



Internet Marketing Introduction

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Introduction

Welcome to the world of Internet Marketing!

This guide is designed especially for those who are new to the world of internet marketing...or IM as some may call it. With this guide, you will be introduced to the basic policies of this industry and also to the much higher-end and more complex systems of internet marketing.

However, before reading this guide, open your mind to the enormous possibilities of the marketing world. At some point, you may find some of the things that will be discussed too complicated for you in the beginning. However, these topics and pieces of knowledge will all fall into place and will further help you understand this systematic way of marketing. In the long run, this will guarantee your overall success in this journey.

Just try to think of this mini-guide as a bunch of puzzle pieces which will eventually connect to give you a complete picture in the end. Sounds exciting? Great! Let's begin.

What Is Internet Marketing?

Internet marketing is now called so many other names – e-marketing, web marketing, i-marketing, digital marketing, online marketing and the like. However, in plain and simple language, it can be defined as the marketing of one's products or services that a business or person offers through the use of the internet.

This type of marketing encompasses a very broad area of the subject as it also includes many types of marketing strategies like e-mail and wireless media marketing. Under this general scope of internet marketing also falls the aspects of ECRM or electronic customer relationship management and digital customer data.

Why is internet marketing a big advantage to many businesses?

The world wide web has given us many unique and essential benefits. This technology enabled the entire world to be connected with each other in a matter of seconds. In terms of online businesses, the internet has provided a global portal in which goods and services can be sold and bought by almost anyone and in any part of the world.

With internet marketing, all types of businesses have enjoyed the lower costs of information dissemination and advertisements. The internet's interactive nature has benefited business marketing through instant responses and its ability to elicit them in the fastest way possible. Fur-

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thermore, internet marketing has tied together all the aspects of creativity, technicality, advertisement, sales and product development.

With its inexpensive cost, internet marketing has also enabled businesses to save on their means of reaching their target market or audience. Through a small fraction of the cost of traditional advertisements, businesses can further allow their customers to conduct research and eventually purchase their products in the most convenient way. This also makes them more appealing to their clients because they can provide results in a very short span of time.

Internet marketing has also allowed these businesses to measure their statistics in a much easier and inexpensive way. Since almost all the aspects of this marketing type can be measured, tested and traced through the use of ad servers, advertisers can easily use and observe their data as to which ads reap the most customer views or purchases. This way, online businesses will be able to determine which of their advertising messages are more appealing to their target customers. The results of all their campaigns can be tracked right away since this marketing initiative simply requires a customer to click the ads, visit a certain website or perform a desired action like filling out a form or purchasing a product or service.

Now as a beginner in the world of internet marketing, you will be responsible for the task of bringing in potential clients by providing them the services or the company that suits their needs or preferences in various internet venues. You will help these customers find the product that they are looking for. The targets are the people who have computers with internet access. Entrepreneurs like you can visit your online store anytime. Consumers can also do the same whenever they want. The future of the world wide web is so bright with its projected online consumer traffic reaching almost 60% and over 80% of these customers shopping online. So if you are determined to make it successful for you, you may just find yourself enjoying the benefits of having an online business that will give you more profit in the long run.

With that said, internet marketing brings you many advantages of incurring minimal costs in starting up your business including cheaper advertising options, a global marketplace, becoming your own boss, promoting stuff that you are passionate about and profiting from these passions along the way. Sounds amazing doesn't it?

Though there are many benefits from internet marketing, it does come with its own share of risks and investments. You must understand that this process will not let you rake in a lot of cash quickly. Your time, diligence, persistence and passion for learning more are very important in your success in internet marketing.

Those who think that this is a get rich quick scheme are bound to be disappointed. Though many businesses have become extremely successful, you will find that those who have failed in this venture have simply wished to become overnight millionaires. The realities of a physical busi-

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ness are still applicable to your online store, including tax payments, customer services and even hiring employees.

Furthermore, it is important that you know that starting an online business is not free. There are costs that may be less than what will be used in building a physical business, but you will still have to shell out for web design, software, hosting, domains and advertising costs. Another reality of having an online business is site downtime. Yes, your site may go down due to technical difficulties or glitches, and this will probably bring a lot of frustration not just on your part but also on the customers' end. Every single minute or second that your site is unavailable to visitors and potential customers, you will be losing money. You need to be prepared for this.

Furthermore, you cannot just rely on a certain system and have it run on autopilot to generate profit. Technology changes and the industry evolves rapidly, making any "autopilot system" that is supposed to generate cash a complete lie. A marketing tactic that worked for someone in the past may not work for you at all in the future. Therefore, it is very important to keep yourself updated with new technologies and marketing trends.

Competition will always be around so if you do not keep yourself informed and you do not work hard, you will not stand out in the crowd. You have to make an impact! Work hard because if not, you can be sure that one of your competitors is out there doing so. Besides, if you want your business to be a long-term investment, your first profits should go back to your site's services and advertising efforts. Maximize your profits and do not just cash out your first earnings. It will also be helpful to learn about taxation and other related laws that affect this industry. This way, you know what your tax and legal advantages are once you set up your business. This will also help in protecting your assets, thus, it should never be overlooked.

With all these realities in mind, you will need to be very determined to stand out in this industry. Internet marketing is not for the person who likes simple routines. You should be flexible in learning new strategies and trends in order to keep up with your competition.

Now that you know what internet marketing is and all the good and bad that comes with it, you will now learn the marketing methods that online businesses have been using in order to promote their services and products to the global marketplace.

The following methods that will be discussed further in the next few passages are:

- Affiliate marketing
- Article marketing
- E-mail marketing
- Blog marketing

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- Pay per click ads or PPC
- Search engine optimization or SEO
- Pop-up ads
- Banner ads
- Social media marketing
- Mobile marketing

These internet marketing methods are not equal at all. Each of them have strategies to reach a target market and will produce varying results based on your goal, marketing pitch and relationship with your customer. Whether you are going to market your own website or choose to get involved in affiliate marketing, you are most likely going to use a couple of these methods at various times. Remember, what you earn in this industry is always proportionate to all the effort and time you have invested in developing your website.

Now let's proceed to the juicy part of this subject. In the next few pages, you will learn each of the internet marketing methods mentioned above. You will get to know what they are, what they do, how they work and why they are effective.

Affiliate Marketing

Affiliate marketing is an online practice wherein a business rewards an affiliate for the visitors or customers brought in by his marketing efforts. The rewards are either cash or gifts and are given for either an offer completion or site referral. In this process, there are four players – the merchant, network, publisher and customer. Recently, this market has grown complex with the secondary players like affiliate management agencies, third party vendors (specialized) and super-affiliates. It works by simply using the affiliate's website to drive traffic to the merchant's own site or to allow visitors to be forwarded to the merchant's main web page.

Basically, this is also what we can call revenue sharing between the online merchants and online affiliates. The compensation given to the affiliates depend on how many user clicks, sales or registrations were made on the merchant's website via their own. Affiliate marketing enables the automation of the advertising processes and the payment for desired actions. Merchants have preferred this internet marketing strategy because it is a “pay per performance” model, where they do not incur any expenses for marketing their products unless the affiliate produces the results they need.

Affiliate marketing can also be translated as a type of business relationship where you, as an affiliate, promote a merchant's services which is different from yours. This means that you do not

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need to have your own product in order to venture into affiliate marketing. You only need to promote your business provider's services and products.

This is how it works – you need to have a web page that contains a link that directs your users or visitors to the main page or online store of the merchant. When one of your site visitors clicks on that link and purchases something from the merchant's website, you will get a sort of commission or a referral fee. This way you are the one driving traffic to your merchant's website through your own web page. The merchant will pay you whenever a visitor from your site buys something or signs up for something on their site. A special affiliate link is assigned to your web page, making it easy for the merchant to track customers coming from your site. One merchant is allowed different affiliate links and all of them will direct the users to its website.

Another strategy that works in affiliate marketing is the use of web page codes or web cookies. This is actually a very interesting way to still profit even if your visitor clicks on the affiliate link and does not purchase from the merchant's site at once. How does this work? The moment a user clicks on the link, a cookie is stored in his computer, indicating that he or she visited the merchant's site and recording your page as the one that referred him to that website. If, let's say a couple of weeks later, the user finally decides to buy something from the merchant's online store and types the web address of the merchant directly into his browser, the cookies stored in his computer will still recognize the purchase as a referral from your affiliate link, allowing you to receive a compensation from the merchant. Note that cookies have expiration, so you must read the affiliate program's terms carefully to check the life span of these cookies.

The success of affiliate marketing has also paved way for the rise of many online companies such as Amazon.com, which now has thousands of affiliates.

Article Marketing

Article marketing is an online advertising strategy used by many businesses to market their websites, products or services by writing short articles that are related to their industry. It is the practice of posting these keyword-focused writings on article syndication sites that have a good readership following. These articles will then be distributed and published in the marketplace. Many opine that article marketing is an essential element in any internet marketing strategy. These articles have the intention of providing information and entertainment to online users. Typically these articles have a resource box or bio box that indicates the references and contact information of the writer's business. The resource box may also contain a link back to the website that the author is promoting in order to attract the readers to visit that website.

Articles that are well-researched and written are usually released and distributed for free in order for the business to gain more credibility within the market. Through these articles, a website or online business will be able to attract more new clients. Internet marketers usually submit the articles to several article directories in order to maximize the results of their online campaign. In

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order to avoid the filtering process of the internet for duplicate content, internet marketers attempt what we call article spinning or article rewriting and rewording to give certain variations to the original article. Through this, the article can acquire site visitors coming from several websites for article directories. Getting your article to be featured in niche blogs or focused content websites that are managed by others is a good and popular strategy in terms of article marketing. If you are a guest blogger on these websites, you will be able to introduce your business to an interested audience that may have been otherwise unreachable.

The common practice in internet publishing is to have your articles use relevant keywords and catchy titles with around 250 to 500 words in the body. If you incorporate the keywords or key-word phrases in your articles, it is possible to get more search engine traffic.

Which, among the hundreds of article directories, should you submit your articles to? This is actually one of the most tedious tasks in this marketing method. Today, businesses and experts usually outsource their article marketing methods including the submission process. The most popular article directories that are recommended include EzineArticles, IdeaMarketers and GoArticles.

Article marketing can also help you generate leads that you can include in your e-mail list. In writing your articles, you must give the readers an offer so irresistible that it will prompt them to visit your website and sign up for your services. Once you have their information, you can start creating a sales-winning partnership with them. Failing to do this will not give you another chance to sell to your leads.

Among the best offers you can give your readers may include quizzes, special reports on a certain topic, free consultation sessions or free book chapters. This way, your readers will be enticed to provide you with their e-mail addresses that you can use to further send marketing news and information about your website.

Overall, the most important factor in article marketing is to get people to visit your website and sign up or purchase one of your services. Writing articles that are accurate, specific and helpful will attract more potential leads or clients.

E-mail Marketing

This is one of the most cost-efficient methods of internet marketing that promotes your business. In order to execute an effective and successful e-mail campaign, you need the right information to achieve your desired results.

E-mail marketing is a direct marketing method that makes use of e-mails to communicate a commercial message to your target market. It is the process of sending messages to your previous or current customers in order to encourage them to do business with you again and in turn en-

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hance your business relationship with them. E-mail marketing is also used to acquire new clients and convince your current customers to buy something at once.

There are several advantages in using this type of internet marketing. For one, almost all internet users have e-mail accounts that they check regularly. With this form of communication, advertisers can easily reach those who have signed up to receive regular communications regarding subjects that interests them. It is cost-effective and has a short impact time.

E-mail marketing can be categorized into three types: direct e-mail, intermediary e-mail and retention e-mail.

Direct e-mail usually is an email message with commercial sales content. They are usually sent to customers who have previously used a certain product or service or to potential clients in your target audience who might enjoy and benefit from the service you are offering. Direct mail marketing may make use of a company's e-mail list or a purchased or shared e-mail list or a list that is acquired from a third party service. These third party services may already know which audience can be target through e-mail marketing or they may conduct an analysis to find out which e-mail addresses will bring the highest conversion or responses for your business.

Retention e-mail or newsletter mail on the other hand, are designed and written for promotional use. They aim to provide a long-term impact to the customer's mind, thus, their content is more than a sales message. The retention mail specifies the benefits of the products or services that a company offers in a more informative format.

Intermediary e-mail is a message sent by a company delegated by the main provider to send out advertising and marketing e-mails to a list of subscribers that is usually owned by the intermediary company.

In order to be successful in e-mail marketing, you must always use all relevant information that is necessary for your business. You may send messages to your customers if you find that they will benefit from what you are about to offer them. In sending these e-mails, you must also write an informative and straight forward headline in order to grab your customer's attention. Before sending out your e-mail, check the message and use both text and HTML formats to make sure that your message will be received and read, or you may include options to view your mail in these formats.

Blog Marketing

Blogs have become one of the useful platforms for internet marketing. Subscribers of a blog usually sign up to receive content on a regular basis and since most subscribers remain loyal when they receive relevant and useful information, a strong following and readership will be a good way to reach these potential customers and get them to either sign up or purchase a service

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from your business. Blogs have continuously reached their targets most of the time, making them a very effective way to market one's services or products.

Blog marketing, as the name suggests, is done via a web blog through a series of weekly or daily posts about a certain topic. A lot of businesses have used blogs to communicate and interact with their customers while featuring their services. Organizations have also used blogs to share and review a product's features and benefits prior to their official launch. They also pave way for companies to gather or receive feedback from the consumers in order to confirm if their services and products meet the expectations of their clients.

Since blog marketing focuses on interaction with online users, you may also start blogging in order to market your product line to get more exposure to the cyber market.

However, you will have to write and design a blog that will stand out from your competitors. This way, your blog will also gain more popularity, making more websites want to link to it. The more websites linking to your blog, the more traffic and profit you will get. You must always remember to give your audience or target subscribers a reason to always visit your blog. If your subscriber leaves any comments, be sure to send them a thank you e-mail. Hold small contests every now and then where you can give away discounts and coupons to your subscribers. You may also ask your followers to post the link of your blog to their own websites in exchange for free product samples.

Pay-per-click or PPC

PPC or Pay-per-click advertisements, also known as Cost Per Click, are used to bring in traffic to websites where advertisers provide compensation to the hosting site whenever their ad is clicked. There are two models for determining how much is to be paid per click – flat-rate and bid-based rate. In both models, advertisers consider the value of a click from a certain source where such value depends on the type of customer that the company is targeting and what can be gained from his or her visit (which is usually revenue).

If you currently have a running website or a blog and would like to earn extra profit, you can try this internet marketing method. Put in pay-per-click ads on your blog or web page and merchants will pay you a percentage every time your visitors click on them.

One of the most popular PPC is Google AdSense. It is very easy to add this to your blog and more so if you use Blogger which is also managed by Google. AdSense displays a number of advertisements that target a specific audience on your blog. In order to sign up for pay-per-click ads like Google AdSense, you will need to complete an online form as your official application.

Search Engine Optimization (SEO)

Whenever you search for a topic on Google, Yahoo or MSN, you usually get pages and pages of websites that have the keywords you typed in the search bar. Have you ever wondered why a

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particular website is listed first on the results of your search? The primary reason for this is Search Engine Optimization.

Search engine optimization allows a website to become search engine friendly, making it rank higher on search results compared to other websites that have the same keyword contents. Usually, these search engines read and archive sites regularly so that they can be found easily whenever a search is performed by a user. For example, if a user types in “parenting” in the search bar and your website is about the same topic and is optimized properly, your website will appear in the first page of the search results.

Basically, SEO makes your website easier for these search engines to understand. Its goal is to increase your website's rank in the search results that will in turn bring in more traffic to your site. Remember, the more traffic you get, the more potential for profit you will have.

On-site and off-site factors are the ones that can determine your search engine rankings. On-site factors include your page content and your title heading. Off-site factors like pages that link to your site, words used to link to your page and how long such link has existed also come into play. It is important that you focus on your site's SEO continuously because if you get good search engine rankings consistently, you will always have free traffic.

Pop-up Ads

During your internet surfing time, you probably have come across many of these pop-up ads. These are advertisement windows that appear once you visit a website. Their aim is to generate traffic or simply capture your e-mail address.

Many people have found this internet marketing method quite annoying since it disrupts them from getting information from the website they are viewing. However, these ads, intrusive as they have been tagged, also have certain advantages. For one, they are much more effective than banner ads. They pull up a 15% click through rate while the banners only yield a mere 3%. Pop-up ads also are effective and give a click through percentage of 6.5. Since they are more effective than banner ads, they also cost you a lot more. However, the return on investment with the use of these ads is much higher. Furthermore, when this ad is the only window on the page, there will be no other images that will conflict with the brand that you are selling.

In the recent years though, these advertising methods have become less popular due to the development of pop-up blockers.

Banner Ads

A banner ad is basically a graphic, text or an image displayed on websites that aim to promote a company's product or service. They are actually small HTML codes, but their importance in internet marketing and business is significant. Banner ads vary in sizes and orientation but will often come in rectangular shape and are 486 x 60 pixels high (full banner). There is actually no univer-

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sal rule when it comes to banner ad file sizes, but the size will still depend on the website where it will be displayed. These sites impose certain limits to banner sizes since it adds up to the total size of the web page they are displayed on, thereby resulting to more waiting times while the page loads on a browser.

Due to the banner ads' graphic elements, you may find these ads somehow similar to those you see in printed media such as magazines and newspapers. However, these banner ads have the ability to direct the user to the advertiser's main web page. If you are interested in displaying or posting a banner on a certain website, you can arrange with the publisher to have your banner posted or pay a banner network to post the ad on a number of websites. You may also arrange with the publisher to simply display their ads on your site in exchange for them displaying your banner ads.

Social Media Marketing

Social media marketing is basically the process of marketing your business through social media portals such as Facebook, YouTube and Twitter. This allows for businesses to have a more personal and dynamic interaction and connection with their clients and potential customers.

Strategies in social media marketing can be as simple as maintaining a blog, a Facebook or Twitter account or attaching "tweet this" icons to the end of your articles or ads. It can also be as complex as having a full campaign that includes blogging, social networking, tweeting and spreading viral videos.

As marketing is the process of informing consumers what your business is, who you are and what your products are, social media further helps in introducing your business to a global network of possible customers. The use of social media to prove a business' identity and to create business relationships with people who do not have the chance be aware of your products and services is a highly recommended option in internet marketing. Moreover, it is an avenue that can be accessed by anyone who has an internet connection and is an inexpensive way to implement your marketing strategies and business campaigns.

Mobile Marketing

Mobile marketing has been a concept that has attained various definitions. It is primarily described to be the marketing strategy that makes use of mobile media to communicate with a target market. Recently a more updated definition was given by the Mobile Marketing Association, saying that mobile marketing is actually a combination of practices that gives organizations the ability to engage, communicate and interact with their audience through a mobile device or network.

The most popular mobile device used for this is a cell-phone. To use this medium, you will need to set up a short code and have your customers register to receive your SMS or text messages.

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Mobile optimization will also make sure that your website is displayed correctly on a mobile phone browser. Search engine optimization has undergone many changes that made internet marketers become more interested in the mobile version of their optimized websites compared to the traditional website optimization. Most mobile phones today have internet access or wireless capabilities. These devices have provided more flexibility on both the business' and consumer's ends in terms of receiving and sending data related to the products or services which a company offers.

The most typical types of mobile marketing include the use of MMS or Multimedia Messaging Service, Bluetooth technology, Infrared and Mobile Internet. Marketing through a mobile device is now a trend in many developed countries where almost every one has a mobile phone. This is also a more cost-effective method of promoting your

business and is much easier for most age groups to understand. More time is now spent online with the use of these devices, making your business available to consumers who are always on the go and would still want to receive updates from your end.

In MMS mobile marketing, a slideshow of text and images that may include a video or audio is a perfect way to capture a potential customer's attention effectively. The ad is delivered via MMS. The use of Bluetooth technology in marketing makes use of radio based frequencies to transfer data on higher speeds. Infrared, on the other hand, is a bit limited, as its frequency range only reaches as far as 1 meter.

Mobile marketing is a new way to ensure customer awareness and boost your sales. With all the new smart phones, tablets and modern mobile devices, mobile marketing is definitely destined to progress in the years to come.

All the major internet marketing methods have been discussed in detail in this guide. It is now up to you to choose which one you prefer, however, remember the things that you need to have in order to succeed – good research, a positive mindset and attitude, diligence, patience and focus.

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