

## **Introduction**

New business owners – and even old business owners – are often swamped with things to do. Cash control, inventory management, hiring, training, display set-up and tear-down, bookkeeping, the list goes on. Even if your business exists only in the virtual world you've probably got a to-do list that seems to never end. Now everyone is telling you that you simply must be online, or if you're already online, that you need to learn about Internet marketing to get your site in front of potential customers. But where are you supposed to find the time and energy to learn about online marketing in addition to all the other work you have to do?

Relax. It's not that complicated. There are, however, a few things you need to know to avoid the biggest online marketing disasters. Armed with these tips about what you should never do, you'll be well on your way to a profitable online marketing adventure.

### ***Failing to Collect Email Addresses***

Imagine if once a week you could call up every one of your customers and tell them what you have on special that week, all about that new line of handbags you just got in, and that you're planning a big sale on shoes next month. How do you think that would impact your sales? Well that's what email marketing is all about, but without the massive amount of time required to call every customer in your database.

If you're not collecting email addresses from interested visitors to your business or website, you are missing out on one of the biggest marketing opportunities on the Internet. Visitors who voluntarily provide you with their email address are giving you express permission to market to them. They are pre-qualified sales leads, and much more likely to buy from you than a random visitor who finds her way to your site via Google. It makes sense then that you should be cultivating

this relationship right from the start. Even when your traffic is low, the most important thing you can do for the future of your business is to begin building a list.

The dark side of email marketing is spamming. Sometimes new business owners are so excited about their product or service that they want to tell the world. While there's certainly nothing wrong with a little enthusiasm, you have to keep in mind that just because someone gave you her business card does not mean she wants to get marketing emails from you. You must have permission first. That's what the CAN SPAM act is all about.

Of course email marketing is vital to the success of any Internet marketing campaign, but just as vital is making sure you're not abusing the trust of your customers. Never send marketing email without express permission. Manage your email marketing with a service such as AWeber and you'll never have to worry about spamming. They'll handle all the details for you, so you have one less thing to worry about.