

Promoting your site

Search engines are not the only way to promote your website. They're certainly important, but so is offline marketing.

Once you've got a website up and running, you should ensure that everywhere your logo goes, your web address follows. That means brochures, mailouts, headed notepaper, business cards, advertising. Don't neglect these 'old-fashioned' ways of communicating with your target audience.

Next, go where your users go. Do your research and find out which other websites your target audience is likely to use. If they use Facebook, set up a profile. If they use YouTube, make some videos. If they post on forums, get a login and start posting yourself.

Develop an online presence and contribute to the community, but don't spam. It's enough just to join in with discussions and activities online. When you do, other users will see things like your signature and your profile, both of which should contain your web address. Slowly but surely you'll drive traffic towards your site.

Obviously, search engines are important, and everyone wants good rankings. But how do you do this?

The biggest tip is to write great content. The better your content, the more people will link to you. If people are linking to you, your ranking will go up.

Next, try to make sure that your website is built using Web Standards. This means that your web design and your web content are two separate entities. On the one hand you've got the HTML of your site (the content), and on the other hand you've got a Cascading Style Sheet (CSS for short – the design of the website). When the HTML and the CSS come together, you get the final look and feel of your site.

Separating your website into HTML and CSS is a good idea because it will help search engines digest the content on your site. This will boost you up the rankings. When Google looks at your site for indexing, it's only interested in the content. If the content is neatly separated from the design, Google will be able to easily read it, and determine your relevance.

There are other added benefits to building your website with Web Standards in mind:

- Great support for older browsers (if necessary they can look at the content without the design).
- Great support for mobile devices (many of which don't care about design).
- Your website becomes accessible to blind users, who may rely on screen readers.
- You conform to legal obligations, under laws like the Disability Discrimination Act.
- It's easy to print from your site (it's simple to print things in a different visual appearance, without all the graphics).
- Updates become incredibly easy.



All that *and* your site will be better promoted on search engines. It's a no-lose situation!

Relevant Guides:

Online advertising - <http://www.businessitguide.com/guides/view-guide/72/>

Promoting your business using email - <http://www.businessitguide.com/guides/view-guide/48/>

Search Engine optimization - <http://www.businessitguide.com/guides/view-guide/69/>

