

# **Marketing For Small Businesses**

## **In 52 Bite-Sized Chunks**

By Owen Jones

Hi,

Thank you for purchasing this book, I hope that you will derive great benefit from it. It was written for business people – for people who use the Internet, realise it's potential, but who are spending so much time trying to get their business off the ground, that they are not sure how to promote it on line.

And don't have too much time to find out either!

People who want the salient information of how to use the Internet to promote their business right now – at their finger tips. This book is divided up into 52 bite-sized chunks covering all the aspects of Internet promotion that you will need to know for the foreseeable future, so don't worry about having to buy more books!

There cannot be a book two like this with another 52 modules – ever and that's a promise, despite the fact that the Internet is still evolving quickly.

If you have any questions about the content of this book, or if you would like another point covered (not that I think I have missed anything out) please don't hesitate to contact me on my private email address:

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All the best,

Owen.

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[How To Create The Correct Office Environment](#)

The office environment and the furniture in that office play a vital role in the productivity of that office. It also has a colossal influence on the well-being of the office workers which will also have a big effect on productivity.

People have to be given the right tools if they are to be expected to do a job well and in an

office environment, the various pieces of furniture are some of the tools.

So, you, the boss, might think that you are saving money by purchasing cheap or second-hand tables and chairs, but that decision could cost you in lost productivity for the next ten or fifteen years. However, it is not only efficiency that you could be losing, your furniture choices could also be affecting the health of your employees causing them to experience aches and pains and even take sick leave. In the worst cases, you might even be taken to court.

Yet all you did was try to save a few dollars on a couple of chairs.

If you work for yourself, say, at home, this is equally if not more important, because if you are the only one in your company and if you get sick, your firm stops trading, which could affect your kids' schooling, your mortgage, your car payments and your future credit worthiness, if you do not have adequate insurance.

Yet all you did was try to save a few dollars on a couple of chairs.

It is imperative to establish the correct working environment right from the beginning. If you were a carpenter, you would not buy a rusty, secondhand saw and you would not buy yourself an old 386 computer to work at, so why not apply the same principles to the office furniture? Office furniture costs less than a new

computer and will last at least three times longer.

So, which items of furniture will you require to equip an efficient office? Well, it is best to start with the chairs and work up, assuming that the floor is even and not slippery or wet. For the sake of ease we will just talk about you as the one employee using the office.

When you sit on the chair, you ought to be able to put your feet flat on the floor and there should be a back rest. You can go more deeply into it, but they are the minimum necessities. This is why many office chairs are adaptable, because they have to be able to suit a range of individuals.

Then the table: it ought to clear your knees by at least six inches, but not be so high that you can not place your elbows on it without slouching. This will encourage correct posture, which will minimize the risk of backache or wrist pain. The desk or table should be big enough to hold all the items that you require to work on or with.

Therefore, you should consider the footprints of your desktop's keyboard and monitor. Maybe add space for a laptop for file-sharing, a paper notebook, a reference book, pen holder, mobile or other telephone, a coffee mug and whatever else you use to do your job. The desk should not look permanently cluttered up, even if you are a disorganized person.

It is a good idea to have a desk with drawers to hold items that you use regularly. Some desks are equipped with a small filing cabinet at one end and a set of draws at the other. This is handy and can save space in a small, home office.

Even if you get one of these desks, you might want a full-sized filing cabinet anyway. That depends on how much paperwork your business generates. A full height cabinet means less bending and you can put the coffee percolator on it.

Then you will require shelving. make certain that the shelving is installed at a height that is comfortable for the person who will use it most frequently and that there is enough of for predicted future use. Once you have your lovely new office set up and full of lovely new equipment, you do not want to have to begin drilling holes in the brickwork.

Which brings me to power points. Make sure that you have plenty of them. Have them all around the room. I like to have a double socket just to the left and just to the right of my desk just above desktop height as well - very handy for plugging the laptop into or the phone, or a lamp or a camera, if you need one.

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[Inexpensive Offline Marketing Ideas](#)

Every business must have some sort of advertising. Traditionally, this has been fairly pricey, but it need not be, if you are marketing over the Internet. This is great for the majority of Internet marketers, as most Internet businesses have a small to non-existent publicity account.

Whichever type of business you have, you ought to consider advertising it on and off line. I find it easier to reflect on the off line aspect first, because there are fewer options than with on line advertising and they can often be rejected. For most businesses, off line advertising typically comes down to newspaper adverts, sign-written vehicles, free ads and handbills.

These types of advertising are very useful for local shops and local businesses such as contractors, glaziers, hairdressers et cetera, but they are comparatively expensive. Here are a few unusual ideas for off line advertising:

Try to give something away. This may sound expensive, but it does not have to be. For instance, if you run a pet shop, you could write a leaflet on how to wash your dog or how to get rid of lice. Promote this give-away on line, in your shop window and in the newspaper. Encourage people to come into your place of work to pick one up.

Ask your local papers whether they print press releases. If they do obtain details of ideal length and content and send them a press

release whenever you take on new staff, win an award or start selling a new product or service. Press releases should be free.

Next time there is a neighbourhood event, hire a stall and give a demonstration of what you do; take a survey of what you want to know; and hand out flyers. Stalls at Girl Guide Jamborees or Bring-And Buy sales are very cheap and you may meet thousands of people in person. Then hand out a press release out about the occasion.

Offer to present a prize to a local charity event and / or have the tickets printed too. With your name on, of course. Hundreds of people will see your name associated with a good cause.

Run a competition with a prize. Run it in the local paper or from your shop. As a building firm, we once offered a man Friday free for a day. It ran over a three week period and every week we asked for five trivia questions to be answered. The local paper ran it free of charge.

Thousands of people went in for it and our cost was a day's salary. An old widow won him and she had him doing little odd chores about the house all day while she made him tea and sandwiches and had a good old natter. I think it made her year, but it got us a lot of goodwill and fantastic publicity.

You could offer badges, coupons and novelties as lesser prizes

Send out Christmas cards and promotional calendars to past and prospective clients. A calendar will keep your name before someone's eyes all year around.

You could offer free seminars on the main features of your business. If you could talk in the community hall for thirty minutes, you could take questions and answers afterward. Try the local Women's Institute.

Some of these strategies can be used to promote an online business or website as well.

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## Offline Marketing Solutions

Last time we looked at the list of inexpensive offline marketing ideas.

Here it is again:

- 01] Newspaper ads
- 02] Shop windows
- 03] TV
- 04] Classifieds
- 05] Press releases
- 06] Radio
- 07] Sign-written vehicles
- 08] Free ads
- 09] Posters
- 10] Flyers/business cards
- 11] Give-aways
- 12] Demonstrations
- 13] Promotional gifts

- 14] Competitions
- 15] Coupons/freebies
- 16] Charity events

Most local tradesmen will be doing two of these already: numbers 2 and 7

So imagine the leap ahead of them you would be, if you did four? Or eight? Or all 16!  
800% more than the competition!

01] Real ads, not classifieds. Our local paper will give us centre spread to say whatever we like about our firm for the price of one quarter-page ad. Do it once or twice a year to go over your recent achievements. You haven't got any? Do some like 11], 12] 14], 16].

02] Shop windows – this is a no-brainer – a postcard for £1 a week with your ad, phone number, email and website addresses. You always see groups chatting and studying these ads.

03] TV sounds expensive, but the way to do it FOC is to invite them to a charity event or demonstration.

04] Classified still work, but are expensive these days

05] Press Releases – you must do these, but don't rely on them for getting time-sensitive information out. Papers run them when they are short of news. If you run ads or classifieds

remind them about it if they are very slow with your PR.

06] Radio – as with TV, but even easier.

07] I'm sure you're already doing this, but do you have magnetic or peelable ads for your car? Take them off when you go out at night.

08] Free Ads – over-rated, but it's free so you might as well.

09] If you work on a site for a builder as to be able to put a poster on his board.

10] Flyers and business cards – keep a few hundred in the van and when you do a job, leaflet the nearest 20 houses or so before you start the job. If you don't have a sign to put up outside where you are working, make sure that your van is clearly visible.

11] Give-aways – make leaflets on easy tasks that will not affect your business. Do one a month on topics like 'How To Wire A Plug', 'How To Avoid Electrocutation in a Flood', 'How To Change a Light Bulb Safely' etc, etc. Write one a month and leave them on the counter in your office or shop. Invite people to collect the latest one every month. Give one with your receipt for the bill or and your invoice. Give them to teachers to use in their home Economics classes or whatever.

12] Give a demonstration on how to perform a simple electrical task like change a fuse. You

can do this at the Scouts, Guides, WVS, school.

13] This is a great one: give calendars, pens, erasers, pencils, power-sensitive screwdrivers – whatever away to good clients or and prospective clients at Christmas. We gave two-inch penknives away one year with our details etched on one side. I know people who still carry them everywhere 20 years later. How can you beat that for £2.50?

14] Everybody likes a competition. Offer a prize at a quiz night or run your own pub quiz 'sponsored by....'. Run one in the local paper {free} or run one for a local charity (and tell the press, TV and radio).

15] Coupons and freebies – give a customer a '10% off if used within six months' coupon. Offer a free electrical household safety check up with all jobs over whatever value. Have special offers: 'All this month, 10% off new shower installations'.

16] Charity – offer to give 5% of your takings one week/month to charity; offer to organize an event for charity; offer a free electrical check of a charity shop, but tell the media.

There are twelve calendar months in a year or thirteen lunar months, if you do one of the above every month, plus the two or three you are already doing, you will be way ahead of the competition in offline advertising. Think about it and take action.

Next time we will look at writing to sell.

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### A Sales Letter, Ad, Flyer, Article etc

Have you ever been reading an advertisement and know that you want to purchase the product? Then you step back a bit and wonder why you actually want that thing? The ad has put you in a trance, in a purchasing frenzy. Just how did the writer do that to you?

The first thing to do is work out who you are going to be talking to. We do this every time we speak; we look at the person and make a judgment how to speak to that person. It is harder when writing because you cannot see who you are talking to, but you still have to try to do it. Are they marketers, are they mothers, welders, pilots, car-owners, who?

Work out why anyone should hire you rather than someone else. What makes you so special? This is your key selling point. You have to be persuasive. Most people have heard it all before so they are very careful. Who can blame them? So, give all the evidence that you are sincere that you can marshal.

Tell your potential customer about the advantages of using you. Think about the

target audience, work out their concerns and how you can triumph over them.

For instance, mothers are concerned about not hearing their baby crying in the next room. Answer? Your baby alarm is sensitive to the slightest noise and will transmit it to the speaker without fail.

Once you have written your sales letter from the point of view of a salesman, re-read it several times, but from the point of view of your target audience. Would your sales letter sell you on the product? If not, alter it and keep altering it. If your sales letter raises any doubts, it should answer them. Do not give your target audience a opportunity to vacillate or to say no.

Once you have your potential customer on your side, you have to persuade them to take the plunge, to act now. You need to make what is known as 'a call to action' and you have to give them a reason to act now. So, you tell them to 'click here now' or 'phone me now' and you tell them that if they order right now they will get an extraordinary bonus of ....

Always give something as a free bonus. People like to think that they have gotten a decent deal and if they get a bonus, then they have to have gotten a decent deal. Handle the bonus as you did your main product. Tell them how much it is worth and why and then say that it is free if they take action now.

Classified Adverts

If you want to sell yourself or products, you will have to promote in your local paper or and on the Internet. The classified ad normally sells quite well, but you need to use the minimum number of words to keep the price down.

All the concepts we discuss here will apply to both on and off line classified classifieds.

You have to get the readers' attention as they scan down the ads. You know what it's like, you have done it yourself. What catches your eye? 'Free' is the biggest stopper. If you can work the word 'free' into your advertisement, you will stop most people for a couple of seconds more at least.

Now you have to make the reader want to use you. At this point, the reader likes to feel reassured, so the word 'guaranteed' is good, if you mean it of course. Promise that what you do is the best, guaranteed.

This takes a lot of the nagging doubt out of the readers' mind and they will be more likely to 'give you a go'.

The last part is the 'call to action' - 'buy it now'. But you can make this even more dramatic by saying things like: 'special offer ends in seven days', or 'only 50 pieces left'. Nobody truly believes these claims, but they still work.

There is no need to mislead, but you are in competition with people who are less

scrupulous, so you have to employ some strategies. It's a pity, but it is the way of business. Just make sure that the services you are selling are worth the money and up to the claims that you make for them and yourself.

Write a 500 word article on yourself and your firm. Then cut it down to a 100 word ad for your firm. Then a 50 word ad and finally a 12 word classified ad.

File them for later use.

If you like gadgets take a look at [Ad Creator](#) (you will be taken off site but in a new window).

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## Inexpensive Online Marketing Ideas

Many business-owners are taking up Internet marketing because the population is becoming more and more Internet savvy all the time. Online marketing or Internet marketing is best accomplished using certain tools.

These tools may not all be quite obvious as Internet marketing tools to the newcomer, so in the rest of this piece we will take a closer look at some of the less obvious, but better Internet marketing tools around.

The best Internet marketing tools, or at least most of them are: SEO, article marketing, content management, RSS, affiliate marketing,

lists, Web2 and auto responders. There are others that used to help before, but which have waned in significance such as: Free For All lists, Safe Lists and Traffic Exchanges.

The point here is that some things that were touted as the bee's knees of Internet advertising a couple of years ago are not so effective now and new ways are being invented all the time, some of which are very useful like: Web2 and RSS. You need to keep your ear to the ground with regard to Internet marketing tools or you will miss current developments and fall behind.

SEO or search engine optimization is one of the best Internet marketing tools about because the principles, once studied, can be applied to any site for long-term improvement in the ranking stakes. Start with your domain name. Choosing the correct domain name is by far the most crucial step you can take in SEO. Make it pertinent to what you are trying to achieve.

For example, if you want to sell petrol powered model helicopters, try to get hold of a domain with those words in the name like petrolpoweredmodelhelicopters.com. If you can not get that try to get petrolpoweredmodelhelicoptersforsale.com. Do not settle for petrolpoweredmodels.com even if you think that you might expand into other related models. Link the web sites instead.

Pick your keywords carefully and use them in your compositions. Needless to say, the domain name should become your foremost keyword or keyword phrase. Do not be tempted to use it ad nauseam, use it only where it fits in but make an effort to make it fit in quite often.

Reword sentences and paragraphs to accomplish this. In this article, one of my keyword phrases or LTKW (long tail keywords) is 'Internet marketing tools' - see, I just got it in again :-)

Write web pages for your site including keywords and LTKW, but keep those pages unique to your web site. Then compose articles around and about the subject of your site, but do not mention your website's keywords in them or you will lose traffic on your keywords to other, larger businesses.

Post these articles, with links back to your site, on article directories. Hopefully, web masters of blogs and newsletters will choose these pieces and use them and you will gain backlinks, kudos and page ranking for your site.

One of these Internet marketing tools is the list. Lots of people quote 'The money is in the list', but some marketers do not bother with a list. Most do but not all. If you want to build a list, add a box to your site so that visitors can sign up for your monthly newsletter and extraordinary offers.

- 01] Article marketing
- 02] Content management
- 03] RSS
- 04] Lists
- 05] Web2
- 06] Auto responders
- 07] Websites and blogs
- 08] Online forums
- 09] Online Classifieds
- 10] Banner placement
- 11] Adwords and PPC
- 12] Newsletters
- 13] Mobile websites
- 14] eBooks
- 15] Free reports
- 16] Back-links
- 17] SEO
- 18] Tell-a-friend links
- 19] Facebook
- 20] Twitter
- 20] LinkedIn

As an exercise, print out this list, mark off the ones you already do and think about why you don't do the others.

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## Online Marketing Solutions

As with the offline marketing solutions, most business-owners will only be practicing two or three of the twenty options below. You need to do all of them, but you don't have to do all

every day of the week or every week of the month.

Draw up a rota and tick tasks off as they are completed. For example, you could add two pages to your site and two articles to directories a month; spend an hour on Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn every weekend. Post an ad, check your PPC, look for new blogs and newsletter once a week for an hour, etc, etc.

The point is to have a printed list pinned up in front of you so that you can tick things off and see how you're doing, because it is easy to forget these things.

OK, let's have a quick look at the items below:

01] Article marketing: means writing articles on subjects relevant to your interest – home electrical systems – and getting them posted in super websites relevant to your industry or in article databases like Ezine Articles. The last three or four lines of the article should contain links back to your own website.

02] Content management: this involves placing articles, photos, reports etc (content) on your website, so that it grows in size, which makes Mighty Google happy and that pushes you up from page 10 to page one, so that people can find and employ you.

03] RSS: this has to do with distributing your articles

04] Lists: some webmasters swear by lists, others don't. At least if you have a list, you

have someone to talk to, even though you don't know whether they are listening or not.

05] Web2: this is the generic name for all the social media that has sprung up like Squidoo, Hubpages, Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter etc

06] Auto responders: these useful buddies are like tennis ball servers, they fire out whatever they are loaded with at regular intervals or when triggered.

07] Websites and blogs: need no introduction, but which is better? We will discuss this next time.

08] Online forums: where groups of like-minded people get together to discuss common problems.

09] Online Classifieds: like ffline classifieds, but less effective.

10] Banner placement: putting your banner on someone else's site in order to gain traffic.

11] Adwords and PPC: buying keywords so that customers are sent to your website

12] Newsletters: a regular newsletter sent out to people who have signed up for it – a bit like a magazine.

13] Mobile websites: a website or blog fvisible on a mobile phone

14] eBooks: paperless books on any subject under the sun.

15] Free reports: as the offline versions

16] Back-links: links back to your website from someone else's

17] SEO: this is a collection of techniques that makes your website more user-friendly or and easier for search engines to crawl.

18] Tell-a-friend links: a gadget that can be put on your site, so that people can tell their friends that they have found a wonderful site.

19] Facebook: you've met already

20] Twitter: ditto

20] LinkedIn: a more serious version of Facebook, perhaps – billed as THE business site.

Next time we will look at websites and blogs.

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## Website or Blog?

If you want a presence on the Internet, you have more than one option. Most businesses will want some sort of website and so do a lot of individuals. This article is about the main Internet options available to businesses and individuals these days.

The oldest and so most traditional means of presenting oneself on the Internet is the website. The website is called a static presence, because it is non-interactive. The blog, which came along a lot later is called dynamic because readers can leave comments on articles.

Both websites and blogs can be hosted by oneself, by a hosting company or be free of charge. Companies want blogs hosted on their own servers or on shared servers. So do most serious individuals, but many bloggers use

services provided by others like Wordpress, Blogger, Tumblr and others.

Lets take a look at these two basic types of web presence:

**Websites:** Basically, a website can either be hosted or free. Free websites are generally not worth the effort. Most free hosts try to disguise the word 'website' by calling it a village, a lens, a hub or something else, but it is still a free hosted website. Usually, other people's ads are stuck all over to pay the cost of giving it to you free.

A proper website which you have paid for with your own domain name - URL - is a different matter, because it shows some level of commitment. These so-called self-hosted websites have the potential to become hugely popular and even financially successful.

**Blogs:** Blogs fall into the same categories - free and paid. This will not surprise many as a blog is only a different type of website. It is interactive in that readers can also write to the blog or just post comments, as the webmaster sees fit.

There are various options, ranging from real hosted blogs created with Wordpress templates to Wordpress blogs hosted on Wordpress servers, which are almost as good and Blogger and virtual blogs like Gather. Again, the self-hosted options are the most powerful and flexible.

Facebook is another type of website that we will look at again.

Which is better? Only you know that, but go for hosted every time.

If you buy a domain, say, <http://bobjoneshomeelectrics.com> and have it hosted (it has to live somewhere), you could have both a website and a blog, which would be at:

<http://bobjoneshomeelectrics.com/wordpress/>

The website could be used for formal, permanent things like previous jobs, meet the staff and contact details and the blog could be used a bit like Facebook, where you can post from your mobile, but Google will love your site and not Facebook's.

Look here for an example of a double website and blog:

<http://behind-the-smile.org> and <http://behind-the-smile.org/wordpress/>

Next time we will look at choosing a domain name, buying it and getting it hosted.

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## URL's and Hosting

What is in a name?

I am sure that you have guessed that the answer is an awful lot. You would take a great deal of care choosing a baby's name, a house name or a name for a boat and it is even more important for a website or blog, if you want anyone to ever find it.

A person has friends whatever he or she is called and a house has a number and a street. A boat has a mooring, but a website has just a name. If you assume that no-one knows the name of your marvellous website, how then are they going to find it?

These potential clients may or may not be looking for you in particular, but how will you get your site in front of them? Well, 80% of searches are made on Google, so you have a starting point. Two-thirds of searchers never look any further than the first page and most of those don't even scroll down.

Therefore, it does not take a genius to work out that you need to be at the top of the list of returns on a search phrase. So, you have to think like your clients. Say, you prefer to operate in Epsom. It would make sense to have Epsom in your domain name – your URL. You are an electrician, so that gives you another word. People may look for you by name, so you have it, in essence.

Bob Jones electrician Epsom – make of it what you will. <http://bobjonesepsomelectrician.co.uk> (.com)

Should you use .com or .co.uk? Living in the UK, it is probably better to use .co.uk, but if the costs were a lot higher, I would go with .com I am not convinced that it makes a lot of difference.

Then go to a broker that sells URL's (Google: "buy .co.uk domain"), compare prices, check availability and buy it or alter it and buy it. Then Google "uk hosting company", check prices and purchase some space. As a guideline, I pay \$9.99 per annum for a URL and \$4.99 per month for hosting, but that is for 'unlimited' domains and blogs.

So, for \$70 a year, I get a domain name 'of my choice' and put it up online for a year. £1 a week. And I get to have a blog too – a double site – for 50p a week each. And it's tax deductible.

If you don't already have a site or it is inappropriate, change it now, before we do a lot of work on it.

Next time we will look at website design.

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## Website and Blog Design

Style is a tricky thing, isn't it? The lenses in all Ray-Bans do pretty much the same job, yet one person will like those and I will like these. Yet the person wearing them gets to see the

frames less than anyone else. Same with your house. You like Georgian, she likes Victorian, but both of you are either inside it or away from it most of the time.

Others see these things more than we do ourselves and so should it be with websites and blogs. Ideally, you want tons of traffic (visitors) going there every day, while you only go once a week to add to it.

If you go there more often than strangers do, you have a problem.

So, do you choose a website design that you like or that is popular? That is your decision. However, the least that you can do is make it easily navigable (easy to get around).

Do you surf much? Do you notice trends? Does anything catch your eye?

'Sliders' are in. Have you seen them? The header (main picture at the top) slides away to reveal another. Very popular indeed, they are.

You will really have to think deep about what you want or what you think your customers want. Or you can sit on the fence like I do 😊

My website is traditional, but my blog is modern. Look at these examples:

<http://mosquitobiteswelling.com>

and

<http://mosquitobiteswelling.com/wordpress/>

That way, I can send different types of people to different types of website, but there is a link on each to the other.

If you choose the right way of designing your online presence, you can change the template quite easily as new designs become available. Wordpress blogs are pretty good for this, because they are the biggest layer in the market, so people design their swanky new blog templates to be WP compatible.

And last, but very, very far from least, you want your website and your blog to look good on a mobile phone or tablet. Tablets are easy, but they have to look good on an iPhone and a Blackberry.

Mine are 😊

By the way, don't fall for the old website designers trick or trying to impress you with swank and glitz over navigability. You are an electrician and you are selling yourself, your ability and your reputation. You are not trying to prove that you have the gaudiest website in town. Your website should just state your case – it is a semi-permanent definition of you and your company. You can let yourself go a bit with the blog, but if it loads too slowly, like 3-5 seconds, you will probably lose a visitor to a competitor.

If you have a website, register it with Google Analytics (Google it) and check the speed that

your site loads at. If you don't have one yet, you need to get on with it. Try here: [set up a new Website or Blog](#)

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## Backlinks

Nobody really knows how Google decides which site should be at the top of a list returned by a search query, except Google, one presumes. However, nearly everyone agrees that the most important metric is backlinks. Backlinks are links back to your website from other sites.

The theory goes that if your website is 'important' then other people will link to it from their website. I personally think that this is flawed, but who cares what I think? The fact is (probably) that Google thinks it. This has sent millions of people off on a mission to get more backlinks than their competitors.

Of course, some people are more ethical than others, so fraud raged, rather than crept in. People would swap links; people bought and sold links and people spammed blogs leaving stupid, unintelligible comments along with their link.

Google noticed this, which is why I wonder if it is still so all-important. Anyway, there are two types of backlinks. Reciprocal backlinks are the ones that are traded – I link to you if you link to

me. And there are unidirectional backlinks. These one-way backlinks may still be good on the theory that I like your set enough to send my visitors to it, whether you reciprocate or not.

However, it does not top people selling one-way links.

Google may be moving to giving more sway to how long people stay on your site. However, there are problems with that too. If someone finds your site because they have an urgent problem, they are not going to stay there reading our content, are they? Their visit will look like a bounce (arrive and leave straight away) which is a bad sign to Google.

So, that is your problem – you need backlinks, but we don't know how relevant they are: they could be vital, but might not be. For the time being, you ought to pursue one-way backlinks.

So how do you do that?

Google says to build a great website and they will come, but that is crap. It only applies to big firms like Coke, the BBC, Mercedes etc. Google mixes with the gods too much and does not understand small firms anymore.

Never buy or swap links. Pursue a regular and persistent strategy of acquiring backlinks by writing articles relevant to your site and post them to 'article directories' (Google it) with one or two backlinks at the end. Webmasters may

pick them up and reprint them which will give you free one-way backlinks.

It is a long, slow, but ethical process for which you will never be punished (by Google).

Look here for examples:

<http://ezinearticles.com>

As a permanent, recurring task, post at least two articles a month. Two a week is better and recycle the articles as freebie problem-solving sheets to give to customers.

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## Article Marketing

Many people who create their first web site get a rude surprise after launching it. They have spent a long time thinking about making a website, a long time studying how to build one and a long time making it. They upload it and wait for visitors to flock to it. And nothing happens. No-one comes by. After a while, they might get four or five visitors and then no-one again.

A lot of new webmaster think that all you have to do is build a web site and it will be registered by the search engines and then people will find it. This is just not true, although you may get indexed after a while. The problem with this tactic is that when people search on a term and the results appear, there are usually several hundred thousand websites. As an unknown

site, yours will be close to the bottom of the pile and most people only look at the first page of results.

So, the idea is to get your web site listed on the front page of Google's search returns. Article marketing will help your web site rise in the rankings and become visible to your prospective patrons. It is far better to advertise your website so that it will be seen, than to have a flashy website that no-one will ever know about. You can add the bells and whistles later, if you still think it is worth while.

The explanation why writing articles works so well at raising your website's visibility, is because of the way that Google operates. Google attempts to rank websites on their popularity, which is supposed to give an indication of its merit. It gauges popularity by the number of websites that link back to it. These are known as backlinks.

If Google finds a backlink to your website, it checks your website for a mutual backlink to the website that holds one to you. Reciprocal backlinks are not as valuable as non-reciprocal backlinks. When you write an article, you are allowed to put two links back to your website (put one to your home page and one to another page).

If you submit that article to an article distribution site (and there are hundreds), other web masters may publish your article with its backlinks. The better the article, the more times

it will be published, the more solo backlinks you will get and the higher you will climb in Google. The majority of money made on any search term will be made by the websites at the top of the first page.

There are some other ways of obtaining backlinks, but article marketing is by far the best, steadiest long term strategy for promoting a web site.

Who is likely to publish your article? Well, the distribution website for a start, but also newsletter writers, website owners, bloggers and others who require fresh content for their own businesses, but who might not have the time or know-how to write their own articles.

Send your article to article directories and websites like Tumblr, Digg and Google+ where they can be found, read and followed back to your website. Perceive the article as a funnel to your website, so do NOT send your whole article to social media or there will be no reason to click through to yours.

Sign up to blogs or create your own and post them there, but only post relevant articles on other people's blogs.

When you have a quantity of interrelated articles, collate them into a book and give it away or sell it with your backlinks in situ

Put a link on your website to an autoresponder which will deliver your articles to people who

sign up for them. This is a feature of most email clients that reside on your computer (Outlook, Outlook Express, Thunderbird, Opera, etc).

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## What Is Viral Marketing?

The idea of viral marketing is one of the more recent ways of marketing to come to the Internet. As the word 'viral' implies, it depends on people passing your promotional material around like a cold. It would normally go from friends and colleagues to their friends and colleagues ad infinitum. You can imagine that if I sent a message to all the people in my address book and they did the same, the message would perhaps reach a million people in a month. All free of charge.

Viral marketing is low cost and can be fast and far reaching, if you use the right advertising medium, but it does have a propensity to be unfocused. That is to say, you do not know who is going to receive your viral advert, so you do not know if that individual will be interested or not.

You can extract certain conclusions, if you select your material carefully though. Say, you had a website on craft work. You could send out a free knitting pattern to all your friends and to those other people who have given you permission to do so (no spamming, please).

Append the URL of your website at the bottom and tell the recipients that they can forward it on to anyone they know who would like it.

Bingo! Now you know that most of the recipients after the first wave that you sent out yourself will be interested in crafts and / or knitting. It is also pretty safe to assume that most of them will be older women with computers. If you tagged your return URL with a code by sending them to a web page like viral-ad1-knitting.html and had a sign-up box there for a newsletter, you would soon have a list of older, computer literate women who like knitting or and other crafts. That data would be of use.

Various companies send out different things. It might be a free report on smoking or catching trout or bicycle maintenance. Some people simply send out jokes. Sending out jokes or pictures is not focused but you can see how other things are very focused.

Hotmail came up with this strategy and they claim that they went from zero subscribers to twelve million in eighteen months. That is some target to beat. Look at the bottom of a lot of the email circulars that you receive and you will probably still see Hotmail's viral marketing.

This is the best viral marketing system, but you must append your URL to something worth having, Your friends will not want to send junk or sales blurb to their friends and family.

Keeping the emails informative, helpful or humorous, is the best tactic.

Look in your junk messages and see if there is anything you could resend. Trim the email and put your own details on the bottom, so that from you on, everyone will see your URL and you may even get some backlinks out of it.

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## Signature Files

A signature file is normally referred to as a 'sigfile'. A sigfile is like a PS in that it goes immediately after the signature.

The correct way to use a sigfile is to write a snappy little one or two line file with your URL at the end. Outlook, Outlook Express and the majority of the other email clients will append this sigfile to the bottom of your emails automatically.

This is a great way of getting your URL out to thousands of people a month, especially if, when you write to say, your Mum, she forwards it to all your brothers and sisters, aunties and uncles.

How many emails do you send out a month? A hundred? Four hundred? A thousand? I send about a thousand a month, which means that I reach at least 1,000 people a month with free advertising.

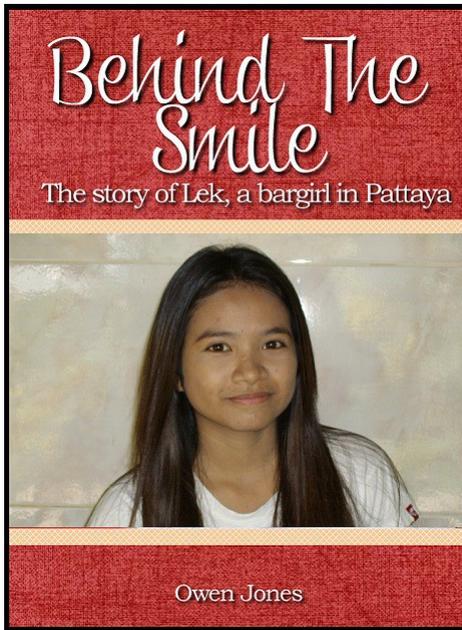
If most of your emails are local – to friends, family, business associates, colleagues, subbies, suppliers, clients and prospective clients, then a sigfile will build awareness of you quickly, easily and free or charge.

All email clients allow sigfiles – if yours does not, upgrade or dump it – so implement this feature today, right now. Look in the help system to find out how to do it. Outlook allows you to append different sigfiles to different email addresses, which can be useful, if you have several aspects to your business. It also allows different sigfiles for new emails and replies, although you will probably not need that level of sophistication.

It is a straightforward, yet free viral marketing tool that many people neglect. By the way, use the same sigfile in the posts you make on blogs. You do not make any? Shame on you, you should. Search Google for related blogs like – ‘blogs home improvements’ - and join a few.

Then read the posts and submit comments with your sigfile. Hundreds will read them and some will click through, if you are not too boring. Bore people on blogs by advertising yourself is a big no-no.

Here is my normal sigfile for use on Outlook. It was created on Word:



*Behind The Smile*

*The story of Lek,  
a bar girl in Pattaya.*

*The new novel*

*by Owen Jones.*

*Paperback & Kindle with  
free p&p in many cases.*

*@lekwilliams.*

And here is my sigfile for my articles. A sigfile for articles is called a bio, by-line or author bio. In raw HTML it will look like this:

```
Owen Jones, the writer of this  
article, writes on a number of topics,  
but is now concerned with his book <a  
href="http://behind-the-
```

smile.org">Behind The Smile</a>. If you want to know more, please visit <a href="http://behind-the-smile.org/wordpress/">our blog</a>

This will look like this:

Owen Jones, the writer of this article, writes on a number of topics, but is now concerned with his book [Behind The Smile](#). If you want to know more, please visit [our blog](#).

As an exercise, you may want to practice your sigfile and bio so that you can add them to your emails and articles when the time comes.

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## SEO Part One

If you are at all serious about promoting your business on line, then you should be concentrating a lot of your work on SEO and getting more backlinks. SEO is 'search engine optimization', but for those who are still not certain what backlinks are, here is a refresher:

Backlinks are links from other web sites back to your website. Google and other search engines use the number of backlinks it can find to a web site to judge how popular (and therefore how good or and useful) it is. The most popular web sites drift to the top of the search engine rankings.

Not only will your website receive more clicks up on the top of the search results, but the people who click through to your site will be looking for what you have to sell – yourself and your firm - which results in more focused visitors.

There are a couple of little tweaks that you can check on to improve your search engine ranking position (SERPS).

Firstly, make certain that the title of your website is relevant to what you are using the site for.

For instance, you are selling expertise in being an electrician, but do you have a speciality? Like, problem-solving or rewiring? Domestic, industrial or new-build? Try to work that into the title, but beware, if you tunnel too deep and later you want to expand, you might need a new website.

It may be better to stick with your name (or the company's name), your location, and the name of your trade, as we discussed before. Then if you later want to branch out you can use folders or sub-domains to do that.

However, if you really want to use a narrow niche like 'rewiring experts' in your website title, there are ways of linking websites, if you make a decision later to branch out into new-build.

So, good SEO means that all visitors, people and (ro)bots find it easy to read your website.

You don't want them to think "Oh, my God! Get me out of here"; you want 'Oh, my God! Give me more'.

Secondly, if you have several pages, make certain that the titles of each page are relevant to the article as well. Check the source code for every page too and be sure that the <META> tags are relevant: that is, put at least six keywords in the keyword meta tag and put a relevant description including your main keyword in the description meta tag.

Thirdly, keep your articles focused but do not repeat a keyword more than 10 times per page (assuming an article length of 500 words, which gives a keyword density of 1-2%).

As an exercise, practice writing articles of 500-1,000 words with the main keyword in the title and used no more than 2% over the entire article. You can have lesser keywords, that is a good thing, but keep their density to 1%.

Tip: use synonyms to help you out. For example, Outlook has a Thesaurus built in, so for WIRE, it offers: cable, wire, line, wiring, flex, lead.

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## SEO Part Two

Look at the content of your website. is it relevant or is it flashy? Does the content set

out to help and enlighten your visitors or does it set out to show how clever a graphic designer you are? Most search engines cannot actually read graphics, but they can all read text.

This means that if there is too much going on on your page, the Google bot might give up and leave and so might a human and both of these scenarios are disasters.

Each page should have between 500-1,000 words of relevant, unrepeated content. Keep in mind too that the text should be in normal text (or HTML), but definitely NOT embedded in graphics or the search engines will not be able to read it and categorize your web site.

Without spamming the search engines by repeating yourself too frequently, look for legitimate ways to repeat your keywords. How? You might ask. Well, one method is to have a number of menus or navigation bars. You could have one in the left or right hand margin and one either in the info bar (between the header and the main text body) or in the page footer. That gives you two, but if your pages are lengthy, you could have all three: top, side and bottom.

A few other legitimate ways are by adding:

1. a 'locator' or a 'You are here :>' line.
2. a sitemap to your menus.
3. a copyright notice in the page footer with an active link back to your home page.

These methods give you four of five internal legitimate links around your site for which no search engine should penalize you.

Back to getting more backlinks, because getting more backlinks ought to always be your first priority. Write articles for each of your web pages with deep links directly to the page for which they were written. If you are allowed two links, one goes to your home page and one goes to the page within your web site that you wrote the piece to advertise.

For example:

1] a link to the home page:

```
<a href=http://behind-the-smile.org>Behind  
The Smile</a>
```

2] a deep link to a specific page:

```
<a href=http://behind-the-smile.org/was-lek-a-  
good-cook.html>Was Lek a Good Cook?</a>
```

This gives Google no excuses, it will follow that second link right into the heart of your website. The first link is equally necessary because Page rank is based on the home page only, although other pages can be ranked too.

I personally have noticed that three articles per web page normally does the trick, but it can take more. You ought to join some relevant blogs and forums and take part, leaving only worthwhile, helpful comments, but make

certain that your backlink is in your sigfile (signature file).

This technique can produce hundreds of relevant, unreciprocated backlinks, but be careful to keep it low key and relevant or the webmaster might delete your comments or even your account, wasting your work of weeks or even months.

Try to be innovative and work on getting backlinks on relevant websites. As you go up the search engine rankings, webmasters will email you asking to exchange links. Do not do this, no matter how they put their case. A link out of your site is like having a hole in your bucket; you should be plugging the holes in your bucket, not making new ones.

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## Content Management

Content management refers to nothing more than taking care what you put on your site and in your articles or webpages.

By the end of this week, you will know all you need to know for now about writing great, keyword-rich, relevant content for your website that will get you tons of backlinks and loads of love from Google.

I apologise if computers and the Internet are not your thing, but we will be taking a break from them soon. I promise.

Along with your skill as an electrician, your personality and the reliability of your company, your ability to communicate ranks right up there. When people visit your website, they might not know you, so you have to come over well and this means writing.

The very thought of writing' scares many people half to death, which is a real shame, because writing is a skill like any other and it can be learned. Alright, some may have more of a natural aptitude towards writing than others, but a big fat glutton can learn to run a marathon too.

With a lot of training.

Well, when writing, that training is called practice and that's all it takes to improve any skill.

Now, I don't know you or your skills or fears, but my guess is that you would rather be out working than writing articles about it. That's not a problem. Please read on.

Let's assume that you have a website or blog somewhere and now you are faced with populating it. That is, you have to fill it out with content – web pages.

How you do this, how many pages, loading them all at once or not is highly subjective, but to keep it simple, I say you need a five-page website as a short term goal.

So, remember that 500 word article you wrote about yourself and your company? Bring it back into the word-processor and read it. What do you think?

Is the title relevant to the name of your business and the name of your website? Does it use a master keyword to a density of 1-2%? Are there 3-4 minor key words to a 1% density?

No, of course not, because you didn't know about those things then, but you can SEO it now, can't you? So, edit it and then load it u as your front page – your index.html

Your website is now 'live', barren but live. Go back to the forums you found earlier and answer a few queries, interact with the others in a low key way and leave your sigfile wherever you go.

You can use this article – copy – as a press release for your new website, if you doctor it a bit or print it out with your links and hand it out as flyers in the town or post them through doors.

You will be surprised how many people go to your site and investigate. Look in the web logs

maintained by your host. Look for Awstats or Webalizer and watch people visit.

However, one page will not interest them for long, no matter how proud of it you are. Now you need to repeat the process on four new, but relevant subjects.

Every time you finish one, load it up, visit the forums, visit Google webmaster tools and tell them about it (reload your sitemap). Print it out and hand it out.

Ping it even ... OK, we'll cover sitemaps and pinging next time, but try to have your five pages up by then.

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## Getting the Word Out

This is where I hope you are now:

You have a website or blog with five or more pages and Google knows that they are there.

How can you tell? Go to Google's Webmaster Tools and look.

When you go over there, it will ask you to verify that you own the site. This is easy, because you registered it with Google Analytics right? And that is one of the verification options, so use that.

If you have not done that, please do it now or choose one of the other verification options and do that now.

Tip: using Google Analytics is the easiest because you want the information available there anyway, but you can upload a <meta> file which is easy too.

If you have a website you now have five pages and a couple of Nav(igation) Bars pointing at them.

If you have a blog, you should have five pages too, but did you upload them as posts by mistake? You really need a few static pages and a load of posts.

So, you have that. If you are lucky, Google has indexed your pages (look on Google's Webmaster Tools and it will tell you on sitemaps). If it hasn't no worries, just keep adding pages to your website and posts to your blog.

When you see that any page or post after the first five has been indexed post it elsewhere. I'll explain.

Say your sixth page/post is called: 'Ornate Pendant Light Fittings in the Home' (Tip: try to make the title unique) type that into Google and see where you are. If nowhere, it probably hasn't been indexed yet. If you are on page three or four, perhaps the title was too common.

Anyway, give it a fortnight and then simplify the title to say 'Pendant Light Fittings', rephrase some of the sentences and alter the main keyword to suit the new title, add your author bio which has a link to your home page and another one (deep link) but not the one on pendant lights and post it to Ezine Articles and other article directories.

This is a cycle o get into:

1. write an article
2. post it to your website with a long, 'unique' title
3. tell Google about it
4. ping it
5. print it out and give it to the public with your links on it
6. wait two weeks
7. alter the article and give it a generic title (so that you start to rank for that too) and post it to the article directories (say, two or three)

You need a sitemap to make it easy for Google to weave its way around your site. The best HTML editors create and load one for you automatically or Google 'free xml sitemap creation', there are plenty out there, but you will need to upload it to your site too. If you use a blog, look for a sitemap plug in, there are several.

Finally, pinging... This is very simple in idea and execution. For bloggers it is built into

'Settings' and for websites, go to ping.com or pingoat.com, type in the name of your latest page (deep link) and press ping. It will tell thousands of sites or your new addition. Most will ignore it, but what more can you do but tell them?

You can only lead a horse to water...

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## Social Media

This is the last part of this section on online marketing for now, next time will be offline 😊

So, now you have a website or blog with at least five pages, some of which have been recycled into the article directories in order to possibly pick up more backlinks. You see the backlinks that your article will get from an article directory are worthless, you want other webmasters to pick them up and post them on their sites where the backlinks will count, but you want the public to read your version on your page.

Ranking highly on Google is the best way of achieving this, but there are other ways too. The next best is social media. This is a huge subject, so we will look into the lighter side of it now, get some results and then return to it in more detail in the future.

Social media are sites like Twitter, Facebook, Mr. Wong, Technorati, Myspace, Google+, Tumblr, Digg, Delicious, Stumbleupon, Reddit etc, etc. There are thousands to chose from and every marketer has his or her favourites and so will you one day (I mean besides Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn).

There is a great ADD-ON for Chrome and Firefox (I don't use IE, so don't know, sorry). Find out how to load an Add-On, locate '**Share This**' and install it. I seem to remember that there were a couple quite similar Add-on's, you want the one with a white cross on a red square like a Swiss flag. It will install to the header of your browser.

When it is there, click on it. At the bottom is 'Options'. Click it and do what is required. Sign up for a dozen of them and make sure they work, then load your website into your browser and then click the flag again. Choose a social medium and click it. This will promote the page on view to that social medium.

Promote each of your pages to three social media, but scatter them about a bit. That will give you at least  $5 \times 3 = 15$  more, high profile back links, most of which are deep links.

As you use these media, don't allow any of them to take your whole page. Let them take a snippet or just the title. You want people to see the title or snippet and click through to your website to read the rest. If you allow them to read your stuff on Gather, Myspace or

anywhere like that, you have lost a visitor to them – bad move!

You may be tempted to click on social media links when you post your articles to the directories, but don't. By doing this, you are promoting your article on that directory to the public. You want webmasters to read that article and the public to read the one on your site. Again, bad news.

Every time you add a page to your site now, promote it to three social media too.

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## Socialising and Networking

Ok, that was quite a heavy few weeks, especially if all that online promotion was new to new. Quite a steep learning curve, but it all hangs together. It is no good writing content if it is written wrong. It is no good promoting your website if the domain name is inappropriate, etc, etc. Now you need to practice that process until you get into a rhythm of promoting your website online on a regular basis.

Now that your website is worth looking at and you are proud of it, put your URL and your email from that URL on your business cards and all your other promotional material. Now, you have a second address: one in a street and one in cyberspace and the second one will

become more important for your business than the first.

Is there a local tradesman's club? There wasn't in my home town at one time, but we set one up. We called ours 'The Barry Builders' Club'.

I phoned all the top local builders and invited them to meet me in a pub in town one Wednesday lunch time at one p.m.. I had pre-arranged with the landlord that we could use a bar that would not open until the evening. I gave them all three weeks notice and followed with a letter (with my card in). I reminded them by phone on the Monday.

About half of the twenty turned up. We just chatted, ate our sandwiches and arranged to meet the following Friday week at 2:30, an hour before work finished. That was a mistake because many builders like a drink with their mates on a Friday, so we swapped it to 3:30 on Tuesday once a month.

That worked really well and soon we had the bar open privately for us and sandwiches laid on by the landlord. We elected a chairman and a secretary and took names and contact details. We soon had electricians and plumbers asking to be allowed to come along.

I personally, as the office manager for our firm, met people face to face that I had only spoken to or about previously. Three things happened:

1] we became a cohesive group and the council (grants) got quite worried about it. In the end we invited them to attend as well.

2] we became friends and a lot of the suspicion and rivalry disappeared

3] we socialized and networked more together. Bonds were built and some of did very well out of meeting others in person both socially and commercially

Now, the point is, could you join one of these and hand out your cards over a pint and a sandwich once a month?

If you don't already have such a club, organize one and while you are at it, set up an online forum on your website host (go to your control panel, cpanel, and look for Fantastico. There will be a free forum add-on there). People can chat on the forum. You could have a public section and a private, members only area.

Don't worry, it is very easy to set up.

As an exercise, ask your colleagues what they think about a club, organize a preliminary meeting and check out the forum on Fantastico.

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Three Tips for a Good Telephone Manner

Most initial enquiries come over the telephone, or not? Therefore, it makes sense to learn how to deal with such an interview, which is what it is. Your prospective client will form an impression of you from how you come across over the phone.

# 1 Smiling: it may sound strange to say that smiling can make a difference in a phone call, but it can and it does. Smiling creates a transformation of attitude and conveys confidence. This confidence will be felt by the caller. In the same vein, if you normally gesticulate a great deal, gesticulate whilst you are on the telephone too. Just be natural and normal and try to be relaxed. This all boils down to smiling, so try to smile during your telephone calls.

#2 Telephone: use a decent quality telephone. Why? Because your voice and your intonations will sound more natural. In the days when everyone leased their telephone units from their telephone companies, before it was forcibly de-regulated by the government, everybody had a good, if costly, telephone.

These days, you are allowed to buy your own phone and plug it in. However, this often leads to people purchasing a cheap phone with poor reproduction qualities or keeping on using a phone long after it should have been replaced. Therefore, make and take your calls on a telephone of good quality so that the interviewer can get an correct sense of who you are.

#3 Truth: the fourth tip is to be true to yourself. In other words, be yourself, be honest and be realistic. Don't just try to say what you think the caller would like to hear. If you just say what you think they want to hear, you will come across as sycophantic and if you get the job, but can't turn up, you will be branded as unreliable. Be yourself and tell the truth.

These are very important points for every business, but even more so if you only work locally. If you get a bad reputation in your town, you are in trouble, so if you don't have time to speak, offer to call back and if you don't have your diary, offer to call back.

Tip: you may leave your desk diary at home for your spouse to fill in for you, but photocopy a week's page-at-a-glance to carry in your folder..

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## Free Reports

People love the word 'free'. It has the stopping power of a .44 Magnum in the world of advertising. Now I understand that you don't want to be giving your hard-earned cash or skills away, but you do have something that you can give anyway without causing you any pain or deprivation at all.

It also comes in many guises and can be recycled over and over again and the people you give it to won't even realise it. I am talking about your experience and knowledge.

I know nothing about you except that you are an electrician and that you are reading this article. However, that tells me that you have passed an apprenticeship, been to college, passed written and practical exams, have or want your own business and realise that that will entail having a website and managing its content.

I could write 50 articles on that alone and so could you.

You could write articles on:

1. My Apprenticeship
2. Going to College
3. My Placement with an Employer
4. How to Prepare Mentally for Electricians' Exams
5. The Written Exams
6. The Practical
7. My First Employer
8. How to Start Up on Your Own
9. The Tax System
10. How to be a Great Employer
11. How to Mend a Fuse
12. What to Do If You Are Flooded Out
13. Electrical safety Tips
14. The difference Between AC and DC Power
15. What is Three-Phase?

## 16. Do You Need 3-Phase?

There are enough topics for four months to give you a breather. Once a week, write an article, I usually do mine in the garden of a pub where I am unknown. Take it home and copy it up. Publish it online to your website and then photocopy a print out. You are now holding a free report.

Two weeks later, alter it slightly and publish the article to article directories.

You have done three things with two hours work:

- 1] increased the size of your website
- 2] increased the potential for backlinks to your site
- 3] increased the pool of public knowledge by 500 words for which Karma will surely reward you

I will give you another use for them too later on, so save them to a folder that you won't lose.

Exercise: create a free report from some previous article and put a few dozen in the van to be distributed as and when or let the apprentice go 30 minutes early if he posts the in doors on the way home.

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Autoresponders

An autoresponder does what it says, it responds automatically. It replies automatically to a trigger and there are some quite sophisticated triggers, but we will get onto that later. There are two types of autoresponder:

1] the early, simple autoresponders simply answered an email automatically with one reply. They were probably developed to deliver that "I am not currently at my desk" response you get from offices sometimes

Then someone realised that you could get it to deliver a free report (see where I'm coming from? 😊)

I do not know what software you have, but Outlook Express used to support this feature, so it's not new technology. If you go to the mail section of your host's cPanel, you will probably find it available there.

To set it up, click autoresponder, open a new mail a/c (free) and write your message. Now whenever that a/c receives an email, it will send your reply immediately.

So, you put an ad on your site, saying: 'If you want my free report on how to prepare yourself for your electrician's apprenticeship, send a blank email here...'

You could have that email autocopied to your inbox so you have their email. Unfortunately, it is unethical, but that does not stop it happening

Now, you could copy your free report into that email with your link, couldn't you? Or you could put a link to your report in that email, which is better, because you get a visitor and Big G likes that.

2] modern autoresponders (AR) do a lot more, but they are not free either. You set up a form and offer your free report as before. Someone fills in the form. You are given their email address and they are given the report – all is fair. But, this autoresponder will keep sending out messages, typically once a week, until there are no more in the queue.

The webmaster has to keep writing new messages with new enticing offers.

Ethical autoresponders of this kind, require the sign-up do confirm (so that no-one can be signed up by someone else) and honour requests to be struck from the list.

Needless to say, most of the junk email you get comes from people who use autoresponders unethically.

You can use your AR to deliver vouchers, reports, vital information and whatever you can come up with possibly via the broadcast feature which shortcuts the message queue and delivers that message immediately.

Exercise: set up a free AR in your cPanel and advertise it on your site.

Tip: each report will have to have a different email address, so make them memorable and write them down in a list for later use elsewhere.

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## Ethical, Double Opt-In Lists

OK, after reading numerable articles, seeking expert advice and reading many success stories of people making a small fortune with opt-in lists, you have decided to have one of your own. Lists are not right for everyone. My father was a builder all his life, but he never had a list and build the biggest building firm in town. .

Here are three ways to build a profitable opt-in list.

1] Get your customers to trust you and your company first. Just launching an opt-in list does not make you an expert or a reliable tradesman. Write lots of articles before you start an opt-in list.

Adding someone to your list just because you have done some work for them does not mean a thing except that they may receive your email.

Write about any aspect of your trade that you know a lot about. Use forums to gain knowledge about your customers and their

wants and needs and aim to satisfy those wants and needs. Are there local online forums or communities in your town?

Be prepared to be adaptable. If you see something working elsewhere, copy it

2) Do you intend to sell products to your list? Find a product or service that people want and need. Although it may not be your strong suit, if you provide a service and product that you have researched and learned about well, you can put that over.

Do you remember our previous example of an article on ornate pendant lights for the home? Well, let's say that you are at a supplier near you and you notice that they have a sale on ornate pendant lights, you could write that report, post it to your website, put copies in peoples' letterboxes and send it to your list.

You could get requests for supply and fit. You do not have two businesses one on- and one offline. It is one business and you need to find ways of integrating them, making them pull together.

3) Use inducements to get people to sign up to your list. Bribery is still the best way. Give them your free reports, if they give you their email address. If that doesn't work, bundle a few related reports together and call it a study. You will soon get the hang of what it takes for people to give you their email address.

However, your content has to be worth reading too.

There is nothing for nothing in this game, but then you knew that already, didn't you?

Exercise: start grouping your reports together into folders like: safety, college, tips, how to..., etc. It will make other tasks easier when we come to them, but it is a good idea to be neat with your files (articles) anyway.

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## RSS

RSS stands for Really Simple Syndication, which means, if you set it up, that you are allowing anyone anywhere in the world to take your content and read it on their site. Or push it other people's sites to be read. Your content is still yours, but unethical people can use it how they want to – they could cut it up and call it there own.

But hold on a moment, they can do that anyway. Anyone can cut and paste content from your website and call it their own. How would you know without a thorough investigation?

Because of Google's policy of the more the better, we like our content to go far and wide, but it leaves us more open to thieves. However, yours is a local site aimed at local

people, so should you care that your content is being stolen on the other side of the world?

RSS is switched on for blogs automatically, but you have to set it up for websites, so you could put only your sensitive content on your website and all your frivolity on your blog. You can also set the RSS feed to only send snippets and a link. That's good, if the snippet is interesting and you get a backlink from somewhere.

The industry consensus seems to be that RSS is a good thing. I think that it is good to curb your RSS feed to snippets plus link only, but I also add a piece of code provided free of charge by a firm called TYNT.

Look it up and add it to your website and blog so that you have another layer of protection from thieves on line.

If you want to add adverts to your feed register it with Google's Feedburner. If the account is not visible in your Google login page, Google Feedburner, sign up for it (free) and the next time you log into Google, it will be right there alongside Analytics and Webmaster tools.

There are many options for your Feedburner feed once you have registered so make sure you check them out.

An RSS feed is like a ticker tape of the activity on your blog. It is like a rolling webpage, and so it will not be surprising to hear that there are lists of feeds, like there are lists of website.

Register your new Feedburner feed with some of these to potentially get loads of traffic.

As an exercise, type 'rss feed directories' into Google and take your pick, join as many as you have time for and save their URL's in your Favourites folder under RSS Feeds.

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## Online Forums

The word 'forum' is Latin for the 'town square'. It was where the free men and women gathered to chat and listen to politicians. It was a meeting point where people discussed things. Likewise, Internet or Online Forums are places where people with similar interests go to discuss things and ask for advice.

For example, yesterday, the image in my sigfile stopped showing up, so I copied the error message into Google and was shown numerous answers. A few didn't work, but the one on Microsoft's forum did. I may not go there again for a year, but it demonstrates the usefulness of forums.

On the other hand, I am also a member of a few forums where I am considered an expert and I freely give of my time and advice there. The Internet is an amazing opportunity, let's hope that we don't screw it up or allow thieves, governments, big business or anyone else to do it for us.

So, you, as an expert in your field, can use this to your and everyone's advantage by joining a few forums and answering people's queries where you are able, leaving your sigfile behind as a reward in the form of a backlink.

Councils in many boroughs have set up a local forum, so that is where you should start. If you have established a 'builders' club', create a forum there too, but if your council has been slow off the mark create a 'Dagenham Peoples Forum' or whatever it is called where you live.

Your kudos will soar if you make it your goal to be seen as an authority on your speciality in your area and one day you may get a surprise phone call from the media – they love experts.

It is free to set up a forum on a hosted website, just look in Fantastico on your cPanel. Imagine that! Running the biggest online forum in your area with thousands of visitors a week and lots of revenue from Google's AdSense. It might make a good part or even full time job for your spouse or child.

I tell you what, if that came off, your local MP would be twisting your arm to get a regular slot on there.

As an exercise, check out the local forums on Google. Ask the council if they are running one, if not set one up. Invite your friends and family along first until you get the hang of running the

software or delegate the responsibility from day one.

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## SPAM

SPAM is the common name for Unsolicited Commercial Email (UCE), which will cover 95% of all email in your inbox, if you are experiencing the torrent of crap that most people put up with every day. Notice that I said 'put up with', not 'have to put up with', because there are things that you can do and things that you can not do to reduce the amount of spam that you receive.

As a budding Internet entrepreneur, you will be flashing up on the spammers radar now even if you have only just opened your new URL and associated email accounts. The only effective way to tackle spam is head to head from day one.

The first step to take is to get to know your email client. I use Outlook, I don't know what you use.

So, if I see an email that I don't recognise, I right-click it and check its 'Properties', if I don't recognise the sender, I right-click the property details and save it to the clip board (right-click> save). Then I open the email, and paste its properties into the top of the email. Then I look for who sent it.

Just look for famous names. Google gmail is a massive culprit. Click 'Reply' to reply to the email, then, in the CC box, type: [spam@uce.gov](mailto:spam@uce.gov)  
This will send a copy to the only government department in the world that seems to be taking this seriously (/USA).

Now, you have told the spammer that you have reported him to the US govt. Look for Google or gmail and if its there type in [spam@gmail.com](mailto:spam@gmail.com) [spam@googlemail.com](mailto:spam@googlemail.com) [spam@yahoo.com](mailto:spam@yahoo.com) or whatever and click send. Finally, right click the message again and click 'Add to Spam',

This takes a long time to explain, but if you do it every day, it takes 30 seconds and the frequency that you have to do it diminishes.

Next, if you notice that a lot of spam comes from one country and you don't know anyone there, go into your email client and ban all email from that country – I did it with Nigeria and Rumania.

Another tip is NEVER to click on an unsubscribe link if you did not subscribe in the first place, because you may be signing up. Rather hover your pointer over parts of the email and look for the provider of the autoresponder then right-click, copy details as previously and email the AR provider with those details.

If you get totally fed up with someone, copy their email details as before and send them to support or help at your host.

If everyone spent a few minutes doing this every day, we would all have less spam in our lives.

And never, ever, ever, buy or sign up for anything in a spam email, no matter how attractive the offer is.

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## PLR

PLR stands for 'Private Label Rights' and means that anyone can use it or edit it. Basically, the creator of that PLR has given up copyright to it and placed it in the public domain. Most people automatically associate PLR with text, but it can apply to music, a jingle, a logo, a design, video or photos – anything that can be copyrighted but isn't.

Let's confine ourselves to text here. PLR is junk. Who would give up copyright on something that could be sold? OK, some people perhaps, but when you look at the quality of the average piece of PLR text, you will see why no-one wants to put their name to it.

Most PLR probably started out as a decent piece of writing, but then it was altered in order

to make it unique and then someone else altered that and so on, until, like Chinese whispers the result was garbled rubbish. In fact a lot of reads as if it has been written by people who don't speak English very well and that may be the case too, although a lot of it has been spun.

'Spinning' is the automatic process of replacing words with synonyms at random. A computer can turn out a hundred unique copies of a 500 word document in seconds. However, they won't make a lot of sense, because a spinner might translate:

Aboriginal footfall - for first step  
Globe of Martial Arts - for World of Warcraft  
Folio file - for Google's Page Rank  
bazaar appraisal - for market value

You can imagine how bad a 500 word document would sound – unless someone takes the trouble of going through it and correcting the errors, but that is tedious and sellers of bad PLR don't bother.

So, that is PLR text, but can you still use it and how? Yes, you can.

How is a little more complicated in your position, because you run an electricians and I have never seen any PLR specializing in that. However, if you wanted to run a series on more general, say home-related, issues, you could buy PLR on 'Home Security Systems', read it through, and just rewrite it a little to imprint your own style and preferences on it.

Shop around for PLR on Google and when you find a good writer, stick with him or her. Try: <http://bookvskindle.com>

PLR should always be rewritten in order to make it sound like you have written it. The absolute best quality that PLR has is that the planning of the article has already been done for you and that is the hard work. You just have to read and rewrite and if you disagree with a section say why, or leave it out, or better still replace it with the correct solution.

Conclusion: PLR can save you a lot of time, but it is not something you can use right out of the box.

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## eBooks

An ebook is like a traditional, printed book but in electronic format – hence 'ebook'.

OK, you probably already knew that, but it had to be said anyway.

How can ebooks be of any use to you?

That depends how you see your business unfolding really. You can be perfectly successful without them or you could use them as another string to your bow.

Most ebooks are made to solve problems (do you see where I am coming from?). Most print books are novels and there are a lot of text books too etc, etc, but traditional print books were expensive, you had to have a publisher and an agent and if you weren't well-known then no-one wanted to know you.

Nowadays, anyone can make an ebook. However, writing a novel is still hard to do, so most ebook authors publish handbooks on what they know about. Ebooks are written to solve problems, as I said before, so you could write an ebook on 'Home Electrical Safety Tips' or 'How to Prepare For Your Apprenticeship As An Electrician'.

If you have been following this course diligently, you will already have 15-20 free reports, so now all you have to do is compile them into a book and that is easy. You have already done the hard part of writing your material or you may have taken the fast track and rewritten some PLR, it doesn't matter. The result is the same.

How do you fancy being a published author?

You can use MicroSoft Word to compile (concatenate) your files into one document or you can do it by hand. Find a relevant PLR photo to put on the cover (take your own photo, it is even better.), add your contact details to the end convert it to PDF and you're away.

PDF? It's a file format that looks neater than Word. You can do it with OpenOffice, which is free.

Now what?

- 1] give it away to people as an inducement for joining your list
  - 2] sell it on Amazon
  - 3] burn it to CD and sell it on eBay
  - 4] start your own specialized niche PLR library
  - 5] give it away free to members of your forum
- Remember when you were struggling with your first article?

Well, thousands of people have probably read it on your website worldwide by now and you have recycled it into leaflets, free reports and now a book.

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## Clubs and Societies

It is probably wrong to join a club or society for the business that you may get out of it, but many people do. The only groups that do not actively discourage members joining for commercial reasons are local businessmen's clubs and the Chamber of Commerce.

It is a good idea though to put yourself in a position where people with money to spend can get to know you and trust you. Where do wealthy businessmen hang out? The golf course and the yacht club.

Now I know that not everyone there is wealthy, but most of them will be employers rather than employees and if they are employees they will have a good job, because yachts ain't cheap.

Of all the options, I have been assured that more business is discussed on the golf course, but never having been a member, I don't know. However, I do know that people talk about what is bothering them and that is usually business.

In the bar, after the race or the round or meeting, when people are having a drink and a chat – that is the place to be. Think about it – if your shop needed rewiring, would someone rather take pot luck with Yellow Pages or ask Bill that he's known for years from the club.

They say it does not happen, but it does, trust me. The same goes for the Masons, The Rotary Club and the Lions. And they are great fun, so why not join one or two of them? The Mason's is only once a month; I'm not sure about Rotary, but sports clubs are whenever you have time to attend and you don't need a boat to join the yacht club.

The Chamber of Commerce is a good one to be in, because they discuss the forth-coming plans for the town, so you get inside knowledge. It does not mean that you will get the job, but you will know to tender and you will meet bank managers and owners of large local outlets. It does not hurt to know these people.

The same goes for the local 'Businessman's Club'. Ours used to meet once a month in a nice hotel for drinks and a chat. You might be surprised how many people you know there. If you are shy, this is the best place to start, because you will meet Masons, Rotarians, yachties and golfers there who will take you to a meeting (except the Masons because you need to be a member first).

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## Banner Placements

We have all surfed around and seen banners. Strictly speaking they are the medium size 468x60 adverts at the top or bottom of a page bearing an image and or text, when clicked you are transported to where you can spend your money. Most people hate them and a lot of people don't even see them any more, their brain ignores them.

For the purpose of this piece, we will include: banners, half-banners, leaderboards, all towers and all rectangles under one banner, so to speak. All that pictorial advertising stuff.

It is widely known that it does not work well any more, so why even bother to discuss it? Well, it is still useful to know about and we may find a use for it.

I would definitely not go for flashing banners, although motion does catch the eye for a

second. The general problem with nearly all the banners is that you are soon scrolled past them, however, the tower banners that run down the side of the page, often called skyscraper banners sort of stay with you and reveal a little more of the story as you scroll down.

They are more interesting.

You could have 160x600 tower ad made for you, or make one yourself, and put it in your forum. That won't cost you more than the banner, which may cost as little as \$5 if you supply the photo. Or you could pay a monthly fee to have it placed on another local forum (£20 p/m).

This size will shrink nicely to 120x600 or 120x240 or even 160x240 or design it so that it can be cut in half.

Most businesses have a website or blog these days, you could swap your banner with that of a trusted carpenter and so build a joint venture. You could ask at the local tool hire shop whether they would place your ad for you and you could ask your local Jewson's or wherever you have an a/c to do the same, although they may want more money.

Still, if you don't ask, you won't know. Offer to exchange banners with them, they can only say no and if you are a good customer, they may say yes.

If you want to go for the cash, you could offer to sell space on your blog to other unrelated businesses. Put the local newsagent on your blog; advertise the local pub or its quiz night for them for a few beers or whatever.

Banners might not work anymore, but a lot of people don't seem to know that yet because there are millions of them out there. Your website is a big hoarding, with people passing by all day long, so why not sell a bit of space?

Tip: learn how to plug the leaking hole that a banner would leave on your site, by adding: `rel=nofollow` and `target="_blank"` attributes to the hyperlink.

Hint, Google them one at a time.

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## Mobile Websites

I am sure you know that more and more websites are being accessed from mobile phones or tablets every year. The proliferation of the iPad, iPhone and the Blackberry have been largely responsible for that and you need to be in on it.

At the moment, Google Analytics tells me that about 10% of my sites' visitors are on a mobile device. Last year it was about 2%, so what might it be next year or after that? Who knows but I would not bet on it going back to 2%

Whatever type of website you have, ws or blog, you need to access it on a phone to see what it looks like. Are you happy with that?

My guess is that most websites and blogs will show up pretty poorly, unless it was designed with mobile in mind, in which case it would be fairly recent and by a good designer. If yours looks good, then well done, if it doesn't then you have to get something done about it.

If you want to design your website totally on your own, then good luck to you, but if you want to do it yourself with the aid of a good HTML editor, then I recommend [XsitePro](#)

I have used XsitePro for four years on over 150 websites and it always functions beautifully. I have been to support, say, 5-6 times, and Ben has always solved the problem first time. XsitePro is a point and click editor, but you can still make mistakes copying and pasting, if you miss bits out.

XsitePro has a button that will turn any site made with it into a mobile site too and will load both versions of your site to your host as well.

It literally has hundreds of templates and features, but two that we have discussed previously are RSS feeds and XML sitemaps. XsitePro has a button to add an RSS feed to your site and produces a sitemap and uploads it automatically. It saves hours of time.

If you have a non-compatible blog, you will have to find one that works on mobile devices. Try changing themes from the dashboard and searching Wordpress. Otherwise, search Google for 'wordpress mobile themes' or you could look here: <http://facebook.the-real-way.com>

Don't miss the revolution, but hurry, because it has already started

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## Facebook

Every body needs a Facebook page. I know many people who say they are going online, but all they are doing is using Facebook. All young people have an a/c. OK, they are not householders yet, but they will be.

Anyway, Facebook has become a phenomenon amongst most people between 13 and 45. I say, 13 because that is the legal entry age, but I know five year olds with accounts.

You probably already have one yourself, but what do you have?

When you open a new a/c, you get a page. You can think of that page as your home page. Once you have that set up as your personal home page, NOT business page, look around for a button called 'Create Page'.

I can't tell you where it'll be, because it seems to move around, but it does seem to be at the foot of the home page quite often. Click that.

This page will become your business page, so you need to call it after your company and website. After you have 30 LIKES, you can assign the name you choose now (or another) as the name of your FB business page. This page could become very important to you, but people are still working out how to get the most from it and so is Facebook.

Here is the FB page for a book:

<http://facebook.com/LekInPattaya>

Note the name, and then look at your new page, it will be the name you chose and a number. After 30 LIKES, you don't need the number in the address, making it easier to remember: "Lek in Pattaya"

So, upload a Timeline photo of 850x315 pixels and a profile picture of 180x180 and start promoting it, because you want those 30 LIKES, in order to establish your name. Then add your new business FB page to your promotional material including website, blog and business cards (next time round).

Now look at the example above again. Do you notice how it is different from yours? Mine has two extra buttons.

The 'Visit Us' button takes you to a page I created which loads into Facebook. You can put anything you like on this page, so you could show adverts and links for your WS and blog on Facebook for free!

The 'Like Us' button, does something fancy in an attempt to send the page viral.

Exercise: click on both the links on that FB page and see what they do. Accept any requests for permission, they won't hurt you and you won't be signed up anywhere. You will be asked to join my list in a follow up, but you are not compelled to. Then look at your home FB page and you will see Lek there like magic.

This is quite neat and very popular and very new. Learn more here:

<http://facebook.the-real-way.com>

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## Twitter

Twitter has taken the Internet world by storm too, hasn't it? And not only the online community either. Twitter and Facebook have been credited with helping the revolutionists and freedom fighters in the Arabic countries. Burma and elsewhere. They have true forces with hundreds of millions of subscribers.

And you only want a few hundred or a few thousand, right?

Well, that's easy enough. It is getting the ones you want – local ones that is harder. Not so much for Facebook, but certainly as far as Twitter is concerned. You will soon have more followers on the other side of the world than at home.

I always think of Twitter as a ticker tape. You know, the ones you see running under some news programmes? You struggle to follow them all, but like to read every other one for a while and then give up.

I have 18k followers on @lekwilliams and @4k followers on another. No-one expects me to read everything that all those people are saying all day, but people do get offended if they never hear from you. So, it is like a garden, you have to spend a couple of sessions at it every week. Say, two times 30 mins or even 60 mins, when you have more followers.

Open your a/c at twitter.com and choose your name carefully. You can have several a/c's but you are only dissipating effort. I chose a dopey meaningless name the first time and it took me five years to get 4k followers, but with @lekwilliams relating to my book, I have 18k in four months.

That is the difference a name makes, a point we have discussed before. It is the only thing

people have with which to create a first impression of you and, as we all know, first impressions count. So, you could be @johnatyourfirmsname. That plugs your email address and the savvy will know your URL from it too. Three birds with one stone.

I love recycling, don't you?

Twitter is forever fiddling with what they allow and how much of it, so it is hard to give you any guidelines, but there are some great tools you can use, all free – or the ones you need are free:

- 1] Hootsuite
- 2] Justunfollow
- 3] ManageFlitter
- 4] Klout
- 5] Kred

However, if you want a little booklet that I wrote on the subject earlier called: 'How to Get 15k Twitter Followers a Month'. To be honest, Twitter has slammed my tactics, so 2,500 is more realistic, but you could get 5-10k with a lot of effort.

However, you don't have time for all that, but the book on Amazon only costs \$2.50 and it is worth learning how to use the services mentioned above.

It goes without saying that you should now add your Twitter address to all your stationery and websites including FB.

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## LinkedIn

LinkedIn promotes itself as the place to make business connections, which may lead to joint ventures or JV's.. This sounds exactly what you need and it is for some people. It really depends what you want out of it and how far your net spreads.

A friend of mine is a contractor who works on shut-downs. He is prepared to travel anywhere for a fortnight if the money is right and he does very well out of LinkedIn. However, if you are only looking for contacts in your own area, there might not be anyone else on there from your town but you.

Still, it is free to join and you may be lucky, or you may set a trend.. LinkedIn only has a chance to work well, if you fill in your profile completely, so signing up can take a long time. You are then encouraged to join groups and look for friends.

There is unlikely to be a contractors' group for your area, so why not set one up, it only takes a few minutes. Then when anyone joins from your locality and enters the word 'contractor' into his profile, he is likely to be shown your group to join.

You could do a search for people in your county and invite them to join, then you could discuss common problems like getting paid for grant work on time.

Obviously, LinkedIn works better the bigger the city you live in and the more scope you give it to help you, but having said that it is worth joining, even if you complete your profile over several visits.

In fact, one of LinkedIn's features is that it reminds you to complete your profile every time you log in and you can refuse to answer any more questions whenever you like.

LinkedIn is getting to look more like Facebook every time I visit, but it does maintain a 'for business' feel, as you can tell from the list of options in the header

- Home
- Profile
- Contacts
- Groups
- Jobs
- Inbox
- Companies
- News

I have never seen a reason to upgrade yet, although I cannot say that it will be a bad thing for you. The best thing to do is use it as and

when you have time and see what it can do for you.

Exercise: Join LinkedIn and fill in your profile – at least your location and your trade or business, so that you can be ‘matched up’, Start a group too, if there isn’t already one for local contractors.

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## Newsletters

If you have a newsletter or a list, this is for you. If you don’t, you should think about starting one and if you don’t want one, it is a free period for you.

Lists, newsletters and autoresponders all go together. You send your newsletter to your list via an autoresponder. He trigger for the autoresponder was someone seeking further information. The AR will keep sending messages, at the intervals it is programmed to do so to the people on the list at the time.

The big difference between a newsletter and a newspaper, is that not everyone on the list gets the same edition at the same time. This is good news for the list-owner, because it means that no editions go to waste.

If it were a newspaper, you would send it out to your subscribers, say 100 of them, this week;

write another edition and send it out to your subscribers, the number of which may have increased to 120 in the meantime. However, the extra 20 people missed the previous edition.

That does not happen with newsletters and autoresponders. Everyone starts with the first edition no matter when they sign up. Therefore, your AR tracks who had what last time and sends them the next one when it is due to go out.

You could have dozens of different editions going out on the same day.

This brings me to the golden rule for newsletters delivered by AR,

Do not put time-sensitive material in an AR module.

You have resist the temptation to wish everyone a Merry Christmas, because some people might not get that newsletter until Easter.

That does not stop you putting adverts saying something like 'for the next seven days only'.

AR's have a feature called Broadcast, which is ideal for sending the same message to the whole list at the same time. You can use this for sending the Season's Greetings to your list.

Sophisticated AR's like this are not cheap if you have a small list, but the pain lessens as your list grows.

What should you send in your newsletter? Well, you can make the main feature one of your free reports and pad it out with a few personal words from yourself or a bit of news affecting householders or electricians.

It depends who your list is aimed at, but if you don't keep it interesting, your hard-won subscribers will leave quite quickly.

There is another problem to be aware of: you may think it's a good idea to start your list and send your newsletter out manually until you have a nice-size list and start paying for it. However, most AR's won't let you just import a list. They will send out opt-in messages and about 50% of your members won't resubscribe.

Many AR's will give you a free month, but that is not enough time to build a list worth having, so it is a red herring.

Exercise: sign up for a free trial and play around with composing a newsletter and getting subscribers. It won't cost you anything but time and you may be lucky.

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PPC

PPC stands for Pay Per Click and is a term used in advertising. You will be most familiar with PPC because it is the system that Google uses most often in its AdSense advertising. When someone clicks on a Google AdSense ad, someone somewhere, the advertiser, gets billed and the webmaster and Google get paid.

Google is the king of online advertising for now, but there are dozens of others at it including Facebook, which may one day take the crown. If you want to consider paying for advertising, these are your only two options really, because of their ability to target your ads.

Google is still omnipotent, but it is having to fight for its place. I might be wrong, but I think that Google invented geo-targeted online advertising with its Adwords advertising. AdSense and Adwords are two arms of Google.

Adwords is what you log into as an advertiser. You can choose the keywords you want to rank for and how much you are willing to pay for them. If you win the auction, your ads show up on relevant (hopefully) websites that have installed AdSense.

Let's say you bid on the long-tailed keyword (LTKW) 'domestic rewiring Essex', you write a short ad (like a classified) and submit it for approval. Google then looks around for websites that it deems relevant to carry your ad. When someone clicks your ad for rewiring, you will be charged.

You have to hope that the person contacts you or buys something from you, but there are no guarantees of a sale. The only guarantee is that you will be charged. Google will bill you weekly or monthly on the credit card you registered with them.

Click fraud is not unheard of, but very difficult to prove. You also have to be careful of your LTKW wording. The example above would target any place called Essex in the world including America, Australia, Canada... Get the picture?

Facebook works in the same way, but Facebook has more details about its own pages and their owners, so the targetting is better in my opinion. With Facebook adverts, you can set a budget (daily, weekly) and maximum cost per click. You also choose which Essex from a list, so you know that only Essex, England people will see your ad.

You can also specify 'homeowners in Essex, UK' and an age group, so 'homeowners in Essex, UK over the age of 30'. This is why I think that Facebook will beat Google in the long run.

Facebook is the place for local advertising.

Exercise: go over to your Facebook page and click 'Advertising'. Start a campaign so that you get a feeling for PPC. You can save or delete the campaign without activating it.

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## Web2

Web2 is social media. That is the easiest way of thinking about it. However, in this instance I am only thinking of Squidoo and Hubpages, although there are many wannabees that you may actually prefer, but you will find those yourself in the goodness of time.

Squidoo and Hubpages are places, websites, where you can build your own website. In fact, it is only a page on their website, which is why 'your website' has to have a unique name. At Squidoo they like to call these webpages 'Lenses' and at Hubpages, they call them 'Hubs'. Two similar sites call them villages or canvases.

Squidoo and Hubpages encourage their members to build plenty of lenses and hubs. They then share any revenue with the client 50-50 or something like that. In other words, they are getting other people to build their website for them and sharing the revenue.

It is a very clever way of building a big, no huge, website for no effort. Anyone who uses these sites for revenue has lost the plot or not thought it through.

However, they do have a useful purpose for us. You see, Google loves these sites and all the

fresh, unique content that keeps springing up on them and we can use this to our advantage.

If you create a Lens and a Hub, Google will give you too massive backlinks. Really massive ones. If you put your on website URL into a Lens and a Hub, your site will jump quite a bit in the rankings and your Lens and Hub will rank highly for their LTKW's.

You will need two unique articles for each Lens and Hub, but after that it is an hour's work to create both the Lens and the Hub.

So, that is your next task – write four unique articles on or around the keywords of your own website – 'domestic electrics' or whatever.

When you set up you Lens and Hub, put a unique or PLR picture in each article via the up-loader built into those websites, use your LTKW as the alt text, and use your own website's homepage URL as the hyperlink..

Then click 'Publish'. You now have four great, non-reciprocal, backlinks to your site from two well-respected sources.

Exercise: write your four articles, create your Lens and Hub, insert your backlinks, insert some money-raising modules like Amazon and eBay and publish them. The whole job should take about five hours, but you also have four more free reports for your ebook, although you cannot publish them on your own website.

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## Your Corporate Logo

Have you ever thought about having a corporate image? All the best firms have got one, haven't they? So why should yours be any different? A corporate image will make your office, your van, your website, your free reports, your letter heading, your business card, your tenders and your invoices stand out.

It will also bind all the various parts of your firm together. It may take you a few hours or even a few days to create one, but then the job is over for life, so that is not so bad, is it? Or you could have one designed for you.

Your corporate image or logo should depict the principles, beliefs, and ideology of you and of the company. As this image is meant to be memorable and evoke some sort of emotional response in your clients, it needs to be highly appealing.

Once your corporate image has been created, it should be put on every single thing to do with your company, including your overalls, T-shirt, key bob, biros, pencils, place mats, mugs, and paper note pads. It goes without saying that you need to be certain of your logo and then stick with it. Changing logos, like renaming a ship, can have disastrous consequences.

It is handy if you can doodle your logo easily by hand, because it helps to keep it simple. Look at the logos of some of the biggest companies in the world. They pay millions to designers to have a logo created and often the result looks as if a child has done it.

This is a good rule of thumb. Keep it simple and people will remember it, but keep it unique too. If you are an electrical safety expert, you might like the first aid design, but there is your problem - people would assume that they were looking at something to do with first aid.

If you want a computer-designed logo, Google 'free corporate logo' and you will find five or six of them that work well. If you don't like the first offerings, just login again until you do see something you are happy with or you could go over to Fiverr and get someone to make one up for you.

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## Using Content for Marketing

We have talked about content and content management before, but it is so important that I want to come back to it and show you how it links into SEO. We have looked at Google and determined that it is the most important search engine (SE) for you to rank in.

If you go over to your growing Google account, enter Webmaster Tools and then open up your site. Click on 'Optimization' in the left hand column and then on 'Keywords'. Do you remember your Keyword? Where is it in that list? Which other words rank there? Make note of the top ten.

That is how Google sees your site. It thinks that your site is important for those words in that order, so if you are not happy with it, you will have to manipulate the list, by more often using the keywords for which you wish to rank. This will alter Google's perception of your site and help you rank for the keywords you want.

Now if Google, reads your site like this, it will also be the subliminal message that people will get - that your visitors are getting. The thing to do is, wriggle your main keyword into more of your articles. Try to get it into every article anyway, although it does not have to be the main KW in every article - in fact, it definitely should not be.

The next thing to look at is, how did people find your site? Most visitors will come from an SE, so what did they type in that triggered your site? No guess work need, Google will tell you. Move up the list on the left and click on 'Traffic', 'Search Queries'.

Do you see your KW's in there? If so, what number do you rank for them? Are you happy with that? Don't forget, you are trying to get to number 1, but 1-6 is good and 1-10 is not bad.

Higher than that is useless. So, you can add those search queries to your list of KW's and make a point of working them into you articles, so that you move up the list for those KW's.

If you go to your cPanel (your host), look at Awstats or Webalizer and look at the search results in there and add them to your list too. You should check these stats at least once a month to see if your rankings are improving (or not).

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## Tell a Friend and Breadcrumbs

The readability of your web site is a big issue, as we have discussed before. It is very important that SE bots and human readers can find their way around your web site easily. We have said that putting two navigation (nav) bars on your page and a link to a sitemap in our nav bars will help.

However, there is one more thing that you can do to allow the bots to flow around your site, without risking being accused of grubby practices, for which Google may mark you down.

This tactic works especially well on a large web site with a silo structure. If you don't know what a silo structure is, I can explain, but your web site designer has already made this decision for you.

Say your URL is:

<http://eddiethessexelectrician.co.uk>, your pages might be called:

<http://eddiethessexelectrician.co.uk/electic-wiring.html>

<http://eddiethessexelectrician.co.uk/rewiring.html>

<http://eddiethessexelectrician.co.uk/fire-alarms.html>

<http://eddiethessexelectrician.co.uk/burglar-alarms.html>

if your site were siloed, it may look like this:

<http://eddiethessexelectrician.co.uk/electrics/electic-wiring.html>

<http://eddiethessexelectrician.co.uk/electrics/rewiring.html>

<http://eddiethessexelectrician.co.uk/other-domestic/fire-alarms.html>

<http://eddiethessexelectrician.co.uk/other-domestic/burglar-alarms.html>

The more complicated the siloing, the easier it is for the reader to get lost, so the 'Breadcrumb Trail' was invented. I am sure that you have seen one before. They usually start with:

You are here: > .../other-domestic/[burglar-alarms.html](http://eddiethessexelectrician.co.uk/other-domestic/burglar-alarms.html)

Even if your site does not have a complicated silo structure, you can use a breadcrumb trail with impunity.

Another handy little routine that you could put at the bottom of one of the columns on your web site is the so-called 'Tell A Friend' routine. It involves you putting a short form on your site which is preloaded with your web site's URL. Your visitor fills in a friend's email address and perhaps a short comments box too.

These devices were all the rage at one time, but research suggested that no-one used them. This is probably true when it comes to an ordinary, average, every day web site, but that is not a description of your web site, is it?

Your web site is going to be informative and helpful. If I were reading such a site and I knew that a friend was looking for an electrician, I would use your form. You could put on your site and monitor how often it is used. If it is not earning its keep, you can easily remove it. Monitor it in cPanel.

Exercise: look for 'Breadcrumb' and 'Tell a Friend' routines on Google and install them on your site.

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## Reading cPanel Statistics

You cannot know whether a marketing action that you have taken has been successful, if you cannot read any results. You have the results of the traffic in and out of your sites, if

you have access to your cPanel. These statistics are usually presented in three forms: Recent Visitors, Awstats and Webalizer.

Recent Visitors speaks for itself, and Awstats and Webalizer are similar, but do need some explaining. We will go through Awstats, but the same goes for Webalizer.

The first section concerns the number of visitors. The important stats here are: Unique Visitors, No. of Visits and Pages. 'Hits' means how many items were downloaded from the visits (all files, including images); Bandwidth is how much, not how many pieces (Hits) of information was transferred. Most a/c's have unlimited bandwidth, so hits and bandwidth are irrelevant.

However, you want UV, NoV and Pages to rise every month. The UV is a measure of how effective your marketing is; the NoV shows how many times people come back (because your site is interesting and Pages show how interesting they found it. Therefore you want these numbers to rise month on month.

A monthly dip, could be seasonal, but continued loss of visitors shows that you probably need to be doing more work on your web site. Is the fall in traffic reflected in profits? If you made a spreadsheet graph of takings and net profits, you could overlay these figures and look for patterns.

This could reveal a lot about the effectiveness of your marketing campaigns.

You could try more Facebook than normal for a month. Did that help? OK, go back to normal Facebook activity and increase your use of Twitter. Was that better or worse? In this way, you can work out which medium is best for you. An extra hour a week on which medium makes the most difference?

You need to keep records for statistics to be effective and you need to test different strategies.

The next important section is 'Countries'. Obviously, you want Great Britain at the top here. It is hard to do a lot about who reads your site, but one thing you can try is to go into your Google Webmaster a/c, click on your site, click on 'Configuration' and 'Settings' in the left column. Check the box in 'Geographic target' and select United Kingdom.

'Robots / Spiders visitors' is an indication of how important the search engines think your site is. They wouldn't come back, if it was uninteresting (ie not changing often) or if it was difficult to navigate. Therefore, the higher the numbers the better. Look for hits from the big SE's: Googlebot, MSNbot, Yahoo Slurp and Alexa (not an SE, but useful).

'Visits duration' is hard to read, but the higher the average the better. However, if most of

your visitors are from China or Romania, it is hardly surprising that they don't stay long.

'Downloads'. Are you offering a free report? This is how many times the offer has been taken up. If it is really low compared with the number of visitors, try changing the offer.

'Pages-URL'. Are people going where you expected? Which are your most read subjects? Maybe write more on and around that subject.

'Browsers'. Here you can see how your site is accessed. Look at your site on these devices and check if it looks OK.

'Connect to site from' is useful for seeing where your visitors come from. Click on the blue hyperlinks if you don't recognise a referrer.

'Search Keyphrases' are the LTKW's that SE deem relevant to your site, so use them in your content. The same goes for the keywords.

'HTTP Status codes'. You don't want to see any 404's or 500's here because it means that your host was not working when a visitor came along.

Exercise: get into the habit of reading your stats and interpreting them. Try to cross-reference them with extra (or fewer) requests to tender and financial gain.

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## Search Engines

Last time, we looked at the cPanel stats provided by your host about your web site. One of the records on Awstats shows which search engines have listed your web site and another record showed how often they sent a bot to check it out.

If you are not listed, no-one will find your site if they search that SE, so it is a no-brainer that you have to get listed as soon as possible. The big three are Google, Yahoo and Bing.

**Google:** If you followed our previous advice and joined Google's Webmaster Tools and Google Analytics, then it is inconceivable that you are not already in listed in Google, but you should check by typing your web site's URL in as a search term.

However, being listed is not the same as being fully indexed. You can check whether Google has indexed your site on Webmaster Tools.

You can increase your chances of getting all your pages indexed by liking your pages on social media sites and by deep-linking articles to pages other than your home page. This is the only way you have of 'forcing' Google to go into your site'.

However, for reasons known only to the Big G itself, sometimes it takes a dislike to a site and it won't index internal pages for months and

then it just does. Adding a blog to the site as in <http://yoursite.com/wordpress/> sometimes kick starts the indexing process. If you already have a blog there, it may index the blog and ignore your site.

All you can do is keep the faith and keep procuring high-quality backlinks.

**Bing:** MSN's rival to Google. They also have a version of webmaster tools and so that is the best way into their search engine too.

<http://www.bing.com/toolbox/webmaster/>

<http://www.bing.com/toolbox/submit-site-url/>

**Yahoo:** is linked with Bing in some way. Maybe Bing passes its findings over to Yahoo, but anyway, Yahoo is often the last to find you. You can speed this up by actually telling them you exist:

<http://search.yahoo.com/info/submit.html>

**Others:** There are plenty of other SE's and directories to join if you want, but the OPD is probably the only one worth the effort, although they don't accept all sites and don't tell you if you were successful or not, which is frustrating. [Other SE's and directories](#)

Exercise: make sure that your site is listed with the big three SE's and take a look at the list of 'others'. Sign up to the Open Directory Project in the 'Regional' category.

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## Alexa

Alexa is an 'old' Internet firm that measures the popularity and reputation of web sites on an independent basis. It is free to join, but it does not give a lot to its free clients. However, it is worth joining, because Alexa can be slow to find a site and some other Internet companies first check your Alexa ranking before they 'trust you'.

It is easy to do, free and does provide some interesting metrics. So, enter alexa.com into your browser, click 'register new account' and give them your email address and nickname. Seconds later you will receive a 'confirmation email' with a link. Click the link to prove that you own the email address and you will be taken to your new account.

All you have to do now is enter the URL of your web site and click enter.

If Alexa does not know you or the site, it will ask you to verify your ownership. This is not difficult. Alexa offers two options which are equally easy.

The first involves up-loading a page, the name of which is the activation code. Don't bother putting this in your sitemap or nav bars. I have had problems with this method, so you

may be better off adding the <meta> tag instead.

Return to Alexa and click 'Verify'.

Moments later, you will be shown what it knows about your web site, if anything. Gathering data like this can take Alexa weeks, but at least you have started the process and if your lucky. Alexa will already have found your site.

Look through the stats if there are any. One section attempts to create a profile of your average visitor, which may be useful for profiling if you use Facebook's PPC advertising.

You will see that your site has no reviews, so write one, you are allowed. Praise your site and give it 5 Stars by all means, but be honest about your intentions for the site, even if it does not quite live up to them yet.

Alexa gives plenty of help with the review on site, so just take their advice.

Later in this series we will start using a company that draws some of its stats from Alexa, so this is an important step in that process.

Exercise sign up with Alexa, register your site and write a review for it. Think about swapping reviews of a friend's site for one of yours.

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## Page Rank

Page rank is a system or algorithm for ranking webpages devised by Larry Page. I'm sure that when Google announced that their new page ranking system by Larry Page was to be called Page Rank, did with a little mischievism.

People were bound to assume that the word 'Page' referred to webpage. Well, now you know that it doesn't. Not that Google's little pun matters. Page rank does though and a great deal.

How Page Rank works is a mystery because Google has never said. They say that it has to be a secret so that webmasters don't game the system. However, I suspect that that is not the only reason. Google admits to altering the algorithm about 200 times a year, so that would mean a lot of explaining.

Anyway, most people who care about Page Rank think that it is basically a function of:

- How many visitors you get
- How long they stay on your site
- How often they return
- How many reciprocal backlinks you have
- How many one-way backlinks you have
- How valuable those backlinks are
- How old your site is

- How frequently your content is updated
- How navigable your site is
- Whether it has a valid sitemap or not

With 200 updates a year, there is obviously more to it than that, but that is the core. So, you need to know your site's Page Rank, so that you can tell if your efforts are helping. You obviously want to see your Page Rank rise from Zero to Nine (although there is only one Nine guess who – why Big G itself).

We have already covered all the points you need to rise in the rankings and get to page one in the search engines, now I am going to give you a utility to see your ranking.

It is an Add On, so go to Add Ons in your browser, search for 'website.informer' (it looks like a vertical bar graph) and install it. You will see that it reports some info from Alexa and some from Google.

Exercise: load you own website into the browser and click on the utility. What is your Page Rank? Stars mean you are on the way, but you want to see a number.. Check out a few of your favourite sites and those of your friends and competitors.

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[Affiliate Marketing](#)

Now that your web site is looking pretty good and you have a few dozen pages, you might be thinking that it does not look like other web sites.

That's right. You may have swapped a banner with someone as we recommended a while ago, but all in all, your website is looking a bit bland- 'colourless' even.

We can fix that with affiliate marketing. Affiliate marketing is where you sign up to an aggregator of advertisers, choose from the clients that they have to offer, put their banners on your web site and earn a commission for every sale originating from your site.

So, you could look at Trade Doubler, Share-A-Sale, or any of the many others, sign up and you really have nothing to lose, do you?

No, you don't have anything to lose as long as the ads remain secondary to the purpose of the web site which is to promote you to local people.

This means that you have to think carefully. Who are you going to aim these ads at? If you have analysed your stats and seen that you get 1,000 visitors a month from the USA, you could put a banner up for Caribbean Cruises. That might appeal to the Americans and the better off Brits. Or holidays in London might do it too.

However, on the pages where you are giving product promotion ideas like burglar alarms,

you should be selling relevant products. Google or Clicksor can do this for you and geo-target the ads to the customers' location.

In that way, your fine article on burglar alarms can be read in your town and they will get one supplier and maybe ask you to fit it, but someone in Texas will get another supplier and you will dip out on the fix.

Shame, that is true, but you made a sale of an alarm that would otherwise have been lost to you.

The danger is that you put too many ads. Remember your SEO. SE bots cannot read images, so too many will annoy them. Less is definitely better in this situation.

Say, one ad in the right or left hand margin/column and one embedded in the article itself, should not upset anybody or anything.

It is only another string to your bow and may pay for a holiday in Spain.

Exercise: Look at firms that specialize in geo-targetted advertising and sign up. Place a couple of add and decide whether it is right for your company's image.

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Sponsorship

If you are in a business that works closely with people, in people's homes in fact, like you do, it is a good idea to be well-known locally. Sponsorship is a simple, effective and yet inexpensive way of achieving this.

It also gives a lot of pleasure and kudos to both the recipient and the donor.

Your cup will be talked about for at least a few months a year by teachers or sports club committee, by the kids and by their parents – the real target of your philanthropy.

There are several ways you could go about it. Do you have a son or daughter that plays for a local team? If not, do you or do you have a connection with a local sports club?

Did you join the Yacht Club afterwards? Here is why it would have been a good idea.

The top prizes have usually already been taken by older local firms (which proves why sponsorship is a good thing to get into), but there is always scope for another one.

The top prize, say a cup, has to be pretty good, but you could give a prize for something else like 'The Best Player Who Did Not Win A Cup'.

This sort of prize is rarely given and you would have a good reason for not making it a big cup (you don't want to out-shine the top prize-winner).

Another example could be, 'The Person Who Turned Up The Most But Was Not Selected'.

'The Bravest Tackler'; 'The Player With The Smartest Kit' 'The Best Turned Out Yacht'... You will soon come up with a category if you know something about the sport.

Just watch the faces of these kids light up when they get a cup too. Do you remember Sports Prize Day?

And another tip: pick an age group which will have to be accompanied by the parents and hand over the prize yourself. If you give a new cup every year, you not only have grateful parents, but you have left an avert on someone's shelf for years to come.

Finally, make sure that the sports club writes a press release mentioning the winners of each cup and who donated them. It is only fair.

Exercise: look into the price of prize cups, plaques, etc (you will be surprised how cheap they are) and suss out a sport and age-group to sponsor.

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## Press Releases

We have mentioned Press Releases (PR) before, but it is a good idea to go over it again

in order to make sure that you know how to write them and that you are submitting them to your local paper.

A lot of people, especially Brits as opposed to Americans, find it hard to write a promotional letter about themselves. We don't like to sing our own praises too much, do we?

Well, the Press Release is a way of writing about yourself but without the qualms of modesty. This is because a Press Release should be written in the third person. For example:

“The attendees at the Football Club's annual prize-giving ceremony clapped loudly last night as Mr. Williams of Essex Electrics presented their cup for 'The Best Dressed Player' to John Smith, 13 of .....

You should always, without exception, write your PR as if someone else were writing it about you or the event. However, don't actually wait for someone else to write it or it probably won't happen.

Let's have a think about the journalists at the local paper. There might be one or two full-time reporters and a 'cub' or trainee. It is their job to fill in between the ads every week, so they are pretty busy.

Then your PR falls on their table. If they are stuck for 'filler' they will check it and print it or check it, rewrite it and print it. (So always put in

the covering letter that you give them full permission to rewrite or edit your work, otherwise they cannot and it may be too long, too short or inaccurate).

Sometimes, your PR will be held over until they are short of news, in fact this often happens. Don't worry about that, as long as it goes in. You can always ring up to see if they received it or call in and get to know the staff. It all helps.

Write your PR at about 400 words long and put most of the important information at the top. That way they can easily cut your PR to length, if the quality is acceptable.

When you see your PR in the paper, compare it with what you sent in and learn how to do it better next time. Don't ever worry about 'getting it wrong'. You are not a journalist and you can't be expected to know what slant they want.

Exercise: start taking more notice of the articles in your local paper and the style they are written in. Practice writing impartial press releases.

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## Trade Associations

It is well worth joining the trade association connected with your line of work. For

electricians the main one is the 'Electrical Contractors Association'. This trade association is worth joining for the confidence that it inspires in your clients, the badge that makes you look official and certified and for the updates that it will send you with regard to the law as it affects you as an employer and as an electrician.

If you are not in a trade association, it can be very easy to miss out on important legal issues that affect you as an employer in particular. The fees are usually negligible and are tax deductible.

These trade associations, like the Electrical Contractors Association also have a social life with regular meetings, which you are not required to attend, and an annual dinner dance, which gives your spouse a chance to meet your colleagues.

However, your own trade association is full of people like you, a useful tip is to join the Federation of Master Builders. The Electrical Contractors Association is all well and good, but it is electricians talking to electricians who are unlikely to employ one another.

On the other hand, the Federation of Master Builders, or FMB, is made up of people who are in a position to employ you and employ you regularly. If you could get in with a few serial house builders, your task of either finding work or expanding would be greatly simplified.

Again, the cost of membership is negligible and tax deductible and if it doesn't work out, you do not have to join the second year. The Annual FMB Dinner Dance offers a chance to meet dozens of builders at their most convivial.

You will also receive regular information from them and have access to their very impressive help desk on matters of employment and tax, which is very useful and otherwise quite expensive, especially if you get it wrong.

If you have access to some money, you might even find yourself doing a joint venture with an experienced builder and making the leap from employer- electrician to house builder. It is a big step, but if you meet the right partner... and just being in the FMB means he or she has not been struck off, although you would still need to do your due diligence..

Exercise: look up the FMB website and see if it is for you. Join online or have details sent to you..

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## Charities

We have touched on charity work before, but it is such a win-win way of creating goodwill for your company in the that it should not be overlooked. The cost to you of performing charity work ranges from next to nothing to

whatever, but we will look at a few things that you can do below.

First of all, let's clear up what we mean by 'charities'. The easiest way to help the high profile charities is through their shops on the High Street. You may have a favourite, say Barnados.

Well, Barnados, sells clothes and some goods that have been donated by others, but those others are often elderly people giving away their dead spouses stuff.

You could donate your van plus a driver one Saturday morning a month to pick up stuff from these old people who otherwise could not deliver it.

Likewise with school, church and Boy Scout clubs. They hold fund-raising bazaars and bring-and-buy sales, you could offer to help move the stuff to the hall and what is left to the second-hand shop or into storage.

Charities are always short of transportation like this,

If you have a strong party political affiliation and your van is clean, you could offer to ferry late or immobile voters to the polling booth. Voting does not happen often, but there are often local TV crews interviewing, doing exit polls.

Your van, sign-written with your firm's name, logo and contact details may be seen coming and going several times. What cheaper way is there of getting on local TV?

While not strictly charity work, why not ask your local radio if they would like to do a spot on 'Electrical Safety in the Home'? They could hold a phone in and you could offer free advice

Or you could do the same in the local paper. Every week, you could answer a query from a reader like an Agony Aunt does for personal relationships.

The fact is though, that you will have to take the initiative in these matters if you want them to happen. The media are always looking for interesting, cheap ways to fill their air time. If you are lucky, the newspaper questions may be covered by items you have already written about in your free reports,

Exercise: investigate the radio and press options. Talk to your contact in the local paper and ask. Find out if one of your employees would work on a Saturday morning driving for a local charity (not free, of course).

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## Leaky Buckets

What do I mean by 'leaky buckets', eh? Well, we did mention them a while back in passing,

but now we need to cover the subject in more depth. In general, a leaky bucket is useless, right, although I am sure that some of you could find ingenious uses for one.

A leaky bucket is one that loses its content. Your web site can be seen as a repository of knowledge, which is the content that you have written diligently every week. This content will earn you 'love' from Google and the other search engines and, if it is interesting to enough people, it will cause your web site to float to the top of results returned for the keywords and LTKW's that you have chosen to rank for.

However, there are things that will reduce your store of 'Google love' or 'juice'. These are bad SEO, bad navigability and unfettered outward bound links.

You must plug all these holes or your web site will leak away all the hard work you have put into it like a sieve. We have already talked about SEO, so you should be all right there, although SEO considerations must become second nature to you when you are tweaking your site and adding content.

Then there is the navigability of your site. If you took the trouble to get it right the first time, then it will still be right now, just that the nav bars will contain more buttons and there is nothing wrong with that. Regularly updating your sitemap will keep this in order.

Outbound bound links can be a source of major problems and you would not even know that it is your problem. You see, Google distrusts outbound links. Google is very suspicious and assumes that someone paid you to put them there. Google does not approve of paid links transferring juice to other sites, so it penalizes both the giver and the receiver.

If everyone sold Google juice, then Google's use of links as a metric of popularity would be useless (which is why it is useless, but Google does not have an alternative yet).. Therefore, to stay on side with Google, you have to make those outbound links less useful.

You do this y adding 'rel=nofollow' to all your off-site links. That tells the bots not to leave your site to go there. To protect yourself from losing visitors, you should also add 'target=\_"blank"' so that clicking the link opens the site in a ne page.

Exercise: it is easy to put links on your page, especially affiliate links without adding these tags. You should regularly check your site for unfettered outward bound links to plug that leaky bucket.

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DMCA

So, now after 50 lessons and lots of hard work, you have a water-tight web site full of fascinating content that is visited by lots of people every week. Good for you, you deserve it.

But what would you think if you found out that someone was copying your content and putting it on his own web site?

It does happen, you know and not only to big web sites. In fact, big web sites take this sort of theft very seriously and react immediately, so it is safer to hit the small guys like you, who might not even know that they are being robbed and almost certainly don't know what to do about it.

First of all, you need to determine whether you have been subject to content theft. That is easier than you might think. Go to a page on your web site and highlight a paragraph from somewhere in the middle of it.

Copy it and paste it into Google's search bar (you may have to use Advanced Search). This will return exact matches and partial matches.

Now you have to decide whether someone has lifted your content, rewritten it or just written something like it coincidentally. Copy the URL's into a file – any sort of file. You will keep the possibles to see if they have more content that coincidentally resembles your and you will discover this during future searches.

Let's say that you have a definite example of content theft. Open a new tab or page in your browser and click this link:

### [Removing Content From Google](#)

This will take you to the page where you can report it. You will be starting a process under the **Digital Millennium Copyright Act (DMCA)**.

It is not a lengthy process, but you will need to show Google where your original page of content is and where the transgressing content is.

It is free. If you are right, the other guy's page will be delisted and he'll get a reprimand. You won't hear anymore about it.

Don't let people steal from you, that is how to plug the last hole in your leaky bucket.

Exercise: check a large sample of your content for theft. Check it all from time to time and issue a DMCA if you are pretty sure. Don't let these people get away with theft.

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## Books

This marks the 52<sup>nd</sup> part of this course. I think that you have done very well to see it out to the end on top of all the other things that you have to do. However, if you have actually completed

all the modules, you will now be the owner of an on- and off-line, business that are mutually complimentary.

For, in truth, you have one business that has several facets and they all revolve around your core business of providing electrical services to your local community. You are improving local properties with your core business; improving people's electrical safety awareness with your leaflets and free reports; providing a web site of useful information on topics that are useful to people all over the world and helping local charities.

You have deep links reaching into your local community through local charities, schools or and sports clubs. You also have three or four ebooks that you are either selling or handing out free to people who have joined your list and your autoresponder.

You may have an on line forum and be a member of your trade association, the FMB and your own local builders' club.

You are truly embedded in your local community. It is unlikely that any electrical firm in the vicinity is as well-known as yours and that is a great position to be in.

Now we are going to give you the equivalent of a trophy for your accomplishment. A trophy that you can put on your shelf – a trophy that will proclaim to the world that you are a true expert in your field.

A solid, real, physical book with your name on it.

You should have at least 50 files on various aspects of electrical knowledge by now. You have been making ebooks every three or four months, right? So, you know how to concatenate files.

Now concatenate the 3-4 ebooks and put the articles in a more logical order if necessary. Choose a cover photo or have one made for you. Write a bit of blurb about the book and yourself – take a book off your shelf to see what is required. And then head over to CreateSpace.com and create your book.

You can sell this book, naturally, in both print and ebook formats. It is all free to do. Order a copy for yourself and put it on display. After 20 years, you will have 20 real books on your shelf, all with your name on them as author.

What a history that will make for the grandchildren, eh?

## Bonus Article

### How To Boost Your Business Credit Status

The first thing to point out here is that no-one, no matter how rich and no institution, no matter how munificent they are towards start-ups, will offer finance to any business, the directors or proprietors of which are not prepared to risk their own money. So, if you do not have any capital and do not have any collateral, do not quit the day job until you do.

However, if you have some capital (and depending on the business, it does not have to be a great deal) and you are prepared to risk it, then you have a decent chance of persuading others to take a risk on you.

The first thing to do is produce a business plan. There are many books and computer programs to help you do this. You can learn to make one yourself with a library book and a finance exercise book from a stationer's or you can use a spreadsheet on a computer to make the maths simpler. A spreadsheet will also make predictions more effortlessly.

Or you can pay your accountant to help you.

Be honest in the formation of your business plan. The managers who will be examining it are experts and if you think that you are going to kid them, you are merely kidding yourself. Make a detailed business plan for twelve months ahead and another far less detailed section projecting the trend for two or four more years.

It is a good idea to find out precisely what your bank or local enterprise board actually wants to see in the plan, before you present it. Be sure you have a thorough knowledge of your business and the plan, because there will be questions to be answered and you do not want to be seen to be floundering for the answers.

Let's say that the bank (or whoever) is prepared to forward you some credit, open a business bank account and apply for a business credit card. They are more impressive to business people than private credit cards, because it proves that a financial institution has checked you out and approves of you.

Next take this information to traders that you are expecting to use for supplies and ask for credit. If you have got this far, you are likely to get 30 days credit from the merchant and negotiate a large discount so that your money goes even further.

By now, you have leveraged your small amount of money to get money off the bank and credit from a merchant (or two, so that you can play them off against each other in a price war).

You have come a long way, but do not try to run before you can walk. Now is the time to increase your credit status in order to qualify for a higher credit limit. You do this by never missing a payment - ever. In order to make sure that you can pay your bills in full every month, you might have to curtail your business activities at first.

This certainly goes against the grain, but might have to be done. If you are on the point of turning work down, call your bank and tell them what a pity it is. If it happens two months in a row approach your bank manager and merchants for better credit terms to cope with the increased volume of business..

Credit is a long term thing, like reputation. Spend time, building it up and if you hit a rough patch it may carry you through when others go to the wall.

### Useful Links

[How To Put A Page of Yours on Facebook](#)

[PLR Articles](#)

[Behind The Smile](#)

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