

Chapter 9

Promoting the Web Site

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Launching a new Web site is like introducing a new product: You have to let the target market know it is there or no one will try it except for your family and friends. Building traffic to an existing Web site is easier because you can quickly discover how users found the site and then simply intensify the effort by focusing on effective methods.

There are hundreds of ways to promote a new site, and you'll find information about the most important ones on the following pages. This chapter also includes information about measuring the effectiveness of your traffic-generating efforts as a way to fine-tune the strategies. Before we begin, it is important to discuss a few general marketing issues:

- **Site content.** Sites that provide value quickly draw an audience. Hotmail.com attracted over a million subscribers for its free e-mail service within six months of launch, primarily through word of mouse (viral marketing): users forwarding e-mail to each other. Content that provides value and is up-to-date will generate many referrals quickly. Of course, not many sites can hit it big like Hotmail.com.
- **Site objectives and target audience.** The site goals drive the type of promotions marketers create. Sometimes the selected target is so narrow that a few very specialized promotions are best. For example, a grocery store in Reno is about to launch a site solely intended to increase sales from current customers. The most important promotions for them will be bag stuffer flyers in the store, coupon mailings to the local market area, and perhaps an e-mail newsletter. By contrast, a new site offering reviews of musical CDs for teenagers may rely heavily on search engine listings.
- **Domain names.** Most users will type the company's name into the browser window when trying to locate a site for the first time (www.companyname.com). Many companies purchase multiple domain names because users often misspell the company name, or try to access the firm by typing in the name of one of its products. For example, American Airlines customers might enter www.americanairlines.com, www.aa.com, www.aair.com, or www.american.com; thus, the airline owns many domain names, just in case. We've heard Bentley Nevada's CEO lament the fact that "Bentley.com" is not available as a domain name since some customers forget the correct spelling of the firm's name. It is

cheap and easy to register multiple domain names and, thus, makes no sense to miss traffic by omitting this important step.

HOW DO USERS FIND WEB SITES?

When people think about promoting a new Web site, getting listed on numerous search engines is usually the first thing that comes to mind. However, this is only one of many online and offline ways to draw traffic to a Web site. Exhibit 9 – 1 displays the top three ways that users come into sites, according to a worldwide random-sample survey conducted by MyComputer.com in March 2000. Over half of all users visit through their preestablished bookmarks (“favorites” in Internet Explorer) or by directly typing in the Web site address (URL). Nearly one-third of users visited sites by clicking on hyperlinks while viewing other Web sites. Finally, search engine referrals generated 15 percent of Web site traffic. These figures are for all Web sites, and we want to reiterate that some referring sources may be more or less important depending on the individual site, its audience, and objectives.

Bookmarks and Page Titles

The Nielsen//Netratings November 2000 U.S. Internet Usage Study reported that users visit an average of 10 sites a month in 18 different sessions, spending an average of 32.3 minutes at each site per session (www.nielsen-netratings.com). This means that users tend to have their favorite sites and visit them repeatedly. This fact, when combined with the MyComputer study, underscores the importance of user bookmarks. Yet, bookmark titles often have strange wording. Have you ever tried to find a site in your bookmark list and realized that you couldn’t identify the site for most of your bookmarks?

Bookmark text is generated by the HTML code that specifies the Web page title `<title>Page Name </title>` (see Chapters 4 and 5).

Whatever name is in the title tag will appear at the top of the user’s browser for a particular Web page, but the title is also important because this is the text that will automatically appear as the bookmark name. The user can change a bookmark name, but it is much easier if the Web developer creates a unique and meaningful name for

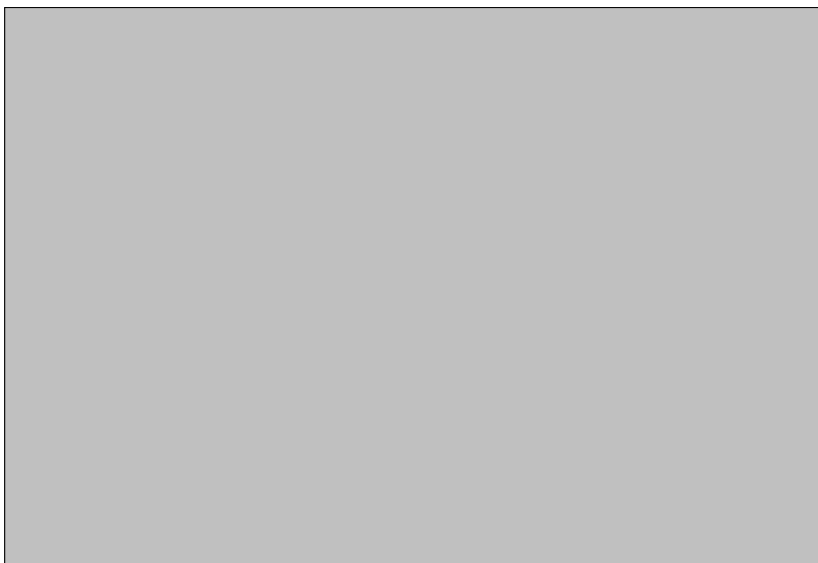


Exhibit 9 – 1 Top Site-Finding Methods

Source: Adapted from www.MyComputer.com

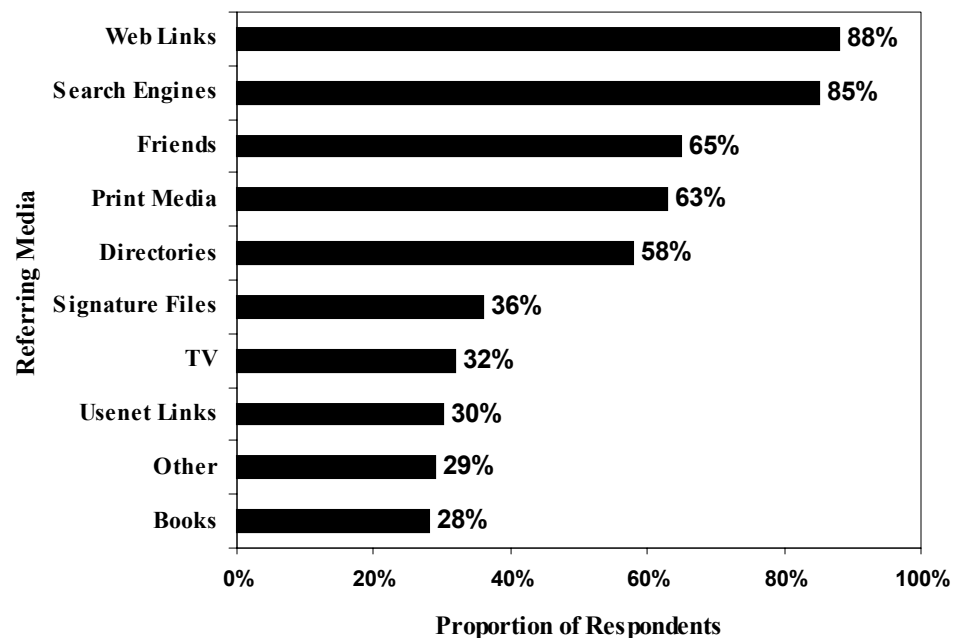


Exhibit 9 – 2 How Users Find New Web Sites

Source: Adapted from Georgia Tech Gvu Tenth User (www.cc.gatech.edu/gvu/user_surveys/)

each page at the site. For example, “order page” is not as useful as “Dell Computers Product Order Form.” Title page text is also very important for search engine rankings—this will be discussed in a later section.

Chapter 8 discussed domain names. As a reminder, it will be easier for users to type in a memorable and easy-to-spell domain name such as www.dell.com. What domain name can a firm such as Reno A. & E. select? Sometimes it is a challenge to use the firm’s branded or trademarked words to best advantage online.

How Users Find New Sites

How do users first find sites so they can bookmark them? A Gvu worldwide survey conducted in late fall 1998 sheds some light on this (Exhibit 9 – 2). The Gvu survey focused on *new* sites while the MyComputer study cited previously related to *all* site-finding activity; therefore, the results are somewhat different. Although the percentages would be different today and the survey methodology creates some biases, the Gvu results give an idea of important promotional methods driving users to new sites. Search engines are very important for users when seeking new sites. Other online referral methods included Web hyperlinks from other Web sites, links found in e-mail such as Usenet newsgroup bulletin board postings, and individual e-mail signature files. The “directory” category may have confused respondents who thought it meant either search tools or individual sites with long indexes of hyperlinks on a particular topic. Important offline methods in 1998 were referrals from friends, magazine and newspaper print media, television, and books. We discuss each of these, as well as some other new promotional methods, in the following sections.

SEARCH ENGINE OPTIMIZATION

A Web site is optimized if it appears in the first page of links returned by a search engine after a query. Search engine optimization (SEO) is critical because the top 10 results get 78 percent more traffic than subsequent results. If you think of your own experience, how often do you go onto the second or third Web pages of suggestions? Every marketer's dream is to have his or her site appear in the top 10 URLs returned to a user who is searching. To do this involves two things: being found by the search engines, and using Web site content and design methods to improve the site's ranking.

Search Engine and Directory Submission

There are two kinds of search tools: engines and directories. Engines send automated software spiders (or robots) to read Web pages, locate relevant information to classify the content, and then add it to the database for later query by users. AltaVista is a very popular search engine, with 350 million Web pages in its database (www.searchenginewatch.com). Search directories use humans to read sites and categorize them by content. Yahoo! is the largest directory, with about 1.8 million links in its database: The directory is smaller due to its labor intensity; however, the human touch makes for more relevant searches. Things get a little confusing because the Yahoo! portal also offers a search engine on its pages, powered by Google (www.google.com). There are differences in the way engines and directories review sites; thus, developers must understand how to be noticed and come out high in either system.

Search engines send spiders out to find new Web sites 24/7, so the chances are that at least one spider will find a page or two on a new site eventually. To accelerate and ensure the process, marketers can submit their home page URL to various engines by simply completing an online form. Once the engine has the submission, it will send a spider to gather information throughout the entire site.

Web sites can only be listed in directories through submission to the directory site. Similar to engines, directories don't usually charge a fee; however, Yahoo! will guarantee a 10-day turnaround for \$199 (mandatory for commercial sites). Submission to a directory doesn't guarantee a listing, so marketers must be careful to review the inclusion criteria before submitting.

This whole submission process is not easy with over 600 search engines currently in business, and some arriving and others disappearing nearly daily (gt.clickz.com). Hundreds of firms offer to submit a new site to anywhere from 50 to 600 engines and directories usually for \$59 to \$150. Interestingly, one survey showed that 71 percent of all sites do not use these services, preferring to submit manually instead (www.iconocast.com). The reason for this is threefold. First, site submission services may not take the time to adapt the submission form for each search tool; thus, the classification may not be appropriate. This, when coupled with the more or less competent spider summarization of page content, is why a user's search often turns up a lot of irrelevant sites. Second, and more important, over 90 percent of the search tool traffic to most Web sites comes from 8 to 10 major search engines and directories (e.g., see www.mediametrix.com). Third, it is very difficult to correct a misclassified site, so most savvy marketers prefer to do it themselves.

Exhibit 9 - 3 displays the share of market for the nine leading search tools, adjusted in April 2000 by HitBox.com to represent only search activity on the site. Based on this research and other ratings, we advise new site owners to manually submit to the search tools found in Exhibit 9 - 4, taking special care at Yahoo! and Excite (because it powers AOL Netfind)—both vastly important by anyone's

measure. LookSmart has only 2 million links but is an important search engine because it currently powers the main results at AltaVista, Excite, MSN, and iWon, giving it access to 52 million Web searchers a month (gt.clickz.com). According to MediaMetrix.com, the Google.com site only has a little over 7 percent of the search engine traffic; however, its agreement with Yahoo! gives it access to 20 percent of all search traffic (Bruemmer 2000).

Now that we've covered the search engines totaling the top 90 percent of traffic, it is time to make note of a growing trend for search engine boutiques (Guernsey 2001). These are search engines that specialize in particular areas, such as medicine or legal documents, drilling deeply into specific Web sites and ignoring all else. For instance, Moreover.com only searches 1,800 online news sources, gathering headlines for its over 340,000 visitors a month. This is the place to go if you want to search for current events, and this is the place to be registered if you publish current events online. We recommend that firms locate which of the 600 known search engines specialize in their industry and add them to the preceding recommended search submission list. Because the Internet has 2.7 billion Web pages and the largest search engine can only locate 60 percent of them ("Lost in Cyberspace" 2000), we believe that boutiques have a quite promising future.

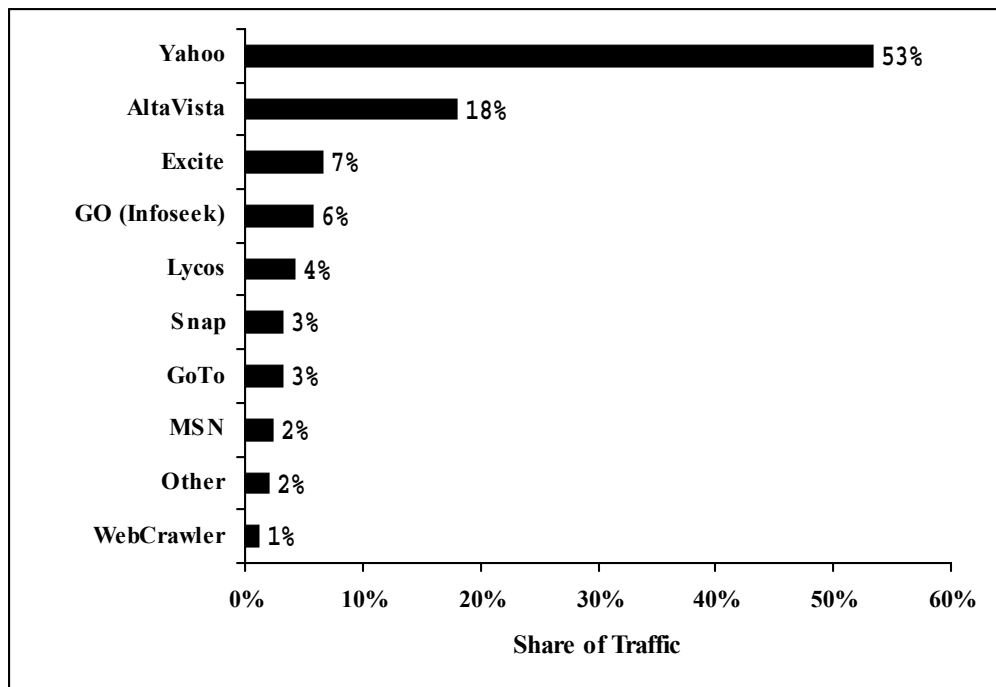


Exhibit 9 - 3 Share of Traffic for Top Nine Search Tools

Source: Adapted from StatMarket Report (www.hitbox.com)

- | | | |
|---------------|-------------------------|-----------------|
| AltaVista | Inktomi | Netscape Search |
| Excite | LookSmart | Snap |
| Go (Infoseek) | Lycos | WebCrawler |
| Google | MSN (Microsoft Network) | Yahoo! |
| GoTo | | |

Exhibit 9 - 4 Search Engines to which Marketers Should Manually Submit Entries

Method	Percent
Changing meta-tags	61
Changing page titles	44
Reciprocal linking	32
Purchasing multiple domain names	28
Multiple home pages (doorways)	21
Hiding keywords in background	18
Paid links/ pay per click	13
None of the above	13

Exhibit 9 - 5 Methods Used to Improve Search Engine Rankings

Source: Adapted from www.iconocast.com

Web Site Content and Design Strategies

It is up to the Web development team to program the HTML and write content that is easily found and classified by search engines. Otherwise, the spider may not accurately figure out the important topics and may misclassify the pages or worse—not find anything of value to put in the database. This is not an easy task for developers because there are many differences in the way engines interpret site information for indexing. In this section, we present the most important strategies that are common to the most popular engines as well as the methods found important in a recent study (Exhibit 9 - 5). Much more detailed information is available at each search engine site.

Meta-Tags

Meta HTML tags appear in the head area of an HTML document to provide information about the page. They do not show up on the user's browser, but instead are read by the browser, local server, and by remote servers such as owned by search engines. Meta-tags are an important place to tell search engines what your Web page and site are about so that they can use the information for indexing.

Exhibit 9 - 6 displays a small part of the HTML source code for the Dell Computer Corporation's home page. This page employs two of the most commonly used meta tags: **keywords** and **description**. The keywords and description meta-tags fall within the page **head** and use the following syntax:

- `<meta name="keywords" content="up to 1,000 characters can go here depending on the search engine limit">`
- `<meta name="description" content="up to 180 characters can go here">`

Keywords are words that might be used to describe the Web site business. Dell uses words that it thinks users will type into search engine queries when they want to find sites that sell computers. The way to discover the best keywords is to ask users in your market what words they would use to find sites like yours. Some developers suggest not using wasting the keyword space with the company name because users that know it will simply type the URL and not visit a search engine first. Others suggest repeating the most important words a few times—for example, Amazon.com repeats its name 18 times in its keyword meta-tag. There is an art to choosing keywords that are descriptive but not too general, and every search engine uses different rules to interpret them.

```
<html>
  <head>
    <title>
      Dell Computer - Laptop, Desktop, Workstation, Server
    </title>
    <meta name="keywords" content="Dell Computer Corporation, Custom,
      Configuration, PCs, Laptops, Portables, Computer, Notebook, Hardware, Build,
      Value, Technology, Servers, Dell, Online, Order" >
    <meta name="description" content="Dell offers custom configuration of personal
      computers, portables and servers. Build your own PC--get the best value with
      latest technology--order online." >
  </head>
  [Note: remaining HTML source code deleted from here]
</html>
```

Exhibit 9 - 6 Title and Meta-Tags for the Dell Corporation Web Site

Source: Adapted from www.dell.com

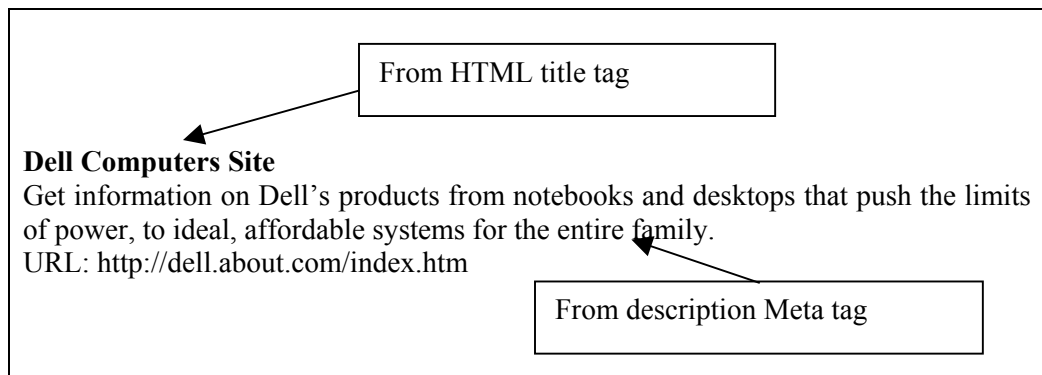


Exhibit 9 - 7 Actual Search Query Return for “Dell Computer” at www.theminingco.com

Description words are the ones that appear next to the Web site address on the search query return page unless marketers submit something different (Exhibit 9 - 7). Writing a description tag is like writing an advertising headline that is attention getting and persuasive. It should be short and to the point. Web developers often put some of the same keywords in the site description, because this will strengthen the message to search engine spiders. Without a description meta-tag, the engine will simply pick text up from the page. Next time you look at the descriptions of Web sites on a search page return query page, notice how many of them appear to be missing description meta-tags.

Page Titles, Images, and Content

Earlier in this chapter, we discussed the importance of page titles for user bookmarks. They are also important to search engines that read page titles to understand what the page is about and then display title text in search query return page along with the meta-tag description text. Exhibit 9 - 6 displays Dell Computer Corporation's title text and Exhibit 9 - 7 shows how the search engine goofed in displaying Dell's page title accurately.

Headings are also important for search engines. They presume that if something is defined as a heading, it must be a more important indicator of what the page is about than other text. When a Web page's meta-tags, title text, headings, and page content all combine to present a unified story about the site topic, the page is more

likely to have an accurate search engine classification. In fact, the folks at searchenginewatch.com say that the key to being categorized accurately by search engines is “location, location, location.” They recommend putting the important content in headings and text near the top of the Web page since engine spiders cruise that area above all for indication of a site’s meaning.

Graphics and photographs are meaningless for search engines because they don’t contain readable text. Image maps on a home page are especially problematic because the only thing search engines can read is the hyperlinks. If you use an image map, it is a good idea to put some text on the page as well. If text spoils the design, you can put hidden text for the search engines by simply using the same color font as is the background color.

Developers often use Alt tags to aid the engines and also because this text downloads faster than images, thus giving users an idea of what the image contains in case they don’t wait for the picture file. Alt tags are nestled inside the HTML code that brings an image into the HTML document (see Chapter 5): ``.

Frames and splash pages are also problematic for search engine spiders. Frames permit independently scrollable windows on a Web page. In addition to being difficult for users to accurately bookmark, frames that contain a menu bar give the impression of a hyperlink-only home page to search engines. Splash pages are usually simple graphic heavy pages that serve as a site front door. They often ask the user to click for entrance to the site, and sometimes use what is called a Meta Refresh tag to take the user automatically to the next page. While these pages are quite cool for viewing, they give little information to search engines and are not recommended.

Link Popularity

While most search engines rank pages by the criteria listed previously, Google and AltaVista use link popularity to determine relevance rankings. Link popularity refers to the number of sites containing links to your site. The idea is that the more sites that link to your site, the better your site must be.

Doorway Pages and Paid Placement

Doorway pages, also known as bridge or gateway pages, refer to multiple home pages that lead into a Web site, each containing different content. Doorway pages are effective because large Web sites usually contain many different topics and, thus, each doorway page can focus on a segment of the site. For example, ESPN.com might have a doorway page for each sport, featuring news and pictures specific to that sport. The page title, meta-tags, and content will relate to that particular sport, thus helping the page to receive higher rankings for searches by sport. After users visit the doorway page, they will then click into the same site that everyone else sees, never realizing they saw a different home page than others. Weather.com uses this technique, having different doorway pages for those typing in the URL directly and those clicking in from its partner ABCNews.com.

A growing trend in the search engine business is to charge a fee for preferential placement on search query return pages. Known as “paid placement,” these usually appear in a section called “featured listings” or “sponsored listings.” GoTo.com is a paid placement search engine, and whoever pays the most for a keyword gets top ranking (Sullivan 2000). Watch for more of this in the future as search engines try to build revenue.

Finally, keep in mind that as an increasing number of sites move to customized page content, search engine methods will change. It is not possible for spiders to

index content that is brought from databases to create different pages for each user. This means that marketers must be sure their static pages are accurately categorized, and then continually monitor the search engine techniques to keep up-to-date on new procedures.

Spam Shutout versus Search Engine Strategy

Some developers look for ways to outwit the search engines and, thus, assure a top 10 listing. For many marketers, this is simply good strategy. Conversely, search engines are on the lookout for what they deem to be unethical practices. For example, some site owners enter their keywords hundreds of times as hidden text (the same color font as the page background) or in the HTML tags. This is called keyword stuffing. In response, search engines often set a limit to the number of times a keyword can appear on a page, and if there are too many occurrences they ignore the word or even the site.

Other forms of search engine spamming include submitting identical pages with different page titles, or submitting multiple pages from a site—most engines want a home page submission only so that the spider can crawl the remaining pages. Before submitting a site, read the rules for each particular engine to be sure you aren't inadvertently shut out of the index. It makes sense to push the envelope, finding new ways to appear above your competitor in the relevance rankings, but avoid the pitfall—to be shut out if the engine perceives your technique as spam.

OTHER ONLINE TRAFFIC-BUILDING STRATEGIES

Other ways to draw visitors to a Web site include Web links, e-mail links, and affiliate programs. Each of these is covered in turn.

Web Links

Many users find a site by clicking on a link from another site (see Exhibit 9 – 1). These links can take many forms, including paid advertising, reciprocal advertising and link agreements, index pages, and others. One clever way of getting many sites to link to yours is to provide a free Web site counter, weather and time indicator, or other interactive feature that must link to your site to operate. (See the Web tools section of Chapter 6 for an example.)

Banner ads are the most visible form of online advertising. They only generate an average click-through of 0.5 percent (users who click on the ad to visit the sponsor's site); however, this is one way to entice users to a new site. Another important form of online advertising is the sponsorship: Sites write content and pay to place it on someone else's site. For example, Kraft provides recipes that include Kraft branded ingredients and pays to place them on www.homearts.com. This is a good strategy for Kraft because it shares the same target market with HomeArts, and users are likely to purchase Kraft products and click to Kraft's page for more recipes and cooking tips. There are many other forms of online advertising used to draw users to sites—a thorough description is available in many other books.

Web rings, banner exchanges, and reciprocal advertising and link agreements are all methods to gain free links by swapping with other sites. For example, www.linkexchange.com offers free banner advertising on over 450,000 member sites—all you have to do is place some ads on your site in return. The critical criterion for any reciprocal agreement is to be sure the target site audience matches your target audience, or it is not worthwhile. In addition, use a reputable network to

be sure site members are screened for quality since your banner or link will be associated with the page on which it appears.

Index pages are Web sites that list lots of URLs on particular topics as a service to their customers. For example, www.freestuff2000.com is a cool site that lists thousands of free giveaways through promotional samples, contests, and sweepstakes. Free Stuff 2000 lists each one and provides a brief description along with a hyperlink to the sponsoring site. There are many sites like this, covering many different topics from advertising to tennis—some for free and some for fee. Of special importance are local index pages provided by cities and chambers of commerce, the MSN yellow pages, and directories at special interest sites such as Advertising World at the University of Texas (advweb.cocomm.utexas.edu/world). While these sites seek URLs, it is important for marketers to be proactive, finding indexes of interest and submitting their sites for inclusion.

E-Mail Links

Two important media for link inclusion are e-mail to individuals and UseNet newsgroup postings (see Exhibit 9 – 2). E-mail has become pervasive in the United States, and users are generally savvy about how to click on an embedded hyperlink to visit a Web site. For these reasons, an increasing number of firms employ e-mail databases and frequent mailings as part of their online marketing strategies. E-mail newsletters, product and promotion announcements, and personalized communication to stakeholders should all include a hyperlink to the firm's Web site. One way to do this is through the signature file. This is the text and graphics that automatically appear at the bottom of each e-mail a person sends. It usually includes not only the Web site link but also other information such as the person's full name, title, address, and phone and FAX numbers. Most e-mail software allows individuals to write a signature file and edit it anytime—signature files should be mandatory practice for all employees.

Incidentally, there is a growing practice to include the Web site link for partner firms in a company's e-mail as well. For example, Expedia.com sends an e-mail to customers after they've booked a flight that includes links to help plan the trip: Weather.com, Barnes and Noble online for books, and others. Consider swapping e-mail hyperlinks with other firms that send e-mail to your target.

The UseNet, accessible through www.deja.com, offers e-mail bulletin board postings in over 35,000 different newsgroup topics. AOL, other portals, and many Web sites also offer newsgroups on various topics. These forums provide an opportunity for product marketing, but commercial messages are not well accepted by members. The way to promote in newsgroups is to become a valued member, joining in on the discussion and adding your expertise when appropriate. For example, a flower shop owner might join gardening groups and offer information about the care of various plants. Naturally, a hyperlink to the flower shop Web site will appear in the signature file for each e-mail posting, and perhaps other group members will inquire individually about the firm's services. This is a lot of work but can help to build a firm's reputation and business if well done.

Affiliate Programs

Affiliate programs are quite important to many large firms: Firms put a logo and link to an e-tailer's Web site and make a commission on all purchases by referred customers. You've probably seen the Amazon.com logo splashed all over the Web sites of Amazon affiliates—it claims 450,000 affiliates. These sites send lots of customers to Amazon, and you can set up a similar affiliate program for your Web

site. It is not easy, as it requires sophisticated tracking and accounting, building good relationships with affiliates, and competing for sites with other affiliate programs. However, successful programs are great traffic and sales generators.

OFFLINE PROMOTION

Promoting your new site through traditional means is perhaps the most important strategy of all, even though it is nearly the smallest entry in this chapter! The site URL should appear on all company stationary, business cards, and promotional materials such as advertising, coupons, and direct mail. Forward-thinking firms plaster the URL everywhere, even going so far as to refer customer service callers to the Web site for frequently asked questions (FAQ). This principle seems so simple, yet in practice it is quite difficult to manage because it involves cooperation from many different departments.

When introducing a new site, special promotions are in order. Contests, sweepstakes, online broadcast of store events, and other techniques will raise awareness of the site. Free specialty items, such as pens or mouse pads touting the URL, can be quite effective as well. The idea is to get the URL into the hands of customers, potential customers, and other stakeholders to whom the site is targeted. To the extent that you can reach these folks via offline techniques, do it.

Finally, don't forget about press releases. If your site offers anything truly newsworthy, let the media know about it. You can file releases electronically at online news sites or via e-mail to local reporters. Also, include the site URL in any regular press releases, such as personnel change announcements, and be sure to have an online media kit for reporters wanting more information about your firm, the people who run it, and its offerings.

MEASURING STRATEGY EFFECTIVENESS

If you go to all the effort we describe in this chapter, you might as well check to see if it is working! Following are some of the ways to measure the success of various strategies:

- **Check your search tool rankings regularly.** Test your site ranking by entering your keywords at the top engines to be sure you do not fall lower in the list over time. Be sure that the first listing of your site directs users to the home page and not some deeply buried inside page. WebPosition Gold is a product receiving excellent reviews that can assist with search engine tracking.
- **Check your link popularity.** Visit www.linkpopularity.com, enter your URL, and see how many sites the search engines have registered that link to your site. Or you can visit AltaVista.com and enter your Web site URL in the search box using the following format: `link:YourWebSiteAddress`.
- **Check your Web site log for referral sources.** The **log file** is a list of addresses of all the site visitors, along with the pages they viewed, and time and date they entered and exited each one. With products such as HitBox Enterprise, marketers can extract data from the log to obtain user numbers referred from various search engines. If the site uses multiple doorway pages with links from various locations, the log information will also help track source effectiveness. If you find that one site in particular is sending lots of traffic your way, you might want to place a banner ad on the site to increase attention with users. Finally, the log will tell which search engines sent spiders or robots to examine the Web pages on various dates, thus eliminating the need to manually submit the site.

- **Identify popular keywords users enter to find your site.** Software, such as WebTrends Enterprise Suite, makes it possible to identify which keywords users entered at the search engines to find the site. You can use that information to fine-tune site meta-tags.
- **Survey site visitors.** On occasion, it makes sense to ask visitors how they heard about the site. This is especially easy if added to another online questionnaire.
- **Don't forget the competition.** Check the search engine rankings and source code at competitive sites to observe their strategies and fine-tune your traffic-building competitive edge.

The last words: Be sure the site is up and running. One of the worst things that can foil your promotional efforts is that your server will shut down and no one will be able to access your site. Most large sites have backup servers and receive notification if a server shuts down. Enough said.

CHECKLIST

- Purchase multiple domain names.
- Use memorable and easily spelled domain names.
- Use descriptive HTML title tags for each page.
- Use attention-getting and persuasive HTML meta description tags.
- Use carefully thought-out and user-tested HTML meta keyword tags.
- Submit your home page to the 13 recommended search engines and directories.
- Be sure the page meta-tags, title text, headings, and page content contain consistent language.
- Avoid frames, splash pages, and image maps unless you use hidden or other text for search engines.
- Use HTML Alt tags for site images.
- Use doorway pages for large multitopic sites.
- Watch search tool listing rules for changes.
- Avoid keyword stuffing and other search engine spamming techniques that will result in omission from the database.
- Find new ways to score high on engine relevance rankings.
- Consider online advertising and reciprocal advertising and link agreements.
- Locate and get listed on all appropriate index pages.
- Create and use a signature file in your e-mail that includes a hyperlink to your site.
- Consider joining newsgroups populated with your target.
- Consider swapping your hyperlink with other firms sending e-mail to a similar target.
- If your firm conducts e-commerce, consider offering an affiliate program.
- Include your URL on every piece of paper or broadcast message from your firm, including press releases.
- Consider special offline promotions to attract users to the site.

- Measure your promotional effectiveness through search engine, log analysis, and other tracking techniques.

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