

What You Don't Know (About E-Advertising) Can Hurt You!

By: Janet L. Warren, You And Me Enterprises

What is E-Advertising Anyway?

E-Advertising, or Electronic Advertising, is advertising via the Internet with a website, or digital sales tool. The Internet is probably one of the more popular advertising media available in today's marketplace. And it's becoming increasingly moreso with the addition of the 20-somethings graduating from college, establishing their careers and coming into their own. Why is this such a big deal?

This is the generation of fast food, fast results, fast information and get-it-now. This is also the generation that will be spending money with you in the future, if they aren't already.

In the recent past, businesses have had to change marketing strategies, plans, types and modes of advertising just to reach them, just to get – and hold – their attention.

In 10 years, they'll be the 30-somethings with families, fast-paced careers, and even more technology to help them along in their daily routines so they can get more done and get it done immediately.

Most in the age bracket will not be interested in waiting 6 weeks for their mail-order purchase to arrive. Most are not interested in using the telephone to contact you. They don't have time during the day. They do their surfing in the evenings and at night long after you've closed your doors and turned on your answering-machine.

As equally interesting is that even the tail end of the baby-boomers generation – the current mid-to late 40-somethings are online. Although they may be more reserved and slower to accept change, they're paying bills online, banking online, surfing the Internet, and communicating with family members online. While not all will purchase online, they will spend hours researching products, businesses and entertainment on the Internet.

So What Does That Mean for a Business Owner?

Well it means a lot actually! Just advertising in the newspaper or on television isn't giving enough information – not when your competitor is using electronic advertising.

And if you are using a website to electronically advertise, you need to know your Site is effective. It is no longer acceptable just to have a “place” online. A Site must hold interest, have valuable content, have serious appeal and trigger the type of technology that these individuals are looking for in order to be popular online.

Tommy Grammer, one of our clients and owner of Charleston's School for Dogs, said it best: “It all comes down to – if given a choice between a piece of clipart or a glossy photo, naturally you pick the glossy photo.”

In today's technological marketplace – and in particular the Internet – there is a wide variety of technologies and avenues that can be used to get information across to your Site Visitor:

- 1.) Videography – More and more, particularly since the popularity explosion of sites like YouTube.com and MySpace.com, Site Owners are using video to get points of interest across to their audience. Used for displaying walk-throughs of cars, homes and businesses, demonstrating products for sale and showing the how-to's of their service procedures, videos have a lot of clout on a website. We use Video Testimonials on our website. What can be better than to see a Site Owner's customer or client explaining why they like the service/product they received from that Site Owner's business. It's as good as word-of-mouth advertising.
- 2.) Newsletter Subscriptions, built to anti-spam guidelines, are a great way to get your business' information out to your patrons. Send them a monthly email with a link to your monthly newsletter published on your website, offering them advice for your industry, current sales and promotions that you're offering, and other tidbits of interest.

You should be aware that, newsletters online are different than the paper ones. Advertising can be sold (giving you another revenue stream), your new product you're selling can be shown in video, contests and surveys can be handled by a newsletter and the list of what you can do with an online newsletter goes on and on.
- 3.) Free reports and trade articles, just like the one you're reading now, made available on your website can really boost interest in your business. People want information and – remember – they want it NOW!
- 4.) A Frequently Asked Questions page can go a long way in keeping you from having to answer phone calls from customers, asking - over and over again – the same questions. You can just refer them to your website.

The above 4 examples are just a sampling of what you can do through website promotions. They're just examples of offerings you can use to compete online. It does not, however, mean that you have to spend lots and lots of money without any return for your investment!

Websites With ROI – Now That's a Concept!

Many business owners that we come in contact with regularly think that advertising using a website will cost money that they'll never recoup. And that's true in many cases. Whether you'll recoup your money – or not – depends on many factors:

- 1.) It depends on how well-built your website project is. Is it built to gather (legally) information about your Site Visitors so that you can actually sell to them, whether the sale takes place online or not?

It isn't important where the sale takes place. It is important that you give the Visitor a means for getting in contact with you immediately – even at 1:00 in the morning – to get more information on what it is that interests them. If they can do this, then your percentage of closing a sale, even if they must come to your location to purchase is greatly enhanced.

- 2.) Is your Site capable of handling repeat business? If you have a mailing list, or a built-in feature that encourages your prior online customers to come back to you again, then the

chances are good that your website is capable of returning your investment and generating revenues beyond the Site's development costs.

- 3.) Does your Site build rapport? Online, you don't have the face-to-face handshake capability, but there are features that can be put into place on your Site that produce the same effect.
- 4.) Is your Site easy to navigate? If Site Visitors get on your Site and it doesn't work, or they are easily lost, then the chances are good you won't realize any return from it. Site Visitors must love it, so it has to be visitor-friendly. If they hate it, they won't be back and there went your investment.
- 5.) Is your Site viewable in all major browsers? We're not talking about Search Engines now, we're talking about browsers: Internet Explorer, Opera, Netscape, Firefox – just to name a few. If it isn't, or it looks strange in one browser yet fine in another, then it's not visitor-friendly. This issue should be handled by your development company.

Here's the Bottom Line!

If you're not taking advantage of E-Advertising, then you're cutting yourself out of a very viable marketplace. If you're advertising online and your Site isn't generating any interest, then you're not realizing a return for your investment.

A website, like any other form of advertising, is an investment. It's as much of an investment as your cash register, your computer, your tools to do your job.

We feel all Sites should have the capability of yielding your investment many times over. Don't you agree?

Resource Information:

Janet L. Warren is the Chief Web Developer for "You And Me Enterprises" !
Learn to choose the right Web Development company for your Web-projects.

To learn more about getting more from your advertising, Visit our Library!

<http://www.youandmeunlimited.com>

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