

WHY ISN'T MY WEBSITE SHOWING IN SEARCH ENGINES?

Occasionally I am asked by people "I had a website designed and developed, but it's now quite a while and my site doesn't come up in search engines"?

Well it is really a simple answer to a simple question, but let me put these 3 scenarios to you.

First Scenario

Tom and Mary go to a builder to discuss having a home built in a new subdivision or private estate. The builder goes through the timeframe of building, the process, the development and when to expect sign-off of the completed home. Tom and Mary have signed the contract paid their deposits and their dream home is now going to become a reality.

Six months later the house is completed and the builder hands over the keys to Tom and Mary and they take possession of their new home.

Some time down the track, Tom and Mary wonder why no one is coming to visit them. They get concerned about this and contact the builder.

They ask the builder "We paid you to build us a nice new home, but no-one knows where we are. We thought that by paying you \$XXXX to build our home, you would ensure everyone would know where we are!"

The builder looks at Tom and Mary and says; "You asked me to build you a home in accordance with the contract we both signed. Our building company did exactly that. At settlement your house was registered at the Lands Title Office, and the local council".

Tom and Mary looked surprised. "You mean we have to tell everyone including our friends and family as well as our insurance company, the telephone company, the gas company etc where we now live"?

"Yes" said the builder. "You only paid me to build your house as per the contract. Any notification of your new address and location is your responsibility".

"If you want people to know where you live then you have to tell them".

Second Scenario

Harry decides to set up a bricks and mortar business to sell his services and products. He fills his shop with great new stock and is raring to go with his new venture.

After 6 months, Harry is worried that he's only had a handful of people visit his new store. He goes and speaks with a small business development officer and laments his woes.

The SBD asked Harry what marketing plans had he put in place when he decided to go into a business and in particular into a bricks and mortar environment for selling.

Harry looked surprised. "What do you mean by marketing"? He asked.

The SBD officer asks "Did you get signage done for your store, did you get business cards made, did you list in the Yellow Pages, did you send out flyers, did you advertise locally, did you put sandwich boards out the front of your store, did you tell all and sundry about your business and where it is located"?

Harry looked dumbfounded! "You mean I have to 'market' myself"?

Harry soon realised that to stay in business and be successful, it would be a matter of ongoing marketing and getting his name out there using the methods the SBD officer suggested.

Third Scenario

Judy decided to have a website built to market to the world her virtual office services.

She gets a web designer to build her a great looking website, all carefully developed with all the right keywords and meta-tags and submits it to the major search engines.

Judy now has her wonderful new website, but after 12 months she contacts the designer and tell them that her website is just not working and she is getting no visitors to her site.

The designer says "What have you done to market your website"?

Market my website"? "What do you mean?" asks Judy.

The designer explains. "When you asked me quote on your website, I quoted the design and development. My quote outlined what you would get for your money. You accepted the quote, I designed and developed the website and then handed it over. Therefore, the marketing of your website is then in your hands."

The web designer explains to Judy that it is not a matter of "design me a website and they will come", but it is a matter of ongoing and committed marketing once your website is completed.

No one knows your business better than you. Therefore, it is up to you to market your website online in every possible directory relevant to your business, services or products.

Summary

In reality, it is like the builder in scenario 1. He was contracted to build Tom and Mary a house, he was not contracted to let Tom and Mary's friends, family and utility companies know where they will be living. That responsibility belonged to Tom and Marry.

In scenario 2, Harry did not market his business. He just assumed that because he had a bricks and mortar store on a busy street, people would just flock in and make his business a success.

In scenario 3, Judy assumed that the designer should have made her website rank well in search engines so that people found her on the Internet with no input from herself.

Conclusion

What business owners on the Internet must remember is that you pay a web designer and developer to build your website. Once you have signed off, the marketing of the website is then in your hands and not the developers.

It would be silly to think that the \$XXXX amount of dollars you spent on your website would allow for the designer to do ongoing marketing of your website. In fact designers are just like house builders; they are contracted only to build your online home or in this case a website.

Marketing Tips

Website owners must take a proactive approach to marketing their websites. This can be done in many ways and I list a few.

1. Have your website address listed on your business cards, stationery, in fact anywhere on a tangible item
2. Have your website address (URL) in a decal on your car
3. Trade your website URL with like businesses (reciprocal linking)
4. Add your URL to online business directories – there are many free ones out there. DMOZ.org is a good place to start.
5. Have a look at your current website content. Has it changed in the last few years? Could it be made better in readability and prime keywords?
6. Write articles and submit them, to online ezines
7. Could your site benefit from a Blog or Forum?
8. Constantly review you search engine rankings and market your site accordingly.
9. Use your domain email address and not an ISP address
10. Join online business groups
11. Have a Newsletter sign up facility on your website and send out regular (monthly/quarterly) e-newsletters
12. Do you buy products from another online business? If so, share reciprocal links.
13. Take time to see what your competition is doing online. What is working from them and try implementing the same kind of ideas.

When owning a website presence on the Internet, it will be a case on constant marketing your site (URL), your services, products and name. A website will work for you if you take the time to market what you know more about than your web designer. The designer builds your online home, but at the end of the day, the responsibility and success of your website is in your hands, not the designer.