

Domain

SEO

www.

Links

Version

error

BACK TO BASICS

Increasing Web Traffic



Look Good. Get Found.

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Back to Basics: Increasing Web Traffic

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Back to Basics:

Increasing Web Traffic

Many business owners look for ways to increase the number of visitors to their website. This is especially true for businesses that have an online store or use their presence to generate revenue.

The question we'll address in this e-book is:
How do I get more traffic to my website?

The answer is not as straightforward as you might think, because there's a number of moving parts that may influence your website's online presence. Additionally, each website is different. In our experiences, some websites can gain large amounts of traffic by making a few simple changes while others will need a lot more work.

While the reality of getting more visitors to your website will vary from website to website, there are a few changes you can make. These suggestions are based on our experiences with dozens of clients who have benefited from this advice.

Below, you'll find seven ways you can get more web traffic. Some of these tips may have an immediate effect on your site; others take a little planning and a lot of time. Combined, these items complement your overall SEO and content strategy in the best and most measurable way possible.

1. Assign a Primary Domain Name

If you're reading this article, you probably already have a domain name. One of the most common errors businesses make, however, is that you may be using two of them instead of one - without even realizing it!

Let's say, for example, that your domain name is `yourbusiness.com`. When you type in "`yourbusiness.com`", the website address at the top of your screen doesn't change. Then you type in "`www.yourbusiness.com`" and find that address stays the same, too.

To computers and to search engines like Google, the following are two separate domain names:

- `yourdomain.com`
- `www.yourdomain.com`

Technically, the “www” version is a sub-domain of yourdomain.com – just like how your business might have mail.yourdomain.com or shop.yourdomain.com.

Why does the "www" matter?

When you have the same content on two, different domain names, you may be hit with what's known as a "duplicate content penalty." This penalty means that the search engines and visitors will have to choose between the www version and the non-www version of your site. These two sites are competing with one another for traffic, links and SEO rankings.

To fix this common error, pick a primary domain – either with or without the “www” in it. Then, redirect the entire secondary domain to the primary to prevent any 404 errors. You'll want to make sure it's set up as a 301 redirect, which is a permanent change.

We recommend taking the time to see how your website is set up. If you are able to see the same page with both the “www” and non-www version, then you should have this changed. This tip is also relevant for website owners that have multiple domain names pointing to the same website.

Once this is fixed, Google and other search engines should see your website correctly. You may see a bump in rankings and traffic since the other version of the website has been removed and redirected.

2. Check for Errors

Did you know that your website speed can also affect your traffic?

Visitors often abandon pages and stop visiting websites if the pages take too long to load. Additionally, search engines like Google tend to rank websites that load quickly higher in their results because they want to give the best results and that includes websites that load quickly.

The most common item that affects your website's load time is an error (or group of errors) on a web page. Each time a visitor clicks on that link, your web server writes down any errors it finds on an error log file. That single activity slows down the load time considerably.

What are errors?

An error can be something as simple as a missing image. It might even be a 1 pixel sized image you don't even know is missing or a broken link to a page on your website. If there are errors, we recommend taking the time to fix them. To take it a step further, be sure to review your website in the major browsers to ensure you're reaching as many visitors as possible.

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There are other ways to fix speed issues, too. These range from optimizing images for the Web to moving your site to a faster web host if needed.

If you're not sure how to correct these errors, we recommend talking to your programmer and web designer to figure out what works best for you.

Once errors are fixed, your website should be loading faster.

A faster loading website may help it rank higher and this should get you more traffic.

3. Post Semi-Frequently To Your Blog

Blogs, which were originally called "web logs," can increase your web traffic in a few, different ways. They also add value to your website.

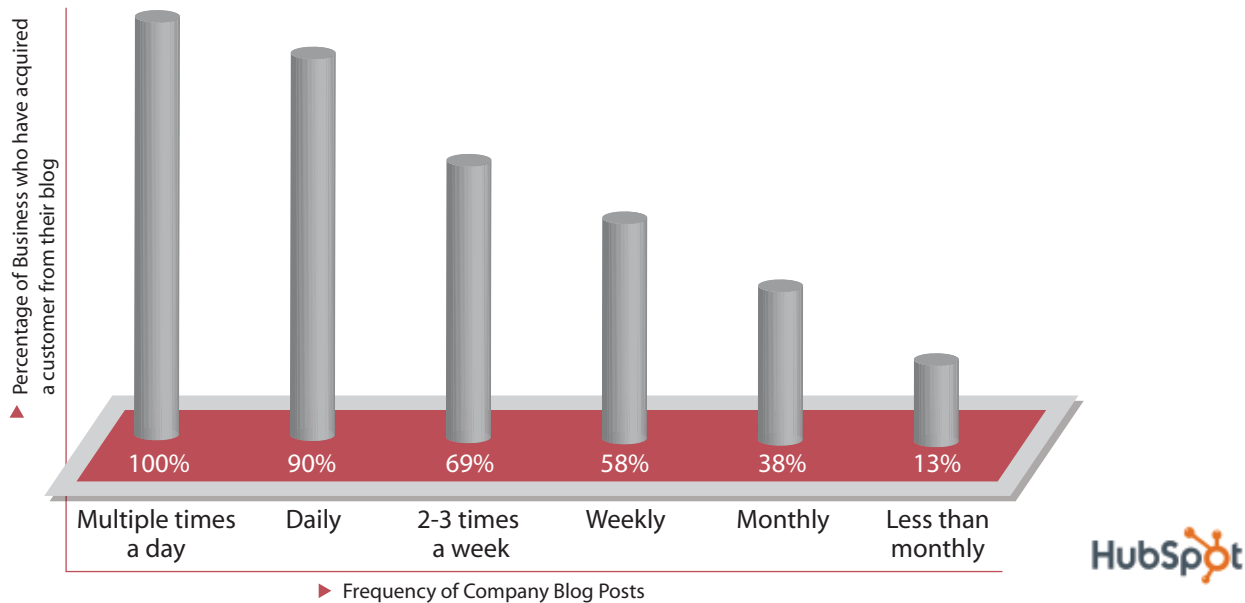
First, blogs make it easy to add content to website. Older content gets archived as new content is created. You simply login to your CMS (content management system) or blogging software and create a new blog post. You can login, post and be done within just a few minutes. For many companies, a blog saves them time and money because they don't have to rely on programmers or web designers to develop a new page every time they want to reach their clientele.

Secondly, the content on a blog tends to be a little more informal, which means you don't need perfect writing skills to blog. We've found that the best formula to follow is called "AODA." It stands for:

- **Attention** - Get their attention with the headline and first paragraph.
- **Interest** - Create interest in what you have to say.
- **Desire** - Turn that interest into desire or an emotional need.
- **Action** - Finally, have a strong conclusion that ends with a call to action.

The other, crucial element to have a company blog, is that you should blog often and not abandon it. By setting a schedule to blog at least once a week, you'll have 52 new pages on your website each year. Ideally, you could blog once-a-day provided you have something of value to share with your customers or new visitors to your website. The more you blog, the more traffic and conversions you will get:

Blog Post Frequency vs. Customer Acquisition

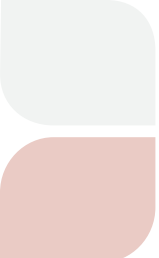


4. Get More Backlinks

Every link from another website to yours acts as a vote for your website and its content. The more votes your website gets, the higher it will rank in the search engines. The higher your website ranks, the more traffic you will earn.

There are many ways to get legitimate links to your website:

- Ask your partners or customers to link to your website.
- Add your website to your signature and actively post comments or in forums.
- Gradually add your website to relevant online directories.
- Consider engaging in article marketing on sites like EzineArticles.com where you can get 2 links per article.
- Link to your website on your social media profiles. Facebook and Twitter do count as backlinks!
- Make your blog's RSS feed readily available and auto-publish to Facebook and Twitter.
- Write guest blog posts. Drop a link to your website in a brief bio.
- And so on!



The key to a good backlink strategy, is to build these links naturally and over longer periods of time. With a little bit of planning, you'd be surprised what kind of gains you can earn.

Depending on how many backlinks you have already, you may see an increase in rankings and traffic right away. If you keep up with adding backlinks regularly, then you will see long-term traffic increases.

5. Buy Pay-Per-Click Advertising

Online advertising platforms like Google AdWords and other similar "Pay-Per-Click" programs can get instant traffic to your website.

To make sure you get the best ad rates, you want to make sure that you set up specific landing pages for each campaign that you run that are relative to your ad.

We've found that in order to get the best results, you'll need to experiment with your ads to find out which ones work and which ones don't. By testing different ads with unique landing pages, you'll quickly learn what you'll need to tweak, abandon or repeat.

Running a pay-per-click ad campaign can be time-consuming, but the potential for financial rewards is worth it!

6. Optimize for SEO!

Before you make any changes to your existing pages, make sure your website looks the same in all the major browsers: Internet Explorer, Chrome, Firefox and Safari. Once you're certain it's functioning properly, gather data from your Google Analytics and Google Webmaster Tools.

By using those free tools, you can discover which keywords to optimize for. If you're not sure if you have Google Analytics set up correctly, be sure to ask a professional! The data in your web analytics tools is crucial to your optimization strategy.

After you build a list of keywords, target your existing pages by optimizing your page titles and body copy. You'll want to have a monitoring system in place to check your SEO health on a regular basis.

Like a few of the items on our list, optimization is an ongoing battle. So don't be afraid to lather, rinse and repeat!

7. Add Better Content

On the web, the "biggest" usually wins and the "best" influences your traffic.

Every website needs content and, if you're concerned with getting relevant traffic to your website, good content will attract and retain more visits than poorly-crafted copy.

Content added to the pages on your website will have a different tone and purpose than the blog posts you write -- but each page you add will help you attract more visitors.

Think about it this way: if you were out in the middle of a lake fishing, would you catch more fish with a small net or a big one? On your website, your "net" is your content.

Concerned about your SEO?

By adding more pages to your website with relevant keywords, your business will be more likely to show up for a keyword or phrase that people are searching for. We recommend coming up with a content strategy to make sure you're not confusing visitors (and searches) with multiple pages of the same keyword.

Don't know a good writer?

Hire a copywriter that knows how to write for the Web. Yeah, it's that worth it. Do not put off adding new, original content to your website. Adding relevant content is one of the most important things you can do to ensure long-term, positive results.

About the Author

Tony Herman is one of the founding partners of Webstix, Inc. and has been building websites since 1995. Tony has a wealth of knowledge in the areas of website design, website promotion as well as the technical aspects of setting up websites.

About Webstix, Inc.

For more information about our company, our clients and our Maintenance Blocks system where you can easily get expert help fixing or updating your website. We encourage you to visit our website at www.webstix.com.



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