

Marketing Strategies for Business-to-Business - B2B Websites

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<http://pwebs.net/2007/06/marketing-business-to-business-websites/>

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Website information is required to get found in the search engines.

The number one thing required in a business to business website is to provide pertinent information for customers and future customers to find via the search engines online.

While e-commerce B2B websites must be focused on providing an easy means of order taking and checkout, and also secure shopping carts, there are large numbers of businesses that sell to other businesses in which true e-commerce is not a factor. These business websites that are structured for information, marketing, and advertising purposes, are really about how well the information is marketed online.

Are you a good story teller?

Marketing a B2B business today, especially online, requires good story telling to bring a marketing message alive on the Internet. When marketing online, creativity is a must. Sure, it is wise to keep a message simple, but keeping a message simple from a search engine standpoint simply will not do. There are some things that can be done from a best practices approach for both the [graphics](#) presented and the website text copy that can help in this area.

Here is one question that is important to consider. How many businesses compete in your market sector; five, ten, fifteen, or more? How many of these businesses have websites that look like the others. Does your business website look like the competition? If the website looks like all the others, what will set it apart? More than likely, it will get lost in the search results.

Having a website online forces you to write down the key points about your business, and this is good. If you are going to have a web presence, then you should try to make it all it can be. Don't skimp on what is said. Don't dismiss the importance of a website either. The old ways of doing business with just advertising in the Yellow Pages, simply will not produce the same results that it did fifteen or twenty years ago. You must have a web presence to compete in most markets today.

Everyone is searching online. Businesses are no different than the rest of us. Engineers and buyers are using the Internet and specifically the search engines as the new [B2B Exchanges](#). Tell me, why would any company want to be left out in the cold. Maybe you are thinking, "my business is such a specialty market, and everyone knows me throughout the whole market place, there is no need to have a web presence." These types of thoughts are not very logical today. Even if you are correct in your analysis (which I highly doubt), don't you think existing customers would want to find your phone number or email contact information online?

OK, now your thoughts say, "I am convinced that a website presence is required. Where do we start?" you might ask. Well, I'll bet that you probably have brochures or something in writing that talks about what it is that your company does. That certainly can be a good starting point for prompting you into writing some items down. Once these thoughts are written out, a good copywriter can come up with the essence of what to say in a website. Writing something down in an idea form has been some of the toughest hurdles to overcome for many businesses. Years ago, where "word of mouth" was everything for many businesses to promote themselves, will not necessarily work the same way as before. There is too much competition, from the local markets and the international markets in which price seems to have more of an impact today than ever before in all lines of business.

Having a website published is not the end. Don't make this mistake into thinking that you never have to update your website. Your competition will surely not sit idle with their websites, and more importantly their marketing efforts online. Evaluating the impact of every marketing strategy, will be important for the next move to be made. Just like in a chess game, where competitors are looking five or more moves ahead, so to must a business evaluate the next moves ahead.

It is important to note that many of the marketing moves online will not have an immediate impact on a business's bottom-line. There are however a couple of things that can make an immediate impact. Search engine marketing, also known as online advertising is a quick way to get a business started. This is because keywords can be bid on through the search engines themselves. If you bid high enough for your keywords then you can get your ad to show up in the search results pages on the right or top side of many of the search engines. These results are paid for through this bidding action. The natural search results generally take more time and Internet marketing efforts to establish a website in the general population of search results. This is due to search algorithms making an automated calculation of the website's importance through a multitude of variables which each search engine keeps tight lipped about.

[Search Engine Optimization](#), SEO is another one of those words that has many meanings, depending on who you talk to. The basic idea is to fine tune a website, optimizing the pages, to have the website rank better in the natural search results. Many individuals will say this is a one time process. I don't believe this to be correct. Search engine optimization must be ongoing. Much like an article written, there is usually more than one draft as time goes on. Even the simple things in a website must be updated annually. For example, copyright dates should be updated to reflect at least the attention to a website details. This can quite possibly make a bad first impression. A potential customer that comes to a website, with old copyright dates, tends to think that maybe the business does not pay particular attention to details. Even though they might not say it, the question is now in the back of their minds.

There are many other factors that also must be addressed for a business website on a regular basis. But, you need to take the initiative, and start today with a website presence if you do not have one, or develop and improve what you already have online.

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