

Creating A Successful Internet Marketing Plan

How to Use This Guide

As you read through this guide, fill out the worksheet to create an easy-to-follow plan for a targeted Internet marketing campaign.

What is Internet Marketing?

Internet marketing is commonly referred to as Web advertising (Webvertising) and/or Web marketing. The Internet has brought many unique benefits to marketing, one of which being lower costs for the distribution of information and media to a global audience. The interactive nature of Internet marketing, both in terms of providing instant response and eliciting response, is a unique quality of the medium

How Do Companies Use The Internet?

Companies use the Internet as *one marketing tool to reach their customers -- including those outside their immediate market -- and to improve market share.* They often combine an Internet campaign with other marketing techniques such as TV, radio, direct mail, trade shows as well as direct selling. This often increases marketing results tenfold.

Why Do Companies Use The Internet?

- To Improve Customer Service and Communication
- To Generate Sales Leads/Sell Products
- To Test New Ideas and Announce New Products
- To Conduct Surveys and Gather Information
- To Reduce Sales Costs
- To Increase Sales
- To Communicate With Prospects and Clients

Is Internet Marketing Right For My Small Business?

Small businesses that want a more efficient way to reach current and prospective customers can gain big returns from an effective Internet marketing program. The key is to develop an appropriate, cost-effective plan.

How Do I Get Started with My Internet Program?

There are eight simple steps to creating an effective Internet marketing program.

Step 1. Define the Goals of Your Marketing Plan

Once you have identified what you expect your marketing program to accomplish, we can determine what kind of strategy will allow you to reach your goals.

The most common goals of an Internet marketing program are:

- Establish new accounts
- Provide information
- Sell a product or service
- Service customers
- Conduct research
- Test market new products
- Generate Leads
- Support sales
- Announce new products or services

Determining one or two goals clearly when designing and implementing an Internet marketing program will be instrumental in your program's success.

Step 2. Identify the Targets of Your Internet Marketing Campaign

Targeting a specific market is critical to overall success. Your website should not try to be all to all people, but instead identify a specific niche' to fill, and target the market that best fits the needs of that niche'.

Some of the attributes used to target consumers include

- Geographic location
- Education
- Gender
- Age
- Income
- Job classification

Step 3. Create Your Message

A company can have a terrific product or service, but, in order to obtain results, it must first capture the customers's interest by communicating effectively. You need to keep your goals clearly in mind and remember to focus your message on the customer's needs and benefits.



Goal	Question(2)	What to Communicate to the Prospect
Sell a product or service	Why would the customer want to buy My product or service? How does it meet the customers needs?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • My product/service is more affordable than my competitor's • The quality of my product/service exceeds other companies' • .My product will improve the customer's ability
Conduct research	What specific information do I want to obtain from the customer?	I would like information about: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The client's preferences • The clients current product usage • How they view my company/other companies
Announce new Product or service	What is the product/service? Why Would the customer be interested?	Our product is different because... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It offers the following new benefits... • It will be available ...

Online, being all things to all people is a great way to reach no one. Effective Web design zeroes in on the attributes that set you apart, and communicates that unique identity through visuals, words, and how the site is organized.

Focus on your unique areas of expertise, and think in terms of your prospect's expectations.

Step 4. Determine Call to Action Purpose

No matter what you're selling, you've got to have a call to action. Free trial. Hurry! Offer ends soon. Call today. Without a call to action, any ad campaign will fall flat.

A call to action is simply asking (or telling) your prospect what you wish them to do. If you are vague about what you wish visitors to accomplish while visiting your web site, you will be disappointed with the results.

Step 5. Decide Upon Follow Up Methods

Based on our research, our key findings are that personal contact and timeliness are the most important elements of an effective lead follow-up strategy. In short, the best practitioners of online marketing are those who meld Internet marketing and technology tools with timely follow-up and tried-and-true, old fashioned human contact.

Many steps involved with long term follow up can be automated. A smart autorespond package, as an example, can greatly increase long term marketing effectiveness by sending timed messages to your prospect.

Step 6. Examine Marketing Budget

The program's budget controls the size of your Internet marketing plan. To determine how much money you will spend on your Internet marketing program, you should consider such questions as:

- How much can I afford to spend on a new Internet campaign.
- Will I need to hire extra staff to maintain my website?
- Will I need any new equipment like cameras, computers, etc?

Be realistic with your goals. The Internet opens the door to a world of potential commerce, but expectations should be level headed. A \$20,000 marketing campaign will be more effective than a \$3000 campaign. Each can produce quantitative results. Don't expect, however a \$3000 campaign to be equivalent to a \$20,000 campaign. Many business owners have failed because they believed the Internet to be a vast gold mine, simply requiring having a web site - and being confused when nobody

visited. A web site without a marketing budget is like having a billboard in the desert. May look pretty. May have the best competitive offer around. But if no one sees it - what's the point?

Step 7. Determine Staffing & Equipment Needs

If you have decided to maintain your web site inventory and/or web content, you need to ensure that you have everything necessary to efficiently proceed. You need to balance the following against budget constraints:

- In-house or outsource web maintenance
- Equipment needs

Step 8. Identify Ways To Measure Progress

Before you can determine whether you need to make any adjustments to the program or your goals, you need to know whether you have met or exceeded your goals. To track performance, you should decide how you will measure your progress and what information you must gather in order to calculate your program's effectiveness.



INTERNET MARKETING WORKSHEET

Step 1. Define the Goals of Your Marketing Plan

1a. What Are My Internet Goals?

1b. What Are Some Specific Outcomes for My Internet Goals?

Step 2. Identify the Targets of Your Internet Marketing Campaign

2a. What Characteristics Describe My Target Market?

2b. What Products/Services Will I Market to This Target?



Step 3. Create Your Message

3a. What General Points Do I Wish to Communicate to Prospects?

3b. What Is My “Message”?

Step 4. Determine Call to Action Purpose

4a. Will I Sell Product or Create Leads

4b. What Specials or Incentive Motivations Will You Offer ?

Step 5. Decide Upon Follow Up Methods

5a. Who Follows Up On Leads?

Step 6. Examine Marketing Budget

6a. What is My Budget?

6b. Will I Need Ongoing Maintenance?

Step 7. Determine Staffing & Equipment Needs

7a. Who Will Maintain and Update My Website?

7b. What Equipment Will I Require?

Step 8. Identify Ways To Measure Progress

8a. How Will I Measure Success?
