NOTES:

Bulk emailers educate and inform their customers because most people don't mind receiving informative or valuable information.

Often a result of this emailing is that the sender receives a lot of bulk email (from others) to the address used in the initial bulk email teaser. This is why many only give their "personal" email address in the sales letter and not in the teaser.

Most bulk emailers look at **all** the opportunities for making money... and usually can't be accused of **being narrow-minded**.

Let me give you a short example. A client who was selling golfing equipment wrote a newsletter to keep his customers and subscribers informed about new products, reviews, tips, etc. **He ended up making more money at selling ads in the newsletter than he was selling his products.** He then sold his golf supply store and got into full-time newsletter publishing. In other words, he kept his mind open to the alternatives he encountered while promoting his business.

Bulk emailers follow up with anyone who has requested email from their autoresponder or inquired about their product or service. Their approach is often without fear of "bothering" readers, because they know they do not have to be face to face with these people. Instead, they are simply sending them a follow-up letter to remind them of who they are and asking for the sale again (in a polite and round about manner). There are examples throughout this course of "follow up" letters and the different styles used by bulk emailers.

Another example of the first few paragraphs often used would be as follows:

To:  
From:  
Subject: Credit Info Requested

Good Afternoon,

## NOTES:

You are receiving this letter because you previously inquired about Credit Rebuilding service, the fastest and most effective way to rebuilding your credit rating.

Etc., etc., etc.

## How is Bulk Email Sent?

In case you don't know how to send bulk email from your PC, there are two major ways to do it. The first is to use the BCC field in a regular email program like Eudora, Pegasus, or Outlook Express (explained in a moment). The other is to use a specialized program that emails each address separately (and has lots of other advantages as well).

The three major "stand alone" email managers on the market are:

Eudora: <http://www.eudora.com>  
Pegasus: <http://www.pegasus.usa.com>  
Outlook Express: <http://www.microsoft.com>

We talked about *Eudora* quite extensively in the Email lesson.

On the note of email programs to use... Don't just use your Netscape browser or "combination" programs (ones that have your browser, email and newsgroup reader all built into one) when running your business. You will need the special features that a "stand alone" email reader will provide, and trust me, your life will be made easier if you get some good software.

To send bulk email using a regular email program like *Eudora* or *Pegasus*, the first thing you need to do is cut and paste the entire email list into the BCC field of an email reader (BCC stands for blind carbon copy). Only about 2,000 email addresses at a time will fit into this field, all of which will be separated by commas. It looks like this:



## NOTES:

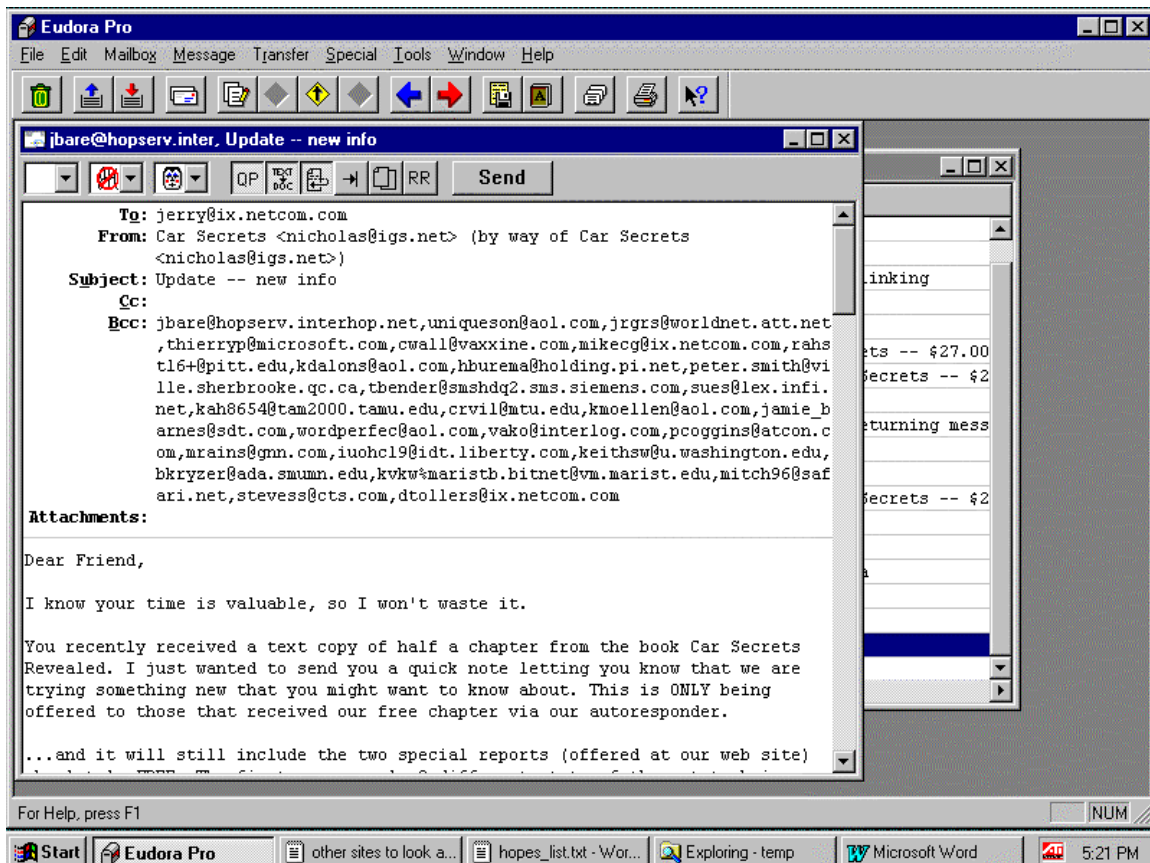
```
To: nicholas@igs.net
CC:
BCC:nobody@abc.com,nextguy@xyz.com,nowhere@nobody.com,hello@nowhere.com,another@abc.com,next@xyz.com,xxx@xxxx.com,xxx@xxxx.com,xxx@xxxx.com,xxx@xxxx.com,etc. (up to 2000 email addresses)
FROM: info@marketingtips.com
SUBJECT: Product Announcement
```

Every address you put in the *BCC* field will be sent an email message, but the entire list of email addresses won't show up on the screen. This may sound a little confusing, so let me explain. If I were to send an email to one thousand people, I would put my email address or any **ONE** email address from my list in the *TO* field. Leaving the *CC* field empty, I then paste the entire list of email addresses, separated by commas, into the *BCC* field.

Every person receiving the email message would see **one** email address in the *TO* field (not their own), nothing in the *CC* field, and the *BCC* field would be blank. In other words, it would look like the email was sent to someone else, but arrived in his or her email box. This is how to hide the list of who you're actually sending to. These people don't know how many other people you sent email to, or what their addresses might be.

This was the method most people were using to send out their newsletters, customer updates (and even spam), many years ago (the technology has changed significantly since then).

The following page contains a copy of *Eudora*, from when we were building a bulk email list to follow up with people who responded to our classified ad. It illustrates what I'm talking about (I only put a few email addresses in the *BCC* field so you can see the rest of the message).



I could send email by posting my entire email list in the *TO* or *CC* field, but then everyone who gets the email will see a **huge list** and have to scan through it to get my message at the bottom — which of course **no one would do**. When people see that your message is being sent to hundreds (or even thousands) of others, they will automatically trash it. Let's be honest here, **it's your job to try and disguise bulk email to look like a personal message so they will read it**. You want it to come across as they are special and you are emailing them personally.

Whether you are just sending a follow up to your customers, following up with your ad respondents, or you are outright spamming, the goal, in any case, is to get the people to open and read the email... and that means making it look like a personalized message.

The best way to do this is to email each person separately. But this would cost you hundreds of hours of tedious work,

and the profits would never pay for your time. By having personal email addresses in the *TO* field and having it personally addressed, **people don't think it's a bulk email.**

There are a few programs available that will take your list and email each address individually so you get a much higher response to your email. One, which I highly recommend, is *Mailloop*. The term I use to describe what this program does is "guerrilla marketing" because it will literally **give you an unfair advantage over your competition.**

*Mailloop* does **a lot more** than just send bulk email. This may sound a little off topic... but I don't want to peg *Mailloop* as a program that just does bulk emailing. For starters:

- it will allow you to automatically run multiple newsletters without the need of Listserve or Majordomo (mailing list/newsletter software that runs on your ISP's server costing \$50 to \$300 every month, depending on the size of your subscriber base)
- it will strip email addresses from almost any type of file including, customer databases, single webpages, autoresponder files, email correspondence, etc.
- it has built in autoresponders you can use (instead of paying your ISP for them)
- It will process web forms received by email automatically (orders, customer leads, applications, etc.) and save that info into a database so you can send personalized email to those people (it has full mail-merge capabilities) at the push of a button. This is very powerful for following up on leads and customers, and is done in virtually no time at all
- it will even filter your mail and protect you from bombs and flames before you ever see them
- it will allow you to post to multiple newsgroups without getting canceled by the "cancel-bots"

... and that is just the start!

For more info, go to  
<http://www.marketingtips.com/mailloop.html>

## NOTES:

All you do is tell *Mailloop* where the email list is saved on your computer, what you want to say in the message, press a button and **it will do everything automatically**. This approach will bring in a much higher response rate and many more sales. As you can see I am a big believer in *Mailloop*... that is because we use it here daily and it is responsible for saving boatloads of time and has generated us over \$70,000 so far this year.

Many people **filter their email** so they do not receive unsolicited email. Most email programs have built-in filters so that you can specify what to look for and then transfer it to the appropriate email box or even delete it.

Because many people bulk email using a regular email program and pasting their email list to the *BCC* field, many consumers have a filter set up so that if their email address does not appear in the *TO* or *CC* field, the message will be automatically deleted (because if it is not addressed to them personally, they assume it is spam). That means **a lot** of the email messages you send will get deleted before these people even get a chance to see them. This is just one more reason why a program like *Mailloop* is so important for your success. **Can you imagine sending an email to your customers and them automatically deleting it because they thought it was spam...** what a shame (and loss of business for you!).

Another reason why I recommend *Mailloop* is that recently, to reduce email spam, many of the mail servers now automatically delete all email messages that have more than 15 - 20 email addresses in the *BCC* field (or how many they have chosen to set the limit at). So, if you are not sending individual emails to each recipient and instead putting the email list in the *BCC* field of your email, there is a good chance that your mail server (or many of the domain servers you send your email to) **will automatically delete your email message before it ever gets to the user**. It doesn't matter if you are legitimately sending a newsletter that someone has requested or sending a spam bulk email... without using a program like *Mailloop* that puts each email

address in the *TO:* field, many of your emails will be deleted before they even get to the recipients.

Another problem encountered when using the *BCC* field for sending bulk email is that while it looks like a very fast process when you are sending it through your email program, it is, in essence, **very slow**. Most of the email addresses are handled very slowly once they get to the server, and if they are busy it can take a day or two before all your messages *really* get sent. Worse yet, if the server's *SENDMAIL* program crashes in the middle of the list, you **will lose some of the mailings** and will never know how many.

Many people have a lot of problems with "time out" when they send bulk email using a conventional email program like *Eudora* or *Pegasus*. The real problem with this begins when you start sending bulk email to 2,000 or more people. If the server is busy and *Pegasus* or *Eudora* (or whatever email program you are using) times out, the next time you tell the email program to re-send, **it will start from the beginning**.

Many people will then get your message twice (which will really increase the flames). Don't let this happen to you, as it is easy to solve. Just set a higher "time out" value in your options menu (or "network configurations"). The default is around 30-45 seconds... set it at 400 seconds and the problem can often be avoided. If you use *Mailloop*, you will not have this problem because it has protection mechanisms in place to prevent this from happening and will re-start where it left off.

I guess what I am trying to say is, do not use the *BCC* method to send out email... I just wanted to explain all the reason why so you understand the technology behind it.

So you have the opportunity to see what a mailer program looks like when you are sending bulk email, I have included some details and even a screen cap of *Mailloop* on the next page.

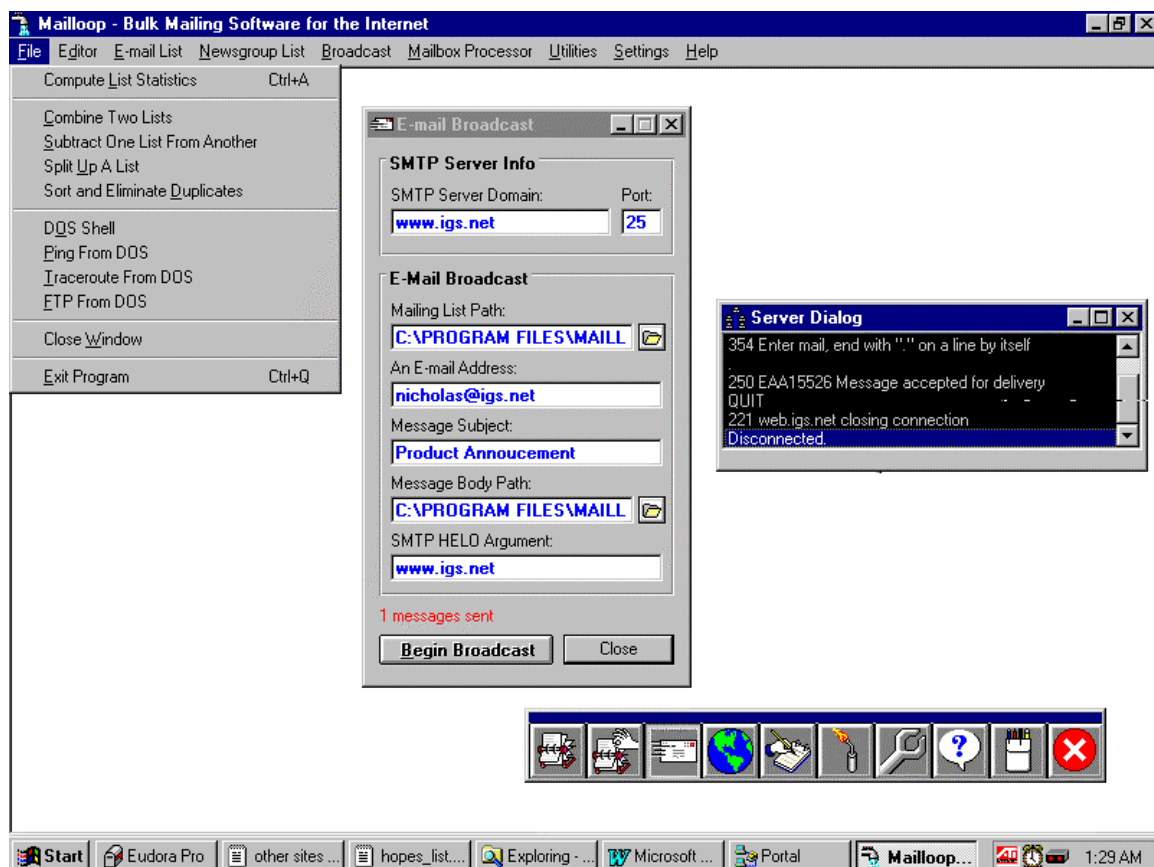
*Mailloop* does just about everything under the sun, but **we don't recommend it if you just plan to extract email**

## NOTES:

addresses and spam them... as Mailloop is much more than that... it is a complete package used to promote a business (I will explain more of *Mailloop's* features as we discuss other promotional techniques in the next few lessons).

I hope that this has helped to explain things, enabling us to get back to the next step...

This is what the *Mailloop* software looks like in email broadcast mode:



Doesn't that look easy?

When checking mail the next day, *Mailloop* will remove all the people who have requested to be removed from the emailer's list automatically. If they were offered more information by replying to the email message originally sent, *Mailloop* could easily be set up to recognize these requests

and automatically send out the appropriate information. Again, this keeps things **hands free** and saves hours of the user's time.

But what makes it even more powerful is that it will automatically remove all "bad email addresses" that it tried to send to (all "user known" or "unknown domain name" mail failures). As far as I know, this is one of the only programs on the planet that will do this. This may not seem like a big deal at first, but when you are dealing with hundreds (or even thousands) of returned emails, which need to be sorted manually to find the type of failure, and then manually removed from your list - this feature can save you a mountain of time.

People, who offer a newsletter for example, could use *Mailloop* to automatically subscribe and unsubscribe those who make such a request. If there were flames or bombs, it will recognize them and remove the email addresses from their list (it will also destroy email bombs). **Are you starting to see just how powerful this software is?**

## **What About "Turn Your Computer into a Mailserver" Software?**

You may have seen these software programs advertised. They are designed to eliminate undeliverable emails... so bulk emailers don't get hundreds, or even thousands of "bad email addresses" returned to them after doing a mail out (these large quantities of returned emails can clog up the server or computer).

For example, one of our opt-in lists contains well over 100,000 people... we get thousands of undeliverable email addresses every month when we mail to it (i.e. people changing their email addresses, canceling their email account, host out of business, host is temporarily down, etc.). This software bypasses the sender's ISP mail server, connects directly to the recipients mail server, checks to see if the email address is valid on that server, and then drops the email in their account. This means that there are no "bad

emails" returned to the bulk emailer, instead only delivering "valid" email addresses to their list.

At a cost of \$200 - \$350, they are a complete waste of money unless you have very large lists to send out to (which you probably do not when you are starting out).

What is the point of all of this?

Last year we had people asking us to add this feature to *Mailloop* as they did not want to get hundreds (or even thousands) of returned emails from their newsletter mail outs or any large email list they had. We in turn added the "turn your computer into a mailserver" feature to *Mailloop*.

This type of software sells for \$200 - \$350 and is really only used by those who participate in large emailings. But the unique thing about *Mailloop* is that it is built into the program, so if you want to use this feature, you can... **free of charge**, as long as you own *Mailloop*.

## **Email Formatting**

As I mentioned in another lesson, another simple thing that is **commonly** overlooked is the formatting of email messages. This is very important, even for mass emails. When composing an email, the character width should be set to 64-68 characters. Have your character width even shorter than in normal email messages. This will not only make them easier to read (less head or eye movement is required), but most people will not have their email viewing window set any smaller than this. This is so important because **if someone cannot read the sales message, why would you even bother sending it.** Do you see where I'm coming from?

When a URL is mentioned in an email, it should have the "*http://*" (i.e. <http://www.marketingtips.com/>) before it. If there is an email address listed in your message, make sure you have the "*mailto:*" prefix before it as well (i.e. <mailto:bob@bob.com>). The reason for this is that most new email programs have a hot-link feature that will allow the



user to just double click on the URL and it will automatically load web browser and go to that site.

This hot-link feature also works with the email prefix "mailto:". You can just double click on the address and your email program will automatically create a new message for you. This is a real convenience for the reader and **will increase their response rates**.

*A little hint: If your webpage promotions are successful but your email promotions are not (or vice-versa), pay particular attention to the first few paragraphs in the successful promotion. Then use these as your opening sentences in the unsuccessful campaign. The theory behind this - In most cases, if you haven't interested them yet, you aren't going to no matter what you say. Most people only scroll after being motivated to. So the first few lines in an email message **must be really good**.*

## **Email Bombs and Flames**

For those who are not familiar with the terminology "flames" or "email bombs":

Flames are when you receive a message consisting of someone telling you to "go to hell and stop sending me spam" (you can get a surprising number of these), or even direct threats.

You will get flames no matter what or how you are bulk emailing. You could be spamming (where you would get a very large number of these) or you could be sending out to your newsletter or opt-in list (where you would get very few and the ones you get will be people who forgot they subscribed to your list and will bitch at you anyway thinking you spammed them).

Bombs are when people send very large files that take a long time to download. This is not a big problem, just an annoyance. However, if you get a savvy Internet user who sends multiple large files, you will be in for a headache.

## NOTES:

Bombs are very rare, but still I wanted to mention them, as they do occur from time to time.

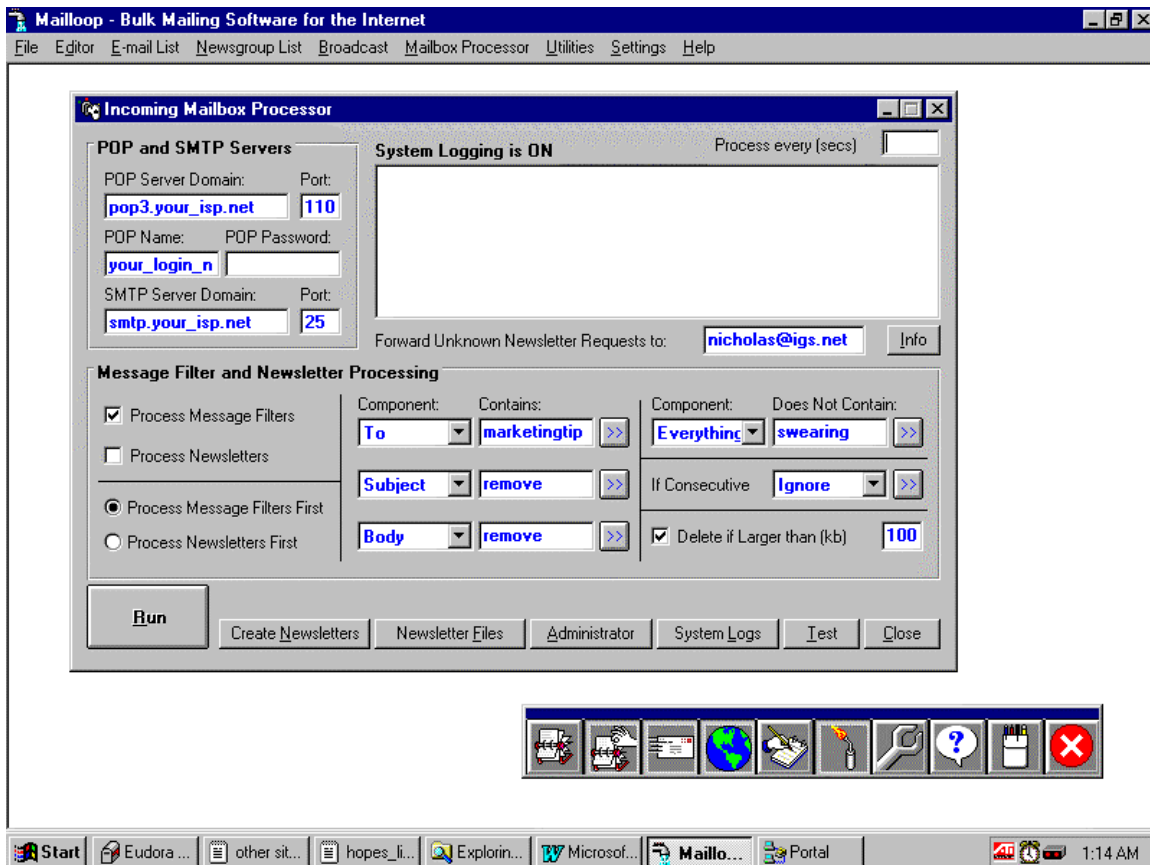
Most flames will be poorly written, full of typos, misspellings, poor grammar, and chock full of anger. It's like swatting a fly with a sledgehammer for some strange kind of satisfaction. These people wouldn't care if you were giving away \$100 bills, they just want someone to hate.

Sometimes it's tempting to write back to these people and tell them a thing or two. Whatever happens, **never, ever** reply to a flame, chances are it will start a "flame war", which is NOT something you want. **Just ignore it and move on.** There are filters in email programs (like *Mailloop*) that will delete these nasty messages before you even see them (and can remove them from your email lists so that person will never get a message from you again). I know this doesn't seem like much, but if you get a few flames, you can feel really bad. Trust me... it can sting.

You will get people sending you email stating they are going to sue you, and others will send you a bill for taking up their time. Stand your ground — bulk emailing is not illegal (I will get into a little more detail at the end of this lesson).

For example, the picture below is what *Mailloop* looks like when you are receiving your email (it will filter out all the flames and bombs for you). There are many options you cannot see here... but this will give you an idea of what I am talking about.

On that note, I should mention that *Mailloop* is not designed as mass bulk email software. It is designed to automate your business and send small quantities of bulk emails to your customers, clients, lead lists, targeted clientele, etc. If you plan to send messages to millions of email addresses, don't use *Mailloop*, it is not designed for that.



## Think "Sales Process" not "UCE"

Spam bulk email or UCE is not a "get rich quick" scheme... it is simply one of the many marketing weapons in your marketing arsenal... what makes you money **is your "sales process."** If you have that, you can make money with almost any type of marketing weapon.

If there is any type of spam bulk email that is somewhat tolerated by people online, it is "Targeted Commercial Email". But note that this is still considered spamming. Targeted commercial email involves the collection of email addresses through a variety of methods. The email addresses you get are only from people who have a **very good chance of being interested in your product.** It does not involve extracting names from newsgroups, discussion lists, forums, etc.

Targeted commercial email is the only method out of all the

bulk emailing techniques that has the potential of turning you a profit... all the other methods (like harvesting addresses from newsgroups or forums and buying millions of addresses on a CD) will lose you money and get you into hot water. Whatever you do, do it legally and ethically.

Too many people dive into bulk email headfirst without thinking it through. They imagine harvesting hundreds of thousands of emails from the net and blasting them all... **this will get you in more trouble than you could ever imagine.**

The problem with Targeted Commercial Email compared to the other marketing "weapons" you can use to promote your business is that it, unlike other marketing techniques online, will get you into the most trouble in the shortest period of time if you make the slightest mistake or do something wrong. The smallest error can get your dialup account cancelled, your website shut down (possibly permanently), and fill your email box with flames.

Why am I writing this?

Well, we get a lot of people who think this will be their "goldmine"... the one marketing method that will make them rich.

That is **WRONG!**

**What will make you rich online is finding the right "sales process".** This process is a combination of getting traffic to your site, providing enough interest that those visitors will want to stay on your site, and then having compelling copy that turns those visitors into buyers.

This may all sound simple, **but it is not.** If it were, every single person reading this would be rich. I am not saying this to "rain on the parade", so to speak. I am saying this so that you know how important it is and so that you know that "the sales process" is what you want to spend your time, money and effort on... not the one marketing technique you think that will make you rich.

When people send out a targeted commercial email and it doesn't work, they blame "bulk email"... not their sales process. The real problem could be in their subject line, the body of the message, the call to action, the sales copy at the website, or the ease (or lack of) the ordering system.

The problem is not bulk email... their problem is their sales process and sales copy.

Targeted Commercial Email campaigns can be one of the fastest ways to get cash flow when you start a new Internet business. Website reciprocal links, search engine listings and other online promotions can take weeks if not months to take effect. Targeted Commercial Email on the other hand, has immediate results and achieves immediate cash flow.

However, **this has many complications and ethical issues online**... because of these reasons, it can get you into hot water and fast - you can end up losing a lot of time and money by doing it.

Virtually everyone on the Internet has email access. This is what makes Targeted Commercial Email so powerful. You can test ads within a matter of days and find out if a campaign is successful within a week.

But it has some pretty serious repercussions if you do anything wrong.

### **"What do Spammers do?" "How do They Do It?" and "What Tricks do They Pull out of Their Sleeves?"**

There are discussions everywhere about bulk email... in forums, newsgroups, Bulletin Boards, and discussion lists,

and they are all saying ONE thing: "spam does not work". This is not necessarily true. These people either:

1. Have a winning formula and works well and don't want other people to try, or
2. Have tried bulk email **without targeting their market** used ineffective techniques, and got very low responses for the effort they put in...
3. Learned the hard way... tried bulk email, did it incorrectly, lost their ISP, had nasty flames and threats, etc.

Spamming can be very profitable, **but most people will not succeed at first**. They will make mistakes like offending people, emailing the wrong list, etc.

The problem is being "responsible" when emailing. If you plan on stripping out random addresses from newsgroups to bulk email to, you are a MORON. Not only will you make people angry, you will also **not make any sales!**

Email addresses are "harvested" using many methods, most commonly through AOL forums and member directories, CompuServe forums and classified ads, public newsgroups and directly from individual websites. There are other ways of getting email addresses, but these are the most common. We will get the details on how the bulk emailers do this later.

Never, never, never buy email addresses from a company that offers them for sale by the hundreds of thousands or millions. I have seen people advertising 100,000 email addresses for \$200 and even as low as \$50. But if you are a true entrepreneur and realize how to properly market your product or service, you will not want a list of email addresses of people who probably aren't interested in your message. Besides, you can't even imagine how many flames and email bombs you will get by mailing an *untargeted list*.

On that note, I should make a few notes on bulk emailing websites (or email solicitations) that hype it to be the "get rich quick" method of Internet marketing. In summary, most

of them use the "numbers game"... **don't fall for this!**

I will expand in a moment on what the "numbers game" is.

You have probably received unsolicited emails from people/companies that will sell you millions of addresses on a CD for \$200 (or whatever price). I've already warned you about and I'm warning you again... **DON'T BUY THEM!**

Their "sales pitch" will say that if you only get 1% (or less) response, you will still make tens of thousands of dollars.

Let's go over an example they may give you.

They may say that for \$199 you can buy 20 million email addresses and if you only got 1% response to those email addresses, that's 200,000 orders. If you only made \$10 on every order, that's \$2,000,000 in profit!... they may even go on to say that if you really screwed up and only got 0.02% response, you still make \$400,000 in profit - it is a little tempting, isn't it?

I call this the "numbers game".

**They are lying to you!!**

What if I told you that **you would be lucky to get one order in every 100,000 emails you sent...** and that is assuming that you don't get shut down by your ISP within a few hours from complaints, their mail server being clogged (because of you), or from any number of other problems.

With the complaints you will get, you will be lucky if you even get out 50,000 emails before your Internet access is terminated... **and you didn't even make a sale.**

Now, let's do those numbers again... if you could get out 20,000,000 emails (which you can't realistically without some **very** heavy duty equipment and systems in place) you would only make about 200 sales (and that is to assume that you did not get shut down and have to move your dialup and hosting multiple times... the most you would make would be \$2000 in profit.

Now that may not sound that bad... but after the \$500-\$1000 in software you had to buy to do the mailing, your \$200 in mailing list costs, a few hundred dollars for other problems you did not account for... and the days you lost trying to deal with problems and get your mail out. If your time is worth anything to you, you are probably in the hole by a few hundred dollars when it is all over (not to mention your bruised ego, the thousands of people who flamed you and called you all sorts of names... and other havoc you have caused). It is just not worth it. Trust me on this... I have seen too many people do it and get in way over their heads.

Although certain kinds of UCE can be very profitable, most are not only a waste of time but will likely get your Internet account deactivated as well and get you in some trouble. I say this not because I am an anti-spammer, but because I speak from the experience of all the emails we get each day from people who think they know it all. People who think UCE is as easy as gathering some email addresses and emailing out their message... it is not that simple.

## **How People Get Creative With Their Email and ISP Addresses**

When you see spam email, you will notice that seasoned bulk emailers **never use their main email address**. Flames are not a big problem to them, but if they are doing a large enough mail-out, or if they post inappropriately to a newsgroup (which everyone is bound to do while they are learning) a few people will contact their postmaster to complain. In turn the postmaster may contact them telling them to stop or their account will be terminated (usually they get 1 or 2 warnings before their account is actually cancelled).



## *NOTES:*

When a bulk emailer gets a successful letter and wants to start emailing tens of thousands of people, they will come across this kind of heat. Some people think the way to get around this is to get a new email account with another local provider and use it until it gets canceled as well, but the problem with this is that they will run out of local providers, and what do they do then?

There is a little trick to get around this problem. When they are logged onto the Internet with their local dial-in account, they don't have to use that particular email address to do their mailings.

Let's say the bulk emailer opens another email account with xyz.com in California. They log into the Internet through their local dial-in number and local provider. They're now connected to the internet by the way of a local call, and then they can log into their email account at xyz.com by simply changing the SMTP server and login/password settings in their email program. They can then start sending and receiving email from their account in California, rather than from their local telephone company account.

The point is, they can open any number of accounts throughout the USA and still use their local access provider's dial-up account.

This will cut a bulk emailer's complaints by 90%. The "authenticated address" in the header is the xyz.com in California. When most people complain, they will be complaining to the postmaster at xyz.com in California, not to the local provider.

The reason I say 90% is because there is still one line in the header that shows where the original log-in is (the local access provider) and a few smart internet users will know to contact that address to complain. Very few know how to do this, so the resulting 90% cut in complaints is still very good.

They use these accounts for a month or so... (or as long as they can) and then close them down. They do not let anyone else close their account because once the account is closed,

## NOTES:

they can no longer pick up inquiries, find out which people asked to be removed from the list (You don't want to make the mistake of mailing them again), or which requested more information.

Here is a list of a few providers that will give you FREE email accounts. Some bulk emailers use them for one mailing and then cancel them in 30 days. Note that most of these providers have a very low tolerance for spamming, so any bulk emailer usually thinks twice about using them.

Juno:	<a href="http://www.juno.com">http://www.juno.com</a>
Hotmail:	<a href="http://www.hotmail.com">http://www.hotmail.com</a>
Yahoo:	<a href="http://www.yahoo.com">http://www.yahoo.com</a>
Bigfoot:	<a href="http://www.bigfoot.com">http://www.bigfoot.com</a>

Whether they use a free email account or one they paid for, this is what a bulk emailer would normally do: Open an account and send out about 20,000 letters. At some point the ISP will get enough complaints that the bulk emailer will be sent a warning letter. The bulk emailer writes a polite letter back saying that they are sorry, and they do not want to cause any trouble and promise never to do it again. The ISP looks at this as an isolated incident and the bulk emailer can keep picking up replies and inquiries.

Then, after about 20 or 30 days they just call the ISP up and tell them to close the account. They will ask "why?" The bulk emailer just says "I wanted to send bulk email and was told that it was against your policies." Meanwhile, they already have another email account somewhere else and plan to do the same thing all over again.

One important note is that when a bulk emailer receives an inquiry from a mass email they did from xyz.com, it is important that they send their salesletter/information from their main account in reply. They do this because if the customer doesn't contact them right away and orders a **month or so later**, the customer will be able to get in touch with them at their main email account. If they sent the salesletter/information from the xyz.com account, that account might then be closed and the customer wouldn't be

able to easily get in contact with the company to order their product or service.

Also, it is very hard for any anti-spammer to get his main account shut down because he has never spammed from it, therefore he has never broken the service agreement and the ISP cannot cancel his account for spamming.

Bulk emailers want to use “throw-away” email accounts to spam for two other reasons.

1. If the complaints get bad, they will only lose this account and not their main account (which would be a big problem for their business). They can then get a new email account at another ISP in their city in a matter of minutes.
2. Although it is unlikely that they will get heavily bombed (enough to have the ISP shut down their email, website and FTP), it is possible and they want to use a different email account to spam so if someone bombs them, the anti-spammer is bombing an expendable email account.

There is a way to completely avoid the problem of losing your account.

Most email providers will not tolerate spamming, and will cancel your account after one warning because of plain economics. You are most likely paying the ISP \$10-\$20 a month for an email account and it is just not worth the ISP's hassle for a measly \$10-\$20.

A technique used by many targeted, ethical bulk emailers is to approach an ISP and honestly state that they plan to do some “targeted” bulk email to a small quantity of people (“within reason”) and won't be sending out “untargeted” bulk email to millions of people... some ISPs will work with them. They usually pay a flat fee of \$100 a month to their ISP for an email account. They are authorized to do small, targeted bulk emailing (about 50,000 email messages a month), and the ISP will deal with the flames and complaints for the \$100 the bulk emailer pays them.

This technique is often overlooked and one of the easiest ways to get around losing email accounts with targeted

commercial bulk email (as long as the ISP is willing and the targeted bulk emailer can afford to pay the \$100 per month extra to the ISP).

Some spam bulk emailers who send out a lot of email host with "bulk friendly" ISPs. These are ISPs that charge \$75 - \$150 a month (and usually an initial set up fee of \$100) and allow you to spam all you want. In other words, they **ignore all the complaints** they get about your bulk emailing.

The problem with this is that if they are well known, there are many "blacklists" out there that list the major ISP domains that are bulk email friendly or have bulk emailed in the past. Some ISPs download these lists and **block all email from these domains** which means that any email received from any of these domain names **is automatically trashed before the recipient ever sees it.**

Now, not everyone has this list and only a few of the bigger bulk email ISPs are on it... but a spam bulk emailer is destroying chances of his/her email ever being seen and he/she is usually stuck with a \$100 set up fee and locked into a bi-yearly contract for the "bulk friendly" services... even if he/she only does this for one month.

If you insist on using a spam bulk email friendly ISP, there are a number of them listed at *Yahoo* and *AltaVista*. Just search for the words "Bulk Email ISP" and a whole pile of them will pop up.

### **What some Bulk Emailers do to Make their Email Campaign Incredibly Successful**

There are two major ways to do bulk email. The first is the direct approach in which the bulk emailer explains up front that they have something for sale... there is also the indirect approach where they draw the customer in with something for free and by doing this, they build credibility and rapport.

So, with that said, almost any successful bulk emailer knows that it is **critically** important that they always offer

something for free. Again, the best way to do this is to offer some sort of useful information (in essence, information the readers cannot get somewhere else) either at the bulk emailer's website or from their autoresponder.

For example, when we bulk email to our past customer base we always try and "soften" the offer by giving them something for free. For example, when people buy *Car Secrets Revealed* and we email these customers, we try to give them something for free (usually information) before we ever try to sell them something else... it shows that you are not just interested in their money, but are also interested in helping them.

The keys to making their email successful are to:

1. Email a "targeted" list of people who would be interested in their service (this applies to all types of bulk email including opt-in lists, customer lists, targeted commercial email, etc.). This is the **most important** factor in the bulk email game! It will account for up to 50% of the results they get.
2. Have a short and "to the point" email offering a benefit to the reader.
3. Follow all the formatting and etiquette tips described in the Email Lesson.
4. Make it easy to respond and reply to (i.e. "reply to this email" or "call our 800 number" or "visit our website at <http://www.mydomain.com>" etc.)
5. Offer something for free (if they want to get a lot of responses).

You may be thinking, "What if the bulk emailer has nothing free they can offer?" But think about it, if they are selling potted plants online (although this would be a very strange business to start online), they could offer tips not only on why plant pottery should be different for different plants. They also might want to share their expertise by way of growing or fertilizer tips... or whatever, the possibilities are endless!

They could offer this free product at their website or via autoresponder. Remember, the purpose of their bulk email is to quickly perk interest and direct customers to their website or autoresponder, so it is important they offer some incentive... they don't try to sell them right in the email.

*Tip: Notice that many of the successful spam bulk emailers list a phone number and mailing address in the email. This gives the business credibility. People who are skeptical can call them to talk to a real live person if necessary.*

Part of being "short and to the point" is having a letter with a good subject line. If it says "get rich selling satellites", **it will not work**. Whether you are using an opt-in list or are spamming millions of untargeted addresses - it does not matter. The only thing it does is it reduces the bulk emailer's credibility by sounding like a "get rich quick scheme", but it tells the reader exactly what is in the email... and they will trash the message.

If the bulk emailer reworded the phrase above to read "\*\*\* \$400 profit per sale!" ... **it works much more efficiently**. 'It still looks like a sales message, but it is interesting enough to make people want to read how they can make the \$400 per sale.

The bulk emailer may also try the subject from the angle of promoting "your potential". People are very curious by nature, and besides, they don't know if the bulk emailer is spamming them or if there is some kind of previous relationship with the company (i.e. customers, lead lists, etc.) sending an email talking to them personally. This will get them to open the email and start reading. The bulk emailer can talk about how they have the potential to be earning \$400 per sale... and then have the sales letter talk about how to become a distributor for satellites.

Another example could be a statement like "Top 10 ways to reduce your mortgage payment". In that email, the bulk emailer would convey that they have a book that explains how to reduce mortgage payments by 30% or their

customers will get their money back. The subject line is interesting enough to get them thinking they will be told the “top 10 ways” in the email... so they read on.

The “top ten” theory works rather well for bulk emailers as they can always write an article that would correspond to the product they are selling. For example, if they sell golf clubs, they might have an article on the top ten ways to improve your golf swing... and then they might mention how the right set of golf clubs will improve a golf swing by 6 strokes (or whatever). They might then direct the reader to their website. **They are very good at using their imagination...** you should be starting to see how they think and what works online.

Also, bulk emailers ensure that the articles they write have lots of good research and valuable information with some reference to other help in the field listed (it will make it look non-biased). The report isn't just a disguised sales letter. This isn't to say that some don't mention or “plug” their product or service... but it has to be more than that. They must **offer valuable information** and then tell their potential customers what they have and how it can be of benefit to them.

If they are selling software... one of the best subject lines to use is: “\$400 database management software FREE”. In the email the bulk emailer then explains to the reader how they can get the demo version they can use free for 30 days. They use the subject line to **draw them in...** they would never say “it is free for 30 days” or that it is “demo software”... they always say something **that is true and exciting which will get the recipient to open and read the email.**

*Hint: Do you want to know which subject line and headline has worked well for many bulk emailers, no matter they are selling? It's the headline “**what is in it for me?**” This is by far the best pulling headline or subject line as it works like wildfire.*

Learning how to write this kind of copy for bulk emailing is something that takes a lot of practice and patience. Most

**NOTES:**

bulk emailers will keep writing headlines and see themselves getting better each and every time.

Here is an example of spamming to someone that there is no relationship with. If a spammer stripped out email addresses from classified ads on gardening and was selling a "miracle growth" product, the email might look like this:

To:  
From:  
Subject: garden growth?

Greetings,

I just saw your post in the classified ads under gardening.  
Could I show you how I can improve your garden's growth by 40% in 10 days?

This is an offer to provide you with valuable gardening information for free. Send an email to [growth@gardening.com](mailto:growth@gardening.com) and the information will be emailed to you within a few minutes.

Patti  
PM Gardening Services  
"Power Gardening" Feel free to drop me a line  
<http://www.gardening.com>

An email such as this gets back **fewer flames** because the spammer told them where they got their email address and that they are not just spamming any address, but are in fact restricting their campaign to those they specifically thought would be interested. This would be classified as targeted commercial bulk email.

Here's a sample email, which was targeted to large corporations selling a course on sales, to sales managers:

To:  
From:  
Subject: FREE copy of "sales strategies for improved sales force results"

Hi,



**NOTES:**

Over 100,000 salesman and salesladies have read my informative article "SALES STRATEGIES FOR IMPROVED SALES FORCE RESULTS".

This is a FREE article and I am now announcing the completion of the NEW, UPDATED article. Just email me back for a free copy (put "send copy" in the subject line).

If you would like me to remove your name please type REMOVE in the subject line.

Thank You,

Fred Bass

This example is non-threatening to the reader as the spammer is simply offering a free article. They can then proceed to have the information/sales letter about their product **right after it**. In the scenario above, the product might be selling a "sales management course". If a spammer decides to include a sales letter in the initial bulk mail, they often **make sure** they have some sort of interesting information at the beginning so it doesn't look like a sales letter at first glance. Here is an example of a gentleman who was trying to sell his huge email list on CD (you know, the ones you never buy!):

To:  
From:  
Subject: Don't burn me down

If you are doing bulk email, you have 3 problems you have to deal with on a regular basis.

- #1 FLAMES (I can't help you with this one)
- #2 TECHNICAL ASPECTS (can't help with this one also)
- #3 ADDRESSES (here's where I can help)

I have found a way to harvest names at a rate that is unbelievable... etc. etc.

*\*\*And the rest of your sales letter goes here.*

## NOTES:

Basically, the example above would go on to explain how they sell a CD with millions of email addresses for \$199 (or whatever price). Now as you know, I don't recommend buying lists on CD... but I thought this would make a good example of what spammers do to get people's attention. Do you see how the subject line creates curiosity and the first few lines are very interesting? This is a **powerful** email!

Just like the email above, if they put the entire sales letter in the initial email, the sender will have the first paragraph summarize the entire message.

Another example is shown below. I apologize for using examples that are all about spam email lists and spam software, but it seems like the majority of the spam I get (at least any good examples of spam) is about selling spam lists or spam software (which, by the way, you don't want to buy). Here is the example:

To: all@nobody.com  
From: abc@abc.com

Subject: free bulk email software

To learn how to get FREE BulkMailer software, read on...

HERE'S WHAT 8 BULKMAILER USERS SAY...

If a "dummy" like me can use this software, anyone can!  
Great tool!! Scott Spofford, Arizona

BulkMailer is terrific! You truly have a remarkable piece of software. It worked just as you promised! Within 10 days I was about to collect over 100,000 email addresses and make a profit of \$4,000 dollars! Thank you for all your help and support! Matt Allen

*\*\*And then they have the rest of the testimonials followed by the sales letter. They may then explain how to download a 30 day trial, \$400 software free of charge or go on to suggest they purchase the software immediately, giving them a special discount which also includes Fed-Ex overnight shipping free of charge. As you can see, they always give an incentive!*

## NOTES:

Note that bulk emailers (whether they are using spam or opt-in lists) will always test their product or service to find out which approach works best. It has been found that a “two-step” process works **a lot better** than just emailing a sales letter directly to their customers. They often get the people they are targeting to respond to an autoresponder for more information, or have them visit the website.

Generally speaking, getting the customer to visit the website is **more effective** in closing sales. Customers see that the bulk emailer is a “real” person or company, and not a scam artist hiding behind an email address. They also get more ‘involved’ this way (i.e., they can surf the sites and read sections they are interested in and ignore others; they can see pictures of the product or service, or they might even see a picture of the emailer... which makes everything **that much more believable**).

Remember, on the Internet most companies are seen simply as an email address or a website. People don’t know them personally and obviously cannot physically walk into their store. Bulk emailers (especially with spam or rented opt-in lists – i.e. lists that have no relationship with the recipient) consider it their job to convince the recipient that they are a **“real” person with a “real” business and a great product or service that can be of benefit to them.**

Depending on the audience they are emailing to, they may have a disclaimer at the top or bottom of the message, like the one in the sample below (this is especially true for spam bulk emailers who get a lot of flames back from their first test mailings). Spammers use this technique much more than bulk emailers.

It might read:

Our research indicates the following material is of interest to you. If you prefer not to be on this mailing list, please let us know, and you will be promptly removed.

## NOTES:

This statement *reduces the flames*, but it **will also reduce responses dramatically**. Once people read this, they know the email is a commercial message and many will ignore it.

You see the problem with using this for opt-in rented lists is that the recipient probably cannot tell whether you are sending legitimate email from the opt-in list or if you are just sending them spam.

When spammers plan to do a "one-shot" mailing (in other words don't plan to email their list ever again), or a bulk emailer has rented opt-in bulk email list, they do **not** use a disclaimer.

In other words, spammers that plan to email the list again are the only ones that usually use this type of technique. Spammers sometimes utilize "references" to help wipe out complaints and flames. A reference is any mention of where they found someone's email address. For example:

```
I found your name in the America Online Member Directory.  
It seems both you and I have an interest in golfing.  
That's why I'm writing to you today.
```

Some have used, in the beginning of their emails, something like the following example, but with obvious negative results:

```
In our research, we found your website... blah, blah, blah
```

OR

```
We apologize for the intrusion... blah, blah, blah
```

This just screams **JUNK MAIL!** and is trashed before it is even read. Those spending the time to bulk email a targeted list, or those having rented an opt-in list, **make sure their email is effective** so it is at least read!

The last technique often used by bulk emailers, I call the "blonde approach" (which I know is not politically correct).

## NOTES:

Here is an example of an email taking the blonde approach: |

To:  
From:  
Subject:

I am fairly new to the Internet but I am aware that some people get upset if they get email without being asked permission. We would therefore like to ask your permission to send you info on our Mountain Bikes and supplies. You will not get any more email from us unless you will allow it by typing OK in the "Subject" of your reply. I hope this inquiry is not too much of an intrusion.

Our firm will guarantee the LOWEST discount prices to retail customers. Six major manufacturers of rugged Mountain bikes and mountain bike supplies. Information, pictures and discounted prices at the BikeSuperstore:  
<http://www.bikesuperstore.com>

Bulk emailers use this approach to seem "naive" and harmless. And in the end, the company gets the description of what they do out and the URL listed at the end of the email.

Depending on the list the spammer is sending to, this can work... or it can really backfire and cause more complaints and flames than normal. For example, you may see a lot of "So, if you know it is wrong to spam, why in the #\$\$%\* did you spam me you &\$\$%^&"... or that kind of thing.

### **Some of the more Sneaky Tricks used by a few Spammers!**

There are some 'other' tricks to spamming, and by telling you what they are I am not condoning them. This is for your own information so that you will know what people are doing. The freedom of speech I'm exercising here is the way things go in cyberspace.

**NOTES:**

The first sketchy method taken by some people is to pretend recipients are **already** on a mailing list, but that they have not contacted them in a long time. The message would read something like this:

Hi Folks,

Some of you have not received an email from me in a very long time. I have met many of you from my various interests in like. Some are from my Internet travels, some musician friends, some church friends, some work friends and some family. Well, after a very long wait, I decided to send out an email to all of you who have ever been in my email address book at once so I don't have to figure out who got my email and who didn't. Things have been extremely busy for us and after over a year, we have finally completed our CD project. I set up a few HTML pages about the CD so you can actually go there and sample some of the audio clips and the CD tracks. You can also see the history behind the project a little, a few highlights about the authorship, and a few fun related WWW links.

The URL for the CD page is:

<http://www.cdpage.com/test/>

I hope you enjoy it. Feel free to pass on the URL if you so desire.

Thanks.

Kim

See how personal and inviting this was? This example shows how they gave a reason as to why they would have your email address (it was in her email box because you have communicated in the past with her at some point).

Also, if the spammer wanted to go one step further to remove "un-wanted" from the list, they could have the following note at the end of the letter:

**NOTES:**

If you don't have a clue who I am, or don't care, or you know me and just hate my guts, you can remove yourself from my personal email list by sending an email to this Internet address:

remove@abc.com

be sure to save the EXACT WORDS in the subject line:  
UNSUBSCRIBE

Well, that is about all the time/space I'll take up for a few months... talk to you then.

Kim

*Tip: The "PS." at the bottom of the letter is the "hat trick". It is a place marketers love to put in a teaser or to restate the **most important benefit** of their product or service (you can use this for your website or your email salesletter). Sometimes they even have a special offer to create a sense of urgency. It is amazing how many people will order right away when offered an incentive. For example: "PS. This price will be valid until Sept. 16<sup>th</sup>, 1999 and will include your two free gifts. After that, the price will return to normal." OR "PS. The first 100 orders in September will get 2 FREE refill cartridges included with their laser printer order (a \$130 value)."*

Here's another little trick that is often used:

To:  
From:  
Subject: Sorry It Took So Long

Here is the info you requested <http://www.golfing.com/>

See how it is **so simple and vague**? Spammers with a URL that explains what they do **are very effective**. For example, a URL like healthtips.com describes exactly what you will get if you go there — health tips. Spammers use the power of this also as they don't get as many flames or complaints because the info is so vague that the receiver assumes they requested it at some point and you took forever to get back

**NOTES:**

to them. The curiosity factor works very well here... as long as the URL name has intrigued them... they are likely to check it out just to satisfy their own curiosity.

Those spammers who have a URL that really describes what they do sometimes use it as the "Subject" line. It might look something like this (but does not work as well for them as the example above):

To:  
From:  
Subject: www.mydomain.com

I recently discovered your health business on the Internet, and thought you might be interested in our website located at <http://www.mydomain.com> Our site includes lots of free promotional tips for your health, fitness, and well-being. We have designed the site to be a resource for anyone interested in staying healthy and improving their lifestyle.

Thank you.

John Doe

= = = = =  
The Health and Fitness center  
<http://www.mydomain.com>  
Learn how to get healthy in 90 days  
Free information: [healthinfo@mydomain.com](mailto:healthinfo@mydomain.com)  
= = = = =

**Interesting CompuServe Note:** Those spammers that email to *CompuServe* members and using the BCC field method above, sometimes have a *CompuServe* address (i.e. 74362.4315@CompuServe.com) in the TO field as it looks like they were sending a personal message that was mis-routed by *CompuServe* and sent to them accidentally.

In other words, the *CompuServe* member has no idea that their CompuServe address (**including hundreds more**) was in a BCC field. The result is a significant elimination of flames and complaints from *CompuServe* members. Instead



## NOTES:

they get a polite email saying they received an email in error. The trick used here by spammers is to make the email personal and sincere like they are mailing an individual (no hype or over-exaggerations) and the recipient will think it is a mis-routed email, not spam.

The last tricky technique often used is by pretending they are emailing a buddy.

This is one of the **stupidest tricks** in my opinion, and many people will obviously know they are being spammed (how many people would screw up an email address **that badly?**). But I still see spams from people at least once a week trying this technique.

The email would look something like this:

Hi Rob,

The guy who does those golf clubs that I was talking about is at: <http://www.golfclubs.com/>.

As I mentioned on the phone, they are incredible and improved my game by 5 strokes!

Give me a call after you take a look at the page.

Howard

This often works for some, getting them a few sales, but the outcome more often than not results in the bulk emailers getting **FLAMED HARD** by the people who know what they are doing. This is a very deceptive way of doing things and can backfire on a spammer in a big way!

## The Importance of Targeting

On a final note, the place that bulk emailers get their lists from (i.e. targeted addresses, rented opt-in email lists, lists on CD, harvested lists, etc.) will make for 60% of the

campaign's success or failure.

Those who use "shotgun marketing" or market a product to a list because they think the product "applies to everyone", will fail. Success is based on Target Marketing first and then they work outward from there.

For example, in 1994 I thought that everyone who owned a car should have a copy of my *Car Secrets Revealed* book so that was my target market! Wrong! If I had rented an opt-in email lists that included only car enthusiasts, or car collectors, I would have failed. If I had rented lists of homeowners because I assumed that almost all homeowners have cars, again, I would have failed.

My target market ended up being people who were in the market for a new car within the next 2 weeks. I originally thought my market was all car owners, and that was whom I was marketing to. But once I did a survey, I found out that over 70% of the book buyers were buying it because they wanted information on buying their new car. I then re-targeted my market... built a new marketing slogan for my banners, ezines, ads, and emails... once I did this, sales jumped by over 400% **almost overnight**.

See how important targeting is? The list of new car buyers is only a fraction of the size of "all car owners in the US", but by targeting my marketing to the people who "wanted" my information (instead of the people who "I thought needed my information"), **I quadrupled my sales**.

Think about this for a moment... Yes... Stop! Think about it, how it relates to your product, and to your market. Are you targeting the right market? The one that **wants** to buy your product and not the ones **who you think** should have it?

Don't just think about this for email, but for all your marketing weapons you use to promote your business online.

## **How and Where Do Bulk Emailers Get Email Lists?**

## NOTES:

As the Internet grows larger and larger, more and more spamming (unsolicited emailing) occurs. There are entrepreneurs and companies gathering email addresses on the Internet through a variety of different methods, and marketers are taking advantage of this opportunity with varying degrees of success.

1. They buy/rent (opt-in or harvested emails) from a service and send the email themselves,
2. They rent (opt-in or harvested emails) from a service that emails the list on their behalf, or
3. They collect their own list and email them (this could be opt-in emails they have collected from their website and autoresponder... or emails they have harvested off the Internet).

Many prefer to collect the list themselves because they want a very targeted market and can control that when compiling the list. When renting or buying a list, bulk emailers don't know where those addresses came from or what their most "specific interest" is.

For example, even if the senders thought that the perfect candidate for their product was a flower store, they could not buy a list that was only for flower stores (they may be able to buy a list that is for gardening... but not just for flower stores). But this list **would be pretty easy to compile**, with the right software that finds the addresses and adds them into a file for the emailer to use.

There are many places people use to compile these email lists. Here a few of the most popular:

1. Their customer database, ad respondents, lead lists
2. Autoresponders logs
3. A compiled list of all people who have sent them email in the past
4. AOL member directories
5. AOL classified ads
6. CompuServe forums and member directories

7. Newsgroups
8. "Whois" inquiries
9. Classified ad websites
10. Participants in email discussion lists or forum conversations
11. Email addresses from websites

**#1-#3:** These are email lists that you have compiled from your website opt-in list (i.e. guestbook, newsletter, free report offer, etc.), your autoresponder logs (people who have requested information from you in the past), and any ad respondents who have asked for more information. These are very safe email addresses to bulk email to (it is not considered spam). #3 is extracting all the emails from your email box. In other words, it is a compiled list of all the people that have emailed you in the past and who you are going to follow up on. Method #3 can be considered spam by some people... so be careful how you word your email and how you present it to them.

*Mailloop* will help you with #1-#3 as it will extract email addresses from autoresponder logs, individual webpages, text files, order files, survey logs, customer database files, emails stored in your email box, FTP files, and so on. You then press a few buttons and email a "follow up" or salesletter to all these clients. As you can see, Mailloop is very much a program for business automation.

**#4-#6:** In general, AOL and CompuServe members get spammed **a lot** because most of the email harvesting software is set up to strip addresses from these online services in an efficient manner. Because of this, many AOL and CompuServe members ignore or **automatically delete a lot of the spam**. It is also becoming VERY difficult to get any bulk email through the AOL and CompuServe spam filters. Chances are that any mass mailings will not make it through AOL or CompuServe's mail server to the recipient.

**#7:** Harvesting addresses from newsgroups will bring spammers a few sales, but they often get flamed and bombed in a big way. These people are very protective of

their privacy from advertisements... **and are usually abusive to spammers.** People who post to newsgroups get their email addresses harvested quite often and they really complain about it. Most spammers avoid this at all costs... but many “newbie” spammers make the mistake and email this group... and pay the price!

**#8:** “Who Is” inquiries will bring back addresses for certain websites. This method has been shown to work well for those looking for a certain type of business or certain type of domain to market to.

**#9:** Gathering email addresses from online classified ads websites, from categories that are applicable to the spammer’s industry or market.

**#10:** Gathering email addresses from email discussion lists, ezines, forums, trade journals or other “chat” areas are becoming a popular way for some spammers to build targeted email lists quickly. This was not used in the past, but some spammers have picked up on this idea and are now using it to build their email lists. They will often find archives of the past ezines and email discussion lists at the websites; they then extract the email addresses of the subscribers and members from the archived issues using a simple extraction program. They are also subscribing to the lists and saving all the issues so that they can extract the email addresses from them later on.

For example, if someone sold a handy skate-sharpening tool and subscribed to a few “skating” discussion lists, they could strip out all the email addresses from participants in the list and then email them the offer. Then, “Bingo!”, they’re selling skate sharpeners.

If you have got spammed and you don’t use your email address much, but you belong to a few discussion lists... this is probably how they got a hold of your email address.

**#11:** Harvesting email addresses from related websites is a method not used by many people. I will go into a detail here because if you decide that, no matter what I tell you, you are still going to spam, this is the **only way** you want to do it.

## NOTES:

This will reduce your problems and give you the best chance of turning a profit. This is the only method that people who are successful at targeted commercial bulk email use.

Most targeted commercial bulk emailers like this method because it is the most under-utilized to create a clientele base online, and it offers many benefits.

This is why:

It is easy for targeted commercial bulk emailers to gather thousands of email addresses that are perfectly targeted for their product or service by using the right software. And since most sites are business oriented anyhow, they are less likely to complain about these people trying to market them something since they are marketing something themselves. Many find a way to market their product or service to specific type of business, as the result is often **the most effective**.

You see, most of the people who get upset about spam are the individuals online who are there for entertainment and research. The companies that are doing business online usually don't mind spam that much. For example, I get over 75 pieces of bulk email here between all our businesses and I really don't care about it much - in fact, I think it is kind of interesting to see what people are trying to sell me online.

There are two ways to sell a product/service via email online:

- 1) Target the end user (the customer) and try to sell it directly to them
- 2) Target the businesses online that have exposure to your target market and get them to sell or distribute it. In the worst case, you can exchange links or pay for advertising at their site.

Many people who harvest email addresses from websites look at their product or service marketing campaign from a

different angle and see if they can market it to a business in some way.

Let's use "*Duralube™*" as an example (you have all seen the infomercial I am sure). You probably think the target market is used car owners who want to take care of their cars. The problem on the net is... how to **target** used car owners who care enough about the maintenance and well being of their automobile to invest in *Duralube™*? The answer is that **it is actually almost impossible to target this market.**

One solution an emailer might use would be to package and tailor the sales letter to new car owners. They would then advertise/promote *Duralube™* on the abundance of new car automotive sites on the Internet (i.e. new car dealership sites, new car price quote sites, services like AutoByTel and AutoVantage that sell new cars online). These sites get **millions of hits every month** and it would be easy to sell a few hundred bottles of *Duralube™* using a few of these sites with links to theirs. *Duralube™* would then arrange for some of the big automotive sites to sell the product directly to the visitors, recommend the product, get reciprocal links, or pay for advertising space on the big automotive sites.

Another angle they might use would be through the realization that this is a consumer related product or service... thus selling it to targeted businesses by finding email addresses on the net.

They might:

1. make a special offer stating they are giving wholesale pricing as a special offer to online automotive site owners because they want them to see how great it is and get some "word of mouth advertising", or
2. offer it as a "distributor program" where companies could buy it in bulk from them at a special wholesale price and resell it at their website, or even
3. offer a sponsorship deal where they are paid a monthly fee for recommending the product or service and having a link/banner to the bulk emailer's site so their visitors

can order.

**Do you see where they are going with all of this?** They may target all automotive sites and all online auto-parts stores or distributors.

So to generally recap; one angle they use is to sell it on a retail level to the individuals who own the sites. Another angle is to get the automotive sites to buy it wholesale to sell it on their sites at the retail level (a money making opportunity for them). The last is to have them recommend the product or service with a link to the product/service's site and pay them a fee for advertising/promotion every month.

Do you know how many of them would go about targeting all of the automotive sites on the Internet?

Before time-saving software became available, most targeted bulk emailers would surf the net constantly looking for sites that were complementary to theirs, but not competitive... as they wanted to get links, work out distributor deals, buy advertising, and network with those sites (to drive traffic to their site). This was VERY time consuming, but businesses have been doing this since commerce first started on the Internet... but they are now doing it VERY differently (I will expand on how they are doing it over the next few paragraphs).

In 1998, reliable software became available that replaced surfing for complementary sites. This allowed targeted bulk emailers looking to build relationships with other related business (or targeted consumers) in a fraction of the time.

Take a program like *SuperSonic* (<http://www.marketingtips.com/supersonic.html>) which will do just that.

Basically, it will extract all the email addresses from websites that match specific keywords (something that is determined by the search engines).

If you started *SuperSonic* and entered the keywords "stop smoking", *SuperSonic* would go to the top 38 search engines and retrieve all the website addresses that have to do with



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those keywords (up to 1000 results per search engine, so up to 38,000 sites per keyword as there are 38 search engines). *SuperSonic* then goes to each website (up to 38,000 per keyword) and then saves those email addresses it found into a file (it also saves what search engine it found it in, the website title, and the URL where it found the email address).

Because *SuperSonic* saves all this information, it allows the targeted bulk emailer to personalize an email to these people so that it looks like a personal note to them when in reality, you are actually sending that same letter to thousands of people and offering the same thing.

IMPORTANT NOTE: I should mention that *SuperSonic* is a SPECIAL VERSION of the "regular" Sonic. It is a special version that has a ton more features and benefits to it. Do not get it confused with the "Sonic" software that Earthonline Corporation sells (also known as EOL Corporation) as it looks very similar. The "*SuperSonic*" software I refer to in this article is far beyond the old version of Sonic that EOL Corporation has... don't get them confused (I would hate to see you purchase the wrong software). There are very few people in the world who have access to this special version of *SuperSonic*... and we have made it available on our site for those who want it.

Note that although this program gives you the power to "spam the world" by collecting hundreds of thousands of email addresses off the web, you should only use it if you are going to do targeted bulk email. **Only** use it to contact related websites you want to Joint Venture with, create linking strategies with, or, for some reason, communicate with. I cannot stop you from using it to spam hundreds of thousands of people... so please use the software with your best judgement in mind.

Now, I should take a moment and explain that no matter how harmless this technique sounds, it is considered to be spam by some people.

I know you are saying "But I'm not trying to 'sell' anything in the emails", which is normally affiliated with spam... but

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you are proposing they and you enter into a business relationship of some kind. That is why you will get almost no complaints when you do this (as you are not trying to "sell" anything). But you are still emailing a lot of people at one time, and by some that is considered spamming - even though you are doing it ethically and responsibly.

It is my job to tell you this because I want to make sure you understand what I am explaining here... this technique may sound harmless, but if you feel that this is spamming and you are against that, I recommend you don't use this technique. In business, only do what you feel is right for you, don't get caught up in the "greed".

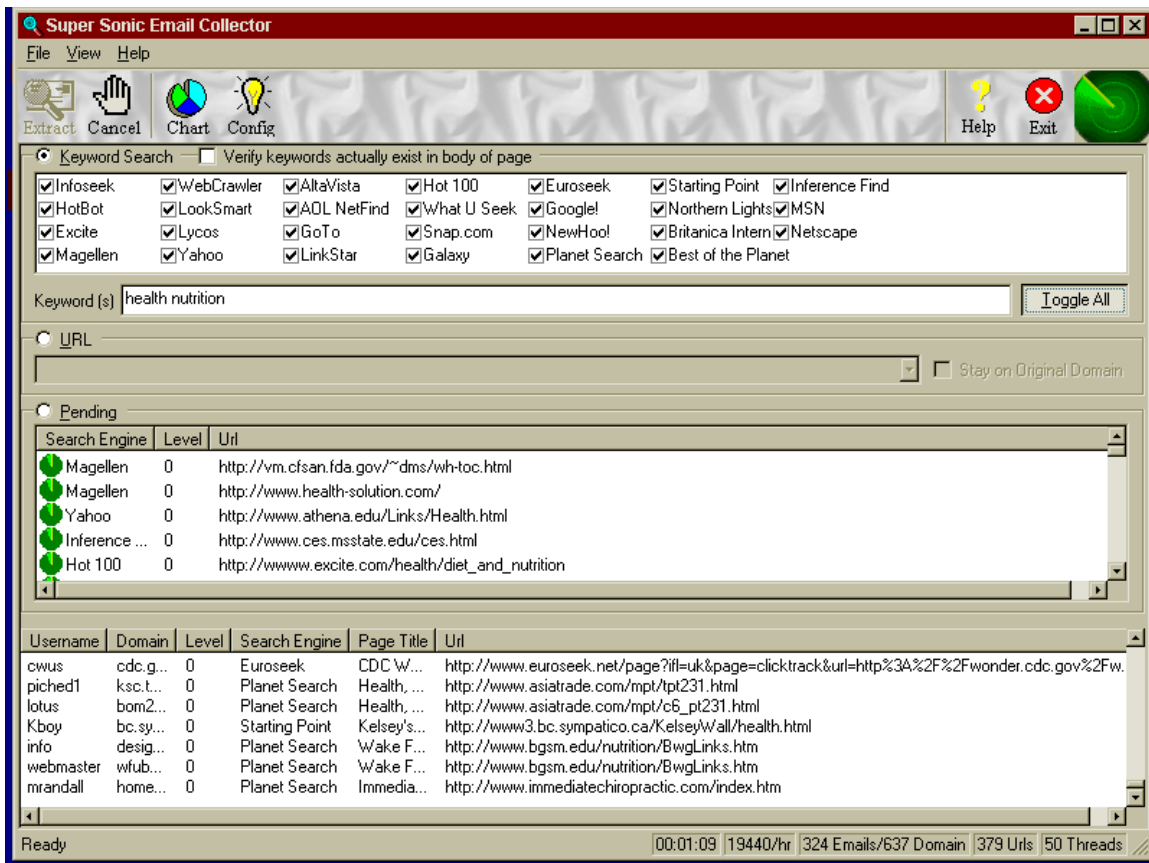
Remember, if you like this idea of contacting other related websites to joint venture or do a business deal of some kind, you can still do this manually if you like... surfing the web yourself and individually emailing each site you find. It is extremely time consuming, but it is an option to still take advantage of this marketing technique and know that you can NEVER be accused of spamming. Use the method that you feel is best for you.

By the way, if you do this manually, do not be surprised if you still get a few people emailing you back accusing you of spamming them. Even though you visited their site and individually emailed them, there will always be someone out there who is ready to "lash out" if they get an email from someone they don't know. And let me tell you, there are "all kinds" of people on the net - some very intelligent, some very strange, some very emotional, etc.

Of course, you will know you haven't spammed them, for whatever that is worth.

You can do extensive keyword searches with *SuperSonic*. In this example, the search was performed using the keywords "health" and "nutrition" on 38 of the most popular sites. Here is what it looks like in progress:

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*SuperSonic* is a very complex program... most email extractors on the web have problems but *SuperSonic* never hangs, never crashes, is super fast and is very reliable. As you can see in the screen capture above, it found 324 people who have a "health and nutrition" oriented website in 1 minute, 9 seconds. This would have taken you over a week if you did it all manually.

You can see the speed of this program... and that is why I am asking you to use this with a conscience, as it would be easy to extract hundreds of thousands of email addresses from websites quickly. I don't want you extracting hundreds of thousands of email addresses and spamming them! You can get more details on the software at:  
<http://www.marketingtips.com/supersonic.html>

Another advantage many find in *SuperSonic* is that it not only builds a list of email addresses it finds, but the search

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engine it found it from, and the exact URL it extracted that email address from. This is **very powerful** when used in combination with *Mailloop* for mail-merging the information into personalized messages which **do not appear as spam** (thus getting the recipient to read the email... the hardest thing to accomplish in targeted bulk emailing).

After setting up *Mailloop* to mail merge the information that *SuperSonic* saved (the email addresses, the search engine it found it from, and the URL it found the email address at), a simple click of a button then sends out the messages to all the people you are wanting to contact. *Mailloop* would insert the personal information extracted with *SuperSonic* for each separate email... all with the push of a few buttons.

For example, one email messages might read like this:

Subject: Your website

Hi John,

I just visited your website (the one at **<http://www.abc.com/product/>** in case you have multiple websites). I wanted to email you to tell you about what I do as it may be of benefit to both of us. We have an interesting... (*and so on*).

You can see what I mean... see how it looks like a personal email sent only to them! This is the power of using these two programs together.

Ok, let's start to summarize this lesson.

"Is bulk email ethical and responsible"? Yes, some (and only some) of it is. But no matter how ethical and responsible it is, **if** people are emailing without the recipients' permission, you will get complaints.

Heck, there are some anti-spam activists that would be furious if they requested sales material from an autoresponder and then had someone follow up with them a week later, they would consider that follow up to be SPAM.

The argument is that if the bulk emailer did not make it clear to the person who asked for the autoresponse that they would be emailing them again, then that is unwanted email... and therefore SPAM. Luckily, most new laws don't agree with them... they basically say that if a "relationship" is established with the person, it will not be considered spamming.

Use this with a conscience. I am giving you the tools to spam the world if you want to, but I am asking that you **think about things** and don't do anything unethical and unacceptable. To bulk email (whether it be to your customers, leads lists, opt-in lists, newsletters, etc.) you need these tools. You can use these tools for your small mailings... it is your judgement that makes these tools capable of spamming or for sending honest targeted emails

There are a lot of bulk email programs available on the market (something that is growing daily), **be careful** - a lot of them are not proven and are produced by independent programmers that have not properly worked out all the bugs. More often than not the software will not efficiently do what it claims (and trust me when I say this happens A LOT). These program seem to come and go every 6 months or so.

## **Is There Such Thing as "Stealth" Spamming?**

You may have seen these software programs advertised. They are designed to disguise where spammers are sending email from and where their dial-up account is. They claim they can completely hide the sender's email and ISP information making it so that no one can track them down from a bulk emailing. **This is a lie!**

The only way to hide an email address is by using different *REPLY TO* and *FROM* field addresses, but there is one line of information that is always "stamped" on the email at the server that the bulk emailer sends the email to. **It is impossible to hide this and it cannot be changed with any**

**software.** This one line in the header of each email that has the Internet Provider address of where the email was originally sent. With this one piece of information, a person can be tracked down... and every server in the world stamps this IP information onto every piece of email that is sent.

The "stealth" programs currently available are based on the practice of relaying email through several third party relays. That's why they are able to send email so fast, because they are essentially stealing the resources of other people's computers. This practice will lead to greater headaches than it's worth!!

Also, in many states, this is illegal! There are some precedent-setting court cases that say sending mail through an unwilling party's relay could be considered a trespass of private property and could be actionable. Spammers who do this could open themselves up to a lawsuit. But more importantly, these stealth programs do not completely hide the dial-up account, and I think software programs like this will become less and less popular in the marketplace as more regulations are put on spam over time.

At a cost of \$300 - \$500, **these programs are a complete waste of money** for any spammer.

Besides, most ISPs are quickly setting up their software to block third party email sending, so this will soon no longer be possible.

Now... here is a **closely guarded secret** that almost no one knows. People sometimes ask me... "I got spammed, but I can't trace the person!"

There is only one way they can **truly and completely** make their email origin so **no one** knows where it came from (in other words real "stealth" email).

How some very resourceful spammers do this by using old email servers that are still using "SMail". This is an old server program, which does not "stamp" the header information in the email that tracks the sender to their ISP. It **only shows** who the email is to and whatever email addresses you have put in the FROM field (which they set

themselves). They install this "Smail" program on their mail server and ABRACADABRA!... **their email is now untraceable!**

This is very rare and is only used by a very, very small percentage of spammers - but that is why you may receive the odd email that is impossible to trace. It is even becoming harder to do nowadays as many new mail servers require a valid IP address before it will deliver the mail to the recipient.

### Looking for Alternative Angles

I am not recommending you do any of these things, I just want to show you how spammers are being creative and some of the things that I found interesting and sometimes amusing.

Spammers are very open minded and creative, as they know that spamming isn't widely accepted. I knew an affiliate who decided to get very creative and turned it into a very successful business opportunity (Note: In case there is any confusion here, I am **NOT** recommending you do this).

He emailed everyone and had them vote, "yes" or "no" for spamming. I know what you are thinking... how can he make money at this? Let me show you an example of what he sent and you tell me.

***Note:** Notice how the 'Subject' header is blank as to entice the reader to open the email and read it.*

To:  
From:  
Subject:

Vote Yes or No for SPAM!

The hottest issue on the Internet is unsolicited email, affectionately referred to as SPAM. I've heard it said that stopping spam would be an infringement on one's

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right to free speech as well as freedom of the press. People on the other side say that unsolicited email is an invasion of privacy and should be illegal as technically they are paying the cost to get it (via ISP hourly charges) every time they log into their email.

Which side are you on???

Most of you are aware of the battle in the courts involving this issue. It is my intention for this survey to have an impact on those decisions. The results of this survey will be published in four national publications and submitted to the commercial servers like AOL and CompuServe.

By taking part in this survey you will be helping to decide what outcome the law will have on this issue and help to offset the cost of publishing these results. To participate, call 1-900-XXX-XXXX and after the very short message, select "1" on your phone for "yes" or "2" for "no".

Let your opinion be known.

VOTE - VOTE - VOTE - VOTE - VOTE - VOTE - VOTE - VOTE

You will be charged \$2.99 for your call (which will help off set the cost of publishing the results) and you must be at least 18 years old to participate.

He made a lot of money! One of the clever parts was that there was no target market... anyone with an email address was a potential customer. He emailed millions of people and made a lot of money!

*Note: Please remember that most bulk emailers of any sort always **target their market**... the above example was a very rare case that did not need to be targeted.*

Remember that spammers look at all the angles to see if they can approach a customer from an interesting point of view that the competition has not thought of.



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I have a perfect example of this below. I get unsolicited email every day from ISPs trying to get me to switch to their servers because they are cheaper... there seemed to be a big price war on and they were really getting competitive.

Well, one company saw that this approach was getting beaten to death with the price war and did not want to compete with the low prices since it would eventually put them out of business. They just wanted to offer a superior quality service and charge for it accordingly, so their spam was very different than that of the competition... I found it quite interesting and a good marketing idea on how to turn a disadvantage into an advantage.

Here, take a look...

```
From: "*****" <info@*****focusinc.com>
To: Web.Scouts
Date: Tue, 16 Sep 1998 10:52:44 +0000
Subject: Great Website!
Reply-to: info@*****focusinc.com
Priority: urgent
```

Dear Web Merchant,  
My company has taken notice of your online presence and wanted to bring a few things to your attention.

Over the past several years, we have spoken with hundreds of online merchants like yourself, who unfortunately are not happy. The reasons for their unhappiness vary but all seem to have common issues.

Here are a few examples of some problem issues:

- "I can't get my website updated with new material within a respectable time frame".
- "When changes are made to my website, they are not what I requested and usually take another month to get fixed".
- "I can't get any technical support for my growing Internet needs".
- "Nobody will return my call if I have a website issue and when they do, they can't answer the questions I have".

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- "My monthly maintenance seems a little expensive for the services I receive".
- "I want my own domain name but it is too expensive".
- "My website takes a long time to download compared to other sites".

Do you and your company have any of these issues? If so, you may want to look into finding another website development and hosting company.

My company, called \*\*\*\*\* Inc., has helped hundreds of companies with the same problems and they still can't believe the difference! \*\*\*\*\* Inc. specializes in Internet solutions.

That's all.

Your company has an objective when it comes to the Internet and we have a solution.

Here are a few things one can expect from \*\*\*\*\* Inc.:

- Professional Website appearance and layout.
- Excellent technical support.
- Super fast Internet connection and download speeds.
- Some of the most competitive pricing in the nation!
- Super fast Website updates.
- Advanced level services including Java, CGI, ActiveX and more!

If any of these areas interest you and you would like to find out more about \*\*\*\*\* Inc., we would like to welcome you to visit our Website at [http://www.\\*\\*\\*\\*\\*focusinc.com](http://www.*****focusinc.com) or call us at 1-800-293-\*\*\*\*\*.

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+\*\*\*\*\* Inc  
+[http://www.\\*\\*\\*\\*\\*focusinc.com](http://www.*****focusinc.com)  
+[mailto:info@\\*\\*\\*\\*\\*focusinc.com](mailto:info@*****focusinc.com)

"Leaders of cutting edge Internet solutions"

If you would like to be removed from this mailing list, please send a note to [\*\*mailto:admin@\\*\\*\\*\\*\\*focusinc.com\*\*](mailto:admin@*****focusinc.com).

See how they get your business with a different approach than by just asking “how much”? This has worked **very well** for them because all the competition was talking about was **price** in their bulk email... whereas this company addressed the customers’ **real** hot buttons and concerns.

Interesting, isn’t it? Don’t just think about this for bulk email... open your horizons and think about how you can turn a disadvantage of yours into an advantage through your website and all your Internet promotions.

### **Is Spamming or Bulk Email Illegal?**

Bulk emailing will never be illegal. You could be emailing your customer base or opt-in list... and how could that ever be illegal?

However spamming is a different story. There are a few rules and laws that have come into play lately.

We are getting a lot of questions from people asking if it is illegal. The answer is that as of this date of printing, it is not. That does not mean that I am saying to go out and spam the world... I am just clearing the air.

Ahh, but you say, “what about those email laws in Washington and California and other laws that are coming out”?

Good questions! And I will answer them right now.

These laws make spamming legal! Yes, I said **LEGAL**, not illegal! They are just trying to stop the people from hiding behind fake email addresses, from relaying messages off other servers and resources, and to stop people from getting bombarded by email that they cannot ask to be removed from.

There are new laws coming out all the time, but as of the writing of this article, these laws (in laymen's terms) say if

you are going to send someone unsolicited email:

- you have to identify yourself with your full name, address, and phone number
- you have to provide a valid email address in the "from" field for people to reply to
- you have to remove anyone who requests to be removed from the list immediately
- you cannot use stealth technology to hide the origin of the email
- you cannot relay the email from other's servers or resources that you do not have authorization to use.

What it is saying is that as long as you follow these rules, spamming or any type of bulk email is LEGAL!

On that note, there is talk of a new law where you will need to have a "relationship" with the person you are emailing to email them legally, but that has not been implemented as of the time of this printing.

Again, I will repeat that I am not giving you a license to bulk email the world. I am just trying to clear the air as we get emails each day from people thinking that bulk email is illegal.

By the way, my lawyer demands that I make this statement... you know lawyers... always looking to protect their client. So here is the statement: *"I am not giving legal advice. I am only interpreting the information the way I see it and you should seek legal counsel before you do anything. Neither I nor the Internet Marketing Center is responsible for any action or damages that you may incur from the information provided here."*

Wow, I am glad I am not a lawyer... would I ever be paranoid - they have a disclaimer for everything.

Actually, that brings me to a funny occurrence. I was at a law firm we were going to hire in Seattle not too long ago and on the way to the washroom there was a disclaimer on the wall that read "Use the restrooms at your own risk. XXXX is not responsible for any damages (mental or

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physical) to people or property by the use of this restroom facility, incidental or accidental."

Of course, it was written in that "lawyer jargon" that you have to read four times before you understand it. I laughed, and laughed (as for a moment I thought the sign was "serious") - I just couldn't believe it - it was truly "overboard". I mentioned it to the receptionist as I was chuckling about it, and she stated it was put up as a joke by one of the lawyers... whew, for a minute I thought they were serious. Maybe lawyers have a sense of humor somewhere in them after all. Anyway, I thought it might give you a little chuckle.

## **Lesson # 8**

# **Newsletters - The Underestimated Marketing Tool**

I have mentioned newsletters in previous lessons. We will now be talking some more about how to market your newsletter, but will also get into how to run one as well. Many people don't know how easy it really is to run a successful newsletter - with the right knowledge and right software that is.

There are two main types of newsletters; those that are paid for and those that are free.

**Newsletters are some of the most powerful tools for generating sales, not only immediately, but for years to come as well.**

It is critical that you offer a free subscription to a newsletter on your website and to **every** customer you encounter. Subscription instructions for your free newsletter should not only be at your website in very high traffic areas, but also in the signature files on all your emails and newsgroup/forum and mailing list postings.

**Don't take this lightly!** People who subscribe to your newsletter will become very loyal customers if you show them you are honest, credible, and most of all... you really do know what you are talking about.

They will not only buy what you are offering now, they will also buy **entirely different products** that you offer in the future because you will have built a rapport with them.

A perfect example of this is this course itself: I have a free newsletter for buying a new car (one of my specialties). People who receive copies for months on end come to respect and trust me. As soon as I announced the Internet Marketing Course to them, a very large percentage bought it. The course has

nothing to do with cars, but people listened to what I had to say because **they believed in me**.

Now normally, this would be considered to be a “no-no” as you always want to target your market... but this is the exception to the rule. I only offer the course to *Car Secrets* book purchasers because I have built a rapport with them, they believe in me and know I will not cheat them. And at the time I offer them the course, I really have nothing else to backend to them... so I have nothing to lose.

You may be thinking “I don’t have a newsletter, nor do I want one”. Let me tell you, you may not have one now, but you will want one in the future **because it will bring in tons of cash**. Let me give you some reasons for starting a free newsletter.

Think about the following scenario:

Someone is surfing the web for information on accounting software and comes across your website (and you happen to be selling a particular package of accounting software). Remember, they are searching through hundreds of websites and just happen to stumble across yours. If you don’t stir their interest in the first few seconds, they will simply click a button on their browser and start surfing to the next website... **YOU WILL NEVER SEE THIS CUSTOMER AGAIN, NOR WILL YOU EVER HAVE THE CHANCE TO SELL THEM ANYTHING.**

Now imagine a different scenario:

This person surfs to your website and sees the offer of a free monthly newsletter on tax tips and accounting software shortcuts and innovations. They sign up for your newsletter, which retains the person’s interest in your website a little longer and gets them interacting with it. They are more tempted now to explore. Even if the person decides to move on to the next site, you have their email address and will be able to send them your monthly newsletter, giving you the chance to sell your product or service every month.

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I am not saying your monthly newsletter should be a sales letter every month, **it should not!** You should have informative tips and updates as promised... but it doesn't hurt to "plug" your product or service on the last couple of lines at the end of every issue.

The newsletter will give you a chance to offer special promotional pricing to "subscribers only", updates, announce new products/services you carry, offer something extra free of charge with their purchase — **whatever it takes to get them to buy.**

Your newsletter subscriber base **is not just any group of people.** It is a specific list **of potential clients** whom you have built credibility with and who feel comfortable with you. When it comes to having a potential customer, it can't get any better than this — that is why I highly recommend you start a newsletter.

You will have to choose a topic for the newsletter.

It could be something related to the product you sell and you are an expert on or have "insider" knowledge about.

It could be informative articles you have gathered, tips or interesting sites to visit.

It could be about industry news and updates, new product announcements, and most importantly what is new on *your* site are also items you might include.

You see, you can have great information in a newsletter even if you are not an expert on the subject. I get in more detail on how to come up with newsletter content in my private "*Cutting Edge Newsletter*".

Of course it should always includes a short, low key blurb about one of your products or services to make it easy for your *potential* customers to become your *customers*.

There are a few different ways to run a newsletter. The obvious way is through special software on your server that is designed for newsletters and discussion lists (i.e. some of the more popular stuff is *Listserve*,



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*Majordomo*, or customer built list management software like Lyris). If your ISP has this software, they will charge you a fee every month and the larger your readership gets, the more you are billed. If you have a newsletter subscriber base of 2,000 or more people (which is very easy to get), you can expect a \$100 set-up fee and \$50 or more a month just to maintain the list. As your newsletter subscriber base gets larger, you will pay more per month (as high as \$500 a month if your list gets large).

If your ISP does not offer *Listserve* or *Majordomo* newsletter capabilities, you can go to <http://www.listserve.com> for this service or find another provider by typing in the keywords "listserve service" or "majordomo service" in any of the major search engines.

The second way to execute a newsletter is through a program such as *Mailloop*. Once you buy the program, **it costs you nothing to run your newsletter**, no matter how big it gets. With *Mailloop* you can run the newsletter yourself or you can even have someone else carry this out from a remote location. Someone else, such as an employee or colleague, can run everything in the newsletter with a login name and password from any computer in the world.

*Mailloop* will automatically subscribe, unsubscribe, and send out your monthly newsletter. In my opinion, this is by far the best way to go (especially when you consider all the other things that *Mailloop* does with email and newsgroups)! It also allows you to groom your newsletter list and do other related functions off-line, instead of having to be connected to the Internet (*Mailloop* is hosted on your PC, not the ISP's server).

With *Mailloop* you can have as many newsletters as you want. For example, you could:

- 1) have a free newsletter (promoted on your website, sig file, and in your advertisements) that updates subscribers on interesting changes to your site... or has interesting articles or free information in every monthly issue.

- 2) have a special newsletter that only gets sent to people who have already purchased your product or service giving them special deals or insider information on your industry.
- 3) have a newsletter your customer base pays for before they can subscribe.

There are many people who charge upward of \$200 per year for a subscription to their newsletter. If the information you offer is valuable and cannot be found anywhere else for free, **people will pay you for it.**

On this note, I must say there are a lot of people in this country who **make millions of dollars selling their newsletters**. And it is *not* uncommon to find a newsletter author making over \$100,000. Again, the principle being, if you truly have something of value to offer, people are willing to pay for it.

Think about what you are really good at, and how you can transform that knowledge into a newsletter. **This is the key!** You can easily charge \$30 or more per year for this information.

If your information will make someone else's life more pleasant or make them more money, it would not be uncommon to charge \$150 or more for your information. I know of electronic newsletters on stock market predictions that cost \$950 or more per year. If the publisher only gets 500 subscribers, after all of their expenses, they **are making \$400,000 a year from just one newsletter!**

A personal client of mine who I designed a full internet marketing and promotions strategy for sells a newsletter online for \$277 (it is about stock market investing). He has about 500 subscriber and is gaining more everyday.

Do the math, **that is over \$135,000 a year he generates from that newsletter.** And because it is distributed online at almost no cost to him, most of that is **net profit.**

I think you get the picture!

In most traditional formats, a newsletter is something that you publish, print and mail out every month. It is a big ordeal to do the layout, printing, mailing, etc... not to mention the cost of printing, envelopes, labels, postage, and manpower.

With an electronic newsletter, it is a breeze to layout. There are **no** printing costs, **no** mailing hassles, and **no** mailing costs. Basically, anything you charge for your newsletter is **pure profit**.

Another example: There are people who are experts in fishing tournaments and make a very good living selling newsletters on fishing tips for \$99 a year per subscriber. If you only get 1,000 subscribers, that is \$100,000 a year! Other than promoting your newsletter, your **only job** is to take a few hours each month to write your newsletter.

The nice thing about today's information age is that people understand that everyone is not a professional writer and they just want information. You can write a newsletter as if you are talking to them, the way I am writing this course. It does not have to consist of perfect grammar and big words — it just has to offer great information and get the point across.

The easiest way to write a newsletter is to pretend that you are talking to one of your subscribers and tape record what you want to say to them. Then take that exact tape and transcribe it into a newsletter. People appreciate you talking to them in laymen's terms and being candid. There is no need for fancy words and grammar that people have to decipher. If you have something truly valuable to say, people will listen. If you are really scared of writing a newsletter yourself, hire a "ghost writer". There are hundreds of them in the back of *Writer's Digest* begging for work. They can write you a great 4 - 8 page newsletter every month for about \$100. See how easy it is to solve the problem of not being able to write a newsletter by yourself? The writers will also provide you with good examples of

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newsletters to learn from and to help improve your writing skills.

I have another acquaintance who took a different approach to this. He sells his electronic newsletter **for only \$3.00 per year**. The orders are taken online with a real-time credit card processing system, so the operation is completely automated. As soon as the credit card is approved, the customer's email address is added to the newsletter subscribers' list.

For his \$3.00 per year fee, he will email a "tip of the day" every day to each subscriber. Each tip is only a few sentences or a short paragraph. He takes one day a month, writes 30 of them and then uploads them to his newsletter server which emails them out everyday on time for the entire month.

Would you believe he has over 240,000 subscribers on the Internet! After the expenses of processing the orders, **that is over \$500,000 a year he makes for doing one days work a month.**

Now don't get me wrong, he worked very, **very** hard at promoting the newsletter for the first six or eight months. But now that it's done, he works one day a month and makes \$500,000 a year!

Okay, you are probably wanting to ask me... who is this person... where is his site, I want to check him out.

That is the problem with many of the stories I tell you about clients and friends, the only way they would allow me to publish the story is to not reveal who they were and how to get a hold of them. They don't want people knowing how successful they are and copying their idea. They don't want to create competition for themselves. They were nice enough to let me publish their story, but I have signed non-disclosure agreements that say I cannot reveal who they are so they can protect their business.

Okay, lets look at another angle for making money with newsletters.

## NOTES:

There are a lot of people on the Internet who want to start (or test) a small newsletter, but don't want to pay the \$100 set up cost and monthly fees for a trial run. If you had *Mailloop*, you could charge these people \$25-\$40 a month to use your newsletter capabilities with the *Mailloop* program, and save them some cash in the meantime.

You could do this with other software like *Lyris* or something like it... but some of this software is outrageously prices. For example, *Lyris* is \$2999 - yes, it is very expensive. That is why I have used *Mailloop* in the examples below - it is only a fraction of the cost and is affordable.

You can host as many newsletters as you want and give the author enough access to run the newsletter by remote if you have the program. You would have *Mailloop* dial up and get your email once every hour (it has a built in scheduler) and it would process any command the author sends in. Of course, like normal, it would process subscribes, unsubscribes, help requests, the submission of new issues, mailing to the newsletter lists, etc.

Let's go over how *Mailloop* processes newsletters (this is very similar to how Listserve and Majordomo software works as well). The main difference with *Mailloop* compared with Listserve and Majordomo software is that it runs entirely on the client's computer; no software or special configuration is required on the server.

*Mailloop*'s incoming mailbox processor includes an integrated newsletter server. The newsletter server allows you to have topic-specific newsletters that others can 'subscribe' and 'unsubscribe' to. In your advertising, you can say something like "send an email message with '*subscribe widgets*' in the subject and you will be automatically informed when news is breaking in the widgets market...". And remember you can set up as many newsletters as you want. You might want to do some for your own business, host others for different businesses for a fee, or both.

The goal of the *Mailloop* newsletter server (although I call it a “server”, it still runs on your PC, not the ISP’s server) is ease of use for the system administrator. To accomplish this, it was designed so newsletter authors could maintain their own mailing lists from remote locations, shifting the day-to-day burden of maintaining the newsletters from the system administrator (who may be someone with only keyboard entry skills) back to the author. **Virtually anyone can run the newsletter server, either locally or from a remote location.**

Each newsletter has an author (this could be you for your own newsletters or someone else for newsletters you host for other businesses). The author communicates and controls the newsletter server by sending specifically formatted and password protected email messages that trigger different processes on the server. The system administrator controls the degree of access given to the newsletter authors.

The system administrator responsibilities are minimal:

- *Customizing the newsletter server response files.* These files are used as a server response when something unexpected happens, like when someone tries to subscribe to a newsletter that does not exist. The first time the newsletter is run, default response files will be created that are appropriate in most cases. You may want to spice them up a bit, adding additional and specific information about your newsletter server. The response files must be plain ASCII text and can be quickly edited by using the pull down menus.
- *Creating newsletters.* Creating a new newsletter takes only a few seconds. Once created and depending on the degree of access you grant to the newsletter author, they may do all the future work - not you.

If given full access (you can control how much access the author has when you set it up), the newsletter author is responsible for:

## NOTES:

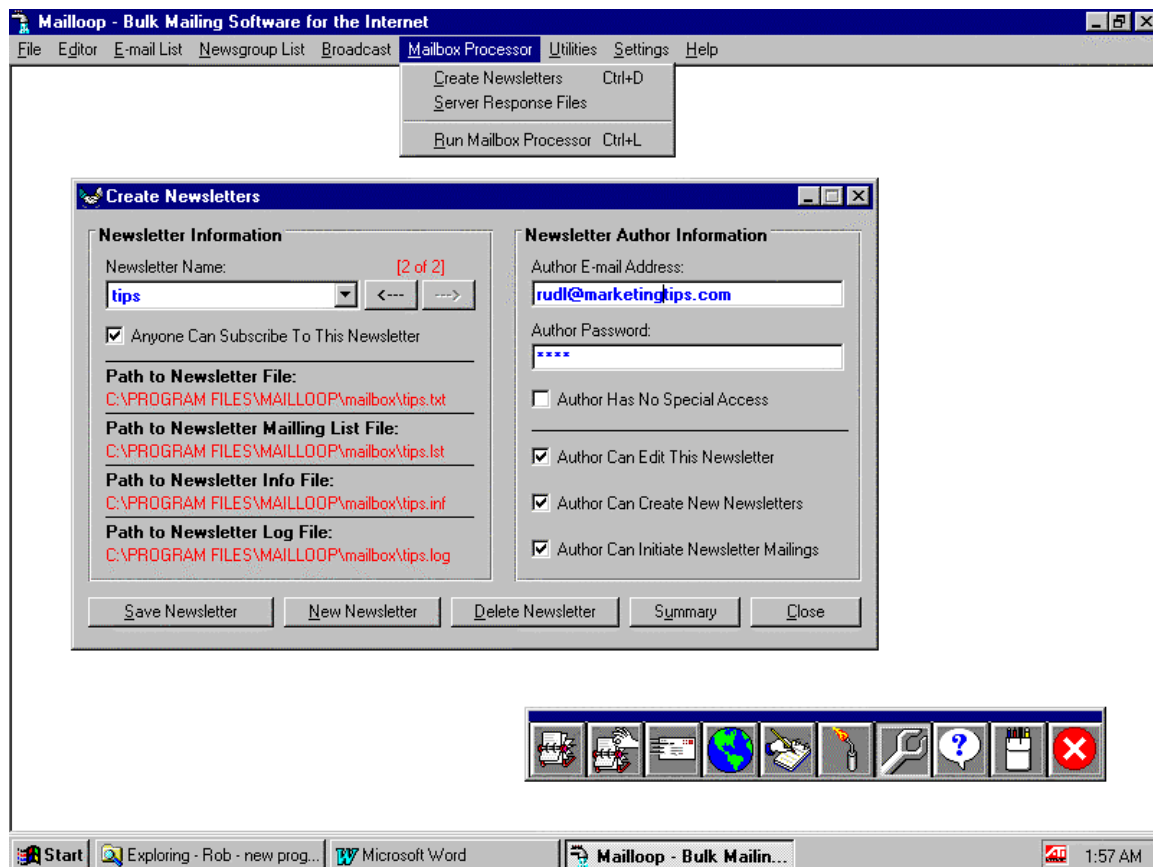
- *Advertising the newsletter* by soliciting others to subscribe to it using conventional marketing methods.
- *Creating and updating the newsletter.* This is done by the author sending an email message to the newsletter server with a subject of '*<password> -u newsletter.txt*', (-u stands for upload) with the message body containing the new/updated newsletter.
- *Creating the newsletter's basic information file.* When users send messages to the newsletter server with a subject of '*help <newsletter>*', the basic information file will be sent to the user. The author can update the newsletter information file by sending an email message to the newsletter server with a subject of '*<password> -u newsletter.inf*', with the message body containing the updated newsletter information file.
- *Initiating newsletter mailings.* This is done by the author sending an email message to the newsletter server with a subject of '*<password> -m newsletter*', (-m stands for mail) and anything in the message body.
- *Creating new newsletters.* This is done by the author sending an email message to the newsletter server with a subject of '*<password> -c new\_newsletter*', (-c stands for create) with the message body containing the new newsletter file.
- *Manually editing/changing the newsletter mailing list.* In addition to users automatically subscribing to a newsletter mailing list, the author can also upload/download the mailing list(s) by sending an email message to the newsletter server(s). The author just sends an email with a subject of '*<password> -u | -d new\_newsletter*', (-u and -d stand for upload and download) with the message body containing the new newsletter mailing list.

If the author is given full access, the only thing they cannot do is delete existing newsletters. The system

## NOTES:

administrator can then control any further access. The system administrator is only responsible for any tasks that cannot be performed by the authors by remote.

Here is a screen capture of someone setting-up a newsletter. It takes all of about 30-45 seconds.



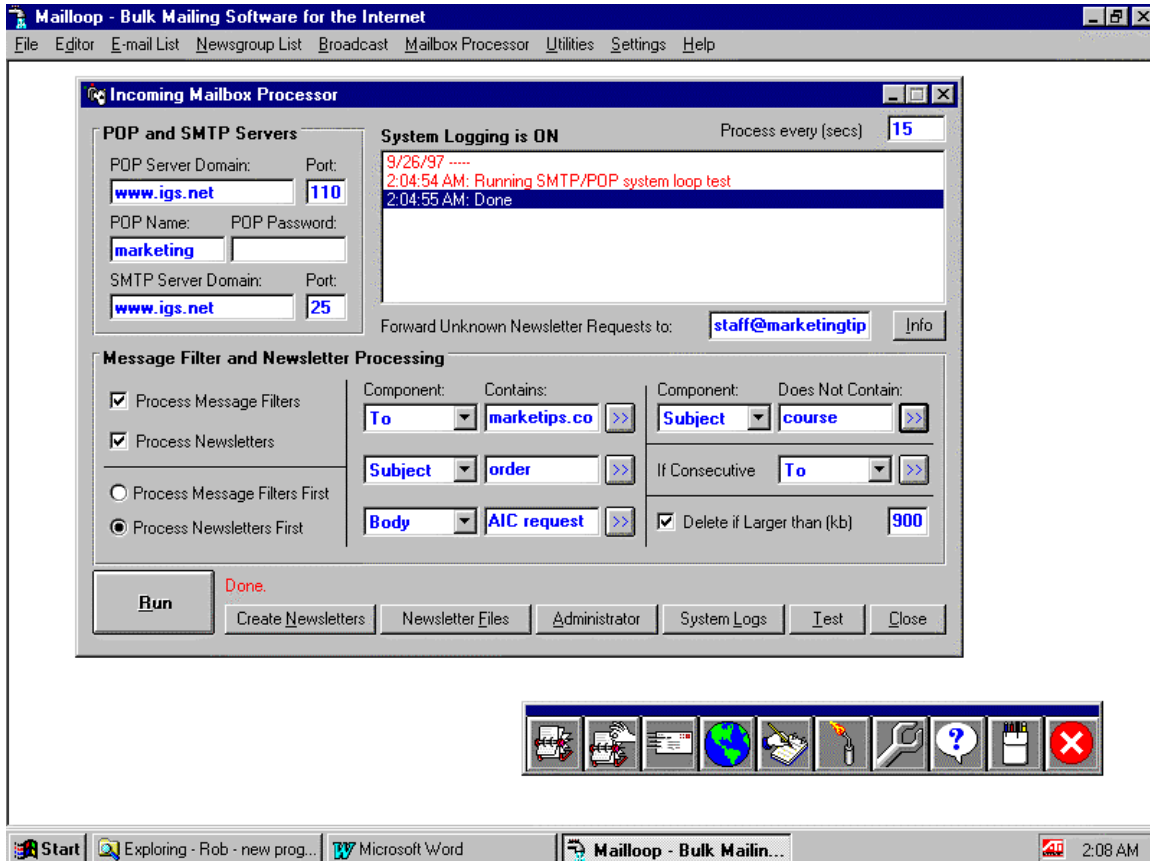
All the newsletter requests for subscriptions or removals are done automatically by *Mailloop* when you check your email. And as mentioned before, it saves you even more time by automatically removing any bad email addresses from your list (instead of having to do it manually like all other programs out there). In other words, *Mailloop* automatically maintains your database. You can then send an issue of your newsletter with the push of a couple of buttons.

Here is a screen capture of what *Mailloop* looks like when processing/filtering your email and newsletters.



## NOTES:

It basically goes through your email for you before you view it and processes any newsletter requests, deletes any email bombs or flames, sends out your autoresponder messages to the appropriate requests, files copies of any orders that come in, files and automatically responds to common requests, and much, much more.



For an author to learn how to communicate with the newsletter server, all they need to do is send a message with 'help' in the subject. The newsletter server will then email a server response file that gives specific information about the newsletter server and how the author should communicate with it. If you want to get a copy of *Mailloop* for your business, we have set up a site for it. Just go to... <http://www.marketingtips.com/mailloop.html> It used to cost \$699 not so long ago... but we have negotiated a deal with the software developer to get the

**NOTES:**

cost down to \$379... a real bargain for all the bulk email, autoresponder, newsgroup, web form processing, mail-merge, and newsletter features it has. It is the only program on the market that will do all of these things for you.

In fact we're so excited about Mailloop that we've developed some Free Online Videos to Help You! We took weeks to make a full set of online help videos and they are- **free!**

We can guide you through just about every feature of Mailloop you can imagine step-by-step in videos that you can run on your computer. It is like us standing over your shoulder showing you how we use it, with all our preferred settings. The videos will blow you away... you just watch the video and we go through all the procedures of every step we take in almost every feature of Mailloop talking to you along the way, showing you what we are doing. There is even a video to show you what our preferred settings are so you can copy them. You will absolutely love them. If you own a copy of Mailloop, I suggest you go there and download the videos you want now. They are at <http://www.marketingtips.com/mailloop/videos.html>

## **Make Money With Newsletter Sponsors**

Make money with a newsletter by simply getting another business to sponsor it.

If you get enough subscribers to your newsletter (e.g. over 5,000) you can get sponsored. I have seen newsletters that offer sponsorship when their subscriber base is only 1,000, but it is not usually worth your while for the compensation you get. This would just consist of a statement on the top of the newsletter like...

----- [ Please Support our Sponsor ] -----

TIPS, TRICKS, AND TOOLS FOR PROMOTING YOUR WEBSITE

Learn unique techniques and strategies for doubling or tripling your website profits from one of the most predominant internet marketing gurus, Corey Rudl.

Check out his website tips, internet training courses at:

----- [ <http://www.MarketingTips.com> ] -----

## NOTES:

Depending on the size of your subscriber base, **advertisers will pay \$100 to \$500 per week to sponsor your newsletter.** To be more specific, most newsletters with under 5,000 subscribers charge 3 to 5 cents per reader (US dollars) and many offer 'frequency discounts' (i.e. \$100 for one week, \$200 for three weeks). As your list grows and you begin to get more sponsors than you need, you can consider raising your rates.

Some people start out with free newsletters for exactly this purpose. They work very hard and promote their letter to get the subscription volume up, and once that is done, they can charge advertisers to sponsor it.

Here is another example:

A gentleman started a newsletter to discuss and explain Windows 95 problems, bugs, shortcuts, tips and tricks. This newsletter started out small, but he pushed and pushed to promote it.

The breakthrough was when he emailed about 300 websites that deal and specialize in Windows 95 software, and asked them to link to his site where he offered the free newsletter (in other words he was showing how it would **benefit them** if they linked to his site). He made it clear in his email that if they provided the link to him, it would reduce the number of technical support messages they would have to deal with, as many of the questions were answered in his free newsletter.

To make a long story short, that email got him listed on some of the highest traffic sites on the internet (like **www.windows95.com** and **www.microsoft.com**) and his subscriber base instantaneously exploded to over 100,000 readers (it is now over 400,000!).

It did not happen overnight, he had to persistently contact the sites he wanted to get listed on and show them the **benefits** of doing so. Also note that this is not a common occurrence... getting 400,000 to a newsletter list is VERY rare, but he is a perfect

example of someone being at the right place and the right time, with the right idea and the determination.

He can now charge big dollars to sponsor his newsletter with that kind of readership, and he does.

**He makes over \$200,000 a year from the sponsorship of this free newsletter!**

Sit down for a moment - right now... take a piece of paper and write down all the things that you are good at or that you have “insider” knowledge about. Then highlight the ones that are “little-known” techniques or knowledge that the average person in that field would not know. There you have it, the subject of your new newsletter.

On that note, you don’t even have to be an expert in the field, you can rely on others’ knowledge. There are lots of newsletters out there that have articles written by many different authors... and all the newsletter owner does is organize whose article will go in which issue (the author has no “expert” knowledge on the subject, he relies on other authors for that).

## **Components of a Newsletter**

*Header:* At the top of every issue, you should have the name of the newsletter, date or volume names, title of the topic of that issue or issue title, your contact information, and any ASCII graphic art you choose to use for “pizzazz”.

*Table of Contents:* This organizes your newsletters and lets the reader decide what particular articles or sections they are interested in reading.

*Articles and Information:* Make sure all of your articles and information (and the whole newsletter for that fact) are no longer than 65 characters per line. If an article gets too large split it up into a series, and offer continuations in the next issue of your newsletter.

*Teasers:* Always mention what will be covered in the next issue to tease your reader so they will look forward to it.

*Sponsorship:* Never have more than one sponsor as it will clutter your newsletter. It is common to put the sponsor near the top, never using more than ten lines so you do not overwhelm the reader if they want to ignore that particular information.

Use dividers to separate sections. Example:

Dots .....  
Underscores \_\_\_\_\_  
asterisks \*\*\*\*\*  
dashes -----  
equal signs =====

And always print a copy and read it before sending it out. I **highly recommend** that you have a friend or affiliate read it, since they can see whether your information comes across clearly and efficiently, or if they are confused by anything. This feedback is of paramount importance. It will not only make your newsletter better but also more readable for your subscribers. They can and will point out things you may never have thought of.

## **How Do You Attract Subscribers To The Newsletter?**

You should know by now that a newsletter should have “news your customers can use”. This is the most valuable information you can provide to your clients on tips, reviews, articles, etc. People will read your newsletter if it is entertaining, gives them information that improves their life, or helps them stay informed. If you have any insider knowledge about certain subjects, share the information.

Here is a list of a few other things you can have in your newsletter:

- informative news about your industry/topic

## NOTES:

- questions and answers from subscribers (i.e. a forum)
- reader feedback area
- mention of new products or services you offer
- special prices and promotions for newsletter subscribers only
- conduct a survey to get feedback from your clients
- humorous stories related to your topic
- famous quotes, funny sayings, joke of the day, etc.
- employee of the month or top sales person of the month
- spotlight of a member, reader, or customer

Encourage your readers to give you suggestions on what they would like to see in your newsletter. Make sure the newsletter is “news” and not an “advertising brochure”.

**Note:** *It is critically important that you always have complete information on how you can be contacted and instructions on how to cancel the subscription in every issue.*

Don't ever talk down to your audience, and remember to explain technical terms. And don't make your newsletter look like a personal email. If your reader knows it's a newsletter, they won't take it personally when the two of you don't agree on something.

Here are the best ways to get subscribers:

1. Post an offer for a free subscription in related newsgroups.
2. Offer a free subscription in related email discussion lists.
3. Offer a free subscription in related emails.

**NOTES:**

4. Offer a free subscription in classified ads.
5. Offer a free subscription in forum postings.
6. Offer a free subscription in the signatures of all your email correspondence.
7. Do press releases to the proper media to get publicity on your free newsletter (email and regular print media).
8. Offer a free subscription on **every** page of your website (or just appropriate pages).
9. Rent opt-in email lists to offer your free subscription.
10. Offer a free subscription to members of clubs and organizations that are related to your industry and are online. The chairman of these clubs can announce it in their monthly club meeting, report or newsletter. This is a great way to get large numbers of people to join your newsletter with only a little work.
11. Exchange sponsorships with other related, but not competitive newsletters. In other words, they will post a plug for your newsletter in theirs, and you do the same for them in yours. This is another win-win situation. (It is not fair to trade if the subscriber base on the two newsletters are drastically different, but you could always run their ad several times for each time they run yours to make up the difference).
12. Offer or announce “gift subscriptions” in your newsletters. This is where someone can go to a webpage and give a subscription to a friend. You would have your server automatically send out “gift certificate email” stating who was giving them a 'gift subscription' and what they will be receiving. A friend of mine has **built most of his mailing list by doing this alone...** he went from **5,000 subscribers to over 16,000 in less than a year just using this one technique.**

**Hint:** When sending out your newsletter, you will get many error messages back from subscribers' addresses. Some say "user unknown", which means the account is no longer valid (the user has probably moved to a new ISP). Others will say "time-out" from the host or "host not found". Don't be too quick to delete these subscribers from your subscriber database. Their email host could be down temporarily or you could have a bad node somewhere. It is most likely that the address is still valid and just temporarily down.

Try emailing the newsletter again a few days later. With *Mailloop*, you can set up an email filter that will automatically delete "user unknown" addresses from your subscriber lists and also automatically re-email all other "non-fatal" error messages a few days later (again, keeping everything automated and hands free!!)

## **A Trick To Get Subscribers To Your Newsletter**

Post a survey in all related newsgroups, forum, discussion lists, mailing lists, co-related newsletters, etc.

For example: If I had something to sell programmers and wanted to start a newsletter, I would post that I was conducting a survey on current programming rates. This is a hot topic that most programmers **are interested in** (that is the key to attracting a lot of people to fill out your survey). Most programmers are always wondering if they are undercharging or overcharging for their services... and the results will show them what other programmers are getting around the country. State that all the contributors will receive the results via email when they are calculated and published.

Because they have to come to the website to fill out the survey, a lot of traffic will come to the site and you can get them to sign up for your free newsletter. Even



**NOTES:**

incorporate a survey question such as “*Would you like to receive a complimentary copy of our monthly programmers newsletter – it has lots of hot off the press tips for programmers and where to make the real money in programming*”. They just click “yes” and are subscribed.

To even go one step further, when the results are published and emailed to the contributors, have a plug within that email about your free newsletter and its benefits... **again** picking up more new subscribers.

Since you know that you have a product that a lot of these programmers need, if you really wanted to be bold, you could email a direct sales letter telling them about your product after you have published the results. You would want to tie this into the survey somehow so it is not offensive.

It might read:

Subject: Survey you completed

Just recently, you should have received the results from our survey on programmer's rates. I hope they were insightful. We have received many emails back with good feedback.

I am contacting you again because I knew this would be of interest to you. As you may already know, we have a product called XXX that is a great time saver for all programmers. It offers you the advantage to... (*and continue with your benefits and hot buttons here*).

We are offering it at a special price to all people who completed our survey as a special "thank you" for being part of our survey. It can be purchased at the following website for \$199 (\$50) off the regular price and we will throw in free technical support for 3 months as an extra "bonus" (a \$150 value) for responding within 5 days.

*\*\*And continue with the closing statements...*

***NOTES:***

I hope that after this lesson your brain is churning and you are coming up with some great ideas. Remember to use the "notes" section to mark down these ideas before you forget them (they are easy to forget when you start another lesson and get a whole new set of ideas!).

I hope you see how easy is it to make money with newsletters? **They are very powerful.**

## **Lesson #9**

### **Distributing FREE Information and FREE Articles**

### **Help People, Don't Sell People**

I'm going to talk about why giving away free valuable information can be your key to success online

No Kidding!

People ask me everyday, why do you give away so much free information (our free newsletter)... or why do you give away such great information for so little cost (our course and our *Cutting Edge Newsletter*), why do you give away your marketing secrets and not just keep them to yourself (talking about the course again).

This is an easy question to answer.

My job is to help you, not sell you. By helping you I will always make money in some way or another, I am not worried about that. If I give you great information that no-one else will, great value in things I recommend that are working for us (like some software I recommend), and great service, or great company you should deal with... will you not believe in me? If I am honest and ethical and hold nothing back... just give you exactly what is working for us, give you examples of what worked and what didn't work... will you not trust in me when I recommend something?

You can do the same with your customers no matter what industry you are in.

Read all my literature in my course... and even my sales literature for any of my products... I don't come across as some snake oil salesman, I really don't try to sell anyone backends, I just get excited about the product because it has worked so well for us and that comes out in my salesletters... it doesn't come across as I am trying to sell you

## NOTES:

something... and am just excited about helping you. I will only recommend what has been successful for us, I am never in it for just the money... I truly want to help people because it makes me feel great when they get on the phone and say "Corey, you are the greatest, I tried what you told me last week and made an extra \$2000 last month." People having that kind of respect cannot be bought... that is my true love in life... getting respect from people I have helped.

What I am trying to say here is I practice what I preach. I own a multi-million dollar corporation that started from my apartment 5 years ago... so "being honest and ethical" and "loving what you do", is proven to work.

If you are in your business online just to make money, you can and will... but to **really succeed** with your online business, you have to:

1. believe in what you are selling
2. only sell or recommend products/services you use yourself
3. treat your customers like gold
4. be honest and ethical no matter what your competitors are doing

If you just pick a product and try to sell online to make a buck... **quit now**, the odds are against you. Keep searching until you find the product/service that you love, feel proud to represent, and most importantly, something you get excited about. More than half your battle is done... all that enthusiasm and everything you do online will come out... and you will be a born salesman without even trying!

**Don't take that lightly... read it again...** it is truly one of the most important first steps you can make to being successful online. Without this love and enthusiasm it is hard to sell someone else on the product when you don't even believe in it yourself, right?

## The Power of Posting and Distributing Free Articles

I talk a lot about offering free articles throughout this course, but I don't think people know the real power of these. They can make or break an online business.

What am I talking about?

I am not talking about just distributing your articles to ezines and libraries online, that is only one method of getting your name out there. It goes back to everything I preach about... "help them", don't "sell them". By helping them, they will gain credibility and rapport with you and WANT to buy what you are selling... **you will not have to "sell" anything... they will WANT it.**

Here is why free articles are so important online:

You are just a website with a name... there is no human that they can see, no one to shake a hand, no certificates on the wall, no store to walk into, no facial expressions to read when you are talking to someone, and so on. They only know you by what is at your website... and what makes you think that they should believe what you say and that you are not just full of BS?

**Free articles are the answer!**

You see, you prove to them that you are there to help. You prove to them that you are real and have great information and knowledge to offer. You build credibility and rapport with the customers. This is worth its weight in gold!

You can publish them at your website, you can put them in newsletters to your potential clients, you can have others publish them at their sites (with links back to yours in the bio at the end), you can distribute them to libraries online, you can offer them to large ezines with huge readerships, you can post them in newsgroups... the list just goes on and on!

If you give people good information, they now respect you because you know what you are talking about. That creates credibility and rapport with the potential customer making them more likely to become "a customer".

## **How Do You Write Free Articles When You Have Nothing to Write About and Have No Writing Skills or Abilities?**

Offering a free newsletter or offering free articles for distribution can be a VERY powerful way to gain a lot of exposure. You will find it will pay off in the long run.

Some of the most common comments I hear about writing free articles are; "I don't have anything to write about"... or "I don't have the ability or skill to write an interesting article - how do I do it".

**Good news! You don't have to be a born writer or publish long articles to complete this task.**

The first problem is solved easily... you write about something that has to do with your product or service. Some subject that offers valuable information to the reader (it can be information that solves a problem, gives interesting statistics, etc.).

No matter what business you are in, you can always write an article on that industry that will give you credibility. Think about the benefit your product gives the user and write a few articles on that. For example, if you sold gym equipment (or "health equipment" is a little more politically correct... but then again, when was I ever politically correct?), you write an article on how to lose weight, how to feel better, how to have more energy in the day, how to be more attractive to the opposite sex, how to live a healthier life (and therefore live longer), etc... there are a hundred angles to an article you could write! Just be creative.

If you have trouble coming up with an article topic or you feel that you cannot write an article or get someone to do it

for you, there are four solutions.

- 1) If you have an idea and have the knowledge, but just cannot put it down on paper very well, you can **use the tape recorder idea I mentioned before**. Record a conversation as if you were talking to a friend about the subject and transcribe that into an article (word for word so it sounds like you are talking to them directly... that makes the article interesting).
- 2) You could **go into a few writers' newsgroups or writers' forums** (there are over 50 of them online) and ask if anyone is for hire to write a few short articles for you. Record your thoughts on a tape recorder and have a conversation via phone and let the writer take notes... and they will create an article from scratch... they are very good at that. If you don't know anything about the subject topic, these writers can even research the entire subject from scratch and will write an entire article for you (it should only take a few days for them to write a few articles for you). That is what they do for a living, so use their skills. But keep in mind you will have to pay for their services (\$75 to \$175 a day is fair).
- 3) **Post a message in appropriate newsgroups** in the industry you are involved in (i.e. if your product was for skiers, you would post a message in alt.skiing, etc). Simply state that you are looking for someone to write an article once a month on XXX subject and you are willing to pay cash for the article OR publish a bio at the end for the author to get exposure (so you get the articles for free), whatever they prefer. These people love skiing so that chances of finding a qualified person on the subject who will work for a very low fee is quite good (you may even find someone who will write it for free just because they love the subject so much... it is fun for them).

*Note:* You cannot believe the response you will get from newsgroups until you actually do it! Some people will offer to do it for free because they just love to do it, others will want extraordinary amounts of money to write the articles... you will get all types. You just choose the person who is most qualified for the job, who has an offer

**NOTES:**

you like. It is that easy. If you post a message tonight, you will have someone to write your article tomorrow.

Let me tell you, you will be swamped with replies.

- 4) **You can compile information from others.** For example, if you had a product about hunting, you could have a directory of information sources or websites on hunting, or a collection of quotes or tips, maybe even statistics on hunting weapons. The possibilities are endless, just use your imagination. Please make sure that you do not violate any copyright laws. If you are quoting people, ask for their permission and give them credit in the articles.

On a different note, make sure that when you are distributing free articles (to libraries, forums, website archives, etc.) that you tailor the article for that target audience. For example, if you were to upload an article to AOL's library, you would want to mention AOL or write the article as if it was coming from an AOL subscriber's perspective. By doing this, it comes across as if you are talking directly to them and that builds rapport (which can lead to a sale with the right salescopy).



## **Lesson # 10**

# **Internet Classified Ads – How to Take Advantage of Them.**

### **Internet Electronic Classified Ads**

Internet electronic classified ads can be a great source of income, but unfortunately many people do not know how to take advantage of them.

Internet electronic classified ads are basically electronic version of the classified ads you see in your paper everyday, only the ones on the internet are not done on a local level, but a national level.

The power behind them is that once you have found a small ad that is tested and makes a profits... you can roll out that exact same classified ad to hundreds of other websites to make a larger profit.

Look at the potential here. Say you have made \$100/week from an AOL classified ads (which we will talk about in the next lesson). Now take that profitable ad to hundreds of classified ad websites throughout the Internet and multiply your success. **Do the math - it is a lot of income!**

I have included a file called *classified.html* on the CD that comes with the course. This file contains hundreds of classified ad sites for you to go to, some are free, and some are not.

The key again is to target your market. It is easy to think that if a classified ad site gets 500,000 visitors a month, you will almost have to make money unless your ad is so poor that no one reads it. But, find out more statistics *before* you place your ad. If you find out most people are coming there because they are interested in the computer sections... if you are advertising anything but computer products or service, it will be a **complete wash**.

## NOTES:

I say this because I don't want the owner of a site to "sell" you on why you should place an ad with their service. Decide for yourself by asking how many hits they get to the sections you are interested in advertising on. It is easy for them to say that they get millions of hits a month, but what you are interested in is how many "visitors" they get in the specific sections you are interested in.

The most effective place to put classified ads in is newsletters. Newsletters are usually read from beginning to end. If you pick a newsletter that is targeted to your market, you have **a very captive audience**. This can be a "goldmine" if used properly.

To find newsletters specific to your industry, go to **<http://www.dominis.com/>** and **<http://www.newsletteraccess.com/>**. Search using related keywords.

I talked a little about this in the bulk email section as these newsletters are really bulk emailed to people so I wanted to address it in that lesson to.

For example, if you are in the aviation industry, you could search for "aircraft", "plane", "aviation", "Boeing", "aeronautics", etc. The site will provide you with a list of newsletters that apply to your keywords. You can then email them to see if they offer classified ads (or if you can sponsor their newsletter as mentioned in previous lessons).

Another example is if you had a product that was perfect for children ages 4-12, then you would want to get a hold of all the parenting newsletters you can get your hands on.

Use the *list.html* located on the CD that came with the course and search some of the newsletter and ezine databases on that list. Use every keyword you can think of that pertains to the subject... in the case above, it would be words like parenting, parent, childcare, raising a child, adolescence, and so on (you get the picture).

Remember the importance of classified ads, whether they are on the Internet or an online service. They allow you to test your price, headlines, copy, the offer... all to see which is the most successful. You can

then take this information and use it for all your offers on your website, newsgroups, etc.

To put it very bluntly, classified ads can be the **key to your success... so don't take them lightly**. They are used to **test and find a successful campaign** so that you can use all the components you need to create a successful presence on the net.

Before I end the section on Internet classified ads, I have saved the best for last.

We also post to free classified ad sites. In the past, it has been a VERY time consuming job. I included a list of hundreds of these sites in the *classified\_ads\_sites.html* you have with the course.

Even though you have the URL's to visit the sites, it is still extremely time consuming because to get any kind of a response you have to post to over 100 of them (taking you hours).

There is new software out that will automatically post your classified ad to the top 400 free classified ad websites on the Internet... **all within a few minutes!** You can pick whatever categories you want and you can submit your ad as often as you want. It is a real time saver and I highly recommend it. You just set it up, press "go", and walk away to have dinner as it posts your ads for you.

To sum it up, **you can have your ad submitted to the top 400 free classified ads websites within minutes.**

It is an absolute godsend... remember my motto "automate everything so you can concentrate on marketing and promoting your business, not doing the daily tasks".

There are a couple of pieces of software that will do this. One is called *Power Submitter* which submits your site to the top 400 free classified ad sites. The other is called *Message Board Blaster* which submits your ad to the top 400 bulletin boards on the Internet.

*The Message Board Blaster* **auto submits** your ads FREE to over 400 bulletin boards worldwide. These bulletin boards are similar to newsgroups as you can post messages on the "board" for others to read, but are hosted on websites (unlike newsgroups that are a separate entity). Bulletin boards are throughout the Internet giving you a wide range of FREE advertising... but until now you had to visit each webpage separately and submit your ad manually - well not anymore!

With either of these programs, it is no more typing, no more looking up URLs, etc... just quick, easy, profitable FREE advertising.

We have set up a special webpage to explain more about how these programs work at:

**<http://www.marketingtips.com/classifiedad.html>**

Just think of the power of this. You can test your ads, slogans, salescopy, etc... very fast by getting traffic from these free classified ad sites.

As a side note, understand that if you are going to post your ads through classified ads on the Internet, you will have your email address harvested by bulk emailers. Use an autoresponder address so the people who bulk email you will get your autoresponder or use a "throw-away" email account so when you start to get bulk emailed a lot you can just "throw the email account away" when you are done with your test. Recall the section where I talk about "throw-away" email accounts in the course - these are accounts like XXX@hotmail.com or XXXX@yahoo.com, etc (free email accounts).

## **How To Design And Word Your Classified Ads**

- **Use power words** – like “free”, “guarantee” and “save”.
- **Offer something for free.** For example, which do you think would get more response;

“Reply now for more information”

OR

“Reply now for our *free guide*, Six Steps to Building Wealth.”

- **Make it easy to respond.** Always offer a phone number when testing your ads to see how many people use each particular route.
- **Use coding responses to track your ads.** Your ads may fit into more than one category or you may be having responses from many different ads come to

the same email address. This can be difficult to manage depending on where you are placing your classified ads. Some classified ad sites and online services will send you a copy of the ad when anyone replies so you can see the original, but some don't. Use different email and autoresponder addresses to track your ads the best you can. Make sure you check out "Our Secret Weapon" lesson for details on how to track your ads when you give out your website address.

There are many free email accounts you can use as described in the email lesson. Get a few of them to use as reply boxes for different ads so you can track which ones made money and which ones didn't.

- **Use multiple postings** (always place your ad in multiple sub-sections). An ad in 10 categories running for one week will bring more response than an ad in one category for 10 weeks. This also allows you to test many ad offers/headlines/prices one at a time to find out what the winning offer is.
- **Tailor your ad for different categories.** For example, if you were selling audio equipment, you would normally advertise in consumer categories with a headline like "consumer audio catalog". But also try the headline "business audio catalog" in a business section to see if it pulls. You may find out that selling large systems to businesses is a much more profitable venture.
- **Always check your competition before placing an ad.** See what they are doing and respond to their ad and see their offer. You will learn what is working for them and what to avoid.
- **Check the position of your ads regularly.** Classified ad areas on the net and online services change quickly. One day you could be on the first screen and the next you might have been pushed down two or three.
- **Make the message complete and concise.** List what you are offering, why the reader may want it

(benefit), and how to get more info. As taught in other lessons, don't tell your prospective customers what you offer; tell them about a benefit. Don't say, "we offer car insurance" for example, but rather "we can slash your car insurance by 34% or more".

- **Use all the techniques described in the *Sales Process* lesson for writing headlines and copy.** Refresh your memory on the "motivational words" to use in your copy, which we discussed earlier, by returning to them now and seeing which best describe your business.
- **Don't write a lengthy ad.** This is a common and costly mistake to make. Don't feel you have to say a lot to get the readers interest. The purpose of your ad is to generate leads, not to make the sale right away.
- **Don't waste precious words** by including verbiage that is not necessary. Words should be used for benefits and to get the reader to take action.
- **Your headline has the power to increase responses by up to 1,700%.** This applies both to classified ad and your written material. You have seen a lot of examples in past lessons, but let me give you one more. If you had a video, book, or course on parental guidance, you could have the headline in your ad read "Parents: Learn to control your kids!" Then the headline of the sales material could say "Wouldn't it be nice if kids came with a fool-proof instruction book?" This gets them saying "yes" even before they read your sales material.

Here are a few examples of the headlines for classified ads that pulled best for ***Car Secrets***:

- Car Secrets by email [Read This]
- FREE "Car Tips" book
- FREE CAR BUYING TIPS
- How to BUY a car \$50 over dealer cost

I will repeat the most important thing I can say about classified ads again: **Your goal is to create an exciting mental image so your prospect will reply for more information.** Your goal is actually not to sell them your product or service through the classified ad, and everything you write in your headline and body should reflect this attitude. This can be the **biggest overlooked mistake** — most people want to tell everything about their product or service right in the classified ad.

#### **An Odd, but Effective Technique**

Instead of giving an email address or website to go to in your classified ad, **give them a long distance phone number to call and receive a free report by mail or fax.** This gets them off the “Internet world” where everything is free and it is as easy to respond to ads as clicking on a “reply” button. You will have fewer people respond (less than half than number that would normally), but they will be more qualified since they are willing to do more work to find out what you have to offer.

- If you have something that markets best to impulse buyers, do not use this technique.
- This technique really works well, however, if you are selling high priced items. Try getting the prospects to call a long distance voicemail number to request free information. This qualifies the buyer (if they will pay for the phone call, they are serious).

## **Lesson # 11**

# **Marketing Through Online Services (i.e. AOL, MSN, CompuServe)**

### **Online Services (AOL, CompuServe, MSN, Prodigy, Genie)**

Online services can be *very profitable* for promoting your product or service because they are mostly consumer-oriented, have built-in mechanisms for marketing, and most subscribers have a high educational level and average incomes. Also, each online service has special-interest forums that help you focus your marketing on audiences which are already interested in your product or service. Lastly, online services attract lots of traffic (especially *AOL* and *CompuServe*).

Online Services generally charge more than a local ISP. Since the consumer is used to paying for information on the online service, **it is a lot easier** to sell them something than it is to a regular Internet user. The Internet users are used to getting free information and are more money/price conscious.

Things have changed dramatically with all the online services over the last year or so. For example, we used to do all our testing in *CompuServe*, but since then the entire classified ad section is now subcontracted to and run by *Classifieds2000* which does not operate the same and therefore *CompuServe* is not as effective a place for testing as it was).

*AOL* classifieds are by far the best place to test your ads. There is a minimal charge for placing ads but they are very effective because the classified ad section is so active.

*AOL* is a great place to test as we are finding that over 30% of our website visitors are *AOL* users - so the



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demographics are good. No, all these AOL visitors to our site didn't all come from our testing... it just shows you how many AOL users there are out there! Testing on AOL allows us to find out what 30% of our visitors want to see. If we can turn a profit on AOL's classified ad section, we have appealed to these people and we are guaranteed to do the same for at least 30% of our visitors. It is just a nice thought when we are testing.

*CompuServe* is second in line. Its classified ad section is now run by *Classifieds2000* and you can test your ad there as it will be published throughout many of the top sites on the internet (not just *CompuServe*).

*Prodigy* rates number three on the list for testing ads. They charge a minimal fee for placing ads. They allow you to place ads alphabetically by headline in each category. You can expect about 1/5<sup>th</sup> the response as AOL.

*Delphi* and *Genie* are so small that it is really not worth placing ads with them because the profit is very minimal for the time you invest.

**The main purpose with online services is to test your ads, headlines, slogans, offers, sales letters, prices, etc.** Once you have a winner, you can duplicate that success on all your Internet promotions since you will then know which headlines, offers, and prices are most profitable.

Online service members don't mind spending money, but must be shown that you have a quality product or service and that you are prepared to stand behind it.

You will need to purchase an AOL and/or *CompuServe* account. You can get them for as low as \$10.00 a month. Whether you plan to test ads there or not, it is important to understand how to navigate AOL and *CompuServe* as many of your customers who visit your website will be from here and understanding their surrounding and what they have at their fingertips is important. Subscribing to other services (if only for a month) will then allow you to visit the shopping mall to check out competition, allow you to participate in

## **NOTES:**

forum discussions and promote your product or service, upload your free articles into the libraries, and much more.

Notice that once you advertise or participate in *AOL* or *CompuServe* forums and classified ads, your address may be harvested by bulk emailers, many times over... so you'll get plenty of unsolicited email messages.

There are three major ways to promote your product or service on *AOL* or *CompuServe*;

- 1) Advertise in the classified ads,
- 2) Upload your free articles into forum libraries,
- 3) Post and get involved in forum discussions.

### **Advertise In the Classified Ads**

Thousands of Internet users read the classified ads on online services. The best place to test your ad is on *AOL*. Right from the start I will tell you that *CompuServe* classified ads will not make you a fortune (contrary to what some of these "get rich quick" artists will tell you), but it is **a great place to test ads and copy** (and maybe make a few dollars).

Placing classified ads is relatively simple, and you can follow the instructions on the screen at *AOL*. However, I do recommend that you surf the ads and find out all the categories that may apply to your product or service (there will always be a few different areas you can advertise in). Once you have found these sections, surf the ads for any competition and see what others are doing. See the section below on electronic classified ads for more details on how to create yours.

### **Upload Your Free Articles into Forum Libraries**

The second way to promote your site is by uploading your "free" articles in the appropriate forums. These

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are the "free" articles you have created for your business that we have been talking so much about in other lessons (informative articles that have a short bio of you and your product or service). If you enter the forum section in *AOL* or *CompuServe*, you will notice that the forums are organized into areas of interest. There is a forum for just about every topic you can imagine and there are many sub-categories in each one on specific areas of interest on each subject.

Don't forget to search for forums that are not directly related to your industry, but which might be full of potential clients anyhow. For example, when promoting ***Car Secrets Revealed***, I used to get involved in the many automotive forums, and also in other non-related forums such as the *Consumer Saving Forum*. This forum still had potential clients for my book, as the members were people interested in saving money. My book told them how to do this with their automobiles.

It is not uncommon for an article to be downloaded a few thousand times. Make sure you take a look through the libraries, not only to see what library sections your article would be best suited for, but also what file names are getting downloaded the most. There is a column that shows you how many times each file was downloaded and how long it has been there. This will give you an idea what the members of the forum are interested in and how you want to name and describe your file. This makes a **big difference** on how many times your file/article will get downloaded.

Remember that your article does not have to be big. A page or two is enough. However, I do recommend you have an article that is at least six pages in length. It's not how big it is, it's what you do with it. The size of the file is listed with every entry into the library and many people will only download the larger files in the hope they will offer more information on the subject they are interested in. This also allows you to put a bigger bio at the end of the article without it standing out like a sore thumb.

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The articles are usually inspected by the administrator of the forum, so make sure it is not an "Advertisement", but an informative article with contact information for you. Be sure to include your website, email address, address, phone and fax. Do not quote prices or try to sell any product or service in your article, as the administrator of the forum will just delete your addition to the library.

You are also required to submit a short description of your article for people to read before they download it. Put your salesman's hat on here and think about what would appeal to the clientele you are targeting and **entice** them to download your article.

***Side note:** You have probably uploaded many articles to different libraries, forums, newsgroups, websites, and FTP sites. You should keep a record of where these files are in case it is necessary to change the information and so you won't upload the same article to the same place twice, (which happens more often than you might think).*

### **Post And Get Involved In Forum Discussions**

The last way to promote your product or service using an online service like AOL or CompuServe is to get involved in a forum through postings. This is very much like a newsgroup, so use all the techniques I mentioned in the newsgroup lesson. This is where a lot of your business can come from.

It can be as simple as posting a message, explaining who you are and what your background is. Just let people know that you are available to answer questions on a particular subject you specialize in.

There is an option to automatically download all new messages only in the forum you are participating in. This way you can read and answer posts **offline**. You will find many opportunities to be an expert and offer advice in reply. Just like in newsgroups, you have the option of replying to the forum for everyone to see, or

of replying in a private email so only the person who asked the question can see it.

If you have received a response from someone as a result of your message postings or a file upload in the library and you feel a sales opportunity is there, you can feel free to quote prices and send sales information to them via *private* email messages.

A little trick for forums is to simply post a message in the appropriate forums saying you have just uploaded a new interesting article to the library. Describe what it covers in your post. Your article will get downloaded a couple of hundred times simply for posting that announcement.

***Another Juicy Side Note:*** Every online service (the major ones being CompuServe, AOL, Prodigy, Genie, and MSN) has business and marketing related discussion groups where you can get advice and contacts. Do a search for “small business”, “PR”, “marketing”, home business”, “business”, “advertising”, and “promotion” on the services to join them.

## **Keys To Selling Via Online Services**

The fundamental key for selling efficiently on online services and having good sales conversions is to come across very professional in all your communications with the customer. They demand this more than customers on the Internet. Remember, just like selling on the Internet, all customers have to go on is,

- 1) How fast you respond to email (in other words, how important your customer is to you).
- 2) How you sound in your sales presentation (do you sound professional in your sales letters, or are you just hyping everything?).

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- 3) Whether all your instructions and correspondence are easy to understand and comprehend.
- 4) Whether you stand behind your product or service with satisfaction guarantees.
- 5) Your provision of other methods for customers to contact you (i.e. phone, fax, and physical address).

When you are testing your product or service ideas on AOL and other online services, you must be willing to commit to advertising and promoting your product for a minimum of four weeks.

Note that you can calculate *response ratios* while your ads are running. However, do not calculate your *sales conversion* ratio from your inquiries until after your campaign is complete. You will find that even though prospects may have your sales information the same day they responded to the ad, they may in fact not purchase for weeks.

Also note you will get duplicate responses from different classified ads you have placed. If your headlines are similar, you will only get about 10% duplicate responses, but if your headlines are very different, you can expect up to 35% duplicate responses. Make sure you realize this before you start “double responding” to people who have inquired two or three times from different headlines.

### **A Couple of AOL and CompuServe Tips:**

- You will need to place 5-10 ads in different categories to be effective.
- Expect to receive 2-3 replies per day, per ad until the very end of your four week campaign, at which time it might fall to half that rate (if you do not, redo it until it works).
- A two line ad in twenty categories works much better than a twenty line ad in two categories (about a **700% difference in response!**).

**NOTES:**

- For every \$100 you spend on ads, you should be getting just under 1,000 replies (not sales) for a good ad.
- You will discover the 80/20 rule applies (20 of the ads will give you 80% of your business).

As a final note, I should mention **you should not jump into all the online services at once**. Take the time to develop a promotional campaign with each service and maximize the profit potential before moving to the next. I talk from experience. If you get too many things on your plate, you will not do a good job or be very profitable on any of the online services. But more importantly, once you have developed a winning strategy on one online service, **it is easy to duplicate that success on other services**. Like I said, start with *AOL* and move to others.

## **Lesson # 12**

### **Marketing To Newsgroups (UseNet) Without Getting Flamed**

Newsgroups can be **very profitable** because they are demographically targeted, easy to access, and read by millions of users each day (the word “newsgroups” is slang for the “usenet groups”. I refer to everything in this lesson as newsgroups, but technically, they are really known as usenet groups).

But be sure you realize that newsgroup users are *very different* from the average web surfer. They have been known in the past to be long time internet users, information junkies, and very hard to sell to. While there is some truth to this, it is changing as more people get online. The fact remains that newsgroup people are hard to sell to because;

- 1) They are used to getting information for free and are generally very price conscious.
- 2) They are quick to lash out because they get spammed quite often by people who harvest their addresses from newsgroups.

In my opinion, newsgroups are an easy way to test your ads and get sales instantaneously (compared with such things as search engine promotions where you have to wait weeks before you're listed). They are a great tool to get your initial sales when you are first getting started and to keep traffic coming to your site in the future.

The advantage of newsgroup promotions is that it is easy to get instantaneous sales... and they are FREE! Their disadvantage is that they are **very time consuming to promote to**. For most of the promotional techniques with newsgroups, you have a lot of time. You definitely want to have newsgroups as part of your marketing campaign, but if your time is very limited, then only do the promotional techniques



that are not time consuming (discussed later in lesson).

I *strongly* suggest that you monitor some newsgroups and experience the type of posts there before you post something yourself. You will be able to see what type of responses people are generally giving, and you will also know who the regulars of the group are. You will need “thick skin” – some of the groups (but not too many) are nasty, use vulgar and insulting language, and can be very offensive.

Another great advantage of newsgroups is that you will find like-minded people, a great resource for information or questions you may have, and you may even make a business affiliate or partner if you meet the right person.

Also, make sure you keep posts relevant to the subject of the newsgroups. There is nothing **that will get you into hot water quicker** than posting to newsgroups that have no interest in what you are talking about.

When posting, use short sentences and short paragraphs — it keeps the reader focused and makes the reading interesting.

There are a few ways to use newsgroups to your advantage. When it comes right down to it; you are looking for **any legitimate reason** that will give you an opportunity to post in order to get publicity and get your name out there. You will see what I mean as you read on.

*There is a general FAQ for all newsgroups available at **news.announce.newusers***

## **Seven Ways To Promote On Newsgroups**

## **#1) Posting Regularly to a Few Newsgroups You Monitor**

By staying active in a few newsgroups and answering people's questions, you not only get a chance to advertise your product or service in your signature line, but you get recognized as an expert in the field as well. This gives you a lot of credibility and can bring you loyal customers and a strong following if you have the patience and consistency to post on a regular basis.

This method can generate a lot of sales, but they usually come after a lot of hard work. If you are not willing to commit a lot of time on a consistent basis to become known in the groups, I suggest you monitor the groups, but do not post too often.

Don't try to become a "regular" or "expert" in the group overnight. It takes time. If you are not willing to invest the time over the next 2-4 months, then don't even bother trying. Don't attempt to use this technique without being fully committed to "run the mile".

***Note:** Of course I don't have to mention that one of the main reasons for getting so heavily involved in a newsgroup is to get your SIG (Signature File) posted many times for the thousands of people, who read newsgroup postings but don't post to them, to see.*

## **#2) Posting Informative Articles**

Article posting is one of my personal favorites and one of the fastest ways to get instant sales from newsgroups. This is when you write an informative article that has something to do with the product or service you are selling (you probably already have a couple of these in development as you were eager to write a few in past lessons for other purposes – right?). You must give away valuable, educational info to get any respect or credibility.

For example, if you are selling some kind of miracle fertilizer, you could write an article entitled "What fertilizers will grow your plants twice the size in half the time?" This article would not be hype, but would

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include statistical info on what is in other fertilizers, what makes them work, and the pros and cons of different brands.

If your article is shorter than three pages you would just have a small bio at the end to plug your product. Here is a bio I use at the end of **Car Secrets** articles. Look at it and use it as a template for creating your own:

If you find the information you have just read valuable, you may be interested in a new book called Car Secrets Revealed. It is written by Corey Rudl and can be seen at <http://www.igs.net/carsecrets/> There are hundreds of "insider" secrets on just about everything automotive. It covers topics such as how to reduce your car insurance by 50%, how to buy cars (and parts) at wholesale prices, how to legally beat the police radar speed traps, how to avoid the auto repairs rip-offs, and hundreds more. It is a "must read" if you own a vehicle.

The idea of an informative article is a simple process of educating your customers. This is **extremely effective** because most competition doesn't do it. **People believe and trust companies willing to help and educate them, not just "pitch" something at them.** It is so simple that any business can use it to step their profits up to an entirely new level.

Ensure that at the end of the article, the customer knows how to get a hold of you or learn more about your product. You can direct them to your website, offer sales info by autoresponder (good idea), invite them to email you, or even possibly give them your phone number so they can call and ask questions.

### **#3) Posting Articles AND Capturing Email Addresses of Prospective Clients**

If you have a long article that is more than 10-12 pages, you could have an entire sales letter at the end. In other words, the more info you give (i.e. the longer your article is) the bolder you can get towards marketing your product at the end of the article.

**NOTES:**

For my automotive business, I use a copy of half a chapter from my book ***Car Secrets Revealed***, as the information give-away. The partial chapter was over 12 pages long so I put a lengthy sales letter at the end of it that flowed right from the article. People didn't even know they were reading the sales letter until they were halfway through because it flowed so nicely from the article.

I didn't want to use 12 pages in my example, so I have saved it on the CD that is provided with this course as *article1.txt*. I have also included a copy of our shorter article with a bio at the end so you can see an example of it too. It is titled *article2.txt*.

**This is certainly the most profitable way of using articles in newsgroups.** You don't actually post the article, **you just post the announcement on how to get it via autoresponder** (so you can capture their email addresses to follow up on later). Your posting may go something like this:

Subject: interesting article on fertilizers  
Body:

I have this article called "how a fertilizer can grow your plants twice as large in half the time". It has tips on different types of fertilizer, fertilizer content, how it works, what works best, and much more. Because the article is over ten pages, I didn't want to post it here so you have to pay "on-line time" to read it. Instead, I have put a copy in my autoresponder so that you can get it emailed to you and read it at your own convenience.

To get a copy of the article emailed to you within a few minutes, send a blank email to abc@xyz.com

Thanks.  
Jane Doe

When we were trying to target "used" car owners for the book ***Car Secrets Revealed***, here is what we did:

Subject: how to get 20-40% off all auto parts

**NOTES:**

Hi,

I have a 17-page article on file (37K) that has tons of info on auto parts and techniques on how to get them at huge discounts (all the "tricks of the trade"). It is called "How to get 20-40% off every auto part... for life" written by Corey Rudl. With some of these techniques you will learn how to save hundreds of dollars (I guess it depends on how much of a "clunker" your car is... ha, ha). See below for instructions on how to download it.

Instead of publishing the 17-page article here, where you have to pay your Internet provider per hour to access and read it in this newsgroup, I can email you the article so that it can be read at your convenience and you are not charged for on-line time while reading it. Here are the instructions on how to get your own copy of the article.

Instructions: To have the article sent directly to you, you can email an autoresponder. For those who have not heard of an autoresponder before, it is an automatic emailer. If you send an email message to it, it automatically emails you back the article. Just send an email to [article@igs.net](mailto:article@igs.net) and you will receive the article within a few minutes.

It does not matter what you have in the "body" or "subject" heading; no human will see your email. The computer just looks at where the email was from and sends the article to that address.

If you do not receive the article within 5 minutes, email me at [ppelle@iosphere.net](mailto:ppelle@iosphere.net) and I will send you one manually (make sure to include your email address).

Enjoy the information (it can be quite an "eye-opener").

Pat

Notice that I use my girlfriend's account and name, instead of "the author" posting it. This third party recommendation gives it more credibility and it doesn't look like someone is trying to sell anything.

**Don't give access information or articles via FTP (always use autoresponders because they are much easier for the potential client to use).** FTP sites are far over-rated. Some people offer free info and files on FTP sites, but the plain fact is most online customers don't know how to work their email properly, much less log into an FTP server anonymously.

#### **#4) Site Update Postings**

When you add something interesting to your site (like a new article, or holiday edition of your service, etc.), you can announce it in the appropriate newsgroups that would be interested.

Just post a short note in the newsgroups related to your industry about changes that would interest readers and invite them to visit you again (remember to include the URL in the post!).

#### **#5) Posting Issues of Your Newsletter or Invitations to Join It**

Another little trick to get more subscribers to your newsletter is to post a portion of it to a couple of related newsgroups and/or mailing lists. Mention that the info is from your newsletter and how to subscribe at the end. You will see a rise in subscriptions after you do this a few times.

You can also just post an invitation to your free newsletter on the appropriate newsgroups. If you do this once every three weeks to a month, you will see a skyrocket in your subscriptions every time you do it.

Remember, your goal is not to sell anything! You want the customer to subscribe to your newsletter... get to know you... come to respect you... and eventually buy from you. I mentioned before how powerful these clients can be... **they are lifetime customers!**

#### **#6) Post a Request asking Feedback on Your Site**

This is another little trick giving you an excuse to post your website and invite people to come without it being considered spamming or blatant advertising...

**NOTES:**

Make a post asking newsgroup readers to visit your site and give you feedback on it. You don't want to come across as a new Internet user or someone who does not know what they are talking about...you want to come across as a semi-successful site looking for help to improve even more. This is what most people do (**wrong!**):

Subject: help

Body:

We have just launched our new site and wanted to get some feedback on what you think. Please check it out at <http://www.xyz.com>

I look forward to hearing your comments.

Sincerely,  
John Doe

This is a bad example of how to do business. There are no specifics, you are not selling your site or coming across as sincere. Get the user more involved, give specifics, ask questions, and be sincere. Following is an example of what you might say:

Subject: Feedback on Widget site

We'd like your help. The ABC website has just been redesigned. We have just updated to include some great new tips and it now has an entire new look. I feel that I'm "too close" to our website ([www.abc.com](http://www.abc.com)) to evaluate it objectively. If some of you would look it over and give some solid input, it would be most appreciated. My questions are:

1. On the first viewing, is the subject clear?
2. Does it sound like a good idea...does it motivate you?
3. What didn't you understand? What other info do you need?

4. Was it user friendly, could you navigate around the site easily?
5. Any recommendations on improving it to grab your attention even more?

Thank you in advance for your help. Please contact me directly with any feedback at [jdoue@abc.com](mailto:jdoue@abc.com).

John Doe  
[jdoue@abc.com](mailto:jdoue@abc.com)

Although you may be doing this for publicity for your site, you will get great recommendations and **find problem areas in your site**. This is critically important, as things which mean one thing to you may be interpreted as something else by another person.

#### **#7) Answer Questions And Use Your SIG File**

Most newsgroup readers and email programs have the ability to add the SIG to the end of your postings and email. Although this can sometimes be considered poor form, you might consider responding to someone else's posts with a short answer or even a restatement of their position just to get your signature file viewed. But don't do this often, because too many posts will show your true intentions (that being to advertise your business, not be helpful in the newsgroup). *See the lesson on Email for SIG file construction.*

You will find that when you have a free monthly newsletter, many of your subscriptions will come from the signature file in your emails and newsgroup postings. If you use your signature to plug your newsletter, don't just mention that you have one...**tell the reader exactly how to get it.**

While browsing the newsgroups be alert for anyone seeking answers to questions, solutions to problems or sources of information. As an expert, you can answer people's questions briefly, allowing you to post your SIG file and get noticed.



If you offer a product or service that will assist them, by all means let them know that; but do not quote prices on the newsgroups. You can email them privately, but don't post this kind of information on the newsgroup.

If someone asks a question and you don't know the answer, post another message saying you would also like to know about that particular subject and tell that person you will get back to them if you find the answer. This allows you to show them your SIG file once and maybe even twice if you get back to them with answers.

### **#8) A Plain Advertisement Warning**

There is another way to advertise on newsgroups, but it is generally not as effective as the other methods. This tactic is to submit a post where the first lines state bluntly that "ADV - How to lose 20 pound sin 20 days!"

Then of course, you would have a blatant ad about your product order service in the posting. This is accepted because people will see the header as they are scanning through the newsgroup and if they are not interested in reading any kind of ad, they just will ignore your post (as your "ADV" will designate it as an ad).

### **#9) Posting to Multiple Newsgroups**

This is where you post an ad to a list of newsgroups, or a message that is a disguised advertisement (which most newsgroup reader's can see through because they've seen so much of it). It is an approach that is generally not recommended, but **can be very useful in controlled situations** (I will explain in a moment).

There is nothing that will get you flamed or bombed faster than posting an ad or an inappropriate message to a specific group. After all, newsgroups are where people go to have lively discussions about their special interests. The last thing they want is messages popping up everywhere (that they have to sift through)

telling them about something in which they have absolutely no interest.

Note that there are cancel-bots that monitor newsgroups continuously. If you post more than 6-10 of a similar message in any combination of newsgroups (the messages don't even have to be exact; the cancel-bots look for IP address, message ID, email addresses, subject lines, and body content consistency), a robot will automatically delete your message from all of the newsgroups no matter what is in the posting (no human ever sees the cancellation).

If you violate the criteria it is looking for, it does not matter what you say in your post (you could even be giving away \$100 bills), the **robot will automatically cancel it within minutes.**

If you are posting articles, offers of articles, site updates, etc., you will not be able to post it to more than about 9 newsgroups. **However, you can beat all-of-the newsgroup cancel-bots using *Mailloop*.** It has a special newsgroup posting system that will defeat the cancel-bots and allow you to post to as many newsgroups as you wish.

For your sake, **use it with a conscience.** Post to as many newsgroups as you feel are relevant (that could be hundreds if you are in a certain industry, like computers). But if you get crazy and go after newsgroups that have no interest in what you have to say, you are guaranteed to get flamed and bombed **beyond belief.** On that note, if you post to newsgroups that don't allow ads in their newsgroups, or you have said or done anything that will offend people... you will also see some flames or complaints. In other words, use this feature in *Mailloop* with care. It is **very powerful and I highly recommend it...** but don't get suckered into thinking bigger is always better because it will blow up in your face.

## **Frequency of Posting**

Because some newsgroups have a lot of activity and others don't, your posting frequency should vary. You can answer and respond to as much correspondence as you want (as long as you have an interesting thought or idea to offer). But when posting a new message or when starting a new "thread", you should post about every two weeks or after every 150 posts go by, whichever comes first.

## **Dealing With Flames**

We discussed flames in the *Bulk Email* lesson, so refer back to that for more info on flames and email bombs if you are at all unfamiliar with what I am talking about.

As a brief recap, flames are criticisms of you in private or public form. They can be simple, polite and legitimate, or they can be vulgar and entirely uncalled for. **Don't ever respond to a flame.** It will only make matters worse. You will get some very "nasty" comments from people who have no life and get very brave behind a keyboard. Ignore them and feel sorry they have nothing better to do in their life than write senseless letters to you, but whatever you do, don't engage them online.

## **The Oldest Trick In The Book - Don't Do It!**

I have had clients who thought they would be smart and spam a large quantity of newsgroups with a blatant advertisement **expecting to get flamed and bombed.** They didn't worry about the flames or bombs. They just wanted to get their name out there to the many people who were truly interested. These people actually anticipate flames and bombs because it gives them a reason to spam those same newsgroups again—this time with an apology letter.

In other words, **they purposely spam to get flamed** so they have an excuse to spam an apology letter and

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get their name seen one more time. The apology letter may look something like this:

I am writing this letter to apologize for a posting our company made seven days ago. We are a chair manufacturing company and relatively new, on the Internet and learning netiquette the hard way. Please do not hold any bad opinions against us, or our website - <http://www.xyz.com>, as this was an unfortunate learning experience for us.

Thank you for your time.

John Doe

Can you see how carefully this letter was formatted? See how he takes the blame upon himself, not the company... For all we know, he may be the owner of the company. Also notice how he subtly mentions what the company does and their URL again.

This is a smart and devious method, but the flames and bombs received (not to mention the warnings and possible disconnection) are generally not worth the profit you will make. This is not even the most serious damage that can be done. **These companies are sometimes not able to post on any newsgroups for a very, very long time with any credibility or respect when they get busted for spamming.**

For your information, there is another little trick that many people attempt, but I want to warn you beforehand it is not a worthwhile approach either.

Some people post listings of the "top ten" websites in their industry, with their website URL somewhere near the top of the list. If you were in the software business for example, you might think to develop a list of the "top ten software sites" and post it on appropriate newsgroups, AOL/CompuServe forums, and forum libraries for people to access for years to come. But this is one of the oldest tricks in the book and people see right through it. Don't expect many visitors (or sales) doing this; it plain **doesn't work anymore.**

## A Couple More Little Tricks

- 1) A great way to use newsgroups more effectively as an advertising tool is to put your autoresponder email address in the “reply to” field. The reader would then receive “a full blown presentation” prior to knowing how to contact you. Note that the purpose of newsgroups advertising is to use short “teaser” ads and then “bounce” that person to your autoresponder or website. You are only attempting to “hook” the consumer's attention, not to sell them anything directly from the newsgroup.
- 2) Cross posting is where you can post to multiple newsgroups but by only submitting one post (that is addressed to all the newsgroups you want the post to go to). **Do not do this**. Cut, paste and post separately to the applicable newsgroups. It takes a little longer, but will help you avoid many problems in the long run.

If you cross-post, the first problem is that it is considered spamming by many users and you are then more likely to get flamed. The second reason is that if someone replies to an email, that **reply is also posted to every newsgroup you did the cross-posting to**.

You may not consider this to be too bad; but if you get flamed publicly in only one newsgroup, that flame will get posted to every newsgroup you cross-posted to. If you post to each newsgroup separately, a flame you might get in one newsgroup will not get posted to any of the other newsgroups.

- 3) Remember that many people are “harvesting” email addresses from newsgroups. If you post to newsgroups, you’ll see an increase in the number of unsolicited emails you get. By using your autoresponder email address in the “reply to” and “from” field, the people who are harvesting these addresses **will automatically receive your sales info from your autoresponder** and they will not easily be able to secure your real email address (that info is in the autoresponder document). I also

recommend you use one email address specifically for working with newsgroups. Since this is the only address you use for the groups, you can tell where people harvested your name, which cuts down on the unsolicited email traffic through your primary email boxes.

## **How Do I Find Relevant Newsgroups For My Industry?**

Many people print or scan through the huge list of over thirty thousand newsgroups to find out which ones are of interest to them. **This is ridiculous...**use the “find” feature found on most newsreaders to find the newsgroups you are interested in.

If you sold wireless cable connections for TVs, you could search for the keywords: TV, t-v, television, electronic, antenna, satellite, RF, cable, video, appliances, new products, new technology, technology announce, etc. This would bring up a list of newsgroups containing any of these words. This only takes a few minutes whereas manually going through 30,000 newsgroups would take an entire day. You can then subscribe or group these newsgroups aside in a section so you can post to them regularly without having to try and find them like needles in a haystack.

If you don't have a 'find' feature in your newsreader, use a word processor such as *Word* or *WordPerfect*. Open every document in the newsreader's directory/folder to find out which one is the listing of all of the newsgroups. You can then use the “find” feature in the word processor to find the groups you're interested in.

**Note:** *Your ISP may only access a few thousand of the 30,000+ groups available.*

It is imperative to have access to all the newsgroups if you are going to market your business using newsgroups. Many ISPs only host a few thousand newsgroups. There may be many newsgroups that would apply to you that they do not even host... so you

never know they exist. **This is just like throwing business away.**

You can find “public” or non-secure newsservers that will allow you to access their newsgroups from a remote dial up account, but most ISPs will have their newsserver locked out to remote users so that only people who dial into their local phone number have access.

*Mailloop* has a feature that will automatically find these public newsservers for you so you can access newsservers that have tens of thousands of newsgroups.

Also, so you can see what newsgroups are available, I have included a file (on the CD included with this course) called *newslst.txt* that is a list of over 27,000 newsgroups for you to scan through. Load this file into a word processor and use the "find" command in your word processor to search for keywords that apply to your industry/product/service.

## **Miscellaneous Notes**

There are hundreds of “for sale” newsgroups. Basically, there is one for every major city, and they are generally designed for local/private sales. You may think because you have an item for sale that is available nationally, you should post in all these newsgroups.

Let me tell you now, **it is not worth your time and effort to post in all the small newsgroups.** The very small sales increase you gain is not worth the time and effort. You only want to concentrate on the national “for sale” newsgroups because of the amount of traffic they attract.

**Make sure you key all of your postings** to see where the leads are coming from and what newsgroups and

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advertising copy is the most effective for you. This can be as simple as using a different autoresponder for different postings or different email addresses.

If you are asking people to reply to you instead of using an autoresponder or website, use a different variation of the subject headings so you can tell what group it was from. This can be as subtle as a capital letter at the beginning of a sentence rather than using lower case. Although this is not a tracking method as reliable and precise as using different email addresses and autoresponders (because people can reply without including the original header in their email), it can still be effective.

Tracking your newsgroup posts allows you to narrow down the exact newsgroups that generate the most profit so you know which ones you should concentrate on.

Since you can attach files to emails, you can also attach files to newsgroup postings. If you want to attach a word processor file or a picture, it can easily be done. Most newsreaders have built in encoders and decoders that will allow you to upload or download any attachment to a newsgroup (*MIME BASE 64* is the most common encoding method used).

Please note that marketing on newsgroups and marketing on services such as *AOL*, *CompuServe*, *Prodigy*, etc. use very similar techniques, so read both lessons thoroughly before you start your marketing campaign in either of these areas.

Similarly, there are a few newsgroups that allow blatant commercial advertisements. They are as follows:

**alt.ad**  
**alt.bbs.internet**  
**alt.biz.misc**  
**alt.business**  
**alt.business.accountability**  
**alt.business.career-**  
**opportunities.executives**  
**alt.business.home**  
**alt.business.home.pc**  
**alt.business.hospitality**

**alt.business.misc**  
**alt.business.multilevel**  
**alt.business.multi-level**  
**alt.america.online**  
**alt.commerve.misc-ads**  
**alt.internet.commerce**  
**alt.internet.services**  
**alt.make.money.fast**  
**alt.misc**  
**alt.www.marketing.adverts**

**aol.commerce.misc-ads**  
**biz.comp.services**  
**biz.comp.software**  
**biz.general**  
**biz.marketplace**  
**biz.marketplace.international**  
**biz.marketplace.non-computer**  
**alt.bbs.ads**  
**biz.marketplace.services**  
**.non-computer**



**biz.misc**  
**biz.mlm**  
**biz.newgroup**  
**biz.next.newprod**

**biz.univel.misc**  
**can.atlantic.biz**  
**market.internet.free**  
**misc.business**

**misc.entrepreneurs**

As you can tell, unless you are selling a business oriented product, these are **useless** for advertising in. They can be effective for those of you who have something to sell to a business, but the net is becoming so cluttered with "get rich schemes" that the methods explained above will be much more profitable.

Stick to the innovative ways I have mentioned previously in this lesson to market to newsgroups related to your industry. They are all very intelligent ways to market your product or service and reap huge profits while ensuring you do not get flamed or e-bombed.

## **Another Controversial Method**

By publishing this, I am not suggesting what follows to be a technique for you to use. I just want to let you know what is possible and what some people are doing so you will be an expert when you finish this course. I admit I have tried this technique a very long time ago, but to be very blunt, it is not worth the risk of getting caught **and destroying all your chances of marketing to those newsgroups again**.

There are so many ways to make enormous profits online, you don't have to resort to this type of technique.

The "dirty trick" I am referring to is to take on a different personality using the *AOL*, *CompuServe* forums or newsgroup discussions. We will use a newsgroup posting for this example.

You use a few of your friends' Internet accounts (or a few different ones you may have) to do a few fake "lead generating" posts.

For example, from your friend John's account, you might post to four newsgroups:

From: John@aol.com  
To: rec.collecting.sport.baseball

Does anyone know about a really cool fold-out plastic storage case for my cards? I read something in the group about it a few weeks ago, but I can't find anything now. Anyone who can point me in the right direction would be appreciated. I think it was called "Card Companion" or something like that.

Thanks.

John

Post #2 from your friend Rob 's account may be: |

From: rob@hook.net  
To: rec.collecting.sport.baseball

John,

I know what you are talking about... I saw an article about it in the Collectable Magazine, but I'm damned if I can find that article now. If you found out where they are from, let me know. It is supposed to even have a locking feature and I now need it (I should have probably bought it when I saw the article, but you always have 20/20 hindsight).

Does anybody know?

Rob

Post #3 from your friend Jim's account would read: |

From: Jsmith@ix.netcom.com  
To: rec.collecting.sport.baseball

The case is called "Card Collecting Companion". I got mine about 2 weeks ago and love it. It has this really neat fold up feature so I can fit it in my briefcase. I ordered it at 1-800-555-1212. I think I paid about \$50 for it. You may be able to special order it from your local card collecting store if you ask.

Jimmy

As you can see, you are promoting/selling the card companion.

Do you think that will generate interest in your product or service? **You bet it will!** Just don't get caught! Your credibility (and the credibility of your company) will be compromised in the newsgroup from then on, spoiling any sale in the future and closing off any potential promotions in those newsgroups in the future.

Besides... as you have seen in this lesson, there many other ways to market your product or service on newsgroups "legitimately", that are just as beneficial, without ever getting flamed.

## **Lesson # 13**

### **Press Releases - Free Publicity**

There are two types of press releases, traditional and electronic (via email).

Electronic press releases are easy to do, and they don't cost you anything (compared to traditional press releases that require you to mail every publication separately).

A great place to go that has thousands of links to media sources is **<http://www.searcher.com>**. This is a must visit for any online marketer. It has links to over 2,000 media sources (TV, radio, newsgroups, magazines, newsletters, and others) to announce your press release. They even have a free service that will email your press release to **hundreds of magazines and newspapers across the country with the push of a button** (even major publications like *USA Today* and *People* magazine).

Just fill out what you want to send and click on which magazines/newspapers you want to send it to. With a click of the "submit" button, your press release will be sent to the hundreds of publications you chose.

However, **don't be too hasty doing this**. You want to make an impact on the editors, so make sure you have a well-planned and powerful press release to get their attention **before** you use this service.

Also check out **<http://www.owt.com/dircon/mediajum.htm#Mediajum>** p. It has over 3,000 links to magazines, journals, trade and consumer publications.

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There are other services that will do this for a fee (usually \$100 to \$200), but why bother when you can take 30 minutes and do it yourself? Here are a few press release services:

*Cape Cod Information Center* (Press release submission form)

**<http://www.allcapecod.com/ccic/preleas.html>**

*PR NewsWire* (fee based)

**<http://www.prnewswire.com>**

Many of these resources have both email and traditional mail press release packages.

Instead of explaining how to format your press release and what editors look for, let me give you two professional sources:

*LA Times New Release Submission Guide*

**<http://www.latimes.com/HOME/ABOUTLAT/SUBMITNR/>**

*The Cyber Press Guide*

**<http://www.successful.com/report.html>** (for excellent articles that discuss what journalists look for in press releases).

Your approach to distributing a press release should be **very targeted**. Don't send press releases to just any email address or fax number you can get a hold of. Sending a press release to 100 editors will get you a much smaller return than a "precision targeted" press release to 10 editors who have direct interest in your industry, product or service.

On that note, it is very difficult to get a press release in large publications. To increase your chances, make sure your press release stands out from the rest by tailoring it to specific magazines or newspapers. Each publication has it's own editorial point of view and needs when it comes to choosing what to publish. A smart marketer will choose what publications they want to issue a press release to, study them, and then determine what would appeal most in a press release. **Treat each editor like a unique customer and cater to their needs.**

Furthermore, if you keep in contact with the editor and develop a relationship (which can take months depending on the size of the publication), it is quite easy to convince them to write a **feature article** on you, your product or service or something special you offer.

I have done this many times with the car industry, and **it has made me thousands of dollars**. One feature article, even if it is in a small publication, can bring in thousands of dollars in sales! **An editorial article has 10 times as much power as an advertisement for your product**. One brief mention in a large mainstream publication is worth thousands of dollars in advertising.

My guess is that I have personally generated over \$100,000 in business over the last few years using this **one** technique. It is as simple as making a phone call once a month to stay in touch with an editor. It is not a lot of money... but it is a lot of money for the few minutes a month I put into it!

Before you write your press release, remember the primary function is not to publicize your business or help sell more of your product, but to provide news, entertainment, and relevant information to readers, viewers or listeners. If your release comes across as an advertisement, it will be tossed in the garbage by the editor within moments of receiving it.

The best idea is to come up with a newsworthy angle about your online business. If you can't come up with anything off the top of your head, try reading the news section of a few online magazines. Make sure that you answer "who, what, where, when, why and how" in the first paragraph of any news release.

Instead of saying something like "This is the most comprehensive guide on gardening ever published", you could rephrase it to read "According to the author, Mr. John Doe, "I've spent four years writing the most comprehensive guide on gardening ever published". It carries more authenticity.

**Tip:** To get your press release noticed, position your company against competing companies in some way. **The press loves conflict.**

Another way to get publicity is to write an article instead of doing a press release. This could be as easy as tailoring the "free article" you have already written and submitting it to appropriate magazines or newspapers. You can submit this article to a traditional magazines or newspapers, or to Internet based e-zines or newsletters.

Timing has a lot to do with whether or not your article or press release is accepted by a magazines or newspaper as well. If you are serious about getting your press release in a larger publication, get a copy of the editorial deadline for each issue. It will point out the deadlines for all submissions and the special editorial focus of each issue (so you can tailor your press release or article).

Editors at major magazines get dozens of press releases every day! Make sure you follow up all releases to major publications with a phone call a few days later asking the editor if he or she would like more information about it. This allows you to draw attention to your release and expand on your news item.

**Tip:** In the presence of other more newsworthy companies, **your announcement becomes more newsworthy** itself. Another way to get your press release noticed in the larger publications is to monitor the online magazines and scan the news section for mention of major companies like AT&T and AOL. Come up with an angle that ties you to a well-known firm and use the firm's name in your press release.

**Another Tip:** Get the email addresses of all the administrators (or editors) **of applicable newsletters or ezines** relating to your product or service and send releases as developments happen in your business (keep this list of email addresses in

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a text file to use anytime you need to). You get these email addresses by going to **<http://www.newsletteraccess.com>** or **<http://www.marketingtips.com/lifestylespub/>**, searching your target keywords, and visiting the sites to get the owner's email addresses. Most people only target press releases to major publications, but it is much more effective to target your press releases to smaller niche markets because it is easier to get noticed and the audience is more focused. **This is a very untapped resource, so use it to your advantage.**



## **Lesson # 14**

# **Competitive Intelligence - Spying On Your Competitors**

Competitive Intelligence is the art of staying one step ahead of the competition by gathering information about their operations. You have to know what they are up to, so I am going to show you how to check out your competitors products and marketing schemes without them even knowing you are there. In other words, this lesson is about how to spy on the competition without getting caught.

Assuming that you have less than five direct competitors, you should **always** buy their product to determine their sales process (and service) and get on their mailing list to see future promotions. The relatively small price you pay for their product will pay for itself many times over in the knowledge you gain by finding out what they are doing and how they are doing it.

Some of your competitors may process orders manually and could recognize your name as their competition. Use your spouse's name, a fictitious name, an employee's name, or an alternative company name (if you have another company) that will allow the mail to get to you without revealing who you are. Also, make sure you use an alternative email address and phone number.

I do this with all of my competitors and find out **exactly** what they are doing, who they are dealing with, and how they are doing it — all by their email and snail mail correspondence.

Also, by purchasing their products you will be able to experience **exactly** what a regular customer would go through and you can then judge their product, service and operations against yours. This gives a great advantage to all of your customers because you will

know the pros and cons of your competition and can more effectively sell your product or service.

**Important Tip:** *You may even want to have one of your employees or friends call your competitor. They could pose as a satisfied customer wanting to see what products or services the company is working on for the future.*

## **Where Do You Start?**

An *absolute must* is to go to **<http://www.netwatch.ca>**. It will search for specific keywords (i.e. your personal name, company name, product name... or your competitor's personal name, company name, product name) in over 280,000 newsgroups.

As a side note, we used to recommend **<http://www.reference.com/>** which was a great service with a ton of features, and most of all, it was totally free. Their site is now down for an unknown reason, but this should only be temporary. If you want to go with these guys, check their URL whenever you have the chance and see if they have any updates listed.

Another free service which you may have heard of, *DejaNews* **<http://www.dejanews.com>**, offers a very limited version of what *Netwatch.ca* does and what *Reference.com* used to do. Through *DejaNews*, you can perform a search for keywords in specified newsgroups to find out if your name, or any other information about your company, is being used without your prior knowledge or permission. This service is a great start, but *Netwatch.ca* will provide you with the full details automatically (as listed below) without requiring you do to any work whatsoever.

*Netwatch.ca* will email you within hours of one of those keywords appearing in any of the 280,000 newsgroups on the Internet. This is critical, since you will know exactly what people are saying about you and your other competition within moments of them mentioning it. It gives you the opportunity to defend yourself or

solve customer service problems *before* any damage is done. **This is a very powerful tool so don't take it lightly.**

Let me go over three powerful uses for this service:

- 1) Imagine anytime a competitor tries to "badmouth" you in any newsgroup or public forum... or even compare your products/services unfairly, within hours you are there to reply to the post and deliver the truth (or your account of the situation).

Now, put yourself in the competitor's shoes. Imagine if anytime you wrote something, your competition was right there — like they were watching over your shoulder all the time. Wouldn't you be very careful in the future as to what you say... and wouldn't you be dumbfounded as to how your competition was always one step ahead of you?

- 2) Remember the old customer service rule... bad news travels **ten times faster** than good news. One dissatisfied customer will tell ten other people, while one satisfied customer may tell one or none. All it takes is a few postings of dissatisfied customers to lose a lot of business. Can you imagine how **powerful it is** if you are right there to **publicly** take care of any customer service problems when a dissatisfied customer posts anything negative about your product or company? This will impress the thousands of people who read newsgroups but don't post on them.

I go out "looking for trouble" and find dissatisfied customers instead of them having to hunt for me. It is so easy that I am astonished no one else is doing it.

- 3) *Netwatch.ca* can also be a great source for sales promotions and an enormous time saver. We talked about promoting your business on the newsgroups by not only posting to them, but monitoring them looking for posts where you can offer your advice

and get your SIG file posted as well. **You can get *Netwatch.ca* to do most of this work for you!**

For example, if you sell something that has to do with international investing, you could have it search for keywords such as "international", "overseas", "Japan", "Britain", and other countries. You want to search for keywords specific to what you have to offer. If you search for keywords such as "investing" or "financing", you will get thousands of results a day. You want to be very specific to narrow your results to only posts that are potential business for you. *Netwatch.ca* will email you every time a post is done on that subject. It could be someone asking for advice or giving their opinion... so you have an opportunity to reply and offer your assistance (and get your name, SIG file out there). Or the post you are notified of could be your competition trying to promote something (you can monitor what they are doing). This will save you from scanning the newsgroups daily, and is a BIG time saver!

Let me repeat what happens here (it is that important!).

***Netwatch.ca* can save you the time of scanning through newsgroups daily and alerts you anytime there is something worth replying to in over 280,000 newsgroups online.**

Are you starting to understand how powerful this resource is?

You can even go the extent of having *Netwatch.ca* search for all of your competitors' email addresses on newsgroups. That way anytime your competitors are promoting their products/services or saying **ANYTHING** online, you will know about it.

You can also pay for other competition monitoring services. Companies such as *eWatch* (<http://www.ewatch.com>) or *MarkWatch* (<http://www.markwatch.com>) will monitor domain names, URLs, newsgroups, and websites for activity by

your competitors. Both services offer free trials so you can compare them before you commit. But note that you will spend a minimum of \$100 per month for this (it can be much higher depending on what specialized services you are interested in). There is a big price difference between these two companies to watch for as well, *MarkWatch* being the less expensive of the two.

There are about 50 resources that will help you investigate and monitor your competition online (including a lot of other neat resources for locating "sensitive" information). These are all on the personal resource list on the CD included with this course (*list.html* which can be accessed from the main menu of the CD). These resources will allow you to find information about your competitors that you would have not normally known about.

## **Find Out Who Your Competition Is**

Wondering how to find your competition online? It is very easy to have your computer automatically search out your competitors on the web and report the results back to you. You can do searches in search engines under appropriate keywords for your product or service (make sure you use robotic search engines like AltaVista or Infoseek as they will find more competitors' pages and they do re-indexing more often to find more of your competitors and their new webpages). Or you can use programs such as *Ferret* (<http://www.ferretsoft.com/>) which will use a combination of a few robotic search engines to get its results.

Some of the resources on my personal resource list (*list.html* on the CD that came with the course and can be accessed from the main menu of the CD) and programs like *Ferret* will allow you to search the web for your competitors company name, address, or personal name and find all the alternative email addresses, postal addresses or company names they may use. **This is important because you don't want your competitors spying on you.**

## NOTES:

**Note:** *If you are going to download the Ferret package, make sure you download all three components as it is split into email, web and phone Ferrets.*

Once you have a list of all of these alternative email addresses, company names, etc. you can search your own database to find out if they are on any of your information request lists, newsletters lists, bulk email lists... or even if they have ordered from you under a different name.

If your competition is on any of these lists, you want to make sure that they are removed so they cannot keep track of what you are doing. Always monitor your lists **monthly** to make sure your competitors have not requested information or accidentally got on one of the lists you send promotional material to.

This is easy to do. Keep all of your competitors email addresses in a separate file so with a couple of pushes of a button, *Mailloop* can search and extract these from any of your database or email lists.

Study what articles or information your competition is offering. Prowl websites, forums and libraries to see what articles your competition has already done. By doing this, you'll avoid duplicating what they have already done and get ideas on how to offer better or different information.

Check out **<http://www.switchboard.com>** where you can:

- enter any name and get their address and phone number in minutes
- get personal information and business information (if they have a business name)
- enter an address and find the owner of a house or building
- and much, much more

There are also a few other sites in the *list.html* file on the CD that came with this course (this file can be accessed from the main menu of the CD) which has links to other “spy” resources to find out just about anything on your competitors.

Heck, if you don’t want to use it for intelligent marketing and just want to find some hotels in the city you are traveling to, you can enter the city name, it will not only list them all but will give you a map of their exact locations.

## **The Importance Of HyperText Links To And From Your Competitors**

**Have a look at what sites your competition is hypertext linked to and from.**

Enter their main URL or domain name in the *Alta Vista* search engine (**<http://www.altavista.com>**). Remember that your competition has many webpages at their website, so you want to search under their main URL or domain name to find all of the other websites on the internet that are linked to **any** of your competitors.

For example, if your competition's main URL (or homepage) was **<http://www.abc.com>**, then you use this. If your competition's main URL is a subdirectory on an ISP's domain like **<http://www.xyz.com/company/>**, then use this. Don't search for any of their sub-pages (i.e. **<http://www.abc.com/links.html>**). If you use the main URL (i.e. home page), the results will list you any sites that are linked to other pages at the site.

You can also do a search for links to you or your competitors at **<http://www.linkpopularity.com>**. Just type in the URL and it will feed you back the results. It's a neat little tool!

The results of these searches will give you websites to contact in hopes that they will link to your site (since they have already linked to your competitors). This

would also help you understand how much effort and promotion your competitors are doing to get direct and/or reciprocal links.

Also take a look at the resources and links your competitors may have at their websites. This will give you insight as to what your competitors are doing, whom they may be affiliated with, and their experience on the web. If they have links to a bunch of poor resources or related sites, you know that they are not very active on the Internet and do not know their industry well online.

If you are serious about tracking your competitor's links, try *Lycos Link Alert* at <http://lla.lycos.com/lla>. It is a subscription based service updated twice monthly that will not only tell you who is linking to your site and what page they are linking to, but who is linked to your competitors as well! *Lycos Link Alert*, packages all the information into seven different reports - one even compares your links to your competitors all on one chart...so take time to browse.

Have you **ever wondered how much your competition is spending on banner advertising?** Well, it's easy to find out! By doing the searches mentioned above and finding your competitors links, you can visit all of the sites and find out what websites their banners are being displayed on. You contact those sites and pose as an interested advertiser asking about their advertising rates and visitors per day. This will give you a good idea of how much they are spending on banner advertising.

## **In Closing**

The reason you need to keep tabs on your competition is so that you know what the leaders in your field are doing. Keep notes on what works for them and adapt it to your situation.

You also want to know about the things that your competition does wrong so you can avoid their mistakes.



*NOTES:*

Study different methods of operation, get on a variety of mailing lists including your competitors' mailing lists, examine their catalogs, brochures, and classified ads ... especially if these things are being used over long periods of time (this may mean they are successful). Adapt the winning elements that successful businesses use and use them in your own business.

If you find something that works, model your projects after these winning ideas and improve on any weaknesses. **The fastest way to succeed is to model yourself after a successful competitor.**

Once you have a successful business online, you can modify and improve your business from the ideas you've learned in this course. But I will mention again that the fastest way to succeed is to model winning elements from your competition and modify them so they can be even more successful for you.

## **Lesson # 15**

### **Modeling Success**

Model Someone who is Successful ... But Don't Go too Far!

I am almost embarrassed to say this, but a few people have taken my "model someone who is successful" statement I use in the course a little too far.

When I say "model", I mean learn from them, mimic their successes and learn from the failures... not outright "copy" them (i.e. copyright violations, stealing products, etc.).

I will use myself as an example here. Because people know that I am successful, we have had a few people steal copy from our website... some even steal our graphics with the copy. All my websites and information are copyrighted. If you steal it, **I will come after you**, client or not... stealing is stealing.

Now, depending on whom you copy material from will depend on how fast you get caught... but you will almost always get caught.

Besides if you want your business to be really successful, how can you promote your business heavily when you know that with the more exposure you are getting you will take a VERY big risk of getting caught. Even if you are just mildly successful, the originator of the work you copied will find you and take legal action.

I say this for a couple of reasons.

Let me give you an example. We have so many clients out there that within 30 days of someone posting copies of our website's pages, content of the course, information, or anything else related to us, we are bound to get an email from a client telling us about it. We immediately find them and depending on the severity of the offense we either give them a letter of

**NOTES:**

formal intent to sue (and we do, unless they meet some harsh demands of ours), or if the offense is serious enough, we will file a lawsuit immediately. I take copyright violation very seriously and have zero tolerance.

This has not been a large problem, actually for the size of our client base, it is rare (almost all of our clients are very honest and ethical), but it has to be mentioned.

Almost every situation has been resolved on reasonable terms, but we have had to continue with our copyright infringement suits in a few instances.

I have to tell you about one of them because it is just plain interesting. These thieves copied (almost word for word) my ***Car Secrets Revealed*** book and were selling it online (which is a very serious offense). We tried to be pleasant and give them a way out, but they thought we were bluffing and not willing to spend the money to sue them. To make a long story short, they now have a \$250,000 civil law suit that will cost them at least \$40,000 just to defend (much less the pay out when we win the suit as it is a "no-brainer" copyright suit). I will **make sure** they pay for the rest of their lives. They messed with the wrong person, I have deep pockets and will make sure they pay.

I am not a mean person... I gave them ample room to get out of the suit if they just co-operated with us and met our reasonable demands for the circumstances. But this guy actually had the attitude that he was "king-shit" (excuse the language, but just no other way to describe his attitude accurately) and 'it was his right to steal my work if he wanted to'. You can just imagine how infuriated I was at his attitude. Well, they messed with the wrong guy... I take that as a personal challenge and will make sure he will be paying for this mistake for the rest of his life. A very stupid mistake on his part... they were in the wrong and we caught them... but they still tried to get away with it.

Why am I telling you this?  
For two reasons.

One, for those who do not know that it is illegal to copy a webpage or information from someone else, you know now.

Second, I want you to feel the same way about your work (if you have an information product or a product idea someone can steal). You have worked hard at it, don't let someone gain from your sweat and blood... defend it! Yes... even if it costs you money. You will feel better about it and they will pay for their wrongdoings.

To end this "serious" matter... let's lighten it up a little with a funny story about copyright violation.

I had a gentleman who booked a 1 hour appointment with me (at \$640 per hour). When he called in for the appointment his goal was to have me critique his website and product. That was fine... that is one of the most common things I do for clients.

When I loaded his page I just sat there in awe. The page was, **word for word**, a copy of my Car Secrets sales letter with a few very minor changes (basically he substituted his product name in the areas when it mentioned "Car Secrets Revealed" in my webpage).

**I was stunned** and just remained silent for a moment.

Think about this... here is a guy who is paying me \$640 an hour to critique his website, when all of it is a DIRECT copyright violation of my site and all my hard work in designing the site and writing the sales letter.

It was not only the strangest consultation I have ever had, I was just plain confused. Why would he pay me to critique his site when it is just a copy of mine (so he knows the copy works). And also, why would he risk showing it to me in the first place knowing he had just committed a civil and criminal offense (he falsified testimonials which is criminal, not civil).

I finally got the breath to speak and I said "Do you realize what you have done here?". He was stunned at my question and muttered back, "What are you talking

**NOTES:**

about". I replied, " You just copied my site word for word and committed a copyright violation... that is grounds for a very expensive lawsuit, not to mention that you used the same testimonials from my clients for your product and that it is a criminal offense... FRAUD... you can get arrested for that - the FTC does not like that kind of thing." He was just shocked and said, "I don't understand? I see people copying other people's webpages all the time so I thought it was OK to do that".

To make a long story short (which you can tell, I am not so good at doing), we talked and this client truly had **no idea what he had done**... he thought this was OK and legal to copy webpages and sales letters. To say the least, he changed the pages immediately and apologized. I was not rude or hard on him... actually I was very pleasant because he truly didn't know what he did was wrong.

Isn't it interesting to learn about the way some people think?

Now you can say, you have heard it all.

## **Lesson # 16**

### **Search Engine Secrets**

Search engines are a way for you to generate from as little as 20% to as much as 60% of your business online (depending on what other marketing techniques you use). Since there are over 100,000,000 webpages in existence, it is extremely important to understand how they work and how to increase your chances of getting placed in the top 20 of the search results. For example, if you were to type "music" and "CD" into the AltaVista search engine as a keyword the result would be over 1,000,000 related site URLs.

Search engines are a **very powerful tool** if you are in the top 50 results, but are **completely useless** if you are listed further down. You can bet that if you are further down than the 50th result, the searchee will not even see your site listing, much less visit it.

It is crucial you understand the basics of how search engines work. There are three main types of search engines: Directories, Indexing Search Engines and META Search Engines.

The first, a directory is sometimes called a category database. This is a listing of webpages by category and is not a true search engine, Many directories allow you to enter in the description and keywords for your site exactly as you would like them to appear. You usually have to select the category you want it cited under.

A directory will not list your URL and will never become aware of your site until you register with them. An example of a directory is *Yahoo*.

Search engines (also called carollers, spiders, robots, and worms) vary to a large degree. They will automatically index your site using "indexing software" or "indexing robots".

Depending on the complexity of the software, here is

what different search engines might do:

- 1) Index the webpage (not the entire "website") you give them.
- 2) Index every word of every page at a site.
- 3) Visit external links to crawl through the web looking for any new sites 24 hours a day, 7 days a week going from URL to URL until they have visited every website that can be found on the Internet.

By simply telling the search engine what your URL is, its software robot will go there automatically and index everything they need. Every search engine has different criteria for returning search results (we discuss the specifics of each search engine later in this lesson).

It is important to realize that many search engines change their algorithms on a regular basis (i.e. weekly, monthly, etc.) — if you're listed prominently today, that may not be true tomorrow.

Search engines change on a regular basis and they are getting smarter every day. *HotBot* for example introduced a new technology called Direct Hit to its arsenal. HotBot is now capable of tracking who it sends to a website and how long the visitors stay there. This helps them keep user preference statistics, which can be factored into their system.

The third category of search engines is META search engines. These perform searches on multiple indexing search engines simultaneously. In this instance, your ranking for a keyword is calculated by the combined ranking of all the search engines simultaneously used. The key to getting ranked high is to make sure you're **listed in all** the search engines used by the META search engines (They use: *OpenText, Lycos, WebCrawler, InfoSeek, Excite, AltaVista, Yahoo, HotBot, and Einet Galaxy*).

The two most popular META search engines are:

**MetaCrawler**

**<http://www.metacrawler.com>**

## MetaSearch

<http://www.metasearch.com>

It is **not necessary to submit your site to META search engines** since they use the results of other major search engines (i.e. not their own).

## What's New and Hot/Cool Sites

*What's New* and *Hot/Cool Sites of The Day* have popped up everywhere on the net. They are not worth your time and effort.

Let's go over the "cool" or "hot site of the day" programs first. The idea behind these is that someone will nominate your site enabling you to win the "cool/hot site of the day" award and drawing attention to your site.

Although this looks good at first, it is actually quite self-serving for the owner of the cool site of the day program. The concept is that if you win the award, you "can" display the award graphic at your site. The graphic links back to their page. By offering this award to a site every day, the owner of the hot/cool site program gets 365 sites linking back to their site for a year (for free). This allows them to get more traffic and charge more for their banner or sponsorship advertising.

It's not worth your time and effort to nominate yourself for these awards. If you insist on doing this, pay a service to nominate your site for you (they charge a couple of hundred dollars). These nomination services are changing all the time so if you are interested go to <http://www.marketingtips.com/searchengine.html>

A list of the "new and cool" sites can be found at:  
<http://www.iTools.com/promote-it>

The *What's New* sites used to be effective (over a year ago). Now they are so cluttered they are a complete waste of time. You will get a small surge in traffic, but it is of negligible effect. The only time you can get



reasonable traffic this way is with a *What's New* site that charges for the listing. *Yahoo's What's New* site charges over \$1000/week and it is very hard to justify the traffic and make a profit at that price.

If you decide to list your sites on the free *What's New* sites, here are a few major ones you might try:

*What's New Too!*

**<http://www.WhatsNewToo.com/submit.html>**

*Netscape Netcenter "What's New"*

**<http://www.netscape.com/netcenter/new.html?cp=hom06snew>**

## **Only the Top 8 Search Engines Matter**

They are:

<b>AltaVista</b>	<b><a href="http://www.altavista.digital.com">http://www.altavista.digital.com</a></b>
<b>Excite</b>	<b><a href="http://www.excite.com">http://www.excite.com</a></b>
<b>HotBot</b>	<b><a href="http://www.hotbot.com">http://www.hotbot.com</a></b>
<b>InfoSeek</b>	<b><a href="http://www.infoseek.com">http://www.infoseek.com</a></b>
<b>Lycos</b>	<b><a href="http://www.lycos.com">http://www.lycos.com</a></b>
<b>Northern Light</b>	<b><a href="http://www.northernlight.com">http://www.northernlight.com</a></b>
<b>WebCrawler</b>	<b><a href="http://www.webcrawler.com">http://www.webcrawler.com</a></b>
<b>Yahoo</b>	<b><a href="http://www.yahoo.com">http://www.yahoo.com</a></b>

***Note:** Excite gets over 10 million searches a month, Infoseek gets over 9 million searches per month, AltaVista gets over 8 million searches a month, Lycos gets over 5 millions searches a month, WebCrawler gets over 2.4 million searches a month, and HotBot gets over 1.4 million searches a month.*

One of the biggest wastes of money is to pay someone to list you in 500 or more search engines, thinking that you will get 50 times the exposure than listing in the top 8 or so. You will **not get any substantial increase** in traffic to your site by submitting to more search engines than the top 8 because there is so little consumer traffic to the others.

**NOTES:**

I've seen estimates indicating that over 80% of all traffic generated by Search Engines come from the top 8 - 10 Search Engines. So by concentrating on these, and on getting a good position you should see a considerable increase in traffic simply by getting good positions in just a few of the top Search Engines.

Let me give you an example. I recently visited a search engine that was rated approximately number 70 out of all the search engines/directories. I went to the submission page where you submit your URL and the counter showed **11 856 629 visitors** (WOW!). Then, just for the heck of it, I decided to "surf" that engine. I went into the automotive section and the counter read **340 visitors** (yes... not 340 000, but 340!).

As you can see, everybody was submitting their site to the search engine, but in the entire time it had been up and running, only **340 people visited this category in the search engine and maybe only a handful of those may have actually linked to my site!** You could waste hundreds of dollars and your time submitting to search engines that people are not using, only to get a couple of hundred visitors a year.

Don't get caught up with "more is better". It is like vitamins... because one vitamin a day is good for you, it doesn't mean that five vitamins a day are better. Submit to the first eight search engines and forget about the rest of them.

Here are the results of a survey we did with 3000 people to see which search engines are used most. And the results:

<i>Yahoo</i>	31%
<i>WebCrawler</i>	26%
<i>Infoseek</i>	17%
<i>AltaVista</i>	13%
<i>Excite</i>	9%

These percentages change rapidly, so beware.

## **How To Get Superior Positioning**

When someone searches for a keyword(s), the search engines retrieves a list of related webpages and display them in a "relevancy" or "best-match" order. In other words, the pages that best match the keywords are ranked highest on the list.

Each search engine or directory uses a different method for ranking the relevancy of each webpage to the keywords submitted for the search. That's why it is **so important to carefully select your keywords and make necessary changes to your webpage before submitting it to optimize this potential.**

Search engines receive thousands of requests everyday from people who want to make changes to their website listings! These requests are at the bottom of any search engine's priority list. Actually, you are better off trying to completely remove your listing rather than change it.

It is **absolutely critical to take your time and submit your site "right" the first time.**

On that note, **never use** a free automated URL submission service. These companies don't tell you that every search engine is extremely different in the way they list, index and rank websites. The only way to get properly listed with a search engine is to know what the differences are, and to enter your information by hand (either yourself or a professional company... we will talk about this later).

Generally speaking, your page will get ranked higher if you:

1. Use great keywords
2. Use your keywords in the title of the page
3. Use your keywords in META tags
4. Use your keywords in the Body text

The confidence or relevancy factor is a measure of how "sure" a search engine is that you're search query

matches a particular webpage. For example, if you did a search query for "car buying", webpages that have the word "car" and "buying" right after one another throughout the title, description, and text in the file (especially the first few sentences) would rate a 90% or higher confidence or relevancy factor. Whereas, if you had the word "car" separated from the word "buying" by a couple of other words throughout the title and did not mention it in the description, it would rank **much lower** by relevancy factor.

There are many small modifications you can make to your webpages that will greatly increase your chances of being in the top ten results for your keywords. We will talk about these *tips* in detail a bit later, but first...

## **Picking Keywords**

When selecting keywords, try to think like your potential customer... what would **they** be looking for? Choose keywords that are directly related to your pages, and additionally choose keywords that your target market may be using in a search. Realize that the keywords you think best describe your page/product/service may not be the ones used by people who are searching for your product or service

For example, if you owned a hotel near the Empire State Building. You would want to have keywords like "Empire State Building" and "New York City" because people searching for this information may be planning to visit, and you want them to find out about your hotel.

Another example could be people buying new cars. They may search for *Edmund's Price Guide* because it is a big name. Since these people are considering buying a new car, they are perfect potential buyers for my book ***Car Secrets Revealed***. I therefore may use "Edmund" as a keyword for my site.

**\*\*\* Note: Be careful here, some companies with trademarked names are now suing web site**

**owners who have hidden their trademarks on unauthorized sites.**

To make your keywords more powerful, **you have to understand what your clients are looking for**. The problem is this — there are so many combinations of keywords that people can use when they are doing a search, that you have no idea what ones are getting used the most. Of course, you want to know this so you can design your website to appear high in the results for those keyword searches (therefore getting more clients).

**Proper selection of your keywords is critical**, so spend a lot of time on this. Picture your perfect client and target market and imagine what keywords they might type into the search engine. I recommend consulting with friends and affiliates since they might come up with different keywords.

Use all the variations of your keywords that you think people will use. For example, the keyword "diet" could be "diet", "diets", "dieting"...

You may come up with as many as 30-40 keywords, but you then must narrow them down to 10 or 15 of the most powerful ones. Once you've done that, sit down and rank them in order of importance and consider combining words to make them even more powerful.

For example, the words "car" and "buying" are great keywords by themselves, but putting them together as "car buying" can **be ten times more relevant to a search engine**.

For my **Car Secrets** site, we didn't know how many people were searching for the words:

car  
cars  
automobile  
automotive  
vehicle  
truck

truck buying  
truck leasing  
truck lease  
car buy  
car buying  
car lease

car leasing  
automobile lease  
automobile leasing  
automobile buy  
automobile buying  
car purchase

**NOTES:**

car purchasing  
car prices  
automotive  
purchasing  
automotive prices  
automotive lease

automotive leasing  
automotive buying  
new car buying  
new car  
new car buy  
car repairs

automotive repairs  
vehicle repairs  
automobile repairs  
...and so on

We found out that the most popular keywords searched were "car buying", "car lease", and "car leasing", **so we concentrated on those keywords**. All the other keywords were only bringing in a fraction of the hits those few "most popular" keywords were. Bingo, this was our target market!

So how did we find out which ones were being used the most? Well that's the tricky part. Contact two of the top 8 search engines (you pick which ones) and say you want to buy keywords ("Buying keywords" is an advertising term where you have your banner displayed on the search engine's search result screen every time that keyword is entered).

You can pay anywhere from about \$30 to \$120 per 1000 banner impressions. If you are interested in advertising, you can give the search engine a list of keywords and ask them to provide you with a report on how many hits they are getting on each. This will help you decide which ones and how much of each keyword to buy.

**Important Tip:** *It rarely is profitable to buy keywords (and display your banner) in a search engine. We have tried it many times and have never made a profit to date. The search engines usually charge too much money and the people doing the search are too busy trying to go through the results to notice your banner at the top anyway. Depending on the number of hits on those keywords, the cost can be thousands of dollars per month. Why spend this on advertising when with the proper techniques and tricks, you can get similar results (i.e. getting your site ranked at the top of the search results) **for free?***

There is another catch, however. A few of the keywords could already be committed to another advertiser and they won't bother looking up the number of hits for those keywords. State that you want hit counts on all the keywords, even if they are already committed to an advertiser since you may be interested in buying those keywords as soon as the current advertiser's contract is up. That is how you get all the numbers. **You will then know the most popular keywords for your products/services and how you should tailor your page to get the majority of the traffic.**

The danger is that an inexperienced web marketer can construct a carelessly written 25 word description or list of non-effective keywords blowing their opportunity to get the most visitors possible from search engines. It is very important that you use "chief" keywords in your title, site description and provide an intriguing message that will entice people to visit your site.

## **Analyze Your Competition**

Don't neglect your competition. Start with one of the major search engines and systematically "search for" all your keywords and phrases. Take note of the Top 10 results. Click on the links and go see the pages.

Look at what the viewer sees and then look at the HTML code. To do this click on "View" and then on "Source."

Check out the titles, META tags, determine the keywords. If this is a particularly important competitor save their source code to a file, so that you can go back and check out some of the things I will cover later in this chapter.

Keep track of your results as you make your way through all your *keywords*. You will find that the same sites and pages keep coming back again and again. These are the ones to really pay attention to. This is your direct competition. Since they are already in the Top 10 they have been successful at the "game." This

is who you have to top!

If you find some sites that appear to defy logic, just take note of them. You may find pages in which:

- the titles or keywords don't match your search results,
- the "description" listed by the search engine doesn't match what is said on the page,
- file extensions are not .htm or .html,
- the file size listed doesn't match

Just take note of these for now, and check them again once you've learned about some of the advanced tips and tricks.

Also take note of the keywords your competition is using that you don't have on your list. Are these relevant for you? Should you have them on your list?

## **Using Keywords in Titles**

**The titles of your home page and individual webpages are of paramount importance.**

For those who have forgotten, the title is in the web page tag content <TITLE>. It shows up at the top of your browser screen. Many people overlook this important part of the web page, giving their pages useless and nonsense names such as "my home page" or "gary10032". If visitors bookmark these pages, the title will be meaningless within minutes.

Additionally some search engines look at the <TITLE> tag first and may give a higher ranking for sites with titles matching the keyword search.

Try to have a small description right in the title, because it will rank much higher in the search engine.

For example, the **Car Secrets** webpage has nothing about "**Car Secrets**" in the title... who is going to search for the keywords "car" and "secrets"? Most



people would just call the site "**Car Secrets Revealed**". This would be a BIG mistake since that title would not be effective with the search engines.

The title for the **Car Secrets** site reads "**Automotive Tips: Money-Saving Automobile Tips on Repairs, Car Buying, Leasing, Insurance, and more**", instead of just reading "**Car Secrets Revealed**". The words "automobile" and "car" are unnecessary in the title, but they are the keywords people will be searching for.

This is my title in HTML code.

```
<title>Automotive Tips: Money-Saving Automobile Tips on Repairs, Car Buying, Leasing, Insurance, and More</title>
```

There are four things to note about the title I used:

- The most important thing to do is **list as many keywords as possible in your title**.
- The first word starts with an "A" . Some of the directories are listed alphabetically and a few of the search engines give an alphabetical weighting.
  - ◆ As you may know, computers sort the alphabet in the following order: symbols, numbers, capital letters and then lower case letters. i.e. !@# 123 ABC abc.
  - ◆ Don't put in a pile of nonsense symbols and numbers in order to be listed before someone with an "A". People DO read the listings, and if they don't make sense they won't click to your site. Additionally, the search engines are getting "smarter" on a daily basis and can be programmed to counter-act any tricks. The title you use should be relevant to your site.
  - ◆ *Hint: Try to stay away from names such as A1 Enterprises or Gary's Custom Lighting since they do not invoke a professional or trustworthy image.*
- I put the word "car" beside "buying" instead of "tips", "repairs", or "insurance", because "car buying" is one of the most popular search words. Having the words "car" and "buying" closer together will get me ranked higher when someone searches

for "car buying".

- I used the word "buying", not just "buy". This is so if some one enters "car buying" or "car buy" the search engine will recognize my site with both.
- You can **double your response rate by adding an "s" to the end of every keyword**. For example, say "cars" instead of "car". If your keyword is "car" and someone types in "cars", you will not show up in the search results. However, if your keyword is "cars" you will come up when someone searches for "car" **or for** "cars" (because "car" is part of the word "cars"). On that same note, think of any "ing" extensions that would be popular. For example, with my **Car Secrets** site, I knew that people would use the words "buy" and "buying" so I used the keyword "buying" to turn up in any search for "buy" or "buying".

Here's the title for *The Internet Marketing Center*

```
<title>Advertising, website promotion & internet  
marketing for small business or office - Marketing  
Tips</title>
```

Here's another example for a company called "VCRON Corporation". Instead of calling the home page "VCRON Corp.", call it "VCRON home and business video surveillance and security" instead.

I can't over-emphasize how important your page titles are. Put your best keyword(s) at the beginning your title. Some of the search engines **only look in the title for keywords**, not in your description or home page content... using the best keywords in your title is critical!

For a little entertainment, I thought you might like to see the top ten search words used in search engines lately:

1. sex
2. nude
3. pictures

4. adult
5. women
6. erotic
7. software
8. erotica
9. naked
10. gay

The top search words change depending on the search engine used and on a monthly basis, if you want to see the most current information available... visit:

**<http://searchenginewatch.com/facts/searches.html>**

I guess this shows what people are interested in!

I am guilty of capitalizing on this myself. I did not feel comfortable selling nude or X-rated pictures, products, etc. Instead I tried to come up with something that would appeal to this huge "adult entertainment" market and at the same time something which I would still feel comfortable in selling.

I met an interesting doctor through one of the expensive \$7,000 seminars I was attending that claimed to have a great video of techniques on how to heighten a couple's sexual relationship. He claimed the video was done with class and dignity (It was very similar to the *Better Sex* series or *Making Love* series that you have probably seen advertised on TV). So I decided to buy these directly from him and sell his video online to appeal to this market, and needless to say, **it went very well.**

I am mentioning this because I don't want too many of you to get caught up in this market because it is so big. It is so saturated now that unless you had a "foothold" in the beginning and made a name for yourself, it is hard to make money in the adult industry online... you have to be very savvy. If you are already in the adult industry, stay in it... there is money to be made... but if you are starting from scratch, think twice as you will have a long road ahead of you.

I've seen estimates that it takes at least 25 hours a week in order to an adult site promoter to keep up with the search engines ... since you still have to maintain the site and sell your product this is basically a full time job!

The problem is the sex market is cluttered with thousands of sites promoting degrading X-rated pictures, video feeds, phone sex lines, and such things. Don't even bother with this market even if you think you have a quality legitimate marital aid or something that is not "hardcore" sexually related... it is so saturated with "crap" that you will get piled in with the rest of the pornography even if you have a product that is directly in the pornography business.

## **Using META Tags**

Most search engines are making use of META tags. **Inserting META tags in all of your webpages is a must to increase your website traffic.** META tags are HTML code messages hidden in your webpages. They are not displayed on web browsers or seen by visitors, but only by search engines that visit and index your page. A META tag is like a mini index of your title, a description of your site, and a short list of keywords.

By using META tags, you are telling the software spider/robot that visits how to catalogue your site based on your preferred description and choice of keywords. Words contained in META tags are given **a lot** of weight by search engines so be sure to use them wisely.

This is another opportunity to use your carefully chosen keywords.

Use the example shown below from ***Car Secrets Revealed*** to develop your own HTML code for the META tags:

<Head>

## NOTES:

```
<title>Automotive Tips: Money-Saving Automobile Tips on  
Repairs, Car Buying, Leasing, Insurance, and More</title>  
<body bgcolor="#FFFFFF" text="#000000" alink="#FF0000"  
link="#FF0000" vlink="#000057">
```

```
<META Name="description" Content="Automotive Tips: Learn  
hundreds of money saving insider tips on new or used car  
buying, leasing, how to get FREE repairs after your  
warranty expires, how to get 20-40%% off every auto part,  
reducing car insurance, parts and more. Save time, money  
and aggravation.">
```

```
<META Name="keywords" Content="car, cars, buy,  
automobile, automotive, buying, lease, leasing, repairs,  
new, parts, auto, used, truck, automobiles, sell,  
vehicle, selling, book, service, maintenance, wholesale,  
warranty, price, insurance, tips, tax, mechanics,  
purchase, consumer, money, help, information, tune-up,  
engine, oil, mufflers, brakes, transmission">  
</Head>
```

As mentioned in previous lessons, it is important to be familiar with HTML coding but you do not have to be master at it. Use the META tag codes above as a template and substitute your title description and keywords in place.

## Using Keywords in the Web Page Design

So far you've done three things:

- 1) chosen and tested your keywords
- 2) used keywords in the titles of your web pages
- 4) used keywords in META tags

Now let's look at what you can do to optimize your search engine results by using the design and body of your web pages.

### **Place Text BEFORE Images**

On most web sites you see a pretty picture or a logo first, then the text follows. Search Engines don't look at images and won't catalogue them, even if they

**NOTES:**

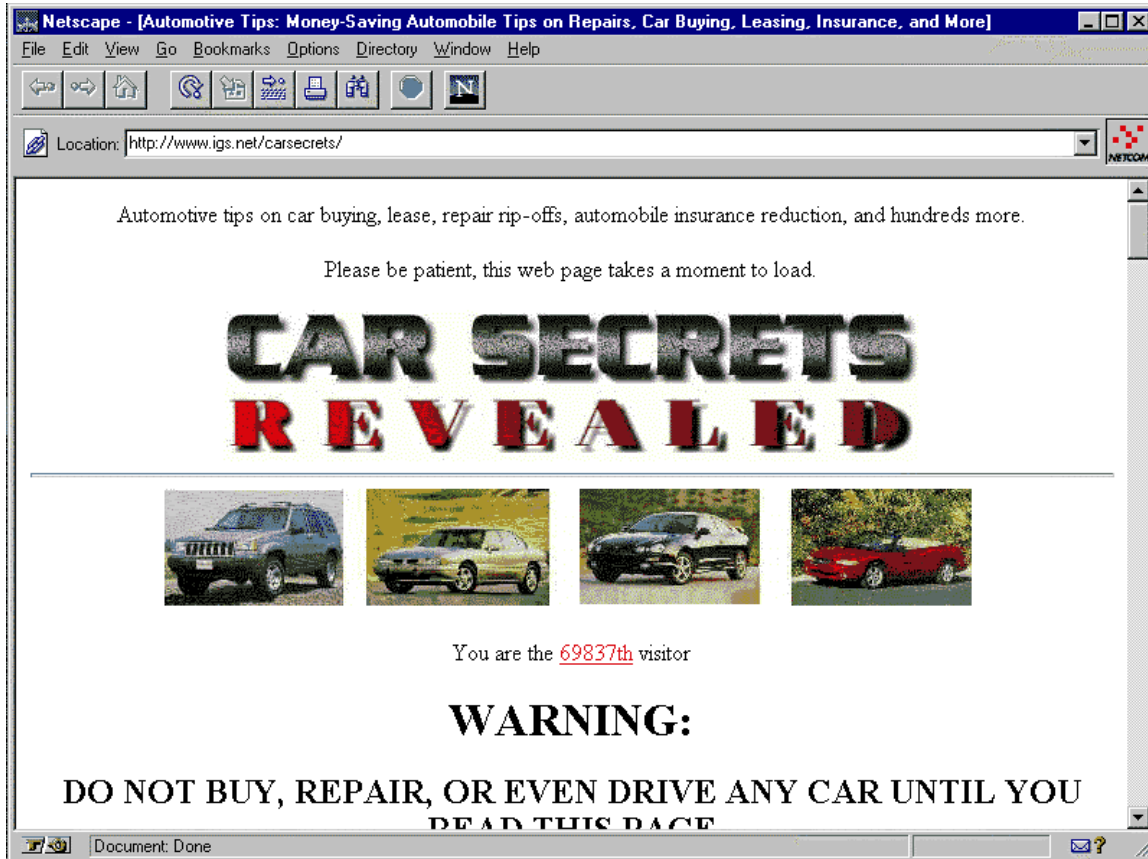
include the statement of a benefit or your keywords.

If your image loads before your benefit-laden text, you will lose search engine positioning.

**Put a short description of your webpage right at the top of your site as the first line of text.**

Most search engines rank keywords that are higher in your webpage as more relevant. Another reason for this is many search engines simply select the first 10 to 20 words of your page as your page description. And using this technique guarantees you have a punchy message for your description rather than some rambling words or HTML code.

The following is an example of how I almost repeat my title with a punchy description in the first line of text of **Car Secrets** (the title line is at the top of the screen capture beside the word Netscape):



## Use Images in Your Webpages to Hide Keywords

When you display an image on your webpage, you have the option of adding text that will show if the image is **not** displayed (i.e. if the graphics option on the web browser is turned "off"). Many people surf the web with the image loading feature on their web browsers turned off, since navigating the web and loading pages is much quicker that way (that is another reason why the graphics on your webpage should enhance your marketing message, not carry it).

The alternative text that is displayed when a graphic is not loaded should give them an idea of what they are missing. But it can be used to place suggestive keywords. If you were selling health products, instead of the alternative text saying "picture", you could say "vitamin supplement picture"

## NOTES:

of health products", since this will add more keywords to your page without them getting in the way.

Here is an example of the HTML code behind an image:

```

```

### **Tips, Tricks and Advanced Keyword Placement Techniques**

I may not necessary agree with all of these, however they are being used and you should know about them. You may want to use some of them and pass on others. At the least they will help you figure out what your competition is doing and why they are getting top rankings.

The key thing to remember is that the search engines and the people who are programming them catch on quickly, and the relevancy algorithms used by a search engine can change overnight.

### **Keyword Stuffing**

Keyword stuffing is when you list a few of your most important keyword hundreds of times at the bottom of your webpage. This can be done two different ways. The words can be listed in the smallest type available at the bottom of your page, or the words can be listed at the very bottom of your page with the text color being the same color as your background (making it "invisible").

### **Don't Use Keyword Stuffing!**

This was a popular and successful technique in the past, but as you may already know, several search engines are penalizing people for this and may automatically delete your listing if you are caught doing it. This is very old technique and it doesn't work anymore.



**NOTES:**

Don't repeat or hide keywords, but DO **repeat and hide sentences**. The more times a keyword occurs, the higher the relevancy rating your page gets in the search engine.

The **wrong way:**

```
<font color="#FFFFFF">
car car car car car car car car car car car car car car
car car car car car car car car car cars cars cars cars
cars cars cars cars cars cars cars cars cars cars cars
cars cars cars cars cars cars cars cars cars buying
buying buying buying buying buying buying buying buying
buying buying buying buying buying buying buying buying
buying buying buying lease lease lease lease lease
lease lease lease lease lease lease lease lease lease
lease lease lease lease lease lease lease lease leasing
leasing leasing leasing leasing leasing leasing leasing
leasing leasing leasing leasing leasing leasing leasing
leasing leasing leasing leasing leasing leasing automobile
automobile automobile automobile automobile
automobile automobile automobile automobile
automobile automobile.... AND SO ON... I WILL NOT
LIST ANYMORE AS IT CAN GO ON FOR PAGES>
</font>
```

The **right way:**

```
<font color="#FFFFFF">
<Car buying is great for automotive people. Car
leasing is good too. Buy or lease any new automobile
at car wholesale prices. Cars and their repairs,
lower insurance rates for automobiles you lease. Buy
cars at automotive dealership cost. I would like to
buy a new car and sell a used car soon. Automobile
leasing is great for car enthusiasts and people
looking at buying a car. New trucks are great to
lease. I repair cars and trucks for new car deals.
Car leasing is only good if you sell your used car
that had repair rip-offs.... THIS CAN GO FOR A PAGE
OR TWO.>
</font>
```

As you can see this last example does not have great sentence structure and the sentences don't make a lot

## NOTES:

of sense, but they are packed with keywords. And the reason for doing this is to increase the keyword density of your web page.

There are two ways to hide these at the bottom of your webpage;

The first is to make the font very small and have those sentences displayed at the bottom of your page (i.e. the HTML code would be `<FONT=-4> Put your repetitive sentences here </FONT>`). This will display the sentences in very small type, but they will still be noticeable to people who surf your site. Some of your visitors may be confused by all this text at the bottom of your page and some might be angry with you for "tricking" the search engine.

The second way to do this (and the best way) is to use a solid GIF background instead of a standard color that you can specify in the HTML code (i.e. `<body bgcolor="#FFFFFF">`). Then, when you want to list the keyword sentences, make the font the same color as the background GIF.

**Note:** *the #FFFFFF code is for the color white. I have included a file called netscape.gif to show all the standard colors you can pick for your background or font.*

In other words, as you may know, you can specify a standard background color with the command `<body bgcolor="#FFFFFF">` (that code is for white) or use an image as a background with the command `<body background="bg-02.jpg" text="#000000">`. That bg-02.gif image could even be a solid white color.

By using a solid color GIF as a background, the search engine cannot tell that the background color of the page is the same color as your font (therefore making keyword sentences invisible to your visitors). The search engine will still catalogue all the hidden keywords.

Remember to use the GIF image background because

## NOTES:

some search engines will penalize you (and will even delete your submission) if you use a standard background color with the same color font.

Make sure you use a small, fast loading GIF for your background, because your "hidden text" may be visible while your background image is loading.

*Note: Most of the Search Engines don't like this technique and will penalize or reject sites that use font colors that are the same as (or even close to) the background color. In addition to the automatic controls, there may be an occasional search engine human that looks at your site. So be careful!*

### **Hiding Keywords in the Comment Code**

Another way to "keyword stuff" is to hide keywords as comments in your HTML code. Comments are used by programmers to add their remarks throughout the code. They are surrounded by `<!-- -->`, and are supposed to be for comments like this:

```
<!-- Start of form for ordering -->
```

Keyword stuffing would look like this:

```
<!-- car, cars, buy, buying, lease, leasing,
automobile, automobiles, automotive, car, cars, buy,
buying, lease, leasing, automobile, automotive, car,
cars, buy, buying, lease, leasing, automobile,
automobiles, automotive, repairs, new, parts, auto,
used, truck, automobiles, sell, vehicle, selling,
book, service, maintenance, wholesale, warranty,
price, insurance, tips, tax, mechanics, purchase,
consumer, money, help, information, tune-up, engine,
oil, mufflers, brakes, transmission -->
```

This is a very old technique and **does not work anymore either**. Most search engines are programmed to ignore these comments now.

## The Hidden Picture Technique

You already know that you should be using the <IMG ALT> tag in order to properly caption your pictures and graphics with good descriptions and keywords. Well, here's a nifty trick that you may wish to try.

Create a picture that doesn't show up on your web page. That's right, the picture is there but you can't see it because it is only one pixel high by one pixel wide. **And** not only is it ever so tiny, it is transparent or the exact same color as your background GIF.

So, now that you have this little picture that no one can see what do you do with it? You label it with your <IMG ALT> tag information, which is filled with great keywords.

Don't get too carried away, people who surf with their images turned off will see these descriptions, so make them relevant!

## Links, Links and More Links

A number of search engines including Alta Vista and Excite have a limit on how many pages you can submit in total, or a limit on how many pages you can submit per day.

When a search engine robot or spider is crawling though the web it may start with pages it already has in its index. The first thing it will do is check for changes on a page and then it may follow the links on a page and will index the pages it finds as a result of the links.

In order to create an advantage, you will want to have your web pages linked to **every other** page on your site.

**If you have a large site this could create an unsightly mess.** So instead of having your pages

cluttered up with your own links, use the Hidden Picture technique to hide the links.

Create your tiny GIFs and make sure they are either transparent or the same color as your background. Then label them with your <A HREF> tags.

The HTML code would look like this:

```
<A href="http://www.marketingtips.com/subscr.html">  
</a>
```

Several search engines also give a weighting for “site popularity.” This is determined by the number of links to pages on your site. Your own links will help bump up your “popularity”!

If you have too many pages to make this practical. Design a site map or table of contents that links to every page on your site, once. Then on each page, have a link (hidden or not) back to your main link page.

## **Catch and Point Pages**

Catch and Point pages use a few keywords or phrases in order to get good ratings with the search engines. Other than the few visible words and graphics everything else is hidden in the codes and is designed to get high search engine ratings.

The keyword “heavy” webpages all link, or “point” to the main page of the site.

The keywords on the page will match the title and META tags resulting in a very high density rating for each of the *keywords*. This technique works best if you build catch and point pages for each of your keywords or phrases.

For example, someone with a site for writers faces pretty fierce competition. They might build separate pages that focus on *keywords* or phrases such as “technical writing” “novel writing” and so on.

All that would appear on the page would be the phrase “technical writing” and perhaps a small GIF and a link to the main site index page.

**Note:** *These pages could be annoying to your potential customers especially if they load slowly. Make sure everything, including GIFS load extra quick!*

## **Automatic Redirect Pages**

Automatic redirect pages have been used with some success in the past. However the search engines are catching on and don't like them. You may encounter this technique from time to time so here's how it works.

You click on a link and as you watch the page load information at the bottom of your screen you see that the page you clicked on is being replaced by another page without any action on your part. The first page, which you never actually see is the redirecting page.

The redirecting page is stuffed with keywords and is specifically designed to score high on keyword density. The HTML code that redirects you looks like this:

```
<META HTTP-EQUIV="refresh" content="1:URL=index.html">
```

When index.html is the page you are redirected to, the browser will go to it immediately.

Many of the search engines will not allow you to submit pages with redirect information on them so you will probably be seeing less of this in the future. However if your competition is using this successfully with specific search engines you may consider using it too.

## **JavaScript Redirects**

Some search engines won't index pages with the <META> refresh tag on them. JavaScript can do essentially the same job, redirecting the viewer to

another page.

What happens as far as the search engine is concerned is that the JavaScript will be “read” and indexed in front of everything else on the “real” page.

We have just talked in great detail about how important it is to get your title, META tags and opening text as close to the top of the page as possible. Inserting the JavaScript redirect code in front of all of this can result in a lower ranking.

JavaScript is a programming language. If you don't know how to program it, consider hiring your current ISP to write a script for you, or hire a programmer. You can find programmers in various newsgroups.

Search for the following newsgroups:

comp.lang.java  
comp.lang.java.javascript  
comp.lang.java.programmer  
comp.lang.javascript

## **Now You See Me, Now You Don't**

This is also known as the “bait and switch.” It has been around in the retail business forever (and is illegal in some areas).

If you have been checking out the competition and can't figure out why on earth their site has a high rating, to the point where their rating just defies logic and everything else you have learned...

It may be because they've submitted a page designed to optimize results for a specific search engine. There may be nothing of real value on the page other than code and keywords designed to get top 10 listings. Then once the search engine has indexed, classified and linked to the site, they switch the page that was submitted with their “real” page.

This technique is most often used with **InfoSeek** since InfoSeek usually responds and indexes a site quickly.

Ethical? No. I'm telling you so that you know what's happening out there. The result is a bit of equally questionable retribution whereby angry competitors have resubmitted the "site's real page" resulting in a drastic drop in results.

## **Someone's Knocking at My Door**

This one is pretty sophisticated and requires a good understanding of CGI scripting.

Whenever you go surfing on over to a site, your IP number identifies you. Basically you announce your presence with a business card in the form of a string of numbers. Well, certain enterprising companies have "discovered" the business card numbers of the various search engines.

If it's just you or me who come calling, we get an ordinary web page filled with all the neat things they want us to see. However as soon as a search engine robot announces itself, the script in the CGI bin goes into action and presents a specially designed page to the search engine robot.

A different page can be designed specifically for the algorithms used by each of the search engines.

Basically this is a bait and switch technique with a high-tech twist. If competitors re-submit a site in an attempt to get "a truer" ratings it won't work. The CGI script will automatically re-direct the robots to the page they want it to see.

In order to pull this one off you need good server resources and a high level of knowledge. However, unless you are dealing in a particularly competitive arena you likely won't even run into it! I'm just letting you know what's out there, so that you'll understand what your competition is up to.



There are a few services that do this on the net. The prices vary, but some charge as low as \$0.25 a clickthrough and up to \$2.00 a clickthrough to the site.

We have dealt with a few in the past and there are a few good ones out there. We have set up a webpage with a form so that you can contact the company we recommend easily. We have set up this form, so that if a company raises their prices or starts to offer poor customer service we can easily change where the form goes to ... so you get the best service!

The good companies charge under \$0.50 a clickthrough and only count unique IPs. What that means is that you only pay for NEW visitors ... not people that click through the link on the search engines multiple times. I won't get into the boring details ... let me just say you want to make sure the service charges only for unique IP clickthroughs so that you get the most for your money.

The form is at:

**<http://www.marketingtips.com/sehelp.html>**

## **Submission Tricks**

OK, now your page is as perfect as you can get it and you are ready to start the submission process. Here are a few tricks to use while submitting.

## **Choosing Categories When Making a Submission**

When manually submitting, if you have a choice of multiple categories that apply to your service, **always chose a category that comes first alphabetically.** Many directories search results are sorted alphabetically **by category first**; therefore improving your chances of being listed (Yahoo is a perfect example of this). And there are so many categories

with engines like Yahoo that this technique is mandatory for getting listed anywhere near the top of the search results.

For example, with **Car Secrets** in Yahoo, the category *Business\_And\_Economy/Companies/Automotive/Buyers\_Guides* will be listed before the category *Recreation/Automotive/Buyers\_Guides* because it is alphabetically higher.

## **Create More Than One Open Door**

You can create a number of doors to your site even if you only have one page.

<http://www.marketingtips.com>  
<http://marketingtips.com> (**no www.**)  
<http://www.marketingtips.com/index>  
<http://marketingtips.com/index> (**no www.**)

All four of these addresses (doors) go to the exact same page. Register all of these at different times (as in days or even weeks). Alta Vista, Excite, Infoseek, Lycos and Webcrawler appear to index these (but that may not be for long).

After you have been listed by the Search Engines, try changing your page title. Some of the search engines will list you as if you have another page, others won't.

Neither of these techniques will work with Yahoo!

## **Obtaining Multiple Listings**

To have **multiple listings in the same search engine**, submit all of the webpages in your site individually. Most search engines will automatically delete duplicate pages, but this does not prevent you from using webpages with different URLs.

For example, at my marketingtips.com site, I have the following pages submitted separately:

<http://www.marketingtips.com/a-order.html>  
<http://www.marketingtips.com/checks.html>  
<http://www.marketingtips.com/exploit.html>  
<http://www.marketingtips.com/headline.html>  
<http://www.marketingtips.com/howtou.html>  
<http://www.marketingtips.com/index.html>  
<http://www.marketingtips.com/links.html>  
<http://www.marketingtips.com/longcopy.html>  
<http://www.marketingtips.com/mailord.html>  
<http://www.marketingtips.com/profileo.html>  
<http://www.marketingtips.com/sneaky.html>  
<http://www.marketingtips.com/statemnt.html>  
<http://www.marketingtips.com/subscr.html>  
<http://www.marketingtips.com/success.html>  
<http://www.marketingtips.com/tipsltr.html>  
<http://www.marketingtips.com/tipsmnu.html>  
<http://www.marketingtips.com/twist.html>  
<http://www.marketingtips.com/wholink.html>

If you have sub-pages on your main home page you can register each of them separately in the search engine. **Make sure** you have different titles, keywords, and META tags for each.

When you change the title and first few lines of text, it is a great opportunity to insert different keywords relating to your industry to increase the chances of one of your pages being in the top ten of a search. If you chose these carefully, you can effectively increase your chances of getting listed in the top results of a search as much as ten-fold.

If you only have one or two pages on your website, you can make mirror copies of it to reflect certain specialties; the purpose being to get multiple pages to submit to search engines. For instance, let's say you were selling pagers nation-wide. You could have a few pages that look very similar, except for the title and the first few lines of text.

The page

**<http://www.nationalpagers.com/business.html>**  
could be a page discussing business uses for pagers.

The page

**<http://www.nationalpaggers.com/personal.html>**

could be a page that discusses personal use of a pager.

You could even break it down by state and have:

**<http://www.nationalpaggers.com/colorado.html>**.

This would give you an opportunity to submit 52 different webpages and greatly increase your chances of getting listed in a search.

If you are making mirror copies of a page, it is **very important** that you change the title and the META tags (discussed in the next section). This is so the software robot does not recognize that it's a duplicate page (if it does, it will not submit your entry to their database).

If you are creating pages that are doorways into your site, you must at a minimum make them compelling enough that your visitor actually clicks a link into the rest of your site! You've expended a great deal of effort getting them to the open door, now make sure they enter it.

**Note:** A few of the search engines appear to be limiting the number of pages you can list. Currently, it is guesstimated that you are limited to 400 pages on Alta Vista and to 600 on Infoseek (this could change at any time).

### **A Few Don'ts:**

- 1) **Don't ever submit a site before your webpage is complete and tested.** If the search engine visits your site and it is not set up properly with the META tags, title and search engine tricks, you will not get ranked very high in a keyword search. And as I have mentioned, trying to edit your submission after it has been catalogued into a search engine is almost useless.
- 2) **Don't type in all upper case letters in your submission.** It not only makes you appear to be

small-time and unprofessional, but it is considered to be shouting and very inappropriate as well.

- 3) **Avoid using frames, JavaScript, and other non-text HTML tags for menu bars, etc.** Note that some webpages can be ranked poorly because search engine indexing software cannot interpret this information. This is why I recommend that you avoid using frames or JavaScript unless absolutely necessary. If you must have frames, make sure you have `<noframes>` HTML tags or have a non-frames section of your website (that the visitor can choose to go to) so search engines can catalogue the site properly. The `noframes` HTML tag was created for browsers that don't support frames, but can be used for search engines to read and catalogue your site properly. More can be learned about these tags in the HTML tutorial page I recommended earlier in the course.

In case you are not familiar with how frames work, they allow you to split up your webpage into sections (or “frames”) to allow the reader to scroll through each section (or “frame”) separately without affecting the other sections (or “frames”). In other words, the left half of the screen could show the table of contents and the right half could be the article you have chosen. You could be reading or scanning the article frame while the Table of Contents remains still on the left side.

Some Search Engines are adapting, but it will be a while before all of them can read framed webpages.

OK, now that I've told you not to use frames, I have a confession to make. Until recently, our sites were frame free zones ... for all the reasons I have just given you. However we have recently started using frames for a variety of reasons. Basically, by using frames we are able to develop a site that is easier to navigate, easier to maintain, and most importantly because it enhances our ability to convert visitors into customers.

We were able to make this switch to frames because

we don't rely on Search Engines to bring us all our traffic. The fact is, we use all the techniques I tell you about in this course ... and because of that, Search Engines only bring in a small amount of traffic in comparison to the traffic we get from all the other sources I talk about.

The reality for us is that Search Engines bring in several thousand visitors a month ... compared to the hundreds of thousands of visitors we have coming in from other sources.

However, I will stress that we have only recently converted to using frames. When you first start promoting your site, **Search Engines will bring in a significant portion of your traffic**. It is only after your business has grown, and you have developed other mechanisms for bringing in traffic that Search Engines will become less important to you.

So until you have significant traffic coming in from a variety of other sources, and until all the major Search Engines recognize frames ... my advice is to stay away from them!

## **How Search Engines Index And Rank Your Site**

The following information is current as of this printing, however the search engines change on a regular basis. They can announce a change one day and several weeks later switch back to their old system.

Also please keep in mind that submission times can change often depending on what policies the Search Engine has recently adopted.

### ***How AltaVista works:***

- <http://www.altavista.com>
- Approximately 35 million pages indexed.

## NOTES:

- Refreshes approximately once a month.
  - Average submission time: 1 - 3 days.
  - Supports META tags: Yes
  - Supports Frame Style Pages: No
- a) Indexes entire site with a robot/spider
  - b) Title tags are extremely important. If your keywords are not in your title, you have NO chance of being near the top of the list. First 12 words are critical
  - c) High priority given for the META description tag. First 22 words are critical.
  - d) Priority given to keywords at the top of webpages.
  - e) Priority for keywords occurring closer to each other in the text
  - f) Heavy penalties for keyword stuffing.

### ***How Excite works:***

- <http://www.excite.com>
  - Approximately 65 million pages indexed.
  - Refreshes weekly and less
  - Average submission time: 7 weeks and up
  - Supports META tags: No
  - Supports Frame Style Pages: Yes
- a) Preference is given for having your keyword in your domain name (URL).
  - b) Use keywords as names for pages and subdirectories. For example:  
**<http://www.marketingtips.com/internetmarketing/>**
  - c) If you break up the words you may get an even better score. For example:  
**<http://www.marketingtips.com/internet/marketing/>**
  - d) Use keywords in links, headlines, bodytext and titles.
  - e) Do not repeat each keyword the same number of times, one word should appear more than the others.
  - f) Short pages (1 to 3 KB) get better scores.

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- g) Outside links to your site are beneficial.
- h) Refer to words from *Excite* itself (they use a complex algorithm to index the webpage). Here is what they say:
- i) Create a number of different “doors” into your site and submit each separate URL.
- j) If you have a quote, comment or information at the top of your page that you do not want to be included in *Excite's* summary, do not display it as a complete sentence.
- k) You will get ranked higher if your pages are updated often.
- l) Multiple entry points will definitely increase your chances of a good position.
- m) Limit your submissions to 25 pages from one domain. Make sure one of the pages contains links to all the URL's you want listed. Their spider will follow them.

### ***How HotBot works:***

- <http://www.hotbot.com>
  - Approximately 65 million pages indexed.
  - Average submission time: 2 days and up
  - Supports META tags: Yes
  - Supports Frame Style Pages: No
- a) High priority for META tags.
  - b) Put your “summary” in the META description. If you don't it will use the first few words on your home page.
  - c) Key word phrases work better than single *keywords*.
  - d) Penalizes keyword stuffing in META tags.
  - e) DO register your pages multiple times using the “more than one open door technique.”
  - f) The maximum number of submissions allowable is 50 per day from one domain.



Here's a quote direct from the HotBot site:

*"We're aware that some people create pages to maliciously "spoof" search engines - making search engines return pages that are irrelevant to the search at hand or pages that rank higher than their content warrants. Common spoofing techniques include the senseless repetition of words, the inserting of META tags unrelated to the document's content, or the use of words that cannot be read due to their small size or color. If HotBot recognizes any spoofing technique, it will severely penalize a page's ranking."*

**How Infoseek works:**

- <http://www.infoseek.com>
  - Approximately 35 million pages indexed.
  - Refreshes approximately monthly.
  - Average submission time: from minutes to days.
  - Humans monitor the submission process. Abusing the rules will be interpreted as spam.
  - Penalties for abuses at Infoseek include the removal of your pages, your site and even legal action.
  - Supports META tags: Yes
  - Supports Frame Style Pages: Yes
  - Check your URL status at:  
<http://www.infoseek.com/AddUrl?pg=CheckURLstatus.html>.
- a) Indexes entire webpage with a robot/spider. There is an Instant service available. You must wait for each page to be indexed before submitting another.
  - b) A maximum of 50 pages per day may be submitted through the add URL link.
  - c) Indexing favors the title, META keywords, the META description, headers and body text.
  - d) Do not repeat keywords in META tags more than three times.
  - e) Concentrate on pages that are short with lots of keywords in the page (but don't keyword stuff).
  - f) Does not index hidden comments, words in the <image> <alt tag> or URL links.

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- g) Supports the META robots tag. If you do not want “someone” resubmitting” your pages insert this tag `<meta name=“robots” contents=“noindex”>` into the `<head>` section of the page. You MUST remove the tag to resubmit yourself!
- h) **Very severe penalties** for spamming or misrepresenting content. Review their guidelines page at:

[http://www.infoseek.com/Help?sv=IS&lk=noframes&pg=new\\_guidelines.html](http://www.infoseek.com/Help?sv=IS&lk=noframes&pg=new_guidelines.html)

Note: Infoseek now appears to favor larger companies and the mega web sites. If you are competing directly against megacorps your efforts are likely better spent on other search engines.

### **How Lycos works:**

- <http://www.lycos.com>
  - Approximately 35 million pages indexed.
  - Refreshes approximately every 2 weeks and up.
  - Average submission time: Days to 5 weeks.
  - Supports META tags: No
  - Supports Frame Style Pages: Yes.
- a) Uses the text at the top of your web page (body) to create a description.
- b) Higher priority for keywords in the page title.
- c) Higher priority for keywords near the top of each webpage.
- d) Assigns higher priority for the closeness of keywords in the document (if using multiple keywords for a search)
- e) higher priority for sites that have a lot of external links
- f) DO register your pages multiple times using the “more than one open door technique.”
- g) Keep your site active, the Lycos spiders revisit sites and follows links down at least one level.

***How Northern Light works:***

- <http://www.northernlight.com>
  - Approximately 60 million indexed pages.
  - Refreshes monthly.
  - Average submission time: 3 - 6 weeks.
  - Supports META tags: Yes/No
  - Supports Frame Style Pages: Not currently.
- a) Makes note of but does not give relevancy weighting to keywords in META tags.
- b) Emphasis on the first 80 characters in the title.
- c) Indexes keywords in the head and body sections
- d) Indexes keywords in links
- e) Does not use the < image><alt> tag or comment tags.
- f) Do use keyword laden sentences, and hidden text.
- g) Optimize your placement by placing keywords throughout body text.

***How WebCrawler works:***

- <http://webcrawler.com>
  - Approximately 2.5 million pages indexed.
  - Refreshes approximately monthly.
  - Average submission time: 6 - 12 weeks.
  - WebCrawler is owned by Excite, they have very similar ranking systems.
  - Supports META tags: No
  - Supports Frame Style Pages: No
- a) Indexes the website with a robot/spider.
- b) Gives more weight to Titles vs. body text. The first 59 characters of your title will display as the site description.
- c) WebCrawler may ignore any submissions after the 25th page is submitted from one domain.
- d) Excite appears to rank pages higher if they have links with other sites. Webcrawler does not appear to factor this in as much.
- e) Use submission information under Excite.

**How Yahoo works:**

- <http://www.yahoo.com>
  - “Millions” of pages indexed.
  - Refreshes data constantly.
  - Average submission time: 2 - 6 weeks.
  - Yahoo is a web site *directory* and is not a search engine.
  - If you want to be considered a serious web presence you must register with Yahoo. Yahoo gets 15+ million hits a day.
  - Has a team of real people checking out web sites and heavily penalizing or simply not including sites that use tricks of any kind.
  - Registration is time consuming and complicated.  
**You MUST register from the category page you wish to be listed in.** Go there first, then click on the “suggest a site” button.
- a) The only things that are indexed are your company name and the description you give them when you submit.
  - b) The description you submit should be short, descriptive and should not contain anything that even resembles hype.
  - c) It is *extremely* valuable if your company name is the same as the title of your page. If your company name does not match the title they may substitute your company name for your title.
  - d) All tricks are rejected: keyword stuffing, redirecting, hidden pictures, hidden text, alphabetical tricks etc.
  - e) Search results are displayed alphabetically first by category, then page title (consider using a category that starts with an "A" or "B" that is applicable to your product or service... and then starting your page title with an "A")
  - f) You are only allowed to choose two categories, so choose them carefully (and as mentioned, if possible, select one higher in the alphabet).
  - g) Only upper level domain names (i.e. you.com) are

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indexed. If your site is hosted as a sub-domain or on a web hosting service, it is hard to get listed. If your site is one of the many free sub-domains, it is virtually impossible to get listed.

- h) Don't even try to get re-listed. It just does not happen. It is easier to get removed and to re-list.
- i) If you want to start from scratch, make sure that your company name describes what you do (use great keywords)... then register your company name as your domain name. Basically you are naming a company and purchasing a domain just for the purposes of getting listed on Yahoo. It may sound crazy, but it can be worth it, considering the traffic that Yahoo can send you!
- j) Here is a fast way to get a great listing. If you ever find a top ranked Yahoo listing that is no longer in business, contact the owner and see if you can negotiate a deal that allows you to use the page linked to the listing. Finally, put a redirect from that page to your site.
- k) Decide on the two categories you want to be listed in first, then read all the Yahoo instructions, and write your descriptions before starting the submission process.
- l) You will only get one change to get it right. Make sure you follow all instructions and get all the details exactly as you want them before you make your submissions. No second chances with Yahoo!

***Note:** Another great way of finding competition or related sites to link to is to look in Yahoo's category for your site to see what else applicable is there.*

## **Additional Notes**

Only half of the major search engines support Frame style pages. And as you do your research you will not find many sites utilizing Frames showing up in the Top 10 listings. If you insist on using frames make sure you provide a noframe alternative.

Ditto for JavaScript.

Dynamically Generated Pages will most likely get rejected by the search engines because they do not want to get their robots caught in endless loops. If your URL contains a “?” or “%” or other characters, your site will probably not get indexed. You could *try* using the Catch and Point pages to get around this.

## **Monitoring Your Ranking**

It can take some search engines as long as six weeks to include your submission in their database, whereas others may only take a day or two. It is important that you check them regularly to make sure your submission is included in the top eight search engines.

*Did-It* is great website that will monitor the ranking of your site in the top search engines within seconds. Type in the keywords that you feel your clientele will search under and a program called *Did-It* will tell you if your site appeared at all in the top ten search engines and if it was ranked in the top 100 results. It is a fantastic service and can be found at **<http://www.did-it.com>**

Another service very similar to this is called *Position Agent* at **<http://www.PositionAgent.com>** Another weapon in the web warrior’s arsenal is a piece of software called *WebPosition*. You can track the position of your web site on the search engines. It is probably the best piece of software to monitor your websites ranking and it runs from your PC on a scheduler – very impressive software.

You can even set a timer so that the software goes to work while you are in bed. Get up and the report is ready. Check out the details at:

**<http://www.marketingtips.com/webposition.html>** I cannot recommend the software higher... great stuff and a vital asset to monitoring your position on search engines and **where your competitors are compared to you**. See the URL above for more details on what it

can do and how it can make you more money with search engine placement.

## **Of the Different Ways Of Submitting Your Site - Which Ones Work Best?**

There are a few different ways you can announce you URL to the different search engines;

1. Use a free submission service. These automated submission services allow you to enter your information once and submit it to the top 8 to 15 search engines with the click of a button.
2. Go to each search engine individually and manually enter information for your webpage(s).
3. Hire a professional submission service to announce your URL's to the appropriate directories and search engines.

## **Free Submission Services**

Services such as

**<http://www.announceitamerica.com/>**  
and **<http://www.internetjoin.com/index.htm>** will list your site for free. You enter your information once and then with a push of a button, it will automatically submit that info to the search engines you pick.

The problem with using a free submission service is that every search engine has different variables for submissions. For example, *Yahoo* only allows 20 characters as a maximum title size where other search engines may allow up to 200.

You want to maximize the number of keywords you can fit in your title, but a free submission service will submit the same information to every search engine. **You are therefore not maximizing your exposure and not getting listed as high on the search results as you should.** More importantly, you cannot specify

exactly what categories your site should be listed in when using an automated service (whereas if you did the submission manually, you could).

By using these free submission services you will save a lot of time, but the punishment is that you will only get about one fifth of the traffic you would could have if you spend the time to do it properly (explained in the next two sections below).

The only exception to this rule is some of these automated search engine submission services are getting very good at making sure you fit all the guidelines of every search engine... it is not the best way to do it, but it is much better than not doing it at all!

## **Entering Your Site Manually**

This is one of the best ways to submit your website to search engines. You go to each individual search engine separately and submit the information for each webpage you have. The fastest way to do this is to use the HTML page with direct links provided with this course (on the CD in a file called `resources.html` you can also access this by the main “Tools and Resources” menu which appears when you insert the CD). This allows you **to maximize your exposure** by completing every field in the submission form to its maximum potential for keywords, descriptions, additions, content, contact information, etc. It also allows you to specifically pick one or multiple categories that would best suit your business, therefore increasing your chances of being seen and attracting visitors to your site.

The only disadvantage to this approach is that **it is very time consuming** (it can take you a few days to do it properly) and there are no professionals available to look over your keywords and titles, verify that you are using all the most current search engine tricks, and to double check your choices and their effectiveness.



When manually submitting to different search engines, you should open a file in your word processor (or *Windows Notepad*) that will contain your webpage titles, URL, keywords, a short 10 word description, a longer 25 word description and a 50 word description of your business. Also consider including your company name, address, email address, and phone/fax number as well, as many submission forms will ask for these.

Cutting and pasting these into the different fields in the submission forms will not only save you time, but will completely eliminate grammatical and spelling errors that can occur by typing into the submission fields for every search engine.

**Important Tip:** *A list of niche directories and link pages is found at <http://virtuallyfree.com>. This is great way of finding other sites that are related to yours so you can exchange links (or even find out who your competition is and what they are doing). Also, make sure you are listed in the niche directories, since it is such a fantastic way of getting targeted visitors to your site.*

## **Paid Submission Services**

There are a few different types of paid submission services:

- 1)** This is completely automated and they may charge you a low fee (usually under \$75 to submit your information to 100 or more search engines). If you decide you want to use this type of service, one of the best we have found is *Contact Data* at **<http://TrafficBoost.com/?SPECIAL>** (they charge \$49.00). If you can afford it, I highly recommend spending a few extra dollars to hire a service that will **manually enter** your submission to the top search engines and maximize the potential of getting ranked higher (see below for a service that does this).

2) Other paid submission services **manually input information** to each search engine as you would yourself, but they only input information you have provided to them. These services range from \$125 to \$250. We have used *AAA Promotions* for many years with very good success, and I have arranged for you to get special pricing (10% off) with them. Your discounted price would be \$99.00 for submission to the top 50 search engines. Just fill out the order form at the following site:  
**<http://www.marketingtips.com/webignite/>**  
If you cannot afford the "best" type of submission company which I mention next, this is by far the best way to go.

3) The last kind of submission company is more like a "top notch" search engine consultant. They will educate you, work with you, and maximize your exposure to each search engine. These services are generally not cheap but they are **very effective**.

I deal with a few companies like this and they all charge approximately \$600 for this service. They evaluate the site, help design keywords and content, give tips and pointers, and design a search engine submission campaign. Then when they start submitting your information to the top search engines, they will not only maximize every single field in a search engine submission form, but also submit multiple webpages from your site. They are very effective and we use them personally.

If you are interested in hiring a service like this, go to:

**<http://www.marketingtips.com/searchengine.html>**

There is a form in which you can enter your name, URL for the website you want to submit, and your phone number (in case there are problems contacting you via email). We will automatically forward the form to the company we currently feel is doing the best job (this can change periodically). They will get back to you within 48 hours

(excluding weekends).

***Conclusion:***

If you can afford it, I highly recommend hiring one of these "top notch" submission companies to submit your site to the search engines. They are not cheap... but they will take care of everything from designing your keywords to providing a written report 90 days later to let you know where your sites are ranked.

**New Software That Guarantees Results!**

I discussed this a little earlier in the lesson, but I will go into more detail now as you have a better understand of how search engines work. A couple of companies have designed new software that basically "tricks" the search engines in ranking you higher in a keyword search. The software is hosted on the company's servers so its secrets are not discovered (as it costs a lot of money to do the developing research and development [R&D]).

Here is how it works. The software is very complex and builds one page for every set of keywords you want to be ranked high for in the search engines. The page is designed in a format that is exactly what the search wants to see (the page matches the criteria for the search engines and the page gets listed high on the search results for the keywords you have chosen). But each page that is designed for each search engine doesn't have any substance to it... it is just a bunch of keywords strategically placed in the webpage where the search engine wants to see them (to get a high ranking in a search for those keywords).

Those webpages are then submitted to the search engines. The software recognizes any search engine that comes to the page, so when it sees a search engine coming to the site, it displays the webpage it made to manipulate the search engine to rank that

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page very high in the search results. When anyone else comes to the site, the software recognizes that it is not a search engine, so it forwards them to your page.

It is a very smart idea and works well (I use this service myself for my marketingtips.com site).

There are a couple of companies providing this service (we deal with a company called *Advanced Networks*). They charge you \$0.35 per visitor that comes through the search engine to your site. Since the visitors are technically going to their server first, they can count how many people they have sent you. That visitor is then **automatically** forwarded to your website without them ever knowing.

What I am trying to get at is that you can literally pay a service like *Advanced Networks* to bring you visitors. There are no broken promises on what they can or cannot do... **you only pay for visitors that come to your site.**

This is a very powerful way to get visitors to you site without you having to do any work. They do everything from setting up keywords to submitting to the search engines... you just sit back and wait for the visitors to come in.

We have set up a special webpage to forward you to them at:

**<http://www.marketingtips.com/sehelp.html>**

The minimum purchase starts at \$750 but since we are giving them so much business, we negotiated with the company President, Jim Maddox, to get you a good discount. With a little bit of bargaining, they agreed. The pricing details can be found at the website and can change without notice.

I recommend the service highly if you can afford it (since you are getting highly targeted visitors). The advantage is that you only pay for results. If you have a well-designed webpage that efficiently converts visitors to sales, this can make you a lot of money.

Also note, however, that if you are selling a \$20 product with not a lot of profit margin, it will not pay you to do this as at \$0.35 a visitor, you will eat up your profit margin very quickly. But, if you are selling a product that has \$100 profit, you can afford to convert only one out of every 200 visitors to break even... any better conversion ratio will bring you a profit.

## **Miscellaneous Info**

- When in doubt model your pages after others. Search your preferred keywords before submitting your site to search engines. Make note of the pages showing up at the top of the results and go to those pages noting how they have structured their title, META tags, keywords in the text of the page, etc. (in case you don't know how to check the document HTML source when you are at a webpage, look under the *view* menu in *Netscape*).
- Note that many web-development-companies state that as a "freebie" for hiring them, they will submit your site to the top 100 search engines. Keep in mind that they are in the business of developing websites, **not marketing them**, so they usually use an old automated submission service because it is quick and easy. If you are to hire a web developer, make it clear to them not to do this because you will want to submit the site yourself. As you already know, it is nearly impossible to go back and change your listing in search engines after they have accepted it. You want submit your site yourself or hire a professional company to insure the techniques that get you ranked the highest are used.
- If you want someone to design a fantastic website for you at a reasonable cost go to:  
**<http://www.marketingtips.com/websitedesign.html>**

There is a form with a few questions about what

you want at your site. This helps the website designers estimate a cost before they get back to you. The form will be automatically forwarded to one of the website design companies that we use and trust because they do a great job. They should get back to you within 48 hours.

- For a real in-depth explanation of search engines and how they work, go to **<http://searchenginewatch.com/wgtse.htm>**

They have an excellent guide on every detail you can imagine.

## **In Closing – A Economical Solution to Easily Getting High Ranking in Search Engines**

The top eight search engines can bring you a huge amount of traffic. However in order to get the traffic, you need to be in the Top 20 listings for each of your keywords or phrases.

Getting there is a methodical process of researching and choosing your keywords, designing page titles, META tags and using at least as many of the tips and tricks as your competitors do.

Once your web site is designed for optimum placement with each of the search engines, then the job of manually submitting the web pages begins. As you have seen it is a very time consuming and complex task, and if you have the resources I highly recommend hiring a professional manual submission service for this task.

Then, you need to keep monitoring you web position, make adjustments and re-submit where possible to keep your high listing or get an even higher rating. It is an on-going process that never stops.

Search engines change so much it can be a full-time job just keeping up with them. Spend some time on

this, but be careful because you can get caught up in it. 20% of the effort will get you 80% of the results. You will have to work 80% of your time in order to achieve the last 20%... and only you can decide if your time is worth the results.

Personally I would rather hire the professionals who spend their nights and days being experts in getting that last 20%!

Search engines are getting tougher and tougher to get ranked high in. To try and do this manually, you can spend entire days with different search engines... the easy way out is to get software to help you do it... without it you will drown. The software is really cheap for what you get. I wrote an article on it in "Internet Marketing Tips" newsletter and I will reprint it here. If you want to get ranked high in search engines, but don't want to spend 8 hours a day just trying to keep up with the changes and problems, this article will show you how to still get ranked high without much work.

**Article reprint from Newsletter:**

Title: "How to Get Positioned Higher In Search Engines! Even learn about a gentleman that does \$500,000 in sales just because of his search engine positioning!"

Ok, we all know that search engine promotions are so popular and everyone is talking about it because **they can increase traffic to your website without spending advertising dollars!**

Search engine positioning/ranking is a very talked about subject. It is confusing and ever changing... that is the problem. What works this month, may not work next month! It is moving at lightning speed.

It is getting harder and harder to get listed high in a search engine's results. It is becoming that you have to make search engine listing a permanent job that takes you 8 hours a day, 5 days a week if you want to be successful at it (as you have to learn about how they work inside and out). The plain fact is that you cannot

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waste your time on the ONE method of marketing online, you have to diversify and get yourself in other markets before your competitors do! I may have a solution for you, read on.

Virtually everyone begins their web travels at one of the top search engines and your search position determines how many of those people will visit your site.

The great thing about search engines is that (for now) **they are free**. It should be one of your main priorities to get ranked high on search engines as they are finding ways everyday to improve their profits by charging for higher listings, bold listings, favoring more popular sites, etc. The days of "free" advertising or listings on search engines may come to a close over the next year or two.

Such forms of online advertising like banner-ad campaign or advertising in Ezines all cost money... search engines are FREE (for now, so get on this right away).

**What most people don't understand is that search engines are a catalyst to other promotions.** For example, when we start a new project or have low traffic we turn to search engines to get traffic immediately. The traffic we get leads to other promotional avenues because other business/industry people find us and we can do joint ventures, partnering, distributors, resellers, etc.

Many websites can bring in thousands of qualified visitors per month by being well positioned in the Top 10 search engines. It all adds up to thousands of dollars of FREE advertising!

How powerful are the top search engines? Let's just go over a couple of figures:

Yahoo! - over 16,000,000 visitors a month  
InfoSeek - over 9,000,000 visitors a month  
Excite - over 8,000,000 visitors a month



Just a few good positions for even one or two important keywords can drive thousands of visitors to your website -- for FREE.

So do search engines really generate a lot of traffic? Absolutely... if you do it right and use the right tools. The problem is that most people just submit their site and then wonder why they didn't get any traffic.

**Search engines are responsible for making us over \$20,000 in sales every month between 2 of my companies...** so you can see how it pays itself off very quickly.

Now, don't get me wrong, search engines will not make you rich (and anyone who tells you they will is lying to you). They are one method of promoting your site that can be very profitable if done right (just like other methods of promoting your business online). For those of you who have my Internet marketing course, you know how I talk about the importance of diversifying your marketing efforts. So do not place all of your time with search engines while ignoring your other promotions. Search engines are quite profitable if you do it right and spend your time effectively with them (we will talk more about this in a moment).

I can take about 30 pages and explain all the tips and tricks that people are using today to get ranked higher in search engines, **but now that we have found a way around that**, I will not bother. Besides, in the next few months a few of them will have changed and all the "techno-babble" would confuse a lot of people and some of the information would not make any sense to them.

So is achieving a good position impossible? No, not for those who use the right tools like *The Site Promoter* and *WebPosition* (we will talk about these pieces of software a little later in this section). In my opinion, they are the perfect "team" of software to assure that you are not only ranked high in the top search engines, but that you are **ABOVE YOUR COMPETITORS!**

Before we get into that, I must explain something. There are **two parts to** search engine placement. Part one is to submit your sites... but submit it properly using all the techniques available to get you rated high for the keywords you select... **submitting your URL to search engines is only half the job!** If you don't check your search positions and work to improve them, no one will find you - in other words you won't get any traffic.

So part two of your "search engine battle" is to monitor your positioning to see where you place, if your competitors place above you, and if your positioning starts to fall - to catch it and fix the problems right away.

**Everything depends on your search position. If your competition places before you, they win, you lose!**

The *Site Promoter* software submits your site to the search engines and the *WebPosition* software monitors it so you can improve your ranking. We will talk more about both of them in the next few paragraphs.

Whether you have a new website or a site that has been submitted to the search engines already, these two pieces of software that we will talk about later in this section are critical in getting your site listed at the top of search engines.

Step One: **Submitting your site "properly"**

The *Site Promoter* is search engine submission **software that actually works to get your site placed higher in the search engines.** As many of you I have never recommended search engine submission software before because most of the software out there sends out one set of keywords, site titles, and description to all the search engines. You will find that your keywords and descriptions get cut off in some search engines, or that certain criteria and rules may not be met so you are not submitted at all with certain engines, you cannot choose the best category or categories available for your listing (choosing the right

category can be crucial to your customers finding your site), and this is just for starters.

And the most important reason why you don't want to use these other pieces of submission software is because your site will not be positioned high in the search engines as different search engines have different ranking criteria and you have just submitted the same "stuff" to all the search engines (not optimizing your listing with each search engine separately).

Deciphering all the rules of each of the engines can be a chore. **This revolutionary new software called The Site Promoter** guides you through picking the right keywords and descriptions in its "tutorial", takes the information that you input, and **prepares the submission just the way each engine wants it** - submitting your website to the top 150 search engines, indices, and directories. Your description will never get cut off in mid-sentence and you will end up in the right category because The *Site Promoter* knows what each engine wants!

The *Site Promoter* knows the rules and guidelines for each search engines (the programmers of the software spend all of their time monitoring them) ensuring that when you submit your website, you'll get excellent positioning and **boost your site towards the top of the list!**

More importantly, with The *Site Promoter* you are prompted on **how to** write effective keywords and descriptions, instead of merely providing an automated placement service with keywords and descriptions that may not best utilize the sorting logic of the targeted engines. This crucial information provided by The *Site Promoter* helps boost your site toward the top of the list. This translates to increased visits.

Ok, let me summarize what *Site Promoter* does... it is easy to rank in the top 10 by **helping you prepare your site data exactly the way the engines want it!** Including site titles and description.

**NOTES:**

Until now, the only way to get high-end promotion for your website has been to spend hundreds or thousands of dollars with site promotion professionals OR learn all the tricks of the trade and spend the hours doing it yourself (which can take weeks!). The *Site Promoter* was created by the same company we personally use and pay \$600-\$800 per website to submit our sites and clients' sites to the search engines (yes, that is how good they are!). They use this proprietary software to facilitate the promotion of their clients' sites... now you can get professional strength promotion for a fraction of the price.

All you do is point and click and fill in the blanks!

I have to say **I am very, very impressed**. So impressed, that it is the **only** piece of search engine submission software out there that I will recommend (and I don't put my name behind to many things – unless we use them here in the office and believe in them).

Here's a copy of an email we got from one *Site Promoter* customer:

Dear Corey;

Somehow I got myself to your website and read (very excitedly) the information about Site Promoter was so excited about what I read that I ordered the product right away. I received it on Monday Nov 29<sup>th</sup>, 1998. I did not get around to using it until Dec 6, 1998. I absolutely loved the program. I think you get the best of both worlds with it. It's like manual-automatic submission or automatic-manual submission, at any rate it's perfect.

Well to make a long story short and to get to the point of why I'm so excited. The program GOT ME LISTED ON YAHOO!!! Mind you, I have been trying to get listed on Yahoo for over 2 years!!! I simply followed the instructions and Voila!! I'm on Yahoo. Yahoo never notified me that I would be listed. I had not checked Yahoo for a while. Well yesterday a lady called me on the phone and I asked her how she found out about me. She said I found you on Yahoo. I dismissed her statement, thinking that she had been surfing and doesn't really

**NOTES:**

know how she found me. Or I thought she went to Yahoo, but clicked the button that says, "Go To Web Page Matches." So I dismissed her comments. Lo and behold! I had to go to Yahoo this morning to look for a friend's site and while I was there I typed in my keyword 'progesterone' and there I was Number One!!! I typed in "natural progesterone" and there I was Number 2!!! Please forgive me, but I am so excited about this and I feel you can really appreciate my excitement.

Also after Site Promoter I reached Number One on several [other] search engines. This happened AFTER I used Site Promoter. I had been promoting my site for a while, and I did get good placement, but with Site Promoter I got Number One Placement.

That's all for now  
THANKS!!  
Charlotte  
elamic@idt.net

I think you can see why I like the software!

To read more about The *Site Promoter* software and how you can get a copy for yourself. Go to **<http://www.marketingtips.com/sitepromoter.html>** I highly recommend it!

To get good search positioning in the search engines, The *Site Promoter* and *WebPosition* software used together are, in my opinion, the most powerful "team" on the market. Don't get confused by all the other software out there which claims to be the best in getting you ranked high... we have tried just about all of them and there is no comparison to this combination.

Step Two: **Monitoring and improving your ranking**

Ok, your question may be "what does The *Site Promoter* not do?" Well, it will not monitor your search engine positioning and let you know where you are compared to your competitors.

A piece of software called *WebPosition* provides reports to show you **where you stand under specific keywords, keyword combinations, and search phrases, so you can make improvements, correct problems, and increase your website's traffic**

without spending a penny in advertising.

Many of you have possibly heard of *WebPosition*... and we will discuss which version you want (as they offer many versions)... and the *Gold* version is the one you want and I will explain why it is the best. On that note, if you see a product called "*WebPosition Analyzer*", you do not want that... see the site we have on *WebPosition Gold*... this is the version you want... it is at **<http://www.marketingtips.com/webposition.html>**

There are many benefits to *WebPosition* and what it can do for you.

The first is that it can take some search engines as long as six weeks to include your submission in their database, whereas others may only take a day or two. So, it is important that you check them regularly to make sure your submission is included in all the top ten search engines. *WebPosition* has a built in scheduler that will turn itself on every day (or week, or whenever you tell it to) and **do it all for you automatically**.

The second main benefit is that it saves you hours a week by consistently and comprehensively monitoring your websites search position, making sure you are ranked high, checking where you competitors are in relation to you, and alerting you to problems. *WebPosition* will literally do this in seconds for you (and you can schedule it to do this for you automatically once a day, once a week, or whatever... with its built in scheduler).

If you offer more than one product or service on your website, it's important to get each "page" which features a different product into a prominent search position under a different keyword. That way you get more exposure in search engines.

Let me explain this a little more for those who don't understand the impact of this and how it can **dramatically affect your search engines positioning**. Instead of having one main catalogue page with all your products which would have to get

ranked high on a **long list** of keywords and key phrases - which is next to impossible to do; you could have 10 pages, each page with one product that optimizes a specific set of keywords or key phrases. Therefore **multiplying your exposure by 10 in the search engines!** These techniques give you the chance to **corner your entire market no matter what set of keywords they search under!**).

Note: **Many people overlook this important concept and lose valuable traffic to their competition.**

For each product or service you offer, there could be a dozen or more keywords or combination of keywords that someone might search to find you. A good ranking with each word/phrase can significantly improve your site's traffic. So lets go over some numbers here so you can understand why I have brought this subject up.

10 major engines X 6 products/services X 12 keywords/phrases = 720 positions to monitor EVERY day or week.

No one has time to conduct 720 searches a week AND record results AND take corrective action. If your website happens to offer dozens of products or services, you already know that tracking your search positions is an impossible task. That is, unless you use *WebPosition* to do the work for you!

If one of your webpages has been gradually moving down in the rankings, you can quickly identify the problem and correct it. Without *WebPosition's* powerful reports, you have no way of even knowing a problem exists - until your site traffic slows down, and it's too late.

*WebPosition* is also the first software product that allows you to **keep tabs on your competition and how their websites rank in relation to yours.** With *WebPosition*, you know what your competition is up to - literally!

Imagine how long it would take to visit 10 different search engines, search on 5 or 10 keywords, and then

scroll down resulting list of websites hoping to spot yours! *WebPosition* automates this task and saves hours of work!

After *WebPosition* reports all the results to you, it then provides specific instructions on how to increase your position in each of the 10 top search engines.

You can now see the value of why *The Site Promoter* and *WebPosition* are a great "team" and how they can dramatically affect your ranking in search engines. I recommend them highly if you are serious about getting better search engine positioning.

**Conclusion:**

The conclusion is that if you want to get listed high in search engines and don't want to pay the \$800+ to a company to do it for you (and then have to pay them 6 month later when you need to do it again), you need *The Site Promoter* and *WebPosition* software.

By using them as a "team", there is literally nothing like them out there on the market. **I cannot recommend them higher.** They will not only save you a lot of money and a lot of time, but you will probably recoup their cost in profits you will generate over the next 30 days by using them. Remember what I said earlier in this section: "search engines are responsible for making us over \$20,000 in sales every month for 2 of my companies"... so you can see how they pay for themselves very quickly.

The *Site Promoter* Software is normally priced at \$129.95, but we have arranged so you can buy it online for \$96.70. To learn more about it go to **<http://www.marketingtips.com/sitepromoter.html>**

The *WebPosition Gold* software costs \$147.00. To learn more about it go to **<http://www.marketingtips.com/webposition.html/>**

And remember because the search engines are continuously changing, you can obtain upgrades for one year included at this price - free of charge.



## NOTES:

Why do I need *WebPosition* and *Site Promoter*? Because you can't do by hand the crucial marketing tasks that *WebPosition* and *Site Promoter* do unattended - it would take you too long to be cost effective. These two software programs make it easy.

You know me and how I believe in automating everything and making the software and software robots do all the work - these two pieces of software are examples of that. That is why we use the software that I recommend in my Internet marketing course... **everything should be hands-free**. Don't spend your time taking care of daily tasks and chores, let the software do it for you so you can spend your time marketing and promoting your product!

So do search engines really work? Let me illustrate how powerful they can be, there is a gentleman locally (he will remain anonymous as he doesn't want people stealing his idea) who promotes his cellular phone business online solely through search engines and newsgroups... nothing ELSE. Just from this, **he is doing over \$500,000 in sales online every year just from search engines!** Yes, that is how powerful they are if you use them right with the proper tools.

## **Lesson # 17**

# **Miscellaneous Tips for Making And Saving You Money**

### **General Tips:**

- Have colleagues proofread all of your material. Have at least two other people read it for accuracy, typos, weird formatting and poor language. It makes the difference between looking like a pro and looking like an amateur. Remember that with any online business, you have no retail location for them to see, so you are judged based on what your customers read.
- Your online marketing battle will include a number of different methods in different areas of the Internet. You may have a website, use an auto responder, post classified ads, post articles, place banner advertisements, sponsor lists and newsletters, distribute press releases, and much more. When you start out, **it is critical you focus on one and promote it to its fullest extent before moving to the next.**

It is better to slowly become profitable by focusing on every issue one at a time, rather than being barely profitable because you are attacking all the issues half-heartedly.

- **Diversify** and spend small amounts on advertising at first. If you use a cautious approach, you will not be wiped out financially if an ad doesn't bring in a response. Just keep placing small ads as your budget allows, and when the ad does take off, you can roll it out (place the ad everywhere you can think of). It will then bring the big response you are anticipating. It is unwise to put all of your eggs in one basket when marketing on the Internet.
- If you have a lot of competition with your product or service, state that you will honor all the

competitor's coupons and/or discounts. **Turn "their" advertising into your advantage.**

- An age-old problem in the service business is getting final payment for services rendered (webpage designers and computer consultants are classic examples). As a business owner, realize this possibility and set up steps so you can collect the balance more easily. The four steps are:
  1. In contract or sales agreements, state the interest rates and late fees that will be assessed if payment is not received within 30 days of completion.
  2. Write form letters to be used for collecting the balance. There should be three letters in total; One after the payment is ten days late, another after twenty days and a third letter should deal with turning the amount owed over to a collection agency (or going to small claims court). The third letter should not be sent until 45 days after payment is late. As a side note, **never bluff**. If you say you will turn it over to a collection agency, do so.
  3. The most viable method of combating this problem is to take payments via credit card. State to your client that you will bill their credit card one third of the total price as an initial down payment and again another third just after you have passed the 50% completion point and the final third on delivery. Or use the two-payment system: half at the initiation of the job and the remainder upon completion.
  4. You should consider looking into credit reporting companies such as CBI or TRW to obtain a credit report on the person(s) or company(s) before you do business with them.
- **Your most valuable assets should be your satisfied customers.** It is common for some businesses to have over half their customers referred by past happy customers. You should

mention to all your customers, “If you like our service please tell your friends. If not, then please tell us”.

- Think about different angles on how to make it easier for your target market to learn about what you have to offer. An interesting example of this is the fact that the *NY Times* increased its type size and spacing in editorials to increase reading ease among aging baby boomers.
- If a customer returns a product, you should **process the refund as soon as possible**. Don't get upset or disappointed because returns are going to happen. It could happen a lot, or it could only happen a few times a year... but you are guaranteed that it will. By offering a prompt refund in a courteous manner along with a nice discount on future orders, you can turn a refund into another sale.
- If you don't have a fax machine, get one. Today is an “instant” society. It is an absolute necessity to have a dedicated fax line when running an online business (you can combine your fax and modem lines if you choose). The worst-case scenario is to buy a fax machine through the classified ads, but having a fax machine is an absolute must if you are planning to start any business.
- One of the best ways that I have found to make a client feel special is to send a thank-you card and a little bonus with their order. Depending on the price of what you're selling, this bonus could be as simple as a short informative report (on a subject matter they would be interested in), or as extravagant as a few free goodies. Customers remember this and can become **very loyal to your company**.
- Without a doubt, hire a bookkeeper to do your books every month. A local chartered accountant can charge big money, but a bookkeeper will charge you less than \$50/month. It is not worth your time to learn complex accounting procedures when you

## NOTES:

can get it done by someone else so inexpensively. When you see the income statement and balance sheet every month you will be surprised where you are really spending and making your money.

- Voice mail is a must in today's society, although many people are still reluctant to leave messages. If used properly, a cellular phone can be the small businessman's best friend. When you are out of the office, you can have your calls forwarded to the cell phone instead of sending them to "voice mail hell". This way, you don't lose any clients by hang-ups on voice mail because you are always there to answer their calls.
- When buying products or services over the Internet, I strongly advise you use your credit card. This is the safest way to purchase. The insecurity of credit card information on the Internet is extremely exaggerated. I have done tens of thousands of transactions over the Internet and don't recall a single situation where a customer had mysterious charges on their card. The most important reason to use a credit card is the fact that you are not liable if the product or service is not delivered (or if it is a scam). If the product is not delivered or the service is never rendered you can contact your credit card company and they will investigate the charge (and reverse the charge if your claim is valid). Most companies allow you up to 120 days to make a report, but check with *your own* credit card company to verify the amount of time they allow.
- Get a *Travel Miles* or *AirMiles* **credit card**. Purchase your inventory and product on this credit card and you automatically get points toward free airfare. Do not mistake these features with strictly "points collection" cards (a separate card that you give the clerk when you purchase to add airfare points to your balance). What I am referring to is an actual credit card like the one you have now, but for every dollar you spend on it, you automatically get points toward free airfare (inquire at your bank). I have actually declined to go on an open account with some of my suppliers and still pay for product (for

my inventory) on my credit card. Because of the volume of purchases I do, **this gets me a free flight anywhere in North America every two months**. Do not take this lightly. If you're only purchasing \$5,000 in inventory every month, you will earn two to three free flights every year. I purchase almost everything I can on my *Travel Miles* credit card as it not only gets me these flights but it also makes it easy to track my monthly spending.

- If your product comes with a warranty, consider a follow-up call or email message when your customer's warranty is near expiration, this is especially important if you sell a high-ticket item. Ask if there is any work to be done while the warranty is still in effect. You will get a few repair requests, but you will also get a higher level of **new business and referrals**. If you sell the product online or have the customer's email addresses, you can even have an autoresponder to automatically send these at the appropriate time.
- Note that most fulfillment companies DO NOT process credit cards on their merchant accounts. There are a small handful of companies who will, but be forewarned that a few companies do this in complete violation of their contract with the bank. In many cases, VISA/MC does not allow fulfillment companies to charge another company's customer's credit card through their merchant account. I have recommended *Mountain West Communications* at **1-800-642-9378** to use as your fulfillment company (ask for Jeannie and tell her Corey sent you). They are a great company to deal with and you can legally use their merchant account to charge customers for your product.

If you decide to use another company, make sure you can confirm with the fulfillment company's processing bank that what they're offering is allowed. Failure to do this could result in all the monies you collected being frozen in a bank account for up to six months.

## NOTES:

- Seriously consider getting in touch with your local university to hire one of the young start-ups with computer skills or website designing capabilities. You will be amazed at how many students are willing to do this type of part-time work, how good they are, and by how much money you will save by not having to hire a professional who can cost upwards of \$50/hr.
- If your business needs start-up capital, consider finding a partner to pool your resources with, or consider getting a low cost loan from Small Business Administration (<http://www.sba.gov/>).
- Because it is so easy to build a webpage and market a product or service in target-specific email and discussion lists, consider 'lightly' marketing a past product or service that failed. What I mean is **if you have a product or service that you have sold off-line that did not do so well, it costs almost nothing to test it on the Internet.** And it is virtually no work to maintain and monitor once it is set up. If you only get a few sales each month, it's extra dollars you didn't have before.

Let me give an example from my own experience. My first book, ***Secrets of Buying and Building Your Specialty Car on a Small Budget***, was a book on kit cars that appealed to a very distinct niche market. I advertised the book in both "kit car" magazines (there were only two) for three years and made a full-time income doing so. After a while, the ad rates jumped too high and the market was getting saturated with my product, (I was the only person writing a book on such a subject) so it just wasn't worth running the ads anymore.

I put the same book on a simple webpage, did a few reciprocal links with related kit car sites, and announced my presence on the two kit car email discussion lists. The results? It still brings in over \$1,000/month automatically. I don't do anything to maintain it (I haven't touched it or even paid attention to it in over 2 years, and it still generates \$1000 in profit every month - not much... but I

don't do any real work for it). It is an old book that was not profitable and not being advertised anymore off-line, but because I put it on the net, it brings back \$1,000 on auto-pilot each and every month. It's not a lot of money, but it is icing on the cake. If you can get a few products like this, you can generate a full-time income very easily. Remember, everything is on auto-pilot... you don't have to do anything.

Be prepared to change your advertising concept a little to adapt it to the Internet. For example, in the kit car business, the customers are what marketers call "picture people". In the magazine advertisement it was difficult and expensive to print a lot of pictures, however, because there is unlimited space on the Internet, I tailor to this market by posting a lot of kit car pictures on my website. I announce the site on the email discussion lists and other kit car forums by inviting them to visit the site, adding that it has a lot of hot kit car pictures to view, and they come automatically.

This pitch enticed kit car enthusiasts to come by my site (and hopefully end up buying my book in the end, which many of them do). The philosophy is to give the target market what they want. In a later post, I wanted to "cover all my bases" by taking a different marketing angle. I post a message mentioning that the book had been in all the kit car magazines for years, and then go on to say it is now available on the internet at a special discount price.

- Personalization of everything you do is becoming standard on the net. **If you don't personalize your mailings to clients, you are losing business.** We want to build a rapport with the client and make them feel special ... the least you can do is call them by their name when you email them. Software like *Mailloop* or *Email Merge* will do this for you now.

In the near future, personalizing webpages like Amazon.com does will become standard. What I mean by personalized webpages is that if you are



an existing client, when a company emails you an offer and gives you a link to the site, a special personal page is generated for you based on your customer information and past purchases. It may say something like "Hi Corey, thank you for your last purchase of XXXX of Feb 23, 1999. Based on your last purchase, I recommend you look at the following products that may be of assistance" ... (and the software will calculate what products to show your customers based on their interests and what they have bought before.)

We are currently testing software like this, and when it is released (very soon!)... **WOW, will it be cool!** Think about it, when you visit your local bookstore, is someone at the door to greet you by your first name, stating it is good to see you since you were last in on XXX day, and offer recommendations based on what books you may like based on your past interests? Amazon.com does! Are you starting to see the **incredible power** of personalization?

How about when your past client goes to an order form, it is automatically filled out with order information (i.e. name, address, phone number, type of computer, email address, or whatever else you have on file that you may need on the order form)... all they have to do is enter their credit card info and click on "buy". Again, are you starting to see the power of this type of software?

### **Offline Marketing Tips:**

- Get testimonials from customers (you are better off not authoring these yourself). Offer your product or service free to a few people in return for their comments on it. A good idea is to make this offer to people who might be an authority in a subject area close to your product. On a side note, people feel obliged, and can be biased in your favor when you give them something for free.

**NOTES:**

- An innovative real estate broker I know always hands an extra dollar to the toll collector at the bridge and says, "I'd like to pay for the car behind me as well. Please give him this." He hands the toll collector a business card, and seven times out of ten, that person will at least call to say "Thank you, you made my day".

Just think about this act of kindness. If just one out of 200 people list their house with you, you can make \$2,000 off a very small investment. Just image how your name will travel around (the conversation factor); that person is most likely to tell a few people how some real estate broker paid for their toll today, and your name will get around. You will be surprised by how many people will do business with you just because you gave them a "spontaneous act of kindness". Let me tell you, **it works.**

- Studies have shown that for TV commercials, the majority of responses will happen within 45 minutes of the spot appearing. The best response rate from a test of 85,000 commercials was 0.23% (that is 2300 calls per 1,000,000 viewers), and the average was 0.038% (380 calls per 1,000,000 viewers).
- If you have product or service that specific interest clubs may be interested in offer samples or discounts to members. For example, I did a search for all the car clubs in the USA on the Internet. Some had email addresses, but most were regular mailing addresses (there were websites that listed all the clubs in the US by manufacturer!... you may find this situation for the product or service you sell). I mailed all the car clubs around the country, gave them a free copy of the book to review in their newsletters and said that I would give their members a special discount if they mentioned the newsletter when they ordered. **This netted me over \$20,000 in sales for only one week's research, mailing, and work.** Not bad for a week's work, wouldn't you say?

## NOTES:

- If you are going to place national classified ads, the top 10 daily newspapers in the US are: *USA Today*, *New York Times*, *Los Angeles Times*, *Washington Post*, *New York Daily New*, *Chicago Tribune*, *Newsday*, *Detroit Free Press*, *Dallas Morning News* and the *Chicago Sun Times*.

### **Business Success Tips:**

- Increase your telephone voice energy level by smiling with your face so that it shows in your voice. Even visualize the person on the other end and get used to using a mirror.
- Examples why businesses fail:
  1. Poor service: being put on hold, “voice mail hell”; failure to reply quickly to calls and email, customers can’t get help for orders or problems, turnover time to fill orders takes too long; impatient or rude behavior on the phone or in email, and/or poor quality of product or service.
  2. Poor inventory control: popular items out of stock, poor variety of merchandise, and/or too much capital tied up in inventory.
  3. Poor advertising: shotgun or non-targeted approach, advertising budget not based on sales or profits, advertising and sales not tracked, and/or failure to see where your advertising dollar is or is not working.

### **Internet Help Tips:**

- If you ever need a phone number, go to *LookUpUsa* (<http://www.lookupusa.com>). They have complete white and yellow pages for 90 million households and ten million businesses.

**NOTES:**

- If you need a toll free number for almost any company, go to the ATT 800 Directory at **<http://www.anywho.com/tf.html>**
- Looking for a specific magazine or newsletter? For places to advertise? For your competition? Go to *Oxbridge Media Finder* at **<http://www.mediafinder.com>** where you can research information on over 20,000 publications. They list publications by title, circulation, editor's name and whether or not they accept ads.
- If you know a URL that you want to do business with but don't know their email address, just do a "whois" query to look up the name, address, phone number and email address for the person (or company) who owns that domain name. Go to **<http://www.networksolutions.com/>** and do a search for the domain name (the *whois* program is built into that webpage). You can also use this service to find out if the domain name you want is available.
- The Internet is a sea of information and it is easy to drown. As you read email, participate in forums and websites, you will see references to interesting online resources, competitive sites and business opportunities. Explore these resources **as you see them**, because it is often difficult to go back where you saw them; even if you do remember. If you cannot explore these resources immediately, keep a word processing document open where you can copy the information to explore them at a later date.
- Make sure you groom the bookmarks (or "favorite list") on your web browser. It is a great time saver. However, the more clutter you have, the harder it is to relocate the places you go to frequently. Groom your bookmark list as often as you need to keep it organized.
- If you decide to hire a website designer or Internet consultant, look for the end result and work backwards. Look for websites you like and are

successful, and then find out who is promoting them. Anyone can claim to be an expert on the Internet, but the best way to find a good Internet consultant or website designer is to locate Internet successes and then learn who is behind them.

- It's critical that you stand out in the market place. You must position yourself **as unique and sell something that no one else offers**. If your product or service has a lot of competition, make sure that yours has some sort of extra value and is more beneficial to the potential client than the competition.
- Your online business may be operational for months or weeks before you're ready to promote it. When you are ready, hold a grand opening by announcing special discounts or giveaways to the first 500-1000 visitors. **Create a sense of urgency**. You should make these announcements in the appropriate discussion groups, forums, newsgroups, classified ads, etc.
- It is easy to get free professional advice online. There are many discussion groups/forums and newsgroups where experts in such fields as law, accounting, advertising, insurance, engineering, and other professionals hang out. A short question to such a newsgroup or forum will get you some helpful answers.
- Check out C-Net at **<http://www.cnet.com>** to check out the top 100 websites and see how to improve your own.

### **If You are a Computer Consultant and Web Designer - Some Fantastic Tips:**

- The traditional problem with computer consulting or web design is “no experience, no work – no work, no experience”. In other words, most people require you to have experience to get the job. **But how do you get experience if no one will give you a job**

**because you don't have experience?** See the dilemma?

Are you willing to do a non-paying gig to get experience? If so, there are plenty of people who would love to put your talents to work.

For example, you can go to *Compumentor* at **<http://www.compumentor.com>**. They look for computer skilled volunteers to help non-profit groups. Try to find a reputable or large business that has name recognition, then volunteer to work for them.

Other opportunities might be to help a local school with their webpage or computer consulting in your community.

You could also barter your services. For example, you exchange your web design or computer consulting services for a product or service a company offers. I know people who do this for car dealers — they build an entire website for a car dealer in return for free repairs.

How about doing some computer consulting for a hair replacement company in exchange for free hair implant sessions? Think about the possibilities... What could you use for free right now in return for your services?

You can also do a search in *Yahoo* for “volunteer”. Lots of sites will come up looking for volunteer computer workers (about 1/3 of all the sites need volunteer computer work).

You could also contract yourself out to popular web designers or computer consultants who have too large a workload. Offer to take the overload as a sub-contract for 2/3 of the contract value. That way, the original web designer or computer consultant still keeps 1/3 of the profit and you get the experience.

## NOTES:

You could even do it for 1/2 the contracted amount if it is was for a great brand name that would add to your resume. I know a person who actually offered to do a job for free because it was for *Hitachi*, and he wanted to be able to say that he did consulting work for *Hitachi* (that carries a lot of credibility!).

The last option is to "network". It may sound simple, but I can't tell you how many times networking has paid off for me. How many of your friends and affiliates know you are trying to establish yourself as a web designer or computer consultant? Make sure they do!

The idea is to get experience and build a portfolio so people want to hire you. Like I said, you must be willing to "pay your dues" in the beginning.

- If you know how to target your market, it can be quite easy to obtain work. Try the following:
  1. Send an email to all of the ISP's in your state and explain what you are doing. This will generate a lot of comments, feedback and valuable referrals. You will find this **will generate approximately \$3,000 worth of work instantaneously**. Make sure you re-email all the ISP's to update them on new progress, developments and accomplishments (if you have done jobs for big companies). There are sites on the net that list ISPs by state.
  2. Get written up in different Internet e-zines and print publications. To get noticed, you must offer something unique so you have a better chance of being written up in one of the publications.
  3. Approach your competitors in the industry and request any overload work. Offer to work on joint projects, as well. It is common for computer consultants to get in over their heads in certain projects and you can be there to bail them out. **This can land you some of the biggest contracts with the biggest corporations.** You

**NOTES:**

may be reluctant to go to the competition to discuss business, but if you have a great portfolio, product and service, many will listen to what you have to say. Remember to be honest and up front about your intentions. You don't want them thinking that you are trying to steal their business, so explain that you would rather **work with** your competition than against them. It's a "win-win" situation for you both.

4. The most successful technique you can use is by emailing a targeted list. Use *Yahoo* and search for a specific geographic area and then send a short and polite email providing some advice or free comments that may help people with their website or computer problems. You will be amazed at the contacts you will make and amount of referral business you will get from it. What I mean is that most of the "paying customers" will come from people who were NOT on the original mailing list, but who had it forwarded to them by a friend. You can set up an autoresponder with loads of additional information so customers only receive the amount of information they want. You will receive about a 5-7% response using this method.

Here's an example of a letter that could be sent out to your competition - it could be modified for mailing out to local ISPs...

My name is XXXXXX and I work in Chicago, IL, as a full-time Website Designer/graphics designer/HTML author. I am sending you a short email note regarding employment opportunities with your firm. My goals are to handle any overload HTML work, work on a part-time contract basis, or relocate.

In the past two years I have created a number of award-winning sites (XXXXXXX award, XXXXXXX award) and provide high quality website design. Given that there are an infinite number of HTML authors out there offering services, I want to emphasize what sets me apart from many others:



- My specialty is creating easily navigated, content rich sites
- My websites are often larger (50-150+ pages)
- My marketing skills are extensive (8 years experience)
- I have extensive experience with Photoshop, HTML, and more
- My experience dealing with large, well-known software companies has provided me with skills not available to most HTML authors
- I currently teach approved Website Design HTML courses (advanced and beginner)
- I have an extensive background in working with search databases and site registration

Recent projects include XXXXXXXX site, XXXXXXXX, graphics for XXXXXXXX, etc. My past projects have included clients in (cities) XXXXXX, XXXXXXXX, XXXXXXXX, in addition to (home province/state) XXXXXXXX. I enjoy working as a team or alone, depending on the scope of the project.

Rather than take up any more of your valuable time, I have my own website at; <http://www.XXXXXX.com> with links to my portfolio. I also have a text file with more details about the kind of working relationships I am looking for. This can be accessed by sending a blank email message to:

joeblo-info@XXX.com

I hope you will take a minute to request more detailed information on how I may be of service to your firm. Thank you for your time.

I look forward to hearing from you!

Cheers

Your name  
Company  
Email address

Feel free to contact me by phone at (716) 224...

- One last tip for web designers: A different approach is to focus on off-line marketing. There are hundreds of businesses waiting to hear the benefits of a web presence. If you have the “salesman” inside of you, sell them on the benefits and advantages of being on the web, and you won’t even have to close the deal... **they will ask you if you can build their website for them.**

## **Computer Tips:**

- I got a letter a while ago from the infamous marketing guru, Bill Myers, and he brought up a very good point. Many of us install different programs over time and run out of disk space. Once in a while we should spend some time uninstalling and deleting old files and programs using the add/remove option in WIN '95. It is a very simple process and fairly foolproof, but be very careful! When you start your computer the next morning you may discover some **serious problems**. Your critical programs (i.e. *Eudora and Netscape*), the ones which you depend on for your daily income, may no longer work.

In fact, they may not even boot up! You may even find that your modem refuses to connect with the Internet.

Because you rely on your computer for your daily bread and butter (as all online businesses do), fixing this problem is of the highest priority.

After a little investigation, you may find that specific .dll files are missing (.dll files are the internal files which enable a program to run). Further investigation will show that the programs are refusing to run because critical .dll files have been deleted (from the Windows directory during the uninstall process). This is not supposed to happen, as the uninstall process is only meant to remove files it originally put in the system, and no others.

Continuing the investigation will point to two programs that are the cause of this critical failure: *Netscape Navigator 4.0* and *Quarterdeck Web Compass*. Evidently a software glitch in these programs allowed WIN '95 to delete critical .dll files. The only way to recover is to reinstall all the programs. You may find that the problem is so deep, affecting so many pieces of software that the only two realistic options are to:

1. Reformat your hard drive and reinstall everything, or
2. Buy a new computer.

Neither choice is painless.

The moral of the story is, if you rely on your computer for your daily income, **it is essential to keep back-ups of your data and programs**. Be careful what and how much software you install on your computer and what you remove. If your computer crashes, it could easily cost you \$1,000/day in lost business and productivity.

If you don't have a zip drive, JAZ drive, CDROM burner, or tape backup purchase one immediately. They can be bought for a few hundred dollars (a very small fee compared to the lost of business and frustration if your computer crashes). You should store all of your programs (not to mention other critical files and data) to avoid losing them. These back-up systems also allow you to archive old data and free up hard drive space.

- A site you want to check out if you need to buy any computer hardware is *On-Sale Auction* at **<http://www.onsale.com>**. This is the best place to buy brand name hardware at prices well below wholesale.

## **Retail Store Tips to Promote Your Online Presence**

Most people spend their time offline, so take advantage of that. If you own a physical retail store or operation, make sure you do the following:

- Put signs up that say "see us on the Internet at [www.mydomain.com](http://www.mydomain.com)".
- Have an online catalog that makes it easier for a customer to shop.
- Have your website and email address on *all* letterhead, invoices, business cards, packing lists, cash register tapes, brochures, and other related media.
- If your business is the first in your area (or in your field) to go online, it is easy to get an article in a local newspaper announcing your presence. Contact the newspaper and ask for the person who writes about new small business. If you approach the right people at trade magazines, you may even be able to get a mention in one of your industry's periodicals.
- Send press releases to any magazines that your clientele might read. Your goal is to get a small mention in the "what's new" section or other similar columns in local magazines.
- If you have the funds, put up a PC in your store or get a booth at a trade show to let your customers tour your home page.
- Try and get the email address of all your customers... you are then free to contact them at anytime if you want to announce a special offering, a preferred customer's sale, or to just remind them that you are there to help if they need any more of what they bought. If some of your customers do not have an email address, try faxing or mailing a monthly newsletter with sale items and other information included.

## **Lesson # 18**

### **Who is Buying on the Internet?**

This is a profile of the average Internet buyer, so you can get a general idea of the kind of people who might be coming to your sites. All of the figures are based on professional surveys done in 1998.

#### **General:**

- Average Age: 33
- Female: 35%
- Male: 65%

#### **Income:**

- Under \$10K 3%
- 10K - 30K 12%
- 30k - 40K 10%
- over 50K 44%
- misc (unemployed, retired, wouldn't respond) 31%

#### **Total respondents to surveys:**

- USA: 85%
- Europe: 7%
- Canada: 4%
- All Other Countries: 4%

#### **Internet Usage:**

- 93% of respondents use their web browser more than once a day
- 56% use it more frequently than 4 times a day
- 36% use the web 1-4 times a day
- 7% use it less frequently than once a day

#### **How often are people buying online?:**

- Never 10%
- Less than once a month 45%
- Once a month 28%
- Once a week 4%

#### **How much did people spend online in the past year?**

- Less than \$100 17%
- \$100 - \$200 8%
- \$200 - \$1000 33%
- \$1000 or more 38%

**What do users access on the net?**

- 45% reported they have never accessed a newsgroup (or only have a few times)
- 20% use newsgroups once a week
- 20% use newsgroups once a day
- 40% look for reference information weekly
- 30% look for reference information daily
- over 45% have never joined a chat group
- 7% chat daily

**Primary use of web browser (most people checked off multiple categories):**

- Personal information 75%
- Work 65%
- Education 60%
- Entertainment 60%
- Shopping 50%

**How do the netters find out about your webpage (most people checked off multiple categories)?**

- 90% find out about webpages from links on other webpages
- 85% from popular search engines
- 64% from magazines, newspapers
- 65% friends
- 57% directories
- 37% signature files

**Web Browser bookmarks; how likely are they to "bookmark" you?**

- 30% have between 11-50 bookmarks
- 34% have over 100 items listed
- 2% never bookmark anything or don't know how to bookmark

**Marital status:**

- 46% married
- 31% single
- 10% common law

**NOTES:**

- 9% divorced or separated
- 4% other

**Occupation:**

- 30% educational
- 28% computer related
- 23% miscellaneous
- 19% professional and management career

**Primary Browser**

- Microsoft 31%
- Navigator (old versions) 19%
- Communicator 45%

*Note: Our stats on this particular item seem to be contradictory to our website logs... which show almost 60% of our visitors using Microsoft IE and only 40% using Netscape Navigator/Communicator.*

**General:**

- Over 55% of users access the internet from home and pay for it themselves (as opposed to work)
- Over 25% of internet access is paid for by "work"
- 57% have one or more college/university degrees
- 90% use English as their first language
- 87% Caucasian
- over 25% of survey respondents have a home-based business

## **Lesson # 19**

### **The Importance of "Backend" And Up-sell Products and Services**

This lesson will probably make you more money than any other in this course, so imagine how it might best be applied to your online business, and remember to make notes as you go!

An “upsell” is when you offer a deluxe or more expensive package right when the customer is ordering. A “backend” is a product or service you sell your customer after the initial sale.

The biggest obstacle in getting someone to buy from you is gaining their “trust”. That is why "backends" are so important. It is easy to sell to previous customers because they have already bought something from you, and if you have offered a quality product, good value and excellent service, they will trust you and buy again.

It is very important to know that you will find the 80/20 rule will apply for your long-term customers. **You will find that 20% of your customers will give you 80% of your profits.** This 20% will buy again and again. In the long term, this is where you want to spend your time and effort, not on the 80% that will not buy again. Show appreciation and offer special incentives to repeat customers. Reward them for being loyal customers and they will keep buying from you again and again.

If you are selling to a customer who will be a repeat customer often, consider offering something at even below your cost for the first sale to get them to buy from you. Once they get to know you, the continued sales will bring large profits. Make sure you understand the "**life-time value of a customer**", not the immediate value of a customer.

If you know that the average customer will buy over \$800 in products from you every year (of which you



make \$300 profit), and that the average customer will stay with you for at least 5 years, **then in reality that customer is worth \$1,500 in long term net profit, not just the initial sale's profit of \$75.** You could technically lose \$1,000 on the initial sale and still make money in the long run.

If you offer a good product (or service), good value and customer service, the customer will be yours for life. It gets better... even if they have no use for your products anymore, they are still worth something because they have had a good business relationship with you in the past and they trust you. It will be easy to sell that person anything else you might offer, even if that particular item is not related to what you sold them initially.

Your current client base is a gold mine. Statistics show that 28%-36% of the people who have bought something from you will buy again if you have something similar to offer. Think of the potential here. This is where a lot of your income can come from.

There are "short term" and "long term" angles that can be employed when selling to your customer base. We will discuss them both in this lesson.

Let's say you have 500 customers who bought something for \$50. You send all of them an email (costs you nothing) and sell 200 of them another \$50 worth of your product (or a similar product you offer). That's \$10,000 in sales that you otherwise would never have seen.

Some people even lose money on their first product with the intent to make more on a "back-end" (I repeat, *a back-end is a product that you intend to sell your customers after they have bought your first offering/product*). Many marketers (including myself) believe this is where all the **real big money** is made.

For example, a marketing guru by the name of Jay Abraham (who charges \$3,000/hr. for consultation!) instructed one of his clients to offer a rare coin collection to new customers for \$19. He was actually

**NOTES:**

losing a couple of dollars on every sale. Of the 50,000 people who bought the coin collection at \$19, nearly 10,000 came back and bought another coin collection (or "backend" coin collection as we call it) for \$1,000 or more. That one back-end product alone made over \$2 million dollars for the client, and who knows how much more on other similar promotions.

And that was only the first step. Every three months he mails the 10,000 people who bought \$1,000 or more and gets almost 1,500 of them to spend an average of \$5,000.... **That's another \$1 million plus in sales!**

*Important Note:* I will take a loss on the front end to get the customer — the lifetime value is paramount! However, if you get a new customer and you know that the lifetime of a customer is seven years, and that you will make an average of \$500 profit on that customer every year (\$3,500 over that seven years), you can afford not only to lose money on the first sale, but actually spend up to \$500 per customer to get them as your client.

If this is the case, buy customers from other related businesses to sell to **(you can buy them for just a few dollars each)**! Make an offer to a related business to buy their customer list at \$1.00 to \$5.00 per name (depending on how much you can make from their customers and how much the customers are worth to the company that has this customer list).

**It is of critical importance** you sit down right now and figure out how much a customer is worth to you. I cannot emphasize this enough. Do you see how important backends are yet?

If you are selling a product, you **MUST** develop a backend product to sell your customers if you don't have one now. You should easily be able to come up with other products/services related to your original product to sell in the future. If you are hard-pressed and can't think of anything or don't want to, then split your current product up somehow (or recommend

## *NOTES:*

someone else's product for a commission, but I will go into further detail on that later).

For example, if you were selling a book on finding your blood relatives through computer databases, you could offer a basic version for \$9.95 to get a large volume of sales at a low price. Then 30 days later you could offer them an advanced version for \$29.95 or even \$39.95 and increase your margins dramatically.

It is proven that you should keep in contact with your customers every 21 days for maximum sales. This has been proven time and time again by direct marketing gurus such as Jay Abraham, Ted Nicholas, and Gary Halbert. Even though they are not experts at Internet marketing, this concept of backend selling still applies on the internet. These are the kind of marketing consultants who charge \$15,000 up front just to write a sales letter for you, **and** then they get 5% of the gross sales from your product (which is often hundreds of thousands of dollars!).

Keeping sales going from customers who have already ordered is critical. Other ways to get them to come back to your site are to:

1. Offer a weekly or daily tip to entice them to return
2. Offer weekly or monthly contests or draws
3. Offer a discussion list (a place where they can communicate with other like-minded people on their site)
4. Special prices or giveaways for repeat customers
5. A weekly or monthly newsletter with valuable information and a special on a product or service or a group of such. Or just a newsletter to inform them of new additions and updates to your site. Think about building a lasting customer relationship.
6. Because customers are human, observe their birthdays, anniversaries and holidays. You can set

up programs that will automatically do this and even personalize the message to every customer.

7. Remind surfers to bookmark your site on the first page of your site. Inform them that new information is posted once a month (or once a week) to entice them to return. Or you could have a simple button on a webpage that would allow them to join a list that will notify them when your site is updated or new articles/information have been added.

## **What Is an Up sell and How To Use Them to Skyrocket Your Profits!**

The upsell is a variation on what we have been talking about. It is a second offer right when customers make an initial purchase.

Your upsell can be a "deluxe" package of what you sold initially, an offer to upgrade to something better or even something affiliated with the product your customers initially bought.

Have you ever called to order something from an infomercial? Almost all of them ask if you want to upgrade to a better model for a small fee or purchase something else that will enhance or complement the product you just bought.

A perfect example of this is the *COPS - Too Hot for TV* videos that were popular a few years ago. They advertised them at \$19.95, but when you called they told you that as a special offer, for an extra \$10.00, you could get a special edition with 15 minutes of the wildest, uncensored video never available before. Then the phone operator would ask "Would you like me to include that with your order?"

This was the upsell. They tried to get you to buy a \$29.95 product when you initially called for a \$19.95 product. And the extra cost to them for the \$29.95

version? **Zero, nil, nada, zip!** They just added the extra footage on the original tape. Then on top of that, later they mailed you a "backend" about 30 days later. It was *COPS 2 - Too Hot for TV*. These people just reaped the profits.

Now that may not sound like a lot of money, but when you consider that they sold it to hundreds of thousands of people... **the upsell made them millions!**

It all comes back to targeting your market. The cost of making that first sale is huge: there are advertising costs, marketing costs, follow-ups and everything else. But once you have that initial sale, odds are **in your favor the new customer will be interested in related or similar products or services**.

You can also offer other products you carry or recommend other's products and services.

Unless your business has a very large product line, you will make a lot more money by recommending someone else as a third party. It is more powerful than trying to sell something you carry yourself (as they know you will be biased).

***\*Important Note:** Refer back to the Autoresponder Lesson where I show how I use autoresponders to automatically recommend others and sell my backend products before reading any further. If you have not read that lesson yet, the following information will not make any sense.*

What are the best ways to maximize your profits with backends?

- 1) A few days after a customer orders, recommend a complementary product (they will most likely buy something similar as they are currently in the market).
- 2) Later (up to 30 days), offer something else you sell as they will be more likely to buy another product from you once they have evaluated that the first

**NOTES:**

product you sent them was what they expected and what you promised it to be.

- 3) If it is appropriate, send a reminder that they are running out of whatever you sold them and offer them a discount on a new supply.
- 4) Keep emailing sales letters, specials offers, new informative information, articles, etc., to repeat customers.
- 5) Once you have exhausted all attempts at selling whatever you have to offer (related to the industry), offer something you carry that is non-related to the original purchase or recommend someone else's product that is non-related to the industry.

The theory is that you don't try to sell something else **you offer** right away because if someone wanted it, they would have ordered it initially (unless it was an upsell product or service that is not publicly offered)! Offer them recommendations of other services/products that are complementary to yours and receive a referral fee or commission for any sold. Then 30-60 days later, offer incentive to buy something else from you (you can contact them via email offering a special discount or again offering free info to remind them who you are). Test which approach works best for your business.

The only time I try to sell something else I offer right away is if it is complementary to what was originally bought and they did not know I had the upsell product available. For example, if I was selling anti-aging cream and also had a weight-loss product or book, I would offer the book to them within a few days of them buying the cream since they were obviously in the market for products to improve themselves physically.

For example, what would people who just bought **Car Secrets Revealed** be in the market for? Well, anything to do with buying a new car or anything that might be needed right after they buy a new car (our survey showed that 73% of the people who bought the book planned on buying a new car in the next fourteen days - see why surveys are so important?). Here is a letter

**NOTES:**

that every **Car Secrets** customer gets from my autoresponder exactly three days after the book is ordered:

Subject: Information Updates

Hello again,

This letter has two purposes. First, to thank you for your business by purchasing "Car Secrets Revealed".

The second reason is to inform you of new developments and new information to help you in reducing your car expenses. Here is a list of the six updates for Car Secrets Revealed that I have for you.

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1) We get letters from readers all the time. Recently we received a letter that we feel is worthy for all our readers to hear. He shows his method for \*owning\* his car for less money than leasing it. He saves almost \$5000 over his loan term as compared to leasing it over the same term! In his exact words... "I have taken a very different path to the one in your book. My method allows you to buy a new car every 2 years or so, from whomever you choose, pay no money down and save thousands over the cost of a lease." As the Internet allows us to share information very easily, we want to make this available to you. This information is quite lengthy and is too long to put in this email. The document is available to all Car Secrets readers. All you have to do is send a blank email to free@igs.net and the document will be emailed to you within a couple of minutes.

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2) If you have read the chapter on "New Car Buying Tips and Tricks" in my book, you probably know my opinion of Extended Warranties or Service Contracts (two different words for the same thing). We have set up a webpage that reveals tricks that the dealers play with warranties, what to look for in a warranty, how dealers get paid twice for one repair, how you can have a hidden "extra"

deductible, why "bumper to bumper" does not always mean what the name implies, and lots of great info regarding warranties. If you are buying a new car, the dealer will really push their service contract as they make a lot of money on it. You definitely want to read this page before you go into the dealership to buy your new car. The URL is:

[http://www.igs.net/carsecrets/warranty/warranty\\_faq.html](http://www.igs.net/carsecrets/warranty/warranty_faq.html)

Well, I still despise the extended warranties that the dealers offer... but I have discovered a company that truly offers "good value" for your dollar when it comes to extended service.

The best part is that they will REFUND YOU 85% OF THE WARRANTY COST IF YOU HAVE NO CLAIMS BY THE END OF THE CONTRACT! Now that is true value! And that is one of the biggest reasons I recommend them... you can't lose with their service... no other service contract will give you any money back if you don't use it... THEY WILL!

Here are the other reasons that set them above the rest:

- They are available for new AND used cars.
- They are almost HALF THE COST of a contract that the new car dealers offer (the new car dealers really mark them up to make a lot of profit)
- You can cancel the contract at any time you wish and get a refund for the unused portion! Just think, if you feel that you are not getting your money's worth, they will refund you and cancel the contract!!!! Try to find anyone else who offers this.
- There is not a "wear and tear" exclusion. In other words, almost everything is covered; unlike most warranties that void most claims by stating they are "wear and tear". This is a fantastic benefit.
- There is not an "overheating" exclusion either. This is another trick used by dealers. If you are having problems with your engine, they can claim that you overheated it and it is not covered under warranty. This warranty will cover overheating.



- You can get your repairs done \*anywhere\* in the country at \*any\* shop you choose, not just "authorized" dealers that most warranties specify.

- Lots of extra coverage like "seals and gaskets" that other warranties will only cover for an extra charge. They even cover you for rental car, meals, and lodging reimbursement.

- It is transferable to the new owner if you sell your car. This adds a lot of value to your used car so you can get a higher selling price for it.

They are truly in for the "long-haul" with great customer service and great value. They will give you a free, no obligation quote instantaneously when you access their website... so I recommend you give it a try. You can get a warranty for you new OR used car.

We have set up a webpage for them on our server and the quote will be displayed right on your screen within 3 seconds after filling out the form. Go to:  
<http://www.igs.net/carsecrets/warranty/information.html>

Even if you are not interested in getting a quote, check out the webpage as there is lots of info and warranty tricks that dealers can pull... and much more. It is great reading if you want to learn the truth about extended warranties.

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3) Many of you out there are buying a new car only because the one you have now is costing too much money in repairs. There is a way to get around that problem at a fraction of the cost of a new car. The webpage mentioned above has service contracts to cover your used car to protect you from costly repairs in the future. Their warranties are bumper to bumper so you don't have to worry about anything. That URL again was:  
<http://www.igs.net/carsecrets/warranty/information.html>  
It may save you having to buy a new car.

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4) If you want to get a car at a great price from a local dealer without the haggling, visit the URL below and you

will get their no-haggle lowest price emailed to you from your local dealer with no obligation to buy. This company below has "haggled" for you so you don't have to.

<http://www.marketingtips.com/autovantage/>

What do you have to lose... it is free. Go to the site and fill out the form to get a quote on a vehicle from a local dealer.

Note: Instead of trying to retype these long URLs above, just "copy" and "paste" them into your browser.

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5) The only way to make sure you are not paying too much for insurance is to shop around! Progressive insurance now offers a free, easy way to shop around. Just fill out a simple form and they will instantly display a listing of comparison rates from Progressive and three other leading auto insurers, including State Farm and Allstate.

Just go to:

<http://www.marketingtips.com/progressive/>

Your email program may split the URL above into two lines because it is so long. Please make sure that you copy and paste entire URL into your web browser to go to the proper section to get the free insurance quote.

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Well that's all the updates. We will be keeping you up on any new updates in the future that are interesting. Thank You.

Corey Rudl  
Car Secrets

**NOTES:**

This is just an example. The people in this letter are only a couple I recommend. We are testing new ideas all the time.

Right now we are testing the recommendation for a leasing book and software from a different publisher. Although some people would consider it competition, it is really a complementary product. It seems to be going well right now and we will most likely be adding it as a fifth item on the list above.

Now you must be asking, "why would he recommend other people in this letter?" Well it's simple. Everything I have listed in this letter (except #1) makes me a profit. The fantastic concept is that it sounds like I am "doing them a favor" by updating them on new information. It doesn't sound like a sales letter does it?

I get a percentage of every extended warranty contract sold, a fee for every referral that is filled out for a new car dealer inquiry, and a payment for every car insurance lead that I give *Progressive Insurance*.

Because I have signed non-disclosure agreements with both of these companies, I am bound by contract and cannot tell you the exact amount I get paid for every sale they make. But I can tell you this letter earns me an extra \$3,600 pure profit every month and I don't have to do a thing. These commission checks are mailed out to me monthly.

In other words **I get over \$43,200 a year in pure profit from this one deal alone. I didn't have to do any work to get it... it is all automated and I just collect the profits.**

I have tried many different products to find which ones are most profitable.

I did business with a company that provided a fax report on any used car to show if it was a hidden "write-off" or to check the true odometer reading, etc. I would show the advantages of their service and recommend their product. The result - it flopped!

## NOTES:

I also tried selling a product called *ShopForeman*, which was software that would diagnose your car from your personal computer. I bought the product at a wholesale cost of \$24.00, which made us about \$15.00 in profit for each unit sold. I directed the customer to the informational pages at our sites and orders were processed on our server with our merchant accounts. The order was then automatically emailed to our supplier who charged our credit card and shipped the software for us.

I even started to exchange advertising for our recommendations. I recommended a dealer car buying service that was a step above the rest in exchange for placing our *Car Secrets* banner on all their webpages. Instead of getting paid to recommend their service and us to pay for advertising on their site, we just swapped services.

As a bonus, our banner was put on the page seen immediately after someone fills out a contact form. This is perfect since our banner would be displayed to every one of the people considering hiring their services (**no one else could even pay for that advertising spot...** it was not available until we did the barter deal).

It worked out well for us, as the profits generated through the banner on their site were equal to what we would have received for recommending their services. The real advantage to us was that instead of just getting paid for recommending them, we generated many new **Car Secrets** customers that we can sell to again and again (and therefore make a lot more money in future sales).

The key to recommending other products or services is to remember that you must truly feel that the product you are recommending is a **great product and great value**. By recommending the product or service, you are personally endorsing it. If it does not live up to what you or the manufacturer/provider claim, your reputation is on the line and you take a chance of losing a possible lifetime customer!

## NOTES:

Now think about this again - exactly three days after a client purchased **Car Secrets Revealed** they are automatically sent this "catalogue" which recommends other products and services. From this we get "kick-backs" monthly, and everything is done automatically, there is no time involvement from us.... it is all pure profit. This generates thousands of dollars in extra income every single month of the year.

Fantastic, isn't it? Do you see how easy it is? Between my four online businesses, back-ends earn me an in excess of \$23,000 extra, each and every month (\$276,000 per year)... and I am not even maximizing these because I have so many other projects on the go. The best part is that I have set it up to be completely automated. **I don't lift a finger for that extra \$276,000 per year!**

Think about what additional products or services can be marketed to both new and existing customers. This is where you can really make some money. If you are already earning a good income with your product, imagine adding a few related products and you can double that figure without much work. You have already found the customer... now you just have to offer them other things you are selling. **It is all at zero risk and great profit potential.**

You will find many different products/services to offer as time goes on. Some will work, while some will not. I want to emphasize this. You will quickly see which ones will make you money and which ones will not. Keep the ones that are successful and continue testing new products.

Within a few months, you will have a winning campaign with a few products that are proven to add substantial profits to your business. Once it is set up, **it is all hands-free and pure profit!**

Remember this very important concept: backend products and services are huge profit generators. **If you do not actually have any backends to sell directly to the customer, recommend someone**

**else's product or service and receive a cut of the profits.**

## **What to do and When to do It**

### **Keep in touch with your customers.**

Holidays give you a chance to contact customers and remind them of your business. I have heard so many people say "I spent a fortune with that company and they didn't even send me a Christmas card". There is no excuse for this anymore. It is easy to send an email to our customer list in a matter of minutes. No designing Christmas cards, signing them, packing them and then finally mailing them... just a simple email. Send the email... **it makes them feel important!**

Research has proven that existing customers are four to five times more likely to buy from you than a "cold" market. Many small companies fail to target their own customers for repeat sales because they have lacked the technology to do so, UNTIL NOW!

### **Once your prospects have become customers, they are a source of profit for life!**

Repeat business costs less than new business. **It costs six times more to sell something to a new customer than to an existing customer.** You should make an effort to offer repeat customers incentives to buy from you again with periodic emailings. Put as much useful information into those emails instead of just advertising. That way, you are reminding them of your product or service but are also showing you care about their needs as well.

Many marketers think that once the sale is done, the marketing is over. Be sure to do the following;

Follow up on the sale: Send a quick email to your customers, 30 days after they purchase to follow up on the sale. See if everything is going all right with the purchase and if the customer has any questions. This

**NOTES:**

helps build your relationship with them right from the start. Send another email up to 90 days later offering a new or related product, or contact them six months later previewing the announcement of an upcoming sale. Then again nine months after the original sale ask the customer for the names of three people who might benefit from being included on your mailing list. One year after the first sale, the customer gets an email celebrating the one-year anniversary of their first purchase, and perhaps a coupon for a discount on their next one. The customer, instead of being a one-time customer, becomes a lifetime repeat buyer.

Now, remember the web form-processing feature of *Mailloop* I was talking about before? This is where this feature really “shines”. Using *Mailloop*, every order you have been receiving by email has been stored in a mail-merge file so you easily have *Mailloop* email your past customer base with a click of a few buttons... and every email will be personalized for that customer. You can address them by name, thank them for their purchase (and state the name of the product and date they purchased automatically so it looks like a personal email) and merge in any other information into the email from your mail merge file you feel necessary. I talked about this feature of *Mailloop* previously, but now that you see the potential of backend sales, you can see the **power** of this feature. As an example, one of the emails to your clients may look like this:

Hello Jane,

I am emailing you to thank you for your purchase of Golf Swing Pro Videotape Package on June 23, 1998. I noticed you lived in New York and wanted to offer all our customers on the east coast a special price on our new software product that is just being released this week. It is called the Golf Pro SwingMaster and is a great tool for improving your golf game. It is state of the art software that allows you to analyze your golf swing right from the comfort of your own home. We have been working years on it and have had some of the finest golfers testing it for the last 4 months with fantastic results. Take a look at <http://www.golfing.com/master/> and see how

it improves your stroke in a matter of minutes, you will be truly amazed. We have set up this special webpage for you because you are on the East Coast and as a preferred client, we wanted to give you a special 30% discount.

Check out the webpage and if you have any questions feel free to contact me directly.

Thanks.

Chuck Peterson  
Director of Sales

Notice that her name "Jane", the product "Gold Swing Pro Video Tape Package", the date of purchase "June 23, 1998", and her city "New York" were all merged into the email. **THIS IS A VERY PROFESSIONAL AND POWERFUL PRESENTATION TO THE CUSTOMER!**... and the beauty of it is that unknowing to the customer who is very impressed by this, it just took the press of a few buttons to mail this personalized message to your entire customer database.

Using this technique, not only do you make many more sales from the one customer (and much more profit), but that customer will probably recommend two or three others to you. So, instead of a customer having a lifetime value of say \$3,500 (or whatever it is for your business), that figure **triples** if the customer recommends two more people.

Because of your follow-up, **this one customer that you would have made \$100 profit from, now makes over \$10,000 during the next few years** (because of repeat business and the friends recommended).

Now lets take this one step further! Because *Mailloop* has a built in scheduler, you can easily set it up that *Mailloop* emails all (or a portion) of your customer database **every week** on Friday (or whatever day) **automatically**. See the power of that! Like I said before, there is no other software product that is more important for doing business on the Internet as *Mailloop*.



*Note: for more information on Mailloop, go to  
<http://www.marketingtips.com/mailloop.html>*

## **What is the Perfect Industry for Backend Products and Repeat Sales?**

The answer to the question above is any industry where someone will need that product repeatedly for the rest of their purchasing life or for some long period of time.

You want to develop lifetime relationships with your customers. If you have a product that has direct repeat potential, make sure to take advantage of that right away.

Let's use a retail flower shop as an example, since people might think this would be a hard business to make a good living at. To take advantage of this industry, you could do the following;

With every new customer, you could include a survey card which would entitle them to a few bouquets or simple arrangements, if they fill it out and send it back. The survey could include questions about the service, quality, etc., but more importantly about family members, birthdays, anniversaries, etc. This gives you the opportunity to do follow-up calls on special occasions and get a new sale. These people become accustomed to doing business with you and your business will grow.

There is a different way to approach this: You could offer a year's worth of flowers to any new or old customers who enter a contest and fill out a survey form.

Once the winner is selected, you send a letter to all the participants saying that Mr. X of New York (or wherever) won, but if they brought the letter in to the

shop or mentioned it in a phone order, they would get a special arrangement for X dollars.

With either of these approaches, you gain new wealth for the business, and now have a great database to send out notices, special offers, etc. There are programs available that will automatically check the database for birthdays or special occasions that are coming up that relate to your client list and print out a list of those every day. Again, you create wealth for your business. See how easy it is with the technology today?

If you take this principle and apply it to an Internet business, you could do the following:

Have a program built for you that will look through your database and extract all the email addresses for any special occasion of a customer (i.e. birthdays, anniversaries, anniversary of the day they became your customer, etc.). It could automatically email them a special notice saying "happy birthday" or "happy anniversary" or whatever. This makes the customer feel special and favor you above the competition.

If you wanted to take this one step further, you could offer 20% off a next purchase as your birthday gift (or whatever occasion). All they have to do is save this letter and use it the next time they order.

***Note:** If you need a special program built for you, they are created at quite reasonable prices. Call our office as we usually have a handful of "hot-shot" programmers who we can recommend to you.*

Email notices like this are additional to the other times you could email your entire customer database (i.e. Christmas, Easter, or to update them on new products, site changes, etc.).

## **What to Sell When You Have Nothing Left**

"Relationship selling" is why network marketing is so powerful. If a doctor, who has been treating you and your children for many years, comes to you and says they have found a wonderful product from a certain company, wouldn't you consider it because you trust them? In short, it is because of the relationship that the sale was made.

You must be prepared to get closer to your customers and clients or you won't survive.

The point is that once you have developed a relationship with a customer (so they trust you), **it is very easy to sell them anything.**

For example, after I have exhausted opportunities to sell my **Car Secrets Revealed** customers automotive-related products, I will offer them something non-related to the car industry. Let me explain:

Some of you might be saying that you have a product or service that a customer will only want once, so this "backend" idea will not work. If you are thinking this way, you are absolutely wrong! My **Car Secrets Revealed** book is something that I can only sell once to a customer. Once they have bought their car, they have no need for my product or service again.

However, instead of looking at this as a disadvantage, I look at it as an opportunity. I search for products on the market that new car owners need, and either offer it to them directly or recommend their product or service for a "referral fee" or commission (as I have shown previously).

Once I have exhausted automotive opportunities, I will sell something that is non-related to the car industry. Because they have done business with me before and know I live up to my promises, it is an easy sale.

I connect my old product as a reason for contacting them with a new product. For example, with my **Car Secrets** customers, I send them a message thanking them for their initial purchase of **Car Secrets Revealed** and then continue to tell them what a great success **Car Secrets** has been (it rose from zero sales

to be the number one best selling car book on the internet in less than one year).

I then continue on to tell customers that I have developed a course that shows anyone how to make the same success out of any product or service they may have online. I give them a taste of the course by emailing half of one of the lessons so they can see the kind of information I reveal.

The result? Hundreds of people purchased the course, and that means **thousands of profit dollars in my pocket**, (just working my "non-related product" customer list).

I actually get previous **Car Secrets Revealed** customers who buy the course who don't even need it. They email me to say something of this nature. "I wanted to thank you for the great information in **Car Secrets Revealed**. My wife and I loved it so much that I figured anything that you have to offer would be very enlightening, entertaining and informative, so I would like to order your new course". You will get sales from people who would never have bought your new product in the first place.

***Tip:** When offering a product directly to past customers, try having an order form at the bottom of the email or a link to a direct link to an web based order form. It has proven pull up to 154% better if you have a good relationship with your customers and it does not come across as pushy. Test it to see if it works with your customer base.*

Note that it is not uncommon to sell a product in an unrelated industry to your customer base and get a good return. The only reason I showed you the example of **Car Secrets** and my Internet Marketing Course was because it showed you the power of "loyalty" and lifetime customer value – how customers will buy from you again and again based on your reputation, your great customer service, and the value you give them. The majority of the time, you want to offer your customer base something in relation to the initial product you originally sold them.

**NOTES:**

For more great ideas on relationship selling and what to sell to your customer base when you have nothing left to sell them, do not miss out on the lesson titled *Joining Affiliate Programs – Should You and How You can Profit from Them* – it has fantastic information on how to take relationship selling to the next level.

## **Lesson # 20**

# **The Hottest Products and Services To Sell on the Internet**

One of the first things you will have to decide when setting up an Internet business is whether you want to sell a product or a service, both of which have their advantages and disadvantages.

### **Products:**

- Advantage: unlimited income potential because you are not constrained by time, the way you are with a service (the more product you sell the more income you make - especially when you are automated).
- Disadvantage: requires stocking and shipping (or drop shipping from a supplier).
- Disadvantage: generally requires you filling large amounts of orders to make a reasonable living, unless you have a product with a very high profit margin.

### **Services:**

- Advantage: it is easier to make a profit quickly because the entire price of a service is paid to you (except for any overhead).
- Advantage: services can generate a great residual income because the client may want to hire your services again and again.
- Disadvantage: you are limited to a modest income because you can provide only so many services each day (unless you hire employees to perform

services for clients).

In my opinion, **selling a product online has, by far seen the biggest profit potential in the long run.** Once you get a successful product, you can automate the system and move on to new products that will generate you multiple streams of income.

If you need immediate cash flow, providing a service is the fastest way to produce instant income... but it will never pay off as big in the long run compared to selling a product with a high profit margin.

If you sell a service, think about how you can transform it into a product. One of the best examples I can think of is regarding the people who submit websites to search engines. Because the competition got so fierce and their business began to suffer, some wrote and sold reports revealing how search engines work and tricks for getting sites listed higher etc. The reports were priced at \$20 -\$40, and the entrepreneurs in our example found new markets to tap.

## **Online Network Marketing (a.k.a. MLM)**

Network Marketing, or Multi Level Marketing (MLM) programs are being sold aggressively on the net. If you are in a network marketing program right now and are putting the techniques contained in this course into play, you can see how much money can be made in the program.

Multi Level Marketing is based on one fundamental key: personal selling. You buy into the plan because you had a friend or someone you know introduced it to you. If it were some unknown salesman at your front door, you would not have listened, but because you have confidence in the opinion of your friend or acquaintance, you will listen to what they have to say and possibly get involved.

It is the **personal relationship** between the two of you that sells the network marketing plan, not the plan itself. It can be difficult to build these relationships on the net... especially when everyone has pushed these plans so hard that most are viewed as cheap "get rich quick" schemes.

So it is important that you make your offer unique... give them something that everyone else cannot. For example you could offer them personal training on exactly how to be as successful in MLM as you have been... they will have a personal successful mentor to guide them to success. That would be a great incentive to get involved, now wouldn't it?

Make sure you do not reveal to them that it is a MLM right away... get them excited about the product or business opportunity first! Build credibility and rapport and then present them with the opportunity.

If you feel that you cannot do this, then move on to selling a product or service without MLM on the Internet.

## **What Are the Hottest Products?**

It is in your best interest to market information products like books, manuals, special reports, audio videotapes and software. **They are the easiest things to sell and generate quick profits.** They have obscene markup potential and are easy to deliver (it can even be done electronically via email so there is no product or fulfillment cost).

For example, ***Car Secrets Revealed*** costs me a whopping \$1.55 per book from the printer and I sell it for \$27.00. What other product can you get this kind of profit margin with? Software and audio/video information is similar. A CD-ROM or floppy disk costs less than a \$1.00 to produce, but you can sell the software for hundreds of dollars. Audio and videotapes sell for up to \$50 and can cost less than \$3.00 to produce.



## NOTES:

Customers are not paying for "value" of the material in the book/videotape (or whatever), they are paying for the **value of the information** you provide.

Information products are also very easy to produce when compared with virtually anything else, and there are essentially no regulations that apply to them. If you were to produce a weight loss pill you would need to go through the drug administration, safety and labeling regulations. If you were to produce an electrical product, you would need to get it approved by the Standards Associations before you could release it to the market. However, if you were to sell a product such as a weight loss manual or a book on how to build your own radio receiver, **you wouldn't have to do anything but write and print it.** You are protected under the first amendment of the Constitution.

The last reason why an information product is the hottest item to sell is because our society is so "information hungry". It is easy to charge large sums of money for knowledge that will make life easier or more comfortable. It can be as simple as how to make your garden flourish or as complex as how to make a fortune in the stock market. What makes the Internet perfect for this is that the people who use it are "information junkies", and they are usually searching the net for information... **a perfect client for you!**

You will also find that when you produce an information product, you will start to receive offers to write articles for magazines, be invited to interviews (TV and radio), to speak at different functions, etc. You will be quickly regarded as an "expert" in the field if your information is valuable and accurate.

***Note:** I commonly write for automotive magazines because of the name I have made from my book. Magazines pay upwards of \$400/page for this kind of article. If you just write a three page article every couple of months, it is an easy extra \$10,000 in income per year. And better yet, I just take a couple of pages out of my book and alter them into article format. It takes me less than 30 minutes to make a three page article and I get \$1200 from each*

*magazine that runs it.*

Pick a market that can afford what you are selling. Many people come up with a great product, but they market to a clientele that cannot afford what they are selling. Take a moment and think about it. Don't make this mistake. Not only do they have to be able to afford it, but they must have a passion for the subject (a hobby or interest they love), or a problem that they badly need solved. And, of course, they need to have a credit card.

I recommend that your first product be a book or manual about 100 pages in length. This is very easy to produce, and publishing a book can be done very inexpensively. You can publish special reports or booklets in small quantities like 10 or more. And, if you are going to publish a book like you would see in a bookstore, it can be done for under \$3,000. A book can cost you as little as \$1.00 a copy to produce if you invest wisely.

If you produce an information product:

- Offer it as a WORD or TXT document on diskette or “downloadable” over the net (or other electronic distribution methods I will discuss later).
- Offer it in print format. You can have this done at any local copy shop, or if you plan to sell a lot of copies, have it printed and bound professionally at a printer.
- Don't try to produce an audiotape, videotape or CD-ROM until you have experience in print media.

When you are creating an information product, the name of the book/special report is a **critical key** to your success. For example, the book *The Entrepreneur's Manual* sold twelve copies. The author renamed the book *Why SOB's Succeed in Business and Nice Guys Fail* and marketed it again. **It sold a whopping 600,000 copies.** The title was a lot more interesting and controversial... making for great press releases and topics for news and TV, and sales

skyrocketed.

Some of the most successful books have never made it to the bestsellers list. These lists only reflect how many books were sold in bookstores. ***Car Secrets Revealed*** has been among the **top ten** automotive bestsellers in the United States for over three years now, but it has *never* appeared on a bestseller list. This is because the lists are compiled from information supplied by a few major bookstores. All the copies of ***Car Secrets Revealed*** were sold online or through the mail, so the retailers don't even know about it but did you know that **50% of all books are sold through the mail?** That means that **half** of all the books sold in this country aren't even considered when compiling bestseller lists!

Many people assume that 90% of the work you will have to do is in the production of the product, but this is far from the truth. You will spend about 10% of your time creating the product and 90% promoting and selling it.

**Tip:** *Widen the scope of your book or manual. The title should not be "How I Made a Million Dollars Selling Real Estate in Orange County", but "How to Make a Fortune Through Real Estate with Little or No Capital Investment".*

Test your titles – they are the keys to your success. Place classified ads in magazines targeted to what you are selling testing new titles to see which one pulls the best. This is critical. For example, for ***Car Secrets*** we tried an ad that read:

Car buying, repairing and maintenance tips - call for free information on how to save thousands when buying a new car. (604) 730-2833

We also tried an ad that read:

Car Secrets Revealed - learn the secrets of how to save thousands when buying a new car. Call (604) 730-2833 for

free details.

Or you could say:

New book completed by professional car salesman - "How to buy a car \$50 under dealer cost". For free information, call (604) 730-2833.

These are different examples we used to test titles. Make sure when you test titles that you use the exact same ad design and are just replacing the title of the book. You need a base line to work from to see which truly pulls better.

You probably have not published your book yet, so you want to offer something to get them to buy once you have completed your printing. You might say, "As a pre-publication offer, I would be happy to autograph your copy of my book and give you a \$5.00 discount from the advertised retail price. It will be off the press in 60 days. Would you like to order it now?"

If you need a product, there are four ways of creating a great information product:

### **First Product Generating Technique**

Pick up a copy of the *New York Times* and find out what the top ten best-selling books are. You will notice that there will be a few on the same subject. This tells you what topics are hot. You can also check out the top 100 best selling books at <http://www.usatoday.com/life/enter/books/leb.htm>

Now, go out and buy 5 or 10 of the most popular books on a hot subject. Read them and summarize the findings into your own words in an information product. You can then sell that product as a special report or a book. As long as you market it correctly, you are guaranteed to sell a lot of copies, because based on the bestseller list, you know it is a topic in demand.

This is a virtually unlimited source of ideas for

products, since every three to six months you will see trends towards new "hot topics", and you can then produce more information products.

### **Second Technique**

The second way of creating an information product is by creating a compilation. There are a few ways to do this. For example, this can be a compilation of interviews of people in the industry. Most well known people in your industry will do interviews if you present it properly (they want the publicity). Just email them a list of question or call them on the phone and do the interview. You can then record it and either sell it in audio format, or transcribe it and put in a book or Ebook.

Another example can be a compilation of other authors that have contributed to your publication (i.e. they can give you reprint rights for small sections from their work). So how do you get them to give you this? Show them the value in the publicity they will get by allowing you to reprint their work in your widely distributed publication. Make sure they understand they will get full credit for it in your publication and readers will be made aware of contact information so they can purchase products and services directly from the contributor. Once you add up all the contributors work, you should have an entire publication that has real value. You can create an entire book or manual from scratch without really having to write anything at all!

If you are creative, you don't have to know anything! Other experts in the business will send you sections of their material (or you can interview them to get the same). You can then use this material to create your own publication. You could entitle it "What the experts say about \_\_\_\_\_, and how it can improve your \_\_\_\_\_" (or whatever). I am sure you get the picture.

To summarize, use other's assets and resources to simply create a product that you can sell. I know of many direct marketing people where all they sell is this type of product and earn \$100,000 - \$300,000 a

year (they never really write anything themselves).

### **Third Technique**

The third way to create an information product is to hire a “ghostwriter”. There are hundreds of ads in the back of *Writer’s Digest* from writers that will write anything from a short article to a full book on just about any subject you want. It is as simple as hiring their services. They will sell you their writings so you can copyright and publish the work under your name.

### **Fourth Technique**

One of the easiest and more overlooked ideas for a product is right in your current industry.

If you are an engineer or an attorney or just a steelworker, you know your industry; its workings, and needs. There is usually an information product you can create or a service that the industry needs that is in demand.

What do you know? What skills do you have? What could you teach others? These are all areas where you could create an information product. Don't dismiss this without giving it some serious thought.

If you were in the cellular phone business you might realize that there is a need for a quick reference manual on all the features and benefits of cell phones for new salespeople. Also, you might see a need for a newsletter to update managers and salespeople on industry changes and new products because the industry changes so fast. This newsletter could also inform the readers of what else is going on around the country and of new marketing ideas in their local area.

It would be very easy to sell advertising in this newsletter too, as there are so many high profile companies that would love to reach such a “well-groomed” market.

You could sell the newsletter in bulk to big companies so they can distribute it to their salespeople... or sell it individually to retail stores.

## **More Product Ideas**

One of the easiest ways to get a product is to find a problem, and then offer a product or service to solve it. I will say this again: **Find a problem and then offer a product or service to solve it.** It can be in the work you are involved in now, or you can do research and find a problem elsewhere. Remember this goes back to the *Sales Process Lesson*... the easiest way to sell a product is to offer a solution. **People will buy solutions to problems... they won't buy features.**

The net is the perfect place for niche marketing. If you have a product that will make gardening tomatoes easier (whether it be tools or fertilizer, or whatever), chances are that it would never support a retail store because of insufficient demand. On the net, however, it is easy to find hundreds of thousands of people all over the world with a gardening hobby your product is perfect for.

There are newsgroups, forums, discussion groups, websites, and email lists that deal specifically with gardening... a great customer base.

## NOTES:

You can make a lot of money targeting niche markets. As mentioned before, I have found that the easiest way to make money on the Internet is to diversify your interests. In other words, have a couple of non-related products marketed to a niche with each making a little money every year. Each may only make \$10,000 a year (like my Dr. Stewart's Tape package), or \$12,000 a year (like my Buy/Build Specialty book), or may make only \$40,000 a year (like my emblem business), or \$150,000 a year (like ***Car Secrets Revealed***). And this is only to mention a few businesses I am involved in... can you see the potential here?

Once you add up the incomes however, you can have an easy \$100,000 income in short order. Since everything is automated, it is not much more work (beyond the initial set up and marketing) to run one online business as it is to run four or five.

Here are a few more good ideas:

### **Idea #1**

Create a tutorial for popular software products you use. For example, you might be using a product like *Lotus Screen Cam* (a 30-day trial version is found at **<http://www.download.com>**). This program allows you to record all your screen actions, along with a voice track, to create a movie-like presentation of the tutorial. All you need is Windows 95 and a sound card.

We use this program for our tutorials of Mailloop. Check them out at

**<http://www.marketingtips.com/mailloop/videos.html>**

If you have a software program you know well but is one that many people are probably having problems with, create a tutorial for it.

Another example: go to

**<http://www.zdnet.com/pcmag/>** and find out about the top ten CD-ROMs, top ten business programs and top ten games. You can also go to **<http://www.download.com>** and find the top 100 file



downloads to see which programs are popular online (this information is *very* helpful when trying to find a large market for a software product to write a tutorial on).

These two sites often contain useful information about new programs that may help you run your business more effectively.

## **Idea #2**

A newsletter is a fantastic way of creating a gigantic income very quickly. You can do this right from the start or you can start a newsletter as a follow-up to a book or manual.

Look at the potential of a newsletter: If you *only* get 2,000 subscribers at \$49.95 each, **that is almost \$100,000 per year**. On top of that, you can offer advertising to companies that will pay up to \$1,000 per page (based on a subscriber base of 5,000). If you have 10 or more advertising pages, this is **an extra \$60,000 every year!**

In just a few months, a newsletter can bring in over \$50,000 if you promote it and increase your subscriber base. It is a fast and easy way to earn a good living.

Today it is easier to than ever to start a newsletter. There is almost no cost to distribute online newsletters. We have better publishing tools, better computers, and more ways to easily find subscribers and advertisers than ever before. This is probably the easiest way to make a substantial income on the Internet in the shortest period of time.

But remember, choosing the right topic is the **key to your success!**

The first step is to go to your local library and pick out about 20 magazines that deal with special interests (i.e. Hobbies or specific areas of interest). Look in the magazines for the "statement of circulation" found at the back (or sometimes on the table of contents page).

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This will tell you how many issues are printed and distributed per month. *Please note that most publishers print a lot of issues, but only a portion of those are actually bought. Those that are not sold on the newsstands are returned to the publisher and destroyed.*

Find out how many subscribers there are and how many newsstand copies are sold to the final user (not to the newsstand, which may later return them for credit if they are not sold).

The subscriber amount is the most important number to you, as this shows how many people are "loyal" to the magazine and the topic of interest. You are looking for any subscriber base over 50,000. This identifies a subject that people are willing to pay to read about. More importantly, subscribers are willing to pay for a year's issues in advance to get this information. **This is a perfect potential market for you.**

Once you have found a few publications that fit the criteria, get the issues of the previous six months and read the 'letters to the editor' to see what common subjects matter to their readers. If you find four or five letters in a six-month period on the same subject, you may have a topic of demand to use in a newsletter.

So what can you expect? Well, you can expect about a 2 - 5% response ratio (based on the subscriber base, not the readership). For example, if you placed a very good small display in a magazine that had 100,000 subscribers, you can expect 2-5,000 subscribers to your newsletter! If you are offering your newsletter for \$29.95 or \$39.95 per year, **you make hundreds of thousands of dollars in income every year** (plus advertising revenue from selling advertising space in your newsletter).

If you are going to use a classified ad instead of a display ad, make sure you realize the response will be lower (but the cost of the ad will be lower too). The key is to write the classified ad in a certain way. It is very difficult to generate a direct sale of \$30 or \$40 from a few words in a classified ad. You want to get them to

call you personally or to listen to a voice recording of the "full" sales presentation.

Words like "call for free sample", or "call this number for free details" are very important to make your classified ad work in this type of publication. The key to having a successful small display or classified ad is to offer something for free!

It gets better. If you can get some advertisers before you print your first issue, their advertising revenue will easily pay the full cost of printing and mailing (if you are producing an offline newsletter).

If you were going to produce an exclusively online newsletter, use the same techniques, but adapt them to the Internet. Scan newsgroups to see what is a hot topic and distribute it through the net.

Instead of using magazine ads as described in the offline example above, use many of the Internet promotional techniques in this course to promote the newsletter and bring in your sales. It is **critically important** that you have a newsletter that has true value with information they cannot get online, or at least they cannot get without a lot of time involvement and cost to them.

Remember that online newsletters cost almost nothing to set up and nothing to produce and deliver. The advertising revenue you get from advertisers **will be instant income before you distribute your first copy!**

### **Idea #3**

Write a book or manual for a video or computer game you are good at. You just do screen captures to show the secrets of the game or program... it's that easy. If you don't know how to do a screen capture, all you do is press "print screen" on your keyboard and it will save that screen into your clipboard. In your word processing program click on "paste" in the edit menu and it will paste the picture into that document. If you have an old computer that does not have this

capability, there are over 100 programs that do at **<http://www.download.com>** (search for "screen capture").

You can produce the product via your word processor in a matter of days and sell it for \$20 to \$40 per copy; *101 Tips and Tricks to Dungeons and Dragons* or *Secret Tricks to Mortal Kombat* or whatever.

#### **Idea #4**

Using the screen capture program above, you could produce a document consisting of screen captures of impressive/important/resourceful websites for a specific topic.

For example, you could produce a document called "50 websites all children should visit to increase their school grades". Market this product to parents and it will take only a few days of web surfing to find the most educational sites for children. Import screen captures of those sites to a document and make them available for download over the web for \$9.97.

Think of websites on certain topics that have an audience willing to pay for a list of the best resources. Just put your imagination to use and you're off to the races.

The possibilities are endless.

#### **Idea #5**

Another idea using screen captures:

There's a neat program called *Click Book* (**<http://www.clickbook.com>**). It can take different screen captures and convert them to one of 20 different booklet formats. You send the booklet to your printer and it will produce master copies of double-sided multi-page books. Use your imagination again, and come up with a few new ideas on how you can use this program to produce a product.

For example, what if you went to different company's

websites and offered to produce a "book" of their site. You could pitch it as something they can use to show other executives in meetings or have in waiting rooms for clients to read, etc. The possibilities are endless. The program will create a cover page, resize all the screen shots, assign page numbers and even show you how to print double-sided pages on a single-sided printer.

Also, go to a few local businesses that have a website and show them the "instant book" of your website. I will bet that they ask you "How much will you charge to do that for my site?" Many people will want it just to show their friends and colleagues what they have on the Internet.

The psychological impact of this product is incredible. If you mail the first couple of pages of a site to a perspective client, chances are they will order an entire booklet from you. If the site is up to 100 pages long, you can make hundreds of dollars for a "website booklet" that you create in a matter of minutes. It is an easy and very profitable business to start.

### **Idea #6**

Use your imagination for brand new product creation.

For example, there are many new sites that are with HTML editor programs because it is so easy to do. However, most people cannot make graphics for their sites because they don't know how. There is a huge market for this. Again, we are looking for a problem or need and offering a product to solve it.

You can also download some graphics programs and an animated GIF creator (I recommend **Paint Shop Pro**, which you can find at <http://www.download.com>) and spend a few hours learning how to create images. It is a lot easier than you think with the new software that is available. Almost anyone can create fabulous graphics in a matter of minutes. If you are willing to work for a while and make a library of about 100 of them on a CD-ROM (or better, a

large ZIP file of the images downloadable over the net), you could sell the package for up to \$75.

Even though I know how to make animated GIFs, I don't mind paying \$75 for them instead of spending hours and hours building my own.

If you offer the CD-ROM through the Internet (or as a large file that can be emailed or downloaded from the web), you could sell a couple of hundred copies each month if you promote it well. **This would be over \$10,000 in extra income every month!**

You can get started by downloading some public domain 'clip art'. With a little practice, you can create two or four images of your own in about an hour.

You can then create Volume II and sell it to your previous clients... again, creating thousands of dollars in extra income. See how easy it is to get a product?

## **A New Twist If You Are Selling Information**

Here is a new twist to selling information: **instant gratification**. If you sell information online, consider this:

You send two ASCII files to prospective clients. One of the files has a sample chapter or section of the information you are selling. The second file is locked out by a password. You have a sales letter at the end of your first file that persuades the perspective client that if they like your sample, for X dollars they can receive the full information within a matter of minutes. All they have to do is call your 24 hour 800 number, give a credit card number, and receive a password to unlock the second file.

How well does this method work? In a recent test, I sent two chapters for my book ***Car Secrets Revealed*** to a series of, newsgroups, AOL and CompuServe Forums. In a six-week period, 37,162 people

downloaded it to their computer and read it. The potential here is incredible.

Now, if you really want to get fancy about it (like I did), you can have full "point and click" software. You give away the software in a self-executable ZIP file. When the file is decompressed, it makes two EXE files (IBM example). One file you can run, while the other is locked out with a password. The file that is accessible lets them run the software (your information product) to access two chapters or sections.

Within the two free chapters there is a little icon that reads, "Personal Note from Author... read this after you have read the chapter". This "note" is just a sales letter explaining what the publication offers, how to call the 800 number, and pay the amount to obtain the password. They have access to all of the remaining chapters within five minutes.

If you want to see exactly how to do this (it is very inexpensive to do), go to:

**<http://www.igs.net/carsecrets/download.html>** and download the 1.2 Meg file that is my electronic ***Car Secrets Revealed*** book (it takes about 10 minutes to download depending on modem speed).

This is the old version of the software... if you want to see the newest (and really COOL version), unfortunately there is no free trial version, only the "full" version. So you would have to buy the ***Car Secrets Revealed*** book to get it. It may be worth your while to buy the book... not only will you get great information, but you will see exactly what every one of my Car Secrets customer go through and what is offered to them, how I backend them, etc. It will be a good learning tool for you.

If you want a software program like this built for you (i.e. and e-book), contact us at **<http://www.marketingtips.com/multimedia.html>** where there will be a form to fill out. You will be asked a few questions about what you are trying to accomplish with your e-book and we will get back to you with what method we recommend you use and

some contacts on who to hire for the job.

**Tip:** *You need to stack the deck in your favor. The easiest way to do this is to sell a lot of low-priced products with a high to very high profit margin **or** sell a few units with a high price tag and profit margin that people will want to buy.*

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## **Lesson # 21**

# **If You Do Not Have a Product or Service, Joint Venture to Make a Fortune**

Joint Ventures can also be very profitable, and are often the easiest way to make money on the Internet. **If you do nothing but joint ventures, you can make a fortune in less than a year** (with the right product or service). Joint ventures connect a product to a person or market (i.e. marketing someone else's product or service with another businessperson, or your own business with another).

For example, you could search the net for software that you think is great but demonstrates poor marketing. There is a great deal of brilliant software on the net, but the owners often lack marketing know-how. Many don't even know how to take VISA or MC, and just offering a credit card payment option could increase their sales by 200%. Once a customer downloads shareware they want to buy, most programmers only have a "nag" screen giving the option to send in a check. This means you have to get your checkbook, fill out a check, find an envelope and paper, get a stamp and drop it off at the post office.

Contact the software owner, offering an exchange for the exclusive marketing rights of the product (for the lifetime of the product, or 10 years or whatever you think you can get), stating that you can provide a guarantee to triple their sales in 90 days or the contract is void! For your effort you take **half** the profits from each sale, creating a win-win situation for both of you.

**Note:** *Try to get a lifetime contract, as the owner might be upset when they find out how little work you did to boost their sales! Get a non-disclosure and non-competition agreement to protect yourself (there is a sample contract for you to use in the next section).*

You may be thinking, "How do I increase sales by 200-300% in 90 days?" Well, without doing any extra work,

supplying the credit card payment option will easily double your sales. Get a 24 hour, 7 day a week 800 number and watch your sales jump again. Also ensure the software does not just have a “nag” screen, but becomes non-functional after the trial period (usually 30 days).

Use the techniques in this course to market the software (or whatever you find). If you get a new software product every month to market, **you can have a six-figure income within six months.**

Here is another trick to increase your profits:

If you really want to automate, use a program like *Super Sonic* (<http://www.marketingtips.com/supersonic.html>) to search all of the software sites you may want to do business with, all while you are sleeping. It will save all the websites and email addresses on your hard drive so you can view them and contact them the next day easily and quickly.

You can even download the software automatically, which can greatly add to the efficiency of your operation (as large software files take a while).

In a joint venture, it is important to educate the client on **the value of backend and residual sales**, so you can negotiate a larger percentage of the profit you both make. Don't think you are asking for too much. Yes, you want half the profits from the original sale, but the owners of the software will make 10 times more money than they would have if they had marketed it themselves. This is because of the increase in the number of sales and the sales of the backend products and upgrades.

**If you do nothing but joint ventures after you finish this course you will make a fortune.** As mentioned before, get multiple streams of income by setting up a marketing campaign for new software once a month (or every two weeks, if you can do it that fast).

Joint ventures do not only apply to software. I mention

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software first because there is so much good software out there with poor marketing. There are thousands of other great products that are poorly marketed. You may have already run across some of these products **or** you can search for them easily.

Start with nothing, and build a profit center! There is an opportunity everywhere for joint ventures... even offline.

Let me use another scenario from an offline business;

A telemarketing office shuts down at 5 PM but has the same overhead at night while no one is there (i.e. rent, insurance, heat, etc.). Find a satellite dealer (the new DSS small dishes) and propose that you can double their sales in 60 days at no cost to them. All you ask is that as the business grows they will buy more products, offer more demos, offer more models, and hire more salespeople.

Then approach the telemarketers after 5 PM and ask the employees if they would like to make an extra \$200 to \$500 a week. Pay them per lead (or per sale, depending on how you structure the deal). Tell them all they have to do is read a simple script for a few hours a night, and have them call rural people in your area (specified right in the phone book). The script may read:

Hi Mr. X., I noticed that you live in a rural area and don't have cable. We wanted to send you a new satellite dish that is smaller than your coffee table and you will get all the movie channels and hundreds of others at twice the picture quality and CD sound quality to try out for a day. You are under no obligation to buy; we just want you to experience the sensation of over 400 channels available at the push of a button.

If you lived in a rural area, **wouldn't you try it if it was FREE?**

Okay, what next?

Once you start getting a steady amount of sales, look at the top salesperson (there is always a leader who is far above the rest in almost every organization). Tell this person you want to spend a day with them. Learn all their techniques, hot buttons and buzzwords. Then meet with the other 20 salespeople and show them how to do the same. This approach is the key to success.

**Tip:** *There are 259 million people living in the US. There are 77 million people born between 1946 and 1964 — these are greying boomers... a great market to target. Think of products or services that will apply to this ever-expanding market.*

Let me give you another retail example:

The video rental business is very competitive. They are always on the lookout for effective and cost saving advertising.

What goes really well with a movie rental... let's see... **pizza!**

If you owned a video rental store, you could contact a local pizzeria to exchange advertising with your business. Hand out flyers regarding a deal on pizza with every rental. In return, they will hand out flyers with a special movie deal to all people who buy pizza.

It is a win-win situation. **Both your movie sales and their pizza sales go up at no cost to either business!**

Sit down right now and think about products, services or businesses that complement yours and propose to do a joint venture with them. Or think about a business that you can pair with another business to increase both their profits. Put the deal together, and take a piece of the profits as your commission.

Don't put it off. **Take some time and do it NOW! The profit potential is too great to let slide.** There is always someone to joint venture with.

## **How To Insure You Get Paid In A**

## Joint Venture Deal!

I use a contract of non-disclosure, stipulating the terms of the arrangement before I share any secrets. Again, the rules are not set in stone. You should be as flexible as you need to be to get the deal. It all depends on the size, volume and the type of deal you are involved in.

There are two type of contracts you need to use to protect your ideas and assets.

The first contract is more of a consulting agreement. It is called a Marketing Consulting Intellectual Property Licensing Agreement. To get this kind of contract, you can ask around at a few of the smaller, but establish, legal offices in your town. The cost will vary depending on the size and expertise of the office, so shop around but most of all you have to make sure you go with someone reliable and have your butt covered! Once you have this contract, you will want to get it signed **before** you tell them how you plan to market their product(s). This prevents them from using your ideas without them giving you a piece of the action. If they steal your ideas, they will owe you up to \$150,000 or a portion of sales they generated with your ideas.

Once they have agreed to do business with you, you will want to get an Exclusive Independent Representative Agreement signed. This states, that you are completely separate from the owner of the product but allows you to have exclusive rights to the product(s) and share in the profits.

A copy of the Exclusive Independent Representative Agreement is located on the next page.

***Note:** The agreement on the next page is a joint venture contract, but is labeled an Exclusive Independent Contract, as you want to be independent from the owner of the company in case they get into legal or financial trouble of some sort. This contract gives you exclusive rights to market their product for a portion of the profits, but also protects you so you are not directly affiliated with them.*

EXCLUSIVE INDEPENDENT REPRESENTATIVE AGREEMENT

THIS AGREEMENT ("Agreement") is made between [Rep contact information and type of entity] ("REP"), and [Product owner contact information and type of entity] ("OWNER").

WHEREAS, OWNER wishes to expand its distribution into new markets and into new distribution channels within the United States and other countries via this Agreement with REP;

WHEREAS, REP wishes to represent OWNER's Products to various vendees and has the knowledge, resources, contacts, and willingness to do so;

NOW, THEREFORE, in consideration of the promises contained herein, the parties agree as follows:

1. DEFINITIONS.

1.1 "Product" shall mean [Explicit list of products], and any future products subsequently sold by REP on behalf of OWNER.

1.2 "Wholesale" shall mean any transaction, which involves the sale of two (2) or more Product.

1.3 "Existing Customer" shall mean any entity which has purchased the Product direct or indirectly from OWNER, OWNER's related subsidiaries, or one of their representatives, within six (6) months prior to the signing of this Agreement.

1.4 "Account" shall mean one, all, or any combination of the following: [Explicit list of the REP's current customers who are not current customers of the OWNER], including their related subsidiaries, successors-in-interest, assigns, affiliates, employees, officers, directors, and any other person or entity acting on behalf of, or purporting to act on behalf of, [Explicit list of the

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REP's current customers who are not current customers of the OWNER].

1.5 REP may add future entities to the definition of "Account" by sending a faxed notification to OWNER. If the new customer is not an Existing Customer of OWNER, such notice shall become an addendum to this Agreement. If the new customer is an Existing Customer of OWNER, OWNER shall demonstrate its relationship with that Existing Customer by faxing to REP within 7 calendar days a previously dated and executed invoice from OWNER to that customer. OWNER's failure to transmit such a fax to REP within the time provided herein shall create an irrebuttable presumption that the new customer was not an Existing Customer of OWNER.

2. EXCLUSIVE RIGHTS. OWNER offers to REP, and REP accepts from OWNER, the exclusive right to represent OWNER's Products to any entity within the United States and other countries including Existing Customer of OWNER. OWNER shall not sell the Product directly or indirectly to any Account unless OWNER pays REP as specified herein. OWNER shall not contract with any representative for the purpose of selling the Product to any Account.

3. PRODUCT EXCLUSIVE REPRESENTATION. Upon referral of an entity to OWNER that results in the sale of the Product and upon the execution of an addendum that includes the entity in the definition of "Account", REP shall have the exclusive right to represent the Product to that entity during the term of this Agreement.

4. ENGAGEMENT AND DUTIES. The parties to this Agreement expressly agree and acknowledge that REP is an independent contractor for OWNER, and that this Agreement does not create a joint venture or partnership relationship, or any other relationship, between the parties. REP shall be available to work for reasonable periods of time to perform the services required by OWNER using whatever methods or means that REP feels appropriate and as approved by OWNER. REP's duties shall be as follows: to refer entities to OWNER; to notify OWNER in writing of any person or entity whom shall fall within the scope of the definition of "Account"; to advise OWNER of other matters relating to the sale of Product to an Account.

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5. FULFILLMENT. Upon REP's referral and upon OWNER's successful negotiations with an Account, it shall be OWNER's sole responsibility to ship Product to the Account and to perform all other necessary and related functions to service the Account, unless agreed otherwise by REP. OWNER shall hold REP harmless and indemnify REP for any action brought against REP as a result of OWNER's failure to ship Product to an account or to service an Account.

6. PAYMENT.

6.1 Within seven (7) calendar days after OWNER receives payment from any Account, OWNER shall remit to REP [Payment schedule, per product]. If OWNER receives partial payment on any Account, within seven (7) calendar days after receiving that partial payment OWNER shall remit to REP a commensurate payment equivalent to the percentage of the total account for which payment was received by OWNER.

6.2 Adjustments to Payment. OWNER may deduct from its payments to REP any commissions that were previously paid to REP but were subsequently refunded to an Account. OWNER shall substantiate any deduction to be made with written copies of the refunded invoices and a receipt from the Account acknowledging the refund, which such supporting documentation shall be supplied to REP at the time the refund or adjustment to payment is claimed. Failure to provide such supporting documentation shall constitute a waiver of any right in OWNER to make any deduction to the funds to be paid to REP.

6.3 Form of Payment. All Payments shall be drawn on OWNER company checks or certified bank checks and shall be delivered to REP via: (a) U.S. Postal Service; or (b) hand delivery; or (c) nationally recognized overnight delivery service; or (d) wire transfer pursuant to written terms for such transfer to be provided by REP to OWNER in the event that notwithstanding the foregoing provisions of this paragraph REP, at its sole option and in its sole discretion, elects to receive payment by wire transfer.

7. WARRANTY. OWNER warrants that it has not entered into, and during the term of this Agreement will not enter into, any agreement expressly or impliedly inconsistent with the rights granted to REP by this Agreement. OWNER warrants that it will not enter into any Agreement which would infringe directly or indirectly upon the rights granted to



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REP by this Agreement. OWNER makes no warranties regarding the Merchantability of the Product and hereby expressly disclaims same. REP makes no warranties regarding its ability to represent the Product. REP shall make no warranties relating to any Product, nor shall REP represent to any Account or any third part that any warranty relating to any Product is made by OWNER, except solely to the extent that OWNER may otherwise provide in writing, printed on the Product or its original packaging.

8. TERM. This Agreement has been effective from [Date of signing]. The Agreement shall continue indefinitely unless terminated by either party as set forth herein or if REP does not increase total gross sales by [percentage of increase] within [number of days here].

9. ENFORCEMENT. OWNER agrees to make all relevant information available to REP for the purpose of verifying OWNER's sales to the Accounts. OWNER shall provide REP with sales reports for all sales executed by OWNER to the Accounts. Such sales reports shall include no less than the following information: (a) corresponding invoice numbers; (b) quantities sold; (c) account names; (d) prices; (e) terms of sale; (f) the full payment due to REP for that sales report; and (g) any other information the parties may deem to be appropriate or necessary. REP shall be entitled to verify the information provided by OWNER pursuant to this paragraph in the same manner as inspection of books and records are provided for under any applicable statute.

10. PRICING AND TERMS. It shall be OWNER's sole responsibility to negotiate pricing and terms with the Accounts. OWNER shall notify REP in writing of any change in the wholesale price of the Products no less than seven calendar days before the new price goes into effect.

11. TERMINATION.

11.1 Termination by REP. REP may terminate this Agreement if:

- (a) OWNER fails to pay REP as defined in this Agreement; or
- (b) OWNER fails to service the Accounts in a timely and efficient manner; or

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(c) OWNER becomes a debtor under Titles 11 or 7 of the United States Code, or any successor statute, or any equivalent [State of governing law] statute; or  
(d) there is any other material breach of this Agreement.

11.2 Termination by OWNER. OWNER may terminate this Agreement if:

(a) no Accounts or other entities order Product within any sixty (60) calendar day period; or  
(b) if OWNER sells or transfers its ownership of the Products to a third party and upon OWNER providing to REP, at no charge, [Compensation to REP]; or  
(c) there is any other material breach of this Agreement.

11.3 Notice of termination shall be made by certified mail and shall take effect thirty (30) days after confirmation and acceptance of notice by the defaulting party.

12. EFFECT OF TERMINATION. OWNER obligation to pay REP all monies earned pursuant to this Agreement shall survive the Termination of this Agreement. If this Agreement is terminated, REP shall immediately cease all representations of the Product and shall return all Product and other related material in its possession, if any, to OWNER. If OWNER terminates this Agreement, OWNER shall not Wholesale any Product to any Account for a period of twelve (12) months after termination.

13. CONFIDENTIALITY. REP and OWNER acknowledge that any information obtained regarding the operation of the other, its products, services, policies, methods, prices, this Agreement, or any aspect of its business is confidential, and shall not be revealed or disclosed to any person, company, or other entity without the express written consent of the other party.

14. INDEPENDENCE. Nothing in the Agreement shall be construed as creating a partnership or joint venture between the parties or making REP an employee of OWNER. REP is an independent contractor and shall conduct its business at its own cost and expense. REP shall have no authority to make unauthorized representations or warranties on behalf of

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OWNER, and REP shall control the method of means used to market the Products.

15. ARBITRATION. Any dispute, controversy, or claim arising out of or relating to this Agreement, or the breach, termination or invalidity thereof, shall be submitted to binding arbitration by the American Arbitration Association (the "AAA") pursuant to its rules regarding commercial disputes. The arbitrator shall be selected by the AAA and shall be certified by the AAA as having a familiarity with [Products being represented] and the legal issues related thereto. The arbitration shall be conducted in [County of governing law], and all proceedings shall be conducted in the English language. The arbitrator may proceed to an award notwithstanding the failure of the other party to participate in the proceedings. The prevailing party shall be entitled to an award of reasonable attorney fees incurred in connection with arbitration in such amount as may be determined by the arbitrator. The award of the arbitrator shall be the sole and exclusive remedy of the parties and shall be enforceable in any court of competent jurisdiction. Notwithstanding the forgoing, the parties shall be entitled to seek injunctive relief and/or specific performance from any court of competent jurisdiction.

16. REMEDIES FOR BREACH.

16.1 Injunctive relief. Notwithstanding paragraph 15 above, in the event of a breach of this Agreement, the non-breaching party shall be entitled to obtain temporary, permanent, and/or final injunctive relief on an ex-parte basis barring the breaching party from any violation of this Agreement, upon application, with or without notice, to a court of competent jurisdiction, regardless of proof, or a lack thereof, of actual damages.

16.2 Damages. The parties acknowledge and agree that any breach of this Agreement shall, in addition to and not to the exclusion of the other remedies set forth herein, subject the breaching party to liability for compensatory and punitive damages in favor of the non-breaching party. Expressly excluded from this paragraph are the provisions of this Agreement regarding arbitration and jurisdiction.

16.3 No Limitation of Remedies. The remedies expressly provided for in this Agreement shall not limit or waive, in any way whatsoever, the parties other rights and

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remedies under applicable law, but shall be cumulative and in addition to such other rights and remedies. Expressly excluded from this paragraph are the provisions of this Agreement regarding arbitration and jurisdiction.

17. MISCELLANEOUS TERMS.

17.1 Waivers. Except as otherwise expressly set forth herein, no modification, amendment, or waiver of any of the provisions contained in this Agreement or any future representations, promises, or conditions in connection with the subject matter of this Agreement shall be binding upon any party to this Agreement unless made in writing and signed by such party or by a duly authorized officer or agent of such party. No alteration, modification or impairment will be implied by reason of any previous waiver, extension of time, delay or omission in exercise of rights or other indulgence, and shall not operate as such or be construed as a waiver by the non-breaching party of any subsequent breach of this Agreement.

17.2 Amendments; Supplements. Except as otherwise expressly set forth herein, this Agreement may be amended or supplemented at any time only by the mutual written consent of the respective parties.

17.3 Entire Agreement. This Agreement constitutes the entire agreement between the parties hereto with respect to the subject matter hereof and supersedes all prior agreements and understandings, oral and written, between the parties hereto with respect to the subject matter hereof. No representation, warranty, promise, inducement or statement of intention has been made by any party which is not embodied in this Agreement, and no party shall be bound by, or be liable for, any alleged representation, warranty, promise, inducement or statement of intention not embodied herein or therein. The parties acknowledge and confirm that each has read, studied, understands, accepts and agrees to comply with all the terms, conditions, obligations, restrictions and liabilities as set forth in this Agreement.

17.4 Binding Effect; Benefits. This Agreement shall inure to the benefit of and be binding upon the parties hereto and their respective permitted successors, heirs, legal representatives, and assigns. Notwithstanding anything contained in this Agreement to the contrary, nothing in this Agreement, expressed or implied, is intended

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to confer on any person, other than the parties hereto or their respective permitted successors, heirs, legal representatives, and assigns, any rights, remedies, obligations or liabilities under this Agreement.

17.5 Assignability. Neither this Agreement nor any of the parties' rights hereunder shall be assignable without the prior written consent of the non-assigning party.

17.6 Notices. Any notice or the delivery of any item to be delivered by a party hereto shall be delivered personally; by U.S. mail, return receipt requested; or by a next-day courier delivery service, i.e., Federal Express, Airborne, UPS, etc.; or facsimile. Delivery by U.S. mail shall be deemed to have been made three calendar days from the postmark on the item mailed. Delivery by next-day courier delivery service shall-be-deemed to have been made when such deliveries are actually received at the addresses set forth above. Any party may change its address for purposes of this paragraph by giving the other party written notice of the new address in the manner set forth herein above. Notwithstanding the provisions of this paragraph, service of process must be made as required by applicable [state here] law.

17.7 Severability. The validity, legality or enforceability of the remainder of the provisions in any of this Agreement will not be affected even if one or more of the provisions of this Agreement will be held to be invalid, illegal or unenforceable in any respect. If any portion of this Agreement is held to be unreasonable, arbitrary or against public policy by any court or tribunal, the applicable portion of the Agreement shall still be enforced. Any determination of invalidity, illegality or non-enforceability shall be given as limited a construction as possible under applicable law, and the remainder of the Agreement shall be construed as expansively as possible under applicable law.

17.8 Governing Law; Jurisdiction. This Agreement has been negotiated in the [State of jurisdiction], and all questions with respect to this Agreement, its interpretation, rights and liabilities of the parties will be governed by the laws of the [State of jurisdiction], regardless of the choice of laws provisions of any other jurisdiction. The parties hereto agree that the exclusive venue for purposes of arbitrating or litigating any dispute

**NOTES:**

arising under this agreement shall be [County of jurisdiction], and neither party shall contest jurisdiction or venue in [County of jurisdiction] on grounds of forum non conveniens, lack of in personal jurisdiction, or for any other reason. Notwithstanding the remainder of this paragraph, issues relating to copyright and trademark shall be construed in accordance with and will be governed by the laws of the United States and any applicable international conventions or treaties.

17.9 Arbitration and\or Litigation; Attorney's Fees\Costs. In the event any arbitration and\or litigation should arise between the parties hereto to interpret or enforce the terms of this Agreement, or if any legal or equitable action or any arbitration or other formal proceeding is brought to enforce or interpret the terms of this Agreement, the non-prevailing party shall pay the reasonable expenses including, attorney's fees, court costs or arbitrator's costs, and any other relief deemed appropriate by a court of competent jurisdiction, of the prevailing party in connection therewith, including appeals regardless of which party initiates the appeal, plus interest at the highest rate allowed by law.

17.10 Return of Information. Any information exchanged by the parties relating to their businesses, which such information is in tangible or machine-readable form shall, upon request, be returned to the other party within 7 calendar days after the termination or expiration of this Agreement or the conclusion of the work to which the requested information relates.

17.11 Representation by Counsel. The parties hereto expressly stipulate and agree that each has had an adequate opportunity to have this Agreement reviewed by counsel of their choice and that they and their counsel are satisfied with the content and subject matter of this Agreement.

17.12 Time of the Essence. The parties hereto expressly stipulate and agree that time is of the essence with respect to all provisions of this Agreement.

18. RULES OF CONSTRUCTION.

18.1 Headings. The section headings in this Agreement are inserted only as a matter of convenience, and in no way

**NOTES:**

define, limit, or extend or interpret the scope of this Agreement or of any particular section.

18.2 Tense and Case. Throughout this Agreement, as the context may require, references to any word used in one tense or case shall include all other appropriate tenses or cases. Whenever the context so requires, the masculine gender shall include the feminine or neuter gender, and singular number shall include the plural number, and vice versa.

18.3 Drafting. This Agreement shall not be construed against either party hereto on grounds of vagueness or for any other reason whatsoever, and the parties hereby expressly agree that this Agreement was drafted mutually by each of them.

18.4 Incorporation of Recitals. That portion of this Agreement entitled "Recitals" is incorporated into the body of the Agreement as if fully set forth hereunder, and the representations therein are binding on both parties.

18.5 Counterparts. This Agreement may be executed in two counterparts, each of which shall be deemed an original, but both of which together shall constitute one and the same instrument. In addition, facsimile signatures shall be deemed original signatures for the purposes of this Agreement.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties have executed this Agreement on the dates set forth below:

[REP name and address]

[Signed] By:

[REP name]:

[REP title]:

[OWNER name and address]

[Signed] By:

**NOTES:**

[REP name]:

[REP title]:

Still with me...? As I said, you may want to change what you charge to share the deal, for previously mentioned reasons. You can however, earn a very lucrative income from this concept by simply showing businessmen and women how to redeploy their existing assets.

With this contract in hand it is easy to get started (you have my permission to copy these contracts and use them for your own personal use). **DO NOT** share the intellectual property you have to offer until you have your agreement signed and "in hand" by both or all parties who will be participating.



## **Lesson # 22**

### **Joining an Affiliate Program**

**You may have seen a few articles on our website that look similar to some of the text in the next two lessons. Please, do not skip them, we left out many things in the articles we published online. There is information here that we did not publish at your website.... Keep reading!**

#### **How They Work and How You Get Paid** **(This is the part I really like!)**

I am constantly being asked if it is worthwhile to join Associate or Affiliate Programs. These programs are being hyped as the next "get-rich-quick scheme" on the Internet. That is not necessarily true... **but the good news is that it is possible to make some very serious money with Affiliate Programs.**

However Affiliate Programs aren't for everyone, so I'm going to give you the inside information on who should join an Affiliate Program, and what you should be looking for.

Affiliate Programs are also called Associate Programs, Re-seller Programs, Commission or Pay-Per-Sale, Pay-Per-Click and Click-Through Programs.

Let's talk about how these work.

Basically, Affiliate Programs reward website owners for referring customers to their business. Website owners are rewarded for sending customers to another website (of which you belong to their Affiliate Program), and for any business (sales) that are generated from the customer who linked through your site.

These "Pay-Per-Sale" programs are usually very easy to join. Just make sure you pay attention and read the terms and conditions, as they can vary widely from program to program.

As an affiliate for that website, you are assigned a special URL that tracks all the visitors to the website and all sales generated. You basically post a banner ad, a small graphic, or a text link to the Affiliate Program's site and earn a referral fee from every sale that is made from that site.

**It is the ultimate electronic joint venture ... I do well over \$1,500,000 in business every year** just from my own personal joint ventures!).

You can also promote the Affiliate Program's site (or its product or service) in newsletters, private emails to your customer base or lead list, newsgroups, magazines or any other way of marketing which you want to undertake.

Once you join a program and display their graphic or text link, whenever someone follows that link from your site (or your newsletter, or your magazine advertisement, or your private email to your customer, etc.) to the Affiliate Program owner's site and buys a product or service from them, **you receive a commission** (or referral fee as it is sometimes called).

That's basically how it works!

I should mention that there are a number of Affiliate Programs out there that don't actually "pay-per-sale", they actually "pay-per-lead" or "per-click". In a pay-per-lead program, you are paid every time the visitor from your site fills out a survey, asks for more information, or gets a quote on a product (in other words, you are paid for giving the company a "lead"). It may even be the kind of situation where you get paid each time your visitor downloads trial or demo software.

Pay-Per-Click is similar to pay-per-lead. Basically, you every time someone "clicks" through the link from your site to the Affiliate Program owner's website (whether it through a text or graphic link).

So, you're probably thinking..."That is all great Corey, but **how do I get paid?**"

Ahhhh... ask and thou shall receive.

There are different ways these companies will pay you.

Some will pay in credits toward the merchandise or services they offer (not many do this though). The rest usually pay in cash (or more specifically, a check written out to you each month).

Many companies have a minimum "pay-out" balance. For example you would have to accumulate \$100 in commissions (or whatever amount they choose) before they will issue you a check. Other companies will pay you no matter how little is owed to you... they'll cut you a check for as little as a dollar or two. Be careful to read the agreement when you sign up to become an affiliate... you don't want to be dealing with a company that has some really high payout where you have to accumulate hundreds of dollars in sales before they will issue your first check.

Just so you know, the reason they do this is to lower their costs so that they are not writing out checks for \$1.00 or \$5.00 or small amounts like that all month long. They want to wait until your commission accumulates to \$50.00 or \$100.00 or more before they write you a check. This allows them to eliminate the need to write a ton of checks every month and cuts down on the amount of bookkeeping that needs to be done.

On that note, **make sure you do business with a reputable company**. I know many people (and I even speak from personal experience) where you can promote a company and don't get paid your referral fees, or you have to wait for months to get them because they are just not properly set up. In other words, they are not taking their Affiliate Program seriously enough and haven't bothered to get the proper software to keep things automated (they are

doing too many things tediously by hand) or they are not devoting enough manpower to it.

We will get into other problems that some companies can run into later on in this lesson... and we will show you how to detect these problems so you don't get stuck with one of these companies.

## **Who Should Join an Affiliate Program... and What to Look For**

If you want to become a part of an Affiliate Program you will **need a lot of traffic**. If you have a busy site or a large newsletter, you can start earning money right away!

But if you are a new site, a low traffic site, or are starting from scratch, you have a long road ahead of you... be very aware of that. If you are starting from scratch you, might be better off developing your own product or service and selling it. Remember, when you sell your own product, you keep all the profit... when you sell someone else's product, you keep only a small portion.

That is not to say that if you are starting off, you should not join an Affiliate Program, but you do need to realize that it may take a while to generate some income. You have to promote it and build traffic just like you would if you had a website with your own product or service, sometimes even more. On that note, an Affiliate Program may be a great option if you don't have a good product or service to sell online and are in need of one. Make sure you find an Affiliate Program with a product or service you love and would feel proud to sell (just remember to follow my "rules" when picking an affiliate program to join... we will cover these in the next few pages).

The beauty of Affiliate Programs is that they are "no-brainers". What I mean by that is if you have a lot of traffic to your site, all you have to do is post a banner or text link to another site (because you are part of their Affiliate Program) and earn a referral fee for every

sale that is generated. There is no customer service, no credit cards to charge, no shipping of orders, no inventory, no administrative problems, no employees, and most of all **no headaches**. The company takes care of all that for you... you just refer people to them, they take care of all the rest and cut you a check every month.

Pretty great isn't it?

You bet it is! But be careful, as we will discuss throughout this lesson, **getting involved with the "right" Affiliate Program is your key to making money.**

Let's move on, as we will talk more about this later.

**Making money with an Affiliate Program is a numbers game!**

Basically what you are dealing with here is that out of all the people who visit your site or who subscribe to your newsletter, you may get anywhere between a 1% or 20% click-through ratio. (This range is so wide because it depends on the interest in the product, how you link to them and the power of their slogans or banners). In other words, 1% to 20% of the people will actually click through the banner or text link that you have provided and visit the Affiliate Program site you are recommending.

Of all the people who click through, only 1% to 2% of those will actually buy. This is where the numbers game comes in. To generate a decent amount from an Affiliate Program, you will need to have a large number of visitors to your site or a large number of subscribers to your newsletter.

Let's look at an example: Say you are getting 1000 visitors to your site a month and you post a banner ad (which generally has a low click through) or a text link. Just for the heck of it, let's say you get a 5% click through (which is pretty high by the way). That means out of your 1000 visitors, only 50 of them go to the

## NOTES:

Affiliate Program site by clicking through on the banner ad or text link that you posted.

So now you only have 50 people going to your Affiliate Program site. Out of these 50 people chances are that only one will buy, IF THAT!

If you get a commission of \$10.00, \$20.00 or even \$30.00, depending on the type of commission or pay out they have, you are getting paid \$10.00 or \$20.00 or \$30.00 per 1000 impressions you make of that banner or text link.

In other words, for every 1000 visitors you get to your site you only make \$10.00, \$20.00 or \$30.00!

That's it! That's the reality and you have to look at it from that angle. **Don't think that because you are getting 1000 visitors to your site,** (that is to your site, not to the Affiliate Program you are recommending), **that you are going to get \$500.00 a month from your Affiliate Program. You simply won't!**

Here is a little tip... a good company with a good Affiliate Program will have about a 0.5% to 1% visitor to sale ratio. It is sometimes better than that (but is often worse especially if you hook up with a poor company), but that is the average. So for every 100 or 200 visitors you send them, only one will purchase.

If you are finding that you have to send 500+ visitors to a site to get one sale, you will need to then re-think your participation in that Affiliate Program. Let me go into a little more detail: If you were getting paid a \$100 referral fee per sale (for every 500 visitors you send them, you would get \$100 on average), that wouldn't be so bad. But if you are getting paid \$10 referral fee per sale, you will want to rethink your participation in that program, as mentioned above.

Before you join **any** programs, ask the questions listed below and check out the various programs that are available for you to join.

**Get the following questions answered before you join:**

- “How long has your Affiliate Program been in place?”
- “What form of compensation do you offer?” In other words, are you getting actual cash, credits towards their product, free Air Miles -- what are you actually getting?
- “Do you have a set up fee?” If so, find out how much.
- “What kind of affiliate tracking software is being used? How do you track referrals?”
- “Do I get credit for each sale I refer to you?”
- “Do you have third party auditing?” If not, find out if the company you are dealing with has been in business long and if are they reputable?
- “Does your tracking software use cookies? CGI? Is it hidden in form fields? Is it a database?”
- “Do I get credit for the sale after a visitor comes to the site and doesn't buy, then leaves and comes back to buy at a later date?”
- “How long does this last?”
- “Can I stop the agreement at any point? Do I have to take special steps to get out of the agreement?”
- “Does the legal agreement bind me to any other responsibilities?”
- “Under what circumstances can the Program remove me as an affiliate?”

**These are things you want to look for in an Affiliate Program:**

- An Affiliate Program that is successful at what they do.
- An Affiliate Program which offers great value, a great product or service, and more importantly, great customer service!
- Make sure the Affiliate Program has a great tracking mechanism so that you get credit for each and every sale.
- Look for a program that tracks sales in real time so you can see your results instantly.

## NOTES:

- Make sure the Affiliate Program has a good-looking website, one that pleases customers, is easy to navigate, and offers great information to the visitor.
- The Affiliate Site must be able to turn visitors into buyers. If it can't, you can send them all the visitors in the world and you have just wasted all your time, as you are not going to make much money.

As I've mentioned above, it is actually quite hard to find Affiliate Programs with the **"full meal deal"**! There are very scarce, but we are one of the few and far between. In fact the Internet Marketing Center has been consistently rated as one of the TOP Affiliate Programs online by major authorities on the subject, including AssociatePrograms.com (<http://www.associateprograms.com>) This shows that we know what we are talking about. We work very, very hard to make our Program the BEST, which is why we have thousands and thousands of very happy affiliates!

AssociatePrograms.com has a great listing of Affiliate Programs you can join... and so does Refer-It.com. In my opinion, you should only deal with the Affiliate Programs that these two sites recommend or rate highly.

Now let's move on.

On a bit of a different note, there are a few pay-per-click brokers out there. What I mean by brokers is that these are companies that host a lot of websites and are willing to pay you by the click. All you have to do is join their network and they will give you a list of the companies who will pay you for posting their banner or text link on your site.

Two of my favorites are ClickTrade and PennyWeb.

ClickTrade.com has a pay-per-lead and a pay-per-click plan... they even have a pay-per-sale plan. Basically, ClickTrade affiliates get a list of hundreds of advertisers who have banners that they can put at their site. Affiliates pick the banner they want, put it



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up at their site and can get paid anywhere from two to thirty cents if someone clicks through to the advertiser's site.

ClickTrade monitors all this information and it is up to the advertiser to pay you. You want to be careful about monitoring what ClickTrade is doing because there have been instances in the past where advertisers, who originally promise to pay thirty cents per-click-through, a day later they reduce the pay out to two cents a click-through. This is fully legal... it is written into ClickTrade's agreement! So you want to be very careful and make sure you are working with a good company that isn't going to screw you on it!

With PennyWeb.com, you can go to their site, join their program, and get a list of hundreds of advertisers who want you to post their banner at your site. These advertisers pay between 2 cents per-click-through all the way up to 16 cents per-click-through. As the click-throughs are generated, PennyWeb pays you directly for the monies generated (so there is no way for the advertiser to screw you). They track everything and make it easy for you. It's actually a pretty slick little program! I'm quite impressed with it and recommend doing business with them. I have personally done business with them for quite some time and have received good results.

You can check them out by going directly to:  
**<http://www.marketingtips.com/pennyweb.html>**

### **When you Join An Affiliate Program There Are A Couple Of "Rules" You Need To Consider**

#### **Rule Number One:**

**Go for quality!** You want to examine the product or service they offer. Make sure it is a quality product or an excellent service! Look at the people who are recommending it, and talk to people who have bought

it. Make sure you are recommending a high quality product that comes from a company with great customer service, and is reputable enough to back up what they sell. And make sure there is good value for the money. In other words, be sure they are not charging a ridiculous amount of money for something, which is not worth much at all!

This is pretty important since **you are putting your reputation on the line** by advertising or recommending the product or service you link to. It's almost like you are endorsing them. So, you need to make sure you are dealing with a company that's going to reflect well on your reputation.

**Don't ever promote something that's going to hurt your reputation!**

**Rule Number Two:**

**You've got to earn good commissions.** In other words, if someone is only paying out 5% or 10% per product sold, this is pretty low. You want to deal with someone who thinks about the life-time-value of a customer and who will give you a fairly high payout. These Affiliate Programs are few and far between simply because most companies don't understand the value of a customer and will only give you a small percentage of the profit.

Let's use my company, The Internet Marketing Center as an example. **We pay over 60% of our net profit to our affiliates.** The way we work our Affiliate Program is we give our affiliates \$65.00 for every course sold through their link to our site, whether it be a banner link or a text link. After the hard costs of the course such as customer service, credit card accounts, hosting fees and other expenses are calculated, we actually pay over 60% out to our affiliates. In other words, we pay out a very good commission!

We even have a sub-Affiliate Program... which means that if you refer our Affiliate Program and they join underneath you, they get paid \$65 per sale (just like

you), and **you get paid \$20 for every sale THEY make**. Just think if you had a few really hot affiliates who signed up underneath you making 10 sales a month... you would be earning over \$500 a month just in the work THEY are doing. Basically you keep getting paid as long as they keep selling courses.

You see we believe in the life-time-value of a customer and are willing to give away a lot of our profit to our affiliates and offer them as many benefits as possible. Finding an Affiliate Program that thinks this way should be one of your top priorities when shopping for an Affiliate Program.

On that note, if you feel that you have a website, newsletter, or customer base that would love to have this Internet Marketing Course, feel free to join our Affiliate Program. It's FREE (and you earn \$65 per sale). Go to [http://www.marketingtips.com/assoc/assoc\\_program.html](http://www.marketingtips.com/assoc/assoc_program.html) for all the details and instructions how to join.

Another thing I should mention is that even if a Program is paying out a high commission, if people don't buy from them, you're back in the same boat! You have to make sure that not only are you getting a high commission, **but that the Affiliate Program site you are sending them to is a site which turns visitors into sales**. The site must have a good conversion ratio.

You want to deal with a site that has a 1% conversion ratio (which means that one out of every hundred customers you send to them turns into a sale). There are not many sites out there which are "experts" at turning visitors into sales, so make sure you go with an Affiliate Program which has sales copy and website design that "makes you want to buy". After all, you are sending them the potential customers, but it is their job to turn those potential customers into buyers (so you can earn your referral fee). The more they can turn those potential customers into buyers, the more money you make.

Going back to our numbers game example from before, if 5% of the visitors to your site click-through to your

## NOTES:

Affiliate Program site and THEY convert 1% of your visitors into a paying customer... you'd be making 1 sale for every 2000 visitors to your site.

2000 visitors to your site X 5% click-through rate = 100 potential customers X 1% buying ratio = 1 buying customer.

As I said before, it's a numbers game!

Also keep in mind your pay out amount. If you are earning a \$50 referral for that one buying customer, you are doing well... but if you are only earning a \$10 referral fee for that one buying customer, you will want to rethink things.

It's worth your while to keep experimenting with different Affiliate Programs if you want to, because you can join and drop most of them as often as you like.

### **Rule Number Three:**

Match the product or service to the theme of your site. If your site is about horses and horse products you don't want to be advertising music CD's or weight loss products (unless of course it is a weight loss product for horses! ☺). If you are selling horse products you'd probably want to be involved in an Affiliate Program which recommends other horse related products or maybe even become involved in Amazon.com and recommend great horse books. Make it something that has to do with your site or your industry. If you try to recommend website hosting services when your site is all about how to train a horse, you aren't going to get very far.

You need to target your clientele so that you are selling or recommending something that relates to what your visitors WANT. I can't stress this enough, it is very important! **Provide links, services and products, which are related to what your visitors want!** I am shocked almost daily by people who build a site and have products and Affiliate Program that are in no way related to each other.

**Rule Number Four:**

Another thing to be concerned about is the tracking software the Affiliate Program uses. You want to go with a company, which has good tracking software, shows your statistics (stats) in real time. You want stats that are easy to understand and that you can check at any point in time to see how you are doing.

Why?

If you post an Affiliate Program banner, you will want to be able to see how much the banner pulls for you, and how many sales it's generating. The same goes for a text link, personal recommendation, or an endorsement to your customer base... you want to be able to see how many visitors you are sending to the site and how many sales those visitors are generating.

Having real time stats allows you to compare the difference in results between putting a button up and putting up a whole page recommending the product or service. Having real time stats so that you can go and check anytime and see how your promotional efforts are working and their effectiveness is really important. **So it's important to see real time tracking, which gives you instant information on visitor and sales results.**

You also want to be comfortable that the software they use is sophisticated, reliable, and will track all your sales. Why I emphasize "**all**" is because you want to make sure they track online, phone, fax, and snail mail orders. Many companies **only track online orders** (which means you get **no credit** for all sales generated by phone, fax or mail). Other companies use certain "inferior" software that will allow the sale only to be tracked about **80% of the time** (which means you lose out on 20% of the commissions that are rightfully due to you). Other companies will only pay you if the customer visits through your link and buys right there... if they come back later and buy, **you may not get credit.**

We will talk more about this in other parts of the lesson and go over it in great detail in the next...but for now, just be aware of it. I am not saying to not do business with a company which may have these problems with their Affiliate Program, I am just saying that you need to be aware of it **before** your become an affiliate.

**Rule Number Five:**

Be careful that you don't allow Affiliate Programs to clutter up your main site or the main goal of your page. Don't go crazy with Affiliate Programs and find 10 different Affiliate Programs that are perfect for your business and promote all of them on your site at the same time! **It just clutters up your site and makes it look worthless.** Concentrate on one, two or three Affiliate Programs (if even that many), this number all depends on the type of business you are running and what kind of clients you have.

I have joined a few Affiliate Programs and use them to promote other quality products to my clients (we will talk a little more about the power of this near the end of this lesson). I wouldn't want to join a pile of unrelated Affiliate Programs and start offering website hosting packages, get-rich-quick schemes, Amazon.com books, CDs, etc. It is tacky and simply doesn't work.

I only recommend products or services that my target market wants. This is extremely important, so I'll repeat it again. **I only become part of Affiliate Programs for sites that have products or services that my target market wants.** Notice I did not say "needs" here, I said "wants"... there is a big difference. People buy things impulsively because they "want" them, not necessarily because they "need" them. There are very few products in the world which people "need".

**Don't get caught up in the “more is better” attitude, it generally isn't.** Just because one vitamin

a day is good for you doesn't necessarily mean that 5 vitamins a day are better! If you put up too many Affiliate Programs on your site you end up flooding your market, confusing your visitors, and you won't end up making a whole lot of money. So remember to stay targeted!

**Rule Number Six:**

Deal with a reputable company. If you are ever concerned about a company you are thinking about doing business with, ask for references and do some checks on them. You want to make sure they are very professional. For example if you phone them and they are rude or put you on hold forever, or if you get an answering machine - be concerned about that as the customers you recommend to them will be getting the same thing. If you email them, they should respond within a couple of days, at maximum, and hopefully within the same day if at all possible. You'd be very surprised at how many companies will put you in "voice mail hell" or will not respond to your emails within a couple of days - or ever.

**Customer response is a very important thing.** When you have a problem or a concern (maybe you didn't get your check on time or you have a question about a sale)... and you call or email a company, you want to know that they'll take care of it right away. If you are asking questions about a company's Affiliate Program and get no answer (or a delayed answer)... be wary. If they can't even take care of you when you express an interest in becoming an affiliate, then you probably have a pretty good idea that they won't take care of you when you have a problem. You can also guess that they won't take very good care of your customers either!

So be very careful, the company you deal with should be very professional and willing to help you out when you're in need.

On that note, although it is a little off topic... customer service and the speed at which you respond to email or

phone messages, **is critical**. For example, we now get over 500 emails a day at this office, and we make it a point to answer all the emails (barring a natural disaster) **by the end of the day** (48 hours if there is a natural disaster) - weekends excluded. I attribute this attitude as a major reason for the incredible success of my companies on the Internet.

### **A Couple of Important Side Notes:**

#### **The truth about bulk email and Affiliate Programs!**

One of the myths of Affiliate Programs is that if you join a few, put them in an email message and then bulk email thousands (or millions) of people, you will make lots of money. That's not the way to do it. In fact it's probably **one of the worst ways to do it** for a few reasons:

The first reason is that unsolicited bulk emailing millions of people (i.e. spam) who have not qualified themselves as interested in your product is not very profitable and in a lot of cases you can end up losing a lot of money! I talked about the pros and cons of this in the lesson on bulk email.

Generally speaking, most Affiliate Programs have a spam email clause in their agreement that says that if you spam, you can get terminated from the program and not get paid for any commissions you've earned up to that point.

There's also a good chance that if you spam, you'll probably lose your reputation, your Internet connection, and you won't get paid for any commissions you have owing to you.

Wouldn't that be a waste of your time **and** money?

There are even recent examples of companies billing for the time taken up with dealing with the complaints and administrative problems caused by people who spam their Affiliate Program URL! So you could end up paying out money instead of making money!



When you spam an Affiliate Program URL that is assigned to you, it looks like the company is spamming the recipient directly as the URL you are using is for their website... this can damage their reputation and cause an unlimited amount of problems.

I talk from experience... we've had problems with affiliates spamming in the past. We have had to adopt some very strict spam policies and if any one spams with our Affiliate Program **we will terminate him/her instantly and all commissions they have earned are forfeited.**

It's very important you don't do this, as it will cause you more havoc than anything else. I can't think of one Affiliate Program that will actually allow you to spam to get sales.

Another thing to pay attention to is **exclusivity clauses in the agreement.** A few Affiliate Programs state, "they can be the only retailer of a specific product on your site". So say for example you join up with a book selling program, they may state in their contract that you can only sell "their" books and can't be a part of any other book related Affiliate Program. Or say you join an Affiliate Program in which you are recommending a website designer... they might have a clause in the agreement that says that you can only recommend and link to their website design company, and no other. So just be careful not to restrict yourself if that isn't what you want to do.

## **How to Become a Successful Affiliate and Earn Amazingly Large Referral Checks!**

A lot of people think they can just post a banner at their site and.... whammo, they'll earn thousands of dollars.

Well, it doesn't work that way!

If you want to make an Affiliate Program campaign successful and actually earn a lot of money from it, **you have to work at it a little bit**. What I mean by that is... play with it... test it. Everything should be tested. This is where the real time stats come in handy! Put a banner up and see if it works for you. Put a text link up and see if it works for you. Put them on different pages. Maybe write a short testimonial and see how that works. Try setting up a special page for your Affiliate Program where you recommend the product or service. Try it as a button on your site. Try having it as a link in your main menu. There are many, many, many ways for you to set things up and try new variations.

A good Affiliate Program should guide you, and let you know what is working. It should let you know the banners that are pulling well, good ways to use text links and so on. Good Affiliate Programs will actually guide you though this giving you tips on how to earn more referral fees and which methods of advertising have worked the best so far.

To be honest with you, there are very few "good" Affiliate Programs out there which are not only:

- 1.) using good tracking software but will offer you great products and good service;
- 2.) Will have a website that turns visitors into sales;
- 3.) Will give you a great commission;
- 4.) And will show you how to earn higher commissions by showing you what's working well for other affiliates.

These are extremely important things that can be critical to your success.

**A good Affiliate Program will make it as easy as possible for you to make referrals.** Be sure you can obtain great banners, or great sales copy that you can use in a recommendation letter. If you are going to mail to your customer base they should provide you with tested recommendation letter template. You should be able to get great text, sales copy, and

"blurbs" to post on your site. It should all be tested so that people **actually want to click-through and find out more**. You want to have a situation where they provide you with everything you need to become successful.

Well, I got a little off track there... what's important when you join an Affiliate Program is to work it a little bit. **Experiment, test and find out what works for you.**

I'll give you an example of this. We have an affiliate in the Internet Marketing Center who, in the first month, earned less than \$400 from us. He happened to call us up and say... "Look guys, I have lots of visitors, I have these newsletters, I have auto responders, I have all these things going on... and I want some help in making this thing work, because I see a lot of potential here." So we actually took a little time and helped him out to show him where he should put things. We gave him tips like where he should put his buttons and banners (and what banners he should use for his site), how he should word links in his newsletters, how he should use his autoresponders and so on. We gave him a lot of ideas of how to promote our Affiliate Program to his client base and visitors.

**His affiliate checks now are over \$4000.00 per month... every single month!**

Let me show you the power of that. He's earning over \$48,000 a year in pure profit all because he put in a months worth of work testing out what works and what doesn't by calling us up and getting us to help him with the Affiliate Program. He spent time making sure it was actually working and found the best methods possible to make sure he maximized his profits for the number of visitors he gets.

Now, I should make it clear that this doesn't happen to everyone. **He had a lot of visitors** coming to his site, a lot of people subscribing to his newsletters, and a lot of autoresponders going out. As you can tell, he is a very successful affiliate of ours. So it does happen... but to make it happen he put in a solid month of work,

maybe 5 hours a day watching his stats, changing things around, using different slogans and testing different letters to find out what pulled the best for him. So for an investment of 5 hours a day for a month, he is now generating over \$48,000 a year... which he doesn't have to work for any more. He basically now has a little money machine!

Let me put that into different words so it is clear. For putting in just one month of work, 5 hours a day, he now makes a steady stream of income (over \$48,000 a year) **which he doesn't have to work for anymore!** That's not a bad job! He just sits back and enjoys the fruits of his labor.

Can you see the potential?

But, you must be willing to work your Affiliate Program, don't just post a banner and think that you are going to reap in the profits. **It just doesn't work that way!** Because of our growing number of affiliates, we don't have the manpower to personally talk to every affiliate who calls and help them increase their referral fees (like we used to be able to do). Instead, we now have webpages to show new affiliates exactly what they can do to increase their referral fees and what our top-producing affiliates are doing to earn their huge referral fees (so new affiliates can mimic their techniques and success).

I suggest you join an affiliate program that has a similar attitude and wants to help you.

I will also mention that banner click-throughs are low on the Internet compared to what you may be thinking (between 1% and 5%... 5% if you have a really, really good banner). We have some very good banners in our Affiliate Program (some pulling as high as 12%), but the average banner on the Internet is pulling about 1%... and many banners pull less than 1%. So think it through... remember that if only 1% of our visitors are clicking through the banner... and then only 1-2% of those 1% click-throughs are buying... that means you have to be getting a reasonable amount of traffic to earn large referral checks.

On that note, if you have been using the techniques in this course, you should be able to design banners which pull 5%+!

I am saying this because I don't want to get your expectations too high... I hear of so many website owners who only get 100 visitors to their site every month and think they will make a fortune by joining a few Affiliate Programs and posting the banners on their websites.

Before you can make big bucks in Affiliate Programs, you have to be getting a reasonable amount of traffic to your site. By using the tips and techniques in this course you should be able to generate thousands of visitors to your website every month - which means more profit in your pocket.

How do I know this?

Because I get over 300,000 people visiting my websites **online EVERY MONTH** (yes, that is over 3.5 million people a year visiting my websites!)... I know what I am talking about.

So it's a numbers game. You have to generate a lot of traffic in order to make money in an Affiliate Program. That's just the way of the Internet. You need to be aware of it and know that you must maximize both the number of visitors you get, as well as the number of people you send over to the Affiliate Program site. This is done by using a number of different ways including buttons, and text links, promoting it in your newsletter (if you have one), and promoting it through autoresponders (if you have them).

**Testimonials will really increase your sales** when you become involved in an Affiliate Program. Whether you are selling website design, website hosting service, CDs, Books, our Internet Marketing Course, or a product of any Affiliate Program - if you have actually bought the product or service yourself and really enjoyed it and recommend it (which is a really great

way to become involved in an Affiliate Program), then you have your own testimonial!

You can honestly say something like, "I've used this service or product and have had great results and I highly recommend it... check them out at this following address...". With a personal testimonial recommending a product or service you are an affiliate for, you'll find that your referral fees **increase exponentially**. Because you are actually a third party recommendation, the visitor feels very good to know that someone else believes in the company and highly recommends it because they've had good experiences with the product or service.

**Newsletters and newsletter lists are great ways to promote an Affiliate Program.** You may have hundreds or thousands of clients who belong to your newsletter who look for information from you every month, every week, or whenever you post your newsletter. These people love to hear from you! If you've spent time building credibility and rapport, when you decide to recommend a product or a service, generally speaking, you are going to get a pretty high click-through and a pretty high percentage of people are going to purchase the product. All this means a higher referral check for you at the end of the month!

So if you have a popular newsletter, you are a perfect candidate for an Affiliate Program. Now all you have to do is find a product or a service that is perfect for your clientele base! As I mentioned before, you can find different affiliate programs to join at <http://www.AssociatePrograms.com> and <http://www.Refer-It.com>. They are both fantastic resources.

Assuming you have done all the checking and know that both the product and company are great... you can recommend this product or service in your newsletter and will find that a large number of people actually purchase the product or service, earning you good referral fees.

You can keep on doing this month after month after month.

Having a newsletter is a great promotional tool and it also gives you an audience to **promote multiple Affiliate Programs over a period of months**. If you are in the health business and have a newsletter on health and fitness, one month you could promote a package of vitamins that are fantastic. Another month you could promote fitness equipment. The next month you could maybe promote some fitness videos such as Tae Bo (the new biggest fitness craze in the world lately - as you have probably noticed by the endless scores of infomercials on TV). The next month you could promote some kind of dieting system and then maybe a book on some aspect of fitness. The list just goes on and on.

You could join multiple Affiliate Programs and promote these products because you have a targeted audience that **wants** to hear about health and exercise and nutrition... every month you can introduce a new product that you are a reseller for.

So just to sum up... promoting Affiliate Programs in a newsletter is a fantastic way to make a lot of money!

### **Are you Experiencing a "Lack of Results" with Affiliate Programs? - Here are some Solutions**

This is a **very common complaint** with people who join Affiliate Programs. People don't understand that earning money with them has everything to do with the number of visitors they get to their website. If you are bringing 100 people to your site every month you are not going to make a whole lot of money with Affiliate Programs. **Affiliate Programs are designed for people who already have traffic.**

Generally speaking, there could be a couple of problems if you are experiencing low referral checks (or no referral checks for that matter).

**Problem#1:**

If you are not making any money, 99% of the time it's because you're not getting enough traffic to your site and you're not converting enough visitors into sales. If don't have enough people coming to your site, or don't have enough subscribers signed up to your newsletter... not enough people are going clicking though to the Affiliate Program site and buy the products or services offered! That is why you don't generate large referral checks. You **MUST** have traffic in order to generate sales.

Although that is usually the major part of the problem, there are a few other problems.

**Problem #2:**

You may be dealing with a company that doesn't have good tracking software and **you aren't getting credit for all the sales possible**. Maybe the Affiliate Program doesn't track 800 # orders or fax orders so you don't get credit for sales that aren't online. Maybe the company uses an older method of tracking and you get paid only for people who actually have cookies turned on in their browsers... since cookies are enabled only 80% of the time, you lose 20% of your sales because of poor tracking software!

**Problem #3:**

Another problem can be when the site you are sending people to **does not convert traffic into sales**. The plain fact is that their site may not be set up very well... maybe they don't have good sales copy, maybe the site is hard to navigate or understand, maybe they don't have an easy order process... it could be a combination of all these problems. But it all boils down to the fact that the people you are sending to the Affiliate Program website **aren't buying**. Since you can't do anything about their site, you end up getting lower referral fees. Many Affiliate Programs have a great product or service, but they don't convert visitors into sales, which means **you** are losing money.



What's the solution? Deal with a site that has an eye-pleasing professional site, is easy to navigate, has good sales copy and sales process, and makes it easy to order. For all Affiliate Program sites out there which are not turning enough visitors into buyers, learn how to turn it all around and get a lot more visitors buying your product/service by studying the information in this course.

**Problem #4:**

Another problem could be that you are **recommending a non-related product or service**. This is very important because... if you are selling a manual on how to train horses, you should not be recommending website hosting or health products - they have nothing to do with horses. You need to find an Affiliate Program that sells a product or service which your clients would be interested in. Even something as simple as going to Amazon.com and recommending books about horses!

**Problem #5:**

Some Affiliate Programs **only track sales that are generated immediately**. Amazon.com is a perfect example of this. Currently, if a visitor links to Amazon.com and buys a book right away you get the commission on it. However, if they look at the book, decide not to buy it now, and they go back to Amazon.com at a later time, whether it be 5 minutes or 5 months later... you **do not** get credit for that sale. Even though your visitor "originally" heard about the book from you, the sale doesn't go to you. This is something you need to be very aware of.

Some of the good Affiliate Programs out there make sure that the sale is tracked even if the visitor comes back at a later date.

Let me use my Internet Marketing Center Affiliate Program for example. If someone links to my site and sends a visitor to me, but the visitor says "hey, this looks really good, but I don't have the money right

now" and ends up leaving the site, that visitor can come back to my site any time **up to three years later** and we will still track the sale. So a visitor can come back a day later, a month later... up to three years later and my affiliate will still receive a commission for the sale. That's a pretty powerful feature to affiliates who are considering which Affiliate Program to join! The commissions on this type of "long-term" tracking can really add up to big referral checks.

So be aware of how the Affiliate Program you are considering joining tracks visitors and sales.

### **Summary:**

As far as lack of results go, 99% of the time it is because you don't have enough visitors to your site or subscribers to your newsletter to actually generate the traffic needed in order to convert them to sales and earn referral fees.

If you DO have traffic and aren't getting results, it could be due to the fact that the Affiliate Program has poor tracking software, that the site isn't converting visitors into sales very well, or that you have chosen the wrong product/service to resell based on the clientele visiting your website or newsletter.

As a final note, another possible reason for lack of results may be that **you aren't getting paid a high enough commission**. You may be getting a very small percentage of the profits and simply aren't making enough per sale. We talked about this earlier in this lesson, so be aware that you should be earning a healthy portion of the profits if the company understands the "lifetime value of a customer".

There are a large number of Affiliate Programs out there which set up programs because it is the "newest" and "coolest" thing to do... another way of generating revenue online. They end up paying out 5% or 10% or some little piddly fee because they are not very serious about their Affiliate Program.

In contrast, we're very serious about our Affiliate Program. We get over **100 emails every day from affiliates** asking various questions. We have a full-time person who does nothing but answer the emails and help our affiliates. I am not saying this in the attempt to impress you, I am trying to demonstrate that you want to deal with a company that takes their affiliate program seriously and show you that there are some that do. You want to be involved with a company that is very serious about their program, that is always updating their software, always making it better for the consumer, always giving information on how to do better, always helping their affiliates, always paying on time, so on and so on.

If you have the type of visitors to your website, subscribers of your newsletter or customer base that would be interested in our Internet Marketing Course (known as the #1 Internet Marketing Course online), feel free to join our Affiliate Program. We pay out \$65 per sale, plus \$20 per sale from any affiliate, who signs up below you - this is called a two-tier program. All the details on what we offer and how to join are at:  
**[http://www.marketingtips.com/assoc/assoc\\_program.html](http://www.marketingtips.com/assoc/assoc_program.html)**

You could be an affiliate starting to earn referral fees in just a few minutes!

### **Affiliate Programs are the Ultimate Back-End... Find Out Why You Should Join One Even If You Have Your Own Affiliate Program**

Whether you have a website that sells a product/service or a website that sells nothing at all, it should not stop you from joining related affiliate programs to your website, product or service.

I commonly see businesses that have their own Affiliate Program for products or services they sell, but feel that they shouldn't add other related affiliate programs to their business.

I can't understand why they think like this... owning an affiliate program to have affiliates resell your products and belonging to one to use as a backend to your existing products are two **completely separate things!**

If you have a product or service you are selling (whether or not you have your own Affiliate Program to offer them), joining affiliate programs that are related to your business to sell other products or services to your clients is something that you definitely want to do. In fact I highly recommend it as an **additional source of cash flow!**

Here's a perfect example. Once I sell my book **Car Secrets Revealed**, I don't have anything else to sell my customers. I now have customers who have cost me money to obtain (advertising, affiliate referral commissions, administration, etc). I have several choices here... I can invest more time and money and develop additional products or services to sell my customers... OR... I can easily join one or more Affiliate Programs and sell their products or services to my clients!

As you may have guessed, I don't have an awful lot of time on my hands to develop new products or services... so I have chosen to join several Affiliate Programs. I recommend car-related products or services that are of interest to my customers and make a commission for doing that.

A smart business person is not afraid of spending a bit of money to get customers... because they will MAKE money on the "back-end". Sticking with the Car Secrets example, I pay out a high percentage of profits to my affiliates because they are referring people to me. Once I sell Car Secrets to a visitor... they are MY customer. The initial sale (the Car Secrets book) is the front-end sale. Any additional sales are back-end sales.

With my four online businesses, backends account for over ½ of my sales (that is over \$2,000,000 a year!). Yes, that is how powerful they are!!!

As I mentioned before... once I sell the **Car Secrets Revealed** book, I personally don't have anything else to sell them. So my back-end sales are the products and services offered by the other Affiliate Programs I've joined!

For the participant, Affiliate Programs are the **ULTIMATE BACK-END!** Your back-end is where you make the bulk of your money. And the beauty of this is that once you've built customer rapport and trust, you can just keep on selling to them again and again and again... and again!

Since I've already discussed back-ends ... I will go over a couple of very important points here. You **ONLY** recommend other products/services if you use them yourself and know they are quality products/services, you believe in that product/service, and know it is a great value to your customers. Remember that **it is your reputation on the line** so if you recommend a product that does not deliver 110% of what you claim, it is your reputation that will suffer and your clients will not trust in you again.

For example, at the Internet Marketing Center, we only recommend products or services, which we personally use, truly believe are the best out there, and offer great value to our customers. If I violate one of those principles I have lost the trust of my clients forever... and that is not acceptable to me. **Do not get greedy...** only recommend products that you believe in.

There are some important things to consider if you are going to use Affiliate Programs as your back end. The first, and most important, is to **choose something that has to do with your target market.**

This may sound really corny but I just HAVE to talk about it because there are so many people on the Internet offering a real "dog's breakfast" of products and services (I call this "the flea market" syndrome). You go to their website and you can't tell what they are all about. I'm sure you know exactly what I'm talking about... the site has links to dog biscuits and jewelry

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and maybe a weight loss program and some books and CDs, oh and don't forget the stack of get-rich schemes. If you're like me, you're probably out of there in an instant! All the products and services are totally unrelated and you can't even figure out why you went there in the first place, let alone why you should stay! Would you believe in the claims a website has for an amazing weight loss program when he/she has 10 other links to jewelry and get-rich-quick books? There is no way in hell they are an "expert" in weight loss with their smorgasbord of items at their site... that is for sure.

If you've been paying attention you already know that your website must have a focus... and the products you offer should be relevant to your target market!

Say for example that you are selling some kind of health products online... then all the Affiliate Programs you join should be somehow related to health. That's what your audience is interested in - that's why they came to your website. If your product happened to be vitamins and nutritional food, then your back end (Affiliate Program products) could be different types of nutritional products, exercise equipment such as AB Rollers, or maybe fitness videos and education on how to become more physically fit and how to get that "ripped" look, etc.

Just because we sell a book called Car Secrets Revealed doesn't mean that our Affiliate Programs have to be about car buying information. We can open up our universe a bit more! A survey we did showed that the majority of our Car Secrets customers were going to buy a new car within two weeks. So we asked ourselves "What would these people be interested in?"

We came up with a number of ideas, experimented with them and settled on a few Affiliate Programs that worked. Our customers were interested in getting free quotes from both a new and a used-car buying service. They also needed insurance so they were interested in getting quotes on insurance rates... and we found an excellent extended warranty program for new cars that we felt was of really good value and were only too

happy to recommend because it's good!

In other words, we didn't recommend "car buying" related products - but what they may need after they bought a new car. **Open your horizons** and think of what you could offer your clients that would be a good fit.

All the backend products mentioned above for Car Secrets Revealed book have one thing in common... they are **all** for new car buyers (73% of our customer base).

We're not recommending website services, health products, music CD's, or design services.

**The bottom line here is... find out what your target market wants and sell it to them!**

You can join any number of related Affiliate Programs and just keep on making back end sales. As long as they are buying and as long as they are your customers... sell them something! The key here is that by joining Affiliate Programs you have an unlimited source of back-end products.

I will go over this again... **Affiliate Programs are the ultimate back-end!** If you don't have any of your own back-end products, (or even if you do) **you can find an Affiliate Program that will perfectly fit your target audience.** There are thousands of them out there. All you have to do is go to AssociatePrograms.com and Refer-It.com. They have a list of all the different Affiliate Programs you can join listed by category, and you can find out if the Affiliate Program is a good fit for you.

Look for all the different features we talked about earlier in this lesson. Make sure they are automated, have real-time stats, are a credible, and check them out to see if they pay on time. Is their software using a reliable tracking program? Do you get credit for sales made off-line? Do you get credit for sales made if your visitor leaves the site and then re-enters it and buys at a later date? It's imperative that they have a great product and a great service, that they have great

## NOTES:

customer service and a pleasing website, that they are honest and respectable. Your customers are counting on you to make good recommendations... your reputation depends on it. These are all critical things you want to go through before you join up an Affiliate Program and resell their product or service!

You know... it's really hard to give an honest recommendation of a product or service if you don't use it yourself. If you are really serious about joining a program... **get the products and try them out... use the service.** We use all the services and products we recommend, that's the only way we can KNOW for sure! It's a small investment in time and money. Make sure you get treated right as a customer... and what better way to tell than by actually being a customer! Use the product, use the service... if you are happy with it then recommend it. If you're not... stay away! If you recommend a shoddy or rip-off product or service to your customers, they won't trust you anymore... and there goes your back-end... there goes your gold mine... and most importantly, there goes your customer!

If you have your own Affiliate Program, you've already gone to the trouble of building a customer base. **Now work it!** If you need back-end products... I cannot recommend joining one or more Affiliate Programs too highly!

If you want to set up an Affiliate Program for your own product or service (which is one of the hottest ways of promoting your product or service online)... keep reading the next lesson as gives you all the "how-to" details.



## **Lesson # 23**

# **Starting Your Own Affiliate Program for Your Product or Service**

**Starting your own affiliate program is one of the hottest ways to market your business online right now!**

As I mentioned in the last lesson, you may have seen a few articles on our website that look similar to some of the text in the next two lessons. Please continue reading this lesson, we left out many things in the articles we published online and saved them for our course owners. There is information here that we did not publish on our website.... Keep reading!

### **Why Selling Your Product or Service through an Affiliate Program is such a Powerful Marketing Tool!**

**Want Proof? Our own Affiliate Program generates us over 1 million dollars in sales, and I will show you how.**

I am constantly asked... "I am selling a product, should I develop an Affiliate Program for it?"

The answer: **Absolutely!** With the exception of a few products and services, almost every product or service online will be MUCH more successful if you offer an affiliate program for it.

That is a pretty bold statement, isn't it? I'm probably a tad bit prejudiced here because we generate **over a million dollars every year just from our Affiliate Programs!**

However, the plain fact of the matter is that I have never seen a business that invested in an affiliate program and did not make money with it! Yes, read

that again, I was not exaggerating... I said that **every business I have seen that introduced an Affiliate program has made more sales, and generated more money!**

**In my opinion, developing an Affiliate Program for your own product or service is one of the most powerful ways to market online today!**

Basically, an Affiliate program is a "reseller program".

You are allowing other people to resell your product at their website, through their newsletter, to their customer base, or in any ethical way they want to market it on the Internet (you get to set the rules on the ways your resellers are allowed to sell or represent your product).

Affiliate Programs have made a "level" playing field between the big corporations and the small companies like you and I. Using Affiliate programs it is ridiculously easy to harness the power of other websites and all of their traffic... and yes, it is possible to set up an Affiliate Program for your own product or service without having to take out a second mortgage on your house!

Yes, you can do it... **but** it takes an investment of time and a small investment of money to do it properly! And you **have to do it right the first time!** I'll talk all about how to get set up and how to run a successful Affiliate Program in several of the sections that follow.

But first, let's get into the heart of things.

**Why can an Affiliate Program make you so much money?**

As you know, I love joint ventures because they can be the easiest path to success in any business (they have been for me, so I am living proof). Basically, an Affiliate Program is the **ultimate "electronic" joint venture!**

Just in case there are few of you who don't understand, let's go through an example.

Let's say you have a protein powder that you mix in with your drinks. It reduces cholesterol and also improves a person's health and vitality. It's a great product and your customers love it! Now, if you can team up with **someone else** who has an email list of past customers who are also interested in improving their cholesterol, their health, and how to eat properly... you will make a boatload of money (the **perfect** joint venture)! So much that you would be willing to give the affiliate a healthy portion of the profits from all the sales generated from his/her list (this is called a "referral fee"). You sell YOUR product to THEIR list of customers, and **you both profit. You use your product and your affiliates' list.**

And it doesn't end there! What about websites, which are health and nutrition oriented? What if you got them to post a banner on their site about your product, or you even got them to endorse it to their visitors because they liked the product so much. Many of their visitors would see the recommendation and visit your site... you sell them the product, then give the website which sent the visitor to me a "referral fee" for the business.

### **Do you see the power in that?**

You don't have to go out and spend money on advertising... there is NO COST in doing this kind of joint venture. You only pay your affiliate per sale. So if you don't make any sales you don't pay out a dime... but if you make a thousand sales, you both make a ton of money. Your affiliate is then motivated to make it work as are you... the more you sell, the more money you both make.

That is an Affiliate Program in a nutshell. The person who is promoting your products to their customer or at his website, is known as the "affiliate" and you are the affiliate program owner.

In traditional marketing, joint ventures of this nature were a little complicated and time consuming and it was very difficult to track every order. But now, with electronic marketing, software can track **EVERY**

customer sent from someone's website, newsletter, promotion, personal email to their customer database, or **from any affiliate** ... to determine who gets credit for the sale.

Basically, an affiliate is an independent representative of your company. They try to sell your product and get a "referral" fee for all the products sold. They send people to your site (using a variety of methods that will be discussed later). You then track those visitors and sales, and give a "referral" fee for all sales generated from those visitors.

Isn't that beautiful? **I love the Internet!**

And it gets even better. By using the technology of the Internet, it is virtually the same work to track "1" affiliate as it is to track "10000".

**Can you imagine having hundreds  
or even thousands of people out there,  
selling your product or service for you?**

Can you imagine how many sales that would generate for you?

I think you get the picture. Are you excited yet?

So how do you get hundreds or even thousands of "affiliates" (otherwise known as "resellers") to join your program?

Sometimes people will "ask" to be a reseller for your product/service (usually customers who have bought your product, are quite happy with it, and want to represent it), or you can actively seek out resellers (affiliates) that you feel would be perfect for your products/services.

**The only way to become very successful with Affiliate programs is to do the latter** (search for resellers who have the perfect exposure to your target clientele in order to sell your product or service).

Let me give you an example. If you were selling

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gardening equipment, your perfect affiliates would be people who own gardening related sites or newsletters, or those who own other related businesses with a large database, and that sell products/services that are complementary to yours (make sure they are not competitive).

These are the people who would be your perfect "joint venture" partners and therefore your perfect "affiliate".

When you set up an Affiliate Program, you are deliberately going out and searching for joint venture partners! Your affiliates put a banner or text link to you on their sites... and they will send their customers and/or visitors back to your site.

In order to do this you must have an accurate and reliable way of keeping track of your affiliates and the visitors they bring to your site (and which visitors come from which affiliate so you know who to credit when there are sales). This is where Affiliate Program software comes into the picture (more about that in one of the sections that follow).

The beauty of all this is that you benefit from the traffic of OTHER sites... and your affiliates benefit too by getting a cut of the profit. **It is a win-win situation for both of you.** It costs them nothing to join your affiliate program and resell your goods, and you don't pay them a dime until they generate a sale... **it just doesn't get any better than that in marketing.**

The power behind affiliate programs is that "there is nothing to lose" (other than a few hours of your time).

For example, the affiliate joins your affiliate program for free. He invests 30-60 minutes to post the banner or links to your site from his (or emails her customer base or newsletter base about your product/service)... and if it doesn't produce as many sales as she expected, he simply removes the banners or links.

What did he lose?

An hour of his time, **at the most!** That is not much of

a risk considering there was a potential to make thousands of dollars over a few hours work.

What is the verdict? It is "offer them next to impossible to lose money by offering your products through an affiliate program" **as long as you have the right affiliates.**

Just in case you didn't get it yet, let me put it in plain English:

With an online Affiliate Program you can have hundreds and even thousands of websites online selling your product or service. In turn, they receive a commission for every sale generated by their links.

This is a fantastic deal for you, as you are not paying a dime for advertising! **You only pay for results.**

Think about it. How can you lose money? If you are not paying a dime until a sale is produced, you can't do anything else but make money!

It is a very low risk method of advertising. **You are always going to make money!**

Let's say that you are selling a product for \$100 and you offer a \$20 referral fee per sale. If an affiliate has your banner up for an entire year before he makes a sale, you don't pay him a cent until that sale is produced... there is no way you can lose! It doesn't matter what kind of traffic your affiliate's site has... whether the site gets 10 visitors a day or 10,000 visitors a day, **you are paying on a per result basis... and you will make money every single time!**

That's the power of Affiliate Programs. If you have the right contacts... it is basically a **"no risk" form of advertising.** You are only paying your advertising dollars (in this case a referral fee or commission) for sales which are made. **You always make money!**

In the past, this kind of advertising was laughed at. If you phoned up the New York Times and asked them to publish a full page ad and then told them that you

would pay them only a percentage of the sales that were made from that ad... they'd laugh at you! They charge well over \$25,000+ for an ad.

If you advertised on TV during the Super Bowl you'd be paying a million dollars for airing a 30-second commercial. But instead, say you approached them and asked them to place the ad for free and you would pay them a percentage of the sales that were generated... they'd laugh at you as well!

But on the Internet, this type of joint venture deal **is commonly accepted!** In fact, **it is taking the Internet by storm.** The technology of the Internet has made this type of arrangement very easy to do and quite profitable for both parties involved (the affiliate and the owner of the Affiliate program).

I should mention that Associate/Affiliate/Reseller Programs are becoming more and more popular... even on larger sites that normally use extensive prepaid banner advertising. These sites, at one time, would have never considered this type of advertising. They are accepting some associate/affiliate arrangement to increase their profits and eat up their available banner space. The reason they are turning to these methods of revenue is that a lot of people are getting sick and tired of paying for banner advertising which doesn't produce sales. Advertisers want results, are often not getting them!

Now, I should also mention that another reason why affiliate programs are becoming popular is because the marketing is done not just through banner ads but through a variety of other methods! Affiliate Programs are marketed through graphic links, text links, autoresponders, ezines, letters of referral, etc. This is advantageous for the following reasons.

There are software programs that can actually filter out and basically eliminate banner ads... so visitors who use this software don't even see banner ads! If you were strictly using banner ads to advertise your products or services... some prospects would **never see your offer.**

However, if an affiliate recommends your services through a text link or writes an endorsement letter... this can't be filtered out... it exposes a prospective customer to your service or product in spite of the fact that they have filtered out all the banner ads!

And it's not just the filtering software... there are lots of people out there who are "immune" to banner ads! They don't need filtering software... they simply ignore any and all banner ads. In other words they automatically filter out the ads before it hits their eyeballs! So one of the BIG advantages of Affiliate Programs is that the information gets to prospective customers in a variety of ways, circumventing human and software filters.

You aren't relying on one method of advertising... and **you only pay for results!**

In closing, let me state one rule. With only a few exceptions, the only products or services which will not do well in an affiliate program are those that do not have a high margin to work with. If you are only making 10% profit on an item or service, it is very difficult to give an affiliate a large piece of the selling price as "motivation" or incentive to sell your product or service.

As long as you have a product to sell and as long as you have some kind of price margin that allows you to offer a reasonable referral fee, you will make money with an Affiliate Program.

But if you have a low markup (unless your product is really unique and it is going to sell like hot cakes), it will be difficult to generate a lot of sales from your affiliates, as there is not much in the way of incentives to motivate them. A commission of only 5% of the sale is rather low and you will not get many affiliates out there marketing your wares with that small of a return.

Even a product or service with a low profit margin will bring you in more sales by simply having an affiliate program, it simply will not be the "windfall" of sales if



you had higher profit margins. This is because with a low profit margin you will not get a lot of your affiliates motivated to sell your product or service... although you still will have a few that will bring you in some decent sales.

However, some good news for those who have low margins in your product; there is one very good reason why you might still consider setting up an Affiliate Program... and it is all explained in the next lesson, our "SECRET Weapon for Tracking All Your Ads and Orders"!

**Generally speaking, with a good product or good service and a reasonable margin... I cannot think of a company that should not have an Affiliate Program!**

## **How to Easily Set Up your Own Affiliate Program**

If you have a product or service, which you want to sell... or are already selling one on-line, you will want to develop and set up an Affiliate Program. **Your own Affiliate Program will accelerate your sales and get you more exposure...** for a very small investment of money... and time.

There are several ways you can set up your Affiliate Program or compensate your affiliates.

The first is your basic click-through program... whereby anyone who clicks-through on the link is paid a referral or click through fee. It is pretty simple, if an affiliate displays your banner, text link, or button and someone clicks through that link, you pay your affiliate a small fee (usually between \$0.05 to \$1.00 depending on your product and price margin).

The second method is a pay-per lead program. The affiliate is paid for each "lead" they send you. The affiliate can post a form at his site for you, and for anyone who fills out the form and submits it, you pay a referral fee to the affiliate for that lead. Or you can

have your affiliates display a banner, text link or button to your site so that if someone clicks through, they will be presented with a form they can fill out. That form can be anything... a request for more information about a product, for a quote, or to downloading a trial version of your software program. Regardless of what the visitor is asked to do... your affiliates will be paid for each lead they send you (or each time a form is submitted).

The third method is a revenue sharing program. This is by far the **most popular** type of Affiliate Program. Basically you are offering your affiliates a portion of the profits on everything that is sold.

This is the way I recommend you run your Affiliate Program. With this kind of program **you are guaranteed to make money because you only pay for sales which are generated.**

For example, if you set up a click through program you could potentially bring in 50,000 visitors... and even with that level of traffic, you are not guaranteed to make any sales! You could be paying out tons of money in click-throughs, but if you don't have a good visitor to sale conversion you could end up not making a dime.

Also it is possible that someone can "cheat" with a click-through or pay-per lead program as they could have software that automatically clicks through the link generating them a referral fee when no real human being has actually visited your site.

If, instead, you set up a revenue sharing program... **you are guaranteed a profit** because you are only paying affiliates when your product is sold. In the example shown above, if you brought in those same 50,000 visitors and didn't make a single sale... it would mean you had a very serious problem with your sales copy or your website... but at least you **are not** in the hole by a thousand dollars that you owe to your affiliates for the visitors they have sent you... when you have no money to pay them!

## NOTES:

When it comes right down to the "nitty-gritty", the only real drawback of having Affiliate Programs for your product is the cost of installing the software to keep track of all your affiliates, traffic, and sales generated. There are a few other expenses... but they are mostly "time" costs, not hard costs (i.e. taking care of your affiliates by helping them make sales, answering their questions via email, and sending your affiliates their checks in a timely manner).

To give you a perfect example, we receive over a hundred emails **A DAY**... just from affiliates having questions like:

- "Is something wrong? I can't get my banner to work!"
- "I didn't get my package with the tracking code."
- "I lost my password."
- "Please change my email address."
- "Please change the address you send my checks to."
- "I didn't get my check last month, what happened?"

... and so on.

Some are valid questions and some are people asking dumb questions. I am sorry to say "dumb" here, but it is the truth. We have actually had people who join our affiliate program, don't put up a banner or link to us in anyway, then email us a month later asking where their referral check is? They have not linked to us, they have not sent us any visitors/prospects, they have not generated any sales... why do they think they are getting a check next month? You will be surprised... so be prepared to answer very reasonable questions and some obscure ones... there are all kinds of people out there.

As you get bigger and bigger, you may find that you get more and more emails... by this point you will be making enough money to justify dealing with these extra questions and can even hire someone to take care of them (for example, we have an employee doing this full-time as we have thousands upon thousands of affiliates).

OK... now it's time to get set up.

**There are three ways to set up how you keep track of affiliates and their sales.** The first is setting up "mirror" pages, the second is hiring an Affiliate Program service, and the third is to purchase your own affiliate managing software. We will go through the pros and cons of each in detail.

### **Method #1**

The first method is to set up a "mirror page"... or even a mirror site.

Basically you set up a separate page... or a separate site, for each affiliate. This is a **VERY** time consuming way of doing things, but there is almost no cost involved other than your time. Here's how it works...

Using marketingtips.com as an example. You'd set up a page for your 1st affiliate called <http://www.marketingtips.com/info1.html>. Then, as you got more affiliates you'd add pages... i.e. [www.marketingtips.com/info2.html](http://www.marketingtips.com/info2.html) and [.../info3.html](http://www.marketingtips.com/info3.html) [.../info4.html](http://www.marketingtips.com/info4.html) and so on.

**These would all be identical pages.** The only difference between [.../info1.html](http://www.marketingtips.com/info1.html) [.../info2.html](http://www.marketingtips.com/info2.html) [.../info3.html](http://www.marketingtips.com/info3.html) etc. is that it has a different tracking number. You actually "hard code" the affiliates tracking number into the HTML code (i.e. [info5.html](http://www.marketingtips.com/info5.html) would have the tracking number or affiliate number of "5") so that when you get an order, a hidden code in the order form prints the code. This allows you to manually track and give your affiliate credit for the sale.

Now this does work and is great for doing a joint venture or two with a few people... **however** it has MANY drawbacks.

First of all you can only sell one product. So if you have a sales letter that sells one product, doing it this way can work, initially... but having multiple products at your website or having multiple pages will cause you nothing but havoc and headache.

But say I do this and get 100 affiliates (and it's pretty

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easy to get 100 affiliates... in fact, it's **very** easy to get 100+ affiliates in a matter of 30 days)... now if I want to change something like the price, or I have found a better way to sell my product so I want to change the sales copy, or I want to add in a graphic, or whatever; I have to go to **every single webpage** and change them all manually, all 100+ of them. It's a **HUGE** job!

Trust me, I used to do it this way back in 1995 when associate/affiliate software was not available. Updating the pages ate up **days** of my time.

There is also the fact that you can't offer any of your affiliates real time statistics. They can't tell how much they've earned until the end of the month when you "manually" calculate it (which can take you a couple of days if you have 100+ affiliates). They don't even know how many visitors they are getting or how many sales they are generating... they have no way of tracking it on this type of system. And on top of that, they have to put 100% trust in me that I'm not ripping them off because I am the only one who has the "true" visitor and sales numbers... they have no idea if they are selling the numbers as I report it to them. So it's a pretty primitive way of doing it. It was a very old way of doing affiliate programs and you can "shoot yourself in the foot" because most people will not sign up with you if they don't feel comfortable that you are reporting to them in real-time, all the time, and how they are doing with sales. Heck, some of the affiliate program directories (which I will mention later) won't even list your site if you do not have real time tracking software.

Now, the other problem could occur if you had a site selling four products, and wanted people to roam around your site, read articles and all that kind of stuff; but still wanted to track the affiliates' visitors and sales. It's almost impossible to set up a reliable system using this method. There would be no way to track your visitors or affiliates from webpage to webpage. The only way to do this is to set up a whole separate individual site for every affiliate within your main website (**a VERY big job!**).

It would take HUGE amounts of room on your web

## NOTES:

server and there is no way you could manage it. And if you ever wanted to change one small thing it would literally take you **weeks to complete**. It's totally unrealistic!

In our case, with thousands of affiliates, this would be an impossible amount of work!

Ok, I know I have stated a lot of negative things about this method... so you may be asking, "What is the benefit to this method?" The answer, unfortunately, is only one benefit... it is really cheap for those who have no money and lots of time on their hands... as setting up takes only your time and knowledge of HTML. But remember, you may do more damage than good as many affiliates will not join because they either can't see their stats or have no confidence in you. Also, you will get a low rating from many affiliate related directories as you will look like a "basement operation". But I guess having this system is better than having no system.

### Method #2

Let's move on to #2, hiring an Affiliate Program service.

You can **hire a service** such as Safe-Audit or ClickTrade. They handle all the details as far as tracking your affiliates, tracking the sales, handling the money and will basically charge you a healthy percentage of each sale. This amount can be in upwards of 30% of the money you are paying out to your affiliates simply to organize this and keep track of everything. For example there is ClickTrade (mentioned above)... they don't have a high set-up fee but charge you 30% as your payment to take care of all the tracking, reporting, handling of money and so on.

This is a **very large chunk** of your profit!

It may make sense at first as there are no set-up costs, but realize that if you do your affiliate program right, you can be paying out thousands of dollars in referral fees very quickly. This can translate into hundreds

and usually thousands of dollars in fees you have to pay them... **each month**. I am not trying to talk you out of it, I am just saying that you want to look at the big picture. If you plan to stay small, they may be for you, but if you start with them and grow, it is extremely difficult to "dump" them and move on to a more cost-effective way of managing your affiliates. To a certain extent, you are married to them, so be aware of that.

There are a few companies (i.e. LinkShare) which don't charge you such a large percentage for each sale but do charge you a couple thousand dollars to get established... and then take a smaller percentage of your sales as their "management fee".

This is not a preferred way to do it as far as I'm concerned because for less than \$1000 I can show you how to do this yourself from scratch... how to get your own software program and run your own system and never pay a dime of your sales to anyone but yourself, (which in my opinion, is the only way to do it)! **The reason you get involved in setting up an Affiliate Program is to make more money; you shouldn't be paying all of it to another company!**

The companies mentioned above are great for people who don't know any better and see it as a more cost effective method compared to the \$10,000+ affiliate software that is available on the market. But to be blunt, there are ways to get the same functionality for a fraction of the cost (for under \$1000) as I mentioned before... if you know where to look and what to look for. We will discuss the differences between the software out there later in the lesson.

Let's move on to #3, purchasing your own associate/affiliate software.

### **Method #3**

#### **Purchasing your own associate/affiliate software**

As far as purchasing your own software goes... some of the Affiliate Program software packages I've seen

selling for under \$1000 are very “hoaky”. They don't have the proper tracking mechanisms and aren't flexible enough to handle a variety of situations. What I mean by that is that they:

- Do not track and display stats to their affiliates in real-time.
- Don't work with shopping carts.
- Are not 100% reliable to track "all" orders (i.e. they only use “cookies” to track, this is something we will talk about later on).
- Don't have any means of tracking off-line orders.
- Won't track and give credit to affiliates whose visitors who come back and buy at a later date.

Generally speaking, almost everything I have seen (about 20 different pieces of software which sell for under \$1000) is mostly garbage! There are a few exceptions to the rule, but even those pieces have their problems (i.e. a few charge a set up fee of \$500 and then a \$1.00 per affiliate you sign up - which can be thousands of dollars as you sign up affiliates... or software that only tracks certain types of orders, etc.).

The good stuff that I've seen sells for \$5000 and even \$7000 and more. And some of them are pretty slick. However they are not cheap... and represent a significant investment for most small businesses!

Don't worry, later I have a solution to the problem so you don't have to spend this kind of money. Many of you are aware that we designed and developed our own software from scratch when we started up our Affiliate Programs many years ago... this is basically because there was no software out there that did what we wanted it to, and how we wanted it do... we basically didn't have a choice!

To make a long story short, we have spent over \$32,000 to develop our software (it has been costly) and we have put in features from a "marketing" point of view, not a "programmers" point of view. We have seen the need to get software out there that has the same features and functionality as the \$5000+ software, but at a reasonable price tag which most



small business owners can afford.

We have modified our software and made it "generic" so that it will work with nearly any product or service that our clients have (no longer just our products). We've hacked through all the pros and cons, the problems we encountered, and done the "learning curve" for you. We've developed this associate/affiliate software which we call *AssocTRAC*... and we are going to offer it to our clients and newsletter subscribers for only \$877

If you want to know more about the *AssocTRAC* software, what it does, and how it works please go to <http://www.marketingtips.com/assoctrac.html>

It will blow you away as far as what it can do, check it out on the webpage listed above.

In my opinion this is **extremely underpriced** for what we are giving... but we wanted to make a fantastic program available to our customers at a reasonable price.

We're actually quite excited about it, as it will be the first time this quality of software has been available at such a drastically low price (as I mentioned we have spent over \$32,000 developing this software to make it **a VERY powerful marketing tool**).

Affiliate Programs are a powerful and really cost effective way to market your products. **In fact, I can't think of a better way to market your products or services** with such a low risk! It is absolutely fantastic.

Do you want to know how much impact it can have on your business?

I am aware of two clients who started up a reseller program... and then had to **shut it down because they got so many orders!**

They had to suspend marketing because they were so far behind getting the orders fulfilled and keeping up with customer service requirements. So it is a very,

very, very powerful way of marketing!

And I know where they are coming from... I talk from experience too. You must have noticed how I have been apologizing for the last 6 months consistently on how we have not been getting newsletters out on time and delays on other things. This was because of our phenomenal growth (we couldn't keep up with everything because of the number of orders coming in, the amount of customer service needed due to this huge increase in orders, and the time taken to hire and train new people to take care of this growth).

**These are "good" problems to have, if you know what I mean!**

## **How to Recruit a lot of Resellers/Affiliates for Your Product/Service**

There are a few different ways to build an Affiliate Program.

**1) You can offer your Affiliate Program to anybody who's interested.**

In other words, you may have adult sites, people who have nothing to do with what you are selling, and other people who have a related interested to what you are selling... all joining up.

Your objective with this method is to get as many affiliates as possible. Going this route means you have more things to manage. You get more exposure, which has advantages such as ranking higher on some of the search engines, (who rank according to popularity based on how many sites are linked back to your site). However, it also means there is an awful lot more administration... and is a hit and miss situation. You'll find that out of every 100 affiliates, only one does really well for you, and 3 to 5 out of the hundred may get no more than one or two sales a month... while the rest may never make sales or may get sporadic results.

**2) You can only allow certain affiliates to join to target your client base more.**

On the other side of the spectrum you have Affiliate Program owners who really target their market and go after specific types of affiliates. You can say... "I only allow selected affiliates into my Affiliate Program and I have to review your site and review your traffic" and so on, before anyone can join the program. You now make your managerial position and your administration a very small job (i.e. you won't be answering a whole lot of emails from your affiliates and doing a whole lot of administration). And if you select your affiliates right, you may be generating a whole lot of sales.

You can even go as far as actively seeking affiliates whom you want to join your affiliate program because they would be perfect for it (I teach you how to do this... and how to crush your competition in my "how-to" manual that comes with the *AssocTRAC* software).

The downside is that you have a lot of time invested in deciding whether to allow someone in your program, also you can never tell ahead of time if they will be a good or bad affiliate. The other downside is that you may be turning away some very good affiliates because you "misjudged" how well they could do or you made it too hard for them to join.

Another option, which I don't recommend, is to charge people to join your Affiliate Program. This technique was introduced to "qualify" affiliates. Basically the idea was "if they paid for it, they will make an effort to do it". The theory was somewhat right even up to a few months ago... but with so many people jumping on the affiliate "bandwagon" now and offering anyone to join for free, this theory doesn't work that well anymore. Why should people spend money on your Affiliate Program when they will be selling your products and making **you** money? Why should they pay for your affiliate program when they can go to your competitor, join for free and promote your competitors products to their customer base and make money? Don't let this happen to your affiliate program.

And the moral of the story is? Simply that I recommend that you **do not** charge affiliates for joining your Affiliate Program.

Ok, I was getting a little off track there... so let's get back to the subject at hand; the best way to get resellers to come onboard with you. The answer is to **use both of the above methods in combination.**

Also, don't get caught up in the "more affiliates, the better" syndrome. You want qualified affiliates who have sites with clients interested in your products. If you are selling a hot rod building product, you don't want to have a link from a guy who is selling horse saddles. It has nothing to do with your product. The conversion ratios will be horrible and you'll have an affiliate who is unhappy and constantly asks you why they aren't making any sales.

You may even find out (as we have in the past) that the affiliate who signed up truly doesn't understand that he's selling horse saddles and you're selling a product for hot rod enthusiasts... and that they are **completely different target markets!** The people visiting his horse saddle site, for the most part, aren't interested in hot rods. This means that you will have a low conversion ratio, an unhappy affiliate, and even more administration work!

For example... Amazon.com wants to have as many affiliates as possible. They have over 200,000 affiliates right now and they basically make it easy for anyone to sign up. They want to sell books. This has worked very well for them but out of 200,000 people, they may be lucky if they issue 2000 checks a month, most of which are likely to be for very small amounts (this is not a fact, just my speculation in dealing with affiliate programs for over 4 years now).

Now don't get me wrong... Amazon.com probably has some very good players in there. But I'd hazard a guess that maybe a hundred affiliates get checks which are in the thousands. Most of their affiliates get very low commissions... under \$100 (if that!) It's a numbers game that Amazon.com plays. They are not concerned about getting targeted affiliates and

qualified affiliates with good traffic. Their theory is that **out of a thousand affiliates they are bound to get at least one good, high-traffic affiliate.**

Try to stay targeted but don't limit your horizons either. Be willing to let people in.

I discuss some unique ways of recruiting affiliates (my little secret "nitty gritty") in the how-to manual entitled, "*The 12 Secrets and Tools to an Outrageously Successful Affiliate Program*" that comes bundled along with the AssocTRAC software. This guarantees that my clients will have a very successful affiliate program if they decide to go with this software.

On that note, there are some other subsidiary benefits to affiliate programs. One is brand recognition (also called "branding")... the more affiliates I get, the more logos and banners that get put up... the more recognized my branding is.

At first, most businesses shouldn't be worried about branding... **they should concentrate their efforts on developing a website with a great sales process to making the sale!** The higher your visitor to sale ratio gets, the more sales you will make from the visitors your affiliates are sending you, and the happier your affiliates will be... which means **more people will want to join your affiliate program.**

My company has just recently started to think about branding, but up until now we weren't worried about it. We concentrated on making money, and providing good quality products and service in order to build our business. Now that we have grown into a multi-million dollar corporation, we are concerned about branding. We want people to recognize INTERNET MARKETING CENTER and MARKETINGTIPS.COM as household names, something that is happening quickly!

**So Affiliate Programs can be used for branding** if you like, but don't make that the main focus in the beginning. As time goes on and you grow, branding may become more important.

## NOTES:

When you are setting up your Affiliate Program you'll want to make sure you have the basics covered.

When it comes right down to it, the two most important things in your affiliate program are:

- 1) The quality and functionality of your affiliate tracking software.
- 2) Your commitment to customer service and taking care of your affiliates.

If you have really good software that offers detailed report statistics to the affiliate, properly tracks their visits, sales, etc properly, it will make your affiliates feel confident in joining because you are "professionals" at it. Some of these features, with the "right" affiliate program software, make it simple for the affiliate to get involved and it makes the affiliate feel more comfortable as the affiliate can see in real-time what he is earning.

When getting affiliates to sign up, make sure you guide them through everything, and I mean **everything!** You should tell them exactly how to sign up, what to expect when they sign up, how to link to you (what HTML code to use), what they should expect as far as commissions go, etc. Encourage them to ask questions. Remember that this is your sales team, and you want to educate them. That is why I mentioned your commitment to customer service as being so important. You have to be willing to spend time answering the phone and email so that you can help these affiliates... remember, the more you help them, **the more money they will make you.**

One of the best ways to have a successful affiliates program is to make it very clear as to how they can make money with your program, and make it **very easy to join.**

You should be telling them which banners, buttons, and text links are working well and you should educate them on how to make more sales.

We keep our affiliates up-to-date on any new changes that have happened, new special features we are adding... not only do we want them to be informed but we try to constantly keep them motivated all of the time!

We show them how to promote our products to their client base, newsletter list, through text links and banners... and even how to use special pages to promote our affiliate program.

We give them the whole package so that it makes it extremely easy for them to use. All they need to do is follow our instructions, and we will show them how to make money!

Helping your affiliates become successful is a major key in creating a successful Affiliate Program. We reveal all my secrets, the secrets that allow us to do over 1 million dollars in business through our own affiliate program, in my step-by-step manual, "*The 12 Secrets and Tools to an Outrageously Successful Affiliate Program*" that comes with our new AssocTRAC software. The AssocTRAC software (<http://www.marketingtips.com/assoctrac.html>) and the accompanying manual are all you need to start your own affiliate program and be **on your way to having hundreds (if not thousands) of people on the Internet selling your product or service for you.** Once you've set up and automated your affiliate program, there are a ton of things you can do to make guarantee its success!

## **8 Keys to Making Your Affiliate Program Successful!**

**1) You must have a quality product and fantastic customer service.**

I'm not going to pull the wool over your eyes... to start off with, you must have a great product, and fantastic customer service. You **MUST** have these before you can develop an Affiliate Program that will build loyalty

amongst your affiliates.

**This is critically important!** To build a successful Affiliate Program your affiliates must know that you have a great product, that you offer great value, and that you give fantastic customer service (so that when they recommend you or send people your way, they KNOW you have a quality company). If you provide all of this, they are going to feel proud of the program. They have to be able to trust you with their customers. They have to be able to trust that you know what you are doing and that you will treat them fairly and honestly. Your Affiliate Program won't last very long if you get a bad reputation.

Given that you DO have a great product or service and fantastic customer service... there are dozens and dozens of things you can do to make your Affiliate Program a successful one! I'll discuss some of them in this lesson.

## **2) Choose your affiliate program software wisely!**

The first, of course, is your choice of Affiliate Program software. The software you use is going to drive how you set up your program. It's going to determine where you spend your time (whether it is on marketing or administrative trivia)... and it will be a factor which some of your potential affiliates will use to determine whether or not they will sign up with you! I am not going to spend a huge amount of time discussing software in this section... because I am going to discuss it in **DETAIL** in the sections that follow.

## **3) Find your target market and offer it to the people who control that target market.**

It is critical that you offer your Affiliate Program to sites where your target market is going to be. For example, if you have a health product, you will want to find websites and business owners who focus on health, fitness and nutrition... then offer your Affiliate Program to the owner of these sites. Then find ezines whose focus is on health, fitness, and nutrition and offer your program to their owners... ask them to



market your product to their viewing base because it is your target market. **The key here is to make sure you are targeting the people who have access to your target market.**

You have to make sure you are going after places or people who have access to your target market, whether it be their customers, their lead list, their website, or their newsletter list. You are looking for places where the people who would love your product are hanging out and where you will find your target market.

You have to get in touch with the people who actually have control of this target market and **make sure they become your affiliates.**

This is the key to marketing your Affiliate Program. Find out where your target market is, find out who controls or owns this area, and then make sure they become affiliates.

AND, don't forget...

#### **4) Your Affiliates can also be your customers.**

They join your affiliate program to earn some money, but you can actually sell your products TO them also. They get a discount through the kickback they receive from their own sale. It's a great way to actually generate some new customers AND once your affiliates use your products or services, they can use their own testimonials, thereby increasing the effectiveness of their marketing efforts!

If you have a situation in which you sell a lot of products, you can actually get affiliates to sign up with you solely for the purpose of buying your products at a discounted price. They buy at regular price, but at the end of the month they get a referral fee on their own purchases, so it is basically like they are getting a discount. This might work, for example, if you are selling something like vitamins. MLM companies have been using this sales technique since the beginning of time! And guess what? It works!

So it's a natural thing to actually sell products to your

affiliates because if they buy from you they are getting a kickback (i.e. they are buying at a discount) and you are supporting your affiliates. It is a natural thing to do, don't fight it!

Some Affiliate Program owners say, "NO, you can't buy through your own Affiliate Program" and they fight it. They're losing out! Don't fight it! This is a great way to get new customers, new business. Let it happen. Encourage your affiliates not only to sell your product but to buy from you.

There's another benefit... it generates a lot of customer loyalty. You allow them to save money by buying from you through their affiliate membership. And you make them money when they sell for you. This is a fantastic way to build customer and affiliate loyalty.

#### **5) Pay out excellent commissions and realize the backend sale.**

You have to **pay out good affiliate commissions** as referral fees. The more room or the larger the profit margin, the more you should be giving to your affiliates. There's one reason most of your affiliates have joined your program... to make money! The more money they make, the more motivated they will be to market your product or service in a variety of ways. The more money they make, the more work they will put in on your behalf.

What it comes down to, and what most affiliate program owners do not understand... is that most of your real profit is on the "backend". Don't be afraid to give away a lot of your profit on the "front-end"... **it is the customer who is worth the money**. Once you have the customer, if you have quality products and services that are great value, you will generate a lifetime customer from whom you can profit for years. This is why you, as an Affiliate Program owner, can afford to give an affiliate a lot of money. You're not looking at immediate profits... but at the potential of repeat sales or potential back-end sales. If you give your customers good value, a lot of them are going to come back and buy and buy again. **Over 50% of my**

**net income is made through back-end products.**

This is **very** important!

Don't just look for the money you can make today, look for the money you can make over the next 6 months... or the next year, or even the next 5 years! You may only be mailing your customer something that is worth \$50 or \$100 today, but they may buy \$2000 worth of merchandise over the next two years! Understand and realize that the purpose of building your Affiliate Program is not only just to make money today, it is about getting that customer, holding on to him and making a sale 6 months from now or a year from now or 2 years from now!

**6) Do business with your competitors.**

You will be surprised to know that you may end up doing business with some of your competitors! And that people you originally thought were competitors really aren't... in fact they can be someone you actually will end up doing joint ventures with later (especially if your product/service is similar but still different)!

This may sound corny, but you will not believe how many times we do business with our competitors. When it comes down to it, many of the people who purchase our information or software will also purchase our competitors'. So why not work together and both profit from that?

For example, I do business with companies people consider to be my competitors. But we actually have established good working relationships. We sell each other's products! If I believe someone has a good service selling great copywriting skills... and they have a manual on copy writing, I will recommend them and I am sure that in return, referrals and recommendations come back in my direction.

Be prepared to look at your "perceived competitors" products... and if they would be of value to your customers... negotiate a deal, become part of their Affiliate Program. Look at what you can offer your

competitors' customers based on what they would want and on what you can both profit from. Yes, you may find that you actually can be partners with some of your competitors and it can be very interesting. So, be prepared for this to happen.

**7) You must have a great visitor to sale conversion ratio.**

To have a good Affiliate Program **you must have a good visitor to sales conversion ratio**. This is one of the things you should look for before you really ramp up your affiliate program. You need to be able to convert visitors into sales in order to keep your sales affiliates happy. If they send thousands of visitors your way and after a month or so realize you are not converting the visitors into sales, they will not be very pleased with the results.

Test, *test*, **TEST**, *TEST*, TEST, and test!

Test everything! Don't be afraid to test!

**A great thing about the Internet is that you can test very quickly.** If you have ad copy that isn't doing so well, or a banner that isn't selling so well, you can put a new one up and get the results in minutes or hours, depending on the amount of traffic you have.

With traditional forms of advertising, you had to wait weeks or even months to get the ad in, wait for it to come out and then get the results in order to tabulate them. It would take months and months to test for one thing.

On the Internet you can put up a banner and test it. Then only a few days later you can put up another one to see the differences in results and find out which banners pull really well for you. You can also write different sales letters and create different site designs to find out what is producing the best conversion ratio for you... all in a matter of days, rather than months as in traditional advertising.

For example if your banner says "FREE gardening

newsletter"... and what you want to do is sell them a gardening product... your visitors may not be very qualified because they may not be willing or interested in buying anything... they are looking for something free.

You may have a very low sales conversion ratio (1 out of every 400 to 600 visitors buys, which is not good)

If you have quality visitors coming in, people who want to buy what you are selling, then your conversion ratio should be better. Your banner might read, "INCREASE THE GROWTH OF YOUR PLANTS BY 30% ALMOST OVERNIGHT FOR ONLY \$25.00". You'll bring in less visitors, but they will be **qualified** visitors. You will probably get a conversion ratio of one out of every 50 visitors... that's **a lot** better than having lots of unqualified visitors.

But you may have had to test 20 different banners to find the one, which really pulls! A key to marketing success is to test everything! Once you have, you should then tell your affiliates the results. Tell them what works and get them to use what works!

Your affiliates are actually working for you for nothing, until they make a sale... **you cannot lose money!**

**The plain fact is that this is the most advantageous way of marketing there is right now online.**

Remember that you are not paying them per hour or per ad... only for the sales made!

#### **8) The 12 Secrets and Tools to an Outrageously Successful Affiliate Program.**

The real "killer" ideas on how to instantaneously guarantee that your affiliate program will make you money... comes in my special course/manual called "*The 12 Secrets and Tools to an Outrageously Successful Affiliate Program*" which only comes with my AssocTRAC software that I have previously mentioned.

The information found in that course/manual will **give**

**you an unfair advantage** over any other affiliate program out there.

By putting this information into my special manual, many people who purchase my software will be guaranteed to make their affiliate program so successful that it will blow their minds, and blow their competition out of the water... just like I have done with my affiliate program. In the manual, I reveal the "nitty gritty" on EXACTLY what you have to do **to make hundreds of thousands of dollars with your Affiliate Program...** and exactly what I have done with my Affiliate Program to make it so successful so you can model your success after my own.

**It is simply a "no-brainer".**

You will learn how to easily get thousands of people to join your Affiliate Program and sell incredible amounts of your product or service. You just have to read the manual, follow my steps, and you are on your way to adding hundreds of thousands of dollars to your bottom line.

**The beauty of Affiliate Programs is that you have hundreds, even thousands, of people out there promoting your product for you.**

This manual will give you access to my guarded secrets that will explode your sales and will show you EXACTLY how to bring in hundreds of thousands of dollars to your business in as short as 30 days from when you start. I have done it, and I will show you how you can easily follow in my footsteps to do the same. Go to **<http://www.marketingtips.com/assoctrac.html>** to get details on the manual, *The 12 Secrets and Tools to an Outrageously Successful Affiliate Program* and our new AssocTRAC affiliate software (check out screen capture on what it looks like and how it works). These are the only two things you need to start your own affiliate program right away and be on your way to having hundreds (if not thousands) of people on the Internet selling your product for you.

**Affiliate Programs are "hands down" the hottest and fastest way to sell your product and make a fortune online right now!** Don't take that lightly, we have been doing this for over 4 years **and it has EXPLODED in the last 8 months.** Ride the wave before it is over (or before your competitors beat you to it).

Let me put that into different words, "get on the bandwagon or get left in the dirt! This is one of the hottest marketing techniques on the Internet if you have a product or service that you want to sell!"

### **How Affiliate Program Tracking Software Works... and Why it's One of the Most Important Ingredients in Running an Affiliate Program.**

Technology has really progressed rapidly when it comes to Affiliate Program software! Let's take a look at what it does, how it works, and why it is so important.

There are many software packages out there... and you literally have to be a programming expert to figure out the differences, specifically the advantages and disadvantages of each.

What is even more confusing... the prices for this type of software range anywhere from...

**\$300 to over \$12,000!**

Yes, I am not kidding... there is that much of a fluctuation. Over the next two sections, we will go over the pros and cons of each and show you the most economical solution.

The main purpose of Affiliate Program software is... tracking! Visitor tracking, affiliate tracking, sales tracking. In other words, you need to be able to track your affiliates, the visitors they send to your site - and

the visitors who buy.

There are many, many ways this can be done, but the most common are:

- CGI tracking
- Cookie tracking
- Hard-coded HTML tracking (this is a very old fashioned way of doing things at this point because technology has really progressed)

Please note that all these systems have at least one of the following:

- An "offline" database where all of the information is stored offline. This means the affiliate cannot view his/her statistics, but is easy to manage for the company.
- An online database, where all statistics and affiliate information can be viewed in real-time.
- Neither database, if they are really "hokey" and manually calculate what they owe their affiliates by hand (this is the way we used to do it back in 1995 as the software and technology didn't exist for doing this without a major investment).

Just to refresh your memory, in case you don't remember, all affiliate programs assign an affiliate a special URL that is specific to them so that whenever someone links to their site, they know who sent them the visitors and credits the affiliate if that visitor buys. For example, with our Internet Marketing Course, the URL may look like

<http://www.marketingtips.com/t.cgi/0086/>. If someone posts this URL at this page, with either a text link or banner, anytime someone clicks through that link to our site, we know affiliate #0086 sent us that visitor. If that visitor buys, we will give that affiliate a referral fee as a "thank you" for sending us the customer.

It sounds very simple, but the software is very complicated, as it has to account for many different types of situations, which we will go over in this lesson.



### Tracking through HTML pages

This basically means you are setting up mirror pages or mirror sites. I've already described how this works in one of my previous sections, but in case you didn't read it... here it is again. If you already know this stuff, just skip to the next section on cookies.

Basically you set up a separate page... or a separate site, for each affiliate. This is a VERY time consuming way of doing things, but there is almost no cost involved other than your time. Here's how it works...

Using marketingtips.com as an example. You'd set up a page for your 1st affiliate called <http://www.marketingtips.com/info1.html>. Then, as you got more affiliates you'd add pages... i.e. [www.marketingtips.com/info2.html](http://www.marketingtips.com/info2.html) and [.../info3.html](http://www.marketingtips.com/info3.html) [.../info4.html](http://www.marketingtips.com/info4.html) and so on.

**All these pages would be identical.** The only difference between [.../info1.html](http://www.marketingtips.com/info1.html) [.../info2.html](http://www.marketingtips.com/info2.html) [.../info3.html](http://www.marketingtips.com/info3.html) etc. is that it has a different tracking number. You actually hard code in the affiliates tracking number (i.e. [info5.html](http://www.marketingtips.com/info5.html) would have the tracking number or affiliate number of "5") so that when you get an order, a hidden code in the order form prints the code. This allows you to manually track and gives your affiliate credit for the sale.

Now this does work and is great for doing a joint venture or two with a few people... **however** it has MANY drawbacks.

First of all you can really only sell one product. So if you have one sales letter which sells one product, doing it this way can work initially... but having multiple products at your website or having multiple pages will cause you nothing but havoc and headache.

But say I get 100 affiliates (and it's pretty easy to get 100 affiliates... in fact it's very easy to get 100+ affiliates in a matter of 30 days). What if I want to change something like the price? Or what if I have

found a better way to sell my product so I want to change the sales copy, or I want to add in a graphic, or whatever; I have to go to **every single webpage** and change them all manually, all 100+ of them. **It's a HUGE job!**

Trust me, I used to do it this way back in 1995 when associate/affiliate software was not available. Updating the pages ate up **days** of my time.

There is also the fact that you can't offer any of your affiliates real time statistics. They can't tell how much they've earned until the end of the month when you "manually" calculate it (which can take you a couple of days if you have 100+ affiliates). They don't even know how many visitors they are getting or how many sales they are generating... they have no way of tracking it on this type of system.

And on top of that, they have to put 100% trust in me that I'm not ripping them off because I am the only one who has the "true" visitor and sales numbers. They have no idea if they are selling the amount that I report to them. So it's a pretty primitive way of doing it. It was a very old way of doing affiliate programs and you can "shoot yourself in the foot" because most people will not sign up with you if they don't feel comfortable that you are reporting to them in real-time, all the time, about how they are doing with sales. Heck some of the affiliate program directories (which I will mention later) won't even list your site on their list if you do not have real time tracking software.

Now the other problem that could occur is if you had a site selling four products, and wanted to let people roam around your site, read articles and all that kind of stuff; while still tracking the affiliates' visitors and sales. It's almost impossible to set up a reliable system using this method. There would be no way to track your visitors or affiliates from webpage to webpage. The only way to do this is to set up a whole separate individual site for every affiliate within your main website (**a VERY big job!**).

It would take up a HUGE amount of room on your web

server and there would be no way you could manage it. And if you ever wanted to change even a small thing, it would literally take **you weeks to complete**. It's totally unrealistic!

In our case, with thousands of affiliates, this would be an impossible amount of work!

Ok, I know I have stated a lot of negative things about this method... so you may be asking, "Where are the benefits?" The answer, unfortunately, is only one benefit... it is really cheap. It is for those who have no money and lots of time on their hands... as setting up takes only your time and knowledge of HTML. But remember you may do more damage than good as many affiliates will not join because they can't see their stats or have no confidence in you. Also you will get a low rating from many affiliate related directories as you will look like a "basement operation". But I guess having this system is better than having no system.

You could get away with this about a year ago, but not anymore. Some affiliates will not even sign up on a system this ancient as it offers them no control. But I thought I would mention it just in case you saw a few of these floating around online. They do work, but they are not competitive against all the other affiliate programs that have come out over the last 6 months.

### **Cookie Tracking**

This method of tracking visitors and sales offers some MAJOR advantages... but a few disadvantages as well.

Let's use an example here. If you had an affiliate promoting your products and you were using cookies to track that URL, you may give them a URL which looks like [www.yourdomain.com/?12345](http://www.yourdomain.com/?12345) or [www.yourdomain.com/track.x/12345/](http://www.yourdomain.com/track.x/12345/).

The affiliate number in the URL is a unique number, which is used to track an affiliate whether they use banner ads, graphics or text links.

In this case, if a visitor comes through an affiliate's link to my site, a "cookie" is placed in their browser called "12345". A cookie is a piece of information which stays with their browser so if they come back to the site at anytime, we can ask them if they have a "cookie" for our site, and the browser will tell us it is "12345". I will get to the importance of this in a moment.

We track them as a visitor through our site. If that visitor places an order we record which affiliate number gets credit for the order and they get a commission for the sale.

In other words, the cookie, which is placed in the visitor's browser, is the affiliate number... allowing us to keep track of which affiliate sent the visitor to us.

Let's go over it in a little more detail (and in "laymen's terms" so everyone understands it).

When a visitor clicks through on a banner or text link from an affiliate's site to your site... the first thing that happens is our software asks the visitor's computer... "Do you have a cookie for our site?" If this is the first time the visitor has come to our site the answer from the visitors browser would be "NO"... and our website would give them a cookie which is encoded with the affiliate's number (in the case above, that would be a cookie that reads "12345"). If the visitor leaves, that "cookie" (or affiliate number) will stay with them. If they come back a few days later to our main URL or any webpage on our website, our software will ask if the browser has a "cookie" set. The browser would say "YES" and give our software that cookie. Then underneath all of the webpages it "remembers" the number "12345", as the visitor surfs through the site and if that visitor orders something, our website records the "12345" as the person who referred the visitors to us and that affiliate (affiliate #12345) gets a referral fee for the sale.

Still with me?

The beauty of cookies is that it makes it very easy to

track the visitor because no matter how many products a visitor orders... no matter how many times they come back, it gets tracked. This is not possible in any other method of tracking... which makes it a **very powerful way to track visitors and orders**. If a visitor visits the site today, but does not order... but then returns a few week later (or years for that matter) the software will still track the "cookie" in the person's browser and the affiliate who initially sent him to the site will get credit for the order. If the person orders more than one product over the period of a few days or a few weeks using the cookie method, it is super easy for the software to track all of this. In the end, the affiliate gets credit for all sales generated in a timely manner, whether he orders today, tomorrow, next week, or next year.

As of this printing, places like Amazon.com don't do this. If you are an affiliate of Amazon.com and have their icon on your site... if someone clicks through and buys right away you will get credit. However, if they leave Amazon.com and come back three seconds later by typing in Amazon.com and not by linking through the special URL that is on your site and then place an order, you as an affiliate will not get credit for the sale. Amazon.com takes credit for the whole thing. That's the problem with those types of Affiliate programs. In other words, the only way to get credit for that was to type in the long URL like  
<http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/ISBN=1571200207/planetpatchworkA/>

Now, who is going to type in that?

But by using cookies, if you first link through to a site and the cookie gets set, all you need to do is type in the main URL and the cookie will still be there... **the affiliate then gets credit for the sale without the visitor ever knowing**. Let's use my Internet Marketing Center site as an example. If an affiliate has a banner or text link to the site and we assign him  
<http://www.marketingtips.com/t.cgi/7999/> and someone goes there, a cookie of 7999 is set in the visitor's browser and she gets redirected to <http://www.marketingtips.com> so nothing looks out of

## NOTES:

the ordinary. If the visitor does not buy, but later (days, weeks, or even years later) types in <http://www.marketingtips.com>, that "7999" cookie is still in the customer's browser and affiliate number 7999 will get credit for the sale even though he/she just went back to the main domain name, not the URL with the "...t.cgi/7999/" in it. Cookies are the only tracking method that can do this efficiently and easily.

You will actually want to use cookies because the main benefit to your affiliates is that they will get credit for the sale six months from now, a year from now... whenever the potential customer visits the site again. And even if a visitor doesn't buy the first time, if you offer good information they will come back... and buy!

You can set the cookie to expire after a certain period of time, after 2 weeks, 2 months, or 2 years... the cookie becomes obsolete. After a certain period of time the affiliate doesn't get credit for that sale anymore. The time period in which the cookie is active is really your choice, and depends on how much you want to reward your affiliate for referring their customer to you. Personally I set our cookies at 3 years... so if the customer comes back and buys within three years, the affiliate who originally referred them will get credit for the sale.

Okay... you now have a visitor at your site, and they want to buy... let's go into more detail on how cookies work.

Now if they click through to the online order form, the affiliate software program will call the cookie back from the visitor's browser and the affiliate number is placed into a hidden field in the order form... so that you can track the sale. When the sale actually goes through, the affiliate's sale counter is increased by one so that **the affiliate can see in real time exactly when they have a sale** (assuming you have good affiliate software that displays these stats for the affiliates).

I won't get into the gory details, but "good" software, like that which we use at our [marketingtips.com](http://marketingtips.com) site, will track the number of visitors and the amount of

sales coming in through each individual affiliate (so you can see which affiliates are actually sending you the majority of your visitors and making the majority of the sales. This allows you and your affiliates to check and see if they are converting enough visitors into sales. If you notice that they aren't, you can suggest they can change their banners, text links, etc. to get more pull.

**Okay, what about offline orders (800#, mail, fax)... how do you track those?**

Off-line orders do happen, as some people don't trust the online ordering process even if secure servers are used. So you will get orders via fax, mail and through your 1-800 number... and you want to give your affiliates credit for these orders too! Not that many affiliate programs DO... so features like these will separate you from the competitors.

Once again, this is where cookies help you to automate this process. If a visitor has a cookie in his browser (the affiliate number in our case), it can be pulled up at anytime throughout their visit.

If they go to the order page, at the bottom of the order page they can:

1. Print out an order form to mail or fax in.
2. Call our 1-800 # to order.

When they call the 1-800 number they have to give a "publication number" (which is really the affiliate's number so we know whom to give credit to). To make sure they give the affiliate number when they call we say "When you call 1-800-241-5934, please give the operator this number 7999 to get your special pricing."

Here's an example of how we do it for the **Car Secrets** book.

You can call anytime, 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and the number to call is: 1-800-241-5934. To get this special price when you call, please tell the operator the "publication number" is #86.

## NOTES:

Remember to give the operator your email address if you want the software emailed to you.

I am sure you know by now how to give a special incentive to get people to order now, so this wording above fits in perfectly (i.e. the "special price").

Now when a visitor prints out the fax or mail-order form we actually have the affiliate number hidden within the address on the order form. For example the address would be, Car Secrets, 1123 Fir Avenue, Suite 86, Blaine, WA 98230. So when they send in their order the affiliate's number is right on the front of the envelope... and we know who to credit the sale to.

When they fax that form to us, we can immediately see who the affiliate is by looking at the suite number in the address right on the order form.

To see an example of our Internet Marketing Course Mail/Fax Order form with the tracking code number in the address at the top of the screen please go to <http://www.marketingtips.com/mailord.html>

Okay... we've talked about how powerful and useful cookies are... but there is a downside.

Some people turn off cookies on their browser, or they may have older version that doesn't accept cookies. Additionally we have encountered some cookie bugs with older versions of *Netscape*... and we don't want to place cookies on those browsers.

**About 20% of the people online either don't have a browser which accept cookies, have cookies acceptance "turned off" on their browser, or have an older version of Netscape with cookie "bugs" in it.**

So when these 20% come to the site... if the software you are using only operates on cookies (which many do) your affiliates would lose these sales because their visitors can't be tracked. This is not good and will not only make affiliates lose faith in you, but you will waste a lot of time "explaining" this to affiliates if they



don't get credit for sales. This may even stop many people from signing up if they know how you are tracking and have experienced difficulties with similar software.

**But the good news is I have a solution to the problem** (we will get to that in a few pages!).

### **CGI Tracking**

Tracking programs that utilize CGI scripting actually put the affiliate's code right in the URL as he is surfing through the site

***Note:** I categorize this type of tracking as "CGI Tracking", but it can be done through JAVA script or another programming language. It has virtually the same functionality as I am describing here, but I use "CGI" as an example as it is by far the most common used.*

Basically the URL is hard coded into the appropriate pages so that the affiliate will still get credit for the sale.

The code is visible to the visitor because it becomes part of the URL. For example if the visitor bookmarks the site... they wouldn't just bookmark the URL `www.yourdomain.com`, but they would bookmark something like `www.yourdomain.com/index.cgi?54321` or `www.yourdomain.com/tracking/reseller.cgi/home/54321.html`, the possibilities are endless as to what the URL could look like... depending on how they have their scripts set up.

The point is the URL is VERY long and it contains the affiliate's ID.

Therefore the affiliate code is not hidden, but is displayed in the URL and it still puts the code on the appropriate pages so that the affiliate gets credit for the sales.

However, if someone leaves that page and remembers the main domain name (i.e. www.yourdomain.com) and they type that in later to revisit the site, **the affiliate will not get credit as there is no way to track the visitor or sale if he does not re-type in the full long URL** (which is almost impossible most of the time).

This is the down side to CGI scripts.

You will also find some people will notice the long URL with a lot of "codes" in it and erase the extra codes in the URL and just go back to the root domain (www.yourdomain.com) to see if something is different there. If they do this, the tracking is lost and the affiliate will not get credit for the sale.

Many affiliate software programs use this method, so be careful which affiliate program software you choose. This is a "messy" way to track affiliates. It is clear that you are tracking something and many people are curious as to why the URL on the webpage is so long and full of funny numbers/names.

### **A Solution - The best of both worlds!**

From the information above you can see why each system has faults by themselves.

However the power is in using them TOGETHER!

**I highly recommend using a combination of both cookies... and CGI scripting for backup.**

Let's use the affiliate software we use for Internet Marketing Center and our Internet Marketing Course.

Why do we want to use a combination of both methods of tracking?

We want our affiliates to get credit **for every single sale they are entitled to**. We want our affiliates to have confidence in knowing we track everything, no matter what happens.

So what do we do?

We use the power of "cookie tracking" and have a backup CGI system. This protects us in case a visitor's cookies are turned off, they are using an old browser which doesn't accept cookies, or they are using a version of Netscape which has a "cookie bug" in it (this is a little secret we learned from experience and hard knocks).

If we cannot put a cookie on their browser for some reason (remember, I said that about 20% of all people online cannot accept cookies in their browser), our software automatically switches to our backup CGI script and puts the code right in the URL. So it still tracks the visitor and sale. In other words, we track all the visitors and sales to the best of what technology will provide us to make sure every affiliate gets credit for the sales which are due.

The most common method of tracking out there on the Internet is through cookies. But by using this system in many Affiliate Program sites, the 20% of visitors who cannot accept cookies get defaulted to the program owner's affiliate number and **the affiliate who actually sent the visitors doesn't get credit for their sales.**

This is a poor way of running Affiliate Programs because you have no idea how much the owner of the Affiliate Program is essentially skimming off the top.

That's why we use backup systems like CGI to make sure that our affiliates get credit no matter what. Every single person who comes into our site is tracked and our affiliates have a great belief and trust in us **because we take so much effort to make sure that no sale goes into "limbo"**... all affiliates get referral fees for **every customer** they send us.

This is one of the reasons we are so successful... we go out of our way to make sure our affiliates get credit for ALL of their sales. To be successful with your own affiliate program, you must be super-reliable. If you don't come across that way, you will not get the affiliates to join you and you will not be looked upon

as having a quality Affiliate Program. We have been consistently rated as one of the top Affiliate Programs on the 'net, so we know what we are talking about!

I should mention that this method of using cookies and CGI scripting is in our affiliate program tracking software called *AssocTRAC*. It is one of the only pieces of software that does this on the market right now. *AssocTRAC* even uses special CGI URLs that are very short so that they are not that noticeable if the backup CGI takes over – which is very important from a marketing point of view. Let me just say I am very proud of this software... it is cutting edge software and was developed from a marketing point of view instead of some programmer's point of view who has no understanding how to actually promote and market a business online – **it is truly killer stuff!** For more details and to see screen capture of *AssocTRAC* and how it works, go to **<http://www.marketingtips.com/assoctrac.html>** So why is all of this "software talk" so incredibly important?

The software your Affiliate Program owner uses is important because you want to receive credit and commissions for every sale you send their way! If your Affiliate Program is utilizing mirror pages or sites... they are using very old-fashioned technology! Your affiliates are totally reliant on your ability to keep good records and to be totally honest in calculating their commissions. They can't get real time statistics... and have no way of knowing what works or what doesn't work unless you tell them, as they can't track it themselves.

If your Affiliate Program utilizes only cookies, your affiliates are potentially losing 20% of their sales and referral fees (and if they aren't tracking offline orders... they may be losing even more).

Would you join an affiliate program that had these problems?

Of course you wouldn't... and **you can't expect affiliates to join yours if you have the same problems.**

You would want to look for affiliate programs that give

**you FULL CREDIT for ALL of your sales!** And expect your affiliates to be looking for the same!

Additionally, having a good tracking system is a **fantastic selling point** when you are recruiting affiliates. You can assure them that they will **get credit for all sales...** and you can provide them with real time tracking so that they can test banners, text links, etc. to find out what works best for their site, in a matter of days!

If you are setting up an Affiliate Program, the software you choose will determine how automated you can get with your program. **The more automated the better... instead of focusing on administrative trivia you can focus on helping your affiliates become wildly successful!** Which means that you will be wildly successful!

To finish up this section, I would like to go over some important points, which have not been mentioned yet.

One is the importance of tracking the number of visitors from each affiliate, not just sales.

Your software program has to **track visitors**; as well as having the ability to **track sales**. If it doesn't, neither you nor your affiliates can tell how many visitors are converting into sales.

It's very good for your affiliates because they can see how many visitors they brought in and how many sales have come from them. If they are only converting one out of every 700 visitors, they will get a little upset and will call you to go over the details on what they are doing wrong. This is a good thing! It gives you a good advantage because you are also seeing what affiliates are pulling really well... and you can call them up and find out what they are doing. You can then help your other affiliates improve their sites, how they are marketing... and help them improve their conversion ratios to get them more money! And you want to do **this because the more money they make, the more products you sell and the more money you make!**

So be careful, many Affiliate Program tracking software does not track visitors... which can be a critical factor to determine whether your affiliate program is a success or failure!

Another important requirement in setting up an Affiliate Program is to make sure that your Affiliate Program software can **track through all of your various order mechanisms**. This means that you can easily track any orders you get by fax, by mail, through your 800#, and all of your online orders, both secure and non-secure. This is not a problem if you have the right software!

I just want to make sure that you are aware of how important this is... because some Affiliate Program software systems simply cannot handle this! Your affiliates aren't going to be very happy if you only track online orders and don't give them credit for any phone, fax or snail mail orders... so make sure you are tracking through every type of order possible!

From the very beginning you are going to want to set up your Affiliate Program so that it will be as **automatic as possible**. You don't want to be spending all your time and effort on looking after administrative trivia! Your time should be spent on testing and improving your marketing and on helping your affiliates become successful... not on filling out manual forms and dealing with manual tracking procedures.

It's also very important to make your Affiliate Program **easy to join, and easy to use**. You want to guide your new affiliate through the sign up process step-by-step. Make it easy for them... have it all automated so that they can join your Affiliate Program and, within a matter of seconds, get all the information they need so they can become a part of it right away.

## **Learn How to Choose the "Right" Affiliate Program Software**

The whole point behind setting up an Affiliate Program is to **make it really easy for the affiliate to join and**

**to bring you qualified visitors.** For the affiliate, the beauty is that there are no orders to fill, no credit cards to charge, no inventory to stock, no returns, no shipping, no handling problems, no customer service, no questions, no in-person or over the phone selling of the product.

It is all "clean and easy" for them... which is one of the main benefits of joining an Affiliate Program.

They don't have to worry about maintaining a website (although many affiliates DO have a website, some just sell to their newsletter lists, or use other sales techniques not requiring a website). **It basically makes it simple for them to make money.** They link to you, the software tracks everything and you give them a referral fee for every sale they generate. This is the heart of Affiliate Programs, and is the true beauty behind them!

What you want as an affiliate program owner, is software that not only takes a lot of work out of your hands, but also makes it easy for your affiliates to join and get all of the information they need to become successful.

Most small businesses should not be concentrating on how the software works and on how to get it working. Your time is better spent on developing products and on marketing them, not on dealing with the technology behind your software, as the technology can be very sophisticated.

As an example, our software is **very** sophisticated. We've spent over \$32,000+ on developing it and another \$30,000+ on time and labor, testing it, modifying it, and **learning what works and what doesn't work the hard way.**

We have been doing affiliate program since 1995 and we have had our "lumps" so to speak. We have learned the hard way, so please listen carefully to what I have to say.

We run a number of affiliate programs and so we know

what's necessary **because we are dealing with the same issues and problems you will be facing, every single day!**

To repeat myself (because it is **so** important), you, as an Affiliate Program owner, want to have software which is easy to use and provides all of the information for affiliates to become successful (which means you will become successful). You want to spend time on marketing and improving your product, building a better website, converting more visitors into sales and supporting your affiliates to make sure they are doing well, giving them more ideas and making sure you have great customer service. You don't want to be worrying about all the hardware and software technology that goes on behind the Affiliate Program.

BUT... you should know what Affiliate Program software is capable of... what features to look for and ask about... what works and what doesn't work! **You need to know enough about Affiliate Program software to choose wisely.**

There's lots of software packages out there right now for Affiliate Programs. To be very straightforward (and I'm not going to point fingers at anyone in particular), there's a lot of garbage out there. Some of them have different ideas on how to track affiliates (i.e. CGI scripts, hidden form fields, through cookies, through Java scripts, through database management, through ASP management, etc). It goes on and on and on. You have to really watch this, because **you must get quality software**. You don't want to set up your whole Affiliate Program and then find out 3 months later that the software is lacking and your affiliates are complaining that the software isn't reliable... not to mention the multitude of other problems, which may arise with poor software.

So what software is available?

What if I told you that it ranges from **\$300 to \$12,000!**

**Pretty crazy, isn't it?**



## NOTES:

There is software which goes by such names as Site Sponsor, NetTracker 2000, E Comm Works, Affiliate Shop, Commission Junction, ClickTrade, BeFree, etc. The list just goes on and on. As I just mentioned, some of this software is available from as low as \$300.00 to as much as \$12,000.00.

What can throw you off is the pricing structure for the different pieces of software. Some companies will give you the software and let you figure out how to install it and incorporate it in your system. Others will install it for you, some run the software from their servers and charge you a set up fee (in upwards of thousands of dollars!), and some will charge you "per affiliate" you sign up (which can really get expensive, especially if you get a lot of affiliates). The list just goes on and on. It seems like everyone has his/her own price structure and it gets quite confusing as some can have semi-hidden charges and it becomes hard to accurately compare the different pieces of software.

I am not a great believer in giving a portion of my profits to the affiliate software owner, or to have them charging me a fee per affiliate. As with any of these methods, I can end up paying a large sum of money every month to them as I get bigger and bigger. My preferred choice is to pay for the software up-front, to know exactly what is involved and to know that there will be no charges in the future.

As far as buying affiliate software, I personally haven't found any software that I would use for MY clientele that is under \$7000. Generally the software over \$7000 has some great features. It is very intricate and complicated software designed to make it easy for the buyer and the affiliate to use. **But it is very expensive!**

Generally speaking, a lot of the cheaper software is less sophisticated, might require a lot of custom modifications, doesn't track all the sales, doesn't make it easy for affiliates to sign-up, or is not sufficiently automated.

All these things are problems not only for you **but for**

**your affiliates as well.** Affiliates don't want to join you if you don't offer stats in real-time. They won't join you if they don't feel confident that they are going to get credit for every single sale they generate. They also won't join you if you don't have software that makes it easy to join and which will help become successful affiliates. And they won't join you if you don't have a successful website, which converts visitors into sales.

It's important to have good software in order to make affiliates feel comfortable that you have a legitimate program, that your tracking methods are reliable, that they can trust you, and that you have a great opportunity for them.

In addition to the cost of the Affiliate Program software, there are additional out of pocket costs involved in setting up the actual Affiliate Program. This includes the cost of hosting fees (usually included in your website hosting fee unless you are a very large site), costs for any kind of modifications, maintenance, or updates, or anything special that you want to do with the software.

The only extra cost involved would be **your time** to write the checks every month (which, if you have the right software, can be done automatically!), answer any email which comes in, and your extra customer service costs. But if you are making the extra sales, these costs are inconsequential as you have **much** more profit coming in.

Before I go on, I will mention that you do have one other option... that is buying the services of a company which will administer your Affiliate Program for you. Some of them have huge set up fees and smaller "per sale" fees... while others waive the set up fee but charge as much as 30% for each sale you make.

ClickTrade, SafeAudit and LinkShare are all examples of Affiliate Program service companies. Services like these charge a percentage of sales per affiliate you sign up or a multitude of other ways... some even have set up fees that are \$2000+. If your affiliate program gets big (which it had better!) and you are paying a

percentage of your sales or for each new affiliate to have them manage your software... the costs can get pretty hefty! As high as a couple of thousand dollars a month if you get really big... which we all hope you do. **In my opinion, it is much more advantageous to actually buy your own software** (and generally much less expensive).

Now, if you are looking at software that is \$10,000+, then you may want to reconsider looking at the companies above... but don't worry... I will show you how to get software that will cost you less than \$900 and have the same features and value as the \$7000+ software.

It is much more cost effective to have your own Affiliate Program software, control all your own systems, and be able to make special modifications to it if you want to add specific features or customize it for your business.

Even though the service companies charge you hefty fees of up to 30% of each sale, they can't do any of the customization! If you have your own software you can customize it and make it exactly how you need it for your Program as well as for your system!

Here are some of the features that you should look for:

**The Affiliate Sign-up Process Should be Fully Automated.**

It should make it super clean and super easy for affiliates to join up. When your prospective affiliates fill out the form, they should quickly be assigned an affiliate code. They should automatically be sent an email giving the details on banners or text links, how to install them and recommendations for using them. You should be able to automatically send them a FAQ sheet... everything they need so they can get started right away... all automatically so it happens without you having to lift a finger.

If your affiliates want to make changes... their passwords... their email address... the address their

checks are sent to, their phone numbers... they should be able to do that at any point in time themselves. Having this process fully automated makes it easy for them... and for you (so you are not changing their information and eating up your valuable time when you could be out marketing your company and making money)!

For example, if you go to my Internet Marketing Center Affiliate Program,

**[http://www.marketingtips.com/assoc/assoc\\_program.html](http://www.marketingtips.com/assoc/assoc_program.html)** you can see how my program works. It is super automated, so when someone signs up, instantaneously they are assigned an affiliate code, we email them and give them the details on all the banners they want to use, how to use them and where to place them. We give them recommendations and a FAQ sheet. We have a FAQ that answers all the questions they may have; we go into detail on how the commissions work, how the tracking works, so they understand it all. The easier you make it for them, the more they understand, and the more they will get involved in your affiliate program to make the both of you money.

### **Automated Contact System**

Make sure that you can automatically email all your affiliates if you want (i.e. a special webpage that allows you to queue a mailing, press a button, and walk away). All it should take is the click of a button to email all of your affiliates and give them an update on what is happening, and how they can improve their affiliate referral fees.

### **Flexible Administrative Functions**

Your administrative functions should work for you... not against you! Can you call up a web page and check all your affiliates? Can you go into the software and make adjustments? For instance, if refunds come in, we will simply make adjustments for that refund and take the referral fee off the appropriate affiliates' commission checks (this is VERY important!). Does the program give you monthly commission reports? Can you make instant changes to all your affiliate sites?

For example, if you change a price, or want to put up a different offer, or change headlines. The software must have the ability to do all of this for every affiliate at the push of a few buttons.

### **Automatic Tracking**

Top-notch software will track through all the different types of browsers, setups, and visitor types. It will track orders whether it's through an 800 number order, a fax order, a mail order, or an online order.

Your software should be able to track visitors whether they order today, tomorrow or a year from now... and no matter what or how many products or services they order. The affiliate who originally sent the visitor to the site should get credit for all sales, no matter when and how those sales take place.

### **Variable Pay-outs**

It's very important that you have software that allows you to choose to pay a fixed amount (per click through), a fixed amount per sale, or a percentage of the sale. YOU need to be in charge of determining your pay out... your software shouldn't limit or decide this for you!

### **Real Time Statistics**

You **definitely** want real time statistics. Your affiliates should be able to go and check all the stats anytime they want to. They should be able to see how many visitors they are sending over, and how many sales they are making. This allows them to test various sales techniques at their site to see what works well for them! It also motivates them by seeing what they are making currently and encourages them to do better.

### **Counting Visitors and Sales**

Make sure you have software, which will count the number of visitors **and** the number of sales for each

affiliate separately (most only count sales, not visitors!). That way you can see which affiliates are sending you quality visitors, and which are not. It will also let the affiliate know if his/her customers are converting into sales and if they are not, he/she has a chance to improve that by reading the stats. You will be surprised at how useful this actually is and how many affiliate software programs do not count the visitors, only the sales per affiliate. Wouldn't it be interesting to find an affiliate who sends you 500 visitors and sells 50 products, compared to an affiliate who sends you 5000 visitors and only sells 5 products? This information is INVALUABLE and helps you identify successful affiliates and not-so-successful affiliates (so you can help them improve to make you both more money).

### **Minimum Payout Settings**

You should be able to preset your pay out levels. For example if you are selling a product that pays out \$10.00 per sale, you might want to set your minimum pay out level at \$30.00 (3 sales) in order to cut down on checking and administrative costs.

### **Automated Check Paying**

This is very important and gets necessary as you become more successful! Your software program should have some kind of system in place, which writes the checks for you to your affiliates. This may not matter the first month, but as you get bigger and start having to write 100, 200 or 500 checks a month, it can get very tedious. It could take days to just write checks if you had to do it manually (there is also a lot of room for error by doing it this way).

For example, in the affiliate software we use for the Internet Marketing Center, the software automatically downloads all of the information like the payee name and amount owed in *QuickBooks* format. We simply upload that file into *QuickBooks* Accounting software and *QuickBooks* automatically prints the checks for us! There are no hassles, as it is done in a few minutes and makes the whole process very easy because it is

fully automated. If we didn't have this, we would be looking at days of work just to write the checks every month.

We only spend less than a few hours a month doing month end, whereas before we were fully automated, we were spending 3-4 solid days doing it!

There are dozens of small things that will take a lot of time, which you probably never thought of... like actually having to write out and sign all those checks... and then having to print out all the stats for every affiliate... then print out all the labels for every affiliate, etc. Why do it by hand when you can have it done automatically for you?

**Here is the good news!**

We have developed our MarketingTips.com Affiliate Program software from scratch and been using variations of it for the last 3 years (we call it AssocTRAC). We have developed it from the point of view of a marketer, not from a programmers point of view... **there is a big difference!**

We have learned a lot over the years we have invested in this. The problems we have run into, dealing with thousands of affiliates have introduced us personally to all the ups and downs, ins and outs of running an Affiliate Program! We have developed software, which meets all of your affiliate program needs, whatever you can imagine, from a marketer's standpoint.

**In my opinion it is probably the ultimate affiliate software available available!** AND, we are adding features to it all the time, little modules that will have extra toys and features that will make things even more automated! It blows me away every day we do this, it is simply incredible and saves a ton of time (**and makes a lot of money!**). Go to **<http://www.marketingtips.com/assoctrac.html>** for details on how it works and how you can use it to start your own affiliate program for your product or service.

## **Lesson # 24**

# **Our Secret Weapon for Tracking All Your Ads and Orders**

There is a real advantage to Affiliate Programs that no one else has tapped into until now! In this section, I will give you all of the details on how you can start using it yourself.

**An Affiliate Program is really the ultimate ad-tracking software!**

What I mean by this is that when you place your banner ads, text links, buttons, or any type of advertising you pay for, you can assign an affiliate number to that advertising and track its results to see if it is making or losing you money.

You can then track exactly how many visitors come in and how many sales were generated by each individual ad. **You can tell exactly what ads are making you money and which ads are doing the opposite.** It is the ultimate ad-tracking software!

In fact, depending on how you use it... it is like ad-tracking software with a built-in bonus Affiliate Program! **We have been using this technique for years now and it has made us a fortune!**

Just think, within days of you placing an ad, you will know if it will make you a profit - right to the last penny. If the ad is not making you enough money, you can abandon it immediately and not waste another second wondering if it was actually making you money.

You've probably seen many of our ads or banners, which are placed by our affiliates. We also purchase banner space and advertising in order to track them and see how each banner or link is doing. We use our affiliate software to test banners, buttons, text links, ezine ads, opt-in email ads, and so on... to make sure



they are actually making a profit. If they aren't making a profit, we will dump the ad... if they are making a profit we will keep buying that banner or button space. We might even continue to purchase that sponsorship space on a newsletter or email discussion.

Isn't that an incredible powerful tool? **Knowing EXACTLY which ads are making you a profit and EXACTLY which ones are not!**

We test a variety of promotional methods, and each time we assign an affiliate number to ourselves. Then using the same methods we use to track an affiliate (in essence, the paid ad or paid banner becomes an affiliate), we can track exactly how many visitors came in, and how many sales were generated from that ad, to see if the ad made money.

Your Affiliate Program software is the ultimate tracking software! No one else is doing this... and I have no idea why? I told one of my marketing friends at a seminar about it last September ("Hi Jonathan", if you are reading ☺) and he said, 'It's the greatest idea! It's so simple, I can't believe I didn't think of it and that other people aren't using this idea! The ad tracking capability of this is well worth the price of the software alone... it is like getting the ultimate ad tracker with a built in affiliate program.'

You can place hundreds of ads anywhere on the net, and at the end of the month, you will know exactly which ads made you money, and which didn't. And of course, you keep the ones that made money, and dump the ones, which lost you money. It is the ultimate way to test... and you get your results instantaneously because the software tracks the results in real time! There is no staff to figure it out at the end of the month and no stacks of paper work to weed through. You simply check the stats by going to a webpage on your website and you know exactly how many visitors were converted into sales.

You can check three things with this method:

1. Is my banner or ad slogan effective?

2. Does the ad space make a profit?
3. See if you got all your ad impressions (or if the advertiser ripped you off!).

Ok, let's go over #1 first. If the advertiser tells you how many impressions the banner had, you can see how many people clicked through your banner, and how many have been converted into sales. This allows you to know how effective or ineffective that banner is. Find the banner, which pulls the best for you.

#2... You can test new banners and ads to see if they pull better than old ones. For example, you may find that the banner or ad which usually pulls a 5% click-through does much better than a new ad you placed which only pulls a 3% click-through (because your affiliate program tracks all of this). You may also find that you are only converting one visitor out of every 300 visitors into a sale, and you normally convert one out of every 100 (because the affiliate program software tracks all of this). This system allows you to determine which ad space pulls better or worse than the other. This information is **invaluable!**

#3... If the person you pay for advertising track clickthroughs (especially if you are paying per click-through) says you got 1000 clickthroughs, but your software shows that you only got 700 clickthroughs, you have an argument with them that their counts are wrong. This is very powerful and I have personal experience in a situation like this... and they gave me the remaining clickthroughs free as I could prove that I didn't get all my clickthroughs! A very powerful tool... **this feature alone has already given me \$6000 in free advertising** because of companies that I placed advertising with didn't give me the full exposure I paid for (and I could prove it with my affiliate software tracking the results!).

It the perfect way to test new banners, new buttons, new text links and new ads.

We use this all the time... it allows us to implement an idea and test it on a moment's notice. Since we spend over \$25,000 a month (yes, I know that is a lot of

money and most of you don't have that to spend every month... but remember we started out small a few years back... only spending less than \$100 a month. But with this tracking method, we just place new ads every month and the ones that made money we stayed with, and the ones that lost money we dumped. After a few years, **we are left with over \$25,000 a month in ads that always make us a profit.**

Are you starting to see the power of this?

We use this software **to track almost every ad we place.** On banner ads, button ads, text-link ads, sponsorship of newsletters and Ezines, and so on. It's critically important that we track everything to see which ads are successful and which ones aren't.

We'd never be able to track this amount of ads without using our Affiliate Program software as our ad-tracking software! There would just be too much paperwork to do (it would be a full-time job just to track and record this information). But with an affiliate program, you can assign as many numbers as you want to your ads and it takes care of all the tracking for you. Every promotion, joint venture, special deal, or ad you place can have a different number enabling you to get some very detailed statistics and information. You will see which ones are profitable and which ones aren't.

I know I have said this over and over in this section, but it is that important! Do not underestimate the power of this... **the power to see which ads are working... which ads are not...** and where you are making your money online.

Ok, as you can tell, I am getting a little excited here so I'd better cool down for a moment (I just love talking about making money and automating things!).

Let's go even a little further. Say you are doing a promotion in a newsgroup... you assign yourself an affiliate number and put that affiliate URL in the signature portion... you can check exactly how many visitors and sales you received from that one promotion, ... not just the one time, but over and over

and over again. You can then assign a different affiliate number to future promotions, and **track every one separately.**

Use it when you do a free classified ad promotion. In other words, you assign yourself an affiliate number, and it will tell you exactly how many visitors and sales you got.

This way you know... exactly how many visitors you get from classified ads vs. how many visitors you got from the banner ads you placed. How many visitors you got from an Ezine sponsorship ad you placed vs. how many visitors you got from trading links with somebody.

**It will also help you pinpoint problems.** For example, if your stats say that 500 visitors came to the site, no one bought... either you have a very misleading ad attracting "unqualified" visitors, or you may have a webpage or sales material which is not doing a good job at converting visitors into sales. **All of this is invaluable information!**

Let's even go one step further to show you the uses for this.

You don't have to rely on what people want you to believe... when **you can get the cold, hard facts!** For example if someone approaches you to trade links... they could claim that, "I have 20,000 visitors coming to my site a month and you are probably going to get a 5% click through." in reality they may only have 2,000 visitors coming through their site! By assigning an affiliate number to the link you can find out exactly how many visitors are actually clicking through the reciprocal link and coming to your site. And if you find that they are not sending you enough visitors, you can cancel your reciprocal link agreement. Do you see the advantages of this? **The benefits are huge.**

You can track it all. The advantages are just incredible! **You simply NEED to start tracking your advertising in this manner, starting today!**

*NOTES:*

So that is the "secret weapon" our Affiliate Program software gives us. Just the ad tracking capabilities, in my opinion, are worth the Affiliate Program software purchase alone. It really gives you power with your advertising dollar. This is a really, really good way of using Affiliate Programs in a unique and creative manner.

Let me reword that. Even if you don't use the software for your own Affiliate Program, but use it for ad-tracking... it is worth every penny! It will allow you to know for sure where you are making money and where you are losing money.

**It will help you streamline your business, making it a lean mean money machine...by taking out the ads that don't work and keeping ads that do work, and testing new ones over and over again.**

**To summarize... a very, VERY, very powerful way to make money online!**

## Lesson # 25

### Common Questions

We get questions every day at the Internet Marketing Center ... these are the ones we hear most often.

#### **“My promotions and marketing are not working! Why?”**

The answer to this question has a very powerful concept that you must understand!

I hear from people every day saying "I tried bulk email and it didn't work" or "I tried ezine classified ads and it didn't work for me"... and so on. You know what... it wasn't the bulk email or the ezine classified ads that didn't work... or whatever... it was your sales copy that did not work!

It is the "marketing" which sells the product, **NOT** the "vehicle" you decided to advertise your product/service with.

If you were using bulk email in this case, the problem wasn't the software, the number of people to whom you sent it, or that bulk email doesn't work for anyone... **it was your sales process!**

It could have been the headline, the design of your website, your offer, or the order process, etc... but chances are **it was your headline or your salescopy.**

You see, if you had copy that worked, you can use those exact same "pulling" words (i.e. slogans and headlines) in your banner advertising, newsgroup advertising, classified advertising, keywords for your search engine ranking, and on and on.

It all comes down to writing compelling copy.

Let me expand a little on that.

## *NOTES:*

You can be marketing with bulk email, or banner ads, or posting to newsgroups, or advertising in ezines... and so on - If you have a great headline or slogan to get visitors to the site... and know what marketing methods to use to get that headline and slogan in front of more people (therefore getting more traffic to your site), half your battle is over.

This is where most people fail - and it shows in their traffic. They may have a killer website, but no traffic because:

1. they do not have the "pull" (sales copy - headlines - slogans) to get people to the site

OR

2. they don't know what marketing techniques to use to get great headlines (or slogans) they may have out on the net in front of their target audience.

You see, once you have a "winning" sales process, you can duplicate those results in almost any marketing method. Think it through... it makes sense, right?

So what is the moral of this story?

If you did something and if it failed... there could be a few reasons, but it was probably due to the fact that your copy did not work!

Why do you think that people pay me \$640 per hour and book weeks in advance... because I can write copy that people understand and make them want to take action. It is believable and at the same time, motivating.

You bought the course right?... that is my copywriting skills at work. This is not because I am superman (although it would be nice to have that big S on my chest and have a few superpowers :-)) it is because I speak from the heart... I say what I feel and if I believe in something and I get excited about something, it comes out in my writing. If you lie or stretch the truth in your copy, it shows. If you can

get excited about something... just be yourself and write from the heart as if you were talking to someone about it right in front of you - **your enthusiasm will come through in your copy**. This alone is a major key to writing effective copy.

For any more tips on copywriting... re-review the lesson in the course on writing "killer copy"... it has some great pointers.

### **"Can you build my website?" or "Who do you recommend for Website Design?"**

We are getting lots of questions from people asking if we can do their website design. We are so busy we cannot take on any extra projects at this time. However, we have some of our website design work done by two companies we have been doing business with for a long time now. They are excellent, they are reasonably priced, and get the work done very fast. We have set up a webpage for them so if you are interested in having a website designed, you can fill out a form giving them a little detail about what you want (the questions are easy to answer) so they can understand your needs and get back to you with a quote very quickly.

The form is at:

**<http://www.marketingtips.com/websitedesign.html>**

### **"How can I take credit cards at my websites?"**

People asking about how to get their own credit card accounts is another popular questions. I took information from the course and added some more detail to it in the November 98 newsletter. This may seem like a long time ago, but getting credit card merchant accounts (whether you are in the US or overseas as not changed any). It talks about how to get them, what they cost (and all the hidden costs), how to get US merchant accounts if you live in a foreign country, etc. It is at:



<http://www.marketingtips.com/newsletter/issue13/>

If you need merchant accounts, we recommend you get them from the people who we deal with and have been for years now. They are super reliable, get 98% of all people approved for merchant accounts, and they specialize in internet e-commerce set ups (and include everything you need to get set up on the web to take credit cards). There is a form you can fill out and want to go directly to the people we recommend at:

<http://www.marketingtips.com/merchantaccount.html>

**"I have merchant credit card accounts, but how can I get a system that charges the order at the site while the customer waits, deposits the money in my bank account automatically, and sends emails to myself and my customer to confirm the order - just like yours does?" -**

This again, is a very popular question. We have a few people we recommend for this. I talked about it in an article in the #13 issue of Marketing Tips newsletter, so please check it out. It will show you how to get real-time credit card transactions that are fully automated to charge the card on the spot, email the customer a confirmation, email you a copy of the order, and a few other things.

It is at:

<http://www.marketingtips.com/newsletter/issue13/>

**"Who do you recommend hosts my website?"**

There are many things to consider for website hosting. One major consideration is a company that has separate backbone connections in the East and West Coast (in case an "upstream" goes down, your site will still be up). There are many other considerations to take into account and I will be writing an article on that soon. Reliable website hosting is a critical issue if you want to have a successful business online (it has to be fast and be

*NOTES:*

reliable with great customer service). As a free service from us, we have set up a form that will ask what hosting services you need and depending on what you are looking for, we will forward your email to a company we recommend for the services you need.

That form is at:

**<http://www.marketingtips.com/isp.html>**

## Final Notes

In the world of business, there is no magic formula that will guarantee success every time you promote an idea. You've probably heard the saying, "opportunity knocks but once". Don't believe this nonsense. Opportunities are around every corner! All you need to do is visualize the potential and tap into it.

Many people will be skeptical when you enter the business world. Don't advertise your plan for success... just do it! It is okay to express your ideas and get feedback, but if you express how wealthy or successful this may make you, **others will be cynical**.

Most people do not believe that wealth is a lifestyle choice within their control. Indeed, many believe the only way to get rich is to win the lottery or rob a bank. They will never be as enthusiastic about your future plans as you are.

Other people's skepticism may be enough to kill your desire to pursue what may have been a **fantastic opportunity**. Ted Turner was asked what he attributed most to his success. His reply was "Early to bed, early to rise, work like hell and advertise". This course attempts to promote that philosophy, combining hard work and technology for success. It is so easy to work smarter and more efficiently by automating your business instead of just working hard. Take advantage of this, be efficient, and **don't get too caught up in all the technology**. Use the KISS method (Keep It Simple Stupid).

For those who have serious business experience behind them, I urge you not to let the simplicity of this presentation frighten you away. The techniques I present here are the same methods **that earn me hundreds of thousands of dollars per year as a one-man operation working a few hours a day from my home (please note that as my online businesses have expanded to over 4.2 million dollars in sales every year, I have had to hire 6 new employees to take over some of the daily tasks)**.

You don't need a lot of money to get started; you need commitment, desire, and will. You don't need any advertising experience. You need the willingness to learn, and to apply the methods and techniques I have shared with you.

I wish you all the best, and please keep me apprised of your successes by email, as I love to keep track of how people are doing.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Corey Rudl', written in a cursive style.

Corey Rudl  
rudl@marketingtips.com

## **Appendix**

The following section, which you may copy, contains three forms; two of which will help you track your ads in chart format (to see which ones are profitable), and one form for taking voice mail messages regarding leads or sales:

<b>Circle Days Ad Ran Month _____+</b>	<b># of Leads</b>	<b>Online/Phone Orders</b>	<b>Income</b>
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			
8			
9			
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31			

# Voice Mailbox Messages

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Time \_\_\_\_\_ Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Message/email address \_\_\_\_\_

Reference \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Time \_\_\_\_\_ Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Message/email address \_\_\_\_\_

Reference \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Time \_\_\_\_\_ Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Message/email address \_\_\_\_\_

Reference \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Time \_\_\_\_\_ Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Message/email address \_\_\_\_\_

Reference \_\_\_\_\_

