



THE 10 WAYS TO GET FOUND ONLINE

Businesses today must have an online marketing strategy if they want to maintain their current customers and attract new ones. But with so many new tools and services being introduced every month, it's difficult to keep up. Fortunately, businesses of all sizes have many user-friendly – and sometimes free – options to help them get started. If you're intimidated by the mysteries of online marketing, but know you need to do more to help your customers and prospects find you, here's help. Read on to discover 10 ways to get your business discovered online:



COMPANY WEBSITE & SEARCH ENGINE OPTIMIZATION (SEO)

Your company's website is your most important business tool. A well designed website, with a clear and compelling message and relevant key words, is the best way for your company to gain credibility and visibility. If you already have a website, evaluate whether it is accurately representing your company and if it is helping you to achieve your business goals. And if your website is more than two years old, chances are you could improve your results with some retooling or updates. Invest in some professional advice – it's worth it. Consumers rely on their trusted search engines – such as Google, Yahoo, and Bing – to find businesses that deliver the products and services they need. If your customers can't find you online using these search engines, there is a good chance they won't find you at all. That's why companies are increasingly turning to SEO strategies (including backlinks, title tags, and meta descriptions, indexed pages, etc.) to move their companies to the top of the list of search engine results. The options may seem overwhelming, and some companies are so afraid of making a mistake that they do nothing at all. But with so many resources available, don't miss out on the many benefits a well-executed SEO strategy can deliver for you.



SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES

Social networking sites – such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and LinkedIn – make it easy for small businesses to achieve online recognition. You can use these sites to deliver important messages about your company's latest achievements, products, and events. Also, these sites allow you to engage your customers and listen to what they are saying. No matter what your industry is or who your customers are, there's at least one site that will no doubt fit your needs. And setting up an account is generally as easy as completing a company profile and setting up a user name and password. From there, you can post information, ask for feedback, launch promotions or contests – and that's just the beginning! Just make sure you have a plan in place to update, monitor, and respond on a regular basis. And don't forget to include the site icons on your website, email, and other marketing materials. Now the question is, which social networking sites do you use? The answer is all of them! There are even solutions out there that support the management of all social media sites at once.



ONLINE ADS

U.S. adults between the ages of 18 and 64 spending an average of almost 15 hours a week online, it's no wonder online advertising is the fastest-growing area in paid media placement. Perhaps the biggest benefit of online ads is the ability to control your costs and create the greatest return on your investment. Online ads can be targeted toward a very specific group, and you can choose the cost-per-click option, where you only pay for the clicks your ads receive.



ONLINE SURVEYS

Companies frequently use print surveys to discover critical details about their customers' interest in their products. In the past, distributing surveys has proven to be very costly and time consuming. Online surveys have solved these problems and taken the technique to the next level. By using online surveys, businesses can most efficiently gather and track information about their clients. Most online survey companies even have software to break down and interpret the results. With all the data you have access to after a survey, you can make the correct decisions that will benefit your customers and ultimately your business.



MOBILE

Only 4% of businesses today have a website that is built especially for mobile devices, yet more than a third of all consumers rely on smartphones to deliver the immediate information they need. Doing things

right and utilizing SEO is critical to establishing a mobile website. But there are other important things to consider when developing your mobile strategy. Phones are not built like computers and phone users have different needs. It is very important that the user interface is easy to use and works with all operating systems and phones. In addition, ask yourself this question, "Why are people using their phones instead of a computer?" The answer is simple, they are moving! And they typically want things that are associated with "moving". Maps, flight info, locations of things, phone numbers, headlines and even IM'ing are big portions of what mobile web functionality. So stay focused and don't give them something that wastes time...because no one has time anymore.



COMPANY BLOG

If you've found yourself online in the past few years, you've probably heard about the "Blogsphere." Blogs have become more and more popular as a means to express your opinions and read other people's opinions. Typically, blogs are updated often and therefore are considered "dynamic content." Dynamic content not only helps with SEO (see above) but it also allows you to update your customers on a daily basis. Blogs are inexpensive, easy to maintain, and require no programming. Your company needs a voice online, and a blog is the perfect way to be heard.



ONLINE COMPANY NEWSLETTER

Staying in contact with your customers is key if you want to retain their business. Companies have always used print newsletters to accomplish this goal, but now there is an easier and less expensive way. Online newsletters can be emailed on a particular day every month, and all the costs and headaches involved in print newsletters can be avoided. In addition to these benefits, online newsletters also allow you to learn valuable information about your readers. You can use a standard web statistics program to see who is reading your newsletter, how much time the reader is spending on each page, and which websites are providing links to your newsletter. This will help you zero in on what your customers are truly interested in reading about.



INFORMATIONAL ARTICLES (WHITEPAPERS)

No one knows quite as much about your product or service as you do, which makes you the expert. And your potential customers are looking for expert advice online, which is why businesses use their websites, blogs, or online newsletters to offer something called a whitepaper. With a whitepaper, companies have the opportunity to demonstrate their expertise and credibility in any given subject. Once you have proven yourself as the best source of information, potential customers are more likely to take your advice and purchase your product or service.



GOOGLE ADWORDS

Adwords are pay-per-click (see above) advertising through Google. They use keyword-specific searches to direct customers to your website or advertisement. These text advertisements consist of one headline and two additional text lines. You can select the word or phrase that should trigger your ad and a short description of what is being sold. Also, you can choose the maximum amount to pay per click. When the keywords are used in a search, the relevant words are shown as “sponsored links” on the right side of the screen and sometimes above the main search results.



GEOLOCATION AND GROUP DISCOUNTS

Google Places and Group Discount applications help you connect with your customers –and potential customers – in a fun way that ensures you are ahead of the technology curve. Also, the discounts you offer can increase the buzz about your product. You can get started by verifying your company’s contact information and communicating important messages to your customers. This feature also allows you to display customer reviews to bring more validity to your business.

Now that you know a little more about how to increase your business visibility online, it’s time to start putting the power of these tools to work for you. And RadiateLocal can help. Call 801-839-2190 today to learn more about our solutions for local businesses.