

Today's Web surfer is reaching out for YOU. Starved for meaningful information, the burgeoning ranks of surfers turn to online sources rather than offline. The proliferation of web sites, blogs and digital feeds from print media offers unquestionable evidence of this trend. Marketing to these info-hungry surfers is very different from traditional marketing where advertisers work to create demand and then offer a product to satisfy it.

## **Most Successful Authors Today Rely On The Flip Side of Marketing—The Web**

by Charles Jacobs

This amazing new technology has totally revolutionized the marketplace, and more and more authors are taking advantage. It has flipped the way marketers market, the way promoters promote and the way writers wrestle their way to the top of the search engines.

If you haven't grasped this new concept, your book promotions will continue to founder. Unfortunately too many in the book industry, from beginning writers in their twenties to old pros in their retirement years, are still bogged down in the antiquated approach of reaching out to find their customers.

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### **Mastering Online Selling**

The key to online selling is not simply announcing the availability of information or product as traditional marketing has always strived to do by placing news releases, obtaining press coverage and getting interviews.

The key is determining who is searching for that information and why.

Marketers have traditionally relied on a two-fold approach: creating demand for a product and then announcing its availability. In other words simply stating here I am and I have something that you might want. That doesn't work on the Internet. The trick is to discover who is searching for the information or tangible product that you offer. Once you know that answer, you ferret out the triggers that will bring them to your web site.

Those triggers are the words or phrases that reflect what they are searching for and how they are telling the search engines to find it. It's important to know where else they are searching so you can compare your success with the competition's. Once you know these answers, you open the floodgates and surfers pour onto your web site. That's what the new industry of Search Engine Optimization is all about.

### **Using Keywords**

You have heard the term "keywords" time and again. These are the words surfers use to

find a source for the product they seek. Companies like Wordtracker and Nichebot have sprung up to help you determine the most effective keywords to move your product. They help you search for synonyms that surfers might use, and show you how many web sites compete using those terms?

With Search Engines monitoring millions of sites, the more frequently the keyword is used by others, the less chance you have to reach a meaningful position in the engines' rankings. For example, I have found that the most obvious keywords in my own work, "retirement" and "writing," are overwhelmingly competitive, forcing me to search far beyond them. It is imperative to raise your ranking on the engines. Research unfortunately has shown that unless your site appears on the first two pages of a search engine, half or more of the people searching will never find you. They look no further.

### **Other Options**

There are several very effective ways to supplement your keyword efforts. Linking, particularly inbound links from other popular web sites on the same subject, are extremely effective in moving you up on the search engines listings. Links provide a benefit to both parties. The inbound link will bring to your site readers who may never have heard of you before discovering the link on their favorite site. The sending site benefits by enriching its readers with an additional source of information.

The "spiders" that the search engines send out to crawl through web sites and evaluate them for positioning on the engine's listing are highly impressed by quality links. They follow links and in that way constantly discover new sites to evaluate.

However, it is important that your links be highly pertinent to your subject matter and come from well-respected sites. The quantity of links you establish is nowhere near as important as the quality. In fact, if the spiders suspect that you are amassing links randomly through "link farms" or other sources, they will punish you.

### **Press Feeds**

With an estimated 50 million readers of print publications turning to the Internet to get their news today, News Engines have become a prime source for exposure for Internet marketers. In 2006, Nielsen/Net Ratings reported that *Yahoo! News*, for example, reached almost 30 million readers, far more than the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post* combined. Companies like PR Newswire are now available to aggregate press releases and feed them to the news outlets.

A new technology, Real Simple Syndication (RSS), has blossomed recently that allows you to send material out directly to other sites and to news groups without the intervention of an aggregator. Regardless of how your release reaches the News Engine, it is treated very much like straight news and its position in the newscast is determined by its relevance and importance. So your release can actually obtain what is comparable to first page coverage

### **Distributing Articles**

Perhaps not quite as new as the technologies discussed above, writing and distributing articles on pertinent subjects is a tried and true way of obtaining visitors to your web site and upping your ranking on the search engines. The universe of Internet surfers is voracious in its hunger for information. They will not only read your articles wherever they find them, but, if impressed by what you write, will head right to your site for more.

These articles cannot be advertisements or obviously self-serving. That will turn off readers. They must be factual and informative. However, at the end of the piece in a brief biography, you are free to mention your writings, your web site or any other means of making contact. It serves as your mini advertisement. You can send articles directly to other sites and blogs yourself or you can use an article distributors like *eZine.com* to distribute your piece throughout the Internet.

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