

The Essential Guide To Free Traffic



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Introduction

Let's see if the following sounds at all familiar to you...

When you first discover Internet marketing you get all excited - and make no mistake about it, Internet marketing IS exciting.

Quite frankly the money making potential in an online business is massive and VERY easy to see...

So, you go off and learn as much as you can about it all. You learn all about how to build a website, how to FTP files and how to set up a Wordpress blog. You read and learn all about email marketing and how to build a squeeze page, how to create an information product and how to launch a membership site.

So - if you were anything like me then you learnt all of this and dived right in.

But a few months or weeks down the line nothing much happened.
and then it hits you like a ton of bricks...

None of these things matter if you don't have traffic!

Yep - you can launch all the websites you want but if you don't have any traffic then 1.) nobody's ever going to see them (obviously) and 2.) you're never going to make any money.

I know it sounds really daft but this is something most newbies completely miss. They think that you can just throw up a website and hope that other people find you...

But sadly that's never going to work. You have to actively go out and tell people about your sites.

This leaves you with two options:

1. Paid traffic methods
- and
2. Free traffic methods

In this report we're going to concentrate on the latter methods - and there's a good reason for this...

When you're just starting out the chances are that you aren't going to be able to afford to buy much traffic.

Paid traffic methods such as solo ads or adwords are fantastic. They DO work (and it's possible to recover back the money you put into them AND make a profit)

... But that's only any good if you actually have money to put into them in the first place.

Free traffic methods are the answer...

But we need to get something out of the way first...

While free traffic methods DO work they require you to put in quite a bit of work.

I'm being totally upfront with you about this. If you're going to use free traffic methods then they WILL require you to put more work in than paid traffic methods.

It'll also take a little longer to see some results...

But if you're comfortable with that then you can get some excellent results.

Without further ado, let's delve into the actual methods.

Article Marketing: The Worst Kept Secret to Success

Article marketing means writing interesting articles related to your niche, and then submitting them to article directories to generate links back to your website. The links to your website will help boost your search engine rankings, and if the article is interesting enough, will help bring traffic to your site.

It's a simple, powerful, and best of all, free way to generate interest in your website and the product or service you have to offer. When you submit your article to one of these directories, you are giving people permission to use your article as content for your site—with one condition—they won't change the link to your website. So, this is a one-two punch. You'll have a link to your website on the article directory itself, and you'll also get a link each time someone chooses your article as content on their own website.

Want to try this for yourself? Here's a step-by-step process to help you get started.

Think About Your Article Topics First

You will need to have fresh, new, content if you want the article directories to accept your articles. It is okay to use private label rights (PLR) material, but you must re-write it or add more material to it. If you're tempted to use it as-is, remember there are plenty of other people who have had the same idea—with the same directory.

The nature of PLR means that hundreds, possibly thousands of people are using the same PLR articles you have, so you'll have to make some changes to make yourself different from the rest of them.

If you have a specific niche you want to promote, pick a topic related to that particular niche that would interest your readers and write 300-700 words on that particular subject.

If there is a certain niche you're looking to promote, choose a topic related to the niche that you know readers would find interesting. Write anywhere from 300 to 700 words on the subject.

For instance, if web design is your passion, your topics could be:

- Color Theory: What Your Color Scheme Says About Your Company
- Designing for Usability: Make it Easy for Your Visitors
- Top 10 WordPress Plugins for X
- Top 10 Free WordPress Themes
- Top 10 Premium WordPress Themes

Make a list of everything you know about your passion, and you'll have plenty of topic ideas for your articles. Try to have a little fun with your topics.

Think about what you are selling online, whether it is memberships, software, or e-books, and the benefits of purchasing the products you have to offer. Then, turn each of those benefits into an article to send you targeted traffic.

For instance, let's say you've made a business of e-books about how to solve various problems. You can write articles about how to solve those problems, providing just enough information to keep your readers interested and wanting to know more. In the resource box for that article, you can include a link to the full book on the issue.

Don't Make Your Articles Advertisements

If your article is nothing more than a long, fancy advertisement for your product, then you are not going to find a single article directory that will publish it. Don't waste your time.

Publishers are constantly looking for new content to present to their readers—content they don't have to write themselves. Creating new content doesn't mean you have to reinvent the wheel, but you will have to rework the content to make it both interesting and useful to the publisher's readership.

That means:

Provide a fresh perspective on old ideas

Most of what's out there today can be restructured, either through changing the wording, changing the order of the information, or both, to make it a new piece of content for traffic generation.

People who turn to the Internet for information are searching for anything and everything you can imagine, and with a keyword tool, you can find out what they are looking for within your niche, and how many people are looking for it.

Having this information available before you start writing articles to promote your products or services can help you make sure you are not wasting time with topics people aren't actively searching for.

Offer a New Solution for an Old Problem Many Relate to

There is more than one way to get gum out of your hair, get rid of ants, remove stains from the carpet, and to save money on car insurance.

Everywhere you look, there's a problem, and we all have plenty of them. If you can offer a list that promises a new way to overcome an everyday hassle, many publishers will accept it, because nearly everyone will be able to relate to the information you're sharing.

The more creative you are, the greater chance you have of your articles being more widely circulated around the Internet. If you have a funny story behind how you discovered a solution, share it. Try to avoid writing in a technical manner, as this can get dry and boring fast. If you have more than one solution and can make several articles from a single problem, do it.

Develop a New Set of Steps to Accomplish Something

Lots of people love step-by-step lists that show them things that will make their lives easier. This is definitely true when it comes to dealing with new technical aspects of social media and Web 2.0.

Articles like this are in every article directory, and many people run to them. Most readers want to know how to master the vague processes responsible for so much of what they see online.

If you are one of the people who has already mastered one of these

vague processes, you've hit the proverbial jackpot in terms of article topics. Start at the beginning, and write a step-by-step process that will work them all the way through the end.

Chances are you're already familiar with these types of topics because you already see them in your email box every day. Things such as: You see examples in your email box all day long with titles like *"5 Secrets To Mastering _____," "5 Steps to _____" or "How to _____."*

To get some ideas for new articles, read some of the articles in the directory that are on your niche. Since ideas cannot be copyrighted, you can use anything that pops into your head while reading the competition's work.

Share a Family Recipe (Ask first!)

A lot of useful information and techniques are fading away as the new generations flock to the "new stuff" like hungry seagulls on a deserted beach.

Our grandparents and great-grandparents hold the key to a lot of useful information and ways of doing things. As the new generation moves toward the new way of doing things, much like birds flying south for the winter, we are seeing that information fade away.

By reaching out to your ancestors and sharing the information they have to offer, with their permission of course, you can bring back their legacy, in the form of articles and eBooks that would be popular in our current society.

If you can't reach out to your own ancestors, look to public domain repositories. The archived information there is a goldmine for old ideas that brought us to where we are today. Under most laws, this information is free for your use, however you wish to use it. It's always a good idea to check the laws in your country to be sure, before you do anything with it.

You can find nearly anything you would need under public domain, including: movies, graphics and photos, music, software, plays, poetry, eBooks, and more.

Each Article Directory has Submission Guidelines You Must Follow

Though some article directories may have similar submission guidelines,

you should not assume that they are all the same. When you are writing your articles, make sure you know and follow the guidelines for the director you are writing for. The article approval process is not automated—there is a real person there making sure your articles fall within the guidelines.

There are article submission services out there that will charge a fee to submit your articles to hundreds of directories, but those services are not going to check and make sure your articles meet the publishing guidelines for each of those directories—that is your job.

For example, if the guidelines state that the title of your article has to have the first letter of each word capitalized, they will not accept articles with even one word not capitalized.

For instance, the guidelines may state the title of your article must have the first letter of each word capitalized, and they will refuse an article with a title that lacks just one word not being capitalized.

Acceptable: *"Five Steps To A Successful Online Business"*

Not Acceptable: *"Five Steps to a Successful Online Business"*

Here are a few of the most popular article directories to help get you started.

- [Ezine Articles](#)
- [Article Dashboard](#)
- [Article Marketer](#)

Make sure you take the time to read each site's article submission guidelines and follow them exactly. It will save you time and improve your acceptance rates if you take care of this before hand.

Increasing Traffic with Forums

Forums are all over the Internet with a niche focus on nearly anything you can imagine. Internet marketing and making money at home are among the most popular forum niches today, and could be for some time to come.

To find a forum focused on your niche, all you need to do is search for your niche keywords and add the word forum. You'll find a list of options in the results, but you will want to be careful about joining too many. Part of the value of forum traffic comes from your participation, so you'll want to choose one or two to join. If you see any that charge a premium, you can consider those, too, but free forums can give you the same, if not better, results.

Why? Members will have the same problems, needs, and questions, regardless of whether or not they are paying members. Those members also have buying power for products they find useful or resources they need.

When you first join a new forum, you will want to look for the "new member" category or thread, where you can introduce yourself and do a soft self-promotion of the product or service you are offering. Tell about who you are, where you live, what you do, and your interest and experience in the niche you just joined.

A good idea is to create a short friendly bio you can use to post in each forum introduction thread when you join a new one.

The next thing you should do is fill out your profile and create a signature, also known as a sig. Your signature will appear at the bottom of every single forum post, along with any private messages you send. All you need is your screen name or your real name, your link, and a simple statement to generate clicks.

Here are a couple of examples:

"Robert Smith
Need a website? Contact [RS Web Design](#) to get a new website for your business!"

"Robin Patterson

Housebreaking your puppy driving you crazy? Visit [Potty Training Puppy](#) for easy solutions to get puppy going outside in no time."

(These links aren't real. Don't try to click them.)

Whatever you decide your niche is, add your linked signature to every single posting or email you send, even emails to your mother. A carefully constructed signature is totally viral and will zip around the Web without you having to think about it again.

Add your linked signature to everything—even emails you send to your mother. A well-written signature can go viral around the Internet without you giving it a second thought.

For instance, let's say you email your mom a recipe, and she shares it with her friends. Your email signature is going with that recipe, and those friends could share it with their friends and so on. Somewhere down the line, as that recipe email keeps circulating, you're bound to get some traffic because someone is curious, or could really use your products or services.

With your online personality out of the way, it's time to take care of the rest of your forum marketing tactics.

Read all the categories in the forum. Get to know the moderators and how they comment. Find out who the strongest members are and what they post in terms of questions and answers. Once you have a good feel for the community, jump in and start offering your own questions and answers. Provide links to free resources.

As you continue to provide support and build a reputation for being a reliable source of information, you will become a valued community member. You are building a reputation and creating credibility so people will listen to you when it is time for you to make a sales pitch.

Many marketing forums will have an Announcement thread, where you can deliberately market your products. Before you post there, make sure you read how it is done on that forum, and make sure you are abiding by forum rules. Use the methods with your own promotional method.

If you really want to get attention to your products, offer the forum members something for free—something like a small report, software, an

eBook or a set of articles—that they can use for their own purposes. Be on standby so you can answer questions, and make sure you use the product before you give it away.

Don't forget when you have a product launch, a couple of hours posting on the forums can greatly add to your sales by just including your sig link in each post.

When you have a product launch, spending a couple of hours posting on the forums you're actively involved in with the link in your signature can boost your sales quite a bit.

Give it a try, and you'll like it. You'll definitely get a response and see a traffic increase—and it's completely free!

Using Search Engine Optimization (SEO)

Making sure your website is popular with your customers *and* the search engines is no easy feat.

It takes more than submitting your website to the searching engines (the bots will automatically find it anyway) and waiting for customers to come. You have to stay on the cutting edge of new trends, implement various techniques you learn, and put everything to good use before you can start building an online presence and working toward earning page rank.

Search engine optimization, or SEO, refers to the process of working to increase your ranks in the search engines, hopefully to the first page of results, if not the number one spot. It may sound simple, but the reality is it difficult work. If achieved, however, the benefits it provides to your business are worth the effort tenfold. Nothing of value is going to fall in your lap unless you work for it, and the same can be said for where your website ends up in the rankings.

SEO is an ongoing process with several distinct steps that, if followed and completed in a timely manner, will lead you to success. A good SEO plan will bring you a better return on your investment (ROI) than most other plans, especially online. In fact, SEO has been called "the most effective form of online marketing."

SEO is not an instant process. It is not a one and done process. It is an on-going effort that consists of many steps. If steps are completed in a time manner, they will provide success. A killer SEO strategy will bring a better return on investment (ROI) than most other marketing plans, especially when it comes to online. SEO has been referred to as "the most effective form of online marketing" though some may argue social media is on its tail.

Let's get started.

The goal is to bring in free traffic to expand your customer base so you have more people to market to. There are many different ways to do this, but they all come down again to three things: keyword choice, manipulation, and research.

Shortcut – It is possible to adjust your SEO until you're blue in the face. The first 20% of your SEO will bring in 80% of your profits. Once you get something that works, don't mess with it too much.

Here is a basic outline of steps I follow, and what works for me.

Choosing Your Keywords

Selecting the right keywords is the first thing you should do and will be the most important thing for your completed website. You need to find a balance between the competitive keywords that everyone else is going after and the less popular keywords that people are still searching for, but people aren't competing for.

If no one is searching for information using the keywords you selected, no one will be able to find your website with a search engine. If your keywords are incredibly popular as search terms, your competition will prevent you from rising to the top of the results for those phrases.

To make it even more complex, you must choose keywords that relate to the buyers that you are trying to bring to your site. You can easily attract fire with cryptic headline or questions to spark curiosity, but you want to attract visitors were interested in buying what you have to offer.

Sounds impossible, doesn't it? You don't have to become a mind reader to get the job done.

You can make a list of keywords based on popularity and a list of keywords based on competition. Using a tool like [WordTracker](#), you can get a list of suggested keywords based on popularity, to save you time.

How Do You Measure Up With Your Rankings?

You will not be able to move up in the page rankings until you understand where you are ranking right now for the keywords you have chosen for your website and your products and services.

By now, you should have a list of relevant keywords your future customers are using to search. Add these keywords throughout your website content, in the title, Meta description, and Meta tags. When used in your copy, keep the keywords near the beginning, somewhere in the middle of the copy, and again toward the end.

When you are ready to find out where you stand in the eyes of the search engine, you can use the Google PageRank Report for free. This is an online tool to check the PageRank values for the list of URLs you enter.

Once you know where you stand and why, you can focus your efforts into improving your ranking in the search engines.

Creating and Optimizing Your Webpage

We've reached the most critical part of search engine optimization/marketing. To keep the search engines happy, you must give them what they want to find, so you can compete effectively. The search engines are constantly changing their ranking algorithms, so getting things right from the get go will help you weather the changes. Read on to find out more about what the search engines want to know.

Search the keywords you want to rank for in Google, and take a close look at the top 10 sites to get an understanding of what has them ranking so high.

Study them and look at the following:

- Content
- Keyword placement
- Keyword density
- Keyword counts
- Link popularity
- Word counts

While you're already looking at the competition, take note about how they are using colour, graphics, testimonials, and white space. This can help you spark ideas to improve the overall look and feel of your website. Emulating success is a technique people have used for decades, and you can make it work for you. One caveat: Don't plagiarize the website's content!

If you try to do all of this on your own manually, you'll be busy for a while. Search Google for "analysing keyword density" and you'll find a number of free tools to help you get the job done.

Uploading Your Website Pages

Each time you make a change to your website, no matter how minor, upload the new version. It will help keep your page current and will attract the search engine robots. Change triggers new content in the eyes of the search spider... and this is a good thing.

Long Tail Keywords

One of the hottest concepts many smart Internet marketers use is “long tail keywords” because they have a specific purpose in your search engine optimization and marketing plans. Long tail keywords are three or more words creating a very specific search, and most consumers use them before they actually make a purchase.

The majority of searches are generic and limited to one or two words, like “dinner ideas” and “hunting.” These searches are testing the waters or looking for broad information before they decide more. When a consumer is ready to buy, they will search with more specifics, which means longer phrases to narrow down the results. The simple searches from before turn into things like “chicken alfredo recipe” and “hunting bows and arrows”.

Conventional wisdom says there is a well defined buying process consumers follow both online and offline. The first steps involve the customer wanting something and looking for information about it online. Then, they will find it and compare features and prices to determine if they can afford it or if they actually want it. During this stage, you’ll see those generic two word searches.

Once they decide to make a purchase, they search again using long tail keywords to specifically define what they are looking to buy, and this is where you come in to attract them to your website. Use the same methods are using to find what they want—by targeting your website and content to those long tail keywords targeted to your product or service.

As a marketer, long tail keywords offer you two main benefits:

- Long tail keywords rank better with the search engines than generic short tail keywords do.
- Those searching with long tail keywords are serious about locating what they are looking for and are much more likely to become a customer.

Opting for this tactic will require additional pages on your website because of the number of combinations pertaining to your products or services, but the good news is, Google loves more pages. The robots crawling your site will think you are bigger and more important.

Your new pages don’t have to be completely different than the other pages on your website, but they should be different versions with a focus on the long tail keywords, which will narrow the focus of that page to the more specific topic.

Making a few simple changes can make a world of difference in your traffic. By making a unique title with a unique long tail keyword for each new page, and using the keyword in your keyword in the description, keywords, headline and body of content, you will attract more people. Make sure that you don't get so specific in your keywords that you are not attracting the traffic you want.

To keep a variety of different customers visiting your site, change your focus. Create some pages to send you traffic from generic keywords, and create a few to send you traffic from the long tail keywords. Though you may see less traffic from those keywords, you'll end up with more targeted traffic, and that is what will make you the most money.

This entire search engine optimization process is a delicate balancing act that can either make or break your business. It is a learning process that you can master with good research and a dash common sense.

Search engine optimization is a delicate process that requires a lot of balance, and when done incorrectly, it can make or break your business. You can master it with research and common sense.

Just don't get so wrapped up in SEO that you don't actually do any marketing yourself—that happens to a lot of marketers!

Video Marketing

If you're looking for another good way to generate traffic to your website, look to video marketing. Though it takes a bit more time to create videos, it can be helpful. Just be sure you create a balance between videos and other methods, until you see what is working well enough for you to continue working on the videos.

If you are working in a computer or Internet related niche, you can make videos much easier, because you can use a screencasting program to record your screen while you talk about what you're doing. This is also a good choice for people who are not too keen on the idea of appearing in front of the camera, but still want to use video marketing to draw traffic.

If you make use of conference calls to reach out to your interested customers so they can learn more about what you have to offer, screencasting software can be used to record this session as a video.

Screen-casting software options include:

- **AVI Screen:** Free
- **Cam Studio:** Free
- **Adobe Captivate:** Commercial
- **Screen Flow:** Commercial, Mac software
- **Jing:** Free, with limitations

If you are outside of this niche, you will need to invest in a video camera and a tripod, and spend time editing videos to make them useful for your audience.

Once you have videos, you will want to create a YouTube account. If you already have a Google account for Gmail or another service like Google Analytics, then you can use that for YouTube, too. Google owns YouTube, so starting your own channel there can naturally boost your SEO so you start to see more traffic.

Invite people to become subscribers to your YouTube channel by including a link to it with your social media icons. Subscribers will be notified whenever you post a new video.

Include a link to your YouTube channel with your social media icons and you can invite people to subscribe to your channel. When someone subscribes to your channel, they will get a notification whenever you post a new video.

It is also a good idea to include your videos in your blog posts, so you have a cross promotional tool. This way, if someone finds your blog post, they can be drawn to your YouTube channel, and if someone finds your video, they can be drawn back to your blog.

Twitter

Twitter is another great free traffic promotional tool. Though it can take awhile to see results from this tactic due to the fact that you must first build an audience of followers, targeted to be your customers, it is worth checking out.

In order for Twitter to work, you must become actively involved with the community and do more than just talk about yourself and what you have to offer. If the only thing you do is talk about yourself, then no one is going to listen, and you'll quickly get lost in the shuffle.

Like you do with forum marketing, take the time to find things that will be useful to your audience, whether or not they are yours originally. For every piece of your own content you share, share at least 10 others that don't originate with you. The relationships you create on Twitter can help you find others who will share your content with their followers, if you share theirs with yours.

Using a tool such as [Prismatic](#) can help you find useful information in nearly any niche you can imagine. Prismatic comes with automatic share links, but if you want to save yourself time and batch your social media efforts, you can use a tool such as HootSuite Pro. For just \$5.99/month, you will have the ability to schedule posts. Though it can be tempting, you should never automate all your social media efforts—if people realize there is not a real person behind the account, they'll ignore it and you'll get lost in the shuffle.

Facebook and Google+ Groups

Facebook and Google+ are used to generate traffic the same way you use forum marketing, except social media, rather than a forum, is the platform. Get the best use of these networks by searching for groups related to your interest. There are groups for nearly any niche imaginable, and they're full of people who are targeted.

Draw traffic to your website by becoming actively involved in these groups, by offering useful information and building a credible reputation. Never spam the groups. Ask questions. Answer them. Provide resources. If the only reason you're participating in a group is for promotional purposes, it will show, and you will be ignored.

Once your own brand and community has expanded because of your efforts, it may be a good idea to start your own group on Facebook, Google+ or both, so that your followers can come together and discuss your products and services. They can get together and talk about how the product has helped them, how they will use it, get help from other users, etc. while giving you a testimonial base to draw in more customers. You'll also have it as a customer service vehicle, which is critical once your business gets up and running.

Conclusion

Building free traffic isn't going to happen overnight. It is going to require consistent effort, for a while. Even when you start to see traffic flowing, it's not the time to give up. You'll spend a lot of time, even on one of these methods, and you will probably run into moments where you want to give up. The most important thing is to focus and keep yourself centred. Trial and error is going to be part of the game.

Let's review the free traffic building methods we talked about and the key points you need to remember:

Article Marketing

- Put a new spin on old content.
- Re-write any PLR content.
- Follow all article submission guidelines, and remember, they vary from directory to directory.

Forum Marketing

- Find forums specific to your niche by searching Google. Several should come up for you to choose from.
- Join one or two—you'll need to be actively involved for this to work, and you can only spread yourself so thin.
- Build your profile, and set your profile signature as a soft pitch, with a link to your website.
- Introduce yourself in the appreciate thread.
- Provide value. Don't self-promote except for in the appropriate threads.

SEO:

- Find keywords people are searching for your niche.
- Create a balance with buyer intent keywords, long tail keywords, and keywords with high competition. Highly competitive keywords will be harder to rank for.

- Place keywords throughout your content; in the title, in a few locations in the body, in the meta description, etc. Make them appear naturally.
- Update your site often, and publish it when you do.
- Research the competition to see what makes them rank so highly.
- Don't get caught up in analytics.

Video Marketing:

- Google owns YouTube, videos will boost your rank.
- Screencasts make excellent video options for people who are in computers/Internet, and for the camera shy.
- Post the videos on your blog, and your blog on your videos as a cross-promotional tool.

Twitter:

- Remain active. Don't automate everything.
- Don't overly self promote.
- Use Prismatic to help find other material to promote.

Facebook and Google+:

- Get involved like you would with forum marketing.
- Provide resources, ask questions, etc.
- Start your own group when your brand reach gets far enough.

With a little determination and dedication, and a plenty of time, you can take advantage of any or all of these free traffic methods and skyrocket your online business to new heights.