CyberBulletin

The bulletin that powers up your online presence

More Than Just a Pretty Site! | Webmaster for Hire, LLC | June 1, 2006

THANK YOU TO:

JIM Collins -- Referred ProJam

Diane White -- Referred PBOI - Site in Development

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New Web Content, Fresh Look to Site Brings More Business

So, you have a web site for your business. Now, you can sit back and watch the business come pouring in — right? Not necessarily.

Let's look at search engines, where you definitely want to be in order to gain a constant flow of new visitors. Once they find your web site (either because you submitted your information or another web site is linked to you), they send their spiders to literally "crawl" your site, like a spider following every web link and indexing all the pages they find to put in their search databases. Once your web site has been thoroughly indexed, there is no reason for a spider to return, unless there is new content to index. No new content, no further indexing — which means you will possibly slip in the search engine rankings with less people seeing your listing. ***New content means more frequent search engine indexing and a chance for higher rankings.***

New content also means that previous visitors have a reason to return. Return visits mean repeat business. Enough said!

The following are different methods for you to add fresh content to your web site:

- **Update Your Existing Web Pages.** Content, as well as the look and feel of a web site, can become stale to visitors over time. You do not want to make major changes, since the experience is too drastic (similar to going to your favorite supermarket and finding all the products are located in different places — it is frustrating and annoying). Minor changes, however, can make a feel-good, new impact on repeat visitors.

  Text. Just rewrite the text a bit, make it more user-friendly, write it from a "benefits to the consumer" perspective, or use more marketing in the way it is written. Your content should change somewhat each time you make a change to your products/services, or add/delete them. If your business or information changes, so should your web content. It is just enough to give your web site a fresh feel.

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Site Design. If you have had your web site design and navigation structure for a few years, you might want to update the look and feel of the site from an artistic perspective. For example, moving the navigation from down-the-side to across-the-top, or slightly changing the color scheme, makes your web site look and feel new yet almost as comfortable as the old design.

Whenever you add new products/services, display them prominently in a sidebar. You can showcase several new products/services, using a small, slower changing, sidebar Flash movie.

- **Write Articles for Your Web Site.** Giving away free information and showcasing your expertise through articles is a proven method for generating new web site business.

Do you distribute a print **newsletter or ezine** for your business? Create a new page at your web site titled, “Newsletters”. Then, upload the newsletter or ezine from the first of the year (January) to now in both .pdf and .html formats. The .pdf format adds user-friendly convenience — easy to download and save to individual computers, but search engines cannot index them. The .html format gives you the marketing advantage — search engines can index them. Next, create a new web page titled, “News”, and link from here to all the major articles in the .html formatted newsletters. (Add your press releases to this News page, too.)

Many writers tell you to distribute or syndicate these same articles across the Internet; however, I do not advise this — it is a two-edged sword. If search engines locate too many instances of the same article, some lower the rankings for all the web sites with that same article. Not a good thing to do. If you wish to draw visitors and establish expertise from such free publicity distributions, write separate articles specific for this and link to them from your web site. Do not take the chance of lowering your rankings.

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Finding topics to write about is easy. There are many free article sites on the web, but you do not want to use them as they are. The problem in the above paragraph will come home to haunt you. Plus, you must include the author's byline, which gives the credibility you are trying to establish away to someone else. Just rewrite them from scratch using the information from the article, or have a professional do it for you. Other places to get ideas are from the news, your clients, questions from visitors at your site, or any other place where your industry is discussed and questions are asked.

- **Blogs.** The latest rage across the Internet even has national news programs using blogs to gain viewership. It was originally called a weblog, a term for web log, and then shortened to blog. Essentially, a blog is an online publication, consisting primarily of periodic articles or updates in reverse order (latest is on top). Like any other media, blogs usually focus on a particular subject. Some are online diaries. They can contain text, images and web links, and use "blogging" web scripts.

  They are excellent for answering questions, informing people of new products/services, giving away information (just like in articles) in which potential customers would be interested, imparting industry news, and sharing your expert opinions. Blogs are fantastic vehicles for connecting with your customer base. Unlike a News page for articles, blogs do need more frequent and regular updates and additions to hold the interest of your viewers.

However you decide to keep your web site fresh in order to keep visitors returning and becoming repeat customers, Webmaster for Hire can assist you. Contact us today to discuss the best solution for your business.

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