

Marketing Your E-Commerce WebSite

Your e-commerce web site is a product itself. As your first point of contact with online customers it needs to be aggressively and intelligently marketed to your target audience.

Here are a handful of effective and proven ways to market your E-Commerce Web Site.

i) Register Your Site With The Major Internet Search Engines And Directories

Search engines and directories like Yahoo!, Excite, InfoSeek, Alta Vista, and Metacrawler are the first place people go when searching for anything on the Web. Registering your site with services like these is probably the most cost-effective way of reaching customers who may not be aware of your company.

In addition to search engines, there are roughly five other types of sites where you can announce the publication of your own site: announcement sites, general directories, geographic sites, specific-interest sites, and selective sites. Each one categorizes and ranks your Web site according to different sets of criteria.

As a rule, it is always smart to announce your site the day it's published, since it will most likely take anywhere from a day to several weeks for the search engines to include it in their databases. Do not, however, announce your site before it's live, as customers who click to a site still under construction are unlikely to return.

ii) Purchase Ad Banners On Appropriate Sites

You may need to spend money to boost traffic by purchasing banner advertising. Choose sites that seem to attract the kinds of people who would be good prospects for your product or service. Expect to pay \$10 to \$40 US per thousand people who see your ad, and achieve a click-through rate of 0.5% to 1%. You can find media brokers who can help you find appropriate and cost-effective places to advertise, especially if you have a significant advertising budget.

iii) Market Your Site Using E-mail

E-mail marketing falls into three categories: unsolicited or unwanted e-mail (spam), authorized targeted e-mail lists, and e-mail newsletters and updates.

Sending out unsolicited e-mails en masse, is currently a hot topic of debate. Unless a person has specifically requested that you do so, sending out unsolicited e-mails will most likely alienate customers who would otherwise visit your site.

Targeted e-mail lists, by way of contrast, are lists of people who have agreed to receive commercial e-mail messages. Working with a list broker (a company that specializes in compiling and selling e-mail lists), chances are you'll be able to find a list that specifically targets customers whose demographics best match your business.

Sending out e-mail newsletters and updates is an effective way to stay in front of customers and get them back to your site. On your web site's response form, include a checkbox where the visitor can give you permission to e-mail product and service updates, as well as subscribe to a monthly/quarterly newsletter if your company publishes one. This way, your e-mails are not spam, but responses to customer's request for more information.

Implement these proven ways to market your E-Commerce Web Site and your site will be flying!

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