

Title:

The Big Website Question: If You Build It, They Will Come?

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1159

Summary:

Q: I recently launched a website for my sporting goods business. Do I need to do anything special?

A: That is a question that has been asked by every business person who has ever launched a website.

For those of you who didn't get...

Keywords:

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Article Body:

Q: I recently launched a website for my sporting goods business. Do I need to do anything special?

A: That is a question that has been asked by every business person who has ever launched a website.

For those of you who didn't get the "Field of Dreams" reference, let me put it this way: No, Sean.

Assuming that a website will automatically attract customers is the single biggest mistake that you can make.

I can't tell you how many times I've heard a client say, "Well, I threw up a website, but nobody came."

Forgive me, but "threw up" is the operative term there. These short-sighted entrepreneurs (God bless 'em) think that

if you build it, will they come? That, Sean, depends totally on you.

When it comes to attracting customers, opening an online business (or an online branch of an existing business) is no different

than opening a physical store. The first step in devising your marketing plan is to ask yourself this question: Who is my customer?

The next question concerns the locality of your customer. Do you want to attract a local or global audience?

If the website is the online branch of a brick and mortar business, include the website URL in your marketing materials.

In short, keep doing what you're doing to attract customers to your physical store, just add your website.

Just remember, it's important to consider your website a branch of your brick and mortar business, not a separate entity.

If you are seeking a global audience, your marketing efforts will be quite different. Attracting global customers is a

different ballgame. In the most basic sense, an online marketing campaign to attract global customers should include the following:

Register With Search Engines There's not enough room in this newspaper for a thorough discussion of search engines, but

it's important to register with the major search engines. Unfortunately, the free search engine lunch ran out a couple of years ago when search engines

started charging for listings. Exchange Links With Similar Sites One free - and potentially effective - way to drive customer traffic to your website is to

exchange links with similar sites. Go To Where The Customers Are If the mountain won't come to Mohammed, then Mohammed must go to the mountain.

Your goal is not to make a living selling on eBay, but to use eBay as a marketing tool to drive traffic to your website.

Let's use our golf ball example. Post a few auctions on eBay selling your golf balls at a ridiculous price.

We have just scratched the surface, but hopefully this is enough to get you started. I wish I  
Here's to your success!

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