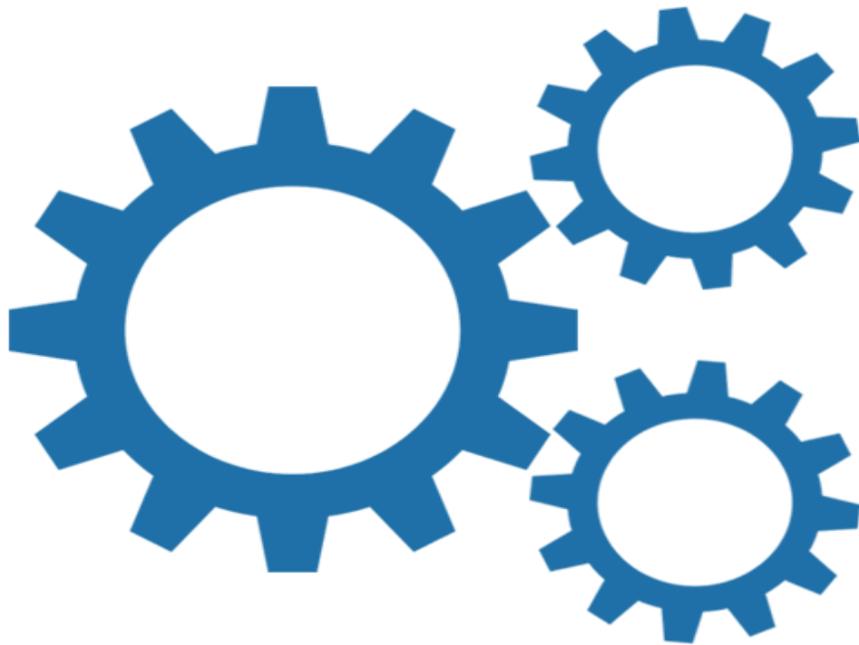


ONLINE BUSINESS BLUEPRINT



GUIDE 4:

SETTING UP YOUR MARKETING
WEBSITE HUB

Setting Up Your Marketing Website Hub

Setting up a marketing hub is one of the best ways to manage your entire online portfolio. In this report, we're going to discuss how exactly you set up that hub, as well as all of the elements that surround the hub.

You should be able to see how the entire portfolio fits together to create an unstoppable marketing package.

When it comes to internet marketing, you definitely need a centralized website to act as the anchor for all of the other things that you have going, but the hub elements are just as important as the hub itself so we will be spending a little bit of time on each of them in turn as well.

What is a Marketing Website Hub?

So, what exactly is a marketing hub? Your marketing hub is the central location that all of your hub elements are connected to. In other words, the marketing hub is your home base.

Most of the time, this is your company's home page, although it doesn't necessarily have to be the case. Your marketing hub can be any website that you choose, but it does have to meet the requirement of being the central location for all of your marketing efforts.

Your hub goes out to all of your other hub elements, marketing channels and the like, and in return, those same elements connect back to your hub.

Traditional Marketing vs. a Marketing Hub

If you think about traditional marketing as standing on a street corner using a megaphone to advertise your products and services, then think about a marketing hub as more like a focus group.

When you have a marketing hub, communication is a two-way street between your hub and the other marketing elements. But you aren't just communicating with elements, you are communicating with customers who populate those elements; social media is an example of a hub element.

A marketing hub is much more effective than traditional marketing, because you aren't just using one megaphone, you are using several, and to extend the metaphor further, you are also getting feedback from the ground so you can change the messages that those megaphones are broadcasting.

Why You Should Have a Marketing Website Hub

There are some really good reasons that you should have a marketing hub. Today, consumers buy differently than they did in the past. People used to be convinced by television, radio and newspaper advertising. Now consumers are a lot smarter.

Now they actually research products and look for trusted brands to partner with. The relationship between the buyer and the seller is much more complex and a marketing hub is more important than ever. Here are some reasons why.

1. You need a place to send your web traffic. Your job as a company, whether you are in retail or an internet marketer, is to get traffic. But what do you do with that traffic once you have it?

You need a quality website to send traffic to, because that's the place consumers will get their first impression of you – and that impression is usually pretty difficult to overcome.

2. Your hub website is the central location for everything that you are doing online. You absolutely need a home base, whether it is for adding to a social media profile, or sending web traffic that is ready to buy. Your website is the central location of your hub, but the center is not where the people are.

The people are elsewhere on the web. You need to reach out and meet them where they are, like on social media sites. But your content will usually reside on your website. Your hub elements are cross-promotion for your central hub content.

3. Your central hub website is an information source for anyone looking to find out more about your company, particularly for those looking for information during the buying cycle.

If you do not have that central location, not only do you lose a little credibility as a trusted partner in a value proposition, but you also lose the chance to answer the customer's questions. They probably aren't going to work too hard to find the answers they need when your competitors are just one search result over.

4. Finally, your marketing hub website is a part of the team. Your website has just as important of a job as anyone that works in your marketing department. In fact, your website has to work harder because it must be available 24 hours a day, ready to answer any questions that a potential buyer must have.

How a Hub Works

Think of a marketing hub website like a general sending his troops out to battle. The first step in the process is reconnaissance. You need to find out what is going on out there in the field.

Luckily your troops (your hub elements) are there to provide you with on-the-ground feedback. This will allow you to change your website so that it is more receptive to those that visit.

This communication is two-way communication. You send out messages to people on the web, they send messages back to you through their comments, buying decisions and more, and then you take that information

and try to determine how to shape your products, services and marketing for them so that you'll have the best chance of making a sale.

Setting up Your Hub: Step-by-Step (200)

Now, let's discuss how you get started setting up a hub marketing website. We're going to start with the very basics, in case anyone is just barely getting into the internet marketing business.

Some of this stuff more experienced internet marketers will undoubtedly know how to do, but a refresher course is never a bad thing. Let's go through this step-by-step.

1. First, choose a domain name that is going to be relevant to your brand. This can be challenging for several reasons. First, you have to strike the perfect balance between a unique name that is going to come up first in the SERPS (search engine results pages) so it has to be unique.

However, it also has to be short enough and memorable enough so that people will be able to remember the address and type it into their browser or a search engine.

Another thing that can create a challenge is that the name that you want may not be available. This is especially true in the case of "premium" names – which are basically domain names that someone has already purchased because they know that someone will want it and they will be able to make money from it.

2. The second thing that you need to do after you choose the perfect domain name is get website hosting. There are several things to consider when it comes to web hosting. First, you want your traffic to be unmetered.

You don't want to have a sudden surge of traffic and then get charged outrageous fees for going over your bandwidth. If the choice is only a few dollars, you also should go with the plan that allows you unlimited domains and subdomains. Your marketing hub website may be the focal point, but there are plenty of elements that may require a separate domain.

3. Finally, you are going to need some kind of framework for your website. In ye olden days of the internet, you had to build your website from scratch using HTML. But today, content management systems (CMS's) are not only trendy; they are also more functional and fully-featured than just about anything you could build yourself.

The most popular on by far is WordPress, and it comes with nearly every webhosting cpanel out there. From a basic installation, you can add widgets, plugins, themes and much, much more.

Hub Elements

So, let's discuss some of the hub elements that are going to make up the spokes of your hub. We will cover these just briefly so that you will know what they are and how they fit into the entire hub network.

Infographics: Infographics can be a terrific tool for one of the spokes of your hub. Infographics have a way of communicating with people that few other mediums do. You can use infographics on your website or post them elsewhere to draw in traffic.

Images: Images should definitely be part of your marketing hub website. Pictures break up the monotony of the text and often can make a point that text cannot. However, you can also use social media image sites like Instagram to bring visitors to your hub site.

Webinars: Webinars can be a great way to get people to visit your website. If you are an expert on something, and you have a couple of hours to spare, consider offering a free webinar that will demonstrate your expertise and make people want to look up your company.

Social Media Posts: It goes without saying that you should have social media accounts and posts that are interconnected with your website. You should have, at minimum, accounts at Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and Pinterest.

Blog Posts: Blog posts can be part of your website or a subdomain. They can even be posted on an entirely new website if you prefer. Make sure you link the two naturally whenever you can.

Events: Holding events can bring people to your hub site. If you can get your name out there at an event, then you might be able to get visitors to your site from it. Events do take some effort so they are only a small part of the marketing hub network.

EBooks & Guides: EBooks, guides, reports and other such materials can help your credibility in the industry and provide you with a terrific opportunity to link back to your main site. You can either distribute these freely or you can charge money for them and make an extra income.

Landing Pages: Landing pages function as sales funnels; these pages are very useful, especially when you are trying to convince someone to buy.

Microsites & Subdomains: Microsites are small sites that support your larger site. They usually focus on a single keyword or a small group of them. You can also set up subdomains as hub elements. These sites can target traffic more effectively for those keywords than your main site can and you get the bonus that comes from backlinks from a relevant site.

Video Content: Video content can be terrific for getting people to visit your website. YouTube is a very useful tool for this purpose, but you have to know how to create a good video that people are going to want to watch, plus you'll need to know how to target keywords within YouTube to get it seen by enough people to make it worthwhile.

Email Marketing: Email marketing should be part of your strategy. Not only should you be using email marketing to get people to come to your hub center website, you should also be using your hub and hub elements to collect those email addresses for future marketing.

Press Releases: Press releases may not be the easiest method of getting traffic to your website, but they shouldn't be abandoned by any means. If you can get a media outlet to run a story about you that gets seen by a lot of people, then you will see traffic from the article or story, and that could mean a pretty significant amount of traffic.

Research: You definitely want to include relevant research whenever possible. It increases your credibility when you are able to cite actual studies that support your claims. Many larger companies even do their own research, although how unbiased that research is, it is impossible to tell.

Forums: Forums can also be a great tool for your hub site. You can put your site link in the forum signature and then build your credibility by answering questions and being useful on the forums in question. There are hundreds of forums for every industry out there.