

## Ten Tips to Increase Web Traffic

Unless you've built a website just to showcase your collection of salt and pepper shakers, you probably want to attract some visitors. If your business depends on your site attracting visitors and soliciting sales, then web traffic is essential.

Simply submitting your site to search engines is not enough. You should work with your Webmaster to implement these ten tips to increase the level of traffic to your site.

### 1. Content, Content, Content

First and foremost, make sure that your site is informative! Don't just list your services, elaborate on what you do and why you do it well. The more detailed you are in your website, the better your search engine results will be.

### 2. Classified Ads

Take advantage of the variety of free online classified ad websites and get the word out about your new site!

Be sure to always post a working link to your website. Get help from your webmaster on the proper html coding for a classified ad post if you need it.

### 3. Articles

One of the best steps you can take to promote your site is to write and publish articles (just like this one!).

First, an informative article helps establish that you're an expert in your particular field. Once a reader finishes the article, they may be inclined to follow a link to your website to learn more about you and your business.

More importantly, once you've distributed your article to some of the many online article directories, you'll have created additional links back to your website that search engines will see and count. More on that in a moment.

### 4. Local Directories

There are two basic kinds of directories that should interest you. First, there are regional directories, perhaps for your local metropolitan area, then there are industry-specific directories.

These are similar to search engines in that they list other web sites, but they're compiled and organized differently. Additionally, many directories allow you to create an online profile that will include information about your business, rather than just a link to your website.

Take a few minutes to do some searches for directories in your area and in your industry, and submit your site to any you find appropriate.

### 5. Newsletters

Online Newsletters or eZine's are a great way to keep your existing and potential clients aware of news or changes within your business. If your business model can support a regular newsletter, you should encourage visitors to your website to sign up for it. You might offer them a free copy of one of the great articles you've already written, as a reward for signing up.

When you're writing for your newsletter, make sure that each of your topics has a Title, a Teaser, then a link back to your website to read the rest of the topic. If your topics are interesting and timely, then you'll ensure repeat visits to your site.

### 6. Forums and Newsgroups

Another way to attract new visitors is to participate in online forums and discussions. Be sure to take the time to understand what the forum or newsgroup is about, and be respectful of other members. Simply posting ads or links to your website will likely just get you banned. Instead, post comments or questions that are on point, including a simple link to your site in your signature, and you'll be rewarded with interested responses and visitors to your site.

## 7. Press Releases

Many businesses forget the power of a press release. When you have something that's newsworthy, like the opening of your business, let the press know! They're happy to print your release if they think it will be interest to their readers.

When distributing press releases, be sure to look for online PR distributors, as well as your local news media. There are sites you can post your release for free, and other sites that will distribute your release for a nominal fee.

## 8. Blogs, Social Networking and Social Bookmarking

Blogs are online journals, and there are a number of websites that offer free blogging accounts. With your online journal, you can post a few tips or even full-fledged articles. If you submit new posts consistently, and the topics are interesting, you'll start to attract a variety of visitors.

There are a variety of networking sites, both social and professional, that will allow you to create an online profile for yourself and your business.

Finally, you should look in to creating accounts on several of the social bookmarking sites that have cropped up. These are sites that allow you to simply bookmark and comment on other websites.

## 9. Reciprocal Links

It's very important that you find other websites that are willing to put a link on their site to yours. Some of the above methods will help accomplish this, but you should also give some thought to other site options, particularly sites that are related to your business. For instance, you might see if your Chamber of Commerce has a website, and if they do, make sure you have a link by your membership name. You might also consider other businesses that compliment yours, like how a mortgage company and a title company are complimentary. When approaching these businesses, you would offer to put a link on your site to their business, in exchange for a link on their site to your own business.

Not only will visitors to these other sites see the link to your site and follow it, but as we discussed previously, these additional links to your site will help your search engine ranking tremendously. Each link on a non-directory website is like a vote of confidence in you and your website.

## 10. Email and Letters

There are a variety of other ways to promote your website. For instance, every piece of communication that comes from your business should include your web address. Your email can have it in the signature, your letterhead can have it in the address area, and certainly it should be included on business cards.

Make sure that your email address is from your website and not your internet service provider. Why advertise for ABC.net when you could be advertising for YourCompany.com?

So, I hope that you've gained a couple of ideas on how you can promote your website, and note that none of the above methods has to cost you any money, just a little time and effort. You can find links to online services providing many of the resources mentioned above on our website here:

<http://www.stadiastudio.com/resources.htm>. Good luck!

## About the Author

Michael is the lead web designer and owner at Stadia Studio ([www.StadiaStudio.com](http://www.StadiaStudio.com)), a web design firm in St. Louis, and has been helping businesses get online since the 1990's.

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