

# How to get people to your site

## Write content people will want to read

If your message is not worth spreading then any money you spend on advertising will be wasted. The most tried and true method of creating hype around a website is by creating exciting content and letting the users do the talking.

If you can successfully interest ten people and get them excited about your site, you can expect them to share it with a 100 more people and this process would go on until the hype expires.

The idea is to convince your first visitors that they have come across a truly great new site and they absolutely have to share it. No one will share a site that has poor content or no content at all. If you want a real head start, you will need some truly interesting content that urges your readers to share it.

## Promote your posts on social media

This should be done from the day you start your site and for every new post you make. Valuable social media sites include Stumbleupon, Reddit, Digg, Delicious, Twitter, and Facebook. Once you get the first few visitors, it is up to your visitors to take the next step. If your site is capable of convincing the reader that it is worth sharing, you can expect it to get 'dugg', bookmarked in Delicious or retweeted.

If you have an arresting image or video, post it to sites such as Flickr or YouTube.

For more information on using social media, read this article:  
<http://www.making-the-web.com/2008/04/11/publicize-your-site>

## Give something away

### Run a viral twitter campaign

Twitter is a free social networking and micro-blogging service that enables its users to send and read other users' updates known as tweets. Tweets are text-based posts of up to 140 characters in length displayed on the user's profile page and delivered to other users who have subscribed to them.

### **Example campaign:**

*@yoursite is giving away a free xxx at <http://www.yoursite.com> - RT this message to participate!*

(RT means to re-tweet, or pass on the message)

This would be a smart campaign, extremely effective and easy to deploy. Just ensure that the prize you offer is exciting enough for someone to re-tweet your message.

Don't let a limited budget restrict what you offer, you might think that an expensive giveaway is just too much money to spend for a Twitter contest but what you want to create is a viral tweet and you need something big enough to grab the attention of many Twitter users. Some phone calls/emails and you will usually be able to find a sponsor who is willing to give something away in exchange for some exposure.

### **Provide incentives to early subscribers**

Give away something to all the users who subscribe to your site (for a limited time). This will give your visitors the push needed for them to subscribe. If you can offer a valuable freebie related to your target audience, it can radically improve your subscriber count in a very short time.

### **Provide incentives to join in**

Your site could give away prizes for commenting, subscribing or becoming a Twitter follower. This is a very common strategy among established sites. If you only have a limited amount of prizes and many participants, simply choose a few winners at random to keep things fair.

### **Hold a contest**

Holding a contest makes your site interactive rather than being a one way conversation. You can challenge your users and allow them to be part of your community. Your contest should challenge, rather than bribe, users into participating. A contest should be exciting to your target audience, simple, but not too easy either.

Promote all these competitions and giveaways via the social media sites mentioned above, as well as in any offline literature you produce.

## **Get others to link to your website**

A long term way to build traffic is to get as many links as possible back to your website. Speaking very simply, Google assesses each page on your website

and gives it a score, called a PageRank. One of the ways you can improve your PageRank is with relevant quality links to your website. Forget all the “quick fixes” to building links that you will see online. The best thing to do is build up a bank of them over time.

Guest posting is a great way to get some exposure. Write an article for a high profile site and ask them to publish it in the first week of your launch if possible. You can now introduce your new site at the end of your guest post.

If you can't convince other organisations to let you guest post at least leave comments on their sites. Most comment systems provide a way for you to leave a link back to your site, which begs a visit at the very least. Do not just try to promote your site, add some value to the website you are contributing to.

## Buy traffic

If you need visitors immediately the only guaranteed way to do that is to buy traffic by advertising online. The UK's two major search engines Google and Yahoo! both run adverts next to natural search results. Booking these adverts is very easy. You tell them which keywords you want (which search results you want your adverts displayed next to), the rough location of your customers, and how much you want to spend (which can be as little as a few pounds a week).

This is called Pay Per Click (PPC) and you only pay when someone clicks on your advert. Broadly speaking, the position of your advert depends on how much you are willing to pay for each click. As with natural search results the higher the better. When your budget has been spent, your advert disappears.

Getting the best return from PPC requires time to optimise your campaigns. Google for example now picks the order of adverts not just on how much advertisers are willing to pay, but on the performance of the adverts. Those that get a better click-through rate are displayed higher. This helps Google show the most relevant adverts to your search.

## Other simple ways to promote your site

### **Submit your address to site search sites and directories**

Submit your site's url to Technorati, Daypop, sitedex, Popdex.

## **Let everyone know you have a site**

For example, email them and tell them about it! Let your supporters, friends, colleagues and other contacts know. Put your site URL in your email signature.

## **Host an event or a party**

Have a launch party and invite everyone you know including the local press. Blog about your party, as this shows your readers that you are a real person in the real world establishing a connection with them. It gives your site a face and makes it easier than ever to create a community around it.

## **Issue a press release**

Once you have posted a fantastic human interest story or launched an exciting competition, write up a press release and get it sent out.

## **List your site everywhere you list your address**

This includes materials such as letterheads, compliment slips, leaflets, brochures, advertisements, Christmas cards and so forth.

## **Make sure site visitors can “Email this article to a friend”**

If you use “email this post” on your site, people will be able to forward your posts to friends. This may not have an immediate impact on your site stats but it enables others to publicise your site for you.

## **Keep search engines in mind**

Make sure every page and article in your site has a relevant and descriptive title. Also, try to be descriptive when you blog. A well crafted blog post about something very specific can end up very near the top results of a search for that topic.

## **In summary**

As you can see, there are plenty of opportunities to promote your site but the most important thing is to get involved. Participating in blogs and forums of other websites in your topic industry will get your name out in the web universe. By getting involved on like-minded websites, you are automatically pulling in an interested audience who will publicise your site far better than any PPC or offline campaign ever will.