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Top 10 Mistakes Marketers Make That Screw Up Their Business

Welcome to another edition of Michael Rasmussen's Internet Marketing Success Newsletter. In this issue, you'll learn about the most common mistakes that people make when they're first getting involved in Internet marketing, and how to avoid them.

Let's face it; we all make mistakes whenever we start something new. I know I sure did. Perhaps you'll spot something in this newsletter that you're doing that you didn't realize was a mistake. If that's the case, then that's good news, because this issue will open your eyes and help you do something about it. We've got a lot to cover, so let's jump right in.

Mistake #10 - Trying To Do Everything On Your Own

When you work from home, you can get pretty isolated, and forget that you need other people's help. It takes a while to learn how to do Internet marketing effectively, and you should not try to do everything on your own when you first get started.

That's like trying to learn how to play an instrument without a teacher to correct your mistakes. It's important that you ask for help, so you can get past your barriers quickly, instead of spending months agonizing over something that could have taken you 15 minutes if you asked for help.

Also, don't be afraid to just say, "I don't have time to learn this particular skill. I think I'll hire an expert to do it."

Look, I'm a decent copywriter, but I totally stink at graphic design. I *could* try to learn how to use Photoshop and make my own graphics (which would take me years to master), or I could just hire Vaughan Davidson from KillerCovers.com and focus on using the skills that I'm already good at.

Mistake #9 - Not Creating A Back End

I made this mistake for years when I was just learning how to market. I was so focused on getting new customers, and I completely ignored the ones who had already bought from me.

What a mistake!

Your existing customers are the most valuable assets you have, so take care of them by giving them lots of valuable content, and let them take care of you by offering them quality products to buy. Just make sure those products are a match for them.

At the very least, create a deluxe version of the product you're currently selling. Then get to work on a more expensive version, like a home study course. And while you're doing the work of creating those products, you can cross promote other products and services that you recommend.

For example, you use an autoresponder service to build your list, right? How about creating an affiliate link and recommending it to your customers? I use AutomateYourList.com for some of my lists, and I always recommend them to people, because they're a great value for the money.

I still get a check in the mail every 3-6 months for people who signed up for my favorite autoresponder years ago.

Trust me, it's well worth your time to create a back end, because that's where the real money is.

Mistake #8 - Not Qualifying The People You're Listening To For Advice

If you're like me, you probably spend some time on discussion forums interacting with other marketers, and sharing ideas. The one thing that nobody talks about, however, is that the forums are FULL of unsuccessful people who love to give advice about what other people *should* do.

The problem is... their ideas are just theoretical, since they themselves haven't done the thing they preach about. The main thing you want to remember is that you should only take advice from someone who has achieved the level of success that you want for yourself. Don't listen to people who are struggling, since they can't give the kind of advice that will take your business to the next level.

Mistake #7 - Thinking That All Traffic Is Equal

This is another trap that I fell into when I first got started. I wasted so much money on:

- Buying banner ads
- Leads from co-registration lists (that were hosted on sites that had nothing to do with marketing and making money)
- Ads in humor ezines
- Start/exit page traffic (remember those?)
...and many other ridiculous sources of traffic

Everyone falls into this trap at some point. They don't care where the traffic comes from, as long as it comes to their site. Don't confuse a high amount of visitors with successful traffic generation. People still have to BUY something from you, right? That's why only targeted traffic is worth investing in.

This also applies to sending offers to your list. If you have a list of marketing students, and you send them an ad for an eBook on how to plan weddings, you're going to insult and annoy your subscribers. Just because you're sending traffic to your sales page doesn't mean that people are going to automatically want what you have. It has to be a match for them.

Mistake #6 - Not Developing A Unique Sales Proposition

The world of Internet marketing is full of 'me too' artists... people who only care about making money, instead of providing value to their market. Here's the thing, just because a person is ALSO selling an eBook on how to make money on eBay, doesn't mean that I'm going to buy it.

I want to know WHY I should bother with this eBook. I want to know what makes it unique, and why I can't get this kind of information anywhere else. If your product is similar to your competitors, then you need to take some time and develop a unique sales proposition (USP). There are plenty of articles out there on this subject, so do a search for it.

To get you started, though, the basic idea is to find out what's missing in your market, and provide THAT in a way that differentiates you from your competitors.

For example, there are plenty of courses out there on how to create email promotions. I wanted to make mine unique, so I created a set of professional videos to teach people how to write emails in my style of writing. The fact that my videos were such high quality (not to mention entertaining) made *Email Promos Exposed* (<http://www.EmailPromosExposed.com>) one of my most successful products. That's an example of creating a USP.

Mistake #5 - Not Continuing To Learn

Internet marketing is always evolving, always changing. In order to stay current, you have to keep reading articles, buying courses, and attending live seminars. Chatting with other marketers on the discussion forums is not enough.

Think of yourself as a stock on the stock market. You want to be a 'growth stock'... something that is always increasing in value. When was the last time you bought another marketer's course and really studied it? If you haven't, then now is the time.

Mistake #4 - Trying To Make Your Website Look Flashy

This is another one that I'm guilty of. When I first learned how to make websites, I wanted to put everything I could find on my site to make it as flashy and glitzy as possible.

It was ridiculous! I had animated gif files, embedded music, blinking text... you name it. Did I make any money? Absolutely not! But I did have fun showing off my site to my friends, who all thought my site was great (they were not marketers, though, so they didn't know good from bad).

You know what set me straight? A book called "**Web Pages That Suck**". This book opened my eyes to all the mistakes I was making. They've actually released a new book called "**Son Of Web Pages That Suck**". You can get used copies of both books on Amazon.com for super cheap. I highly recommend buying them.

The one thought I want to leave you with on this topic is this. Fancy graphics with no sales copy does not sell anything. Sales copy with no fancy graphics will still sell a ton. Don't waste your time trying to make your website look glamorous. Make it look clean and professional, with nice graphics (done by a professional), and focus on creating a powerful sales message with killer content. You'll make a LOT more money that way.

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Mistake #3 - Looking For The Next 'Sure Thing'

There's no such thing as a 'guaranteed business model'. If there's one thing that I've observed over and over again, it's that you can either succeed wildly or fail miserably in any kind of business. It all depends on your own efforts, and how much focused effort you put into it.

It also depends on how much you invest in your education. If you're not learning, then you're not growing in value. Don't rely on some 'guaranteed business model' to save your life. What really works is finding people who are doing what you want to do, and dedicating yourself to modeling what they're doing.

Take the time to get to know them and become their student. Don't get sucked in by the latest Internet marketing 'fad'. Those things come and go, but proven business principals always endure.

Mistake #2 - Copycatting Other Marketers

They say that imitation is the sincerest form of flattery. While there's some truth to that, I say that, when it comes to marketing, imitation is also a fast way to insult and alienate someone.

I cannot tell you how many people have gone and set up their own versions of my websites... changing only one or two things. People have even gone and stolen my web copy, and used it word for word.

Do NOT do this... EVER.

If someone finds that you've copied them, you can pretty much guarantee that they'll never do business with you, and you'll probably make an enemy in the process. When I find that someone has copied what I'm doing (like taking one of my websites, and using my exact sales copy, but changing the product being offered), I go right after their merchant and web host to get him or her shut down.

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I also keep a personal black list of people to avoid doing business with in the future (and so do many other top marketers). Once a person steals from you, you know that they cannot be trusted, and no matter how much they repent, the likely hood of you doing business with them in this lifetime is small.

If you see someone who has a business idea that inspires you, then get to know them, and create something that uses the basic principals behind what they're doing, but don't copy their stuff exactly. In fact, you can even write them and ask them for help. Most people will be flattered, and go out of their way to help you (unless they're super busy, and don't have the time). By doing it this way, you'll make a lot more friends and allies in the marketing community.

Mistake #1 - Giving Up When You Don't See Immediate Results

Being successful in marketing is like being successful with playing an instrument. It doesn't happen overnight, and it takes some time to master. Don't lust after immediate results. That kind of thinking will cause you to bounce from one 'sure thing' to another.

Keep your goals small and measurable at first. If you don't have a list, then make it a goal to get a list of 100 opt-in subscribers. If you don't know how to write sales copy, then study it, and make it a goal to get 3 small copywriting jobs within 6 months.

Lastly, do something every single day to grow your business. Even if you only spend 30 minutes a day on it, that adds up to 15 hours a month. If you do that every month, you'll be surprised at how far you've come after a year.

In Conclusion

We all make mistakes when starting out. Hopefully this issue has opened your eyes to some of the things that you (or people you know) are doing, and has given you some ideas on what to do about it. As always, keep growing your business, and keep growing as a marketer.

Good luck building your business, and as always... if you know anyone who you think would benefit from this premium newsletter, please pass it along to them, but then also ask them to sign up for a free subscription themselves. They can do that here:

<http://www.MichaelRasmussen.com>.

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