

Driving Web Sales

IPG notes from Mar 2005

ADVANTAGES OF SELLING THROUGH WEBSITE

The advantages of selling through a website can be seen instantly by comparing the following figures

Estimated Costs incurred by a £10 title

TRADE	WEB
Trade Discount 35%	-
Less printing costs: £1.30	Less £1.30
Less carriage: £1	+ plus surplus on carriage
Less distribution: 10%	+ plus 3% on credit card
Less Rep's commission: 10%	
Net revenue (after 45 days, AND before returns): £2.70	£8.70ish

Also, if you sell through trade you never know anything about your customer except which shop they bought it in. You don't get data capture. Through web sales you can get NAME, ADDRESS, EMAIL, and an ability to add to your mailing list (opt in for non-title bought info).

Tips to driving more visits:

GOOGLE RANKING

- Index your site by going to: google.com/addurl.html
- Get more links and Google will rank you higher, in particular links *to* your site – by negotiating reciprocal links with other sites.
- Put in more links within your site to other pages in the same site. Where possible put them as links to that page's full URL address, rather than just a navigation finder
- Informally, the speaker agreed that the old trick of writing key words in the same colour as the page background (i.e. invisible key words) may still succeed in increasing the site's ranking on a key word searches; though Google claim to be able to see through such cheap tricks.
- ASP pages aren't indexed as well as HTML pages.
- Your service provider should provide full stats on visits and hits, otherwise companies like Matrix will offer them at a small charge (e.g. £10)

MAKING INTERNET FRIENDS

- Find forums and include your email address and website address on those forums (downside – this brings you more spam).
- Join a webring (for directories see <http://dir.webring.com/rw> or www.webringworld.org)
- Join existing interest groups (or start your own), but blanket sales pitches will often be ignored or see you kicked off. For directories see: <http://groups.yahoo.com>, <http://lists.topica.com>, or <http://groups-beta.google.com>
- Region specific links: Tourist Board sites, Council websites, etc.
- Email newsletters – use to: promote new titles, special promotions and clearing out old editions.

GOOD WEBSITES

For a good understanding of what makes for *bad* design in a website, go to www.websitesthatsuck.com

Musts:

- Instil confidence in the user
- Cross-promote titles. If you like A, try B, etc Amazon are the kings of this.
- Pre-promote!
- State clearly when your website was last updated!
- Encourage people to sign up to your newsletter
- Sell on line: Free shopping cart software is available to all credit card users. Also see PayPal, NoChex and FastPay
- Always include an order hotline number, a fax number for non-online credit card sales, and a downloadable order form that can be filled in and faxed back.

The biggest issue with web sales is 'disintermediation'. Web selling allows you stop the process where the publisher gets further and further away from the customer.