

**For Natural Health Marketers:**

# **5 Internet Marketing Mistakes**

## ***And How To Fix Them For Online Marketing Success***

***A Special Report from Sarah Clachar  
Natural Health Copywriter and Marketing Consultant***

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# Introduction

## ***You may be missing out on the greatest opportunity ever.***

While the recession is eating away at businesses right and left, many are thriving.

And no place is this more true than in the health marketplace. Everyone needs products and services to take care of their health. Even when people start pinching pennies, health products, like food, tend to get left in the budget.

In fact, as part of the natural health industry, *you have an even bigger advantage*. With tighter budgets, people are becoming even more DIYers about health care. More people are seeking health information and natural health products that can help them stay out of the doctor's office and pharmacy.

The question is:

***Are you doing what you need to take advantage of the new openings in the health market?***

Certainly, you need to market hard.

**But even more important is marketing smart.**

Nothing beats the web for providing a cost-effective way to reach millions of prospects and generate sales. In fact it's where more and more consumers are looking for your products.

An article in the March 2010 issue of *Internet Retailer* noted three sets of statistics that underscore what both you and I know already. *Online is where it's at.*

According to Internet Retailer . . .

- During post-Thanksgiving holiday shopping kickoff of 2009, the number of consumers shopping online increased by 6% over the year before. From 8.2 million to 8.7 million, according to comScore Inc. Meanwhile traffic to bricks and mortar stores declined by 1.1%
- In a December survey of shoppers, 68% said they were using online search more often to find good deals.
- The US Department of Commerce reported that the fourth quarter of 2008 saw a 14.4% increase of online sales – totaling a nice figure of \$35.9 billion for that quarter.

***Consumers are online and looking for you.***

And they're not alone. *Your competitors are there as well.*

- Anthea Stratigos of Outsell, Inc., quoted in Forbes Magazine, predicted in 2009 that \$65 billion in marketing spending would be moved from traditional print and broadcast media to online.
- Econsultancy, in association with Exact Target, surveyed B2B and B2C marketers from companies of all different sizes and found that 46% are increasing their marketing budgets for 2010. And on average, companies are increasing their digital marketing budgets by 17% for 2010.

### **A Good Time For Natural Health Companies**

- In an April *New York Times* article (2009), CEO's from established companies Vitamin Shoppe and New Chapter reported increased- if not record - sales for the beginning of 2009.
- In May, the American Botanical Council (2009) reported in their quarterly journal, *HerbalGram*, that total herbal supplement sales for 2008 rose over 1% above 2007 figures.
- And according to the Organic Trade Association (2009), sales of organic products – both food and non-food – rose 17.1% over 2007 sales in 2008.

**"[Emarketing] is imperative,"** John Grubb from the Sterling-Rice Group in Boulder, Colorado told me last spring when I interviewed him for a *Nutrition Business Journal* article on emarketing. And he continued by emphasizing that in this economy, more than ever, companies needed to be building their ecommerce presence. Especially companies like health-related businesses that are information-intensive, added Grubb.

So your website and connected e-marketing efforts have got to work hard – *really* hard.

**But you've got some serious problems.** With all these businesses moving online, your website is part of a crowded, bustling marketplace. Picture an old-time city marketplace with chickens squawking, vendors yelling and haggling haggling. Noisy and full of distractions!

On top of this, consumers these days are even more skeptical and even more impatient with something that doesn't seem to meet their needs at first glance. They are the sharp-eyed farmwives inspecting cabbages carefully.

They can so easily click away – never to return.

If you haven't set up your online presence the right way your customers WILL click away and you will never have the chance to tell them how great your products are.

But you can prevent that from happening by keeping a sharp eye out for the following mistakes. Amazingly, despite the fact that many of these pointers are basics when it comes to internet marketing, too many businesses ignore them to their detriment. Many marketers are busy jumping onto the latest trend – social marketing or videos (both powerful additions) – without making sure home base is covered.

You, on the other hand, know better. You know that the fundamentals need to be taken care of.

So pay close attention to the following pointers. Check your online presence for these mistakes. And if you find them there, change them quick. You'll find yourself way ahead of much of the competition.

## **Internet Marketing Mistake #1: Beautiful Website Lost In the Jungle**

In 2005, the Pew Research Centers Internet and American Life Project reported that a full 80% of internet users go online to research a health topic.

People are going online looking for health solutions. *Your products!*

**The question is – Will they find you?**

The sad truth is this: There are hundreds – thousands – of grand websites lost in the internet jungle like the grand temples of the Aztecs.

They are beautifully designed, sell some great products, easy to navigate – but no one's coming to look!

## **The Fix**

Right from the start, as you're building your online storefront, you've also got to think about getting people there. And the web makes it very cost-efficient to do so through search engine optimization (SEO).

Search engine optimization is like word-of-mouth referrals. Except it gets better.

Search engines not only give out your name to people looking for your kind of service or product. By providing one-click access to your website, they're driving them right up to your front door!

Getting a good ranking on the search results page can really thrust your business forward. More people click onto organic search results than paid ones. *Just look at your own behavior* – are you more likely to click on a paid listing or an organic listing?

And in general, people choose these listings for the same two reasons that these pages have gained the approval of the search engines:

1. They have good content.
2. They have a good reputation – lots of places "recommend" them through links.

No wonder they get a good ranking. **Remember, Google's (and the other search engines)' goal is to provide good results to web searchers.** The search engines are trying to find pages that help searchers out. If your pages seem to match what web searchers are looking for, Google will give your pages a higher ranking for the search terms these web searchers are using.

Consequently, working to bring your company higher in the search engine's ranking will also make your website more useful for your prospective clients as well.

Here's how you can build your website to cruise up the search engine rankings and get found:

- Create clear and valuable content for your website that is optimized for your prospects' search terms.
- Use language that is familiar to your prospects and matches the language they would use.
- Use internal linking strategies to further underscore what your web pages are about and to help people find what they are looking for on your website.
- Make sure the world of the web gets to know about your website's content by building relationships with other websites – or links.

This may start to sound a little esoteric, but essentially it still boils down to telling search engines and prospects that you can provide a happy end to their quest.

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### **Internet Marketing Mistake #2: Beautiful Website With Visitors Who Say "AHH" And Then Leave**

Remember those temples lost in the jungle? Okay, now people are finding them. But all they do is look up, say "AHH - it's beautiful!" and leave.

The question is: Once your prospects find you . . . *Will they go further and convert to a customer?*

This is just as important as getting found. *In fact it's more important.* You can have all the traffic in the world – if they're not converting, what difference does it make?

### **The Fix**

**Once your prospects find you, you want them to be excited about what you offer them.** Enough to purchase from you or at least leave their contact information with you so you can continue to market to them.

Remember, your prospects are hardbitten, task-oriented seekers. They're looking for solutions.

You want your website to communicate right off the bat that you've got what they're looking for.

Think of your website this way:

When prospects come to your virtual store, do they feel like staying and looking around or are they ready to move on down the street to the next store?

- Does your website let them know right away that they have indeed arrived at the place they were looking for. Do you have a big sign, pictures and info out front in the reception area/entranceway (your home page and header) that outlines what services and products you sell?
- Does it help them move quickly and easily from the entranceway to the right department or aisle to get the information they need or find the product they want?
- Once they find the right aisle or department, do they get the information they need? Are they able to clearly see that the products you have solve their problems?
- Or, at the very least, do they have enough interest in what you offer so that they want to leave their contact information so you can follow up?

### **An Infallible 7-Step Process For Improving Your Website**

Use this process to make sure your web sites serves their purpose well.

1. Clearly identify your website's purpose.
2. Research your audience and your competition.
3. Evaluate your current site's usability with a usability checklist.
4. Create an overall website plan.
5. Map out the site and its content.
6. Create clear messaging for each page.
7. Create a marketing plan to bring traffic to your website.

This is what a good website does.

A good website uses good information architecture and copywriting. And with these two elements a good website . .

- **Welcomes your visitors** and affirms that they've come to the right place for what they're looking for.
- **Helps them move easily to the right pages** to accomplish the task they've set out to get done. This can mean getting information, identifying and contacting the right person, or purchasing the product they are seeking.
- **Gets them excited about the solutions you offer** so they move easily down the pathway to a sale or at the very least leave their contact information.

As online marketing thinktank Marketing Experiments' Dr. Flint McGlaughlin (2009) explained in one of Marketing Experiments' webinars, you want each page of your website to answer 3 things:

1. Where am I at?
2. What can I do here?
3. Why should I do it?

Essentially, your website should welcome visitors and get them closer to their goals. And the nice thing is, when you help your visitors find the satisfaction they're looking for, you get closer to your goal as well.

## Internet Marketing Mistake #3: Your Beautiful Website Attracts Visitors, Makes a Good First Impression, But Loses Them In the Long Run . . .

Okay. So now you have a website that is ranking well and drawing traffic. People are finding your site and their interest is piqued!

But the web is a fast-paced supermarket. A visitor (who could mean years of a profitable relationship) can so easily leave – with just the click of a mouse – never to be found again. Never to return!

And the truth is, as much as marketing works to get people to buy right away – most don't. This is even more true today when people are watching their pennies ever so carefully.

Just because people are undecided, have put you in the MAYBE pile, doesn't mean they won't buy from you in the future. Remember, many online shoppers are researching when they come to your website. It's your job to keep that door open.

As wise Bill Glazer, author of *OUTRAGEOUS Advertising That's Outrageously Successful*, points out, "The MAYBE pile is often overlooked by most entrepreneurs, *and it costs them a bunch of money.*"

So hold onto those MAYBE visitors, those hot prospects. Don't let them slip away.

**More important than selling any product on your website is selling the value of developing an initial relationship with you.**

### The Fix

One of the primary goals you should have with your website is to get your prospect to leave his or her contact information. Then you can continue to communicate with them and perhaps turn this lead into a successful deal.

*But why would anyone leave their contact info with you?* Doesn't everyone already get enough spam and junk mail?

### Great White Paper Bonus #1: Viral Publicity and Better SEO

When you post a white paper online, it can go viral and spread the good news about your business without your help.

If it provides information that people find useful, they may provide links to your download page from their e-newsletters, websites or blogs. And not only will this white paper help spread the word about your company, but it will also help you improve your search engine rankings by bringing more links to your site.

### Great White Paper Bonus #2: SEO Within FDA Limitations

White papers can help you provide compelling information about your product that may otherwise be impossible to talk about due to FDA restrictions. In a white paper, a company can discuss how a substance mitigates, cures, prevents or treats a disease – as long as you follow two guidelines:

1. No brand name is mentioned. *Remember, good white papers do not sell as much as educate.* You can use the white paper to explain the benefits of an ingredient you produce without mentioning it specifically by brand name and you're free to cite studies and all the health problems they address.
2. The white paper is 2 clicks away from any mention of a specific branded ingredient or product. So you can have the white paper connected to your home page or to a general subpage on a specific ingredient as long as they do not mention your branded ingredient.

This also can help with search engine optimization since you can optimize for search terms that include the disease terms that some prospects may be using to find you.

**A Word of Caution:** While there is room with white papers to get a little more into the specifics of your product's health benefits, it's not an absolute safe zone. The 2-click rule is not law, just standard practice.

The FDA may conclude that the intended use of your white paper is for marketing purposes – even if it is insulated - and send you one of its famous letters about selling an unapproved drug. You have to consider carefully the context of how you're presenting this white paper. And still be cautious about disease language if using the white paper for list-building. Some companies have created separate "information library" websites to further insulate their publications from being connected with their marketing activities.

Bottom line, you should always evaluate your publications with a lawyer who specializes in FDA legalities.

Offer them some more useful information. Make it worth their while to stay in touch – or become reachable.

Offer them an intriguing free report.

All they have to do is to give you their contact information and they can walk away with some good ideas and information.

But the beauty of this is that they not only walk away with some good info, *they walk away with another set of compelling reasons to do business with you* . . . if your free report does its job well.

Here are some ingredients for an effective free report, thanks to white paper writing guru Michael Stelzner (2007), author of *Writing White Papers*:

- Start by addressing the problems or challenges – not the solutions.
- Focus on benefits more than features.
- Educate more than sell.
- Provide valuable information.

And it also should be crafted with a keen attention to the audience. That means, keep it conversational, intriguing and exciting. Don't get caught up in techno-jargon unless you know for a fact that your specific audience is comfortable with that. Speak to them in their terms about what they want to know.

## **Internet Marketing Mistake #4: Visitors Leave Their Calling Cards, Grab Your Report . . . And Never Hear From You Again**

So now you've got a bunch of calling cards – your website visitors' contact information.

- You've gotten the prospect to your website through SEO;
- Right off the bat, they decided you offered what they needed on your website and decided to stick around a bit.
- You've captured your visitor's contact information by offering them an enticing free report;
- And you've started the relationship off on the right foot with the great information *in* your free report.

Your visitor (potential customer) likes what you have to say and is interested in your products.

But you know how it is . . . things get busy. And this visitor might completely forget about you and your solution. *They might even forget they had a problem that needed fixing* . . . that is until their next doctor's appointment or their wife gets after them or they read an article. Or in the B2B world, a budget cut interferes with the new investment in your product they were considering.

They'll completely forget about you. And if they decide to look for a solution again when they remember their problem, they may still forget they ever heard about you.

You've got to remind them you exist and that you can help them.

You've got to continue to nurture this relationship and build it until your prospect is ready to convert to a customer.

## The Fix

Once again, the web provides a great, cost-effective way to do so – email.

Now you may be thinking – so much email gets filtered out as spam or never opened. How can I make it through that morass of lost emails?

**In fact, you've *already* done the most important thing to make sure you get your emails opened.**

You positioned yourself as a helpful source of information with your well-crafted, content-rich website and your valuable info-packed free report.

*The key to getting your emails opened is reputation.*

Nick Osborne, expert in web copywriting and author of *Net Words* explains that the key to making sure your email gets read is making sure the prospect feels good about all the previous interactions. Make sure they look forward to receiving more communication from you.

If you've done the first two steps right, you've already created a solid reputation with your prospect.

Now, you have to make sure that you build on that reputation and make it even stronger.

And the essentials of a good email is this:

- Clarity and interest in the subject line
- Recognizable sender
- And once they're inside – good content that speaks to their concerns and provides a solution.

Make sure your e-mail recipient can clearly see who is sending the email. Make sure your subject is interesting and clear. And then – each time you send an email – make your reputation even stronger by making each communication valuable to your reader.

One fantastic way for extending the power of your free report is by creating an email autoresponder series. Unlike a regular newsletter that is sent out to your list on a weekly, or monthly basis, an autoresponder series is triggered by your prospects signing up and downloading the free report.

In essence, you're communicating with them just when they are feeling so positive about you that they gave you their contact information and asked for something from you. That's an excellent time to be in touch.

Starting anywhere from immediately after they download your report to a few days later, you can send them a carefully planned series of emails. These emails can be scheduled at intervals over the next few weeks to continually bring your prospect's attention back to what you offer them while strengthening your relationship with your prospect.

These emails can do a number of things. These autoresponders can . . .

- Build on the information in the report with more great information;
- Suggest products connected to the report topic that they've already expressed interest to;
- Pre-sell your prospect by building excitement about a product or service related to the report over time.
- Direct the recipient to landing pages for products;
- Solicit their questions and suggestions providing you with more information about your market;
- Let them know more about you and your business;

- Connect them with other customers by providing testimonials, forum links, etc;

The list goes on.

While there are a number of different approaches for autoresponders, key is to develop a clear idea of what you want to accomplish with this series. With that in mind you can strategically build a multi-touch set of email communications that moves your prospect towards this goal over time.

And unlike the one-shot deal of trying to make a sale when someone first comes to your website or first downloads your report, you can build a relationship that is more likely to result in a sale or multiple sales.

## Internet Marketing Mistake #5: In The End, You Come Across As Just Another Website Trying To Sell Stuff . . .

The web gives your business cost-effective access to the world marketplace. With a good website, well-written free report and strategic follow-up, you can use the internet to increase your sales and customers for your business.

**But you can also get lost in the anonymity of it.** As much as people have adjusted to a more virtual world, we still like to deal with people. We're still looking for something to tether us to earth while we're floating around in cyberspace.

And this is where you can make your marketing communications really stand out.

### The Fix

Your copy should sound like one person speaking to another. Your prospects should feel like there is a real person behind all this digital stuff.

Watch out for corporate-speak! Keep your marketing materials feeling a person-to-person chat.

As you create your website copy . . . craft insightful free reports . . . and compose emails . . . make sure they get delivered with a virtual handshake. Write to one person – not a mass of customers out there. Think about what that person is really interested in and could be motivated to buy.

And communicate your personality or the many personalities within your business to your prospect. Attribute communications to specific people within your business or make your emails come from one identifiable person. Have a special message sidebar in your white paper from one of your research scientists that communicates their excitement about their latest discovery. Find ways to include language and anecdotes in your marketing materials that tell someone about the people and culture of your business.

In other words, make it real and your prospects will *really* respond. In fact you may be pleasantly surprised at the response when people feel like someone really spoke to them directly.

## Apply All Five Fixes And Beat The Competition

You are not going to have one of those crumbling temples, lost in the internet jungle.

Picture this: With these fixes applied, your website is live and lively. Business is humming. People are visiting and looking around. They're buying your products and even when they don't they leave their contact information and say, "Hey, please keep in touch. I like what I see here."

Now, the fixes I mentioned here are old hat, mostly fundamentals when it comes to online marketing. But they still are not used enough or effectively. I'm amazed at how often with all the buzz about social marketing and videos on YouTube (which is great stuff BTW), how often the fundamentals of a good home base are left out of the picture.

You've got to have your house in order before you get out there!

If you apply these fixes right you've built the sturdiest foundation for your web marketing.

Used effectively, these three formats – a well-crafted website and free report, followed by an email autoresponder series - will help you build powerful relationships with your prospects and customers that will propel your business forward.

***You'll have everything you need to seize some of this exciting internet action.***

## **[RETWEET THIS](#)**

**For more ideas on how to create traffic-drawing, response-generating online copy, insightful white papers, and relationship-building autoresponders (Phew! That's a mouthful) . . .**

Please see my website [www.healthymarketingideas.com](http://www.healthymarketingideas.com) where you can find archived copies of my e-newsletter HealthyCopyIdeas and other helpful resources.

Questions and comments? Please contact me by email at [sarah@healthymarketingideas.com](mailto:sarah@healthymarketingideas.com) or by phone at (603)332-7870 M-F 8:30-3:30 EST.

### **About Sarah Clachar, Natural Health Copywriter and Marketer**

Author of the ebook *Writing Irresistible Copy for Nutritional Supplements*, edited and published by master copywriter Bob Bly, Ms. Clachar specializes in writing online copy for the natural health and nutrition markets.

Ms. Clachar has used her copywriting and marketing skills to create hardworking B2B and B2C promotional materials for a variety of companies in the nutrition industry, both large and small, including Jigsawhealth.com, 1-800-Healthy.com, Ecuadorian Rainforest, Nature's Baby Organics, Indiana Botanic Choice, and Vitacost.

An organic farmer and former health educator with a B.A. in biology, Ms. Clachar brings a technical understanding and a passion for health to her natural health copywriting tool chest. As a frequent trade journal contributor, writing for *Nutrition Business Journal*, *Natural Foods Merchandiser* and *Nutritional Outlook*, she maintains a bird's eye view of the industry.

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