

Online Marketing Ideas for 2010

If you have been in business for any length of time, your annual marketing plan probably looks very similar from year to year. Sometimes this can work well for a business that truly knows its target client, understands how its target client thinks, and where to find them. But if your marketing plan doesn't include any online methods of marketing and networking, you are going to lose out on a big part of your potential market.

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- **Company website:** You might not think of a website as a marketing tool, but it is the perfect passive tool for building sales because many consumers, when researching product vendors and service providers on the internet, look for a company website. Websites give consumers the opportunity to get their questions answered, establish trust, and get a sense of the company's culture. A website has become a company's "brochure."
- **Email marketing:** If the thought of email marketing immediately makes you think of SPAM, step away from your preconceived notions. Not all email marketing is SPAM. If you receive email advertising a product and you did not opt-in, that email is SPAM. However, if you include a sign-up area on your website then marketing to them is not SPAM. Just make sure your emails are targeted properly and offer a product or service of real value. Make sure you give them the option to unsubscribe in every email.
- **Online ads:** Closer to traditional marketing, online ads can help expose your company to clients who might not have known about your business. You can buy banner ad space on websites or use companies like Google for pay-per-click (PPC) advertising. PPC advertising limits your costs because you only pay for each person who clicks through to your site from your ad, rather than paying for the ad space itself.
- **Content marketing:** Building authority online is vital to the success of your business. One way to build your authority is through content marketing. Content marketing is the process of developing articles specific to your industry that help educate readers and show your command of the subject matter. Articles do not overtly advertise your service and are placed on various content websites like Ezine Articles and GoArticles as well as your own website.
- **Social networking:** It is important to include social networking in your online marketing plan. Social networking includes the use of sites like Twitter, forums, and Facebook to find clients. When finding clients on these sites, your goal should be to get your company's name and brand out while building relationships with your target clients. These sites allow you to make connections with other users who fit the description of your target client.