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**Expert Interview with Frances Cole Jones on Job Searching and Interviews**



**INTERVIEW WITH Reputation Marketing Expert Michael Shih**

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Welcome to the **MAY 2018 Issue** of **MWM** our monthly "Making Web Money" Online Digital Marketing magazine - where every month we show you how real people, just like you, are making web money – online. *This month we have **MORE** great articles and personal success insights, interviews, plus some **ONLINE** opportunities for you.*

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- **MWM Back Story - A Franchisee Who's Expert at Building Both Shelves and Revenues**

I hope you enjoy this month's issue of the magazine, and as always please email me any comments, contributions or feedback.



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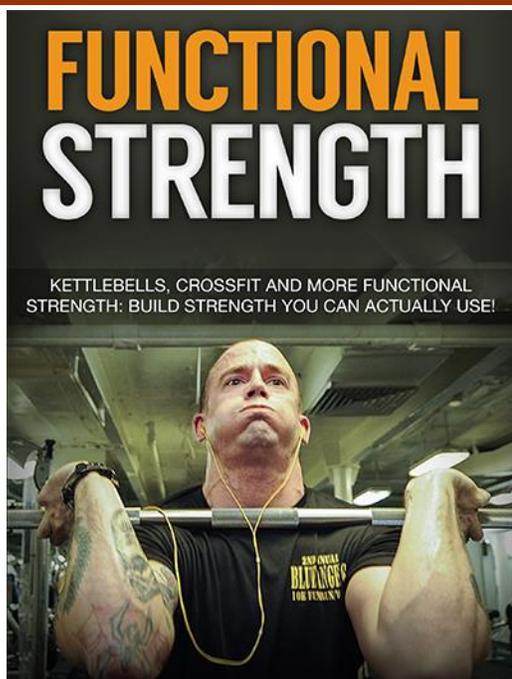
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# HOW DOES SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING HELP?

By: Ivan Sparks



SPREADING THE WORD SOCIALLY

For any online marketing campaign to be successful, it is imperative to make it a hit among the social media networks. Social media marketing therefore lies at the centre of any marketing campaign. It not only helps to reach out to a wider audience but also to survey the impact of the campaign, tracking the statistics and analyzing the effects.

Using the social media like Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, Youtube, Vine etc. is like promoting through word of mouth, only here the platform is internet and the mouth is electronic. A company can make it or break it through statements issued by users of these social media on websites, news feeds and instant messages.

We see this new trend through e- invites to events, to like a particular brand or try out a new service.

## Why are they successful?

Almost 76% of businesses today are recorded to use social networking sites as Twitter, Facebook. Social media sites connect a huge- huge network of people through their platforms. You can ask every person you meet and the popularity of these sites would be revealed to you. This in turn, provides a gigantic target audience for advertisement campaigns.

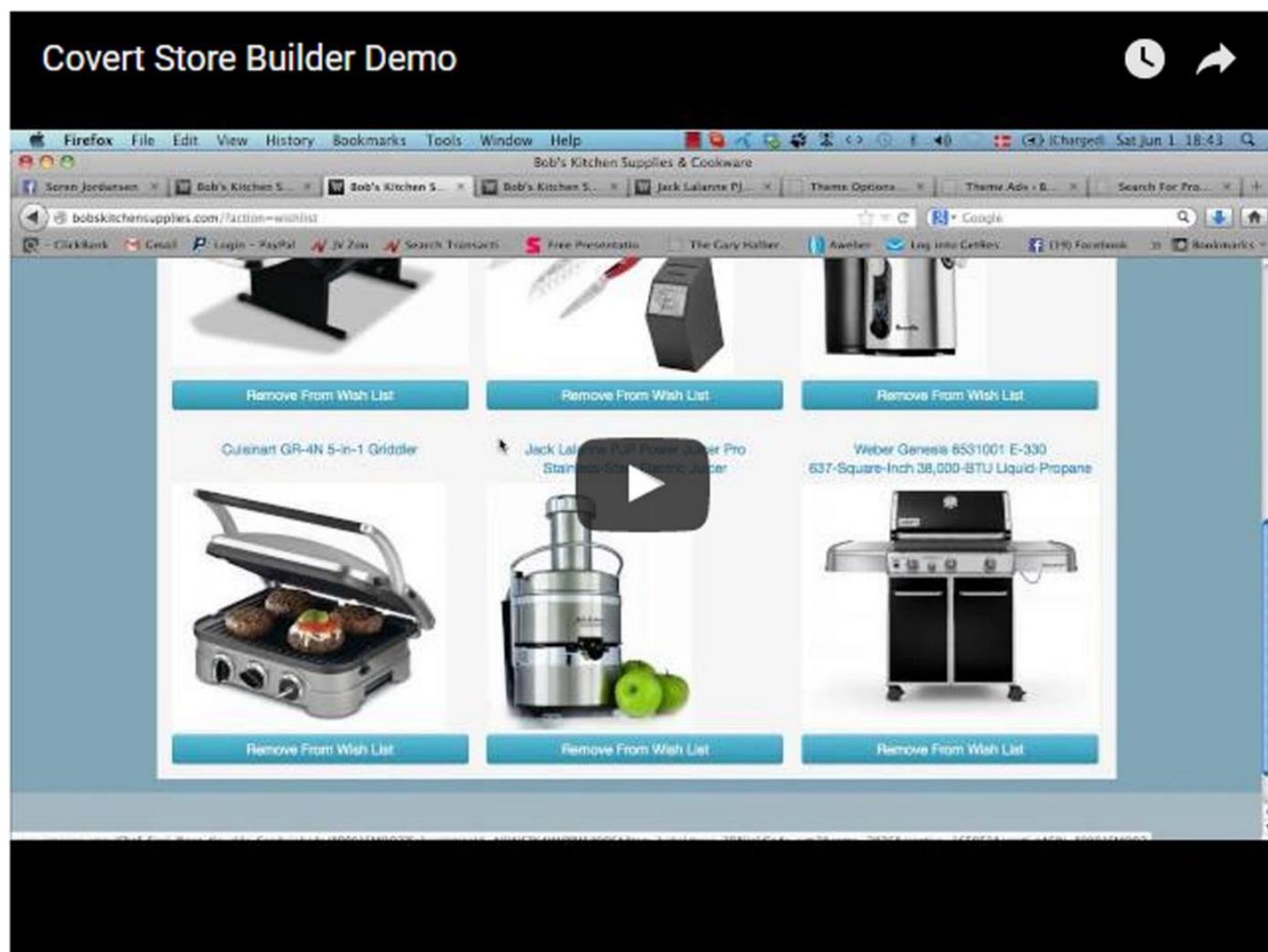
If everyone else is online, where else could you take your business to? Also, it is insanely cheap compared to certain other modes of advertising, besides being a source of market intelligence. Social media helps a company to reach out to a focused and targeted audience as their profiles reveal their interests, likes and dislikes. It also has been a great help in building better customer relations. Through official accounts on these sites, the public can take a grievance directly to the company without any travelling hassle. The interaction between the company and the public becomes way easier.

The promotions are easy to spread around through fans and followers of official pages, just several clicks away. The community of fans and followers become a part of the marketing group and do the work for an incentive, or even for free. People uploading photos and videos about the products they love and products they can find faults with, doesn't hurt either.

There can be a frank engagement with the public and users are encouraged to express opinions. The customers are now active participants in helping the refinement of the products and revealing the general opinion.

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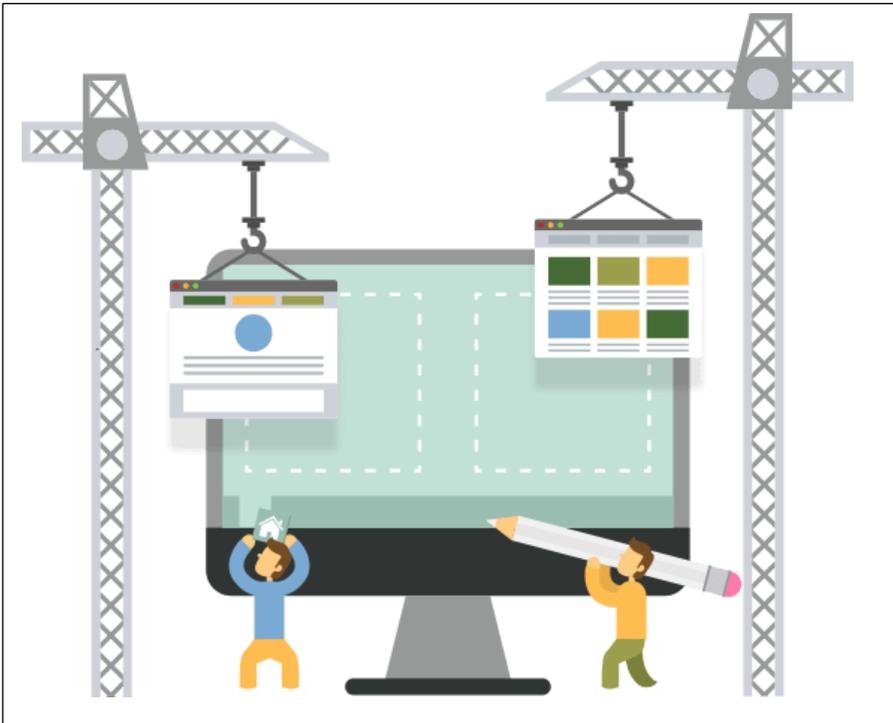
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This **12 month coaching program** can help you feel good about every PLR purchase you've made (*even those "junky" ones because I will show you how to polish them 'til they shine!*). The **PLR Profits Coaching Club** can justify every penny you've spent. It can make those purchases worth something to you because you can put that content to work making money for you.

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# CUSTOMERS CAN MAKE THE MOST OF INTERNET MARKETING

By: Luz Stewart

In this new age when technology is available at everyone's fingertips, internet marketing is a blessing to consumers. Internet marketing includes both marketing and advertising of products and services online. It tries to promote these products through emails, web banners, pop-up ads and even social networking sites. It helps customers to communicate with companies and businesses on-the-go and also make purchases and transactions with them. This has led to a great increase in online shopping which is now become a fad.

One of the benefits is that consumers are always informed and aware of any offers that these companies might have. Since they are always connected to the net, they are updated every now and then of bonuses or discounts that might be available for a short period of time during festivals and special seasons. People who love shopping can shop at any time of the day without any limit or restrictions.



***Thanks to internet marketing, customers can now track their purchases. They can choose when and how to pay for their purchase and also choose the place and time for the delivery.***

Every company or business gives all of its information online so the customers can make completely informed decisions about their purchases. The pricing system is transparent and also shows the variety in range of products according to the range in prices. This is advantageous to the consumer. When it is online, they are not dependent on any sales person and there is no chance of being misled by false information. Since everything is available online, the consumers can also compare the prices and products of different companies at the same time which saves a lot of effort. The consumer no longer has to go physically from one place to another checking out prices.

Thanks to internet marketing, customers can now track their purchases. They can choose when and how to pay for their purchase and also choose the place and time for the delivery. Since it is completely their decision, happy customers tend to maintain a good long-term relation with companies owing to online marketing. They are also aware of where their package is from the time it is ordered to the time it is delivered to them.

**ATTENTION:** Want to start your own high-ticket business?

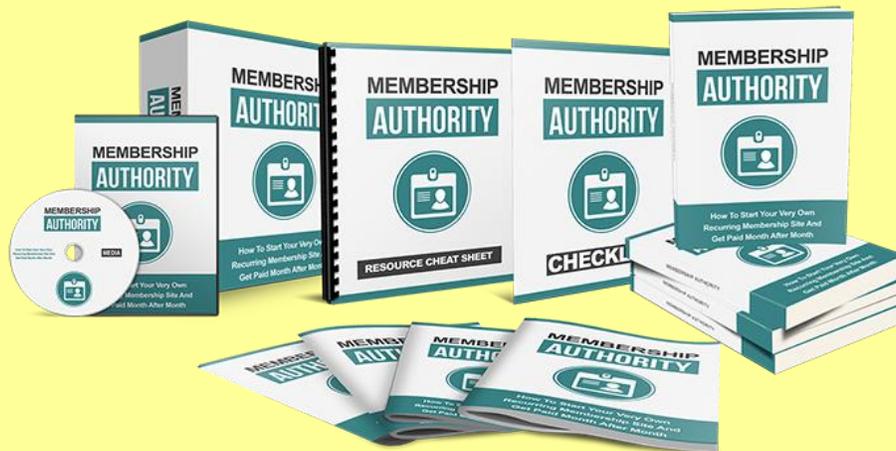
# "Discover The Steps On How To Start Your Very Own Recurring Membership Site And Get Paid Month After Month"

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## THE STORY OF A CEO WHO GREW UP ON FOOD STAMPS

By: Chelsea Berler



*"The truth is my road to owning a successful business was full of setbacks, disappointments and ugly truths -- the sort that no one wants to talk about."*

What do you think when you hear about a 33-year-old CEO (now running a marketing agency of 20+ staffers) who grew up eating meals paid for by food stamps? You might find it intriguing. You might want to learn more about that road from poverty to success

Or you might just roll your eyes and think "another rags to riches fairytale."

I recommend you Think again.

### Quotable:

"A computer once beat me at chess, but it was no match for me at kick boxing."  
~Emo Philips

But my path from a tiny North Dakota town of about 300 people to starting a company eight years ago (that I relocated to Birmingham, Ala. in 2009) has been full of incredible highs and gut-wrenching lows. And I wouldn't have it any other way.

Each of my humbling low points led to a triumphant success down the road. What I've learned can easily be applied to your life, too.

My childhood is full of memories of buying the simplest of nourishment with government funds. I can still recall that distinct feeling of embarrassment when my mother laid down the food stamps at the cash register. It's that swirl of emotion that says, "We don't have enough." And the truth is we didn't.

Now I'm not saying there was anything wrong with that time in my life because my mother worked extremely hard to provide for her family and she dealt with the residual baggage of my father's struggle with addiction and his death.

But this is where my motivation for more out of life was born. During those humble experiences when feelings of shame and guilt came into play, I became increasingly aware of my family's situation and even more determined that this would not be my life forever.

I didn't know how my life would change but I knew that someday it would. I understood then that I could use my creativity and common sense to take me higher than the life I knew.

## Seeking change.

OK, so maybe you were raised much the same way I was or you're living that very life right now. You may even feel a little hopeless. Sure you have great ideas and even the passion and know-how to fuel a great business.

But how do you get there?

My barebones upbringing and observations of my mother's innate strength have shaped my style of leadership and now the way I run my company.

From my first "career" job in sales to now while I serve as a CEO, I have carried those early experiences with me and they have influenced every move I make.

My first and only corporate job prior to my starting a business was at an international distribution company. I was hired to do customer service and quit college so I could earn a full-time paycheck (with benefits!).

About a year in is when I started to work my way up the corporate ladder.

My role evolved pretty quickly into having more of a sales component. I saw a need for someone to answer the phone and sell customers on the company's offerings instead of their having to wait for a call back from someone in sales.

That's exactly how I got to where I am today. I searched for opportunities even if they weren't readily available.

And I ended up as director of sales and business development,



**“DON'T GIVE INTO  
HOPELESSNESS. THERE IS  
ALWAYS A WAY TO CLIMB  
HIGHER IF YOU BELIEVE  
YOU CAN, EVEN WHEN NO  
ONE ELSE DOES.”**

I just jumped right in and did what needed to happen to keep the customers happy. I didn't worry if I was qualified to do the job. I just did it. And in those moments, I felt like I was making a difference. I knew I needed to find a way for my life to become more focused on that feeling.

So, I started my own business at age 22 and eventually quit my corporate job because I was able to make enough money on my own to pay my bills.

If you can't be thankful and thoughtful about where you've come from and what it took to get you where you are now, then you will never fully appreciate (or own) being there.

That is the first step to being truly successful. I realized that being humble, forgiving and optimistic would bring me so much more success than any monetary value could. And as I came to terms with family members who came before me, who I really was and what I wanted my life to look like going forward, I was equipped to step out on my own and really shine.

## **Being different.**

While I didn't have much growing up in the way of material things, my siblings and I were encouraged to develop and indulge in our curiosity. My love for the playground of life started very early on and I've held onto it ever since.

As I became an entrepreneur, I began to witness real freedom and success from believing in myself, when others did not. I started my company, Solamar, knowing that my business model would be different and it would embrace my individuality.

I love interesting, creative and often quirky people like myself. So, I built a company that lets me surround myself with those types of individuals. My intention was to start a small business as a way to pay the bills and do more purposeful work.

What it became was something much bigger. As soon as I started hiring a team, the world I once knew was gone forever and I never looked back. Working with freelancers and staffers alike, I am now able to help others live their dreams and reach new heights in business.

## **Overcoming roadblocks.**

The truth is my road to owning a successful business was full of setbacks, disappointments and ugly truths -- the sort that no one wants to talk about.

One of my greatest lessons came from being in a place of hopelessness and despair. I was in a situation where I didn't think there were real possibilities for my life. I felt stagnant and no matter what I did, I felt like my options were limited.

But I was wrong and I overcame that mindset.

Both my brothers died as a result of two separate car accidents while I was in high school. I didn't know what to do with the rest of my life. When others were filling out college applications, I was just lost, struggling to figure it out.

The corporate job helped me get set up in the right direction, although I still felt emptiness. Something was missing. A little of that feeling came back again. I struggled to figure out what to do with the rest of my life. I wondered, Is this how it's going to be forever? Me in this corporate job, doing this very thing?

Trying to reprogram my thoughts has been one of my biggest challenges and has led to my greatest victories. When I realized that I had a say in my life and vowed to not let my past define my future for me, I started living and working differently.

I put 150 percent into everything I did. I worked hard to become something that so many people thought I could not be. I wanted to create something bigger than myself. And I did just that. That is my hope for you.

Believe in yourself, in your talent and what you want to do in life. Then make it happen. Period. Nothing can hold you back.

### ***Here are my guiding thoughts for you:***

***1. Everyone has a past. Don't let yours define you.***

***2. Embrace your individuality and let it shine in all you do, including your business.***

***3. Be humble and appreciate every struggle that got you to this point.***

***4. Don't give into hopelessness. There is always a way to climb higher if you believe you can, even when no one else does.***



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# INTERVIEW WITH REPUTATION MARKETING EXPERT MICHAEL SHIH

By: Petra Mayer

## Reputation Marketing is an Easily Overlooked Strategy

Reputation Marketing as an easily overlooked discipline in your business strategy. Making it a habit to listen to the Market and to pro-actively encourage online reviews is not only important for online businesses but for brick-and-mortar businesses alike.

This interview with Reputation Marketing Expert Michael Shih of ReviewSprout is another way to encourage you to look at all aspects of your online strategy. Michael is an expert in this area and he will give you some advice on how to build a positive reputation for your business and how to deal with negative reviews. Reputation is important for us as people but it is also important for any business and in a socially connected world even more so than ever before.



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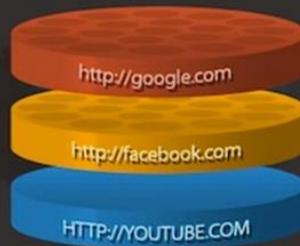
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*Petra Mayer: I want to introduce you to online specialist, Michael Shih, CEO of Review Sprout. I met Michael Shih at a networking event and when he told me about his business I thought it was so unique that I wanted to share it with you.*

To introduce you to this aspect of online marketing that may not be at your forefront of considerations and that's reputation marketing. So let me introduce you to Michael. Review Sprout specializes in helping good business owners build a strong online presence and a five-star reputation.

They have systems and processes that help businesses stay ahead of the curve and dominate the marketplace. They provide digital marketing and consulting solutions to small and medium sized businesses. Michael Shih has been doing internet marketing for over five years.

First he started off doing it part-time for friends and family and then he quickly realized that his passion is seeing his clients' business grow. He's the Founder of Advanity marketing group, Review Sprout and the organizer of Vancouver Business Alliance where he educates local business owners on the different systems to help increase growth in their business.

**Michael Shih, welcome to this interview, you are a reputation consultant. What does a reputation consultant do?**

Michael Shih: Well as a reputation consultant, our role is to monitor what is being said about business owners online and as well position business owner as a market leader in their industry so they can get more pre-qualified callers calling them and not their competition.

**GREAT. WHAT ACTIVITY SPECIFICALLY FALLS INTO MANAGING A BUSINESS REPUTATION?**

MS: Well first we have to look at the top rating review sites on there like Google and Yelp and then we have to monitor those voices that people are talking about them on those channels. From there if it's good review or bad review we have to respond to them at a timely manner. And then if it's good we can share them on different marketing materials and on social media networks.



**HOW DO YOU DIFFERENTIATE BETWEEN PASSIVE OR PROACTIVE TASKS IN THIS AREA?**

MS: There are many ways to explain this but what we normally say that reputation marketing is proactive because you are actually marketing those reputations to leverage those reviews to get more business, right, proactively getting those reviews.

And management is basically waiting for reviews to come in and deciding on what you want to do afterwards so reactive. But a good reputation marketing strategy is to include both marketing and management.

**SO WHY ARE THESE SO IMPORTANT FOR A BUSINESS?**

MS: It's so important especially nowadays, 90% of consumers are influenced by the reviews they read online and companies who have positive reviews can convert 183% more businesses than those businesses with no reviews or bad reviews.

And perhaps most importantly, being on the first page of Google is just not enough anymore. You are still competing with other listings and there is really no reason for a customer to choose you over your competition if there is nothing that makes you stand out.

Another reason is, sometimes rogue ratings can appear on listings that you don't even know about. We have a case study where we are working with an insurance company, they have a listing on Google but the number on that listing actually is his competition's number.

PM: *Whoa!*

MS: This can be really bad for a business owner if they don't know about this.

PM: *Right.*

Michael Shih: Another reason to be on top of your listings and your reviews is also if a customer looking for you on the first page of Google and you have four different listings and only one being accurate can you just imagine what the customer will feel if they go to the wrong listing? Probably your brand, your credibility will be damaged and you'll probably lose that customer forever.

PM: *Yeah, and you might not even know about it. You might not even be aware of what's going on because you don't have the resources to listen really to what's going on.*

MS: Yeah exactly.

**So how can an entrepreneur improve their online reputation?**

MS: Well, first take control of those listings online, claim ownerships, right, Google and Yelp for instance and understand that your online virtual doorway is even more important than your actual doorway.

And then have a system to get reviews at a proactive way and make it easy for your customers to give reviews for your business. So for instance at Review Sprout we have our feedback loop CRM that makes this whole system more automated and easier.

Yes, give me an example. That's what I'm looking for, an example of how you actually do this in your business for your clients.

MS: Yeah, so basically a case study I want to touch upon is there was this walk-in clinic that we are working with. He's a brand new clinic in downtown, his location is not very visible so he had trouble getting bookings and walk-ins.

But after he claimed his listing, got more reviews on those Google Plus listings his star ratings started to show up. Now this is very important for conversions. Clients always talk to me and say, oh, they need more business, they don't know what to do.

But when I look at how their business is structured they are having traffic, so they don't have a traffic issue, they have a conversion issue. And that is where reputation can really help you increase your bookings and sales so reputation and visibility go hand in hand.

PM: Yeah. So what I'm hearing here is as well this is not just for an online business, this is also really for brick and mortar business. Somebody, a client might still be searching first online before they decide which store or which clinic, in this particular case, they would actually go to.

MS: Yeah, exactly. People are always searching online before they are actually picking that phone call or determining who to go to, to do business with. And even if they get referrals from their friends the first thing they would do is search if that doctor is good or not.

PM: Yeah. So what do you recommend on how an entrepreneur should deal with negative feedback online.

We've talked a lot about positive feedback and improving that and getting your star rating up but what do you do if somebody gives you a really bad review?

MS: Well first is don't get too upset or frustrated because that always happens. The best thing to do is know where it's all coming from and how to handle it and how to handle it is respond to bad reviews and good reviews at a timely manner.

People are always looking at how you respond to these reviews that if you are being proactive. People know you care you want to improve.

The Holy Grail is to respond in a way to get them offline and deal with it offline because the people who made the review have the ability to remove those reviews. So once it's dealt with completely, then most likely, 9 out of 10 will go back and remove those reviews.

PM: Right. So as the business you can't deal with the bad reviews, you can only try and get the other person, the person who was disappointed to overcome that disappointment and proactively remove that negative review.

MS: Yeah or mitigate the issue by getting more reviews to offset the problem.

PM: Yeah. It seems to me that it's always harder to get positive reviews. When people are upset that's when they put their voices out and say oh I'm going to tell everybody that I've had such a bad experience. But if they've had a fantastic experience they don't tend to do that as much.

SO WHAT CAN A BUSINESS OWNER DO TO ENCOURAGE THEIR CLIENTS TO LEAVE POSITIVE FEEDBACK TO EXACTLY DO THAT BALANCING AND GET 99% POSITIVE REVIEW VERSUS 1% NEGATIVE THEN IT STILL IS A VERY POSITIVE IMPRESSION.

MS: Exactly, that's actually a very good question. People who are mad tend to leave reviews more often but when you think about it, you just have to be more proactive in asking for those reviews.

If you ask most people they are more likely to leave a review for you but make sure it's easy for those customers to leave reviews don't make them jump through hoops to get there. Once you've got that done you shouldn't have any problems getting reviews.

PM: Yes. Business owners tend to struggle with time that seems to be the scarcest of our commodities is time to do all the things that we think that our business needs and it sounds to me like this is quite time consuming.

WHAT DO YOU THINK WOULD, FOR A SMALL BUSINESS OWNER OR AN ENTREPRENEUR WHO IS A SINGLE ENTREPRENEUR, HOW MUCH TIME DO THEY NEED TO PUT INTO THEIR REPUTATION MARKETING OR WHAT ARE THEIR OPTIONS IF THEY JUST CAN'T MAKE THAT TIME?

MS: Well if they have a system in place it doesn't really take that much time, maybe just 15 minutes a day. That's all they need to do if they actually need to go and to respond to posts on social media.

But in terms of knowing where everything is coming from, all they have to do is put up an automated system so when someone leaves a review you know right away and can deal with it at a timely fashion?

SO HOW CAN OUR READERS ABOUT REPUTATION MARKETING AND WHAT SERVICES DO YOU OFFER TO YOUR CLIENTS THAT MAY HELP THEM TO TAKE CONTROL OF THIS AS A NEW AREA THAT THEY MAY BE NEGLECTING NOW?

MS: Yes. Please visit my site [www.ReviewSprout.net](http://www.ReviewSprout.net) to find out more about my solutions. Basically on my site we have different packages for different solutions that a business owner can learn about and if they want a free snapshot report or a strategy session to bring clarity to their business just fill out the contact form and my team will get to them shortly.

IS THERE ANYTHING THAT I SHOULD HAVE ASKED YOU THAT YOU WANT TO SAY ABOUT REPUTATION MARKETING THAT WE HAVEN'T COVERED AT ALL THAT OUR LISTENERS SHOULD REALLY MAKE SURE THAT THEY GET THAT MESSAGE? SO ANYTHING THAT YOU WANT TO ADD?

MS: Everything is good. I just want to touch upon is it's really important just to know that reputation is really the foundation of business no matter what kind of marketing you are doing it's going to be tied to someone's reputation online. So just maybe do a quick search on, if you are having a presence online that's tied to any reviews right now and go from there, just start from the first step. And if they have any questions, just give us a call and we'll be happy to give advice on what to do next.

PM: Great, well thank you very much Michael for being available for this interview. Like I said when we met I kind of thought oh, that's interesting, I haven't even thought of reputation marketing. So I think this is an interesting additional topic for my audience.

And I hope that they will enjoy this interview and that you get a lot of calls after that of people who want to get into the strategy session and start looking at their reputation marketing in a great way.

MS: Thank you for having me.

**People are always looking at how you respond to these reviews that if you are being proactive. People know you care you want to improve.**



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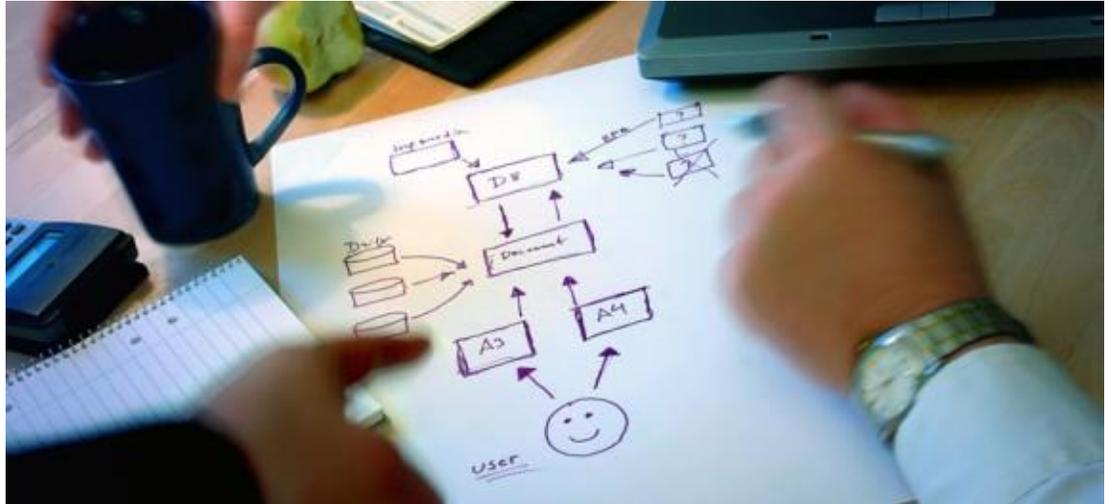
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# INTERNET MARKETING STRATEGIES

By: Clarence Willis

When we talk about a successful business it involves facts about how we build the marketing strategies to promote it and help it grow. The main concepts of building a base of one's business there are three basic steps to be taken care of. Applying well establishes marketing techniques can raise one's rank and vice versa.

- Optimizing the search engine:
- 
- Search engine optimization (SEO) is used to create a site that could rank a website as the most relevant. It is the preliminary thing that each seller would think of before starting a business online. Most of the searchers click on options that are available on the first page of Google or Yahoo search results. Search rank is undoubtedly a very important factor to make online business a success.



## How to build a SEO strategy

Selecting relevant keywords, providing valuable content, keywords density or how many times a keyword was used to link to that page are a few things to keep in mind while making strategies to do online marketing. However now a days, a page had nothing to do with keyword could be ranked in the top three. This is done by optimizing the page. The sites which rely totally on keyword could be ignored by the search engines. SEO include Keywords relevant to the search, shared valuable Content, a fast loading website and back links of reputed websites

- Content marketing: Content marketing helps build a brand and inspires confidence in one's company. Almost every customer reads a custom publication to understand the reputation and image of a company. Today, the field to include blogs, training videos, podcasts and video games etc, in a website has spread due to content writing. However, low quality content can affect one's rankings and damage his brand.
- Social media marketing: In the field of business social media brings SEO and content marketing together. It has become the most common way to share content. People trust content shared from others. Creating a true community is the key to make the most out of social media marketing.

**SEO include Keywords relevant to the search, shared valuable Content, a fast loading website and back links of reputed websites.**

# AFFILIATE MARKETING: IN BRIEF

By: Darryl Patrick



Affiliate marketing is part of online marketing campaigns where a middle person is responsible for driving traffic to the website of the company. The middle person is called the affiliate or the publisher.

## What does affiliate marketing entail?

In order to advertise, a company looks for affiliates or an affiliate signs up with a company to earn quick bucks. The affiliate is provided with a link that is specific to his affiliate id. The job of the affiliate would then be to get drive potential customers to the company website through this link. This link, being particular to his id would let the company know where the customer visiting the website is directed from.

The publisher is paid on a per visitor basis or how much customer traffic he can get them through pay- per- click. The affiliates work however, is not as easy. In order to get people to click on his link, he first needs them to visit his own website where he will post the company link. Affiliates work on many factors to generate the interest of the public to visit their page.

Some of these factors are -

- **Generating relevant and related content.** The publisher may create contents that are useful or helpful for someone who is interest I that particular product or service. For example, if it is a promotion for a book, then the publisher may write a review about that book or something related to book in that genre.
- **Many affiliates spend a lot of time on community forums.** They browse around for questions or articles related to the product that they are advertising and add some relevant comment to them that will attract the attention of the users. They usually paste the promoting link in that comment or a link to their own website.
- **Another helpful way to gain attention is by posting video reviews of the products or video related to such products.** People looking for something similar are bound to stumble upon these videos and will follow the link in the description to your website.

These are a few of many ways in which affiliate marketing happens. It will require patience as it is a lot of work and does not yield results immediately. Nevertheless, it is a field worth investing in.

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### Bluetooth Suction Cup Speaker *plays back music while you take a shower!*

Bluetooth-enabled speakers are useful – as you do not need to get tethered to a particular device, and not only that, this means that there are no wires for you to trip over – literally speaking. However, when you take a shower and would want some background music to accompany your bath time singing, then a waterproof speaker is just the thing for you. Here is the \$29.95 Bluetooth Suction Cup Speaker – which as its name suggests, will be able to be stuck to a wall, thanks to a powerful suction cup base that can secure it instantly to majority of smooth surfaces out there.

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# You want it

Go on splurge – you deserve it. It's time to spend your hard earned cash.

### This Compact Charger Is No Bigger Than Apple's But Powers Two Devices

Prepare to have one those “hey, wait a minute!” moments because it turns out the compact charger that Apple includes with iPhones could actually be doing so much more for you. The similarly-sized ChargeTech not only has folding prongs so it's even easier to transport, it also comes with two side-by-side USB ports that can charge a smartphone and a tablet at the same time.



<http://www.gizmodo.com.au/>

## MIMOPOWERTUBE DELIVERS PORTABLE POWER,



Are you looking forward to the upcoming Star Wars film that is set to hit the silver screen in due time? Surely, the continuation of this space opera franchise, to continue from where Star Wars: The Return of the Jedi left off all those years ago, is a massive undertaking. Since then, we have had three underwhelming prequels, not to mention a whole slew of fiction that accompanied it, in addition to numerous toys and other merchandise. Well, you might want to add the \$29.99 MIMOPOWER TUBE to your list, as this Star Wars inspired portable battery pack certainly looks the part.

It mainly resembles that of a lightsaber hilt as well as other Star Wars characters, where you can choose from numerous styles, as each of them will come accompanied with a USB charging cable – not to mention its fair share of tips in order to make sure that it will be compatible with just about every smartphone out there as far as possible, even throughout the galaxy. The various designs from which you will be able to pick from include those of C-3PO, Darth Vader, a lightsaber, and Stormtrooper, stashing 2,600mAh of juice within, taking approximately 3 to 4 hours to charge up. Definitely one of the cooler looking portable battery designs around to date.

<http://www.coollest-gadgets.com/>



Did you know

Mark Zuckerberg's original Facebook profile number ID is 4.

# THE BASICS OF INTERNET MARKETING

By: Faith Lane

The whole notion of internet marketing rests on relationships. Although that's hard to do given the vast distances between people online, not to mention the number of them who could be involved at any one time and also the sheer strangeness of it all, you need to create a valued environment that attracts customers and keeps them coming back. Through a repetitive focus on customer needs and demands, you get closer to them and by extension gather more people to your brand or image. Unlike actual footwork where you may be asked to go out on the field and promote relationships between company and customer, you can do so much more and reach a larger denomination of people by using the internet as your field. Because you're sitting in one place while you market your service or brand image, you can spend more time spreading the word. A commitment to quality is a great step forward. In fact, it should be your first step when it comes to internet marketing. People crave quality for affordable prices and if you can meet that demand the sky becomes the limit. To do this effectively—to instill promise of quality in customers—you need to stay updated on social media and changes to them. From apt and attractive content writing to an ace presentation of your message, you need to learn to use Facebook, Twitter, Google+ and Instagram to access a large community of people, a good portion of whom spend almost all day on such social media sites.



**Writing excellent content and changing it every now and again can result in amazing rewards. What you have to say about your work in words resonates with people who have no idea who you are yet. They need to know what you do and why you do it. Write and perfect your content, whether it's a page on a social media site, a blog or a full-fledged website.**

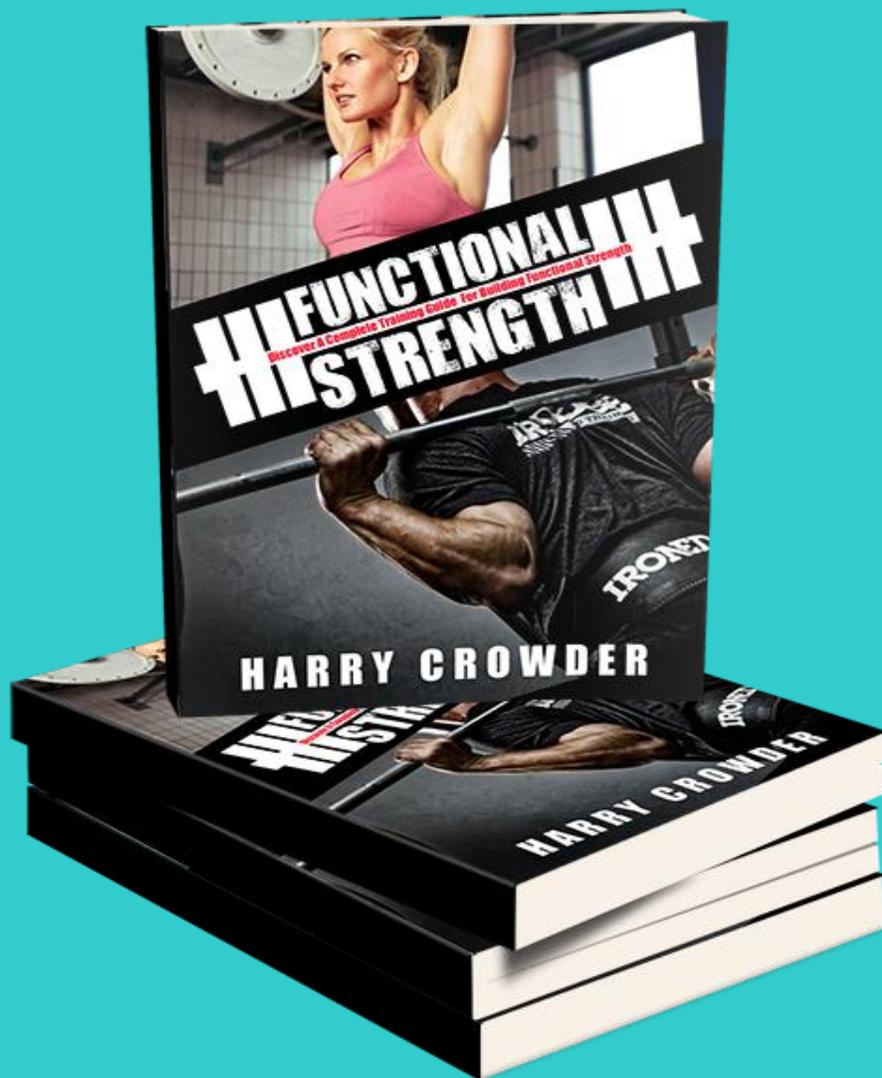
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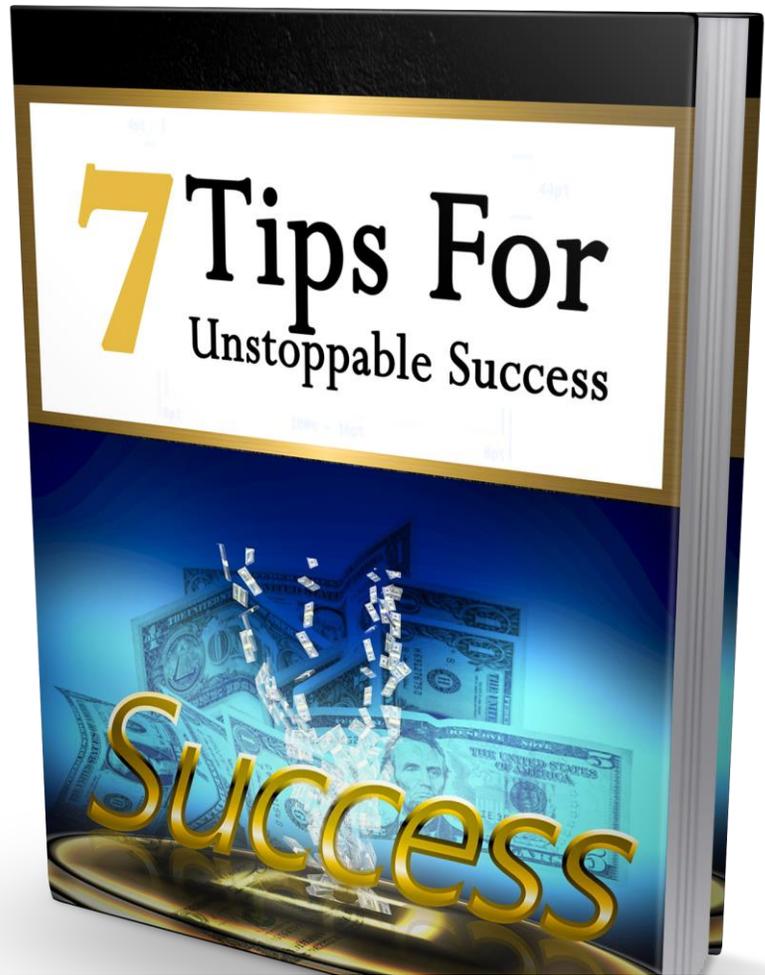
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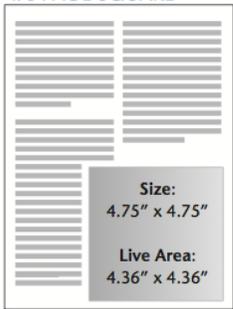


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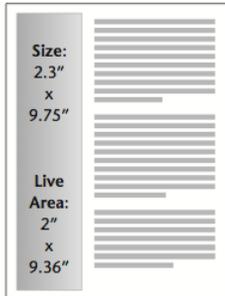
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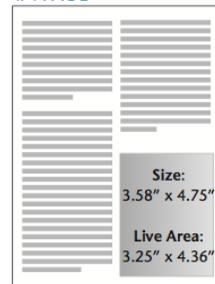
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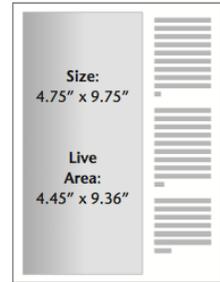
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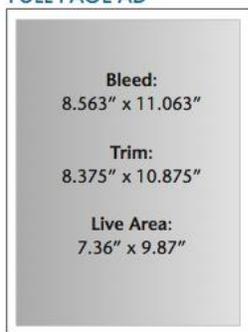
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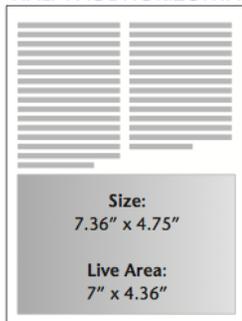
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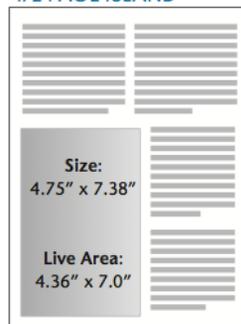
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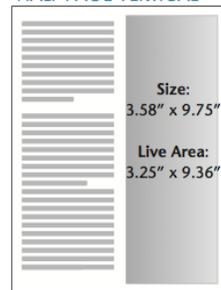
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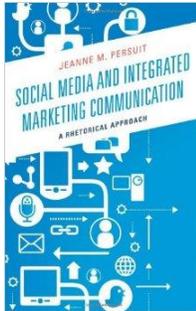
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### Social Media and Integrated Marketing Communication: A Rhetorical Approach

By: Jeanne M. Persuit



Social Media and Integrated Marketing Communication: A Rhetorical Approach explores social media in the areas of corporate identity, brand narratives, and crisis response from a rhetorical perspective. Key ideas in this text are social media as epideictic rhetoric—the rhetorical setting that deals with the present and matters of virtue and education—and how rhetorical decorum, a component of Cicero’s third Canon of Style, can guide organizations and their audiences toward more ethical and effective integrated marketing communication (IMC). This strategy emphasizes changing behavior, not just attitudes. Because social media leaves traces of communication that may be with us for the foreseeable future, Social Media and Integrated Marketing Communication frames the conversation about social media and IMC to move away from a risk/reward or a return on investment orientation and toward a focus on social media as communicative action that is attentive to this historical moment, to organizations and their audiences, and to communication ethics. Through this, Persuit asks how organizations can engage in decorum in their online IMC efforts while at the same time considering how their audiences can engage in decorum as well. Neither romanticizing nor demonizing the areas of social media and IMC, instead, this text offers a pragmatic understanding of these areas that finds a place in the theory of the communication discipline.



### Leading Digital Strategy: Driving Business Growth through Effective E-commerce

By: Christopher Bones & James Hammersley

As businesses continue to embrace digital tools and technologies to enhance customer engagement and develop digital channels, executives and leaders must understand the drivers of market success, the opportunities for change, and how enhanced leadership capabilities can help drive digital strategies.

Leading Digital Strategy explains what makes a digital operation successful and explores how to align organizational structure with wider goals and implement a customer-centric culture that supports multi-channel success. It covers key digital developments to help executives understand the consumer and media trends that are driving change.

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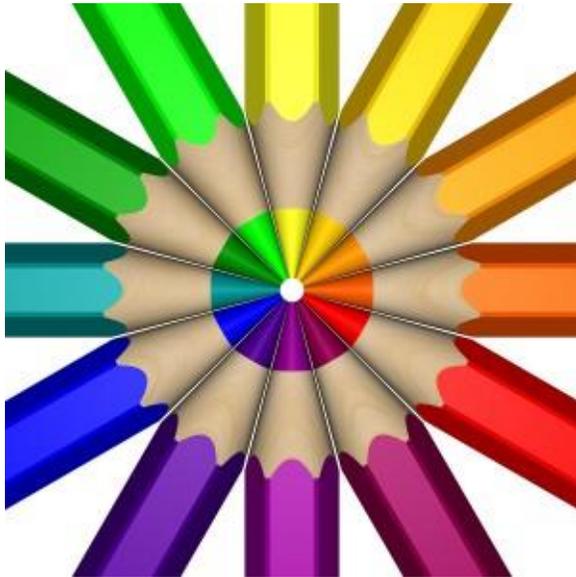
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### Did you know:

**In 1936, the Russians made a computer that ran on water.**

# THE ROLE COLOUR PLAYS IN INTERNET MARKETING



By: Cameron Gibson

*Green: Green is associated with wealth. It is also a colour that the eyes find easier to process. If your campaign targets a group of holiday makers, you could use it.*

An internet marketer shouldn't underestimate the power of colour in marketing. There are very many interpretations the colour you choose in your internet marketing campaigns can attract. For this reason, web designers and internet marketers should choose colours that blend with the type of business being promoted.

Colours have cultural interpretations too. For instance, blue is considered a corporate colour in North America. Columbians associate the same colour with disease and death; meaning you wouldn't really apply it in a hot campaign for venture capital in the country. In Africa, colours make particular signatures. Ghanaians, for instance, revere the Vlisco cloth. In this article, we will discuss the colours that symmetrically blend with internet campaigns.

*Whether it's social media or paid campaigns, Google Analytics will help you understand what source is getting you a majority of sales. Look up the Pareto Principle's 80/20 rule: Take the top 20% of your traffic sources and see which ones generate 80% of positive results.*

1. **Blue:** As already noted, blue is symbolic of corporate signature. However, other connotations that the blue colour sends out are: Trust, security and sensational attachment. You could probably see this with many banks.
2. **Red:** Red is a colour of passion. It increases a person's heart beat, creates intensity and urgency and should be applied in campaigns where one is seeking clearance sales.
3. **Yellow:** A colour laden with youth and optimism. If your strategy in the internet marketing campaign is to grab attention or attract window shoppers, yellow works best here.
4. **Green:** Green is associated with wealth. It is also a colour that the eyes find easier to process. If your campaign targets a group of holiday makers, you could use it.
5. **Purple:** This is a soothing and calming colour. It should be used in marketing anti-ageing or beauty products.
6. **Black:** Is a sleek and powerful colour. It can be best used in the marketing of luxury goods.
7. **Pink:** Pink is a feminine colour. It is also considered romantic too. It can be best used when marketing to girls or women.
8. **Orange:** Orange is an aggressive colour. It calls buyers to action. If you intend to have this achieved, use it.

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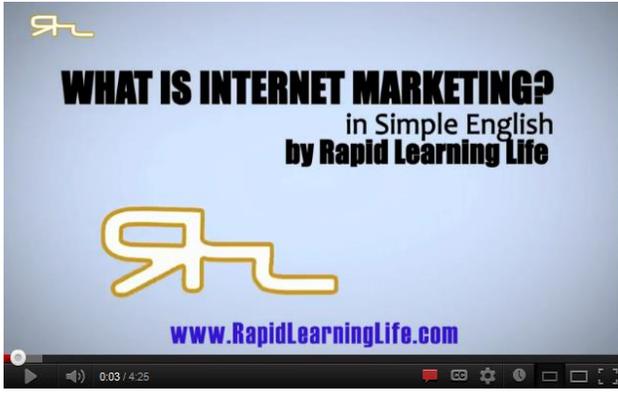
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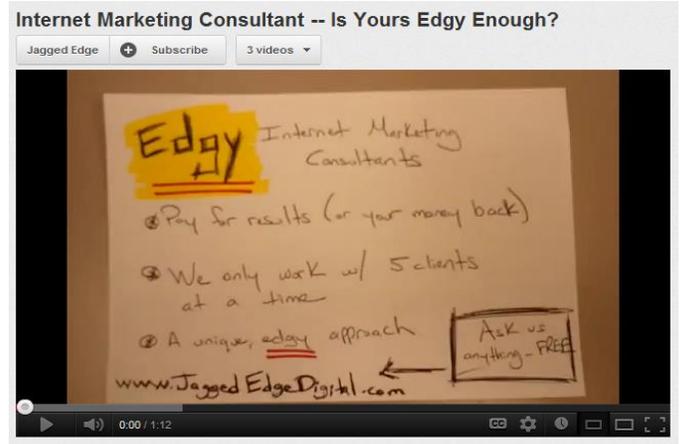
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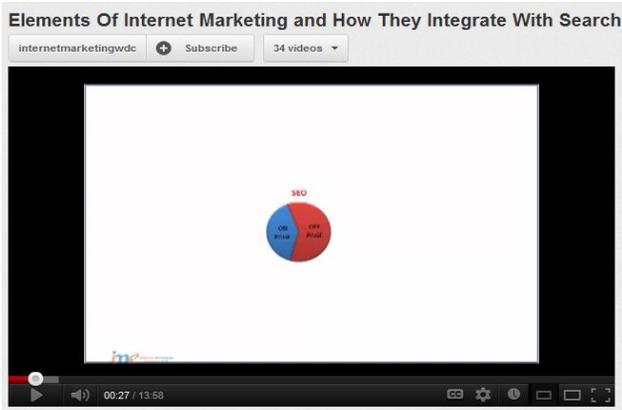
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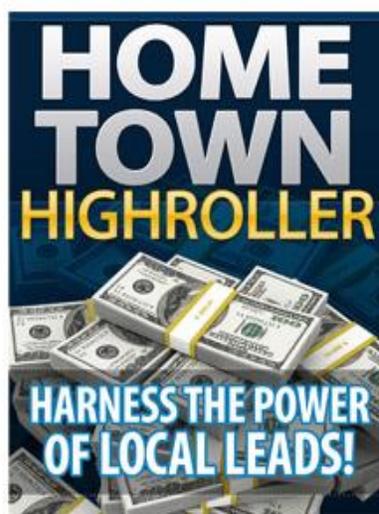
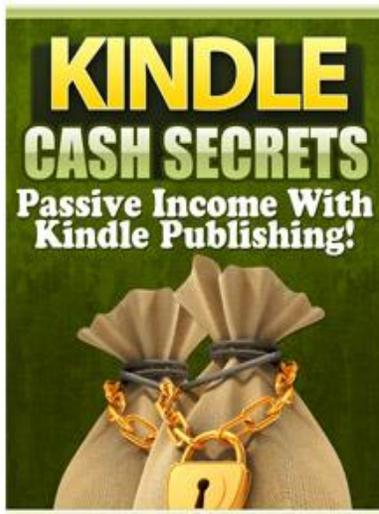
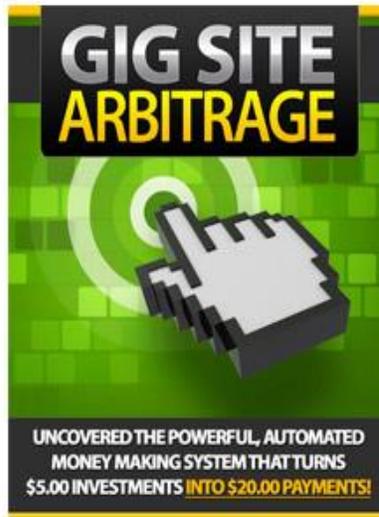
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## EXPERT INTERVIEW WITH **FRANCES** **COLE JONES** ON JOB SEARCHING AND INTERVIEWS

By: Mary Hiers



*“Unless the field is highly specialized, many candidates have the same level of education and skill set. Given that, employers are paying closer attention to the “soft skills” that demonstrate a candidate will be a good team member.”*

Frances Cole Jones started her career as an editor, working with authors to better interpret ideas. She rapidly realized, though, that those skills could be applied to candidates and interviews, and has since become one of the premier career experts, offering advice on TV, books and on her website.

**She spoke with us about interviewing and the surprises you might find in that office.**

**HOW HAVE JOB INTERVIEWS CHANGED OVER THE LAST FEW YEARS? WHAT ARE EMPLOYERS LOOKING FOR OUT OF A CANDIDATE?**

Unless the field is highly specialized, many candidates have the same level of education and skill set. Given that, employers are paying closer attention to the “soft skills” that demonstrate a candidate will be a good team member, or as Tina Fey has said about picking writers for Saturday Night Live, “someone you want to see in the break room at 3 a.m.” With this in mind, candidates need to actively work to create camaraderie. Easy ways to do this are to comment on office decor that has obviously been chosen to impress, like a framed diploma; to eat and drink what you’re offered in your interview; to write both email and snail mail thank-you notes.

**IF A JOB SEEKER HASN’T BEEN ON THE MARKET IN A WHILE, WHAT’S THE FIRST STEP TO BRUSHING UP ON INTERVIEW ETIQUETTE?**

Candidates need to practice their answer to “What have you been doing in the intervening time?” so that their response is concise and confident and reassures their future employer that they are ready to re-enter the job market and give 110%. They also need to reassure themselves about the value they have to offer. More seasoned candidates bring institutional memory of what has occurred in an industry, and that is invaluable.

**CAN AN INTERVIEWER SABOTAGE THEMSELVES AS WELL, AND HOW?**

I think interviewers sabotage themselves by failing to prepare and falling back on “softball” queries along the lines of “Tell me about yourself.” Candidates need to know that this is NOT an invitation to talk about themselves. This is an opportunity to say, “Your job description states that you are looking for someone who can do ‘Y’ and not only can I do ‘Y,’ but I can also do ‘W’ and ‘Z.’” In other words, “Tell me about yourself” is an opportunity for candidates to show how they are going to add value to the firm once they are hired. No one needs to know they are one of six siblings and grew up on Nantucket.

## WHAT CAN WE DO TO INSURE FEET DON'T ENTER OUR MOUTHS IN AN INTERVIEW?

Slow down. Inhale and speak on an exhalation. Doing so gives your voice more resonance and authority. It also makes you come across as more confident. Jumping on every question as soon as it leaves the interviewer's mouth "reads" as anxious. If you don't have an immediate answer to a question, don't hesitate to say, "I'd like to think about that for a moment because I want to be sure to give you the best answer possible" – no one is mad at the candidate who wants to give the best answer possible!

## HOW MUCH RESEARCH IS TOO MUCH RESEARCH ON A COMPANY OR YOUR INTERVIEWER?

Doing so much research that you never get around to applying for the job is problematic. Other than that, I don't think it's possible to do too much research. The tricky bit, however, is remembering you don't need to use all that research in every answer! For example, while it's important to demonstrate to your interviewer that you are familiar with their background – by using information available on LinkedIn, etc. – you don't want to include a bizarre amount of detail. For example, saying something along the lines of "Loved those pictures of your family at the July 4th barbecue!"

## WHAT ARE SOME TRENDS IN HIRING WE SHOULD BE KEEPING AN EYE ON?

Most candidates know that employers are checking their social media profiles, and if they aren't aware of this, they should be. They also know that employers might ask you open your accounts mid-interview for a look-see. One thing candidates might not know, however, is that many interviewers are stopping interviews halfway through and saying, "You know what, I just don't think you are the right fit for us" even if they think the candidate is great. They are doing this to see a) if an interviewee will fight for the job and b) how she or he handles stress. If this happens to you, I recommend leaning in, smiling and saying, "I see I haven't made it clear how much I want this position. Let me take you through my thinking one more time."

***Candidates need to practice their answer to "What have you been doing in the intervening time?" so that their response is concise and confident and reassures their future employer that they are ready to re-enter the job market and give 110%.***



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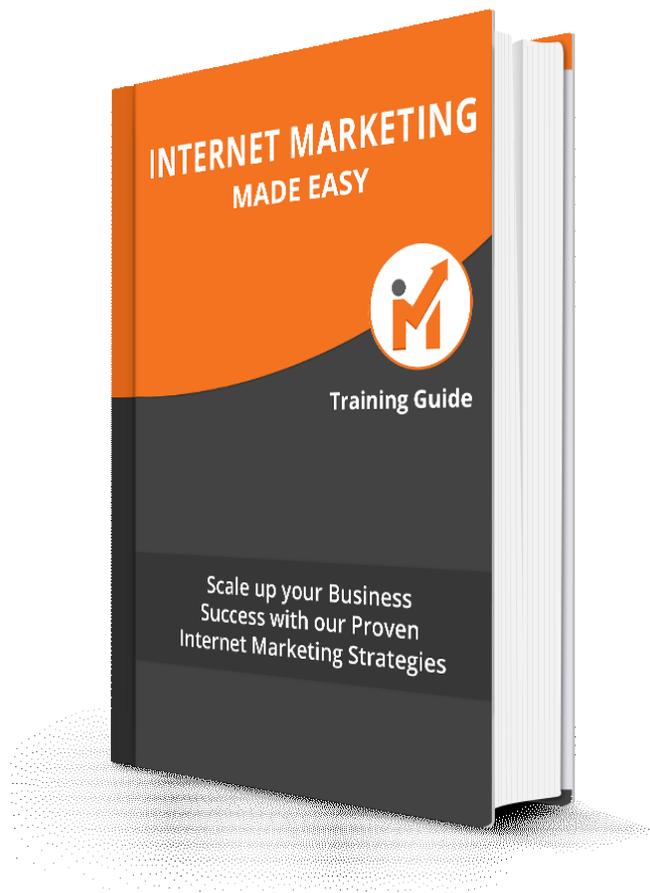
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# WHY ONLINE MARKETING IS BETTER?

By: Ronald Allison

*Internet, and social media exposure has made it possible for advertising agencies to track their progress, measure its impact and subsequently, immediately work on the strategies to make it better.*



## 1. The market should be where people gather.

As virtual world is the new reality of today, it is only implied that the biggest share of customers can be better wooed through the internet. It is a way of reaching a wider audience efficiently. Traditional marketing can become cumbersome and complex, not to mention very expensive, at the thought of going international. Internet has reduced these problems by a big share.

## 2. Advertise, learn, and improvise.

Internet, and social media exposure has made it possible for advertising agencies to track their progress, measure its impact and subsequently, immediately work on the strategies to make it better. This is not possible as efficiently for the traditional methods of advertising.

It would take enormous efforts otherwise to collect data by organizing surveys, analyze them and then form conclusions regarding the success or failure of any marketing campaign. It would not only be time consuming, but also waste of capital.

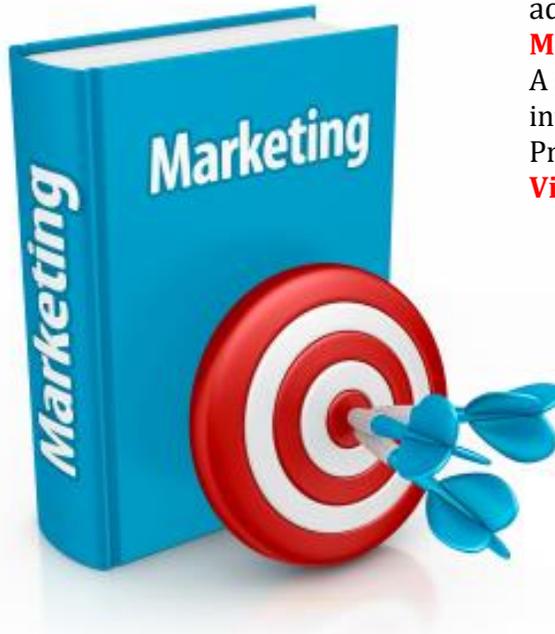
## 3. Targeted audience.

Internet has made it possible to create advertisements keeping in mind preferences of the public and thus, reaching out to a targeted audience. With all the narcissism flowing around the social media websites, it is easy to generate profiles of what audiences based on their likes and dislikes. This is utilized by generating for them specifically, advertisements fine tuned according to their preferences.

## 4. Another appealing factor is money.

Internet marketing is considerably cheaper in comparison to the traditional modes of advertising. This is contributed to by promotions getting viral with very little incentive, electronic word of mouth and again by the fact that people love to show off their shopping on the social media.

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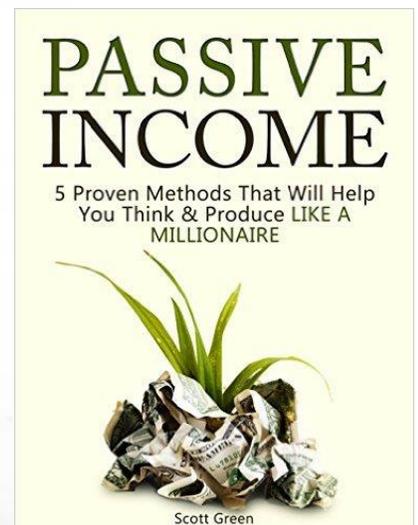
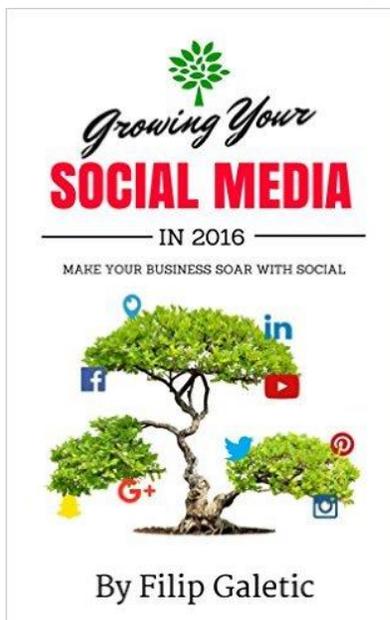
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## Chelsea Berler

**Chelsea Berler**, author of *The Curious One*, is the CEO of Solamar a boutique marketing agency in Birmingham, Ala. She is a champion for people who are driven to bring their talent and greatness into the world on their own terms.



## Clarence Willis

**Clarence Willis**, is an Internet marketer for well over a decade. He also conducts trainings all over the globe, helping businessmen, in particular, to stay ahead of the curve.



## Corey Farmer

Corey Farmer loves Internet marketing and his world revolves around keywords, SEO, PPC and other techniques. And of course, he loves to share what he knows.



## Cameron Gibson

Cameron Gibson is a full-time mom who works her SEO magic at home. She helps businesses improve their online rankings and offers trainings to those interested in this field.



## Darryl Patrick

Darryl Patrick has been in the Internet marketing industry since 2004. His broad knowledge and skills about different techniques help companies, big and small, spread their message.



# THE DIFFERENT TYPES OF INTERNET MARKETING

By: Andy Ray

Now-a-days marketing and advertising is incomplete without the use of the internet. Internet marketing helps to reach a large audience who are constantly interacting with each other and thus enhancing the marketing strategies. Innumerable money transactions take place online. All this online buying and selling of goods, products and services is known as ecommerce. Most companies have switched to online businesses but there are still quite a few companies which own retail centres and use the internet to market and advertise their products.

Internet marketing also helps companies to carry out research regarding their customers, find out their preferences and accordingly adjust their marketing strategies to provide them with better service. Every single aspect of internet marketing is important, right from the design and content to display and affiliate advertising and using keywords for search engine optimisation. It is also both eco-friendly and cost effective.

**Websites**-Internet marketing includes giving the consumers information about themselves through their websites. It is also a way of advertising their products and letting them know of offers and discounts from time to time to entice them and retain their attention. It is an interactive means by which the customers can also provide their own views and feedback. In order to engage audiences to visit the website it is important to choose striking names and content.

**Email marketing** is another simple way of marketing online. It helps to communicate directly with the customers and build strong relationships with them. It is beneficial to the company because of low costs and wide audience. It is possible to track, research and survey in order to form strategies. It can also reach potential customers through press releases, articles and blogs.

**Social networking sites** are the most recent and trendiest ways of internet marketing. It works on a global scale on the principle of people being influenced by their social circles. Sites like Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter are the most popularly used sites for internet marketing. Companies have distinct identities and can advertise about their products and offers and redirect people to visit their websites for more information.

*Social networking sites are the most recent and trendiest ways of internet marketing. It works on a global scale on the principle of people being influenced by their social circles.*



# THE NEW AGE OF INTERNET MARKETING

By: Gina Roy

For any product, good or service to sell it is important to advertise it well and also find a market for it. This concept has remained the same over ages but the methods and means for it are constantly evolving. In the old time, communication was by word of mouth or face-to-face, then came print media, radio, television, etc. We are now living in the age of internet marketing. It is absolutely necessary for each person to understand the workings of the internet to survive in this technological day and age.

Internet marketing also known as online marketing has taken over almost every category of sales be it industrial goods, clothes, accessories, books, insurance, etc. It is not restricted to sales alone. It has a wide network and coverage of communication and is pervasive in today's society. Internet marketing is used to disperse information among the general public, create awareness and encourage them to be more responsive to their products and services. Some of the most common and popular ways of internet marketing are through emails, social networking sites and websites. It also includes different types of advertising such as mobile advertising, display advertising, affiliate marketing etc.

In order to catch people's attention, internet marketing tries to make the content more attractive, interactive and user-friendly. It makes use of certain keywords and phrases so that various websites or the content can easily show up when search engine optimizers (SEO) are used.



Online marketing and advertising is a major source of income and is also cost-effective. Since content is one of the most important aspects of internet marketing, there is a separate group of ad agencies who create the content which is then sent to the publishers. This has in turn caused advertisers and publishers to gain a huge clientele. There are also advertising affiliates known as third-parties who create connections between the different companies and the customers.

Internet marketing can almost be termed as a revolution which has brought the world together to make it work at a much faster and smoother pace.

***Internet marketing is used to disperse information among the general public, create awareness and encourage them to be more responsive to their products and services.***

## Learn the WEIRD trick that allowed this single Mother to climb out of debt and make over \$700 per week helping businesses with their Facebook and Twitter accounts!

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Nowadays work for me involves logging on to Facebook, Twitter and YouTube, reading and replying to some comments and scheduling some posts for the day. The businesses that I do this for don't have the time to do this work themselves and it's not enough work to hire someone full time, so they pay me to do the work for them part time from home.

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## WHY HOME BUSINESS: THE UNTOLD BENEFITS



**1. Personal freedom** - Working at home requires no dress code, no rigid work schedules and no company cultures. Instead, you can work and earn money at your own pace, at the comfort of your home. This allows you to gain control of your personal life while not losing a source of income – the best of both worlds!

**2. Experience Enrichment** - Home business owners need to play many roles at once, from being the CEO, the financial planner, the researcher, the marketing manager and the sales manager. This is especially true for those solo owners who have to learn how to do everything on their own.

**3. Increased Competitiveness** - As the overhead cost of a home business is low, you can now offer quality products or services at a lower cost, making your products and services more competitive in the market. In addition, small home business is more able to provide clients with personalised services that cater to their specific needs compared to large commercialised businesses.

**4. Lower Risk** - Home business frequently requires low capital to start up and is also cheaper to maintain. This protects the home business owners from their life-time savings should the business idea fails. It also allows business owners to test out new business ideas before deciding to invest large amount of money in it.

**5. Reduced Stress** - Being able to work from home allows you to plan for both your work and your family. This is especially true for parents of school-age children as they do not need to juggle between work and taking care of their children.

## HOW TO START A HOME BUSINESS

How do you start a successful home-based business? What needs to be in your consideration?

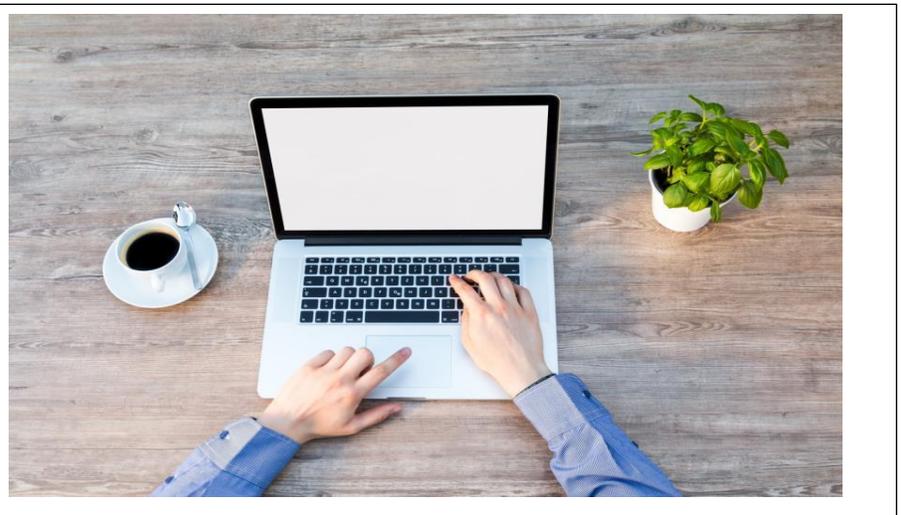
Below is a 6-step guide:

### **1. Access Your Skills And Knowledge**

- You need to know what you are good at and what you are not so good at. Identify your strong points and your weaknesses. This can help you gauge if you are suitable for embark on a home business. As a home business owner, you will need to run a lot of tasks on your own, from planning, business management to the field work. Make sure you can carry out the tasks needed.

**2. Generate Business Ideas** - Start brainstorming from your interest and passion. Get your family to involve as you will be using part of their space for your business.

**3. Test The Market** - Shortlist your ideas so that it contains only those ideas that can work for a home business. Be practical. Think whether people will want to spend money on the kind of products or services that you can offer, how much and whether this will generate sufficient income proportional to your effort. If no, get back to Step 2 for more ideas. Being persistent is important at this stage because many people gave up after facing the obstacles.



### **4. Understand The Legal Barriers**

Check if there are any rules or regulations controlling the starting up of a home business in your state or country. If yes, figure out how you want to get around them.

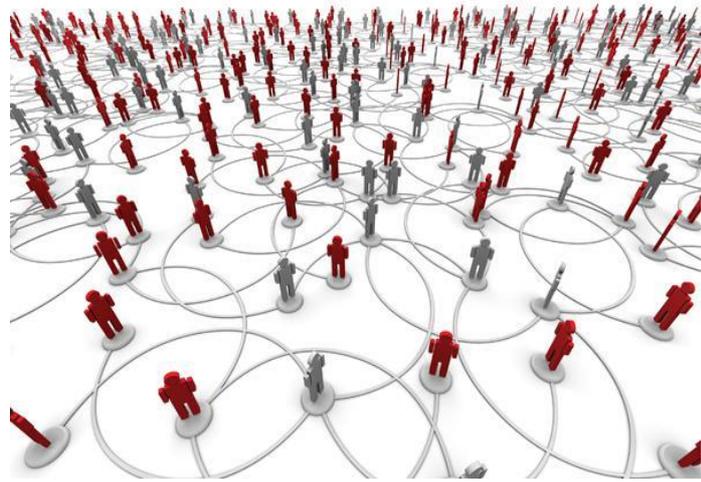
### **5. Determine Your Capital**

Calculate the amount of money you need to start up your home business. The cost should include the purchase of any instruments, hire of any professionals (e.g. lawyers) and insurance. You might not be familiar with all these so take your time to do some price checking and bargain.

### **6. Plan your business – break even points.**

Once you have obtained a clear picture from Step 1 – 5, it is time to lay down your business plan. Find out your break-even point and how many products you need to sell in order to get back your investments.

# THE 3 MOST USED ONLINE MARKETING TOOLS



By: Lila Dunn

Today, almost all companies have an Internet presence; have their own website, although the number is drastically reducing. If we ask how many of these perform an active online marketing and carry out marketing activities on the Net, you will realize that many of them are actually passive. In this article, we will look at some of the tools that you can use in your online marketing and how to coordinate them within an online marketing plan targeted to specific and measurable objectives.

## Tool #1: E-Mail Marketing

The e-mail marketing is not just e-mailing. It is a series of coordinated actions of sending personalized messages to a database in search of the much talked one to one marketing. Obviously these actions can develop own customer base and increase their level of purchase and loyalty. A company can send a commercial offer to a database segmented according to various socioeconomic variables (age, sex, province ...) and interests (interested in training, driving ...) etc

## Tool #2: Viral Marketing

The ability to perform certain advertising pieces, which by its enormous notoriety can be transmitted from user to user direct, free way is the goal of viral marketing. You can plant the first seed of your message by sending several thousand e-mails to a database with the aim of it being transmitted by each receiver to their respective spheres of influence, or use guerrilla marketing techniques to promote their dissemination. It is true that when you send a message to a group of potential customers, it will be forwarded by them to their acquaintances. This is a profitable strategy.

## Tool #3: Micro-sites

The creation of small websites oriented to a promotion or service, is increasingly used in Internet marketing. It offers you the freedom to create a site distinct from corporate that focuses on a very specific goal, often in a very specific period time, such as the support of a particular promotion. For instance, you can use a URL with a name that supports the objective of the site. For example, you can choose a site that is [www.example.com](http://www.example.com) to promote these services.

It is true that when you send a message to a group of potential customers, it will be forwarded by them to their acquaintances. This is a profitable strategy.

# TRUSTWORTHY INTERNET MARKETING TECHNIQUES

By: Corey Farmer



*Blogs are 'friendlier' than full-fledged webpages. They make people see that a human being is creating content or 'posts' rather than some mindless drone-software running a webpage and keeping it going.*

Establishing your credibility online can take anywhere from a short while to a few years, but it's quite possible. The more you spread your roots and create an interlinking chain, the more people will see that you are determined to get it right. Here are some online tools that can help you instill trust in your customers:

- **Social Media** – Create pages and profiles and keep them updated on sites like Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, Google+, Instagram, and Pinterest. You can include a few or all of these sites based on the type of product or service you're selling. There are online communities for major magazines and institutions that in themselves act like social media centers. These include Inc., Businessweek and so on. Videos and images are more powerful than long sentences or paragraphs when it comes to social media communication.
- **Blogs** – These are 'friendlier' than full-fledged webpages. They make people see that a human being is creating content or 'posts' rather than some mindless drone-software running a webpage and keeping it going. Sharing is made easy through blogs and social media responds well to them. There is much more versatility in blogging that can benefit your service or product.
- **Reviews & Testimonials** – You can't go without these. People need to see that professionals in fields related to your product or service have reviewed your work and liked it. This instills massive credibility. A close second is when people see actual human customers say how much they benefited from your services and products. You can get reviews from major companies or online sales portals, which are also great places to find customer testimonies.
- **FAQ** – This section should detail all the specifics, nothing generic or obvious. Answer the difficult questions that customers can't find anywhere else online. Forging trust through truth is the way to go.

## A FRANCHISEE WHO'S EXPERT AT BUILDING BOTH SHELVES AND REVENUES



**ALAN REGALA, A FIRST-GENERATION AMERICAN OF FILIPINO AND CHINESE DESCENT, AND FIRST-TIME BUSINESS OWNER, DIDN'T JUST ACHIEVE THE AMERICAN DREAM; HE SURPASSED IT. IN HIS VERY FIRST YEAR WITH SHELFGENIE, HE REACHED THE \$1 MILLION REVENUE MARK. WHAT MAY HAVE HELPED WERE HIS YEARS IN PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT, IN THE MEDICAL DEVICE AND CONSUMER PACKAGED GOODS INDUSTRIES -- HE ACTUALLY INVENTED A PORTABLE NOTEBOOK AND PEN THAT FITS INTO YOUR WALLET. SOMETHING ELSE LIKELY HELPED TOO: HIS MASTER'S DEGREE IN MECHANICAL ENGINEERING FROM STANFORD.**

**Name: Alan Regala**  
**Franchise owned: ShelfGenie in Seattle, Washington**

**How long have you owned a franchise?**

I'm in my eighth year this summer.

**Why franchising?**

I've started a business on my own in the past, and while I felt it was successful, it was difficult being on my own and starting from scratch. There is the added pressure of staying relevant in the crowded field of technology and consumer products start-ups. When I decided to start a new business, I really liked the idea of having a partner, but I didn't just want to find a random person to partner with. The idea of franchising really appealed to me because the franchisor is your partner and you are starting with a game plan and system based on something that works.

I knew that with my background, I could find a way to optimize those systems and grow our client-base. With ShelfGenie I liked the fact that they were an established brand and there was a high potential for growth. After winning Rookie of the Year in 2010 and Franchisee of the Year in 2013, and seeing my franchise grow to more than \$1 million in yearly revenue, I know that I made the right decision.

**What were you doing before you became a franchise owner?**

After receiving an undergraduate degree from Cal-Poly and my master's in mechanical engineering from Stanford, I spent seven years in product development. I worked for various companies until I founded Everyday Innovations. With Everyday Innovations, I realized that I have what it takes to be an entrepreneur. I embraced the challenge and the thrill of taking a product from the concept level to the marketplace.

One such product, the PicoPad, was actually featured in Entrepreneur magazine in 2008. Establishing my own company and seeing it thrive was proof that I could grow a business, and instilled the confidence I needed to get my ShelfGenie franchise off the ground.



**Why did you choose this particular franchise?**

I was looking at three different franchises at the time, and after my initial research into each of their business models, ShelfGenie was at the bottom of my list. I'm glad that I did my due diligence on the company and put myself in the shoes of the franchise owner because that really shaped my decision. It wasn't until I visited the companies in person that I could see the difference in how the businesses were run and see the people behind the company.

I was extremely impressed with the leadership at ShelfGenie. They seemed very committed to providing the best possible experience for the end client and the franchisees, as well as doing all of the things necessary to make that happen -- making a top-quality product, hiring the right people internally, listening to clients and franchisees and constantly working towards being a better organization.

**How much would you estimate you spent before you were officially open for business?**

My startup costs were around \$127,000: \$104,000 for franchise fees (multiple territories), \$11,000 for initial marketing materials (home show display, vehicle wrap); the rest was for miscellaneous expenses like training, accounting setup, office equipment, etc.

## Where did you get most of your advice/do most of your research?

I utilized the help of a franchise consultant to help me pick my top three franchises. I highly recommend using a consultant, as they typically vet all the companies they work with and recommend only those they feel are quality businesses. There is really no downside to this process as this service is free to the prospective franchisee. Without that guidance, I would have been overwhelmed with the process and the large number of franchises out there.

## What were the most unexpected challenges of opening your franchise?

The biggest challenge for me was getting the right team in place. I didn't have a lot of experience with hiring and managing people prior to this, so that, combined with the learning curve of getting to know the business myself, was tough. We wanted to grow at a pace that was sustainable and would allow our team to provide the highest level of service.

I've learned along the way that I always need to be looking for ways my team can improve to better serve our clients. Recently, I created training documents for the team and also shared them with the corporate office in case [that contribution] would be valuable to the system as a whole. Thankfully, the franchisor has provided great support to encourage our success.

## What advice do you have for individuals who want to own their own franchise?

Use a franchise consultant to help you explore what's out there and what might be a good fit for you. Have a monetary goal in mind as well as a lifestyle goal; make sure that the prospective business has the capability of meeting both of those requirements. Once you're far enough along in discussions with the prospective franchise, do your due diligence with the validation process and speak to several current franchise owners to get their firsthand experience and see if it's meeting their expectations.

## What's next for you and your business?

Things have been going so well with ShelfGenie that a few years ago, I decided to buy into another franchise, this time in the frozen yogurt industry. Before I was able to open a location, things did not pan out with that business, so I ended up backing out. Although it didn't work out as planned, I was able to see the inner workings of another franchisor, and I learned that, with ShelfGenie, I am fortunate to be partnered with a solid company with solid values, which cares about its franchisees.

I've since decided to double down on ShelfGenie by focusing my efforts on expanding my coverage area and building a phenomenal team to provide the best possible experience for our clients.



***“We wanted to grow at a pace that was sustainable and would allow our team to provide the highest level of service.”***

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