

Aspiring Webmasters Want To Know, "What Makes a Website Grow?"

It appears that most webmasters have come from the world of advertising. Their website content emphasizes "marketing and promotion". Just to prove my point, do a Google search on "marketing promotion". As I write, Google comes up with "about 5,910,000" entries. Gosh imagine the good fortune of a listing on page one! Of course, the number of entries for "marketing promotion" gets shadowed by "sex" which provides you with "about 192,000,000". It's not money and sex; it's sex and money.

Prominent webmasters like Jim Daniels, Cory Rudll, and Kevin Bidwell (one of my favorites) et.al teach you Internet success strategies. Of course, they all started way back in '96 (that's 1996) when aspiring webmasters wanted to know how to succeed.

Someone asked me recently if Cory Rudll's two volume manual collects dust on my desk. Chagrined, I acknowledge, "sitting just to the right of my keyboard" (been there for two years). Then I think of all the other manuals, ebooks purchased to vault my Internet marketing skills.

What then gets you the income so many claim to make? You've read the ads, "so and so made \$55,000 in one month" and this was their slowest month. Or, affiliate maven makes \$463,000 a year marketing affiliate programs. Each of these testimonials appear attached to some alluring ebook which you "must have" to succeed. Well, hold off before entering your credit card number.

Here are 5 considerations to ponder before thinking about income from your website.

Purpose:

I never gave much credence to business plans; however, you can't get from my house to Boston without a map. Whether you write it down (which is best) or create pictures in your mind, there must be a map. A strategy which defines what steps you take. Strategies begin with brainstorming. Sit down, put a blank paper on your desk, grasp your pen, and write. Write anything that comes to mind relevant to your purpose. Write the not so relevant ideas too; who knows they might turn out to be the most important expression of your brainstorming.

A number of routes will get you to Boston from my house: some direct and boring, some scenic and slow. Who cares what way you get there. Herman Drost's article, "8 Steps to Creating a Simple Business Plan...." provides a "how to" outline.

Persistence:

No matter what Internet hype reads, this takes persistence. Perhaps the only emotion that separates the successful from the not so successful comes down to persistence. Calvin Coolidge's (1872-1933) viewpoint may be worth memorizing. "Nothing in the world can take the place of Persistence. Talent will not; nothing is more common than unsuccessful men with talent. Genius will not; unrewarded genius is almost a proverb. Education will not; the world is full of educated derelicts. Persistence and determination alone are omnipotent.

The slogan 'Press On' has solved and always will solve the problems of the human race." Kevin Sinclair's article, "Persistence - The Magic Key To Success" inspires you to continue. Also, if you've never read Russell Conwell's "Acres of Diamonds", find it and read it now.

Preparation:

"There are no secrets to success. It is the result of preparation, hard work, and learning from failure," says Colin Powell. Well, historians will assess the current geopolitical "learning from failure".

Every endeavor requires preparation. Ever watch a chef work? Every summer I work a weekend at a camp which serves 250 men seven meals. Doesn't sound like much until I observed the chef arrives to work at 3AM. I would get there at 4:15AM in order to dice, chop, stir, and pour in preparation for the next meal. When meals get served, few understand the amount of "prep work" that preceded the meal. No one sees you doing it; it just has to be done. Judy Collins provides clear guidelines on Ten Steps To Prepare Yourself for Online Marketing.

Probabilities:

As this article is written, the banter of presidential poll interpretation continues. Everyone has an opinion, and every pole a changing nuance. Reading polls provides some lessons on reading the probabilities of website traffic.

Most of us read the primary poll results rather than referring to the "internal tracking polls". When reading website traffic, we look at the number of visits without reading the "internal tracking". Travis Reeder provides detailed explanations and reasons for digging deeper into the numbers in his article, "How (and Why) to Read Your Web Statistics and Analytics".

Learn to track visitors. "AWStats is a free powerful and featureful (sic) tool that generates advanced web, ftp or mail server statistics, graphically." "A reasonable probability is the only certainty," writes E.W. Howe. So what probabilities do you have for succeeding and how do you measure them?

Personality:

Ever start a conversation with someone until you recognize that person is not "there"? Many websites give the same impression. What does this webmaster think? What matters to them? What message do they want conveyed?

It takes more effort to insert your personality into your work, to evidence your opinions and world view on a website. Every website page represents you implicitly or explicitly. What matters to you should be evident on your website, and your website should reflect your values.

Little seems to be written about this subject. Terri Seymour's article, "The Power of Personality" provides further insights. Bob Baker's book, "Poor Richard's Branding Yourself Online" elaborates this premise.

Oscar Wilde's observation that "Most people are other people. Their thoughts are someone else's opinions, their lives a mimicry, their passions a quotation" deserves a webmaster's attention.

As with all enterprise, Internet endeavors involve you with something that does not happen overnight. As with all worthy efforts, it requires a purpose clearly defined, a persistence resolutely affirmed, and a daily preparation involving your complete personality. You must remain passionately focused on the belief that you add value to this incredible enterprise known as the Internet.

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