

When is the right time for marketing?

How can you promote your business, without a heavy cost? And is this the right time? Tom Bull, Web Developer at Beaver Design, takes a look at e-marketing

Businesses always need to bring in customers and when times are difficult, this need is even greater.

The next time a potential customer wants something which you sell, what will lead them to choose you and not a competitor? What puts your company in their mind? In a word, "promotion" – get your business in front of people! If people are going to buy, then you want them buying from you.

This means marketing yourself. You want your customers remembering your business and forgetting the competition.

If you still think marketing is a cost you don't need, then here's a little something Henry Ford said:

"The man who stops advertising to save money is like the man who stops a clock to save time."

So what's a good way to market, without spending too much?

Bring in "e-marketing", a term which describes promotion of your business over the internet.

Spread the word

Advertising on the web catches the eye of people and directs them to your website.

It can be that simple. But for an advert to work, there are things to consider like the design and location of your ad.

You want to make sure you're advertising to



the right people. It's unlikely an advert for dog biscuits on a financial services website will generate much business!

With email addresses for the people you want as customers, then e-flyers are a direct way of marketing.

A good e-flyer is designed similar to a web page, but instead of being visited, it goes direct to the individual.

In many companies, between 60 and 80% of business comes from existing customers. Simply staying in contact is a very good way to keep a loyal customer base and with a good e-flyer, this can be done at a low cost. A great thing about web ads and e-flyers is that they can be tracked.

You can see how many people are viewing your banner, how many are clicking on it and what they do when they reach your website. E-flyers tell you information on specifically who's viewed the email, who's clicked a link and how many times. This technology isn't new and successful businesses are using this data to interact better with customers.

1997: Weblog. 2009: We blog

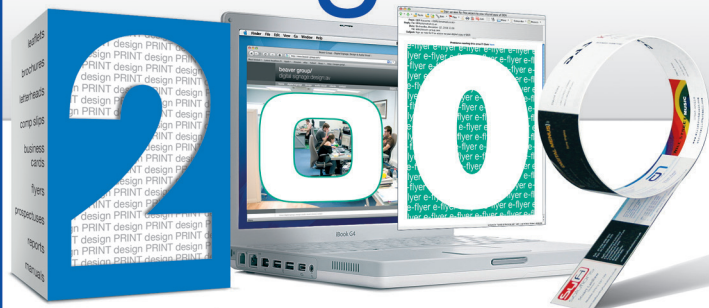
Blogs, called weblogs when they started in 1997, were originally used by individuals to post their personal views as a form of free journalism. Blogs do well on search engines as they are made of current and (hopefully) relevant information. These days, many companies are using a blog on their site, giving current news and helping the site's ranking in search engines.

Online, as in the real world, it's all about being found and chosen. Search engines are a primary gateway for new customers into your company and next month I'll be covering them in more detail.

The better positioned your company is on the web, the better chance there is that when a potential customer wants something which you sell, they'll be finding you and not the competition. Whether in a recession or not, the time to promote your business has always been now!

◆ Next month: *Search Engine Optimisation*

Design for



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